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TARI launches sunflower planter to boost production



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Experts call for national dialogue on harnessing PPPs to drive evolution



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Cashewnut farmers, who are members of Mtwara Region's Masasi-Mtwara Co-operative Union, follow proceedings at a cashewnut auction held in Masawi District at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Hamisi Nasri

Rampant public service abuses, nepotism now 'a big problem'

"Supervision of the policy and public service laws through systems of human resources and improved digital systems."

By Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

PUBLIC service agencies are struggling with numerous unprofessional practices including nepotism, tribalism and misuse of power undermining its effectiveness, the government has admitted.

George Simbachawene, Public Service Management and Good Governance minister in the President's Office, made this observation here yesterday when opening of a workshop for heads of human resources and administration departments in the civil service.

He said that these drawbacks weaken the performance of the sector, with the three-day meeting involving officials from ministerial head offices, local government authorities, ministerial departments and government agencies was convened to address challenges in the delivery of public services.

The minister expressed concern over public institution heads who reject newly appointed or relocated employees owing to personal interests despite their having

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Tanzania, Oman pact ends double taxation

By Guardian Correspondent, Oman

TANZANIA and the Sultanate of Oman yesterday signed an agreement for removing double taxation on incomes and curbing tax avoidance, evasion.

Dr Mwigulu Nchemba, the Finance minister, and Nasser Al-Jashmi, the Oman Revenue Authority chairman, signed the pact in Muscat, with the minister saying that the signing of the agreement is a significant step in opening up the country's economy by attracting international investment.

Referring to efforts by President Samia Suluhu Hassan in that direction, he said that the pact will enable investors and traders engaged in bilateral activities and taxed only once.

They will avoid being taxed in both countries on identical transactions or income, as such a drawback hinders the prosperity of businesses on either side, he stated.

Signing the agreement is likely to attract substantial investment flows from Oman to Tanzania, especially with big companies where the royal family has considerable interests.

They are aligned with scores of private investors and have extensive cultural connections on the Mainland and

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Activists push women-led industries for Vision 2050

By Beatrice Philemon

WOMEN's rights activists have urged the government to ensure that the National Development Vision 2050 prioritises the creation of a supportive environment for women-led industries in agricultural areas.

Prof Ruth Meena, a veteran activist and member of the Women Coalition and Vision 2050 said at a meeting with senior government officials that this effort would enable women to operate businesses, creating employment opportunities for others.

Stanslaus Nyongo, the Planning and



The network has provided excellent analysis which the Planning Commission will work on all its suggestions

Investment deputy state minister in the President's Office met with activists in Dar es Salaam lately, where Vision stakeholders emphasized that women should move beyond informal roles like food vending or small shop frames.

They need to be equipped to operate industries, hotels and other businesses, they said, underlining that such industries would ideally be located in areas rich in agricultural produce, such as fruits and vegetables.

Such produce often goes to waste due to lack of processing facilities, they stated,

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Zanzibar connects 100 schools to ICT network

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR expects to connect 100 schools to a major communications network, boosting access to learning materials by improving ICT infrastructure.

Lela Muhammed Mussa, the Education and Vocational Training minister, made this affirmation at the signing ceremony of a partnership agreement with the Zanzibar Communications Infrastructure Agency (ZICTIA) for the installation of the communications network in the schools.

She said this initiative will address challenges such as the shortage of teachers, limited access to ICT equipment and the lack of technology for students.

The Zanzibar government seeks to bring about reforms in the education sector, with ICT improvements being as key area of focus, she said, praising President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi and his team for approving the funds.

The World Bank is extending a \$1.5m credit for the project, with Dolfen Co. pledging \$0.5m while the government committed over \$3m to the project, she stated.

She referred to remarks by the president that funding was not the issue as the challenge lies in correctly implementing existing plans. The new infrastructure would greatly help to reduce the shortage of science teachers, no longer relying on traditional chalk-and-board methods and thus capable of reaching more students, she said.

Teachers in science and ICT centres or schools so equipped need to embrace the new technologies, using the facilities to prepare lessons and teach students creatively, she urged.

The ministry expects that ZICTIA completes the work within the agreed timeframe while Dolfen delivers agreed upon high quality equipment, she further noted, while permanent secretary Khamis Abdalla Said elaborated on the project.

The agreement is intended to connect some schools to the national network with the provision of 'O data,' with the ICT-equipped centres receiving educational content prepared and stored by the ministry.

It will enable schools to access the con-

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Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba (2nd-L) signs an agreement in Muscat yesterday with the chairman of the Sultanate of Oman's Tax Authority, Nasser Al-Jashmi, on the mutual elimination - between Tanzania and Oman - of double taxation with respect to taxes on income and prevention of tax avoidance and evasion. Looking on are the director of the Legal Department in Tanzania's Finance ministry, Elias Kalist (L), and an Omani government international relations specialist, Salwa Khalfan Eid-Al-Salti. Photo courtesy of Finance ministry



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Rampant public service abuses, nepotism now 'a big problem'

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the required merits.

He said that such leaders prioritize their own preferences, as some officers are reluctant to hire qualified individuals fearing to lose their positions to younger, well-educated staff.

"It is shameful that some heads of public institutions are engaging in the practice of recruiting staff based on personal interests," he stated, vowing to work to uproot nepotism and tribalism in recruitment processes.

He was also aghast at favoritism, particularly in the issuance of travel permissions or per diems, cautioning senior public servants against seeking extensions of service contracts when they reach retirement age.

"This is not patriotic. There are many qualified young people ready to serve the public," he said, urging that the chief secretary no longer accept such requests unless it is an exceptional case.

Insisting on adhering to regulations and ensuring transparency in the public service, he demanded that heads of administration and human resources departments

make full use of the government's digital systems.

These include applications for recruitment and for transfer, to enhance human resources supervision and improve efficiency, he said, expressing dismay over appointing interim directors to key positions lacking necessary qualifications, underlining that it is unprofessional.

The workshop themed "Supervision of the policy and public service laws through systems of human resources and improved digital systems," also addressed preparations for salary budgets and arrears.

It also sought to map out the future vision for public service reform, aiming to anchor the public sector at a different level of performance by 2050, officials said.



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Activists push women-led industries for Vision 2050

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adding that women should be empowered with skills to set up industries, learn how to package fruits and juice, and establish tourism companies.

Small industries in rural areas would help to combat poverty and reduce food wastage, they said at a workshop, which also featured various gender activist groups, like Women Action Towards Economic Development (WATED) and the Tanzania Women Cross-Party Platform.

It was focused on identifying ways to overcome gender barriers and empower women in agriculture, mining and construction, where the retired don appealed for women's access to land, loans and a supportive environment in industries "where they are often excluded."

She also highlighted the challenges women face in the mining sector, citing the denial of licenses and frequent harassment. "We want to see women operating mining companies and receiving necessary protections," she declared.

Rose Marandu, the Women Fund

Tanzania Trust (WFTT) executive director, further advocated for a gender-sensitive budget and increased access to healthcare and water services.

These provisions would enable women to participate more fully in economic activities, she said, stressing the need for women's involvement in construction and large-scale contracts.

This would show that the country has policies that ensure women are not left behind in Tanzania's economic growth, whereas the deputy minister praised the coalition for invaluable contributions to shaping Vision 2050.

The network has provided excellent analysis which the Planning Commission will work on all its suggestions, he said, acknowledging the significant role women play in the country's development.

The Vision 2050 framework seeks to create an inclusive and equitable economy, focusing on eliminating gender-specific barriers, ensuring women's participation in all sectors, and empowering them to contribute meaningfully to the nation's development, he specified.



Valentine Ngorika (C), coordinator of a network of Manyara Region farmers and pastoralist groups, pictured at an annual meeting held in Babati town at the weekend. His focus was on the impact of climate change and strategies to enhance food security. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

13 in court over economic sabotage

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THIRTEEN people have appeared before Kisumu Resident Magistrate Court charged with economic sabotage, including the theft of copper wires from the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR).

Speaking to journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Railway Police Commander Gallus Hyera displayed the stolen wires recovered from various locations.

He revealed that the suspects include individuals from China, Kenya, and Tanzania, some of whom were employees of the Turkish railway construction company, Yapi Merkez.

Out of those arrested, eight were sent to the Kibaha Resident Magistrate's Court in the Coast

Region, while five appeared before the Kinondoni Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam, all in similar charges of economic sabotage.

Commander Hyera explained that the arrests were the result of extensive intelligence operations, which enabled the police to recover the stolen wires and other railway infrastructure materials.

Among the suspect was the electrical technician employed by Yapi Merkez, who, according to the police, was involved in cutting and stealing the wires.

He further revealed that owners of African Light Investment Company, which operates in Visiga, Mlandizi District, were also arrested.

The company, reportedly owned by individuals from China and Kenya, was found in possession

of 882 kilograms of copper wires belonging to the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC).

"I warn anyone planning to sabotage the SGR and other electric infrastructure that stern measures will be taken against them," Commander Hyera cautioned.

He urged the community to play an active role in protecting railway infrastructure and to report any acts of vandalism or criminal activities.

One month ago, Police in Dodoma Region arrested six people for allegedly damaging and stealing copper wires from the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) infrastructure in Mpwapwa and Bahi districts, Dodoma Region.

Dodoma Regional Police Commander (RPC) George Katabazi confirmed the arrests, detailing the

incidents.

In Mpwapwa District, two suspects, Said Sempinga (39) and Michael Robert (44), both from Kilosa, were caught for damaging SGR infrastructure.

The incident occurred on October 3, 2024, around 5 p.m. in Msagali Village, where the suspects allegedly cut and stole copper wires from three railway bridges.

"Following the incident, the police received reports and initiated an immediate investigation, working closely with the community," he said.

He added: "This led to the timely arrest of the suspects, who were found in possession of the stolen wires. The investigation is still ongoing and legal action will follow."

In another incident on October 8, this year, four additional suspects were arrested in Bahi District for attempting to sabotage SGR infrastructure.

The suspects, identified as Said Kapambwe (38), Petro Yassi (22), Michael Leyaseki (27) and Issa Misami (42), were arrested at different times in Bahi market.

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without having to spend money on internet services, he explained, while Hawwah Ibrahim Mbaye, the Works, Communications and Transport deputy permanent secretary expressed satisfaction that ICT is now reaching communities as the government envisaged.

Shukuru Awadhi Suleiman, the ZICTIA director general, praised the ministry for commitment to connect Zanzibar schools to the national communications network.

The project will be completed within 24 weeks as agreed, he stated, urging the ministry to expedite the signing of agreements for the second phase.

