



### CHARITY



UNHCR WORKERS CLIMB MT KILI PAGE 3

### FINANCE



EFTA IN CHICKEN LEASING PLAN PAGE 4

### EDUCATION



GOVT TO IMPROVE LIBRARIES PAGE 6

### INVESTMENT



KARUME HAPPY WITH INVESTMENTS PAGE 7

Page 13



## SPORTS

Page 20



Tanzania's first opponent intensifies preparations for 2023 AFCON

Page 19



Algeria legend Rabah Madjer: Expect a strong competition

Page 18



Mgunda asks Simba Queens players to remain focused after derby win

# EACOP: Total Energies reviewing land buyouts



Dodoma city residents, most of them presumably parents and guardians, busy shopping for school uniforms and other items for their children ahead of early next week's reopening of most primary and secondary schools across Tanzania for Year 2024. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Resistance to the project has rallied opponents of fossil fuel development as well as conservationists and those objective the relocation of indigenous populations

By Guardian Reporter

FRENCH energy giant Total Energies has launched a review of land acquisition practices conducted by the host governments for the \$10bn projects in Uganda and Tanzania. The company said in a statement yesterday that it was pushing ahead with its Tilenga drilling project in Uganda and the 1,443-kilometre (897-mile) East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project to transport crude oil to Chongoleani on the vicinity of Tanga port, in the face of opposition from activists and environmentalists in the European Union. "This mission will evaluate the land acquisition procedures implemented, the conditions for consultation, compensation and relocation of the populations concerned, and the grievances handling mechanism," it said, noting that the findings will be published

TURN TO PAGE 2

## Tanzania's GDP set for \$136bn by 2028 - IMF

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania's economy is on track to achieve an impressive milestone with a projected

ed GDP of \$136bn by 2028, a recent report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) affirms. This affirmation is given as part of country overviews of the IMF based on staff reports and

the last Article IV executive board consultation with monetary and fiscal authorities in Tanzania last held on April 24 2023, preliminary aspects of the report indicated.

In a laudatory assessment titled 'Tanzania: The Story of an African Transition,' the update lists a number of staff members who participated in compiling it, noting that the forecast underscores the country's steady economic growth and highlights its potential as a major

TURN TO PAGE 2

## Kairuki Hospital treating tumours with ultrasound

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

KAIRUKI Hospital, a top-level facility based in Dar es Salaam, has started removing various tumours without surgery, using a medical device that runs on ultrasound waves.

Dr Fred Rutachunzibwa, the hospital's lead radiologist and high intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) expert, said yesterday that introducing the technology is a milestone, as it treats tumours in the cervix, kidney, pancreas, liver, bones, breast; any tumour that can be detected.

The plant, which has just started operating, has the capacity to serve up to 10 patients per day, he said, noting that the patient does not experience severe pain, recovers quickly, does not lose blood and avoids surgical scars.

Four patients have already undergone treatment since the plant was installed, expected to be formally launched soon, he said, explaining that the facility will greatly benefit women as they suffer from tumours that cause fertility challenges.

"Once the tumours are removed, pregnancy

TURN TO PAGE 2



Doctors and nurses at Dar es Salaam's Kairuki Hospital line themselves up to place to deploy a high intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) in conducting surgery. This is described as a non-invasive procedure that specifically targets the deep foundation below the skin, without cutting or disrupting the skin surface. It is said that, unlike other cosmetic procedures such as laser skin surfacing or surgical procedures, HIFU sessions require no recovery time afterwards. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

## Families rejoin, with Hanang disaster fading

More than 100 people were reported dead, more than a thousand injured and some residents still missing a month after the night avalanche

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

AT least 500 household members had been reunited with their families by the start of the month after the Katesh mudslide disaster early last month.

Tomic Simbeye, a lead social welfare officer participating in extensive counselling of the affected population, made this affirmation yesterday, the first positive news following the confusion which reigned after the colossal Mount Hanang

TURN TO PAGE 2



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## EACOP: Total Energies reviewing land buyouts

FROM PAGE 1

within three months.

The Tilenga projects targets oil under the rich Murchison Falls nature reserve in western Uganda, planning for 419 wells, with activists pointing at the region's fragile ecosystem as likely to be endangered.

Drilling began mid last year and production is slated to start next year, where TotalEnergies works with the Chinese oil firm, CNOOC on the project. It said that the 6,400-hectare land acquisition exercise for the pipeline affects 19,140 households and communities owning or using plots of land, with the relocation of 775 primary residences envisaged.

It reaffirmed that 98percent of the concerned households signed compensation agreements, with 97 percent having received their dues. Upwards of 98 percent of households to be relocated have taken possession of their new homes, it stated.

Resistance to the project has rallied opponents of fossil fuel development as well as conservationists and those objective the relocation of indigenous populations.

Human Rights Watch, an activist organisation with links to United Nations agencies, back in July demanded that the plans be halted, saying in a report that it had already "devastated thousands of people's livelihoods in Uganda."

The oilfield would "ultimately displace over 100,000 people," it stated, while environmental groups like the Darwin Climax Coalitions, Sea Shepherd France, Wild Legal and Stop EACOP-Stop Total in Uganda, later in September filed a criminal complaint in France accusing Total Energies of "ecocide."

A first case filed in 2019 was thrown out last year by a Paris court, while To-

tal Energies says the Tanzania-based East African Court of Justice has also rejected a complaint.

Other aid groups and 26 individual Ugandans filed a further French civil case in June calling for "reparations," meanwhile as Total Energies said yesterday that it had named Benin's former premier Lionel Zinsou to lead its land acquisition assessment, asserting that he is a recognised expert in African economic development. Zinsou has worked with Total Energies in the past through his consulting company, the firm indicated.



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## Families reunited, with Hanang disaster fading

FROM PAGE 1

landslides where upwards of 90 people lost their lives.

More than 3000 survivors of the landslides have received physical and mental health support, where a wide ranging team of social welfare officials are working to reach out to 6000 people also touched by the disaster.

Social welfare and medical officers from all over the country set up camp in Katesh town to attend to residents, having been injured and incurred heavy losses in the disaster.

The welfare officer who hails from the nearby Mbulu District, Manyara Region, said that during the first week the team provided first aid to survivors, with the second week devoted to providing intensive mental health or psychotherapy support on those traumatised by the natural disaster.

The services were provided in association with mental health experts from top medical facilities in Dodoma, Kilimanjaro and Dar es Salaam, where in the next three months the focus will be on children.

They will be reporting to their respective schools for the new school year, with the local authorities working to ensure that basic needs and facilities required are there as they get back to school.

Welfare officers have been supervising the distribution of basic services

like food, medicines, clothing and shelter to affected villagers, he said, elaborating that welfare officers will be spending four months the spot to ensure that avalanche victims are entirely reached and assisted to cope with the situation.

They will also be working to establish new homes for children who lost parents, relatives and guardians during the landslide, as many are orphaned.

More than 100 people were reported dead, more than a thousand injured and some residents still missing a month after the night avalanche, he added.



**The services were provided in association with mental health experts from top medical facilities in Dodoma, Kilimanjaro and Dar es Salaam, where in the next three months the focus will be on children**

## Kairuki Hospital treating tumours with ultrasound

FROM PAGE 1

comes easily," he said, while Dr Asser Mchomvu, the hospital's director general, noted that there are only four such facilities so far in Africa, in hospitals located in South Africa, Nigeria and now Tanzania.

The hospital sent two of its specialists abroad for training, who have already completed their training, thus being tasked with operating the plant, he said, saying it was another step in

modifying, perfecting tumour removal techniques.

"In the past we used to perform surgery by opening the stomach, we moved to the surgical method using holes and now we have progressed further by removing the same tumours without cutting or placing holes," he said, affirming that this is the highest level of treatment.

The hospital has created a team of experts to run its new HIFU clinic, he added.



National Assembly Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson, who is Inter-Parliamentary Union President, follows address Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni delivered in Kampala yesterday when opening a meeting for Speakers and Chairpersons from IPU member states. Photo courtesy of National Assembly

FROM PAGE 1

player in the East African region.

The report affirms that real GDP for 2024 is projected at 5.2 per cent change on the previous year, while giving the current population of the country as 63.343m.

The update says Tanzania's promising economic trajectory is tied to sustained macroeconomic stability, ongoing infrastructure investments, a growing service sector and a commitment to economic reform and diversification.

The country's focus on attracting foreign investment, promoting sustainable development and fostering a favourable business climate are also cited as contributing factors to buoyant economic expansion.

GDP growth is expected to be driven by agriculture, tourism, mining and manufacturing, where the agriculture sector, which employs a significant portion of the population, is making strides in modernizing its practices and increasing productivity, the update affirmed.

## Tanzania's GDP set for \$136bn by 2028 - IMF

"With its wealth of natural resources and breathtaking landscapes, Tanzania's tourism industry continues to attract visitors from around the world, bolstering economic activity and creating employment opportunities," it observed. Furthermore, the mining and manufacturing sectors are poised for growth, supported by government initiatives aimed at enhancing industrialization and value addition in these key areas, it said.

A growing GDP signifies increased economic output, higher incomes, improved living standards and enhanced economic resilience, it said, underlining that as Tanzania works towards realizing this economic milestone, it is expected to create new opportunities

for businesses, entrepreneurs, and job seekers, contributing to poverty reduction and sustainable development efforts.

This optimistic outlook for Tanzania's economy has garnered attention from global investors and international stakeholders, who see the country as an attractive investment destination with significant growth potential. The government's commitment to fostering a conducive business environment, promoting trade and investment, and implementing sound economic policies has been instrumental in garnering confidence from both domestic and foreign investors.

"As Tanzania looks ahead to achieving this ambitious GDP target, it is es-

sential for the government to remain focused on sustaining the momentum of economic growth through prudent fiscal management, continued investment in infrastructure and targeted reforms aimed at further unlocking the country's economic potential," it emphasised.

"Additionally, efforts to improve education, healthcare and social infrastructure will be crucial in ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are widely shared across society.

"With a focus on inclusive and sustainable growth, Tanzania is well-positioned to capitalize on its strengths and emerge as a significant economic powerhouse in the East African region," the report added.



TCB Bank CEO Adam Mihayo (4th-R) poses for a photo with other officials of the bank and Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups minister Dr Dorothy Gwajima (C) in Dar es Salaam yesterday. This was shortly after talks on the potential for collaboration by the bank and the ministry in enhancing the inclusion of special groups in financial services. Photo: Guardian Correspondent





Shadya Mrisho (29), a mother who gave birth to female quadruplets at the Dodoma Regional Referral Hospital on Wednesday, breastfeeds embraces two of the babies as found at the facility yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Renatha Msungu

By Guardian Correspondent, Musoma

## Leave wetland to avoid disaster, adamant Musoma residents told

RESIDENTS of Musoma District, Mara Region, who live within 60 meters of the reserved Lake Victoria wetland and Kitaji dam, have been urged to move to elevated areas to avoid risks posed by increase of water level due to heavy rains that have been pounding the area for days.

The call was made here yesterday by Mara Regional Commissioner Said Mtanda who said people who reside within the area live in a restricted area hence risk their lives by exposing themselves to natural disasters.

Musoma District Commissioner Dr Halfan Haule said the permanent solution to the matter is to ensure

that all those who constructed houses there move to safe places.

"We are continuing with efforts to clear water drainage systems, we are set to construct a huge drainage system which will carry water to the Kitaji dam but also ensure that we move people from the area," he said.

Mohammed Atanga, Acting Manager for the Tanzania Rural and Urban Roads Agency (TARURA) in Musoma District said efforts are underway to clear drainage systems, calling upon

residents to take care of the drainage systems by not littering them.

Meanwhile, residents of Kitaji Ward whose houses are surrounded by water have refused to move out of those areas, arguing that they do not have elevated places to go to nor do they have the ability to buy land and build new houses.

The residents said that despite being in a dangerous environment, they have no option but to continue living in the flooded houses despite

the risks.

"Water is still in all my rooms despite the fact that in these three days water has receded; all our belongings are under water and properties surrounded by the same," said Zubeda Khasim, a resident of Kitaji.

Golden Charles, Kitaji Ward Councillor, said that the effort to move people from the areas is difficult due to their economic situation because everyone who is told to move has claimed to have nowhere to go.

## UNHCR staff brave it to top of Mt 'Kili' to support refugee children

By Guardian Reporter

THREE aid workers with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Tanzania have climbed Mount Kilimanjaro to raise funds to support schools within refugee camps.

The journey took six days with the final leg of the climb which started at midnight ended at sunrise yesterday with the climbers making it to the coveted 5,895 meters above sea level.

With the raised funds, 10 schools will receive much-needed lightning arrestors to protect refugee children from strikes which are regular in Kigoma Region during rainy season.

According to UNHCR, recent more than normal rains and thunderstorms led to fatal lightning incidents in the region, impacting hosting communities as well as refugees.

In just one month, lightning hit a school in the Nduta refugee camp and instantly killed five children and injured other 15. A nine-month old refugee baby had to undergo lifesaving treatment after being struck in a separate incident, while another refugee child was left with multiple burns last month.

"When the fundraising idea came up it was about us climbers highlighting the needs of the refugees in Tanzania figuratively from the highest point possible and translating the adventure and toil of the climb to mobilizing resources for those that UNHCR serves, especially children," said Murithi M'nkubitu, one of the climbers.

M'nkubitu said despite the beautiful views of the mountain, members of the UNHCR team were constantly reminded of the reality of many refugee camps and the conditions they live in.

Damla Balaban, another member of the climbing team, said the expedition was crucial in motivating them throughout their journey.

"It was dark, cold and we were sleepless and hungry. The climb to the top was physically challenging, but I didn't have any room to doubt if I was able to do it or not, I had to do it. There was no option for stopping because we

were climbing to fundraise for refugee children to be safe," Balaban said.

"Thinking about those refugee children who are affected by the lightning has motivated me to keep on going, keep on moving and never give up. The climb to the top of Mt Kilimanjaro was especially challenging for me as I went higher and higher; oxygen was decreasing and I had difficulty in breathing," added Yajun Hu, another climber.

George Kuchio, UNHCR Deputy Representative for Protection in Tanzania said that climate change continues to impact both displaced populations and the communities that host them. In recent decades, Kigoma Region where the two main refugee camps are located- has grappled with severe weather events such as heat waves, floods and storms.

"Out of a total of 56 schools in the refugee camps in Tanzania, 46 do not have lightning arrestors. The fear of encountering further lightning incidents is a daunting reality for many refugees and asylum seekers as the Tanzania Meteorological Authority has forecasted more heavy rains and storms in the coming months. It costs just \$1,700 to install one lightning arrestor in a school, which can save lives of around 1,500 refugee children," he said.

"We need to move with speed on the installation of lightning arrestors to safeguard the lives of the people we serve. Having the lightning arrestors will mitigate the risks of death of refugees, especially children, which is an avoidable tragedy if we act now," he said.

Tanzania currently hosts over 240,000 refugees, mainly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, more than half of them being children.

As of 15 December 2023, UNHCR had received only 37 percent of the resources needed to assist and protect refugees in the country. UNHCR appeals to the international community to support the refugee response, especially fund raising for lightning arrestors in refugee schools.

By Polycarp Machira,

Dodoma

## Schools get sorghum seeds to promote crop, boost nutrition

SEVERAL primary schools in Chamwino District, Dodoma Region, have received over 500 kilograms of sorghum seeds, being part of the plan to boost production of the crop in the area.

The seeds donated by the Dodoma Agriculture Seed Production Association (DASPA) are also part of efforts to improve nutrition services in schools.

Aithan Chaula, DASPA Executive Director, said the organisation has been providing sorghum seeds to schools in Chamwino District in efforts to complement the government's initiative to ensure that children have adequate nutrition services while in school so as to increase their performance and reduce truancy.

According to him, Sorghum seeds are being provided in Chamwino District every year as part of intensifying campaigns to engage in sorghum farming as drought resistant crops.

He added that the association was producing quality seeds to ensure that there is sufficient production of crops as well as ensuring productivity in agricultural activities. He said farmers should use improved seeds to improve productivity.

Chaula noted that the government was making efforts to ensure that agriculture becomes more productive by enabling seed producers to produce quality and sufficient seeds to be distributed to farmers in their respective areas.

He said the private sector is also making efforts to

ensure that farmers join various groups and are given training aimed at helping them improve their agricultural activities and providing them with quality seeds so that they can increase productivity.

Chaula further noted that Masia sorghum seeds are distributed to about 100 primary schools whereas each school is supposed to cultivate an average of between one and four acres of the crop.

In October last year, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) challenged Tanzania to heighten production of sorghum in order

to cater for the skyrocketing demand of the grain in the world market.

William Lasway, Monitoring Officer at the UN body, said that demand in the world's largest humanitarian organisation was at least 200,000 tonnes of sorghum from Tanzania per season.

He stated that WFP had been purchasing a huge quantity of sorghum with the aim of rolling out humanitarian support to populations in need in different countries across the continent, especially in Sudan, Somalia and Burundi.

Bank of India (Tanzania) Ltd. **BOI**

### APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT NON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN THE BOARD OF BANK OF INDIA (TANZANIA) LTD

Bank of India is a Leading Public sector Bank in India and completed 117 years in 2023. It has network of over 5100 Branches in India and 45 Overseas Branch/Offices across the globe in all important centers. Bank of India (Tanzania) Ltd, is a fully owned subsidiary of Bank of India.

The Board of Directors of Bank of India (Tanzania) Ltd would like to invite applications from suitable candidates for the position of **INDEPENDENT NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**.

For full job description Please visit [www.boitanzania.co.tz](http://www.boitanzania.co.tz) & Email your Application with CV and Certificates to [Boi.Tanzania@bankofindia.co.in](mailto:Boi.Tanzania@bankofindia.co.in) OR

Send Physical Application through below mentioned address:

**Bank of India (Tanzania) Ltd**  
**Head Office**  
**Human Resources Dept**  
**P.O.Box 7581**  
**Maktaba Square, Maktaba Street**  
**Dar es Salaam**  
**Tanzania**

**Air Tanzania**  
*The Wings of Kilimanjaro*

### VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Air Tanzania Company Limited (ATCL) is expanding its network to meet the needs of its Business Strategy which focus on sustaining the recorded achievements and remain an airline of choice that meets and exceeds customers' expectations in line of its mission of provision of reliable, safe and high-quality services. Therefore, applications are invited from qualified Tanzanian to fill the position mentioned below:

#### 1. POSITION: SENIOR INSURANCE OFFICER (RISK MANAGEMENT) (1 POST)

##### 1.1 QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be holder of Bachelor Degree in one of the following fields; Insurance, Risk Management, Actuarial Science or relevant field from a recognized and reputable institution.
- Must have minimum of seven (7) years working experience in risk management field.

##### 1.2 RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Coordinate efforts for developing and enhancing appropriate risk management framework, procedures and systems in consultation with management.
- Coordinate and monitor the implementation of risk management initiatives within the Company.
- Work with risk owners to ensure that the risk management processes are implemented in accordance with agreed risk management framework and strategy.
- Collect and review all risk registers and their treatment plan for consistency and completeness.
- Provide advice and tools to staff, management, Board and the Board Committees on risk management issues, including facilitating workshops in risk identification.
- Promote understanding of and support for risk management including delivery of risk management training.
- Oversee and update corporate risk register, with inputs from risk owners.
- Perform any other duties as assigned by the supervisor.

#### 2. POSITION: RECORDS MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT I (RE-ADVERTISEMENT) (1 POST)

##### 2.1 QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be a holder of Diploma in one of the following fields: Records Management, Records and Archives Management, Corporate Information Management, or equivalent qualification from recognized institutions.
- Must have working experience of at least four (4) years in related field.

##### 2.2 RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Ensure that a file register is in place.
- Receive incoming mail, stamp and record them in relevant register.

- Send mail preview box to preview officers and record daily movement of files
- Ensure letters have all attached documents referred to; and letters are signed by relevant desk officers after attending to them
- Ensure that envelopes are affixed with proper stamps and are addressed correctly
- Circulate fleshy files to the authorized officers.
- Develop individual objectives/targets and performance standards as part of the individual performance agreement in consultation with the immediate superior.
- Perform any other official duties as provided by the supervisor.

#### 3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Ten (10) years contract with attractive remuneration and Fringe Benefits as per ATCL Salary Structure and Incentive Scheme.

#### 4. MODE OF APPLICATION:

Interested applicants must submit a fully signed letter for consideration of the applications attached with the following:

- A detailed curriculum vitae (CV);
- Certified copies of all certificates (including Secondary School and birth certificate), and other relevant certificates and licenses. (Applicants who have studied outside Tanzania should have their certificates approved by relevant authorities i.e. Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) or National Examination Council-NECTA)
- Two recent passport size photographs;
- Names and addresses of at least two reputable referees;
- Applicant's reliable contact address, email address and telephone numbers.

**Note:** Misrepresentation of facts and qualifications during application shall warrant legal consequences. Previous applicants for the position of Record Management Assistant I may re-apply.

#### 5. CLOSING DATES:

Applicants should reach the undersigned within 14 days from the first date of this announcement: -

**MANAGING DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**AIR TANZANIA COMPANY LIMITED,**  
**P.O. BOX 543,**  
**DAR ES SALAAM**  
**Date: 5th January 2024**

**ATCL is an equal opportunity employer. Women are encouraged to apply. Misrepresentation of qualifications or any other information on application shall warrant legal consequences**



## Dawasa to connect 5,000 new water users at Kibamba

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

DAR ES SALAAM Water and Sanitation Authority (DAWASA) at its Kibamba Service Region plans to reach 5,000 new customers to bring the total to 20,000 water users.

The authority's goal is to reach all potential customers of its service area by 2025.

Ian Mlay, the authority's Kibamba regional business officer said yesterday that the existing strategies to reach 5,000 more customers include implementing small projects to connect customers to the essential service after completing big projects.

"One of our plans is to ensure that we reach all customers in the area we serve by increasing the scope of our service network; we ask our customers not to hesitate to request connection of our service," he said.

He added that other plans include reducing the number of customers with long-term debts by entering into a special agreement so that they can pay for the service by instalment while continuing to get water services.

"We continue to plead with our customers to pay for the service on time instead of waiting for the same to be suspended. Paying the bills helps us to extend the service to other areas

that have not yet received it," said Mlay

He said DAWASA Kibamba is focused on strengthening cooperation with customers by providing education to people and other useful information through chat groups including Whatsapp groups, its official social networks and customer service centre.