He also raised the need for proper maintenance of equipment as educational facility to ensure that teachers and students alike benefit from the new infrastructure.

He praised the government for allocating 71 hectares of land to the agency for the construction of a tech city in the Fumba area to support the technological revolution.

Mbwana Yahya Mwinyi, the ministerial ICT director, said that eventually all schools will be connected with the network, citing 11 science innovation centres and 20 ICT centres.

There are also government schools, including 26 new primary and secondary schools that all need to be effectively pegged to the communications network, he added.



Kinondoni district commissioner Saad Mtambule pictured yesterday with Mbeniteta Secondary School students while in the course of planting 500 trees in the implementation of an environmental conservation drive. Story on Page 4. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Tanzania-Oman pact ends double taxation

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in Zanzibar, he said, projecting that easing investments will help push growth in production sectors.

It will also accelerate industrial development and generate increased employment opportunities, as local investors will now be

able to invest in Oman without tax barriers, protected by this agreement, he specified.

This step presents an opportunity for Tanzanian businesses to expand their operations into international markets particularly in the Gulf region, he said, describing the pact as opening a new chapter in economic

cooperation between Tanzania and Oman.

Oman is being further attracted to investment opportunities in Tanzania thanks to its strategic location, economic attractions and favourable investment environment compared with much of the neighbouring zone, he added.



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Dr Mpoki Ulisubisa (R), Executive Director of the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI), presents certificate of appreciation in Dar es Salaam yesterday to UK-based couple Zarnat Dattoo and Jamie Satchell for their having supported the treatment of ten Tanzanian children with hydrocephalus and spina bifida. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

MOI appeals for children with hydrocephalus and spina bifida

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE Executive Director of the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI), Dr Mpoki Ulisubisa, has called on various stakeholders to support the treatment of children with hydrocephalus and spina bifida currently receiving care at the Institute.

Hydrocephalus and spina bifida are congenital (present at birth) conditions that affect the nervous system, specifically the brain and spinal cord.

His appeal came during an award ceremony held in Dar es Salaam yesterday to recognise contributions of Zarnat Dattoo and Jamie Satchell, a couple from the United Kingdom (UK), who funded the treatment of 10 children suffering from the conditions.

Dr Ulisubisa expressed gratitude for their support but emphasized the ongoing need for more contributions, especially as many of the children come from impoverished families.

He explained that the burden of raising these children often falls on their mothers alone, as many fathers abandon their families.

"MOI is your home, come anytime. We thank you very much for your contribution, which has made the treatment of these children successful," Dr Ulisubisa said.

He added: "We ask that this contribution should not be the last. Please continue the spirit of giving and helping."

The director also urged Tanzanians, organisations, businesses, and government institutions to lend their support to the treatment of children at the Institute, as there is a growing

number of patients in need of care. In response, Zarnat Dattoo shared that she and her husband Jamie Satchell have long been dedicated to supporting children in challenging circumstances around the world.

"We are not very rich, but we help with what God has blessed us with. It's part of our culture to help children, especially those in difficult environments," she said.

She said the donation marks the eighth phase of their ongoing support to children at MOI, and Zarnat promised they would continue to offer assistance as much as possible to save children's lives.

Meanwhile, MOI has announced plans to launch a digital system aimed at reducing the long queues patients face when seeking services at the institute.

Dr Laurent Lemer, the director of brain surgery services, revealed that the new system would allow patients to make appointments with specialists, pay fees online, and bypass long waiting times when they arrive at the hospital.

"In a few days, we will reduce the queues significantly. The new system will allow patients to book appointments using their phones, receive a payment number, and pay from home. When they come to the hospital, they can go directly to the doctor's room," Dr Lemer said.

The system will also streamline services such as laboratory tests and radiology, allowing patients to pay in advance and directly access these services upon arrival.

In addition, Dr. Lemer urged Tanzanians to embrace health insurance, stressing that widespread participation would significantly strengthen the fund and improve access to a variety of healthcare services across the country.

Tanzania and S. Korea sign \$90m pact for sewage treatment project

By Guardian Correspondent

THE government has signed a significant agreement with Republic of Korea (RoK) valued at \$90 million for the construction of a sewage treatment system in Dar es Salaam Region.

The agreement was formalised following a visit by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to South Korea and aims to address the growing waste management and water quality needs in the region.

Speaking during the signing event in Dar es Salaam yesterday Minister for Water, Jumaa Aweso, said the project marks a crucial step in addressing Dar es Salaam's growing water and sanitation challenges,

benefiting both the environment and public health in the region.

He noted that the project, which will span 36 months, will be implemented in the Kinondoni and Ilala districts. The project, funded through South Korea's Exim Bank, is part of broader efforts to improve Dar es Salaam's water and sanitation infrastructure.

"This project is a direct result of our President's recent visit to South Korea. We are grateful for the opportunities that such diplomatic engagements bring," minister Aweso said.

He also took the opportunity to urge officials from the Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority (DAWASA) to ensure

that the region's residents have consistent access to clean and safe water.

"There is enough water in the system, and there are no excuses for not providing clean water to the people," Aweso emphasised.

He urged DAWASA to reduce complaints from citizens about water availability and to expedite new water connections for residents.

During the event, the Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner, Albert Chalamila, addressed the ongoing challenges with the water network, particularly in areas that remain underserved. He also advocated for a reduction in water rationing and emphasised the

importance of resolving the city's sewage system issues.

Mkama Bwire, DAWASA Chief Executive Officer explained that the project would take 36 months to complete, with the primary objective of enhancing the capacity to manage the large volumes of wastewater generated in Dar es Salaam.

Eunju Ahn ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Tanzania expressed her country's commitment to further cooperation with Tanzania.

She assured that the sewage treatment project would be executed with high quality and completed within the agreed timeframe.

TARI inaugurates sunflower planter to boost production

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Singida

IN a bid to enhance sunflower production in Tanzania, the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) has developed a new farming tool designed to aid sunflower farmers and boost production.

The tool known as 'Sunflower Rafiki Planter Prototype', created in collaboration with the Centre for Agricultural Mechanisation and Rural Technology (CAMARTEC), was unveiled at a trial event in Mayaha village, Itigi District, Singida, over the weekend.

The planter, designed by TARI's Ukiriguru centre in Mwanza, uses just one liter of petrol to plant one acre of sunflower within an hour.

Dr Paul Saidia, Director of TARI Ukiriguru, explained that the planter is part of the Food Systems Resilience Programme for Tanzania (TFSRP), which supports food systems resilience by promoting climate-resilient agricultural technologies.

"The ongoing trials in regions like Singida, Dodoma, and Simiyu are aimed at familiarizing farmers with the equipment and gathering feedback for further improvements," Dr. Saidia said, noting that the machine would help farmers plant at the recommended spacing while reducing sowing costs.

Stanslaus Choaji, Assistant

Administrative Secretary for Economic and Production in Singida Region, emphasised the planter's potential to boost small-scale farmers' productivity. "Many smallholder sunflower farmers in Singida struggle to achieve high yields due to a lack of modern machinery," he said, adding that high machine costs often prevent farmers from adopting new technologies.

Solo Lameck, a local farmer, praised the innovation, stating that it would attract more young people to agriculture. Dauson Malela, the lead innovator of the planter, confirmed that the machine was designed for local use and would be available at affordable prices to encourage adoption by smallholder farmers.

Tanzania is currently the leading sunflower producer in Africa, a position strengthened by government efforts to boost the sector, including support for private investment, particularly in seed production.

National sunflower crop research coordinator, Frank Reuben, highlighted that sunflower cultivation has expanded nationwide, except in Dar es Salaam. Singida, Dodoma, and Manyara are the top producing regions, followed by Iringa, Njombe, and Mbeya. According to ministry statistics, approximately 1.6 million farmers across 800,000 households are now cultivating sunflower in Tanzania.



Opposition Chadema Secretary General John Mnyika (R), pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday presenting forms to Vice Chairman (Mainland) Tundu Lissu for nomination as an aspirant for the party's national chairmanship in upcoming elections. Photo: Correspondent Elizabeth Zaya

Leaders chart out path for sustainable education financing and devt in Africa

By Special Correspondent

The need to revolutionise education financing in Africa was at the forefront of discussions at the continental education conference, where ministers and international experts gathered to address one of the continent's most pressing challenges:

Held over the weekend Nouakchott, Mauritania aimed at ensuring sustainable funding for quality education, particularly for Africa's rapidly growing youth

population. During in-depth sessions on education financing and governance, African ministers shared their countries' successful approaches, while international experts presented innovative funding solutions.

Zimbabwe's Minister of Education announced an increase in education spending to 26.2 per cent of the national budget, while Zanzibar committed 21 per cent of its budget to education. Zanzibar also introduced a new

skills development tax on the tourism sector to support technical education initiatives.

"Traditional funding approaches alone cannot meet Africa's educational needs," emphasized Prof. Mohamed Bellhocine, African Union Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation, who moderated a high-level exchange between Mauritania's education and finance ministers. The discussion focused on improving efficiency in education spending and increasing

available resources to meet growing demands.

Tunisia's Minister of Education highlighted the country's constitutional commitment to free and compulsory education up to the age of 16, demonstrating how cross-ministerial collaboration can bolster education funding efforts.

Meanwhile, the World Bank introduced innovative financing tools, such as the "Data for Development Support" mechanism, which has already helped Côte d'Ivoire

unlock resources through debt refinancing.

Economist Jeffrey Sachs, speaking virtually, presented a thought-provoking perspective on the issue, challenging conventional education financing models. He proposed that African countries should allocate 10-15 per cent of their GDP to education, far higher than the traditional recommendation of 4-6 per cent.

His suggestion of future earnings-based funding and international tax arrangements for educated

professionals working abroad sparked crucial conversations about rethinking funding models to meet long-term educational needs.

The sessions concluded with a growing consensus that education financing must be viewed as an investment in Africa's future, not as a current expense. This shift in perspective is essential for implementing sustainable funding mechanisms that will support the continent's educational transformation over the long term.

Experts call for national dialogue on harnessing PPPs to drive evolution

By Henry Mwangonde

A Diverse group of business experts from both the public and private sectors have called for a national conversation on how Tanzania can harness private sector-driven growth under reformed Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models.

The call for action came during the Impact Business Awards 2024 in Dar es Salaam over the weekend, where leaders gathered to discuss the crucial role of PPPs in shaping the country's economic future.

Experts urged modifications to existing policies to ensure the effective operationalization of PPPs, which they view as key to unlocking the country's vast economic potential across various sectors.