Kibamba Service Region serves five wards which are Msigani, Kwembe, Kiluvya, Kibamba and part of Mbezi Ward where its offices are located at Mbezi Luguruni near Ubungo Municipal Council office.



**One of our plans is to ensure that we reach all customers in the area we serve by increasing the scope of our service network; we ask our customers not to hesitate to request connection of our service**



Members of the Maasai tribe pictured at Samanga township in Simanjiro District yesterday visibly finding pleasure in wrapping around tourist and All for Love, Love for All (ALALA) chairman a kikoi they had bought specially for the purpose. It was shortly after the launch of Phase II of a village water project also incorporating the construction of two water tanks and troughs for use by livestock. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

RELIGIOUS leaders in Ruvuma Region have urged the public to continue prioritising environmental conservation initiatives in order to overcome the increasing impacts of climate change.

In their messages during mass service to welcome the New Year, the leaders urged Tanzanians to recognise the impacts of climate change and that they are the ones to act to reverse the situation.

Rev Amon Mwenda, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) Ruvuma Diocese, said that Tanzanians should revive the culture of protecting and preserving the environment due to the threats and effects of climate change that have been witnessed in 2023.

He said climate change has devastating impacts on human's wellbeing as it has created some problems including drought with some of them being stimulated by human activities.

According to him, environmental

## New Year: Clerics for environment protection to curb climate change

preservation is something that should be addressed by individuals in families, communities and the government.

"Let's set goals in our areas for everyone to plant several trees every year, I believe it is possible," Mwenda said, noting that despite planting trees, families can also plant flowers and grass that protect the environment and prevent soil erosion in their homes.

Pastor Lucas Ndugu of the African Inland Church Tanzania (AICT) Pastorate of Songea said the issue of environmental protection in Ruvuma Region has not been prioritized due to the community not paying attention to matter and authorities not putting garbage storage and collection facilities in some areas.

He noted that environmental

protection is a biblical matter and it is about taking care of God's creation, asking religious leaders to continue to speak about it in their sermons so that their followers realize their responsibility in this matter.

Bishop Raphael Haule of the Anglican Church in Tanzania Diocese of Ruvuma said human beings have the responsibility to protect, preserve, govern and develop the environment so that it can enable them to continue with daily life.

"Sometimes human beings destroy the environment due to poor economic conditions where they use environmental products to earn income such as charcoal," he said.

Ruvuma Regional Sheikh Ramadhanani Mwakilima said Islam recognizes environmental care as worship and that man meets his

daily needs from the land and that protecting it should be a priority.

He further said that the issue of environmental protection will be well achieved when the government puts in place friendly policies and laws in clean energy which also facilitates reduction of prices, thus cutting down use of charcoal.

"I am confident that if the cost of gas with a volume of 15 kilograms is sold between 8,000/- and 10,000/-, many Tanzanians will be able to afford it; doing this will help reduce their dependence on charcoal as main source of energy for cooking," said.

Climate change has caused various challenges in the political, economic and social spheres in the country and it has become a cross cutting topic in the world with leaders grappling to find ways to

## Company introduces pilot chicken leasing for youth and women

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

EQUITY for Tanzania Limited (EFTA), a Tanzanian Finance firm has launched a special initiative aimed at providing chicken loans to youth and women without collateral.

Nicomed Bohay, EFTA managing director, said this yesterday when introducing chicken loan programme at the Silverlands' Hatchery Unit, Usa River area in Arusha Region.

Bohay said that the chicken financing product has been launched following the approval granted by the Bank of Tanzania (BoT).

He said for a while, youth and women in Tanzania have constituted significant demographic facing challenges in securing formal employment, contributing to heightened poverty levels within these two groups.

He noted that with the Built Better Tomorrow - Youth initiative for Agribusiness (BBT-YIA) programme running through to 2030, Tanzania is making a calculated gamble on its youth, hoping to foster a new generation of agribusiness leaders who are as proficient in modern agribusiness practices as they are rooted in the rich agricultural heritage of their land.

In support of this government initiative, EFTA has introduced a pilot programme offering collateral-free chicken leasing to young people and women. This approach allows these groups to actively participate in production activities through loans without collateral, addressing the challenges they face in accessing loans from mainstream financial institutions like banks.

"Many young people and women face hurdles in securing loans from our financial institutions due to a lack of collateral. Recognizing this challenge, we introduced collateral-free chicken loans. Chickens offer a short-term investment cycle, and within a few months, borrowers start seeing returns on their investment," he said.

"For instance, with the chickens we're providing, borrowers can start selling them after 6 weeks. This investment offers returns within a short period, encouraging numerous young people to explore this opportunity."

Bohay further added that in the programme's inaugural year, EFTA aims to offer up to 250,000 chicken loans nationwide, with over 31,000 chickens already delivered to farmers in regions in the country.

"We have commenced training for

farmers willing to avail themselves to take these loans, and for those who have completed the training, we have already provided their chickens. Approximately 30 farmers have already benefited, and a total of 31,000 chickens have been distributed so far. Therefore, I encourage more young people to take advantage of these loans; it's a beneficial opportunity," he said.

In collaboration with day-old chicks (DOCs) suppliers such as Silverland Tanzania Ltd, EFTA also provides financing for necessary items like feed, vaccines and drinkers on loan until farmers are ready to market their chickens

Mwanamvua Ngocho, marketing manager of Silverlands Tanzania Ltd expressed strong confidence in this chicken leasing product loan programme, stating its potential to enable many youth and women in the country to engage in poultry farming. "Previously, our clients were experienced farmers with substantial capital. However, with EFTA's introduction, more opportunities are opening up for young people and women. We are fully committed to providing comprehensive training on modern poultry farming and producing high-quality DOCs," said Ngocho.

"We aspire to witness economic prosperity among our people as poultry farmers, as well as the enhancement of community health through the consumption of high-quality chicken meat and eggs from our farmers."



**For instance, with the chickens we're providing, borrowers can start selling them after 6 weeks. This investment offers returns within a short period, encouraging numerous young people to explore this opportunity**



A Mbeya city motorbike taxi operator captured along the Nzovwe stretch of the Tanzania-Zambia Highway yesterday transporting tomatoes in a style not particularly safe, including not wearing a helmet. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa





Zanzibar's Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister, Riziki Pembe Juma (2nd-R), cuts the ribbon on Wednesday to launch the Nungwi branch of the People's Bank of Zanzibar as part of the countdown to the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the January 12 Zanzibar Revolution. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## There is only a 5pc chance of AI making humans extinct, study says

By Beatrice Nolan

INDUSTRY leaders and AI heavyweights said the rapid development of the technology could have catastrophic consequences for the world.

But, while most AI researchers recognize the possibility of existential threats, they don't think the dramatic outcomes are very likely, the largest survey of AI researchers has found.

In the survey, the 2,778 participants were asked questions about the social consequences of AI developments and possible timelines for the future of the tech.

Almost 58 percent of those surveyed said they considered the threat of human extinction or other extremely bad outcomes brought about by the tech to be around 5 percent.

The study was published by researchers and academics at universities around the world, including Oxford and Bonn in Germany.

One of the paper's authors, Katja Grace, says the survey was a signal that most AI researchers "don't find it strongly implausible that advanced AI destroys humanity." She added there was a "general belief in a non-minuscule risk."

Whether AI poses a significant threat

to humanity has been an intense debate in Silicon Valley in the last few months.

Several AI experts, including Google Brain cofounder Andrew Ng and AI godfather Yann LeCun, have dismissed some of the bigger doomsday scenarios. LeCun has even accused tech leaders such as Sam Altman of having ulterior motives for hyping AI fears.

In October, LeCun said some of the leading AI companies were trying to provide a "regulatory capture" of the industry by pushing harsh regulation.



**Almost 58 percent of those surveyed said they considered the threat of human extinction or other extremely bad outcomes brought about by the tech to be around 5 percent**

## Govt subsidy seeds boost sunflower production in Singida

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

ACCESS to quality sunflower seeds through government subsidy in the last three years has raised production of the crop in Singida Region from 260,383.2 tons in 2021/22 to 400,000 tons in 2023.

Singida Regional Commissioner Peter Serukamba made the remarks yesterday during the launch of distribution of sunflower seeds under the government subsidy programme which was held at the Roman Catholic Church grounds in Singida town.

He said the success has been possible because the government has invested in the agriculture sector by emphasizing on quality seeds to farmers through subsidy.

The RC said in achieving this, the region has put in place strategies to increase production of the crop whereby in 2023/24, the region expects to produce 323,455.8 hectares for production of 523,092.5 of sunflower.

"To achieve this which is our target, the region requires 1,617.3 tons of seeds which have been requested from Agricultural Seed Agency (ASA)," he said.

Speaking to farmers, extension specialists and leaders at the launch, Deputy Minister for Agriculture David Silinde said in this season the government will distribute 2,045 tons of sunflower seeds in the country, including 700 tons of hybrids, from abroad and 625.4 tons, from private companies internal, to increase yield.

The deputy minister said Singida region this season will benefit from receiving 600 tons of sunflower seeds, including 315 tons of hybrids, worth more than 8.58bn/-, equivalent to 42.8 percent of the seeds distributed in the country.

In addition, Silinde commended Singida Region for increasing the production of sunflower seeds and edible oil in the last season of 2022/23, for cultivating an area of 131,793.3 acres, which produced 55,335 tons of raw sunflower, which will produce 1,383,826 liters of oil, and reduce edible oil imports.

The executive director of ASA, Dr Sophia Kashenge, said the aim of the agency is to help the farmer by providing with quality seeds to achieve goals.

"The seeds we bring are open-pollinated, open-pollinated seeds cannot match high-bleed seeds, in terms of quality and cost, we expect to import hybrid seeds from abroad according to the government's instructions," she said



**The seeds we bring are open-pollinated, open-pollinated seeds cannot match high-bleed seeds, in terms of quality and cost, we expect to import hybrid seeds from abroad according to the government's instructions**

Canara Bank (Tanzania) Ltd.					
PUBLICATION OF INTEREST RATES, FEES AND CHARGES					
PURSUANT TO REGULATION 11 OF THE BANKING AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DISCLOSURE REGULATION, 2014 AND REGULATION 40(3)(a) OF THE FINANCIAL CONSUMER					
S/N	DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED CHARGES	TZS	USD	
1	Monthly Maintenance	SA CA	2,000.00 6,000.00	2 4	
2	Non Maintenance of Minimum Balance	SA CA	1,500.00 4,000.00	2 4	
3	Account Statement Charges	SA-Monthly SA-Interim CA-Monthly CA-Interim	- 1,500.00 per page Free 1,500.00 per page	0 1.5 Free 1.5	
4	Cash withdrawal charges	SA-Up 25M SA-Over 25M SA-Up to \$2K SA-\$2K-\$5K SA-Over \$5K CA-Up to 25 M CA-Above 25M CA-Up to USD 5K CA-\$ 5K-\$10K CA-Above \$ 10K	Free 0.26% Free 0.60% 0.60% Free 0.26% Free 0.60% 0.60%	Free Free 0.60% 0.60%	
5	Cash Deposit Charges	SA-Up to 25M SA-Over 25M SA-Up \$5K SA-Over \$5K SA-small currency (\$1 to \$20) CA-Up to 50M CA-Over 50M CA-Up to \$10K CA-Over \$10K CA-small currency (\$1 to \$20)	Free 0.22% Free 0.50% 10.00% Free 0.22% Free 0.50% 10.00%	Free Free 10.00% Free 0.22% Free 0.50% 10.00%	
6	Balance Confirmation Certificate	SA CA	12,800.00 21,200.00	10 13	
7	Account Closure Charges	SA CA	20,000.00 50,000.00	20 50	
8	Activation of Dormant Account	SA CA	Free Free	Free Free	
9	Stop Payment Charges	SA CA	Free 35,000.00	Free 28	
10	Cheque Return Charges/Dishonoured Cheque	CA-Inward CA-Outward	50,000.00 50,000.00	50 50	
11	Cheque Clearing Charges	CA-Inward CA-Outward	1,300.00 Free	1 Free	
12	Ledger folio charges per folio (40lines per)	SA CA	Free 6,000.00	Free 4.00	
13	Cheque book Charges	CA-50 Leaves	42,000.00	27	
14	Mobile Banking				
	Withdrawal Charge	Upto 100,000 101,000 to 200,000 201,000 to 400,000 401,000 to 600,000 601,000 to 999,000	1,700.00 2,600.00 4,300.00 5,100.00 6,800.00	N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A	
	Funds Transfer/Mobile Wallet	Upto 100,000 101,000 to 250,000 251,000 to 500,000 501,000 to 1,000,000 1,001,000 TO 10 Mn	500.00 900.00 1,700.00 4,300.00 8,500.00	N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A	
15	Locker Rent-Yearly	Small Medium Big	296,700.00 508,500.00 635,600.00	N/A N/A N/A	
16	Remittances				
	TISS	Any amount per 1 transfer	TZS 8,450.00	TZS 8,450.00	
	E Remittances	Upto USD 1000 or Eq. TZS 1001 to 5000 5001 to 10000 10,001 and above	17,000.00 \$ 20,400.00 \$ 40,700.00 \$ 84,800.00 \$	9.00 11.00 22.00 43.00	
	Swift Outward	Upto 5,000 5,001 to 10,000 above 10,000	NA \$ NA \$ NA \$	39.00 51.00 77.00	
	Swift Inward	Upto 5,000 5,001 to 10,000 above 10,000	NA \$ NA \$ NA \$	11.00 16.00 26.00	
	HEAD TREASURY AND TRADE FINANCE		03-01-24		
	GM-CREDIT		03-01-24		
	DEPUTY CEO		03-01-24		
17	Loan/Advances Related Charges				
	i Processing Charges	Upto 5 Mio - 5Mio to 10 Mio - 10 Mio to 25mio - 25 mn to 500 mio - >=500mio- (minimum 7.5mio) Upto 5,000 - 5000 to 10,000 - Upto 20,000 - 20,000 to 500,000 - >=500,000- (minimum 7,500)	21,200.00 169,500.00 339,000.00 1.28% 1.06% \$85.00 \$170.00 \$255.00 1.28% 1.06%		
	ii Documentation Charges	Upto 100 MILLION >100 Mio (Min 300,000) Upto 50,000 >=50,000 - (Min 150)	FREE 0.26% FREE 0.26%	FREE FREE	
	iii Upfront fee on Term Loan	Upto 5Mio - 5 Mio to 10 Mio - 10Mio, 25mio - 25 mn to 500 mio - >=500mio- (minimum 9mio)	21,200.00 169,500.00 381,400.00 1.28% 1.28%		
	iv Inspection Charges	Upto 100 Mio - >100 mio - Upto 50,000 >=50,000	21,200.00 42,400.00	\$255.00 1.53% 1.28%	
	v Credit Reference Report Charges		101,700.00	\$43.00	
	vi Pre-payment penalty	Calculated as %ge pre-paid amount in the case of takeover of liability by other bank/lenders	2.00%	2.00%	
18	Guarantees (Local & International)				
	i Bonds & Guarantees	per quarter (Min TZS 75,000)	1.02%	1.02%	
	ii Bonds & Guarantees with 100 % Cash Margin	per quarter (Min TZS 75,000)	0.43%	0.43%	
19	Letter of Credit				
	19.1 Import Letter of Credit (per qtr of Part thereof)				
	i Opening commission	commission Min \$ 200		NA	
	ii LC amendment Commission	Commission Min \$50 max 350		NA 1.02%	
	iii Swift charge for LC opening			NA 0.34%	
	iv Swift charge for other message/amendments			NA \$34.00	
	v Extensions - Commissions	commission Min \$ 200		NA \$34.00	
	vi LC cancellation charges	commission Min \$ 200		NA 1.02%	
	vii Non payment of Bills on due date	Till Payment		NA 1.02%	
	19.2 Export Letters of Credit (per quarter or part thereof)				
	i Advising commission			NA \$119.00	
	ii Confirmation Commission	Commission Min \$150		NA 0.43%	
	iii Negotiating bills under LC	Commission Min \$75+courier-interest		NA 0.43%	
	iv Reimbursement claim paid	Commission Min \$75		NA 0.43%	
	v Commissions	Commission Min \$200		NA 1.02%	
	vi Collection of Export LC	Commission Min \$75+courier-interest		NA 0.43%	
	vii Amendments			NA \$64.00	
20	Other disclosures				
	i Base or Prime Lending Rate			16%	10%
	ii Maximum spread above			5%	5%
	iii Penal Interest				
	a. For non compliance on Terms of Saction	Rate per year over regular rate of interest		3%	3%
	b. For Overdrawing/Excess drawing due to non payment of interest/installment/charges	Rate per year over regular rate of interest		5%	5%
	vi Deposit Rates				
	a. Current account			Nil	Nil
	b. Savings bank deposit			3.00%	1.00%
	C. Fixed Deposits Rates	Up to TZS 50 M(up to USD 50,000)			
		30 -90days		3.50%	1.50%
		91-180days		4.50%	2.25%
		181-364 days		5.50%	3.00%
		1 year and above		8.00%	3.75%
		2 Years and Above		8.00%	4.00%
		TZS 50 M-100M (USD 50,000 -USD 100,000)			
		30 -90days		4.50%	2.25%
		91-180days		5.50%	2.50%
		181-364 days		7.00%	3.50%
		1 year and above		8.25%	4.25%
		2 Years and Above		9.00%	4.75%
		Above 100 M(Above USD 100,000)			
		30 -90days		5.50%	2.50%
		91-180days		6.50%	3.25%
		181-364 days		7.50%	4.00%
		1 year and above		8.50%	4.75%
		2 Years and Above		9.50%	5.00%



## Cooperative set to start paying cotton farmers in Shinyanga

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

KAHAMA Central Cooperative Union (KACU) in Shinyanga Region is to start paying farmers who sold cotton in the 2022/2023 season to return part of its profit and encourage farmers to continue expanding their fields.

KACU chairman Tano Nsabi expressed this yesterday when speaking to journalists on how prepared they are on countering the effects of El Niño rains said to affect the area.

Nsabi said that working closely to support farmers is one of the cooperative's goals in order to increase production of cotton in the country.

He called upon farmers to adhere to advice by extension officers to realize bumper harvests, saying this year they expect to purchase 5.5 million tonnes of the crop from farmers compared to last year when they purchased only 3 million tonnes.

"Our financial experts are doing their calculations according to the number of farmers who sold cotton to us to check how much is expected to be paid when they are done. We will pay our farmers the second payment through their bank accounts. I ask them to be patient as they will get the payment," he said.

He said they have requested a financial loan from the Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB) to establish an edible oil processing plant to extract the same from cotton seeds which is expected

to increase income of the cooperative and pay the second payment to farmers.

When given the loan, he said they will buy a machine with a large capacity to extract oil, sell chaff and husks to livestock breeders, and that the area close the factory is large and it needs more investments.

Maganga Masanja, Chairman of Uyogo Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives (AMCOS) said there are a total of 257 farmers who grow the crop and last 2022/2023 season they managed to produce 50 tonnes of cotton.



**Our financial experts are doing their calculations according to the number of farmers who sold cotton to us to check how much is expected to be paid when they are done. We will pay our farmers the second payment through their bank accounts. I ask them to be patient as they will get the payment**

## Libraries not for students and teachers alone - call

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

THE government has embarked on a programme aimed at improving all libraries in the country in order to provide opportunities for students, teachers and other education stakeholders to access additional knowledge.

Prof Adolf Mkenda, Minister for Education, Science and Technology made the remarks yesterday when launching a public library at Ugweni area in Mwanza District, Kilimanjaro Region.

The library christened 'Martha Onesmo' and launched at in order to stimulate reading culture and enable area residents to acquire new knowledge.

Founded by a Tanzanian student Jennifer Dickson who is studying at a university in Rwanda, the facility was inaugurated at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) grounds at Msangeni.

Prof Mkenda commended Dickson, saying that her vision will help many people to transform their lives thought reading.

"This library has come at the right time when the government has come up with a change in the education system with the aim of improving quality of education in our country. I say so because this library will be used by students, teachers and other residents to increase their knowledge," he said.

"Vision of this young woman has given us hope that the country has innovative young people like you; let me assure you and those who attended this event that the government will do everything possible to ensure this library becomes sustainable."

"He noted that libraries have a unique importance in development of society, individuals and even country as a whole and that is why the government has now decided to ensure that existing libraries are improved throughout the country."

According to him, the government has set aside approximately 2bn/- to facilitate the improvements, which include adding books and infrastructure to the existing library buildings across the country.

Prof. Mkenda said that the improvements of the 22 available libraries in different parts of the country will enable students to gain additional knowledge after getting regular education provided in schools at various educational levels.

"Education in the classroom gives students the education that will help them find additional knowledge that helps them in their contributions to development of our nation after

school; they can find all these at the libraries which are the source of extra knowledge", he added.

Dickson said that she established the library in order to fulfil a dream that she had for many years to help people especially in rural areas to get library services so that they increase their knowledge.

"This library which is named Martha Onesmo to honour my grandmother is a dream I had since I was in form six; I am happy that the dream has come true," she said.

She added that the library is also a contribution back to those who supported her as well as supporting the government's efforts meant to improve education sector in the country.

She thanked various donors who enabled her to fulfil her dream including Bayport Tanzania, Barrick Gold Tanzania and ELCT-Mwanza Diocese.

"I call upon all Tanzanians to develop the habit of using library services to study so that they can gain knowledge and abandon the misconception that libraries are for students, teachers and intellectuals only," she said.

Head of ELCT-MD Bishop Chediel Sendoro congratulated Dickson for her creativity which he said will contribute to the development of individuals and the nation as a whole.

Prof Bonaventure Rutinwa, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) said that the library is an educational infrastructure that enables a person, including young children to get extra education through reading books, advising that it is better that children start to be informed about the importance of using libraries early in their childhood.

"We study not to get school-based education alone but to improve our understanding and life in general and this is one of the real meanings of the existence of libraries; libraries are meant for all people and not for students and teachers alone," he said.



**This library which is named Martha Onesmo to honour my grandmother is a dream I had since I was in form six; I am happy that the dream has come true**



Edward ole Lekaita (R), legislator for Kiteto constituency, participates in maize sowing at Makame village on Wednesday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

## Rwanda suspends Kenyan drug due to safety concerns

KIGALI

RWANDAN health authorities have issued a recall for antifungal tablets produced in Kenya due to safety concerns.

The Rwanda Food and Drugs Authority (RFDA) has directed importers to return all batches of 200mg Fluconazole tablets manufactured by the Kenyan company Universal Corporation.

Retailers and health facilities are instructed to cease distribution and return the affected drugs.

RFDA's action comes after notifying the Kenyan manufacturer about discolouration in the tablets. Four bulk batches of pink Fluconazole 200mg tablets, imported into Rwanda, exhibited white discolouration shortly after their shelf life began.

The agency emphasized that some of these discoloured tablets had already entered the Rwandan market. Health officials in Rwanda are launching an investigation to determine whether these drugs have had any adverse effects on consumers.

Meanwhile, Kenyan authorities have not yet announced whether the antifungal drug, commonly used to treat fungal or yeast infections, will also be recalled from the local market.

The mandate of RFDA is to protect public health through regulation of human and veterinary medicines, vaccines and other biological products, processed foods, poisons, medicated cosmetics, medical devices, household chemical substances, tobacco and tobacco products.

*Retailers and health facilities are instructed to cease distribution and return the affected drugs*

## District hospital boasts improved services after 2.6bn/- investment

By Guardian Correspondent, Uyui

HEALTH services at Uyui District Hospital in Tabora Region have greatly improved after receiving funds from the government totalling 2.6bn/- to procure modern medical equipment, construction of a surgery and mortuary buildings.

Speaking to this paper on Tuesday, Medical officer in charge of the hospital, Dr Tumaini Fumbuka said the funds which were issued by the government in the 2023/24 financial year have supported major improvements at the

hospital, enabling patients to receive quality services.

According to him, prior to the improvements, patients used to walk for seven kilometres to seek health services in other hospitals but they now feel the relief with the government's investment.

"In November last year, we received more funds for the construction of modern toilets which will be used by patients along with water storage tanks," he said.

He thanked President Samia Suluhu Hassan for her efforts to improve health

services at the hospital which has been equipped with modern equipment such as ultrasound, radiology, dental and eye treatment as well as waste incinerators.

Dr Fumbuka added that availability of the equipment has helped them provide the good services that previously residents had to seek at the Kitete Referral Hospital in the region.

"The improvements have also helped increase employment opportunities while also bringing services closer to the people; we are really thankful to the government," he said.

Leokadia Humera, Uyui District Executive Director said the government has issued enough funds in order to ensure that services in hospitals, health centres and 65 dispensaries are improved.

"The funds have helped construction of various modern buildings at the Uyui District Hospital which were lacking before," Humera said, adding that completion of the buildings has helped transform and enhance efficiency of health service provision while serving more people from inside and outside the area.



Education, Science and Technology minister Prof Adolf Mkenda (2nd-R) makes remarks shortly after launching a community library at Msangeni-Ugweni in Mwanza District yesterday. The library was founded by Jennifer Dickson (R), a Tanzanian pursuing studies at a university in Rwanda. With them are Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania's Mwanza Diocese Bishop Chediel Sendoro (2nd-L) and Mwanza constituency legislator Joseph Tadayo. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



## Drought-tolerant rice variety to help boost food security

SHANGHAI

A DROUGHT-tolerant rice variety developed by China is boosting food production in African countries while slashing methane emissions, which have been linked to global warming.

China has been working for decades to bolster food self-sufficiency in Africa. For example, the country introduced a strain of water-saving and drought-resistant rice in countries such as Burundi and Kenya a few years ago.

An expert said the newly developed varieties have not only increased rice yields in some of the most hunger-prone regions of the planet, but have also reduced carbon footprints and fertilizer demand as global temperatures rise.

Research on drought-tolerant rice dates back more than two decades in China, with Chinese scientists crossbreeding widely planted hybrid rice varieties with those known to thrive in arid soils to get the drought-defying properties, said Liu Zaochang, a researcher at the Shanghai Agrobiological Gene Center, who was involved in the variety's promotion in Africa.

Liu said it could rival hybrid rice in terms of yield and prosper in suboptimal conditions. It saves labor because farmers can bypass the lengthy process of nurturing rice seedlings and directly plant rice seeds in the fields, and its demand for fertilizers is two-thirds of its conventional counterparts.

"Data has shown that the variety has curbed water use by more than 40 percent, and reduced methane emissions by at least 70 percent," he said on Tuesday in Beijing at a media event organized by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Liu said that methane is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of its effect on global warming, and about 20 percent of the world's methane emissions come from rice production. He said that drought-resistant rice varieties are a "sustainable option" in addressing climate change challenges.

Liu said that cassava and corn played a dominant role in African diets, but rice consumption has been rising along with improving living standards. However, increased demand for rice led to greater reliance on food imports, creating financial burdens and making

African countries more susceptible to supply chain woes.

"Drought-tolerant rice varieties have great potential and can help achieve food self-sufficiency in Africa," Liu said. It has helped African countries curb their reliance on rice imports, he added.

Home to large swaths of untapped arable land, Africa is a key destination for China's agricultural assistance projects.

Zhu Qinghua, deputy director of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's China office, said on Tuesday that more than 60 percent of the world's undeveloped fields are in Africa, but a shortfall in farming-related investment and other hurdles mean the continent struggles to feed its 1.5 billion people.

The situation is set to worsen given rising global temperatures, which could increase the chances of crop disease and pest plagues and reduce crop yields, he said.

Zhu called for increased investment in agricultural research, saying it was critical for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

"Without significant science-based advances in food systems, vulnerable farming communities cannot adapt (to changes) and global climate goals cannot be achieved," he said.



**...it could rival hybrid rice in terms of yield and prosper in suboptimal conditions. It saves labor because farmers can bypass the lengthy process of nurturing rice seedlings and directly plant rice seeds in the fields, and its demand for fertilizers is two-thirds of its conventional counterparts**

## Zimbabwe horticulture sees green shoots, targets \$1 billion exports

HARARE

ZIMBABWE'S horticultural sector, ravaged by violent land seizures 20 years ago, is recovering thanks to increased investment and is targeting \$1 billion in exports by 2030, an industry body said yesterday.

The southern African country's horticultural exports peaked at \$140 million in 1999, before former President Robert Mugabe championed the seizure of white-owned farms to resettle landless blacks.

The land seizures disrupted Zimbabwe's agriculture-driven economy, triggering food shortages and a lengthy economic crisis marked by 500 billion percent hyperinflation in 2008.

Zimbabwe is now earning \$120 million annually from exports of horticultural products including citrus, flowers, tea, avocados, blueberries and macadamia nuts, according to the Horticultural Development Council (HDC).

"We have to grow 10 times to reach this goal and obviously it calls for rapid expansion in the sector," HDC Vice President Linda Nielsen told a horticultural conference in Harare.

The targeted growth would require \$1.2 billion of investment, according to the HDC, an uphill task for a sector struggling with an inconsistent policy and regulatory environment, high borrowing costs, logistics challenges and persistent concerns over land tenure.

Increasing investment in products such as blueberries and macadamia nuts, whose global demand has surged in recent years, is helping traditional products such as citrus, tea and flowers to drive the rebound.

"We see a revival of up to 10,000 hectares (of citrus plantations) by 2030. Most of it was lost to land

reform," Citrus Growers Association President Pete Breinstein said.

Zimbabwe's government, under Mugabe's successor President Emmerson Mnangagwa, has sought to improve relations with white farmers and is supporting the revival of agriculture, including providing funding.

The European Union, a major market for Zimbabwe's horticultural exports, is also providing technical support and funding through the European Investment Bank.

"We believe we can get there, provided there is an enabling environment and user-friendly financing," HDC president Stanley Heri said.



**Zimbabwe is now earning \$120 million annually from exports of horticultural products including citrus, flowers, tea, avocados, blueberries and macadamia nuts, according to the Horticultural Development Council (HDC)**



Ally Mdeu (L), Mwanga Hakika Bank's Hanang branch manager, pictured at the weekend presenting to Hanang district administrative secretary Hamad Kaaya various items worth a total of 5m/- meant as assistance to residents of the district recently hit by mudslides. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## Karume links increased investments in Z'bar to peace

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

FORMER President for Zanzibar Abeid Amani Karume has said peace and stability are the reasons behind the continued flow of investors in the Isles.

Karume spoke when launching the Kidantili 'Y corner' - a five-star hotel located at Urowe Pongwe in the Unguja South Region as part of celebration to mark 60 years of the Zanzibar Revolution.

He said most of the investors are willing to invest in Zanzibar due to the peace that is existing in the Isles contributed by good leadership.

"For this to continue, we need to ensure that we work together in upholding peace so that we attract

more investors to participate in national development," he said.

He said a serious investor with money cannot invest in a place full of conflicts and which does not have good environment for investment.

Karume said the government, through investment institutions, has been a leader in promoting Zanzibar in the field of investment so that it can grow its economy and realize its potential.

In addition, he said that the investment authority in Zanzibar has been very innovative in using digital tools in their work hence eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy.

He said investors coming to invest in Zanzibar must be aware that most employment opportunities that do not

require special skills are given to locals, especially young people.

He asked the Zanzibar Investments Promotion Authority (ZIPA) to cooperate with investors in providing education on the protection of the environment.

Mudri Ramadhan Soraga, Minister of State in the President's Office (Labour and Investment) said investment stakeholders have been in the forefront of the protection of the environment.

He said that ZIPA has already prepared a law for investment and soon the law will be signed and become operational.

Sharif Ali Sharif, ZIPA CEO said that in this period of three years, more than 17,000 young people have already been employed in various investment

projects in the islands.

He said that during that period, a total of 296 investment projects have been recorded while 112 projects are tourism projects with a total \$4.5 billion.

Sharif said that ZIPA is still very active in attracting more investors to Zanzibar in the interest of Zanzibaris in particular and Tanzanians in general.

Manager of the hotel, Emmanuel Jounson, said when the hotel project is completed, it will have 40 rooms with international standard.

He said that other goals of their investment are to help fishermen in surrounding areas to store their catches in the hotel's freezers since storage facility is one of their many challenges.



Dodoma district commissioner Jabir Shekimwari (2nd-L) checks quality of the floor of a newly built classroom at Mayeto Primary School at Hombolo Makulu ward in Dodoma Urban District on Wednesday. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

## Nigeria to ban degrees from Kenya, Uganda in crackdown

LAGOS

NIGERIA has announced an expansion of its suspension of degrees accreditation, encompassing additional countries such as Kenya and Uganda.

This decision follows the recent suspension of accreditation for degrees obtained from institutions in Benin and Togo.

Education Minister Tahir Mamman stated on Wednesday: "We are not

going to stop at just Benin and Togo. We are going to extend the dragnet to countries like Uganda, Kenya, even Niger here where such institutions have been set up."

This move is a response to the revelation of fraudulent qualifications from foreign degree mills, as exposed by the Daily Nigerian newspaper. In an undercover investigation, reporter Umar Audu detailed how he acquired a degree for a four-year program from a Benin university in under two

months.

Expressing his firm stance, Mr. Mamman asserted, "I have no sympathy for those with fake certificates from foreign countries. They are not victims but part of the criminal chain that should be arrested."

Nigeria has initiated a formal investigation into the ministries and agencies responsible for accrediting academic qualifications obtained abroad. Mr. Mamman emphasized that this measure aims to safeguard

Nigeria's employers and maintain the integrity of the country's qualifications.

The government's decisive action is in response to the urgent need to curb the proliferation of counterfeit qualifications, as revealed by the Daily Nigerian's exposé.

This broader suspension reflects Nigeria's commitment to maintaining the credibility of its educational system and protecting employers from potential fraudulent practices.



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## Scare of fall armyworm invasion of shows limits of rescue, relief or support capacity

**L**UDEWA District is risking an emergency induced by the invasion of fall armyworms. Local authorities say this could mean intensifying periodic shortages of grain and other basic needs when farms are destroyed.

This feeling is gathering pace with the crop-ravaging worms having attacking nearly 400 hectares of maize in the district.

The reaction is largely still at the lower levels of authority villages, wards and executives in the district administration, without a wider disaster admission from higher public offices.

Farmers interviewed express real fears for famine due to this invasion, as the worms enter their fields and attack crops.

The farmers are understandably appealing for immediate measures to control the breeding and movements of the armyworms.

How far such outbreaks can go and the level of disaster they can cause remain a matter of guesswork, just as is usually the case with outbreaks of diseases, as the natural dynamics like speed of propagation or multiplication, breadth of the zone covered, and the potential effectiveness of pesticides come into view.

Little can be said directly as to how far armyworms are resistant to common pesticides, while strong pesticides risk harming human health by complicating harvest precautions.

As the farmers count the cost of the armyworm invasion, the costs of preparing farms and the losses they will likely incur, there is also emphasis on the logistics of response, rescue and support.

The farmers are expressing the obvious fear that the armyworms attack rapidly and that, if the response is not swift and thus the worms aren't rapidly controlled, there will likely be severe hunger - while there are no mechanisms for insuring the crop.

While some food assistance could be raised for people hit in such

circumstances, the matter will pose a grave situation later if response is not quick enough.

An online academic study alludes to what happened in 2017 when armyworms struck, initially their favorite target being maize though researchers point at upwards of 80 other plant species attacked by the worms.

The write-up shows that it was practically impossible to eliminate or extensively control the pests by applying pesticides, as some online entries twice or thrice appear to suggest that pesticides make little impression on armyworms.

At one point a farmer is quoted as saying that they sprayed three times but to no avail. It is unclear if the authorities concerned have an effective answer to that at the moment.

This brings up another challenge where the new outbreak of fall armyworms would in a sense be a response to acute position taking.

This relates to agro-sector activists demanding the creation of a seed bank network at the district and ward levels.

The point about the seeds is that they are local and, in the application of some agro-sector conventions at the United Nations level, it is said the seeds would be owned by the farmers.

This is where the fall armyworms come in, as research conducted at the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) shows that when the armyworms struck in 2017 and 2019 all crops or farms having a relationship with genetic modification were safe.

Maize seeds and plants have a high amount of sugar that attracts all manner of pests, and when the sweetener is removed or altered with a salt mixture, the plant becomes of little interest to armyworms.

So the refusal to take up genetic modification has to contend with more resilient armyworms where pesticides aren't of much help. It is noteworthy that technological conservatism can be costly.

## Irrigation wells can be offloaded to the private sector, with water pricing rules

**W**ITH large amounts of money being disbursed to uplift agro-sector prospects in the coming year, familiar contentions on policy models will be there - one being the vision of involving the private sector, as espoused at the highest level.

At lower levels, government agencies traditionally mandated with this or that role will not bring up such visions in how they do things - that is, until the top authorities see reason to decide that reform is necessary.

The concept of reform raises interest in layers of officialdom and technocracy as political reform and considerable disdain once they sense it is pointing at economic reform.

So it is interesting hearing that the government has started drilling deep wells in four wards in Ludewa District, Njombe Region, where the costing has been agreed with the relevant regulatory agencies or local government supervision, with general guidelines for such costs prepared at the national level.

There isn't specific worry over such costs because most of the model costing was rectified during the past decade, as the government moved to cut excessive expenditure on projects, limiting government ability to deliver.

In that case, the costing of many such projects will likely be optimal, though it could have been better sourced. When governments seek to uplift various sectors, at least since the multilateral financing model came up after World War II, they no longer take money to the service delivery or entity doing the work except for situation where no payback is directly expected - like spraying outdoors to control malaria.

For agro-sector projects with clear commercial parameters, what modern

methods involve is to disburse substantial amounts of money to central banks which lend at near zero interest rates to companies to do the job.

The private sector will usually do it at half the cost, with the charges halved later, but that method will be rejected by the mainstay district councillors, as there are benefits when it is a public sector assignment.

The large number of water and sanitation authorities as well as agencies must first reproduce their own administrative costs that are then factored into water pricing, which limits the work they can do with the disbursed amounts of money.

Nor can it finish one work, pay back the money and obtain loans for more work as a private company would do.

Instead, there will likely be endless questions and answers in Parliament where some minister will promise to go with the legislator of whichever constituency to inspect what has been done or the readiness to do the job.

What is uncomfortable about this situation is inability and indisposition to translate President Samia Suluhu Hassan's 4Rs to include this sphere.

Irrigation will likely to take at least 400bn/- in the Agriculture ministry's expenditures this year, and anyone who cares to figure out the issue knows how many people are waiting to cut slices from the cash.

The government has essentially no workable audit system apart from visits of top leaders and annual yawns by the Controller and Auditor General.

It may thus be up to the ruling party to see 4Rs as a way to cut corruption, thus making the economy more inclusive - including by letting commercial banks make the lending lead to the initiation and execution of more projects.

## TAIFA STARS 'NATIONAL TEAM' LINEUP



## SPECIAL INTERVIEW

# Binaya Srikanta Pradhan: My experience in Tanzania stands out as most enriching

**Question: How have links between India and Tanzania evolved during your tenure as High Commissioner?**

**Answer:** Throughout my tenure, cooperation between the two countries has experienced significant growth across various domains, chiefly encompassing political links and people-to-people exchanges. A pivotal milestone was achieved when the bilateral relations were elevated to the status of a Strategic Partnership during President Samia Suluhu Hassan's October 8-10, 2023 state visit to India.

Our bilateral trade has surged to an unprecedented US\$6.4 billion, solidifying India's position as Tanzania's largest export market. Notably, in the realm of development partnership, water projects totalling US\$1 billion have either been executed or are currently in progress.

In a ground-breaking move, the Indian Institute of Technology Madras IITM has meanwhile established its first offshore campus in Zanzibar. Additionally, several pivotal agreements and MoUs have been inked, covering areas such as digital public infrastructure and the establishment of the Indian Industrial Park in Dar es Salaam.

**Could you share your insights on President Samia's state visit to India?**

## Health service quality must be a priority, not an afterthought

By Special Correspondent

**C**OUNTRIES need to ensure continuous attention to the quality of their healthcare services, including during emergencies, contends a newly launched collection of articles published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ).

The authors call for greater investment and political attention to quality issues - not just access - as a cornerstone of universal health coverage.

They state that disruptions during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic show why health service quality must be explicitly addressed within emergency plans and response.

Even when facilities were nominally open, they add, many provided significantly reduced services that often failed to meet patients' needs, impacting both health outcomes and patient trust.

"People not only need access to healthcare, but they also need



India's High Commissioner to Tanzania, Binaya Srikanta Pradhan

The enduring camaraderie between India and Tanzania, particularly at the leadership level dating back to the era of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, has been the bedrock of seamless links. President Samia's state visit resonated warmly with both the Indian leadership and the citizens of India.

This was manifest in the thoughtful gesture of incorporating Tanzanian avocados into the lunch menu, orchestrated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The vibrancy of the Business Round Table, where Indian business leaders actively participated in the lobby, underscored the visit's widespread popularity and significance.

Notably, the emotional response from the audience during President Samia's acceptance speech following

the conferment of doctorate by the Jawaharlal Nehru University further illuminated the deep admiration the Indian people hold for the president leadership.

**Reflecting on your over two-year tour of duty in Tanzania, what are your personal takeaways?**

My time in Tanzania stands out as one of the most enriching experiences in my career. The warmth of the Tanzanian people and the natural beauty of the country will forever resonate with me. Travelling by road across 24 regions of Tanzania provided me with close-up views of reality on the ground.

The unparalleled beauty, from the towering peaks of Mount Kilimanjaro

to Mbeya Region's verdant rice fields and the enchanting Zanzibar islands, have left an indelible mark on me. The gastronomic delights, ranging from ugali to the exquisite mishkaki (skewered meat) and nyama choma (grilled or roast meat), have been a truly sensory treat.

It is also noteworthy that I had the privilege of meeting Mama Maria Nyerere, former Prime Minister Joseph Warioba and several other towering personalities whose inspirational lives and genuine concern for the well-being of Tanzanians and humanity as a whole have left an indelible mark.

Above all, the hospitality of the Tanzanian people has deeply endeared me to this country. Their warmth, humility, politeness and unwavering sense of patriotism make them so truly admirable that I will remain a friend of Tanzania and an advocate of India-Tanzania friendship wherever I go.

**\* These are excerpts from a recent interview a Correspondent with The Guardian had with Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, outgoing India's High Commissioner to Tanzania who, until his posting to Tanzania on July 20, 2021, served as Deputy Chief of Mission in the Indian Embassy in Moscow. He presented his credentials to President Samia Suluhu Hassan at State House in Dar es Salaam on August 25, 2021.**

The paper calls for health systems to ensure quality is included in emergency response plans so as to protect people's health and rights, with a greater commitment to ongoing learning and adaptation.

A positive example is cited from Western Cape, South Africa, where regular information flows and virtual learning helped teams address common challenges and mitigate risks.

Improving the ability to consistently provide good quality care - that is, care that is effective, safe, people-centred, timely, equitable, integrated, and efficient - is fundamental to universal health coverage.

And yet, every year, an estimated eight million people in low- and middle-income countries die from conditions that would have been treatable with better healthcare provision.

It is further argued that lapses in quality can also jeopardise trust and deter people from accessing critical health services, with impacts that last

for years. Developed as a collaboration between The BMJ, WHO and the World Bank, the Collection explores the emerging priorities and unfinished agenda for improving the quality of care in low and middle-income countries, providing examples from maternal, newborn and child health.

There are various other topics the papers consider, including the need for the engagement of various actors - such as the health workforce, private sector and communities - in delivering quality care.

A second one is measurement of quality of care, chiefly relating to innovations and solutions that advance quality of care.

To cite an editorial from the series, quality health services are "not a nice to have or a one-off project with a start and end date but must be consistently delivered to everyone, everywhere, starting from primary health services to the highest levels of care".

\* Agencies



# General overview of judicial structure in Tanzania

## Introduction

The decision to prepare this article emanates from various questions asked by our readers regarding the judicial system in Tanzania. It is important to take note that before we proceed further, foundation of judicial mandate as final organ to dispense justice to citizens is premised on Article 107A of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 as amended from time to time.

The above provision states clear that neither other institution has final say in dispensing justice in this country save for the judiciary. Our judicial system is a common law-based system, meaning that laws are developed and expanded through judicial decisions. Therefore, any interpretation of certain provision by the High Court must be respected by citizens or complied by the lower courts unless there is good reason to depart from that position.

Therefore, one must understand judicial structures or be aware of all the courts in Tanzania and the powers vested upon them. All courts in this country are either creature of the constitution or the statutes and their mandate to deal with disputes are provided in the statutes.

Therefore, any court or tribunal which makes decision without having foundation from the above two sources, its decisions can neither be enforced nor respected by other organs of state.