Ambassador (rtd) Ami Mpungwe, a member of the Planning Commission, identified a fundamental issue: Tanzania's national savings rate, which remains low at just 15percent of GDP—well below the 30percent needed to generate sufficient domestic capital.

He stressed the importance of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to fill this gap and raised concerns about shortages in technological and human capital.

Without advanced technology and skilled labor, Mpungwe argued, the country struggles to transform its resources into value, ultimately limiting the appeal of PPPs.

A significant barrier to successful PPPs, Mpungwe added, is the lack of trust between the public and private sectors.

"If the private sector is always viewed as exploitative, it will be difficult to establish the trust necessary for collaboration," he said.

For PPPs to succeed in Tanzania, he called for a shift in mindset, urging the need for clear policies, fiscal regimes, and regulatory frameworks that will attract private capital.

Former Controller and Auditor General, Prof. Mussa Assad, echoed the concerns, calling for greater financial transparency and collaboration between the sectors.

He emphasised the need for market-based price discovery to facilitate fair negotiations, noting that the government does not possess the market expertise of the private sector, and that creates challenges in crafting equitable agreements.

John Ulanga, Director of International Trade and Economic

Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, shared an optimistic perspective on Tanzania's progress.

He highlighted the country's macroeconomic stability over the past 25 years, citing controlled inflation and steady GDP growth.

Ulanga pointed out that key sectors like mining, tourism, transportation, telecom, and banking have attracted substantial private investment.

He underscored that the investors who have entered the Tanzanian market have benefited, as evidenced by the annual Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) list of top taxpayers, most of whom are privatised or private enterprises.

Tanzania's strategic geographical location was also highlighted as a key advantage. "Tanzania is not just a gateway to its own market, but to the entire East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC)," Ulanga noted, reinforcing the country's position at the heart of East Africa.

However, Ulanga pointed out that there is still significant untapped potential, particularly in infrastructure.

He cited the lack of private investment in critical areas such as roads and railways as a missed opportunity for both efficiency and economic growth.

David Tarimo, a panel moderator and member of the Presidential Tax Reform Commission, acknowledged that while Tanzania's Vision 2050 lays a solid foundation, the country's PPP landscape has faced several hurdles that hinder progress. Nevertheless, he noted that there are signs of progress despite the challenges.

The Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC), director for investment promotion John Mnali said the centre is actively working to attract private capital into sectors like agriculture, mining, fisheries, tourism, energy, ICT, and infrastructure.

Mnali emphasised the government's focus on encouraging value-added activities, such as processing raw crops and minerals domestically before export.

TIC's efforts have already yielded positive results. In 2021, the country registered 256 projects, generating 53,000 jobs. By 2023, this number increased to 526 projects, and by November 2024, the figure had reached 812 projects, projected to create over 204,000 jobs.

Kinondoni DC calls for tree planting in schools to support greener future

By Guardian Correspondent

KINONDONI District Commissioner, Saad Mtambule has underscored the need for primary and secondary schools to plant trees in support of the government's efforts to ensure cleaner and greener environment.

"We all well understand that trees convert carbon dioxide and water into oxygen. In addition trees are source of rainfall but also a source of food including fruits," the District Commissioner said on Monday when speaking shortly after leading a tree planting exercise Mbweniteta Secondary School, in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam.

He called upon students as well as teachers to take care of the 500 planted trees so that it benefits the current and future generations.

Donated by Bayport Tanzania, the planted 500 trees at Mbweniteta Secondary School is part of the firm's initiative which aligns with its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy to support a cleaner, greener future for Tanzania.

The firm's chief operations officer, Ndringo Materu, emphasised the company's focus on sustainability during the event.

"In 2019, we transitioned our loan origination process from paper-based to digital, reducing paper usage and waste significantly. As part of our commitment to a sustainable future, we pledged

to plant 1,000,000 trees across Tanzania. Planting 500 trees in Kinondoni today is another step forward in achieving this goal," Materu said.

Gema John, a Form Three student at the school commended the company for choosing their school to drive the tree planting exercise.

"There are so many public schools within Kinondoni District but you have decided to choose our school for this exercise. This clearly shows and demonstrates the love you have for our school. We the students here promise to take care of these trees as an appreciation," she said.

Gema added that the school initially had many trees planted at their school but many are shade. But now they are happy that the company has provided fruit trees which will not only provide shade but also contribute to their nutrition.



We all well understand that trees convert carbon dioxide and water into oxygen. In addition trees are source of rainfall but also a source of food including fruits



Iringa district commissioner Kheri James (3rd-L) pictured at the weekend presenting agricultural equipment worth over 100m/- to one of 75 youths engaged in the implementation of Feed The Future Tanzania project. It was support meant to help them diversify and improve their farm and livestock development activities. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

75 youths empowered with 100m/- agriculture equipment in Iringa

By Correspondent Francis Godwin,

Iringa

A Total of 75 youth in Iringa Region have been empowered with agricultural, livestock, and processing equipment worth 100m/-, thanks to the Feed the Future Tanzania project in collaboration with Agriedo Hub.

The initiative, aimed at boosting the capacity of young people in the agricultural value chain, is set to reach 200 youth by January 2025.

Mshindi Isaya, project manager for Feed the Future Tanzania, emphasised that the project's primary goal is to support youth under 35 by providing them with access to modern farming tools, markets, and financial services.

"Our focus is to link youth with financial institutions and market opportunities to enable them to engage in productive farming and reduce unemployment," Isaya said.

Each participant in the project contributed 300,000/- towards the cost of the equipment, with the project covering the remaining 700,000/-. The collaborative effort has enabled the youth to receive equipment valued at one million shillings per person, enhancing their ability to start or expand agricultural businesses.

Charles Masasi, project coordinator for Agriedo Hub, explained that the initiative was designed to address key challenges such as lack of capital and distrust towards financial institutions. He noted that the equipment provided would help the youth

engage in efficient agricultural activities, boosting productivity in the region.

Iringa District Commissioner Kheri James praised the project, recognising the positive impact it will have on local youth.

"This new technology will empower youth to engage in modern farming and livestock activities, creating jobs and boosting the economy of Iringa Region," he said, urging beneficiaries to maintain the equipment for long-term success.

Hadija Jabiri, a representative from Agriedo Hub, added that the centre aims to connect young farmers in the Southern Highlands with markets, funding, and business education.

She highlighted the youth's commitment, with 30 percent of

the equipment cost contributed by them, demonstrating their investment in the project.

The Ministry of Agriculture, through the 'Jenga Kesho Iliyobora' programme, has also been working to address barriers like access to land and capital, enabling youth to engage in agribusiness with greater ease.

Vumilia Zikankuba, representative from the Ministry of Agriculture, emphasized the government's dedication to supporting youth in agriculture.

Ayoub Kago, a vegetable farmer from Mufindi expressed gratitude for receiving an irrigation machine, which he had long desired but could not afford.

"This machine will improve my productivity and make irrigation work much easier," he said.



Hadija Sokolo (L), the chairperson of the Women's Police Network's in Tanga Region, has a word at the weekend with one of the patients admitted to Pangani District Hospital. A delegation from the network was on a visit to the hospital during which it presented an assortment of items to patients admitted there. Photo: Correspondent Cheji Bakari

RITA resolves Mwanza mosque dispute

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

THE Registration, Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency (RITA) has urged the newly appointed Board of Trustees of Ijumaa Mosque in Mwanza City to safeguard the mosque's assets and promote unity among its worshippers.

Speaking to journalists shortly after the interim committee handed over its responsibilities to the new board of trustees at Ijumaa Mosque yesterday, RITA Administrator General and CEO, Frank Kanyusi, said the appointment of the new board marks the resolution of a longstanding dispute that had lasted for over 30 years.

The dispute stemmed from

amendments to the mosque's Constitution, which was registered in 1990.

"The key causes of the dispute included unrecognized constitutional amendments made in 1993 and submitted to the Registrar in 1997, misunderstandings among board members, misuse of assets and funds, and a lack of transparency within the institution," said Kanyusi.

In February of this year, RITA established a probe committee tasked with investigating the matter and submitting a report within one month. The investigation uncovered misappropriation of one billion/-.

"Following the allegations against

the previous board, I formed a probe committee, and the report was handed over to the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) for further investigation. I understand that some members have already been questioned, and PCCB will soon complete its findings," he added.

Kanyusi urged the new Board of Trustees to carry out their duties in accordance with the law, emphasizing that they are custodians of the mosque's assets, not owners, and are accountable to the members.

Sherally Hussein, the vice chairman of the new Board of Trustees, commended RITA for its role in mediating the dispute. He

said it is now time for all factions within the mosque to come together and work in unity to achieve the institution's goals and vision.

"We are confident that the previous disputes, which divided us into different factions, have now been resolved. This is the right time for all groups to unite and build a stronger institution that will make a significant contribution to both the worshippers and the nation as a whole," said Hussein.

The office of the Administrator General (RITA) has pledged continued support to the new board to ensure they effectively fulfil their responsibilities for the greater good of the Islamic community in Mwanza.



The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in Tanzania, Eunju Ahn (3rd-R), pictured in Dodoma city yesterday presenting a dummy key to Dodoma regional commissioner Rosemary Senyamule (L) from UNICEF Representative Elke Wisch (2nd-R) and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Tanzania director Manshik Shin. It was in marking the handing over of Dodoma's US\$3 million Ilazo Health Centre by the two agencies, which collaborated in putting up the facility. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

Koica and UNICEF hand over new health facility in Dodoma

IN a boost to the health sector, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in collaboration with UNICEF, yesterday handed over to the government the fourth state-of-the-art Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC) facility in Dodoma City.

The Ilazo health centre project was funded by the KOICA-UNICEF partnership as part of the Project, 'Improved Maternal and Neonatal Health Care Through Strengthening the Blood Transfusion System and CEmONC' at total cost of \$3million.

The amount was for construction, procurement of medical equipment, and training of healthcare providers and aims to strengthen health systems and ensure timely and high-quality care for women and newborns in Dodoma city council and surrounding areas.

The Ilazo and other three health facilities are equipped with state-of-the-art amenities, including an outpatient department, labor ward, 14-bed maternity wards, antenatal and postnatal care units, a modern neonatal ICU with a capacity of 17 units, a modern laboratory, operating theatre, laundry, mortuary, among others to ensure that every woman and child receives the critical care they need.

Speaking while officiating the handover ceremony, Dodoma Regional Commissioner, Rosemary Senyamule thanked both KOICA and UNICEF for the support, stating that it is in line with President Samia Suluhu Hassan's vision to improve provision of health services, especially maternal and child care in the country.