In our country, judicial structure hierarchy constitutes



Court of Appeal of Tanzania at apex, the High Court of Tanzania, Resident Magistrate's and District Courts. Primary Court is the lowest in the hierarchy and various tribunals.

Despite having specialized tribunals dealing with various issues in different sectors or activities but their operations and duties are checked by the ordinary courts of law either by way of appeal, enforcement or revision depending on the law and sometimes the courts may on their own motion opt to intervene when there is good reason to do so.

### Court of Appeal

The Court of Appeal is the apex court established under Article 108 of the Constitution. It is constituted by Chief Justice and other Justices of Appeal. Chief Justice has two roles as the head of judiciary and justice of appeal.

Administratively, head of the Court of appeal is the Chief Justice appointed by the President of United Republic of Tanzania. Once the Chief Justice is appointed, he or she has power to head of the Court of Appeal and other courts in our country. In short, he or she is the boss of the judicial system in the country, and has the mandate to oversee judicial services provided to citizens in accordance with law.

The Court of Appeal is not the court of original jurisdiction, no one can institute directly legal disputes as first instance in the court of appeal. It must start from the either High Court of Tanzania or Tribunal such as Revenue Tax Tribunal.

The court is only permitted by the law to sit as the appellant court or revisional court but not as the first instance dealing with such disputes either criminal or civil. It depends on circumstances governed by the court of appeal rules but there is a moment where single justice can deal with disputes preferred or three justices, seven justices.

Chief Justice as the head of the Court of Appeal also has mandate to assign case to justices of appeal for determination of the disputes. Decision delivered by the Court Appeal is the final in the sense that, no further court to prefer dispute in case aggrieved by court of appeal decision.

### The High Court

The High Court is established under Article 107 of the Constitution. The court has both original and appellate jurisdiction on the matter of both criminal and civil nature. Generally, the High Court is vested with unlimited jurisdiction on any dispute, in

sense it has wide power to deal with any dispute despite of existence of any legal restriction.

The only thing the person moves to the High Court should provide good reason as to why; he or she opted to move to the High Court instead of referring the matter to other courts as required by the law.

Further, head of the High Court is the Principal Judge appointed by the President of Tanzania. He or she serves two positions within judicial structure, one, as head of the High Court and second as the judge of the High Court.

Administratively, he or she is the boss of High Court in Tanzania ensuring all citizens are in a position to received legal services and sits as the judge of the High Court when determining disputes assigned to him or her.

One thing needs to be understood is that, we have only one High Court in Tanzania with many registries and specialized divisions such as Commercial Division, Land Division, Labour Division and Corruption Court.

Almost in every region we have sub registry of the High Court but few specialized divisions of the High Court have concurrent mandate in respect of decisions they made, in the sense neither of the judge of the high court has mandate to revise decision of his fellow judge of the High Court unless when the judge exercise its review mandate.

In most cases the mandate to review should be exercised by the same judge unless there are good reasons established then another judge can deal with the preferred review of the decision of his fellow judge. Aggrieved by decision of the High Court, only Court of Appeal can revise the said decision either by appeal or revision

not otherwise.

The Resident Magistrate's Court and District Court

We have subordinate courts which are the Resident Magistrate's court and District courts established by the Magistrate Court Act, 1984. In every region, we have Resident Magistrate's court and district court in every district.

Both have concurrent jurisdiction; in sense they have the same mandate both on civil and criminal dispute within the district or region. Head of the said court is the magistrate in-charge of the designated court with both administratively power and determination of the dispute in courts of law as other ordinary magistrate.

Their jurisdiction is limited within locality of the district court or region. The only technical difference between resident magistrate and district magistrate is that the jurisdiction of the former is limited to the region while the latter is limited to the district.

Both courts have original jurisdiction and appellate jurisdiction on the matter of civil and criminal nature. The court is vested with supervisory power over the proceedings of the lower court.

### The primary courts

The primary court is the lowest court in the hierarchy of the judicial structure; it is established through the Magistrate Court Act 1984. This court is available in many areas in the country within the district with mandate to deal with both criminal and civil nature.

The court is constituted only in the presence of magistrate and assessors. However, on civil nature primary court is limited only to dispute of customary nature and Islamic only. Decision

delivered by the primary court is appealable to the court of either district court or court resident magistrate depend on the circumstances provided by the law. The resident magistrate courts or district court have supervisory power on the decision of the primary court or its proceedings therein.

### The tribunals

Lastly, is the tribunal, most of the ministries in this country have established their specialized tribunals that deal with disputes fall within their ministry with view of fastening disputes resolution, but ought to comply within rules of determination of disputes.

There are so many tribunals such as land and housing disputes tribunal, tax board and tribunal, fair competition tribunal and many others. Each tribunal is or must be established by the law of the Parliament. Most of decisions are appealable or apply for revision to the High Court; save for decision from the Tax Tribunal is appealable on the point of law to the Court of Appeal.

Note: the material and information contained in this article are for general information purposes only. They only provide either elementary or basic legal knowledge on the above subject. Anyone considering legal action should consult an experienced lawyer to understand current laws and how they may affect a case in question.

**You can send questions or comments to our email info@legisattorneys.co.tz or postal address Managing Partner, Legis Attorneys, P. O. Box 3750, DSM. You can visit our website www.legisattorneys.co.tz**

By Telesphor Magobe

WHEN you visit urban centres across the country you are likely to come across some businesspersons preparing or selling fried foods and snacks, but often in an unhealthy environment, which raises health concerns.

These are fast-foods because they can be prepared within a short time and be consumed when they are sold or taken away. They are mostly sold near schools, pubs, bus stations and business centres where many people are found. They can also be sold in mini supermarkets or supermarkets.

Some schoolchildren carry some fried foods with them to school or may buy them on their way back home in the afternoon or evening. Many schoolchildren, even adults, like eating fried foods like cassava, bananas, eggs, chicken (including chicken wings, legs, intestine, liver, gizzard), fish, chips or sausages. Yet, these foodstuffs are often prepared using reused cooking oil, which aggravates health risks. Although these foodstuffs are common as they are easy to prepare and use, their health risks are unknown to many consumers.

The Ministry of Health, through the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC) with financial and technical assistance from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), has formulated Mainland Tanzania Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (Technical Recommendations) 2023 for a healthy population through a broad consultative process.

One of the recommendations given in the guidelines is to limit the consumption of deep-fried foods, saturated and trans-fats, sugar and salt as well as avoid reusing used cooking oil.

According to the guidelines, fried foods such as chips, samosas, kachoris and maandazi are popular, whether cooked at home or commercially prepared, because of their taste and ease of cooking.

However, there are some serious health risks associated with over-consumption of these foods."

The guidelines show that increased consumption of deep-fried foods and sweetened beverages in urban areas has increased the prevalence of overweight and obesity among schoolchildren.

"Snacks made primarily from fried

## Health advice: Avoid intake of deep fried foods and reused cooking oil



potatoes, fried wheat- and rice-based buns, fried cassava and banana, sweetened and/or coloured beverages, and candies are commonly sold in school premises. This practice predisposes children to high consumption of fat and sugar. Similar types of snacks are also sold within the neighbourhoods of their homes."

According to the guidelines, studies show an increased risk of eating fried foods with type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular events such as stroke and heart attack. At least 17 different studies, involving 562,000 participants, found that people who consumed "the highest amount of fried food per week had a 28-per cent increased risk of

stroke and heart attack, a 22-per cent heightened risk of coronary heart disease and a 37-per cent heightened risk of heart failure compared to people who ate the least amount of fried foods."

Another study, which involved 70,842 women from the Nurses' Health Study and 40,789 men from the Health Professionals

Follow-Up Study, "found a significant association of increased risk of type 2 diabetes and moderate association with coronary artery disease."

The guidelines suggest that fried foods, whether at home or for business purposes, "are higher in fat and calories than foodstuffs cooked with other methods such

as boiling, steaming and grilling." While 1gm of fat gives 9 kcal, 1gm of carbohydrates and proteins provides only 4 kcal. "Frying foods may add more calories than a person needs per day and high intake of calories leads to overweight and obesity."

The guidelines say that when foodstuffs are deep fried in oil, they lose water and absorb fat, which increases calories to one's diet due to the higher fat energy density. "Since frying replaces water in the food with fat, frying increases fat content in food. Fats and oils high in saturated fats include palm oil, coconut oil, ghee and butter." Fats come from animal sources and oils come from plant sources.

The guidelines show that during frying, oils break down and change their composition due to high temperatures. "The chemical by-products of this oil breakdown cause inflammatory responses in the body. The high heat of frying causes the hydrogenation of oils, creating trans-fatty acids, even in home cooking."

It is, therefore, not recommended that people re-use oil used for frying to cook other foodstuffs. It is important to discard leftover oil after deep frying and avoid reusing it.

Fried foods in fast food centres, other commercially made fried foods and ultraprocessed foods use hydrogenated oils, which are high in trans-fats. The guidelines suggest that hydrogenated oils are stable during long periods of frying and repeated frying without the need to change oils.

They also "give food a satisfying taste and crunch." According to the guidelines, ultraprocessed food manufacturers use trans-fats in foods because they are cheaper to produce, increase shelf life, and improve taste and texture.

Yet, according to WHO and FAO, trans-fats are associated with an increased risk of heart diseases, type 2 diabetes and obesity and have no known health benefits. So, it is highly recommended to limit the consumption of deep fried foodstuffs and avoid the re-use of used cooking oil.



# There is no democracy without gender equality

By Maria Noel Vaeza and Michelle

Muschett

**V**IOLENCE against women and girls is one of the most widespread and persistent abuses of fundamental rights at a global level that, to a certain extent, derives from what we consider "normal" in our societies.

In addition to firmly condemning that every three women in the world suffer from physical or sexual violence, we must question what we are normalizing as a society for this to happen.

Faced with this question, the Gender Social Norms Index published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) reveals that 90 percent of the population has at least one fundamental prejudice against women, which ranges from believing that men are better business leaders and that they have more rights than women to take a job, to the conviction that it is okay for a man to be violent with his partner.

Gender violence is not a phenomenon that arises out of nowhere and its prevention and eradication also require each of us to be aware of our own biases.

At UN Women and UNDP, we work to reduce gender discrimination and transform sexist attitudes by promoting social norms and positive gender roles. This requires empowering girls and women and working with the entire society to remove stereotypes that promote violent masculinities.

To achieve this, at UN Women we apply the behavioral sciences to involve men and commit them to the prevention of violence against women and girls with more effective awareness campaigns that adapt to the reality of each country in the region.

Social norms that limit women's rights also harm society, they hinder the expansion of human development and increase inequality gaps.

It is no coincidence that the difficulty in achieving progress in social gender norms occurs during a human development crisis. The global Human Development Index (HDI) lost value in 2020 for the first time in history; the same thing happened the following year.

In turn, for Latin America and the Caribbean, the UNDP estimated - based on its proposal for a Multidimensional Poverty Index with a focus on women, that 27.4 percent of women in 10 countries in the region live in conditions of multidimensional poverty.

The impact of poverty on women varies depending on their location in the territory: in the 16 countries analyzed, 19 percent of those who live in urban areas are multidimensional poor, while 58 percent live in rural areas.

The poorest women are those who face greater inequalities, participate less in the labor market, and experience greater time poverty caused by excessive unpaid care work.

These inequality gaps, in addition to being a barrier to human development, are a threat to democracy. Latin Ameri-



ca and the Caribbean, the third most democratic region in the world and the only emerging region that aspires to - and still has the possibility of - achieving development through democracy and respect for human rights, will not achieve it if it continues to be the most violent and dangerous region for women.

The Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) quantifies biases against women, capturing people's attitudes on women's roles along four key dimensions: political, educational, economic and physical integrity. The index, covering 85 percent of the global population, reveals that close to 9 out of 10 men and women hold fundamental biases against women. Credit: UNDP

The Latinobarometro 2023 report points out a clear democratic decline in Latin America: the percentage of its population that sees democracy as the preferred form of government fell from 60% in 2000 to 48% in 2023. Women remain underrepresented in decision-making decisions and are the most dissatisfied with democracy with 70%

At the same time, according to the latest data reported by official organizations to the Gender Equality Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean, in 2022, at least 4,050 women saw their lives cut short. 4,004 from Latin America and 46 from the Caribbean, from 26 countries in the region, were victims of femicide or feminicide.

This is a clear sign that despite the progress in several countries in the region with the approval of specific and comprehensive legal frameworks and the establishment of specialized prosecutors and protocols to respond to gender violence, the fundamental rights of women continue without translating into tangible achievements.

Without effective governance and solid institutions that guarantee women and girls the full enjoyment of their rights, including the right to live a life free of violence and discrimination, it will be impossible to regain confidence in democracy in the region.

In building more peaceful, just, and

inclusive societies, universal access to justice is essential to eradicate gender violence and impunity. Girls, adolescents, and women who suffer violence do not find sufficient protection in the judicial system, and when they have the courage to report, they are often re-victimized until they give up their complaint and seek help and protection from the authorities, public institutions.

At the same time, these women have a triple workload: they face caretaker tasks, domestic work and their paid jobs, which are usually precarious, informal and low-income.

Furthermore, much of the impetus for the judicial process falls on the complainant, who must not only appear before the court on numerous occasions, but also bear the financial costs of transportation, the difficulties in organizing household responsibilities, and the fear of retaliation by the aggressor or members of their communities.

To this must be added both the possible lack of knowledge that many women may

have about judicial or extrajudicial procedures, as well as the difficulties in accessing free services and/or ignorance of their existence. There is also little or no public information about specialized services.

For example, in the case of experiencing violence, there is usually distrust on the part of women regarding the speed and effectiveness of the judicial response to their situation and, they also often face practices of re-victimization such as being forced to tell the facts on several occasions, or have their testimony called into question.

From UNDP and UN Women, we call to build more just societies for women. All people and societies can advance through education, social mobilization, adoption of legal and political measures, advocacy for greater budgets to prevent violence, promotion of dialogue, and search for consensus to break down biases and open passage to more peaceful, secure, fair, inclusive, and egalitarian societies as a requirement to leave no one behind on the path towards sustainable development.

## 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
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO



# Girls, young women encouraged to specialise in agriculture courses

By Guardian Reporter

**G**IRLS and young women have been encouraged to wake up and specialise in agriculture programmes as this was one of the potential sectors with numerous opportunities.

Grace John, principal of the Dodoma Institute of Development and Entrepreneurship Studies (DIDES) made the call recently when speaking to journalists who visited to witness various agricultural activities at the college under the programme.

She wanted girls and young women to see agriculture as a serious business so they can explore the numerous potentials that abound in it.

"When growing up, I was also one of those who were thinking that agriculture is for the uneducated ones, but when I entered into this sector, is when I recognised that there are lot of benefits which have been hidden in this sector, so I'm encouraging my young girls to wake up and direct their heads to this sector," she said.

Grace noted that agriculture if properly explored can help reduce poverty, raise incomes and improve food security.

She wanted girls not to prioritize white-collar jobs but change their mindset and chip in seriously into the farming sector.

"Agriculture has moved from just mere farming and has become a very serious business which is capable of turning around the fortunes of those who choose to be actively involved in it. So we need to continue encouraging our girls to take agriculture courses as many of them have been evading the courses thinking that agriculture is a tough job and was for men which is not true," the principal said.

She noted that office jobs are so limited these days, so it is very important for youths and women to take full advantage of what agriculture has to offer.

"To accumulate profit in the farming sector, it does not require someone to have a large plot of land, but in a small plot, a farmer



Girl busy in farming

can still reap big and generate profit, what is needed is determination and creativity," she said.

## Narrating on how she chipped in

Grace said that with support of the Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania (SAT) under the Curriculum Implementation Support for Training Institutes (CISTI), the college has greatly transformed starting from staff, students and the surrounding communities.

She highlighted that with the changes, organic farming has now become one of the new modules taught to all students of agriculture in various agricultural training institutes putting into practice revised curriculum to promote agro-ecological practices and socio-economic development.

Grace said that DIDES started in 2018 with one student but it has now grown to have 284 students.

Wilbert Kitilya, a tutor at DIDES said that CISTI project has transformed their

mindsets and many students as well as staff now admire organic farming more than the modern one as they have witnessed themselves in the school's garden.

"The staff here were the first one to taste the vegetables which are free from chemicals, from there the garden attendants increased efforts and expanded their plots to produce more products so as to cater the demand in the college as well as serve other customers in the street," he explained.

He said SAT experts have trained us and completely transformed our thinking to the better and they are now engaging in farming using simple methods of producing organic fertilizers and pesticides.

"Since we were trained on the techniques to improve soil fertility, we discovered the benefits of compost in boosting productivity and learned how to use mulch to preserve water and prevent water losses as well as use of bio-pesticides like neem trees,

and many more to combat pests and diseases," he explained.

Dr Sebastian Moshia, principal at the Ministry of Agriculture Training Institute (MATI- Uyole) in Mbeya Region said that the number of women taking agriculture courses was increasing compared to previous years, something which shows that many have started to recognize the potential in farming.

"I can say, things have greatly changed, many girls are now joining agriculture colleges and they are keen and committed to ensure that they come out full of skills to enable them practice well in their projects once they graduate," he said.

He thanked SAT and the government for the big job which has greatly improved teaching practices where now students are fed important skills that are needed in the market and align with the country's needs.

He also said that through the improved curriculum, the college has adopted a competence-based modular training curriculum, aimed to create a meaningful learning environment and opportunities for students enabling them to be more creative in coming up with solutions in the farming sector.

The entrepreneurship education initiative, among others, focuses on the scale-up capacity of the Mbeya-based Institute to mold proactive human power to propel for the bright future of the country's agro sector.

"MATI Uyole's contribution to the delivery of better extension services to the farmers cannot be overemphasized since the institute's primary objective and mission is to provide quality agricultural training for practicing farmers, future farmers and agricultural technical staff that serve both the public and private sector," he insisted.

He stated: "After few years of implementing the new curricula, most of the graduates from MATI are now managing and running their own enterprises in the agribusiness sector such as potato production, agrochemical dealers, chicken production, and avocado production."

Dr Moshia informed that despite the formal training programs that are offered by the institute, MATI Uyole engages itself in the production activities in line with the agriculture sector such as production of maize, wheat, beans and soybeans.

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

**W**ILSON Mutai describes malaria as destructive and lethal. Recently the 76-year-old farmer and businessman was diagnosed with the disease at a hospital in Isiolo.

"I was taken to hospital and when I got there, a blood test was done and I was found to have malaria," he said. The hospital did not have any medication to treat him. That prompted him to hire a private doctor to treat him at his house.

However, Mutai's friend, who was ailing with malaria at the same time, could not afford a private doctor and he passed away due to lack of treatment.

"My friend passed away due to malaria because he could not get any treatment. In two to three days, without treatment, you are dead. This malaria is destructive," he says.

Like Mutai, Kelvin Onkoba, a 25-year-old nursing intern, was diagnosed with malaria and he had to pay for treatment.

"Malaria impacted me in terms of, it made me miss work for four days which it was big blow for my team, the people from the community because of my skilled work that I usually provide to them," he says.

"The medication was not available at the facility so I had to even dig more deeper in the pockets in terms of accessing medication," he adds.

The International Livestock and Research Institute (ILRI) and Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) have partnered with Zoonotic Disease Unit to study how climate change affects the population and species of mosquitoes and disease transmission pattern by vectors.

ILRI set up weather stations in different locations to monitor weather patterns.

"The reason we have set up a weather station in this area is to be able to capture different environmental conditions like temperature, like humidity, like wind speed and wind direction to be able to really relate how these different components of climate could be influencing the population of vectors and also could be influencing the disease trends we are seeing around here," says James Akoko, a research scientist at ILRI.

Using Centres for Disease Control (CDC) light traps, they capture mosquitoes using carbon dioxide, which attracts mosquitoes to the trap.

The mosquitoes are transported to KEMRI lab for species identification.

"When the mosquitoes are trapped from the field, they are transported in a



## Experts say climate change inducing vector-borne diseases

cold chain, that is liquid nitrogen, to the KEMRI laboratory. And this is where now they undergo identification so that we are able to tell what species are present in that particular area," explains Joel Lutomia, an entomologist at KEMRI.

At ILRI, the mosquitoes are analysed to identify the virus and pathogens they carry.

"We also extract RNA which is another nucleic acid for the viruses and using polymerase chain reaction, we then determine the type of the virus that is carried by the mosquito," explains Hussein Abkhallo, molecular biologist at ILRI.

The Horn of Africa has recently experienced destructive floods that have caused massive suffering to people.

Willis Akhwale, a senior advisor for Kenya Malaria Council, says the recent heavy rainfall,

which is attributed to the climatic phenomenon El Niño, creates stagnant waters that become breeding grounds for mosquitoes and that could lead to an increase of vector-borne diseases including malaria.

"There is more breeding, there is more breeding sites and there is therefore a high chance of transmission of vector borne diseases like malaria, like dengue, like Rift Valley fever and chikungunya. And with this therefore, you are likely to see increased cases of these diseases. And in an area like northern Kenya, that is not very well developed in terms of infrastructure, there will be a strain on the health system."

The World Health Organisation's 2023 malaria report says that in 2022 there were estimated 249 million malaria cases worldwide - 16 million more

cases than the pre-pandemic level in 2019.

In 2021, WHO endorsed the first malaria vaccine in what it described as a "historic" effort to end the devastating toll the mosquito-transmitted disease has on Africa, home to most of the world's estimated 200 million cases and 400,000 deaths.

That vaccine called RTS,S and marketed as Mosquirix by GSK. In studies it was considered to be about 30% effective. This year the World Health Organisation also endorsed a second malaria vaccine called R21 Matrix M.

Research suggests the three dose vaccine is more than 75% effective and that protection from malaria is maintained for at least another year with a booster. Both vaccines are expected to be rolled out in several African countries in 2024.

## Heart-warming reunion raises toast to China's medical aid missions abroad

By Liu Kun, Wuhan

WHEN 89-year-old Li Jinrong heard someone calling her "mom" at an event in Wuhan, Hubei province, she immediately rose from her seat.

A foreign woman ran toward her before hugging her tightly and saying, "Mom, mom." With tears of joy, Li gently patted her back and said, "Bonjour."

The woman, Bouammouch Kheira, who is from Algeria, underwent a total nasal reconstruction surgery - the first such operation in Africa - that was done by Li and other members of a Chinese medical team 39 years ago.

Li and Kheira reunited last month at an event marking the 60th anniversary of the sending of China's first foreign aid medical mission, which was sent to Algeria. Kheira, 50, traveled 10,000 kilometers from Algeria to arrive in Wuhan the day before the anniversary event on Dec 19.

"This is my first visit to China, but I didn't feel the journey was arduous at all, because I was so excited to meet Professor Li, my Chinese mother," Kheira said.

In November 1984, Li, then a surgeon at the Hospital of Stomatology affiliated with Wuhan University, joined the 11th Chinese medical aid mission to Algeria. She helped a hospital in the North African country carry out oral and facial surgeries, enhancing the standard of medical care there and strengthening the friendship between the two countries.

In March 1985, Kheira, then 12, visited a hospital in Algeria's Mascara Province to seek treatment for a stomach infection. Li and her colleagues were providing medical assistance at the hospital. One of the Chinese team's doctors noticed Kheira's badly disfigured nose, the tip of which was bitten off by a donkey when she was just 2 years old. The doctor took Kheira to see Li.

"Had she not been disfigured, she would have grown up to be a great beauty," Li said. "The surgery could accept nothing less than full victory."

The hospital in Wuhan where Li worked had conducted nasal reconstruction surgeries since the 1960s. However, the conventional method required skin grafting from the forehead, which left a scar on the patient's face.

After consulting medical literature and taking the Algerian hospital's limited medical capabilities into consideration, Li devised a comprehensive treatment plan and decided to transplant skin from one of Kheira's upper arms, because it matched her facial skin tone and was only a short distance from the nose.

Kheira admitted that she was scared at first, but Li's earnest attitude when inquiring about her symptoms and hands-on approach in changing her dressings reminded her of her mother and gave her hope.

The reconstruction of Kheira's nose required four surgeries over a period of two months, including elaborate procedures that involved cutting the skin and subcutaneous fat, transferring a skin flap, immobilizing the repaired nose with plaster, and trimming and reconstruction.

Many people visited the hospital to witness the first such surgical procedure in Africa. After its successful completion, Kheira ran from ward to ward, telling everyone she met that she now had a nose identical to theirs, courtesy of her "Chinese mother", and sniffing to prove she could breathe easily and smoothly.

"Without my Chinese mother, my life would be darker than death," Kheira told Hubei Television in Wuhan last month.

The Algerian Ministry of Health praised the Chinese team's handling of Kheira's surgery and told all the hospitals in the country to refer patients with facial deformities to the hospital in Mascara.

"As a member of a Chinese foreign aid team, I knew that my duty was not only to help local residents with common illnesses, but also to find remedies for long-standing and challenging diseases," Li said.

### Contribution hailed

During her two years in Algeria, Li once performed six surgeries in a row without sleep, helping people with sinus problems and neck tumors live normal lives. She also established Algeria's first oral and maxillofacial department at the hospital in Mascara, and passed her skills and knowledge on to Algerian doctors.

When Li left the hospital in October 1986, many people gathered to bid farewell to her and other members of the Chinese team, showering them with local specialties to express their gratitude.

Since China sent its first foreign aid medical team to Algeria in 1963, nearly 30,000 medical workers have provided treatment to nearly 300 million patients in 76 countries and regions around the world, the National Health Commission said.

In September, Wuhan sent its 28th medical aid team to Algeria.

"Foreign medical teams play an important role in promoting healthcare services in developing countries and striving for world peace," Li said. "We are fulfilling a glorious internationalist obligation."







# TANZANIA GETS ORBITAL POSITION FOR SATELLITE INAUGURATION, PROPELLING IT INTO SPACE AGE

By Guardian Reporter

**T**ANZANIA celebrated a ground-breaking achievement in space exploration as it successfully secured a pivotal orbital position for its inaugural broadcasting satellite. The accomplishment signifies remarkable stride forward for the nation, underscoring its commitment to advancing technological capabilities.

Nape Nnauye Minister for Information, Communication, and Information Technology disclosed the positive move recently when speaking at the 2023 World Radio communication Conference (WRC23) in Dubai.

He highlighted the positive outcome of collaborative international efforts that solidifies Tanzania's position in the global space arena and sets the stage for a promising future in satellite communication.

The country's recent acquisition of an orbital slot at 16 degrees West showcases the country's dedication to advancing technology on a

global level, said Dr. Francis Ng'atigwa who lectures communication studies at St. Augustine University of Tanzania.

"I believe we are going to have improved broadcasting services in our country which is paramount in discouraging edutainment and further information dissemination which are important tenets of any country's development," he remarked.

At the conference, Nnauye acknowledged the collective efforts invested on an international level, expressing that this success is one of the fruits of the WRC23 and determined efforts of the government of Tanzania under the leadership of President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

Nnauye emphasised the country's commitment to launching its first satellite, highlighting the ongoing progress being made. Now, positioned in the expansive realm of the cosmos, Tanzania is on the verge of joining the ranks of nations utilising the potential of satellite technology to enhance com-



munication services for its people.

John Athanas, a telecommunications engineer based in Dar es Salaam, emphasized the financial implications for countries without their own satellites. He noted that such nations would incur substantial expenses by leasing satellite capacity from other countries or regional satellite spaces. Mem-

bership fees charged by international organizations, often based on a country's GDP and satellite usage, can range from millions to tens of millions of dollars per year, particularly for entities like Intelsat.

Athanas stressed the importance of strategic planning for ownership and effective utilization, highlighting that while leasing

capacity on others' satellites is costly, having one's own satellites is highly recommended for enhanced communication services. He commented, "It is imperative for a country to invest in its satellites, as this not only fosters autonomy but also ensures optimal utilization for improved communication services."

Athanas pointed out the

profit-driven nature of commercial satellite operators, noting that they prioritize financial gains over the affordability concerns of countries.

He explained: "Commercial satellite operators prioritize profits and may not consider the financial constraints faced by countries, leading to exorbitant charges. Costs vary based on

service type, bandwidth requirements, and lease duration, ranging from hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars annually."

Dr. Jabiri Bakari, Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) director-general acknowledged the significant progress made by the government in solidifying the country's position in the communication sector.

He emphasized the crucial role of satellites in the communication infrastructure, considering them a vital component for years.

Dr. Bakari expressed determination as a regulator to collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure the success of these initiatives, recognizing the achievement of attaining a prestigious position in the field.

Tanzania has joined other African nations in adopting satellite technology, placing it alongside countries like Egypt, South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria, Morocco, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, and Mauritius. Tanzania's potential has

garnered global attention and attracted investors from around the world, highlighting the country's ambitious vision to become a spacefaring nation.

Tanzania's achievements at WRC23 go beyond securing orbital slots, as they have also successfully acquired frequencies within the 3600-3800 MHz range. The frequencies, which are crucial for 5G technology, "have the potential to bring about a significant transformation in internet speed, enhance the reach of the mobile network, and drive economic growth by fostering digital communication advancements" said Dr. Bakari. The conference, which took place in Dubai from November 20 to December 15, 2023, brought together member countries of the ITU to engage in discussions and reach decisions regarding spectrum usage. One of the key topics addressed was the expansion of spectrum to accommodate high-speed 5G technology.

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Consumers gather at a Mixue Bingcheng store in Shenzhen, Guangdong province.

## Leisure tea firms seek breakout via HK floats

ZHENGZHOU

Henan province-based Mixue, a specialist in ice cream and tea beverages with 36,153 stores at home and abroad, has applied for an IPO in Hong Kong on Tuesday.

On the same day, Zhejiang province-based Guming, another tea-based beverage seller with more than 9,000 stores, applied for an IPO, also in Hong Kong.

Four months ago, Chengdu, Sichuan province-based ChaPanda, a tea beverage firm with about 5,000 stores, applied for an IPO in Hong Kong.

Market sources said all these three players hope to join Shenzhen, Guangdong province-based Nayuki as successful listed companies in the new tea beverage segment. Nayuki listed in Hong Kong in 2021.

Tea-based beverage players' IPO plans, they said, confirm that the already fierce competition among China's on-premise tea beverage players is intensifying

further. The IPO plans also highlight the industry's emphasis on franchising and supply chain management, experts said.

Mixue mainly offers teas priced at an average 6 yuan (84 cents).

In December 2020, its A round investment attracted three investors - Longzhu Capital, the venture capital arm of Chinese internet giant Meituan Dianpin, Hillhouse and CPE-Fund.

At that time, the company's valuation was estimated at 23.3 billion yuan, giving the collective stake of 85.56 percent of Mixue's founder brothers Zhang Hongchao and Zhang Hongfu a valuation of nearly 20 billion yuan.

When he was still a student at the Henan University of Economics and Law in 1997, Zhang Hongchao founded the first Mixue store that sold ice cream.

The turning point came in 2005 when Mixue's ice cream, priced 1 yuan, became popular. In 2013, its introduction of iced lem-

onade priced 3 yuan was also received well as the drink used fresh fruits. The brothers invested in a supply chain to secure their own ingredients, thereby exercising quality control and adopting a strategy that made their products affordable.

Mixue has five production bases, covering ingredients like sugar, milk, tea, coffee and fruit. As of Sept 30, the company's annual production capacity reached about 1.43 million metric tons.

Mixue has seen strong growth in revenue and profit in the past two years. In the first nine months of last year, revenue reached 15.4 billion yuan, up 46 percent year-on-year, generating a net profit of 2.5 billion yuan, up 51 percent. In 2022, revenue was 13.6 billion yuan, up more than 31 percent over 2021, yielding a profit of 2 billion yuan, up 5.3 percent.

Mixue said its strengths lie in standardization and scale. With a menu of 35 items, it focuses on teas with lemon and coconut ingredients,

which helps lower costs.

Adoption of the franchise model helped Mixue to grow and achieve scale. By Sept 30, almost all of its stores ran as franchises, helping Mixue to penetrate 90 percent of China's county-level markets.

Jason Yu, general manager of Kantar Worldpanel, a marketing research provider, said: "Mixue's business model primarily relies on franchise operations, with the majority of its revenue generated from selling goods and equipment to franchise stores, profiting from supply rates. This approach effectively mitigates the risks associated with directly operating individual stores."

Mixue differentiates itself through efforts like consistently strengthening its supply system, which enables the brand to expand its product categories from fresh ice cream and teas to coffee, achieving scalable expansion across regions and product categories, Yu said.

## Expropriation for four road projects in Rwanda gets greenlight on works

KIGALI

A new Ministerial Order signed by the Minister of Environment, Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya, and the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Emmanuel Ugirashebutja, approved the expropriation of assets in public interest along four roads set to be constructed.

The approval of the expropriation - published on December 20, 2023, in the official gazette - was done to pave way for the construction and rehabilitation of Base (Rulindo)-Butaro (Burera)-Kidaho (Burera) road, Sashwara (Nyabihu)-Rega (Nyabihu)-Mutovu (Rubavu)-Kabuhanga (Rubavu)-Busasamana (Rubavu)-Muhato (Rubavu) road, Mukoto (Rulindo)-Nyacyonga (Gasabo) road, as well as Kigali Logistics Platform (Kicukiro)-Bugesera road.

"What we have done as the Ministry of Environment is give a greenlight to the road construction projects given that the expropriation law also comes from the Ministry of Environment. The land including environment features such as forests and others, which we are in charge of, will also be affected during the expropriation in the public interest," Jeanne D'arc Mujawamariya, the Minister of Environment told a local outlet on Monday.

The ministerial order, she noted, aims to inform the public about the "expropriation in the public interest" and appropriate compensation according to the law.

"The residents with assets along the road should facilitate the expropriation as they get informed about planned land surveying," she said.

Imena Munyampenda, the Director General of Rwanda Transport Development Agency (RTDA), later, on Tuesday, told The New Times that for Base-Butaro-Kidaho road, a contract was signed and expropriation will start "by January 2024."

He said procurement is ongoing for Sashwara-Rega-Kabuhanga-Muhato road and it is expected to be completed by April, while expropriation will start between June and July.

"For Nyacyonga-Mukoto road, a contract has been signed and expropria-

tion will start toward March."

For Kigali Logistics Platform - Bugesera road, he said, procurement will start between February and March, while expropriation will start toward the end of the year.

Construction of Base-Butaro-Kidaho road had earlier come to a halt due to the demanding requirements set under the financing agreement between the Government of Rwanda and the Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank).

In May 2018, Rwanda and India signed a \$66.6 million (about Rwf84 billion) concessional loan agreement. Consequently, the government is currently collaborating with the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) and a local civil engineering and construction company, NPD. Under a pre-financing agreement, CRBC and the local company will undertake the road construction, with the government making payments in instalments.

The Base-Butaro-Kidaho road project, spanning 63 kilometres and located in Northern Province, was intended to connect Rulindo and Burera Districts, as well as link the country to Uganda through Cyanika border crossing.

The road will connect the emerging touristic centre of Burera, Ruhondo lakes and key infrastructure like the University of Global Health Equity as well as the Cancer Reference Hospital of Butaro.



Workers on duty during Kigali-Gatuna road rehabilitation.

The Government of Rwanda and the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), in May 2022, signed a financing agreement worth \$18 million (Rwf22.7 billion) to rehabilitate 36 km Nyacyonga-Mukoto road. The road will connect two important national paved roads from the northern part of the City of Kigali to Northern Province.

It will start at the Kigali-Gatuna junction in Gasabo District and end at the Kigali-Musanze road junction in Rulindo District. Once complete, the road will improve the safety of road users including pedestrian and other non-motorized traffic, promote trade, increase mobility and reduce transport costs by facilitating regional mobility of goods and people.

It will also act as a diversion to reduce traffic congestion on the national road network especially to and from Northern Province and Western Province, along the border with DR Congo.

The financing agreement is concessional. It carries a 1.75 per cent interest rate payment over 20 years including a grace period of five years. The entire project cost is estimated at \$41 million (about Rwf51.7 billion).

The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) committed a financing of \$18 million (Rwf22.7 billion) to this project while the Government of Rwanda's contribution is estimated at \$5 million - mainly to cater for payment of taxes and expropriation budget.



# DINOSAUR FOSSIL DISCOVERED LONG BEFORE THE TERM 'PALAEOLOGY'

ADDIS ABABA

Credit for discovering the first dinosaur bones usually goes to British gentlemen for their finds between the 17th and 19th centuries in England. Robert Plot, an English natural history scholar, was the first of these to describe a dinosaur bone, in his 1676 book *The Natural History of Oxfordshire*. Over the next two centuries dinosaur palaeontology would be dominated by numerous British natural scientists.

But our study shows that the history of palaeontology can be traced back much further into the past. We present evidence that the first dinosaur bone may have been discovered in Africa as early as 500 years before Plot's.

We're a team of scientists who study fossils in South Africa. Peering through the published and unpublished archaeological, historical and palaeontological literature, we discovered that there has been interest in fossils in Africa for as long as there have been people on the continent.

This is not a surprise. Humankind originated in Africa: *Homo sapiens* has existed for at least 300,000 years. And the continent has a great diversity of rock outcrops, such as the Kem Kem beds in Morocco, the Fayum depression in Egypt, the Rift Valley in east Africa and the Karoo in southern Africa, containing fossils that have always been accessible to our ancestors.

So it wasn't just likely that African people discovered fossils first. It was inevitable.

More often than not, the first dinosaur fossils supposedly discovered by scientists were actually brought to their attention by local guides. Examples are the discovery of the gigantic dinosaurs *Jorbaria* by the Tuaregs in Niger and *Giraffatitan* by the Mwera in Tanzania.

Our paper reviews what's known about African indigenous knowledge of fossils. We list fossils that appear to have long been known at various African sites, and discuss how they might have been used and interpreted by African communities before the science of palaeontology came to be.

One of the highlights of our paper is the archaeological site of Bolahla, a Later Stone Age rock shelter in Lesotho. Various dating techniques indicate that the site was occupied by the Khoesan and Basotho people from the 12th to 18th centuries (1100 to 1700 AD). The shelter itself is surrounded by hills made of consolidated sediments that were deposited under a harsh Sahara-like desert some 180 million to 200 million years ago, when the first dinosaurs roamed the Earth.

This part of Lesotho is particularly well known for delivering the species *Massospondylus carinatus*, a 4 to 6 metre, long-necked and small-headed dinosaur. Fossilised bones of *Massospondylus* are abundant in the area and



A worker assembles a liquid loading arm at an equipment manufacturing plant in Lianyungang, Jiangsu province.

were already so when the site was occupied by people in the Middle Ages.

In 1990, archaeologists working at Bolahla discovered that a finger bone of *Massospondylus*, a fossil phalanx, had been transported to the cave. There are no fossil skeletons sticking out the walls of the cave, so the only chance that this phalanx ended up there was that someone in the distant past

picked it up and carried it to the cave. Perhaps this person did so out of simple curiosity, or to turn it into a pendant or toy, or to use it for traditional healing rituals.

After heavy rains, it is not unusual that the people in the area discover the bones of extinct species that have been washed out of their mother-rock. They usually identify them as belonging to a dragon-like monster that devours people or

even whole houses. In Lesotho, the Basotho call the monster "Kholu-molumo", while in South Africa's bordering Eastern Cape province, the Xhosa refer to it as "Ama-gongqongqo".

The exact date when the phalanx was collected and transported is unfortunately lost to time. Given the current knowledge, it could have been at any time of occupation of the shelter from the 12th

to 18th centuries. This leaves open the possibility that this dinosaur bone could have been collected up to 500 years prior to Robert Plot's find.

Most people knew about fossils well before the scientific era, for as far back as collective societal memories can go. In Algeria, for example, people referred to some dinosaur footprints as belonging to the legendary "Roc bird". In North America, cave paintings depicting dinosaur footprints were painted by the Anasazi people between AD 1000 and 1200. Indigenous Australians identified dinosaur footprints as belonging to a legendary "Emu-man".

In South America, the notorious conquistador Hernan Cortes was given the fossil femur of a Mastodon by the Aztecs in 1519. In Asia, Hindu people refer to ammonites (coiled fossil-sea-shells) as "Shaligrams" and have been worshipping them for more than 2,000 years.

The fact that people in Africa have long known about fossils is evident from folklore and the archaeological record, but we still have much to learn about it. For instance, unlike the people in Europe, the Americas and Asia, indigenous African palaeontologists seem to have seldom used fossils for traditional medicine. We are still unsure whether this is a genuinely unique cultural trait shared by most African cultures or if it is due to our admittedly still incomplete knowledge.

Also, some rather prominent fossil sites, such as the Moroccan Kem Kem beds and South African Unesco Cradle of Humankind caves, have still not provided robust evidence for indigenous knowledge. This is unfortunate, as fossil-related traditions could help bridge the gap between local communities and palaeontologists, which in turn could contribute preserving important heritage sites.

By exploring indigenous palaeontology in Africa, our team is putting together pieces of a forgotten past that gives credit back to local communities. We hope it will inspire a new generation of local palaeoscientists to walk in the footsteps of these first African fossil hunters.

## India's Akasa Air nears order for 150 Boeing jets: report

NEW DELHI

Indian budget carrier Akasa Air is set to close an order for around 150 Boeing 737 MAX narrowbody planes, two sources said, its latest bid to tap the travel boom in the world's fastest-growing aviation market. Contract negotiations are ongoing and a deal is expected to be announced at

Wings India, the country's largest civil aviation event scheduled for Jan. 18-21, said the two sources familiar with the ongoing talks.

An Akasa spokesperson said the airline does not comment on speculation, while Boeing did not respond to Reuters' queries. The sources declined to be named as the plane order details are confidential.

Reuters is first to report details of the deal, which comes on top of Akasa's existing order book for 76 Boeing 737 MAX planes.

Akasa is India's newest airline and has garnered market share of 4 percent since it started flying in 2022, against IndiGo's 60 percent and Tata Group airlines' combined 26 percent.



Its Chief Commercial Officer Praveen Iyer told Indian newspaper Business Line in December that Akasa planned to announce a three-digit aircraft order in early 2024, without sharing any details.

The first source said its new order for around 150 planes is likely to include some future purchasing options.

The airline currently flies only

domestically, with a fleet of around two dozen planes. It was hit last year by the abrupt departure of about a tenth of its pilots and had warned it was flying less as a result, costing it market share. It has since said the issue is behind it.

Both sources said Akasa's new plane order is aimed at fuelling its domestic and international expansion, with the narrowbody

Boeing planes being ordered equipped to fly to nearby foreign destinations like Southeast Asia and the Middle East from India.

Indian carriers are trying to keep pace with soaring demand for air travel which has surged post-COVID, sending industry records tumbling amid diminishing production slots even as plane manufacturers are struggling to meet output goals.

IndiGo in June placed a record order for 500 Airbus narrow-body planes, eclipsing Air India's purchase of 470 combined jets from Airbus and Boeing earlier in the year.

Akasa's order will be another win for Boeing, which has been lagging behind Airbus in the fast-growing Indian market, where its other customers include SpiceJet.

## Sahara Desert used to be a green savannah, new research shows

ALGIERS

Algeria's Tassili N'Ajjer plateau is Africa's largest national park. Among its vast sandstone formations is perhaps the world's largest art museum. Over 15,000 etchings and paintings are exhibited there, some as much as 11,000 years old according to scientific dating techniques, representing a unique ethnological and climatological record of the region.

Curiously, however, these images do not depict the arid, barren landscape that is present in the Tassili N'Ajjer today. Instead, they portray a vibrant savannah inhabited by elephants, giraffes, rhinos and hippos. This rock art is an important record of the past environmental conditions that prevailed in the Sahara, the world's largest hot desert.

These images depict a period approximately 6,000-11,000 years ago called the Green Sahara or North African Humid Period. There is widespread climatological evidence that during this period the Sahara supported wooded savannah ecosystems and numerous rivers and lakes in what are now Libya, Niger, Chad and Mali.

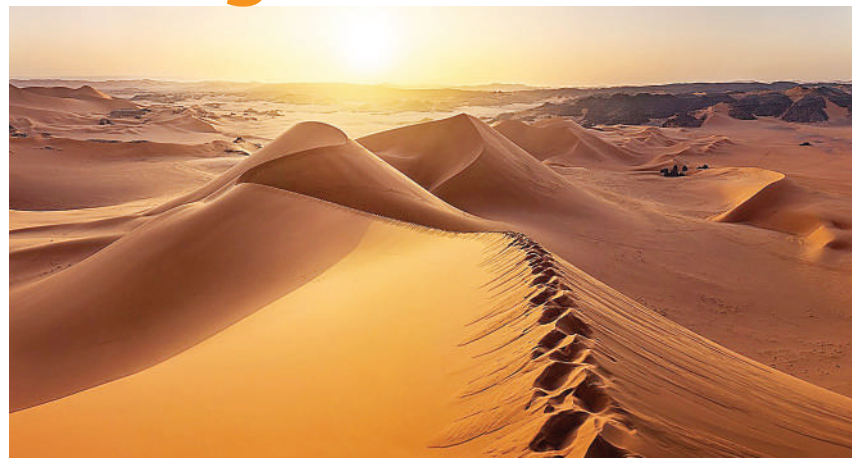
This greening of the Sahara didn't

happen once. Using marine and lake sediments, scientists have identified over 230 of these greenings occurring about every 21,000 years over the past eight million years. These greening events provided vegetated corridors which influenced species' distribution and evolution, including the out-of-Africa migrations of ancient humans.