She noted that the project highlights the collaborative efforts of the government, development partners, and local communities to address critical healthcare challenges

and ensure access to lifesaving services.

"We highly appreciate your efforts in helping the government in different ways, more so in improving provision of health services in the country", she said, adding that the facilities will help save lives of Tanzanians.

Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Tanzania, Eunju Ahn, who also attended the event, applauded the government for efforts to improve healthcare and reduce maternal and child deaths.

She expressed her country's construction, procurement to continue working with the government in various areas, especially health sector. "Korea remain committed to collaborating with the government of Tanzania to realize the 2050 goals" he said.

Despite notable progress made by the Government over the years in maternal and neonatal health, Tanzania continues to face challenges, including a maternal mortality ratio of 104 deaths per 100,000 live births and a neonatal mortality rate of 24 deaths per 1,000 live births.

This accounted to nearly half of all under-five deaths in the country as indicated in the 2022 Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS). Limited access to skilled birth attendants and emergency care contributes significantly to these statistics. The CEmONC facility at Ilazo Health Centre is expected to address these gaps, serving an estimated 100,000 people annually.

KOICA Tanzania Country Director, Mankish Shin, on his part noted that through the collaboration, they are enhancing healthcare infrastructure and ensuring that healthcare providers have the tools and training needed to deliver quality care.

"This is a true testament to the power of partnerships in achieving health equity," said Shin.

UNICEF Representative to Tanzania, Elke Wisch, said the organization has been privileged to be a longstanding Primary Health Care partner in Tanzania in joint efforts to improving the health and well-being of children and their families, and to realizing the right to health for every woman and every child in Tanzania.

"I would like to congratulate the government of Tanzania for efforts to improve access to quality health care, particularly your focus on primary health care, which is a fundamental step towards achieving Universal Health Coverage" she said.

The director also thanked the government for its dedication to transforming healthcare delivery, with a special focus on maternal and neonatal care.

The UNICEF boss expressed gratitude to the KOICA and Government of the Republic of Korea for their generous support which have made this possible.

In addition to the Ilazo Health Centre, KOICA and UNICEF have facilitated the establishment of modern CEmONC facilities at three other health centers in the region: Haneti, Soya, and Chipanga, in Chamwino, Chemba and Bahi districts respectively, which were inaugurated earlier this year.

The total costs for all four CEmONC facilities including the Ilazo facility that was inaugurated today amounting to USD 8.1 million out of which KOICA contributed 6.1m USD and UNICEF \$2 million respectively. Furthermore, the project supported the construction of a central zone blood transfusion services center in Itega, Dodoma City, which is now fully operational.

Higher learning experts due to discuss war on moral decay amid globalisation

By Correspondent Idda Mushi, Morogoro

HIGHER learning experts from across Africa and beyond have gathered in Morogoro to address the issue of moral decay in African cultures amid globalisation.

The two-day conference, titled Africa of Tomorrow, kicked off yesterday at Jordan University (JUCO) and is being held in collaboration with Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), the Islamic University of Morogoro (MUM), and the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA).

Participants from various institutions, including Imo State University from Nigeria, the University of Zimbabwe, the Arizona Institute from the United States, and Portable Practical Educational Preparation (PPEP), are part of this

critical dialogue.

Speaking during the opening event yesterday here, Dr Adolph Makauki, a senior lecturer at Mzumbe University and the chairman of the conference organizing committee, emphasized that the conference would cover a broad range of topics such as politics, history, economics, ethics, rights, heritage, freedom, and language.

The central theme of the conference, 'Community Efforts in Preserving African Cultures and Languages,' will engage over 200 participants, half of whom are expected to be youth. Dr. Makauki stressed that the discussions would focus on how African communities can collaborate to preserve their cultures and languages while addressing the challenges posed by modern influences.

The Minister for Information, Arts, Culture, and Sports, Prof. Paramagamba Kabudi, will be the guest of honour at the event, providing a key address on the importance of cultural preservation and ethical conduct in the face of globalisation.

Carol Mattunda, coordinator of the community development department at Jordan University, stated that preparations for the conference were complete and that they expect fruitful discussions that will lead to tangible solutions for revitalising African ethics and cultures, particularly among the youth.

The conference aims to foster solutions that can help curb moral decay and empower young people to embrace their cultural heritage in a rapidly changing global environment.

Dr Mwinyi holds talks on Union tax reforms

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi yesterday met with the Presidential Commission on Tax Reforms at the Zanzibar State House for an introductory discussion on Union tax issues.

A delegation led by the commission chairman Ombeni Sefue, engaged in discussion on tax reform proposals that will be presented to both the Zanzibar and Union governments.

During the meeting, President Mwinyi expressed his gratitude to President Samia Suluhu Hassan for appointing the Commission,

emphasising that the proposed reforms would strengthen and transform the tax systems in both governments, ultimately improving business operations and tax-related matters.

The Commission also met with First Vice President Othman Masoud Othman, who explained that the current tax system in the country allows for a proliferation of multiple taxes managed by different authorities.

Othman noted that the existence of these multiple tax authorities not only creates significant inconvenience for businesses but also poses a major challenge that

the Commission must address, particularly in key sectors like air transport and agriculture.

He stressed the need for a simplified tax system to improve efficiency and business operations in Tanzania, highlighting the importance of reviewing tax structures in critical sectors like agriculture. Such reforms, he emphasised, would ensure resources are invested effectively, contributing to the country's economic development.

Othman pointed out that the current tax framework could lead to business closures, not only because of difficulties in fully paying taxes but also due to the financial strain on businesses trying to maintain operations.

On air transport, Othman noted that while Tanzania has several airlines offering numerous job opportunities, the sector still requires tax reforms to improve efficiency and benefit the country. He also remarked that air transport has become largely accessible only to the wealthy and reform is necessary to foster growth in the sector.

He recommended that Tanzania adopt a tax system tailored to its specific context, as done in other countries, to aid tax collection and contribute to economic growth. Othman also suggested reducing the number of tax authorities to eliminate inefficiencies caused by multiple institutions, which would support business growth.

Ambasad Sefue explained that the Commission's mandate is to consult with stakeholders, review the entire tax system, and propose improvements. He stated that these proposals would help streamline the tax system and create a more favourable business environment in Tanzania.

The Commission, established by President Samia Suluhu Hassan and launched on October 4 this year, is tasked with reviewing the entire tax system, including management, tax authorities, communication, standards, and the significance of taxes.



Tabora regional commissioner Paul Chacha (R) exchanges greetings with Chief of Defence Forces Gen Jacob Mkunda shortly before talks at the RC's office yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

WE EFFECT TANZANIA COUNTRY OFFICE

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

		31 December 2023	31 December 2022
	Note	TZS	TZS
Income	2	2,336,503,342	2,372,755,604
Expenditure			
Activity costs	3	2,053,950,457	2,108,131,222
Operational costs	4	129,538,354	136,883,146
Staff costs	5	153,014,531	127,741,236
Total Expenditure		2,336,503,342	2,372,755,604
Surplus/(deficit)		-	-

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

		31 December 2023	31 December 2022
	Notes	TZS	TZS
Assets			
Current Assets			
Current receivables from Partner Organizations	6	41,325,514	45,612,592
Cash and Cash Equivalents	7	124,418,540	180,189,545
Total Assets		165,744,054	225,802,137
Liabilities			
Other Current Liabilities	8	1,373,736	22,438
Accrued Expenses & Deferred Income		56,732,839	-
IC ROEA – Liability due to HQ	9	107,637,479	225,779,699
Total Liabilities		165,744,054	225,802,137

The financial statements on pages 19 to 27 were authorised for issue by the We Effect Tanzania Country Office management on 12 April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Frank Ademba
Country Manager

Proscovia Mlawa
Country Finance Officer

Proscovia Mlawa
Country Finance Officer



INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION

Introduction:

Pact is an international nonprofit that works in nearly 40 countries, building solutions for human development that are evidence-based, data-driven, and owned by the communities we serve. Founded in 1971, Pact works with partners to build resilience, improve accountability, and strengthen knowledge and skills for sustainable social impact. Since 2001, we have been working in Tanzania to help people and communities build their own capacity to generate income, improve access to quality health services, and gain lasting benefit from the sustainable use of natural resources around them to benefit future generations. For more about Pact, visit www.pactworld.org.

Pact Tanzania has set aside funds towards the cost for supplying various goods, works and other services and intends to Pre-qualify interested suitably qualified and competent bidders for the provision of and supply of various goods, works and services for a period of 2 years. The objective of this pre-qualification is to identify competent companies / firms that will be called upon from time to time to quote/tender for supply of goods, work, and services during the two - year period as per notification issued upon being successful.

Please note that even if you are a current service provider to Pact Tanzania, you still need to apply.

Requirements:

S/N	Category: Description of Goods/Supplies or Services	Lot No.	Required location
1	Supply and Printing of various promotional materials i.e. T-shirts, Caps, Wheel covers and Banners	Lot No. 1	Dar es Salaam
2	Provision of Air conditioners repair and maintenance services and hardware materials	Lot No. 2	Dar es Salaam
3	Provision of Air, Ferry and Train ticketing services	Lot No. 3	Dar es Salaam
4	Provision of Vehicle hire and Taxi services	Lot No. 4	Dar es Salaam, Kagera, Mwanza, Tabora, Mbeya, Bukoba, Simiyu, Kigoma, Kahama, Geita, Tanga and Shinyanga
5	Provision of Courier services	Lot No. 5	Dar es Salaam, Kagera, Mwanza, Tabora, Mbeya, Bukoba, Simiyu, Kigoma, Kahama, Geita, Tanga and Shinyanga
6	Supply of Office sundries/ general merchandise (Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Milk etc.), cleaning materials and toilet utilities	Lot No. 6	Dar es Salaam
7	Supply and maintenance service of ICT Equipments (Computers, Laptops, UPS, Printers – including Server SSD Hard Disks, Toners & Cartridges, Projectors, Conference Room Scheduling Panels, Copiers and ICT consumables)	Lot No. 7	Dar es Salaam
8	Supply and Printing of Books and IEC materials (brochures, Business cards, IDs, booklets, posters, flyers and leaflets)	Lot No. 8	Dar es Salaam
9	Provision of Hotel accommodation, Conference package and other conference facilities.	Lot No. 9	Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Morogoro, Arusha, Zanzibar, Kagera, Mwanza, Tabora, Mbeya, Bukoba, Simiyu, Kigoma, Kahama, Geita, Tanga and Shinyanga
10	Supply of Education subsidies (bags, pens, pencils, rulers, mathematical sets, uniforms, shoes and other school items)	Lot No. 10	Dar es Salaam
11	Supply of Startup kits items (Welding, Saloon, Plumbing, Carpentry, Masonry, Food production, Tailoring, Mechanics, etc. according to vocational courses)	Lot No. 11	Dar es Salaam
12	Supply of sports gears – Football, Jersey, truck suit, whistles, sports shoes, socks, gloves etc.	Lot No. 12	Dar es Salaam
13	Provision of food catering services at the office or training centers.	Lot No. 13	Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Morogoro, Arusha, Zanzibar, Kagera, Mwanza, Tabora, Mbeya, Bukoba, Simiyu, Kigoma, Kahama, Geita, Tanga and Shinyanga
14	General Office cleaning and fumigation services	Lot No. 14	Dar es Salaam
15	General Office repairs and maintenance services (Building, furniture and fittings, office equipment, generator etc.)	Lot No. 15	Dar es Salaam
16	Supply of motor vehicle spare parts, batteries, tires and related accessories.	Lot No. 16	Dar es Salaam

Eligibility

The service provider must be currently legally operating in Tanzania, and the proposal must clearly express ability of the Provider to meet or exceed the Requirements/ Specifications outlined above.

- Ability to deliver the required services.
- Ability to deliver the required goods.

Submission Instructions.

Interested service provider must submit the following information to Pact Tanzania for each Lot:

- Application Letter
- Current company profile.
- Copies of registration, certificate and address of the registered office, relevant and valid business license, VAT, TIN certificates, most recent tax clearance certificate, and any relevant license or certificate as per applied categories. These should align with the Lot being applied.
- Evidence of similar assignments, and at least three (3) copies of the recent contracts or purchase orders similar to applied categories and at least three (3) names and addresses of client served.
- Current Audited financial statement for at least 2 yrs (most recent) and must be signed and stamped by both parties.

Interested service providers should submit their applications electronically to Pact Tanzania via email at tendertz@pactworld.org by Tuesday 7th January 2025 addressing to: -

**The Tender Committee,
Pact Tanzania,
Masasani Peninsula
Plot 1486
P. O. Box 6348,
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Email: tendertz@pactworld.org**

Clarifications:

Request for clarification can be done via email ProcurementTZ@pactworld.org indicating; **Request for Clarification: LOT #**. Clarifications will be responded till **Friday 20th December 2024 12pm**.

Evaluation Criteria:

(This will be a step-by-step evaluation on pass or fail basis).

- Minimum eligibility
- Past performance - For vendors who have worked previously with Pact, Past performance will be assessed. Any vendor with poor performance record will not be considered.
- Satisfactory site visit if needed.
- Financial capability if successful from above criteria.

Note:

- Application must be submitted electronically to Pact Tanzania.
- Vendors currently working with Pact Tanzania are also advised to apply.
- Application received after that time or at a different address may not be accepted.
- Prequalification is not a guarantee for business opportunities, bidders will be invited to submit their quotations on a need basis based on the opportunities available.
- Submission email, subject name should be lot number e.g. "Application - LOT 1". If interested in applying for more than one lot, separate emails should be submitted for each lot.

183013

Tanzania Red Cross constructs 35 houses for Hanang flood victims

By Guardian Correspondent

THE Tanzania Red Cross Association has completed the construction of 35 houses for flood victims in Hanang District, Manyara Region, valued at 1.7bn/-.

The houses are part of the 101 promised by the government after devastating floods at the end of last year, which resulted in loss of life and property.

Lucia Pande, TRCS Secretary-General detailed that in Dar es Salaam yesterday while sending best wishes to Tanzanians for the year-end session.

She emphasized that the association remains a key partner of the government, playing a crucial role in providing humanitarian services during disasters such as floods, droughts, and road or water accidents.

"We have completed the construction of 35 out of the 101 houses the government promised to build for flood victims in Hanang, so we have done our part," Pande

said, noting that the final task now is the official handover of the houses to the beneficiaries, as per the government's distribution plan.

The housing project was made possible through funds from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which contributed to the construction of 33 houses. The Spanish Red Cross funded the remaining two houses.

Pande highlighted that this project demonstrates the power of community solidarity in addressing disasters, with the Red Cross collaborating closely with local communities in times of need. The association's efforts this year also extended beyond Hanang, providing assistance to other regions affected by disasters.

For instance, the Rufiji District in the Coast Region faced significant flooding, while outbreaks of cholera affected parts of Simiyu and Shinyanga regions.

The TRCS responded by offering humanitarian support and raising

awareness about epidemic diseases, including Ebola, Marburg, and Mpox, particularly in border areas.

"The association has worked tirelessly to educate Tanzanians on how to act in the face of epidemics and other disasters," said Lucia. "Through our volunteers and in partnership with government officials, we have been able to promote public health awareness."

In addition to its disaster response efforts, the Tanzania Red Cross has been collaborating with other Red Cross organisations, such as those in France and Kenya, to mobilise resources and enhance disaster management services.

The association also focuses on disaster preparedness by training volunteers, providing first aid at public events, and offering psychological support to those affected by crises. Lucia emphasized that these activities have been part of the Red Cross's mission for over 60 years, in partnership with both the government and international stakeholders.



Kilindi district commissioner Hashim Mgandilwa (in light blue shirt) pictured yesterday chairing the first-quarter council meeting on the status of nutrition in the district. Photo: Correspondent Cheji Bakari

World Bank plans \$1.65bn loans for Nigeria in 2025

By Special Correspondent

THE World Bank is set to approve three major loan projects for Nigeria in 2025, totaling \$1.65 billion, aimed at addressing critical social and economic challenges in the country.

The loans will focus on supporting internally displaced persons, improving education, and enhancing nutrition, with the goal of fostering Nigeria's recovery and development.

The first project, titled Solutions for the Internally Displaced and Host Communities Project, seeks \$300 million in funding. The project is designed to provide sustainable solutions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their host communities, addressing social and economic challenges faced by these populations. The project is under review, with approval expected on April 8, 2025.

The second project, HOPE for Quality Basic Education for All, is set

to receive \$553.8 million in financing. This initiative aims to improve access to quality education across Nigeria, focusing on underserved areas to ensure more children benefit from a solid educational foundation. Approval is slated for March 20, 2025.

The third project, Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria 2.0, involves a loan of \$800 million. This initiative seeks to improve nutrition across Nigeria, targeting malnutrition and health issues among vulnerable populations. A decision meeting for this project is scheduled for February 20, 2025.

These loans are part of the World Bank's broader efforts to support Nigeria's social and economic recovery, particularly in sectors that require urgent intervention.

In addition to these upcoming loans, the World Bank has already approved \$6.95 billion in loans for Nigeria since President Bola Tinubu took office. On December

13, 2024, the bank approved a \$500 million loan for the Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project-Scale Up. This project aims to enhance rural access to markets, schools, and healthcare services while fostering agricultural growth and social cohesion.

The latest loan approval for the Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project is the 10th loan approved under President Tinubu's administration. Other key projects include a \$750 million loan for the power sector recovery and a \$500 million loan to promote women's empowerment.

The \$1.65 billion financing package for 2025 underscores the World Bank's ongoing commitment to supporting Nigeria's development goals. However, the approval of these funds will depend on Nigeria's ability to meet project prerequisites, including ensuring transparency and accountability in the implementation of these initiatives.

34 killed in Mozambique by cyclone, thousands displaced

By Special Correspondent

CYCLONE Chido, which hit southeastern Africa over the weekend, has claimed at least 34 lives and displaced over 175,000 people in Mozambique, according to officials.

The cyclone, which made landfall on Sunday, has wreaked havoc in the northern provinces of Niassa, Nampula, and Cabo Delgado, leaving a trail of destruction.

The National Institute for Natural Disaster in Mozambique reported that the cyclone brought severe winds, thunderstorms, and over 250 millimeters of rainfall in just 24 hours, significantly affecting infrastructure and social services. Schools, health centres, and residential buildings were among the structures destroyed, compounding the humanitarian crisis in these already vulnerable regions.

"The situation remains dire, and the number of fatalities is likely to rise as assessment teams continue

their work on the ground," said a spokesperson from the Mozambique government. The affected areas face challenges in accessing essential services, as many roads and bridges have been rendered impassable.

In response, the government has allocated approximately \$4 million in initial humanitarian aid to help with rescue and relief operations. The money is being directed to emergency shelters, medical supplies, and the restoration of critical services. International aid organizations have also begun mobilizing resources to assist with the ongoing crisis.

Cyclone Chido's path of destruction extends beyond Mozambique, with neighboring Malawi also severely impacted. Two fatalities have been reported, and 1,800 people have been displaced in the country's southern region. The Department of Disaster and Management Affairs in Malawi warned that further damage assessments are ongoing,

and the situation in some areas is still precarious.

The cyclone's effects have led to widespread panic, especially in rural communities that depend heavily on agriculture and infrastructure that has now been destroyed. The severity of the storm has raised concerns about its long-term economic and social impacts, with experts predicting that it could take years for communities to fully recover.

Meanwhile, officials in France's Mayotte region are bracing for potential casualties, with fears that nearly 1,000 could have died due to the cyclone's violent winds and flooding in the Indian Ocean archipelago, although no official confirmation has yet been made.

As rescue operations continue, the region remains on high alert, with efforts focused on providing relief to the hardest-hit communities and preparing for any additional storms during the cyclone season.



National Environment Management Council director general Dr Immaculate Semesi has a word with other members of the council's staff during a tour of Ndoto Pole Pole Farm in Bagamoyo District yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

800 arrested in major Nigerian crypto-romance scam onslaught

ABUJA

Nigeria's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has arrested 792 individuals in a major crackdown on an international online fraud operation.

The suspects, including 148 Chinese nationals and 40 Filipino nationals, were detained on December 10 after a raid on the Big Leaf Building, a seven-storey

luxury structure in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital.

According to EFCC spokesperson Wilson Uwujaren, the building operated as a call center for a sophisticated fraud scheme targeting victims in the Americas and Europe. The fraudsters used social media platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram to lure people with offers of romance or fake cryptocurrency investment

opportunities.

Once trust was established, victims were manipulated into transferring funds into fraudulent schemes. Nigerian accomplices initially contacted the victims, while foreign partners handled the financial exploitation.

The EFCC seized several items during the raid, including computers, phones, and vehicles. Authorities are working closely with

international partners to investigate possible connections to organized crime networks. The ongoing investigation aims to uncover further details and extend the scope of arrests, as many victims remain unaware of the extent of the scam.

This operation highlights the growing threat of online fraud and the importance of international cooperation in tackling transnational cybercrime.