These dramatic greenings would have required a large-scale reorganisation of the atmospheric system to bring rains to this hyper arid region. But most climate models haven't been able to simulate how dramatic these events were.

As a team of climate modellers and anthropologists, we have overcome this obstacle. We developed a climate model that more accurately simulates atmospheric circulation over the Sahara and the impacts of vegetation on rainfall.

We identified why north Africa greened approximately every 21,000 years over the past eight million years. It was caused by changes in the Earth's orbital precession - the slight wobbling of the planet while rotating. This moves the Northern Hemisphere closer to the sun during the summer months.



A section of the Sahara desert in Algeria.

This caused warmer summers in the Northern Hemisphere, and warmer air is able to hold more moisture. This intensified the strength of the West African Monsoon system and shifted the African rainbelt northwards. This increased Saharan rainfall, resulting in the spread of savannah and wooded grassland across the desert from the tropics to the Mediterranean, providing a vast habitat for plants and animals.

Our results demonstrate the sensitivity of the Sahara Desert to changes in past climate. They explain how

this sensitivity affects rainfall across north Africa. This is important for understanding the implications of present-day climate change (driven by human activities). Warmer temperatures in the future may also enhance monsoon strength, with both local and global impacts.

The fact that the wetter periods in north Africa have recurred every 21,000 years or so is a big clue about what causes them: variations in Earth's orbit. Due to gravitational influences from the moon and other planets in our solar sys-

tem, the orbit of the Earth around the sun is not constant. It has cyclic variations on multi-thousand year timescales. These orbital cycles are termed Milankovitch cycles; they influence the amount of energy the Earth receives from the sun.

On 100,000-year cycles, the shape of Earth's orbit (or eccentricity) shifts between circular and oval, and on 41,000 year cycles the tilt of Earth's axis varies (termed obliquity). Eccentricity and obliquity cycles are responsible for driving the ice ages of the past 2.4 million years.

The third Milankovitch cycle is precession. This concerns Earth's wobble on its axis, which varies on a 21,000 year timescale. The similarity between the precession cycle and the timing of the humid periods indicates that precession is their dominant driver. Precession influences seasonal contrasts, increasing them in one hemisphere and reducing them in another.

During warmer Northern Hemisphere summers, a consequent increase in north African summer rainfall would have initiated a humid phase, resulting in the spread of vegetation across the region.

In our study we also identified

that the humid periods did not occur during the ice ages, when large glacial ice sheets covered much of the polar regions. This is because these vast ice sheets cooled the atmosphere. The cooling countered the influence of precession and suppressed the expansion of the African monsoon system.

The ice ages are driven by the eccentricity cycle, which determines how circular Earth's orbit is around the sun. So our findings show that eccentricity indirectly influences the magnitude of the humid periods via its influence on the ice sheets. This highlights, for the first time, a major connection between these distant high latitude and tropical regions.

The Sahara acts as a gate. It controls the dispersal of species between north and sub-Saharan Africa, and in and out of the continent. The gate was open when the Sahara was green and closed when deserts prevailed. Our results reveal the sensitivity of this gate to Earth's orbit around the sun. They also show that high latitude ice sheets may have restricted the dispersal of species during the glacial periods of the last 800,000 years.



## CONSTRUCTION

# 'CANCELLING OF MINING FIRMS' LICENCES OVER SAFETY, LABOUR STANDARDS A GOOD DECISION'

KIGALI

Seven mining companies have seen their licences revoked by Rwanda Mining, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMB) over "serious deficiencies," including failure to meet environmental and labour standards.

The RMB has the powers to, among other things, carry out inspections where operations related to minerals, quarries, oil and gas resources are conducted to ensure compliance with the licensees' obligations.

The revocations announced on January 3, followed "repeated failures to remedy serious deficiencies highlighted in official cancellation warnings issued earlier," the RMB said in a statement. As noted, the mining companies, most of them with concessions in Western Province, "breached safety, environmental, and labour standards, and have not met their investment commitments."

Although the revocations may lead to job losses, according to Andre Mutsindashyaka, the Secretary General of Rwanda Extractive Workers Union (REWU), the RMB made "the right decision."

"For us, revocation of mining licences is the right decision because these companies often put the lives of mine workers at risk," Mutsindashyaka told The New Times.

"The good thing is that these companies had been warned. Of course, that [revocation of licences] will affect employment, but employment that puts workers' lives at risk has no utility."

One of the affected companies, Ngali Mining, lost a licence in Ngororero District; DEMIKARU lost two licences



Miners inside a tunnel at Nyamyumba mining site in Rubavu District recently

in Rubavu and Rutsiro Districts; ETS MUNSAD Minerals lost one licence in Ngororero District; while FX TUGIRANUBUMWE lost one concession in Kamonyi District. There is also Ngororero Mining Company (NMC), which lost two licences in Ngororero (Nyamisa and Nyabisindu); Ets R.M. & Sons which lost two concessions in Bugesera District; and Union Stone, which lost its licence in Rwankuba, in Gatsibo District.

"These companies have breached safety, environmental, and labour standards, and have not met their investment commitments," the statement reads in part.

The RMB said the mining licence cancellations are part of the government's efforts to im-

plement measures that support and professionalize mining operations. Except for Ngali Mining, which extracted amethyst, all the other companies dealt in tin (cassiterite), tungsten (wolframite), and tantalum (coltan), which are collectively referred to as 3Ts.

In November 2023, the RMB cancelled 13 licences of 10 mining companies due to "serious and persistent shortcomings" related to safety, environmental and labour standards as well as investment commitments. Several other companies with serious deficiencies were given cancellation warning notices.

"Through collaboration with other Government institutions, RMB will continue to ensure the security and proper decommissioning of abandoned conces-

sions while preparing for responsible new investments," the statement said.

The regulator encouraged all licence holders to continuously enhance their operations and maintain the highest standards.

"This is essential for ensuring that mining remains an enabler of our country's sustainable development," it said.

In April 2023, a report by RMB indicated that accidents killed at least 429 people while 272 were injured in a period of five years. The report on the status of illegal mining and accidents showed that 337 mine accidents were recorded from July 2018 to 2022.

A study by REWU, in October 2023, found that most mining companies in Rwanda had a level

of compliance with labour standards that is less than 50 per cent.

Mutsindashyaka said that as a result of continued advocacy and government enforcement of labour and safety standards, the mining sector is becoming more professional and safer.

"The number of accidents in mines has decreased over the years, thanks to different measures put in place," he said. "In terms of labour compliance, there has been noticeable progress over the past five years, from 30 per cent to 49 per cent."

Mutsindashyaka said the number of workers with contracts in the mining sector increased from 21 per cent in 2021 to 34 per cent in 2023. Ange Nadine Ashimwe, a mining engineer at New Bugarama Mining, as well acknowledged that the local mining sector has witnessed significant improvements in terms of growth and professionalism.

She too noted that RMB conducted inspections before coming up with the decision to revoke the mining licences.

"This decision reminds those that are still operating to adhere to the standards," said Ashimwe who also noted that some of the standards required by the regulator are hard to achieve as the Rwandan mining sector is not fully advanced.

"Our mining sector is largely artisanal and the situation on the ground is the most challenging. One may think that we can easily attain the standards of advanced mining industries," she said.

## December 2023 manufacture PMI at 18-month low on slower pace

MUMBAI

Despite a loss of growth momentum, the manufacturing sector still expanded strongly in the month. There were softer, albeit sharp, increases in factory orders and output, while business confidence towards the year-ahead outlook strengthened, S&P Global said.

India's manufacturing sector activity slowed to an 18-month low in December due to softening of output and new orders, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell to 54.9 last month from 56 in November. A PMI reading above 50 indicates an overall expansion in manufacturing activity compared to the previous month and a print below 50 shows an overall decrease.

Despite a loss of growth momentum, the manufacturing sector still expanded strongly in the month. There were softer, albeit sharp, increases in factory orders and output, while business confidence towards the year-ahead outlook strengthened, S&P Global said.

"India's manufacturing sector continued to expand in December, although at a softer pace, following an uptick in the previous month. Growth of both output and new orders softened, but on the other hand, the future output index rose since November. Rates of increase in input and output prices were broadly unchanged," said Pranjal Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC.

During the reporting month, new business gains, favourable market conditions, fairs and expositions collectively induced another sharp increase in manufacturing production.

However, the rate of expansion softened to the weakest since October 2022 even as it remained above its long-run average. Growth was reportedly curbed by fading demand for certain types of products, S&P Global said.

New orders placed with Indian manufacturers rose sharply but to a lesser extent in December. The pace of expansion was the slowest seen in a year-and-a-half.

December data showed a twenty-first consecutive increase in international order receipts at goods producers in India. Companies noted gains from clients in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North America. New export sales expanded at a moderate pace that was the joint-slowest in eight months.

Goods producers signalled a further uptick in purchasing costs at the end of the 2023 calendar year. Among the items reported to have been up in price were chemicals, paper and textiles.

Little-changed from November, however, the rate of inflation was negligible by historical standards and was the second-weakest in just under three-and-a-half years, the survey said.

# China calls up on firms to pursue innovations

WUHAN

Chinese Premier Li Qiang has emphasized the need to further enhance the leading role of enterprises in making scientific and technological innovations and to achieve breakthroughs in core technologies in key fields.

He made the remarks during a fact-finding trip to Central China's Hubei province on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Li visited a water conservancy project, enterprises, an industrial park, a key national laboratory and an airport during the tour, which took him to Yichang, Wuhan and Ezhou.

In Wuhan, the provincial capital, Li learned about the development of flash memory chips when visiting the production lines of Chinese memory chip company Yangtze Memory Technologies Co., and about the laser industry during a visit to HGTECH, an industrial



Premier Li Qiang, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, learns about development of the laser industry while visiting HGLaser Engineering Co., Ltd. in Wuhan, Central China's Hubei province.

technology enterprise that produces laser equipment.

He called for efforts to promote closer collaboration among

industries, universities and research institutes, and to introduce more targeted policies to support enterprises so that more

scientific research achievements can be better turned into productivity.

At Wuhan University's key national laboratory of information engineering in surveying, mapping and remote sensing, Li fully recognized the laboratory's progress after listening to a report on its research and development of major projects as well as the industrial application of advances.

He expressed the hope that the laboratory staff will make vigorous efforts to gather and integrate more innovative resources and make greater breakthroughs in core technologies in key fields, thus making contributions to the country's goal of promoting high-level self-reliance and self-improvement in science and technology.

The premier's trip comes after the tone-setting Central Economic Work Conference last month, which emphasized using scien-

tific and technological innovation to advance the construction of a modern industrial system.

The meeting also stressed the importance of implementing high-quality development actions for key industrial chains and boosting the resilience and safety of industrial and supply chains.

When visiting a battery material industrial park in Yichang that boasts a sound supply chain, Li affirmed the efforts there to develop a circular economy. He also encouraged the enterprises to aim at the high end of industrial and value chains and take the lead in developing the green and low-carbon economy.

Noting that the Central Economic Work Conference outlined the priorities for the country's economic work this year, Li said Hubei province should forge ahead with determination and hard work, in order to make new contributions to the country's overall growth with its achievements in high-quality development.

# Companies flouting ESG rules to miss IFC funding

NAIROBI

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) will no longer fund any private sector companies that do not adhere to or report on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues, a step that could lock out several firms in Kenya.

ESG standards are considerations on how companies' business practices impact the natural environment, the people around them, and their employees in the pursuit for profits.

With the growing threat of climate change, ESG has increasingly taken centre stage in the corporate world, with some regulators, such as the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), now requiring their regulated entities to report on their ESG practices.

IFC's regional director for East Africa, Mary Peschka told a local outlet that the financier will no longer "do



Stacks of collected plastic waste at Mr Green Africa factory in Nairobi

business" and will pull out of any projects led by entities that show no commitment on closing ESG gaps.

"For us it's not a trade-off. We will

walk away from projects that have clients or sponsors that won't commit to our ESG standards," Ms Peschka said.

"When we set out to do business with a client, our specialists and corporate governance team undertake due diligence on the ESG front and

then put together a plan to close any gaps related to ESG issues.

"If we see a client that's not closing the gap, we find out why. Is it a lack of capacity, a lack of understanding? Hopefully, it's not a lack of will because we shouldn't start with those clients in the first place."

This means that thousands of private sector businesses which are not yet adhering to or reporting on ESG issues in the region, will be unable to tap into the concessional lending facilities provided by the IFC.

Currently, only banks are required by CBK to report on ESG issues, but a few other companies listed in the Nairobi Securities Exchange report on them voluntarily.

Across the East African region, there are no mandatory requirements in any sector for ESG reporting, and not many firms have embraced the culture of reporting on their practices.

However, experts argue that ESG is increasingly becoming consequential to private businesses' profitability as consumers become more aware and conscious of environmental and social issues.

"If you start compromising on your commitments to ESG, it's a slippery slope. ESG is good business. It's not just because it's the nice or morally right thing to do. There's lots of research that shows it translates to the positive bottom-line," Ms Peschka said.

Last year, IFC launched a subsidised ESG consultancy programme for Kenyan companies in the manufacturing, agribusiness, financial, and affordable housing sectors to bolster ESG compliance.

It had earlier rolled out similar programs in Rwanda, South Africa, and Tunisia, with the initiative in Kenya extending services to Uganda, Tanzania, and Ethiopia.



## WORLD

## Japan: Coast Guard plane not cleared for take-off before crash

TOKYO

JAPANESE authorities said on Wednesday a passenger jet that collided with a Coast Guard turboprop at a Tokyo airport had been given permission to land, but the smaller plane had not been cleared for take-off, based on control tower transcripts.

All 379 people aboard the Japan Airlines Airbus A350 managed to evacuate after it erupted in flames following Tuesday's crash with a De Havilland Dash-8 Coast Guard turboprop shortly after landing at Haneda airport.

But five died among the six Coast Guard crew who were due to depart on a flight responding to a major earthquake on Japan's west coast, while the captain, who escaped the wreckage, was badly injured.

Authorities have only just begun their investigations and there remains uncertainty over the circumstances surrounding the crash, including how the two aircraft ended up on the same runway. Experts stress it usually takes the failure of multiple safety guardrails for an airplane accident to happen.

But transcripts of traffic control instructions released by authorities appeared to show the Japan Airlines jet had been given permission to land while the Coast Guard aircraft had been told to taxi to a holding point near the

runway.

An official from Japan's civil aviation bureau told reporters there was no indication in those transcripts that the Coast Guard aircraft had been granted permission to take off.

The captain of the turboprop plane said he had entered the runway after receiving permission, a Coast Guard official said, while acknowledging that there was no indication in the transcripts that he had been cleared to do so.

"The transport ministry is submitting objective material and will fully cooperate with the ... investigation to ensure we work together to take all possible safety measures to prevent a recurrence," Transport Minister Tetsuo Saito told reporters.

The Japan Safety Transport Board is investigating the accident, with participation by agencies in France, where the Airbus jet was designed, and Britain, where its two Rolls-Royce engines were manufactured. In Canada, where the Coast Guard Dash-8 was originally built by Bombardier, the TSB safety agency said it would also take part.

The JTSB has recovered the voice recorder from the coast guard aircraft, authorities said.

## Police inquiry

Meanwhile, Tokyo police are investi-



Police investigators gather beside the burn-out wreckage of Japan Airlines plane at Haneda airport yesterday, in Tokyo, Japan. AP

gating whether possible professional negligence led to deaths and injuries, several media outlets, including Kyodo and the Nikkei business newspaper, said.

Police have set up an investigation unit at the airport and plan to interview those involved, a spokesperson said, declining to say whether they were examining any suggestions of negligence.

Parallel air crash investigations have raised concerns in the past over tensions between civil safety investigations, which rely on open discussion of errors to help improve safety, and police-led inquiries, which are designed to apportion blame.

"There's a strong possibility there was a human error," said aviation analyst Hiroyuki Kobayashi, who is a former JAL pilot.

"Aircraft accidents very rarely occur due to a single problem, so I think that this time too there were two or three issues that led to the accident."

A notice to pilots in force before the accident suggested that a strip of stop lights embedded in the tarmac as an extra safety measure to prevent wrong turns, was out of service, according to a copy of the bulletin posted by US regulators.

"This is something the investigators will look at," said US aviation safety consultant John Cox.

In a statement on Wednesday, JAL said the aircraft recognised and re-

peated the landing permission from air traffic control before approaching and touching down.

All passengers and crew were evacuated within 20 minutes of the crash, but the aircraft, engulfed in flames, burned for more than six hours, the airline said.

The Coast Guard aircraft, one of six based at the airport, had been due to transport aid to regions hit by Monday's earthquake of magnitude 7.6 that has killed 81 people, with survivors facing freezing temperatures and prospects of heavy rain.

The accident forced the cancellation of 137 domestic, and four international flights on Wednesday, the government said.

But emergency flights and high-speed rail services were requested to ease the congestion, Transport Minister Saito said.

Michael Daniel, a former US accident investigator, said investigators will be looking to make recommendations.

"The main thing is the situational awareness: what is it they would have told the pilot holding short of getting on a runway ... And then what was air traffic's understanding. Did the controller give them clearance to take off? ... A lot of that information will come out when they start reviewing the cockpit voice recorder as well as the air traffic tapes."

Agencies

## UNSC discusses Red Sea attacks amid risks of Gaza crisis spillover

UNITED NATIONS

THE UN Security Council on Wednesday held an open meeting on Houthi rebel attacks in the Red Sea, amid growing concerns for global trade and regional stability due to the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict in Gaza.

UN Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiri told the council that "no cause or grievance" could justify continuing Houthi attacks against freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, adding that all incidents originating in Houthi controlled areas "must stop".

He encouraged "all concerned parties" in the wider region to avoid any further escalation and de-escalate tensions and threats and called for a return to the regular flow of traffic to avoid the risk of Yemen being "dragged into a regional conflagration".

The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, Arsenio Dominguez, described the attacks as unacceptable, saying ships "must be allowed to trade worldwide unhindered and in



Representatives of member countries take a vote during the Security Council meeting at United Nations headquarters, Dec 22, 2023. AP

accordance with international law".

He reiterated a call for de-escalation "to ensure the safety of our seafarers, freedom of navigation and stability of supply chains".

A significant number of companies are already rerouting their ships around South Africa to reduce their risks, which takes an additional 10 days to journeys on average and negatively impacts international trade, and costs of freight, said Dominguez.

He reminded of earlier recommendations agreed in De-

ember on how to deal with the crisis, saying IMO had a program already in place on security in the Red Sea region.

Nicolas de Riviere, the permanent representative of France to the United Nations, which holds the presidency of the council this month, said that it is the collective responsibility of this council to ensure that the peace process in Yemen continues according to the road map of the UN special envoy on Yemen.

Vassily Nebenzia, Russia's permanent representative to

the United Nations, said that restrictions on freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden were "not happening in a vacuum".

He said nobody should deny that "what is happening in the Red Sea is a direct projection of the violence in Gaza, where Israel's bloody operation has been ongoing for three months".

Escalation is also happening in other occupied Palestinian territories, he continued, as well as across the Israel-Lebanon border.

He blamed the United States

for covering up Israel's actions and holding the remaining members of the Security Council "hostage" by vetoing any resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire.

In his inaugural address as a Security Council member, Algeria's permanent representative to the United Nations, Amar Bendjama, recognized the crucial role of the Red Sea passage as of "paramount importance for the whole world".

He said the crisis at sea must be seen within a broader regional context.

He noted that the Red Sea is "far more than just a trade route", hailing it as a historic region with legitimate aspirations and hopes.

The Security Council issued a press statement on Dec 1, addressing the Houthi threat and condemning the attacks "in the strongest terms".

The Security Council's most recent meeting about the crisis on Dec 29 saw UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warn of the widening risks of further spillover.

Xinhua

## 'Last 10 years have been transformational'

NEW DELHI

CALLING his 10-year tenure under the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government "transformational", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that from a time when Indians had to face difficulties regarding visas, today many countries are themselves pursuing New Delhi to figure out workplace mobility.

He further emphasized that today, a big opportunity lies in the area of the global workplace besides supply chains and digital flows.

The EAM was speaking at the launch event of his book 'Why Bharat Matters' in the national capital on Wednesday.

Jaishankar opened up on the range of subjects he has dealt with in the book, ranging from Article 370 as well as India's border situation, especially along LAC with China.

Speaking at the event, Jaishankar said, "The last 10 years, where I have largely served in the government, have been transformational and I bring out in a descriptive account what those transformations have been. Within that transformation, some inflexion points...I would describe the Article 370 decision as one of them. What has changed on the border with China is another, the whole neighbourhood".

"I tried to explain is really a new construct of foreign policy that has come into the making. Of course, since I am in politics...we also are experiencing attacks from beyond our borders which are often ideological and agenda-driven," he added.

Highlighting the multiple achievements of India in the last few years, the EAM said that the situation of visas has completely transformed over the years, with multiple countries pursuing New Delhi to figure out workplace mobility.

"If there is Apple production in India, we are able to deploy our own 5G stack. If we could go to the moon in the manner in which we did. If we could produce a vaccine with the kind of accuracy, integrity on that mass scale...all these are symptomatic of what is happening," Jaishankar said.

He added, "The big opportunity for me apart from getting into supply chains, digital flows is actually is the global workplace...5-10 years ago we were chasing the world saying you know you are being tough on Indians where visas are concerned. Today, there are a range of countries that are pursuing us saying 'Let us figure out workplace mobility'. In the last 2-3 years, we have signed agreements with Germany, Italy, Portugal".