Zimbabwe kicks off project to reduce mercury use in artisanal gold mining

HARARE

Zimbabwe's government is taking action to support a more responsible artisanal gold mining sector, launching a \$23.7 million USD project to reduce mercury across mine sites in the country.

A toxic chemical used to extract gold from ore, mercury damages the lungs, skin, and eyes. The chemical can travel far from where it is released, polluting the air, water, and soil. Furthermore, it bioaccumulates up the food chain.

In Zimbabwe, over 300,000 people work in artisanal gold mining, with the sector contributing to more than 40 percent of the country's mineral exports. Across the country, 96 percent of artisanal gold mine sites use mercury, with miners often forgoing protective equipment and risking exposure to toxic fumes. Zimbabwe's artisanal gold mining activities result in more than 24 tonnes of mercury being released annually.

The five-year planetGOLD Zimbabwe project is financially supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The project is executed by the international non-profit organization, IMPACT, in close coordination with the government of Zimbabwe.

We look forward to working with all stakeholders to create a sustainable change in the sector

The project will work together with local communities to reduce the use of mercury in artisanal and small-scale gold mining—the world's largest source of anthropogenic emissions of mercury pollution—while improving the health and lives of local mining communities. The Zimbabwe project is part of a global programme implemented in 25 countries.

The planetGOLD Zimbabwe

project plans to support 7,500 men and women at 11 districts in Zimbabwe, reducing mercury use by 4.85 tonnes. In addition to mercury reduction, the project aims to support formalization of the artisanal gold mining sector and increasing miner's access to finance. This will lead to the adoption of mercury-free technologies and promote more responsible and traceable gold supply chains.

The project officially launched on November 14 in Harare, with an Inception Workshop that brought together stakeholders to discuss how planetGOLD Zimbabwe will support a more responsible artisanal gold sector.

In a keynote speech, Edward Samuriwo, Acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Climate, and Wildlife, outlined the project's significance in addressing the challenges of mercury use in Zimbabwe's gold mining sector. Mr. Samuriwo reaffirmed Zimbabwe's commitment to the Minamata Convention on Mercury and emphasized the pivotal role the planetGOLD project will play in supporting the country's efforts to eliminate mercury use in artisanal gold mining through the implementation of Zimbabwe's National Action Plan.

Zimbabwe ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury in 2021. In its National Action Plan, the country committed to strong cooperation among all stakeholders including government agencies and supply chain actors to improve the health and safety of communities involved in artisanal gold mining.

"Through the launch of the planetGOLD project, Zimbabwe moves towards more responsible artisanal gold mining. We look forward to working with all stakeholders to create a sustainable change in the sector," said Yann Lebrat, IMPACT's Deputy Executive Director.



RE-ADVERTISED: REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST: PROCUREMENT, LOGISTICS & SUPPORT SERVICES FOR MAINTENANCE SPARE PARTS & INITIAL STOCK OF CONSUMABLES. REFERENCE NO. REQ-00000659

East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) LTD ("EACOP LTD" or "COMPANY" herein) invites experienced and reputable companies to express their interest in providing "Procurement, Logistics & Support Services for Maintenance of Spare Parts & Initial Stock of Consumables" services ("the Services") to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) Project.

The EACOP Project involves the construction and operation of an underground and cross-border pipeline to transport crude oil from Lake Albert area in Uganda to eastern coast of Tanzania for export to international markets. The pipeline will run from Kabaale, Hoima District in Uganda to the Chongoleani peninsula in Tanga, Tanzania. The length of the pipeline is 1,443 km, of which 296km will be in Uganda and 1,147 km in Tanzania. In Tanzania the pipeline will traverse eight (8) regions comprising of Kagera, Geita, Shinyanga, Tabora, Singida, Dodoma, Manyara and Tanga, 27 administrative District Councils, and 231 Villages.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOPE OF THE SERVICES:

The East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project will require a comprehensive turnkey solution to support its operations readiness at Marine Storage Terminal (MST), Tanga, Tanzania. This solution must include the following components:

The Company as part of its commitment to promoting local content and the participation of Tanzanian Nationals in the Oil & Gas value chain is seeking the services of a reputable and qualified companies with a track record of experience of providing procurement services for the purchasing and transportation of maintenance spare parts and the initial stock of consumables to support Field Operations. Based on the spare parts lists provided by the Maintenance Inspection engineering contractor, the service provider will manage:

- Procurement process,
- Associated post order logistics and services,
- provision of a retention area and
- To deliver to Tanga EACOP Marine Terminal warehouse and input the relevant data/documentation into COMPANY's system.

The objective of this EOI is to identify a contractor capable of delivering comprehensive procurement and logistics services to support the provision of maintenance, covering a range of essential functions, including but not limited to:

DOCUMENTATION MANAGEMENT

Management of vendor documents, material certificates, and related records.

PROCUREMENT SERVICES

- Contract and/or Purchase Order preparation, bids review, clarification, evaluation and issue of recommendation.
- Full procurement management, including supply of materials, equipment, and essential spares.
- Provision of spare parts and consumables for the initial operation and ongoing maintenance of the plant
- Comprehensive contract administration and material expediting.

LOGISTIC SERVICES:

- End-to-end cargo transportation and handling.
- Cargo Stuffing, lashing, Destuffing and Packing.
- Port Handling and Custom Clearance.
- Import cargo Storage.
- Management of necessary Import Licenses (inclusion import documentation, PVoC, GCLA etc.).
- Warehouse management system to ensure streamlined storage.

DELIVERY SERVICES

- Collection of materials from Vendors' premises.
- Sea & land transportation (including in-country domestic routes).
- Delivery Incoterms: DAP to COMPANY's warehouses at Marine Terminal Facilities, Tanga.
- Inspection, surveying, and insurance management.

RETENTION, STORAGE, PRESERVATION

- Provision of temporary storage facilities as required.

DATA INTEGRATION AT RECEPTION

- Registration of received items within COMPANY's ERP system.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

Companies or Organizations expressing an interest are required to support their expression with:

- Brief description of experience, expertise and capacity to deliver the Services.
- Demonstrated experience of successfully conducting similar operations in support of the major projects.
- Proof of experience (minimum 6 years) in providing similar services to related projects or companies including recommendation letters from three current clients.
- Proof of registration with the Tanzania Revenue Authority and Tax (TRA) Clearance Certificate for the latest year available (attach copies).
- Certificate of Incorporation and recent BRELA search (attach copy).
- Valid Business License (attached copy).
- Proof of registration with the Revenue Authority and Tax Clearance Certificate for the latest year available (attach copy)
- Financial capacity to deliver the services required including submission of audited financial accounts for the past three years.
- A copy of current official search report from the Business Registrations and Licensing Agency (BRELA).
- Profile of key personnel to be involved in the provision of the Services including personal certifications as necessary and level of qualifications, and experience and capacity to deliver the Services in a major project environment.
- Evidence of a QHSE Management system, organization, and process in compliance with applicable Local and Industry standards for similar works.
- Proof of Anti-corruption, Anti-bribery, Compliance and Human Rights policies.
- Proof of registration with EWURA Local Supplier Service Provider (LSSP) database or approved application at the time of submission of the response to this expression of interest is strongly recommended.
- Compliance with Local Content Regulations, 2017 and Local Company definition.

Companies which have the ability, capacity, and resources to implement the activities listed above should express their interest by sending together with the documents stated in the above section through an email to procurement.tz@eacop.com, (max. email size 20Mb) on or before 17:00 hours East African Time (EAT) on or before 15 January 2025. Email title shall be: **REQ-00000659 - Procurement, Logistics & Support Services for Maintenance Spare Parts & Initial Stock of Consumables for EACOP Project.** Statements of EOI should be no more than ten (10) to twenty (20) pages long. **All Expression of Interests should be submitted in English Language.**

Note: EACOP LTD will review and assess the documents provided by companies that have expressed interest in accordance with this EOI and conduct evaluations based on internal criteria to determine which companies or organizations will be included in the list of pre-qualified companies or organizations. Only the pre-qualified companies or organizations will receive, by signing a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), an invitation to bid as a continuation of the call for tender process. EACOP LTD reserves the right at its sole discretion to make the decision to select or reject a company or organization and maintain its decision without having to give reasons to the company or organization concerned.

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Visions of multiplying incomes need greater focus on data flow

THE higher echelons of the central government's planning and investment wing appear to be exuding more confidence on our prospects and achievements than critics may see as justifiable or realistic.

These are days of opening, distributing and deliberating on the first draft of our country's 2050 vision of development.

The relevant minister says that, come 2050, the country will likely have attained five times average incomes from our current level - reaching around 11m/- annually from 2.8m/-.

These statistical averages often bring together heaven and earth or the deep freezer and the stove, etc., to find an average.

A top cleric once used a festival sermon to ask rhetorically whether it was right or fair for a qualified medical doctor to start with 0.7m/- per month in salary, while taking four months to reach the average earnings applicable for the wider country.

Another statistic published in global media and available on internet says that average pay in our country basically hovers at around 1m/- per month. Really?

That is why even our efforts to develop a cohesive vision for the next quarter century ought to be taken up with a pinch of salt.

There is no other way to discuss what concerns incomes or prospects of large numbers of people except via statistics.

But then these figures have to be reduced to averages to serve as comprehensible communication material, and that is where trouble comes in.

For countries where the physical environment relating to things like housing and health care have been 'levelled up' or finding jobs is nearly

straightforward for those who need to do it, averages are helpful.

But the lower one descends on the ladder of cohesive environments or social conditions comparable across large segments of the population, the data start to look skimpy and not of much utility.

A social critic could easily say that the problem here is inequality, and then start proposing policies to execute in seeking to reduce such inequalities.

However, the problem would be lying elsewhere: too many facets of economic activity or life as a whole aren't monetised, thus pulling down the rest of the society to take care of 'disabled' parts.

In wider society communal land is an idle asset to be found outside the market and effectively unable to attract loans to improve it; at a wider level it relates to many of our parastatal firms.

The idea that Tanzania will become a middle- and upper income nation by 2050 is not altogether erroneous or misleading.

Even currently there is gushing modernity all around us if one compares the situation for example in Dar es Salaam with what obtained 20 years ago.

With the frenetic pace of manufacturing and commercial construction projects, and all of these often purchase land and facilitate new investments, this is not at all far-fetched.

Trouble is as relates to the prospects of worsening levels of agro-sector ruin, shortage of promising farmland as well as exponential rises in urban unemployment and violence.

UN data indicate that by 2030 half of the world's abject poor will be African children, and those projections speaks volumes whose importance and relevance no one can afford to belittle or ignore.