ANI



External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar calls on the President of Nepal, Ramchandra Paudel in Kathmandu yesterday, during his two-day visit to the country. ANI

## Russian army units thwart Ukrainian assault teams in Kupyansk direction

MOSCOW

MOTOR rifle units of the Russian Battlegroup West repelled a counter-attack of assault teams of the Ukrainian mechanized brigade in the Kupyansk direction, Battlegroup spokesman Sergey Zybinsky told TASS.

"In the defense area of a combined arms army, motor rifle units thwarted a counter-attack of assault teams of the 15th mechanized brigade in the vicinity of Sinkovka. The adversary had to retreat southwestward; enemy losses in this direction totaled up to a company of manpower," Zybinsky said.

A Krab self-propelled gun was destroyed near Krinchki settlement and a Furiya reconnaissance drone was downed in the vicinity of Kolomichikha, the spokesman added.

Agencies

## To usher in bright future of peace, security, prosperity, progress for world

THE year of 2023 was the first year for fully implementing the guiding principles of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, and also marked the 10th anniversary of the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind put forward by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Under the personal guidance of Xi, major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics has made solid steps. Pursuing the noble goal of building a community with a shared future for mankind, major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics has created a proactive and favorable external environment for achieving the great

rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and made significant contributions to the cause of world peace and development.

The world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation, with profound changes occurring in the relationships between major countries. In 2023, China always kept its strategic focus, comprehensively planned its relations with relevant parties, and worked to build major-country relations featuring peaceful coexistence, overall stability, and balanced development.

Together, the Chinese and Russian heads of state charted the course for future growth of bilateral

relations and cooperation across the board. The meeting between Xi and his U.S. counterpart Joe Biden in San Francisco achieved important results, identifying the direction for the sound, steady and sustained development of bilateral ties. Besides, China-EU relations have shown a sound momentum of full recovery and steady progress.

In the past year, China firmly promoted regional peace, stability, and development. The successful China-Central Asia Summit resulted in the signing of seven bilateral and multilateral agreements between China and the five Central Asian countries. Additionally, over 100 cooperation agreements were inked across vari-

ous fields.

Announcing a new characterization of the relationship for the two parties and two countries, China and Vietnam will work together for a China-Vietnam community with a shared future that carries strategic significance on the basis of deepening the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership between the two sides.

As a developing country and a member of the Global South, China breathes the same breath with other developing countries and pursues a shared future with them.

Last August, Xi attended the 15th BRICS Summit, promoting the historic expansion of the BRICS mech-

anism. He joined the BRICS-Africa Outreach and BRICS Plus Dialogue, where he worked together with relevant parties to pool strength for building a community of shared development.

During his visit to South Africa, Xi and the South African head of state agreed to build a high-level China-South Africa community with a shared future. He also attended the China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue and raised new proposals on assisting in Africa's integration and modernization.

In 2023, China established diplomatic relations with Honduras, set up or upgraded partnerships with more than 10 countries, and con-

tinuously deepened and expanded a global network of partnerships based on equality, openness, and cooperation.

In October 2023, the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was hosted. China worked with all parties involved to deepen Belt and Road partnerships of cooperation, ushered this cooperation into a new stage of high-quality development, and announced eight major steps China will take to support the joint pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. At present, all the 458 outcomes delivered at the forum are being implemented.

People's Daily



## Ebrahim Raisi accuses Israel for twin explosions in Iran, warns 'will pay a heavy price'

TEHRAN

IRANIAN President Ebrahim Raisi has accused Israel of being behind the twin explosions during a memorial ceremony in southeastern Iran on Wednesday, CNN reported. He warned Israel that it would "pay a high price" for this crime.

In a televised speech, Raisi said, "I warn the Zionist regime: Do not doubt that you will pay a heavy price for this crime and the crimes you have committed," CNN reported. He warned that Israel's punishment would be "regrettable and severe."

At least 103 people were killed and 211 others were injured after two blasts took place in Kerman near the burial site of slain military commander Qasem Soleimani on Wednesday, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

The blasts took place on the fourth anniversary of the death of military commander Qasem Soleimani. He was killed by a US airstrike ordered by former President Donald Trump at Baghdad International Airport in 2020.

Raisi said, "Undoubtedly, the perpetrators and masterminds of this cowardly act will soon be identified and brought to justice by the capable security and law enforcement forces."

"The enemies of the nation must know that such actions can never undermine the unwavering determination and will of the Iranian people to defend the Islamic ideals," he added.

He asserted that such attacks will only add to Iran's resolve to eradicate terrorism on the battlefield against the enemies. He directed relevant authorities to take swift measures to attend to those affected by the terrorist attack and restore order in Kerman.

The first explosion was 700 metres away from Soleimani's grave, and the second was a kilometre (0.6 miles) away as pilgrims visited the site, according to IRNA report.

Meanwhile, the Iranian administration announced Thursday, the day of national mourning, while Kerman province declared three days of mourning, IRNA reported.

The Commission of National Security and Foreign Policy of Iran's parliament plans to send a delegation to Kerman to inspect different aspects of the terrorist act.

Abolfazl Amouei, the spokesman for the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said that the attack indicated General Qasem Soleimani's fight against terrorism was the right path and added that it will be continued strongly, IRNA reported. A police spokesperson said three police personnel were killed while they were trying to assist people who were targeted in the blasts in Kerman.

ANI

## PM Modi to attend All India Conference at DGP, IGP in Rajasthan

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will attend the three-day annual All India Conference of Director Generals and Inspector Generals of Police at the Rajasthan International Centre in Jaipur on January 6-7, according to the Prime Minister's Office.

The three-day conference will deliberate on challenges posed by artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security, counter-terrorism, left-wing extremism and narcotics smuggling.

"The conference, being held from January 5 to 7, will discuss a wide range of policing and internal security issues, including cybercrime, technology in policing, counter-terrorism challenges, left-wing extremism, and prison reforms, among others," the official statement said.

Another key agenda of the conference is deliberations on the road map for the implementation of the new criminal laws recently passed by Parliament.

"Further, the conference will also deliberate on futuristic themes in policing and security, like the challenges posed by new technologies such as AI, deep fakes, etc., and ways to deal with them," it added.

The conference also provides an opportunity to identify tangible action points and monitor their progress, which is also presented before the Prime Minister every year.

The conference is the culmination of extensive deliberations involving police and intelligence officers from district, state and national levels on identified themes. Best practices from states and union territories under each of the themes will be presented at the conference so that states can learn from each other.

Since 2014, the Prime Minister has taken a keen interest in the DGP conference.

"Unlike the symbolic presence of



prime ministers earlier, he sits through all major sessions of the conference. The Prime Minister not only listens patiently to all the inputs but also encourages free and informal discussions so that new ideas can come up," the release from the Prime Minister's office added.

Free-flowing thematic discussions over breakfast, lunch and dinner have also been planned in this year's conference. This will provide an opportunity for senior police officials to share their views and recommendations on key policing and internal security issues affecting the country with the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister has also encouraged the organisation of annual DGP conferences all across the country since 2014. The conference was organised at Guwahati in 2014, Dhordo, Rann of Kutch in 2015, National Police Academy, Hyderabad in 2016, the BSF Academy, Tekanpur in 2017, Kevadiya in 2018, IISER, Pune in 2019, Police Headquarters, Lucknow in 2021, and the National Agricultural Science Complex, PUSA, Delhi in 2023.

Continuing with this tradition, the conference is being organised in Jaipur this year.

The conference will be attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, MOS for Home Affairs, Cabinet Secretary, senior officials of the Government of India, DGP of States/UTs and Heads of Central Armed Police Forces and Central Police Organisations, among others.

ANI

## Chinese researchers develop new strategy for treating aggressive breast cancer

SHANGHAI

CHINESE scientists have developed a new strategy for treating a form of highly aggressive breast cancer by converting treatment-resistant tumors to a more treatable state.

The study published on Thursday in the journal *Science Translational Medicine* unveiled this new approach, which can be integrated into existing regimens to improve outcomes in patients with deadly triple-negative breast cancer.

The researchers from Fudan University analyzed the metabolism of tumor samples from 401 patients with varying homologous recombination deficiency scores. The scores reflect a tumor's response to DNA-damaging drugs and those patients with a low deficiency score tend not to respond.

Researchers identified one molecule called GDP-M that impedes DNA repair of the tumor cells and raises the patient's deficiency scores, primarily by promoting the degradation of a cancer-linked protein.

In a mouse model, supplements of the molecule made the breast tumors more responsive to approved DNA-damaging drugs such as cisplatin and boosted antitumor immunity, according to the study.

Also, GDP-M was shown in the lab to be capable of empowering a class of targeted agents for breast cancer treatment called PARP inhibitors. The new finding points to a clinical strategy combining GDP-M with other DNA repair-targeted therapy, said the researchers.

Xinhua

## Ukraine, Russia carry out largest prisoner swap, first since Aug

KYIV

UKRAINE and Russia on Wednesday carried out their first exchange of prisoners of war in nearly five months, under which 230 Ukrainian captives including six civilians had been returned from Russian custody.

Among those freed are service people from the Ukrainian Armed Forces, the National Guard, the State Border Guard Service and the National Police, the Coordinating Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War said on Wednesday.

The exchange marked the first prisoner swap between the parties since August.

More than 2,800 Ukrainians taken captive in the Russia-Ukraine conflict have been released so far as a result of prisoner exchanges.

Russia's Defense Ministry said 248 military personnel had been handed over by Ukraine.

On the Russian side, a Defense Ministry statement said its released prisoners would undergo medical checks and treatment.

Russia's Commissioner for Human Rights Tatyana Moskalkova thanked President Vladimir Putin and the military and intelligence services for their efforts in the exchange.

The UAE's foreign ministry acknowledged its role, saying in a statement that the swap was made possible by its "strong friendly relations" with both Moscow and Kyiv.



This grab taken from a handout footage released by the Russian Defense Ministry on Wednesday shows Russian prisoners of war inside a bus at the Russian-Ukrainian state border in the Belgorod region following a swap. AFP

It offered both further humanitarian efforts and to find a peaceful solution to the war.

Separately, the Ukrainian Navy said the actions to clear the Black Sea and its neighboring Sea of Azov from mines would take up to five years.

"The demining of the maritime communication routes and trade routes will last an estimated 3-5 months, while the comprehensive demining operation will take 3-5 years," the *Ukrayinska Pravda* media outlet quoted Ukrai-

nian navy spokesman Dmytro Pletenchuk as saying.

The mine-clearing operation is currently at the planning stage, Pletenchuk said, adding that the headquarters of the operation has been established already.

Mines and other explosives have been drifting in the Black Sea since February 2022 due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Last week, two sailors were injured after a Panama-flagged grain ship hit a floating mine in the Black Sea near the Ukrainian coast.

Xinhua

## Hezbollah chief warns Hamas leader's killing 'will not go unanswered and unpunished'

BEIRUT

AFTER the death of Hamas deputy chief Salah al-Arouri in an alleged Israeli strike, Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah warned Israel against waging war on Lebanon and said that the killing "will not go unanswered and unpunished," *The Times of Israel* reported.

"If the enemy thinks of waging a war on Lebanon, we will fight without restraint, without rules, without limits and without restrictions," Nasrallah said in his address, which had been pre-planned to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the death of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corp general Qasem Soleimani.

"We are not afraid of war," Nasrallah said, but did not issue a concrete

threat. "For now," he said, "we are fighting on the frontline following meticulous calculations."

Both the Iran-backed Lebanese terror group and Hamas have accused Israel of killing Arouri in Dahiyeh, Beirut on Tuesday night, with Nasrallah describing the attack as a "major and dangerous crime" that "will not go unanswered and unpunished" - repeating a threat made by the group itself. *The Times of Israel* reported.

The strike that killed al-Arouri marked "the first time they target the southern suburbs in this way since 2006," Nasrallah said, in reference to that year's Second Lebanon War which saw Beirut's southern suburbs bombed.

Israel had sent "messages" to di-

cate it "did not intend to target Lebanon or Hezbollah," but was rather "settling scores" with Hamas leaders, the Hezbollah leader added.

Hamas deputy leader Saleh al-Arouri was killed in an alleged Israeli drone strike in Beirut on Tuesday, *The Times of Israel* reported. The terrorist organisation Hamas has also confirmed that Israel killed its deputy commander, Saleh al-Arouri, in Lebanon earlier tonight.

"The cowardly assassinations carried out by the Zionist occupation against the leaders and symbols of our Palestinian people inside and outside Palestine will not succeed in breaking the will and steadfastness of our people or in undermining the continuation of their valiant resistance," senior Hamas official

Izzat al-Rishq said in a statement, according to *The Times of Israel*.

However, Israel is yet to comment on the strike that has killed the senior Hamas leader.

Meanwhile, Lebanon's caretaker Prime Minister, Najib Mikati, condemned the alleged killing of Saleh al-Arouri.

He issued a statement responding to the alleged killing of Hamas deputy leader, terming it a "new Israeli crime" and forewarned, saying Tel Aviv is aiming to drag Lebanon into the conflict. Al-Arouri, 57, a resident of Lebanon, served as the political bureau's deputy director for the terror group and was regarded as the de facto head of Hamas's military branch in the West Bank.

ANI

## China to work with rest of world for common good of humanity



Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a New Year message via China Media Group and the Internet on the evening of December 31, 2023, in Beijing to ring in 2024. Xinhua

Chinese President Xi Jinping reviewed the remarkable achievements China had made in 2023 and expressed the firm confidence of the Chinese people in forging ahead with resolve and tenacity in his 2024 New Year message, conveying a sincere desire of China to create a better future together with the rest of the world.

"We Chinese are keenly aware of what peace means. We will work closely with the international community for the common good of humanity, build a community with a shared future for mankind, and make the world a better place for all," Xi said in the message.

The past year was the first year for fully implementing the guiding principles from the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. With an aim to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization, China has marched forward with solid and robust steps, in high spirits and with great confidence.

China achieved a smooth transition in its COVID-19 response efforts. The Chinese economy has sustained the momentum of recovery. Steady progress has been made in pursuing high-quality development.

Thanks to years of dedicated efforts, China's innovation-driven development is full of energy. The Chengdu FISU World University Games and the Hangzhou Asian Games presented spectacular sports scenes, envisioning an inclusive and confident China for the rest of the world.

All these exhilarating activities have made the lives of the Chinese people richer and more

colorful, and they mark the return of bustling life across the country. They embody people's pursuit of a beautiful life, and present a vibrant and flourishing China to the world.

China's long history and profound civilization have developed and flourished while being inherited, shining with brilliant glory and becoming the source from which Chinese people's confidence and strength are derived.

The world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation. At the critical juncture of history, China firmly upholds world peace and promotes common development, bringing valuable certainty and stability to the world filled with change and instability.

Last year, China held the China-Central Asia Summit and the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, and hosted leaders from across the world at many diplomatic events held in China.

Xi also made four visits to foreign countries, attended international conferences, and met many friends, both old and new. He shared China's vision

and enhanced common understandings with them, conveying China's confidence in jointly facing challenges and overcoming difficulties with all parties.

While pursuing its development, China has also embraced the world and fulfilled its responsibility as a major country. No matter how the global landscape may evolve, peace and development remain the underlying trend, and only cooperation for mutual benefit can deliver.

For any country or nation to thrive, it must follow the logic of history and develop in line with the trend of the times. What people in various countries long for is definitely not a new Cold War or a small exclusive bloc; what they want is an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys enduring peace, universal security and common prosperity. Such is the logic of historical advance and the trend of the times.

The overall direction of human development and progress will not change, the overall dynamics of world history moving forward amid twists and turns will not change, and the overall trend to-

ward a shared future for the international community will not change. Building a community with a shared future for mankind is the right direction for human society leading to common development, lasting peace and security, and mutual learning between civilizations.

In the face of risks and challenges, China will always work with other countries to uphold the correct views of the world, of history and of the world's overall interests, and act to translate the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind into reality.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Steadfastly advancing Chinese modernization, China will remain clear-eyed and undisturbed in a volatile world, and stand firmly on the right side of history and on the side of human progress.

Dedicated to peace, development, cooperation, and mutual benefit, China will promote the common values of all humanity, implement the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, and Global Civilization Initiative, and build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity.

People's Daily





Simba Queens' winger Elizabeth Wambui (L) dribbles past Yanga Princess' left fullback, Diana Antwi, as the former's teammate, midfielder Fatuma Issa (C) closes in when the two sides met in this season's Mainland Tanzania Women's Premier League tie which took place at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. Simba Queens won 3-1. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA QUEENS

## Juma Mgunda asks Simba Queens players to remain focused after derby win

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SIMBA Queens' head coach Juma Mgunda has insisted his players should remain focused ahead of the upcoming Mainland Tanzania Women's Premier League fixtures.

Mgunda stated after Simba Queens had garnered a 3-1 win over rivals, Yanga Princess, in the women's league clash which took place at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday evening.

Simba Queens, though, failed to retain the Women's Premier League top spot after defending champion, JKT Queens, thrashed Amani Queens 10-0 away to go top of the table with a goal difference of five.

The Msimbazi Street-based Simba Queens are set to face JKT Queens in the upcoming fixture and, with Mgunda understanding JKT Queens' prowess, he has as a result fired a warning towards his players.

Mgunda highlighted that it was a crucial victory while insisting every match requires specific tactics and approaches depending on the strengths and weaknesses of the opponents.

The gaffer disclosed: "We will have a different game plan against JKT Queens in our upcoming game, we understand their prowess and we are focused on reviewing their game and getting familiar with their game."

"Today's match against Yanga Princess was a perfect fit for us but the focus has to change against JKT Queens, for us, a win against Yanga Princess was crucial," Mgunda stated.

Mgunda applauded the growth of women's football in Tanzania after scores of soccer fanatics had turned up in numbers for the tie, as well as how difficult it was to beat Yanga Princess in the derby.

"A match between Simba Queens and Yanga Princess is always tough, and that can be proved at all ranks," the gaffer noted.

"They gave us a very challenging match and we have a lot to take from this game ahead of our next match

against JKT Queens, they exposed us, we exposed them, and we will work on where we got exposed," Mgunda revealed.

"Above all, Tanzania's women's football has been on the rise, you can see how fans showed up in numbers to support their sisters, which is very important for us and teams especially when playing against foreign teams," the gaffer noted.

Yanga Princess' head coach Charles Haalubono said early goals his squad conceded led to failure to come back to the game and the loss.

The Zambian coach moreover noted despite losing the game, he noticed that his team was improving and he saw some progress.

He added that he learned many lessons from the derby and would judge his players based on what he observed.

"We lost the game after failing to stay put in the early minutes, conceding two goals and failing to take our chances contributed to our loss," Haalubono revealed.

"I think we still have to work on our patterns and style of play since the game here has been improved, I feel that we will challenge the league if we keep pushing," the gaffer noted.

In the derby, Simba Queens demonstrated their strength over Yanga Princess by scoring two quick goals in the first 10 minutes of the game by forward Aisha Mnunka.

Yanga Princess pulled one back through attacker Neema Paul's beautiful header in the 14th minute before defensive midfielder Vivian Aquino scored the third goal for Simba Queens in the 49th minute.

Simba Queens continued to dominate the game in the second half as they possessed and pressed high when they lost the ball.

It was Yanga Princess' first defeat in the league and it was the first time they conceded three goals.

Simba Queens are currently sitting second in the log, trailing JKT Queens are leading with nine points and a superior goal difference while Yanga Princess sits third with six points.

The fundraising event is expected to be held on January 10, 2024, at the

## Amrouche optimistic of Taifa Stars' chance to flourish in 2023 AFCON

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

TANZANIA's senior national football team head coach Adel Amrouche is optimistic the squad's three players will hold sway in the 2023 AFCON slated for January 13-February 11 in Ivory Coast.

Taifa Stars will start their campaign with a duel against Morocco to be held at the Laurent Pokou Stadium on January 17.

The East African nation's squad will, before battling it out in the AFCON, play an

important friendly match against Egypt at Cairo International Stadium on January 7.

Amrouche mentioned Ibrahim Hamad, alias 'Bacca', and Feisal Salum as some of his team's performers billed to excel after battling it out in the 2019 AFCON showdown.

Salum will be playing his second AFCON competition, as well as Mudathir Yahya, while Sospeter Bajana is expected to debut in the coming continental competition.

The Belgo-Algerian tactician disclosed: "The quality

that Hamad now has and his game discipline will make him become a great player and I see him develop into a good player during this tournament."

The gaffer pointed out: "At the moment if you tell me to name you the best defender in Africa, my first name is Hamad."

"He is a player who can rank attacks from behind and he is quick to break attacks from the opposition and not afraid to put his body on the line but mostly the way he makes decisions," he said.

The strong-minded coach

said he expects Salum, alias 'Fei Toto', with the talent he possesses, will prosper and be of huge benefit to the senior national team.

Amrouche said he previously did not include Salum in the squad due to lack of game time and contractual challenges he had with Young Africans SC before heading to Azam FC.

"I remember I called him and sat with him to build him up, he needs to forget the past and invest his energy in football because that is his job," the gaffer noted.

He revealed: "To see him excel this season is some-

thing I am proud of as a coach, he has shown great potential and I expect to see his career excel after these finals."

"With what he is producing now in the league, if he continues in the AFCON 2023 championship, we will be talking about other things later, for now, he has to put in the work," the gaffer said.

Tanzania begins its campaign against Morocco to be held at the Laurent Pokou Stadium on January 17, he said it will be a tough game for both sides as Morocco is equally wary of Taifa Stars.



Minister for Culture, Arts, and Sports Damas Ndumbaro (C), and India's High Commissioner to Tanzania Binaya Srikanta Pradhan (L), are pictured listening to a famous Indian athlete Milind Soman during the presentation ceremony for this season's Tanzania-India Friendly Marathon which took place in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

## Simba SC wallops Singida FG FC to book 2024 Mapinduzi Cup quarterfinal spot

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC, on Wednesday, continued its dominance over Singida Fountain Gate FC, securing a comfortable 2-0 victory over the latter to advance to the quarterfinals of the 2024 Mapinduzi Cup now held in Zanzibar.

The Msimbazi Street squad followed in the footsteps of NBC Premier League rivals Yanga and Azam SC, who had already progressed to the Mapinduzi Cup knockout phase earlier.

The Group B clash which took place at the New Amaan Complex in Zanzibar saw Simba SC entertain the squad's fans with a dominant display.

Simba SC's head coach Abdelhak Benchikha made some tactical changes to the squad that featured in the previous match, introducing keeper Ally Salim, captain John Bocco, Moses Phiri, and Willy Onana in the attacking department.

Despite strong attacking play shown by both sides, the first half finished goalless.