Girls taking vast share of boarding space is positive

WE are being treated to plenty of talk and various engagements in relation to improving expectations for girls, including in the education sector.

The government and various other players are doing much to bring about better conditions for girls, in some ways even beyond what activists commonly demand.

This is the feeling one gets on hearing that girls will be given priority among the 6,810 fresh secondary school students set to join national boarding schools early next year.

The minister in charge of Regional Administration and Local Governments explained this allocation in respect of secondary school selections.

By contrast, there was less than parity in selections for boarding schools for high achievers, as 329 of those selected are girls and 480 are boys.

The order of priorities is reversed for vocational schools, where 1,174 students were selected, with a sharp imbalance of 197 girls selected and a whopping 977 for boys.

This carefully orchestrated method of boosting chances in life as well as easing the work of protecting the young people in their learning aspirations shows that the formula for 50-50 parity ideas is not the best in many circumstances.

The government merits applause for working to create the highest available number of spaces for boarding school for girls. That is as it should be, while the positive discrimination is reversed in vocational spaces.

One lesson one could draw from this is the difference between parity and equity, considering that parity is an outlook to maximise available chances at the gender level.

This idea has its merits and is already applicable in many areas although not as much yet in a wide range of needs or requirements.

High-achieving boys get boarding opportunity as further encouragement to study even harder and in a more purposeful manner, while girls are allocated more space as less a matter of study encouragement but protection.

Thus when one looks at the figure of 974,332 candidates (525,225 girls and 449,107 boys) completing primary education, there is something close to parity.

Something in that order is also visible in looking at 3,067 pupils with special needs (1,402 girls and 1,665 boys) who were selected in that the selection of which pupils go to what school and on what basis did not just follow the pass mark aspect.

The latter would suffice in having only a few boarding schools allocated to boys, with greater effort made to get girls into the schools.

Even if there will be reservations as to which specific students were placed on what sort of schools, by sensing that some favour may have been extended in some cases, we need to take note of what is essential.

The point is that the overall structure of allocation of schooling at the next level is positive and even inspiring, as young girls are facilitated to study in the most appropriate environment. Excellent...



Addiction: Monster wreaking untold havoc (I)

By Lydia K. Igarabuzza

THIS is not a fictional tale. Someone will die - eventually. The death will be monstrous, but there will be no police investigation. The murder weapon will remain undiscovered. The only person who truly knows what happened will be dead. And the killer? Still roaming free.

This killer monster lurks unseen in the city, much like a ghost cloaked in shadows. It is waits for the perfect moment to strike - silent, relentless and cunning.

The monster thrives on secrecy and fleeting pleasures, preying on its victims' vulnerabilities. Its ultimate goal: to make their lives fall apart, leaving families and communities in despair.

Death often finds its victims after a long and reckless battle with this beast. The evidence left behind reveals prolonged abuse - alcohol, drugs and sometimes both.

The monster's profile

The killer monster has no preference for age, gender, race or faith. It preys indiscriminately. Survivors describe its influence as overwhelming: "It's like having a voice in your head constantly encouraging you to burn down your life, and you don't even understand why," says Beth - of course, an assumed name.

Medical reports give the monster's greatest strength as its ability to disguise itself. It wears many masks - a friend, a lover, a neighbour, even a family member. It deceives its victims into believing that it means no harm, making its betrayal all the more more malicious, treacherous and devastating.

At first, the killer monster infiltrates the brain, manipulating memory, emotions and the sense of reward. Slowly, it builds an obsession, a compulsive drive that traps the victim in its web.

The monster's victims soon lose control of their actions and decisions and, eventually, their lives altogether. By then, the monster will have delivered its fatal blow.

Lives torn apart

James (again an assumed name) was found in a ditch, robbed of almost whatever one would find worth whisking away, stabbed and left dying. His autopsy pointed to a night of binge drinking.

In a different incident, the lifeless body of a woman was discovered in her bedroom. One could easily see prescription pills scattered across the

floor, which pointed to suicide.

In yet other incidents, a woman was left lying on the roadside, a suspected victim of overdose and sexual violence. Another stood behind bars in connection with a pub brawl, bearing the scars of her supposedly substance-fuelled rage.

These are but a few of numerous cases and names one could readily recall and cite with respect to substance abuse and related incidents. There are countless others.

The global health crisis

Across the world, this killer monster has been identified for what it truly is: Disease of Addiction. It's a progressive, chronic and often fatal condition that continues to tighten its grip on individuals, families, communities and society generally.

In Tanzania, this epidemic has been accelerating at an alarming pace. According to some authoritative reports, the year 2020 saw 31 per cent of the country's population struggle with health disorders induced by substance use, with youth being disproportionately affected.

Over 30 per cent of Tanzanian teenagers are meanwhile reported to be experimenting with drugs or alcohol, early exposures commonly leading to lifelong battles with addiction.

Addiction doesn't just claim lives; it fractures communities and erodes the fabric of society. As the government and various other local and foreign or international players or stakeholders battle this crisis, we're left asking: Is enough being done to contain this killer monster?

Addiction: Misunderstood disease

Addiction is much more than just the misuse of drugs or alcohol. It's not merely about the substances themselves. Rather, it's even more importantly and sadly about the deep wounds it makes.

The drug, the drink, or the behaviour isn't the problem; to the contrary - and, rather ironically - the solution. It's a destructive, life-destroying solution, but a solution nonetheless. Addiction is rooted in pain - an attempt to escape discomfort, loneliness or self-loathing.

Imagine being allergic to your own existence, constantly feeling out of place, even in a crowded room. That gnawing discomfort leads to desperation - a need to numb the pain, to escape reality, to find fleeting relief.

The addiction of choice becomes a lifeline, even as it drags the people directly affected increasingly deeper into despair and destroys them from the inside out.

Why we must act

As noted, addiction is not just a personal battle; it is a relentless epidemic that silently tears through families, communities and society generally.

Behind every statistic lies a human story, one of pain, resilience and, often, hope. Those who have lived through its suffocating grip will swear that it is not some abstract issue but a reality known all too well.

It's a cunning predator, an enemy that thrives in silence, shame and misunderstanding. Yet, too often, the public conversation around it reduces individuals to their lowest moments, ignoring the complex and deep personal reasons that lead the gullible and other victims down that path.

That is why we all need to confront and demystify the myths and stigma surrounding addiction with the urgency and empathy they call for.

Addiction doesn't discriminate. It doesn't care about age, gender, race, status or other factor, aspect or consideration. It claims lives indiscriminately, leaving a trail of devastation in its wake.

What many people often fail to understand, though, is that addiction isn't just about drugs or alcohol. Rather, it's about pain - pain so overwhelming that numbing becomes just about the only survival strategy.

For many, as noted, the substance or behaviour isn't the problem; it's the solution to a deeper, festering wound.

Addiction is what happens when people feel so out of place and so alien in their own skin that the only way to cope is to escape - even if that escape comes at the cost of their lives, that is, by paying the ultimate price.

Addiction is a disease and not a moral failing - and, until we start treating it as such, we will keep losing our loved ones to its relentless grip.

Through my own experience, I've seen how addiction creates a prison of the mind. It's a cycle of guilt, shame and self-destruction - a gnawing sense of loneliness and alienation that seems impossible to escape.

The impact of addiction doesn't stop with the person or people struggling; it ripples outwards, leaving a trail of grief and confusion

in its path.

I've seen how addiction transforms people, turning the kindest souls into strangers, and the most promising futures into tragic endings.

Yet, amid this darkness, I've also seen hope. Recovery is real, but it's not easy. It takes a village, a system and an unshakeable belief in the possibility of change.

The fight against addiction requires more than personal resolve - indeed, it demands systemic action. Too bad, all too often, the resources available to those seeking recovery are woefully inadequate.

Addiction thrives at a speed outpacing the efforts to address it and, without proper intervention-prevention and long-term support, we'll never keep up with its impact.

We badly need to prioritise safe spaces for those in active addiction to facilitate and expedite their stepping away from the chaos so that they can begin to heal.

We need community-based interventions that address the underlying pain and isolation inducing and fuelling substance use. And, most importantly, we need to replace judgment with understanding. This is because no one chooses addiction; rather, many people choose relief, however fleeting it may be.

This isn't just about survival; it's about reclaiming lives, restoring families and rebuilding communities. For every person struggling, there is potential for redemption, healing and fulfilment.

Addiction may be relentless, but so is hope. If you've lived through the storm of addiction, you know the power of recovery. But even if you haven't, you likely know someone who has.

This is why we must act - not just for the numbers, but for the faces and names behind those numbers. I repeat: Addiction is a cunning and relentless predator that claims lives and devastates families and communities.

But together, through compassion, empathy, education and sustained effort, we can bring this silent epidemic into the light and help those still struggling find their way back to their true or original selves.

*** This is the first part of a three-part feature series focusing on alcohol and drug addiction, chiefly by exploring its destructive power and what it takes to overcome it. Kindly, share your views via: newinfluenceinitiative@gmail.com.**

- Editor.

Public education crucial in addressing gender-based violence more effectively

By Correspondent Emmanuel Onyango

GENDER Based Violence (GBV) remains a significant global challenge, with its most severe manifestations often seen in African countries, including Tanzania. GBV takes many forms and continues to harm local communities. Human rights activists define GBV as any harmful act inflicted on a person due to unequal power relations between genders.

The consequences of GBV manifest in visible and invisible ways, including physical, emotional and psychological abuse. This includes assault, slavery, verbal abuse, confinement, rape, child marriage, and female genital mutilation.

Socio-economic violence, such as denial of resources or poor treatment of adopted children, also falls under GBV. These forms of violence represent extreme manifestations of gender inequality, affecting individual survivors, families, and communities at large.

Women and children are particularly vulnerable to GBV, often suffering more severe and long-lasting consequences due to their physical disadvantages. Instances of severe beatings, maiming, verbal abuse, and even killings frequently affect women and children, which is why GBV is often synonymous with "violence against women and children."

Globally, over one-third of women and girls experience violence during their lifetime. This rate escalates during emergencies, conflicts, and crises, where protections often break down.

International efforts to eliminate GBV

To address this crisis, November



Minister for Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups, Dr Dorothy Gwajima

25th is observed globally as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children. This marks the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, concluding on December 10th, International Human Rights Day. During this period, countries worldwide launch campaigns to raise awareness and mobilize action against GBV.

Tanzania actively participates in these campaigns, demonstrating its commitment to eliminating one of the world's most

persistent human rights violations. As the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action approaches in 2025, achieving gender equality and protecting women and children's rights remain ongoing challenges.