The second half saw Ben-



Simba SC's midfielder Abdallah Khamis (R) shoots past Singida Fountain Gate FC's midfielder, Yusuph Kagoma, during the 2024 Mapinduzi Cup clash which took place in Zanzibar on Wednesday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

chikha wring in the changes, substituting Bocco, Phiri, and Abdallah Khamis for Mohamed Mussa, Jean Baleke, and the talismanic Luis Miquissone.

This injection of pace and firepower paid immediate

dividends, as Onana sent a stunning free-kick directly into the net merely five minutes into the second half, sending the Simba SC faithful into raptures.

Not long after, Miquissone added a second goal with a

powerful shot from outside the box, finishing off Shomary Kapombe's cross.

This crucial victory propelled Simba SC to the top spot in Group B, with Singida Fountain Gate FC also qualifying for the quarter-

nals as group runners-up.

This was the third consecutive win for Simba SC against Singida Fountain Gate FC this season, following victories in this season's Community Shield mini tournament and the NBC Premier League.

Although Singida Fountain Gate FC showed flashes of competitive football, they lacked the necessary focus in front of goal, with Habib Kyondo, Elvis Rupia, and Morice Chukwu missing key chances.

Simba SC has one final match left in the group stage against Rwanda's APR FC, who defeated JKU SC 3-1 yesterday. This crucial encounter will be played tonight at 2:15 pm.

Following the game, Fabrice Ngoma was awarded the Man of the Match, while Kelvin Kijiri was recognized as the Most Disciplined Player.

The outfits' head coaches Thabo Senong (Singida Fountain Gate FC) and Benchikha of Simba SC, congratulated their players for their efforts, with the latter particularly pleased with his team's performance.

## Yanga, Simba SC top officials appointed as delegates of 2023 AFCON committee

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SIMBA SC Board of Directors Chairman Salim Abdallah and Yanga's president Hersi Said have been appointed to a special committee of delegates tasked with ramping up support for the national soccer team which has qualified for the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations.

In a statement released by the

Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Sports, obtained by The Guardian yesterday, the committee will have the responsibility of encouraging fans in and outside the country to support players.

They will also be charged with the coordination of special fundraising events for the national team.

The fundraising event is expected to be held on January 10, 2024, at the

Johari Rotana Hotel in Dar es Salaam where Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa will represent President Samia Suluhu Hassan in the event.

The newly formed committee has 16 members and will be chaired by Theobald Sabi and Patrick Kahemela as its vice-chairman and Neema Msitha as the secretary.

Other members forming the committee are football pundits and ce-

lebrities including Jemedari Said, Nick Reynolds 'Bongo Zozo', Oscar Oscar, Lucas Mhaviye 'Joti', and Clayton Chipondo 'Baba Levo'.

The ministry also called in Burton Mwemba 'Mwijaku', Beatrice Singano, Michael Nchimbi, Hamis Ali, Christina Masha, Paulo Makanza, Mohamed Soloka, Hassan Raza, and Prisca Kishamba as members.

The national soccer team "Taifa

Stars' is set to test their charges against Egypt at Cairo International Stadium where the Tanzanian team has camped before heading to Ivory Coast for the continental showpiece.

Taifa Stars, which has been put in the showdown's Group F, will open its campaign with a clash against Morocco.

The next fixture for Taifa Stars has been penned for January 21 at the

same venue, with the squad locking horns with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Three days later, Taifa Stars will play their last group match of the campaign against Zambia.

Cruising to the knockout phase of the competition will be a big achievement for the country's representatives and this is what millions of Tanzanians are waiting to see happening.



## Hodgson warns stars like Rooney have 'no magic wand'

LONDON

CRYSTAL Palace boss Roy Hodgson believes leading former players such as Wayne Rooney often face "unrealistic" expectations when they become managers.

Ex-England captain Rooney, who played under Hodgson when the now 76-year-old was managing the national side, found himself out of a job on Tuesday when sacked as manager of second-tier Birmingham after just 83 days in charge. The former Manchester United striker said he did not "believe 13 weeks was sufficient to oversee the changes that were needed".

Birmingham were sixth in the Championship, the division below the lucrative Premier League, when Rooney replaced the far lower profile John Eustace as manager.

Rooney oversaw just two wins in 15 matches, however, with Monday's 3-0 thumping by Leeds, Birmingham's ninth defeat under him, proving the final straw.

The Midlands club -- who have NFL legend Tom Brady as a minority shareholder -- are embroiled in a battle against relegation, slumping to 20th since the 38-year-old Rooney took over.

Many leading players have struggled as managers, with Rooney's former England team-mates Frank Lampard and Steven Gerrard enjoying nothing like the success of their playing days during their second career in the English game.

Hodgson, who himself returned for a second spell at Palace following France great Patrick Vieira's sacking last March, said Wednesday: "It's perhaps more a question of the climate people work in these days. I think sometimes the bigger-name players won't be given a chance at a top club or a club in an elevated position."

"I'm thinking in particular Frank Lampard and Steven Gerrard even more than Wayne, but unfortunately the way the climate is these days is that the judgement on them will come very, very quickly and will be quite severe."

Hodgson, who in common with a number of managers had a modest playing career, added much of the blame lay with owners looking for a quick fix.

"They'll be welcomed into the club because of their name and they'll be expected because they are Steven Gerrard and because they are Frank Lampard (that suddenly you're going to come in and the team that you're going to be taking over, which hasn't been doing brilliantly is suddenly going to fly because you're here.

AFP

## Chelsea sign sponsorship deal with Russia-linked crypto firm

By Matt Law

CHELSEA have agreed a new sponsorship deal with BingX, a crypto company who have described themselves as "a steadfast supporter of the Russian crypto community."

The deal means BingX will become Chelsea's new shirt sleeve sponsor for the rest of this season. After this campaign, BingX will sponsor Chelsea's training kit in what is being described as a multi-year deal.

This season, 18 of the 20 Premier League clubs, including Manchester United, have an official crypto partner, which has prompted criticism. BingX does not appear to be fully accessible in the UK and has offices in Asia, Oceania, Europe and South America.

The company proudly boasted about their links to Russia at the end of November last year and hosted what they described as "a prominent event during Moscow Tech Week" which showcased its "commitment to innovation and engagement within the Russian crypto community."

Chelsea co-owners Clearlake Capital and Todd Boehly, who have negotiated the deal with BingX, bought the club from Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich, who was sanctioned by the UK government and effectively forced to sell the club. As a result, restrictions were placed on Chelsea before the takeover.

Many high-profile businesses decided to cease trading in Russia following the country's invasion of Ukraine and Chelsea have a Ukraine international player, Mykhailo Mudryk. The Premier League and EFL suspended their broadcast deals with Russia.

Chelsea have supported Ukraine, hosting the 'Game4Ukraine' to raise funds for the Mykhailo-Kotsiubynsky School in Chernihiv Oblast, which was struck by missiles, and in February 2022, the club released a statement that said: "The situation in Ukraine is horrific and devastating. Chelsea FC's thoughts are with everyone in Ukraine. Everyone at the club is praying for peace." Chelsea had a crypto partner with the Amber Group in 2022, during which the the WhaleFin logo was displayed on their shirt sleeves. That deal abruptly ended.

As first revealed by Telegraph Sport, Chelsea earlier this season announced a new front-of-shirt sponsorship deal with Infinite Athlete. It has emerged that their deal will see them become the sleeve sponsor of the training kit from next season.

Founded in 2018, BingX is a cryptocurrency exchange, serving more than 10 million users worldwide and claims to be "committed to providing a trustworthy platform that empowers users with innovative tools and features to elevate their trading proficiency".

BingX highlighted their influence in Russia in a blog on the company's website that read: "The purpose of the event was to highlight the extensive possibilities that BingX offers to its users, positioning itself as a reliable and groundbreaking exchange within the Russian market. With a focus on meeting the unique needs of the local audience, BingX has proven to be a steadfast supporter of the Russian crypto community."

THE TELEGRAPH

## 2023 TOTALENERGIES AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS Algeria legend Rabah Madjer: Expect a strong competition

ALGIERS

THE tournament, which will be played until February 11, is poised to host the continent's formidable teams, making it exceptionally fierce.

Speaking with CAFOnline.com, Madjer, the winner of the 1987 African Footballer of the Year award, acknowledged the difficulty in predicting the favourites for the upcoming competition.

Madjer's difficulty stems from the fact that all the powerhouses of African football will be playing at the tournament scheduled to be held in the West African country.

CAFonline.com: As we approach the AFCON 2023 in Cote d'Ivoire, what are your expectations regarding the level of competition?

Rabah Madjer: I am highly confident about the quality of the competition because the strongest teams in the continent are all present and by default this makes it a tough competition. The participating sides will all be vying for glory, and I expect them to raise the bar to ensure that the tournament is captivating. With just a few days remaining before the kickoff, the expectation for a high level of performance is set with top players from across the globe playing in it.

CAFonline.com: Which teams do you predict will shine in the AFCON 2023?

Rabah Madjer: Predicting standout teams is a challenging task, given the diverse pool of formidable contenders. Some



Algerian legend Rabah Madjer has shared his thoughts on the upcoming TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations Cote d'Ivoire 2023, set to kick off on January 13, 2024.

teams will obviously be aiming to go far in the continental competition, while others enter the competition with the sole aim of clinching the coveted title. Naming a specific team as the favourite is extremely challenging, especially with giants like the host nation Cote d'Ivoire, Algeria, Morocco, Senegal, and Nigeria participating in the finals.

CAFonline.com: Who are the players you anticipate will emerge as discoveries in AFCON 2023?

Rabah Madjer: I have a big difficulty of pre-determining players who might shine in the AFCON 2023 because of the

TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations is different. A player might be excelling elsewhere but when he comes to the AFCON his performance will be different because all the matches are extremely difficult. The tournament's opening matches will offer a glimpse into the players' performances, which will allow me the proper chance to assess their capabilities on the grand stage.

Meanwhile, Algeria coach Djamel Belmadi has played down the chances of the Desert Foxes ahead of this month's TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations, Cote d'Ivoire 2023.

The former international attempted to take the pressure off his side claiming they are not among the favourites insisting other sides stand a better chance of winning the title.

Belmadi stated that hosts Cote d'Ivoire were the team to beat at the tournament starting on 13 January.

He cited the Ivorians along with the likes of Egypt, Senegal, Morocco, Tunisia and Nigeria as greater contenders than the defending champions.

"We are arriving at this tournament slowly but surely, with a lot of certainty," Belmadi said when unveiling his squad for the

continent's flagship football competition.

"But we are reminded of our elimination from the first round of the last edition, followed by our failure to qualify for the 2022 World Cup."

He added: "De facto we are not favourites."

It contrasts sharply with Belmadi's bullish statements before Algeria's triumphant 2019 TotalEnergies AFCON campaign in Egypt.

On that occasion, the coach correctly predicted his side would stun the continent by bringing the trophy back to Algiers.

This time, he is keen to reduce expectations on a team still recovering from the pain of recent setbacks.

Algeria did not even reach the knockouts at the 2021 TotalEnergies AFCON in Cameroon two years or qualify for the 2022 World Cup.

But Belmadi still backed his players to perform in Cote d'Ivoire, saying: "We will go there with the intention of obtaining an optimal result."

Algeria are embarking on a 10-day training camp in the Togolese capital of Lome and play two friendlies before flying to Cote d'Ivoire for the finals.

Despite his caution, few would write off a talented Algeria squad containing the likes of Riyad Mahrez and Youcef Belaili.

Under the guidance of Afcon mastermind Belmadi, the North Africans have pedigree and quality in abundance.

While the boss of the Desert Foxes may be downplaying their chances, Algeria remain serious contenders to recapture their continental crown.

CAFonline.com

## Andre Onana faces two games in 24 hours after being cleared to play at Africa Cup of Nations

By James Ducker

ANDRE Onana will fly to the Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon) immediately after Manchester United's game against Tottenham on Sunday week after Cameroon agreed to the goalkeeper's delayed release for the tournament.

Cameroon are due to face Guinea in Ivory Coast on Jan 15 - the day after United's match with Spurs at Old Trafford, meaning Onana faces the prospect of playing twice in the space of 24 hours if selected by his country.

United had been in talks with the Cameroonian Football Federation (Fecafoot) to delay Onana's release in order for him to be able to play in the FA Cup third-round tie away to Wigan Athletic on Monday and at home to Tottenham in the Premier League six days later.

Onana quit international football after being sent off during the World Cup in Qatar in November 2022 following a dispute with coach Rigobert Song and the Fecafoot president Samuel Eto'o, the former Barcelona striker.

United signed Onana from Inter Milan for £47.2 million in July not expecting they would stand to lose him to the Afcon six months later after a fragile rapprochement between Cameroon and the goalkeeper.

The Cameroon federation is understood to have been sympathetic to United's situation which played a part in it agree-



Manchester United signed Andre Onana last July in the knowledge that he had retired from international duty and would not be going to AFCON. Agencies

ing to Onana's delayed release during amicable talks with the Manchester club. Those conversations were well received by Erik ten Hag, who met with incoming United minority shareholder Sir Jim Ratcliffe for the first time on Wednesday.

For his part, Onana has been wary about going to the Afcon on the basis of it affecting a turbulent first season with United in England.

Although Ten Hag has stood by Onana despite a litany of errors and unconvincing performances, the goalkeeper has been concerned about the prospect of struggling to reclaim his place once he returns from the tournament.

With the Afcon final due to be held on February 11, the same day as United travel to Aston Villa in the

play for the club.

"Ratcliffe meets Ten Hag for the first time as new investor

Meanwhile, Ten Hag's informal talks with Ratcliffe were held at United's Carrington training base as they met for the first time since the Ineos founder's £1.03 billion deal for a 29 per cent stake in the club was announced on Christmas Eve.

Ratcliffe spoke to Ten Hag and members of his squad as part of a series of meetings at Carrington and Old Trafford this week during the transition phase while the deal awaits approval from the Premier League.

The Oldham-born billionaire - who has been accompanied by the Ineos director of sport Sir Dave Brailsford - arrived in Manchester on Tuesday and is expected to stay until Friday. "It's all about helping Jim, Dave and the [Ineos] team get to know the club

and its people and develop plans for working together," one source said.

Ten Hag said publicly last week that he believes Ratcliffe and Ineos want to work with him although his long-term future is understood to be under threat if results do not improve. United have lost 14 matches in all competitions this season.

Ineos' immediate priority is to address United's recruitment problems with the group likely to appoint a new director of football plus a head of recruitment.

United have triggered a 12-month extension option in Aaron Wan-Bissaka's contract to tie the right back to the club until June next year. Borussia Dortmund are also moving closer to securing a loan deal for Jadon Sancho as talks with United continue positively.

THE TELEGRAPH

Gwiji by David Chikoko





# SPORT

Hodgson warns stars like Rooney have 'no magic wand'

PAGE 19

## Tanzania's first opponent intensifies preparations for 2023 AFCON



Footballers making Tanzania's senior national football team are pictured participating in drills in Egypt recently to shape up for qualifiers for the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations slated for January 13–February 11, 2024, in Ivory Coast. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA FOOTBALL FEDERATION

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

**T**ANZANIA'S first opponents in the upcoming Africa Cup of Nations, the Atlas Lions of Morocco, have intensified preparations for the continental tournament slated to be played in Côte d'Ivoire.

Currently training at the Mohammed VI Football Complex in Maamora, the Atlas Lions are continuing their preparations for the African Cup of Nations, scheduled for Ivory Coast from January 13 to February 11, 2024.

In a press release published on its official website on Wednesday, the Royal Moroccan Football Federation (FRMF) announced that the national team will fly to San Pedro next Sunday (January 7, 2024), aboard a special plane.

The Morocco football governing body also clarified that the friendly

match scheduled for Sunday against Gambia has been canceled.

Instead, coach Walid Regragui's men will play a friendly in San Pedro on January 11. However, the identity of the opponent has not been revealed.

In the upcoming Africa Cup of Nations, the Atlas Lions of Morocco will come up against Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Zambia in Group F.

Forty-seven years have

gone since Morocco last won the continental competition's silverware but, after reaching the semi-finals of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, they are now one of the favourites to win the title in Ivory Coast.

Since winning the AFCON top honour in 1976, Morocco has only reached the showpiece's final once, in 2004 when they lost to hosts Tunisia.

At the last edition in Cameroon in 2022, they lost to Egypt in the quarterfinals.

Regragui has retained the bulk of his 2022 World Cup squad, who beat Belgium, Spain, and Portugal before falling to a 2-0 defeat by France in the semis.

It includes Paris Saint-Germain defender Achraf Hakimi, Sevilla's Youssef En-Nesyri, and Manchester United midfielder Sofyan Amrabat.

But he has also brought in younger talents- for a good balance between the present and the future- such as PSV's Ismael Saibari and Real Betis

defender Chadi Riad, who won this year's U-23 AFCON.

Their adventure in Ivory Coast will begin on Wednesday, January 17 at 6 p.m. against Taifa Stars before challenging the Leopards of DR Congo on January 21 at 3 pm.

They will conclude their Group Stage campaign against the Chipolopolo of Zambia on January 24 at 9 pm.

All matches will be played at the Laurent Pokou Stadium located in the town of San Pedro.

**5 EATV MONDAY**  
TONIGHT @ 9:00  
Sports

11:00 DADAZ  
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA  
13:00 Zete Kuntu  
13:30 Kall Za Wana  
13:55 Dandoo Za Michezo  
14:00 SKONGA (I)  
14:30 Planet Bongo (I)  
15:00 Funguka  
15:30 Akili & Mo  
15:55 Dandoo Za Michezo  
16:00 Zete Kuntu  
16:55 Dandoo Za Michezo  
17:00 SILEKT  
17:55 Kuriisa  
18:00 Kall Za Wana  
18:30 #HASTAG  
19:00 EATV SAA (I)  
20:00 DADAZ (I)  
21:00 SPOKES  
22:00 Zete Kuntu  
23:00 SVOYI  
23:05 EATV SAA (I)

**eastafrika RADIO**  
05:00 Supa Breakfast  
09:00 MAMAMIA  
12:00 Kipenga Xtra  
13:00 Planet Bongo  
14:00 EA Drive  
19:00 Kipenga  
21:00 The Cruise

**88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM**



Simba SC's Ivorian winger Aubin Kramo. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBASC

## Simba SC winger eager for action

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC's Information and Communication Manager, Ahmed Ally, has officially communicated the return of the attacking midfielder Aubin Kramo to the team in Zanzibar following his recovery from injuries.

Ahmed stated that details about Kramo's official return would be provided after the outfit's doctors conduct tests to determine his readiness for the field or if he requires additional time for fitness.

Ally emphasized that Kramo is not yet fully fit for competitive matches requiring nothing less than positive results.

The official said the Ivorian winger needs to undergo light exercises before joining the team, expressing confidence in the footballer showcasing his quality to contribute to the team.

Simba SC's doctor, Edwin Kagabo, stated that he is awaiting the star's visit before providing official information on his health progress.

Kagabo, speaking after the winger's return, mentioned that the player's health has improved despite experiencing minor pains.

He disclosed: "Additionally, his weight increased due to prolonged inactivity during treatment and injury recovery."

The Ivorian winger said: "Currently, I express gratitude for my recovery and aspire to rejoin the field. I am at a 60 percent readiness level for a comeback."

"I hold deep affection for Tanzanian fans and appreciate their unwavering support," Kramo disclosed.

Excitement surrounds the

significant transformations within the Simba SC squad, including the appointment of a new head coach, Benchikha, and the technical bench.

"My earnest desire is to make a swift return, contribute to my team, and advance in the competitions that we are participating in, the 2023/24 CAF Champions League, NBC Premier League, and the Azam Sports Federation Cup," the winger noted.

Simba SC introduced Kramo as a versatile player expected to play a crucial role in upcoming domestic and international matches, aiming to surpass their performance from the previous season.

Kramo officially joined the club on July 8, 2023, becoming the second import after Cameroonian winger Willy Onana in the main transfer window.

The Ivorian winger, previously with Ivory Coast club ASEC Mimosas, sealed a lucrative deal with the Msimbazi Street giants.

Due to injury, Kramo missed all 10 NBC Premier League matches, which witnessed Simba SC securing a victory in seven, two draws, and one loss.

He also missed the CAF Champions League Group Stage encounters, with Simba SC lately sitting second in the continental tournament's Group B, securing one win, two draws, and one loss in four matches.

Simba SC is currently participating in the 2024 Mapinduzi Cup, having won both matches- a 3-1 victory over JKU SC in the first group stage game and a 2-0 win over Singida Fountain Gate FC.

## Benchikha impressed with Simba SC's victory over Singida Fountain Gate FC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA SC head coach Abdelhak Benchikha was impressed by the club's increasing fluency during the 2-0 win against Singida Fountain Gate FC in a Mapinduzi Cup tie that took place in Zanzibar on Wednesday night.

The 'Msimbazi Reds' secured their quarterfinal ticket with a victory courtesy of second-half strikes from Willy Onana and Luis Miquissone.

Cameroonian import Onana opened the scoring for Simba SC through a well-taken free kick just after the restart then Miquissone wrapped up the victory with a sweet semi-volley finish in the 59th minute.

After the game, Benchikha provided his take on the contest to the press. He was impressed by the performance of his players in a game against a solid Singida Fountain Gate FC.

The Belgo-Algerian gaffer stated: "I think it was a good match. We played against a strong team tactically and with a good coach. They make high pressing."

"However we played well,



Simba SC's head coach, Algerian Abdelhak Benchikha. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBASC

we were compact, and we had three markers in midfield," Benchikha revealed.

"We scored our first goal

through a free kick, that changed the match. Then we scored the second and, after that, the game was over," the

tactician noted.

The coach said: "I am satisfied with the team's performance. I am happy with all my

players' performance too."

The coach also admitted to taking time to struggle with information about teams in Tanzanian football.

"I am new in Tanzania, I don't have information about teams so I read teams in the first half and make corrections in the second half. I waste time on this," he noted.

"If I were here for at least three months, it would have been different but now I have problems with information about teams in Tanzania," Benchikha revealed.

Benchikha was introduced in Tanzanian football in December following the sacking of Brazilian Robert Oliveira in November.

He has led the team in three CAF Champions League Group Stage games as well as three in the NBC Premier League.

With the Mapinduzi Cup quarterfinal ticket already secured after back-to-back wins, Simba SC will wrap up the squad's Group stage campaign today with a game against Rwanda's APR FC.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