Alarming GBV incidents

During the 16 Days of Activism, Tanzania witnessed shocking GBV incidents. In Mbeya City, a couple killed their child after beating him for defecating in his clothes. The parents, Ram-

adhan Mwakilasa and Mariamu Mwashambwa, were arrested, and police investigations confirmed cruelty and abuse as the cause of death.

Another horrific case occurred in Geita Region, where a mother set her 9-year-old child on fire for allegedly stealing 800/- . The child, a student at Kasota Primary School, suffered severe injuries and was hospitalized. Geita Regional Police Commander, SACP Sophia Jongo, confirmed the mother's arrest and promised to take

stringent legal action against the proprietors.

These incidents have drawn public outrage and highlighted the urgent need to address GBV more effectively.

Government response

Minister for Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups, Dr. Dorothy Gwajima, emphasized that GBV is a critical social and human rights issue in Tanzania. Addressing this challenge requires concerted efforts from all sec-

tors of society. Despite government initiatives, awareness and prevention strategies remain inadequate. Education is crucial to raising awareness and combating GBV in local communities.

Dr. Gwajima pointed to systemic issues, such as a lack of political will and a culture of silence, which result in many cases being settled outside judicial systems through traditional means.

This practice often denies justice to survivors, particularly in cases of sexual violence and early marriage. Manyara Region has reported a significant increase in GBV cases, with 7,893 incidents recorded in just ten months.

Initiatives to combat GBV

The government, in collaboration with stakeholders like the German Development Agency (GIZ), has launched initiatives to fight GBV. One such initiative is a paralegal training manual focusing on a survivor-centered approach. This manual aims to empower paralegals to educate citizens and local leaders on reporting GBV and seeking legal aid.

The Ministry of Constitution and Legal Affairs has implemented legal support programs as part of President Samia's legal aid campaign, reaching over 2,000 people.

Former Minister for Constitutional and Legal Affairs, Professor Palamagamba Kabudi, reiterated the government's commitment to combating GBV. Speaking during the launch of the 16 Days of Activism, he urged communities and stakeholders to unite against GBV, calling it an "embarrassing issue that demeans society."

As Tanzania continues to make strides in community development and gender equality, revising and enforcing laws related to GBV remains essential. By recognizing GBV as a cross-cutting issue, Tanzania can take meaningful steps toward eliminating this pervasive violence and protecting its most vulnerable populations.

VP Mpango leads Tanzania's bold strides against corruption

By Adonis Byemelwa

TZANANIA has marked a significant step forward in its fight against corruption, achieving its highest score yet on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). With a score of 40 out of 100 for 2023, the country has improved steadily since hitting an all-time low of 19 in 1999.

This progress underlines the growing public and institutional commitment to tackling corruption, even as the journey remains challenging. Tanzania's ranking has also improved globally, moving from 94th in 2022 to 87th in 2023, reflecting incremental yet notable strides toward better governance.

Despite this positive development, a recent analysis of the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) reports by the WAJIBU Institute of Public Accountability highlights persistent red flags in public sector fraud and corruption.

Alarming, while the value of flagged corruption and fraud cases dropped by 10 percent—from 3.085trn/- in 2021/22 to 2.778trn/- in 2022/23—this decrease is overshadowed by significant concerns.

Corruption red flags surged in local government authorities, rising from 297.86bn/- in 2021/22 to 641.29bn/- in 2022/23, an alarming 215.3 percent increase.

In total, public authorities accounted for 44.4 percent of red flags, or 1.235trn/-, while the central government accounted for 676.66bn/-, equivalent to 24.4 percent. Local government's share stood at 23.1 percent, with 641.29bn/- flagged.

Development projects also faced scrutiny, with red flags amounting to 225.39bn/-, or 8.1 percent of the total. These figures reveal a troubling pattern of governance weaknesses that remain deeply entrenched.

Several examples illustrate

the systemic issues. A tender by the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) to construct its headquarters revealed inefficiencies and potential foul play.

Initially awarded at Sh9.80 billion in March 2022, the tender was abruptly canceled on ministerial orders. The same contractor won the re-tender at a higher cost of Sh10.48 billion, raising concerns over mismanagement and oversight failures.

Other sectors, such as the Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO) and Keko Pharmaceuticals Industry, also reflected similar governance challenges.

WAJIBU's analysis identified key drivers of these issues, including political interference, systemic corruption, and weak oversight mechanisms.

The institute recommended stricter enforcement of accountability, enhanced transparency, and stronger cooperation between state and non-state actors. Calls were made for greater public involvement in demanding accountability, monitoring audit outcomes, and advocating for reforms.

On December 16th 2024, Vice President Dr Philip Mpango urged the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) to intensify its efforts as the nation prepares for the 2025 general elections.

Recognizing the growing threat of corruption in political processes, Dr. Mpango directed the PCCB to combat bribery through digital platforms and mobile money transfers, which have emerged as new avenues for illicit practices.

Dr. Mpango emphasized the critical role of ethical leadership, warning that leaders elected through corrupt means are unlikely to prioritize citizens' needs or supervise development projects effectively.

He called for robust systems



He also urged the media to play a more active role in exposing wrongdoing, while cautioning against biased reporting that could undermine public trust.

to detect, prevent, and punish corruption, stressing the importance of protecting whistleblowers and deploying modern investigative techniques.

He also urged the media to play a more active role in exposing wrongdoing, while cautioning against biased reporting that could undermine public trust.

Over the past year, the PCCB has recovered 18bn/- through investigations and monitoring of development projects. However, systemic gaps persist. A total of 375 corruption cases were opened in 2022/23, but nearly 42 percent were closed due to insufficient evidence. Only 41 cases made it to court, with 40 resulting in convictions. Meanwhile, 160 cases remain under investigation, highlighting the slow pace of justice in tackling corruption.

Tanzania's fight against corruption has gained fresh momentum, marked by significant steps to overhaul governance systems and enforce accountability across public and private sectors. Vice President Dr. Philip Mpan-

go recently emphasized the urgency of combating corruption, particularly with the 2025 General Elections on the horizon.

Addressing the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Arusha, Dr. Mpango called for intensified efforts against bribery, especially through digital platforms.

He warned that corruption threatens national development and erodes democratic principles, stressing that leaders compromised by illicit practices cannot champion public welfare or oversee effective governance.

Tanzania's anti-corruption strategies have a storied history. Efforts began as early as 1966 with the establishment of the Permanent Commission of Inquiry, later evolving into the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRG).

In 1971, the Prevention of Corruption Act created the Anti-Corruption Squad, which eventually transformed into the Prevention of Corruption Bureau (PCB) under the President's Office.

These institutions laid the groundwork for the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan (NACSAP), launched in the late 1990s as part of Vision 2025. The framework emphasized transparency, accountability, and ethical governance, mandating ministries, departments, and agencies to prepare action plans for combating corruption.

Despite these historical efforts, corruption remains deeply entrenched. Recent audits by WAJIBU Institute of Public Accountability revealed a decline in red flags from 3.085 trillion Tanzanian shillings in the 2021/22 fiscal year to 2.778 trillion in 2022/23.

While this 10 percent drop is a positive sign, the persistence of irregularities in local governments, central institutions, and development projects is alarming. The Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority's mishandling of a 10.48-billion-shilling tender illustrates how oversight weaknesses can inflate costs and fuel unethical practices.

WAJIBU's Executive Director, Ludovick Utouh, called for public vigilance, urging citizens to hold officials accountable and demand transparency in public spending. To address procurement inefficiencies, Tanzania is transitioning to the National e-Procurement System of Tanzania (Nest), replacing the older Tanzanian National e-Procurement System (TANePS).

This digital platform aims to minimize human interaction, reducing opportunities for manipulation. Analysts praise this move, highlighting its potential to enhance accountability in the 31 trillion shillings allocated for procurement in the national budget. However, they caution that challenges often emerge

during contract execution, where corruption thrives.

Dr. Mpango's directives reflect the government's renewed commitment to eradicating corruption under President Samia Suluhu Hassan's administration. He announced investments in advanced ICT systems for PCCB offices, modern investigative tools, and whistleblower protection to ensure transparency.

Stressing the importance of impartiality, he warned PCCB staff against bias, calling for adherence to legal standards and a strong focus on grassroots institutions like local courts and land councils. This multifaceted approach underscores the government's intent to bridge systemic gaps and prevent funds from being misappropriated.

Civil society and media play pivotal roles in Tanzania's anti-corruption campaign. Experts like Professor Patrick Lumumba argue that genuine political will is essential for these efforts to succeed.

He criticizes African anti-corruption institutions for often serving donor interests rather than fostering meaningful reform. In Tanzania, election cycles complicate the fight against corruption, with accusations that political parties and law enforcement tolerate or exploit bribery to secure electoral victories. Such practices weaken democratic institutions and erode public trust.

Tanzania's progress on the CPI is a testament to growing reform momentum. The government's decision to strengthen criminal justice systems and enhance cooperation between state and non-state actors reflects a holistic approach to governance. Dr. Mpango's call for greater citizen involvement underscores the importance of collective action in ensuring public resources are managed ethically and efficiently.



'Until my last breath': Searching for relatives at Syria's 'slaughterhouse'



By Ali Haj Suleiman

FOR decades, Sednaya prison was only ever mentioned in hushed tones in Syria. Torture and death were known to be routine in this place everyone called the "human slaughterhouse".

But on the evening of December 7, that all ended when Syrian opposition fighters burst through doors and liberated the prisoners.

In no time, thousands of Syrians descended on the prison in the mountains north of Damascus, desperately seeking news of the loved ones they believed had disappeared behind the prison's walls.

Standing in front of the prison, Jubba Jubbu, who is from al-Kafir in Idlib, said: "The liberation of Syria is an indescribable joy."

"But the joy is incomplete because there are hundreds of thousands of missing detainees, and we haven't heard any news about them at all."

False hope

Sednaya's two buildings may have been holding as many as 20,000 prisoners, according to Amnesty International.

Many of the prisoners were freed a week ago - on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. But by Monday, thousands of people were still waiting for news.

The scene inside the prison was chaotic. Rumours were circulating that there were hidden underground sections of the prison which they could not access.

Families seeking loved ones wait hopefully as a member of the civil defence force, the White Helmets, attempts to locate an entrance to rumoured underground cells.

A former prisoner said that military police had told him there were three underground floors with thousands of people held there. This week, people were using water conductors in the hopes of finding gaps in the walls or floors.

At one point, a loud bang rang out from a far wall of the prison and shouts spread through the crowd.

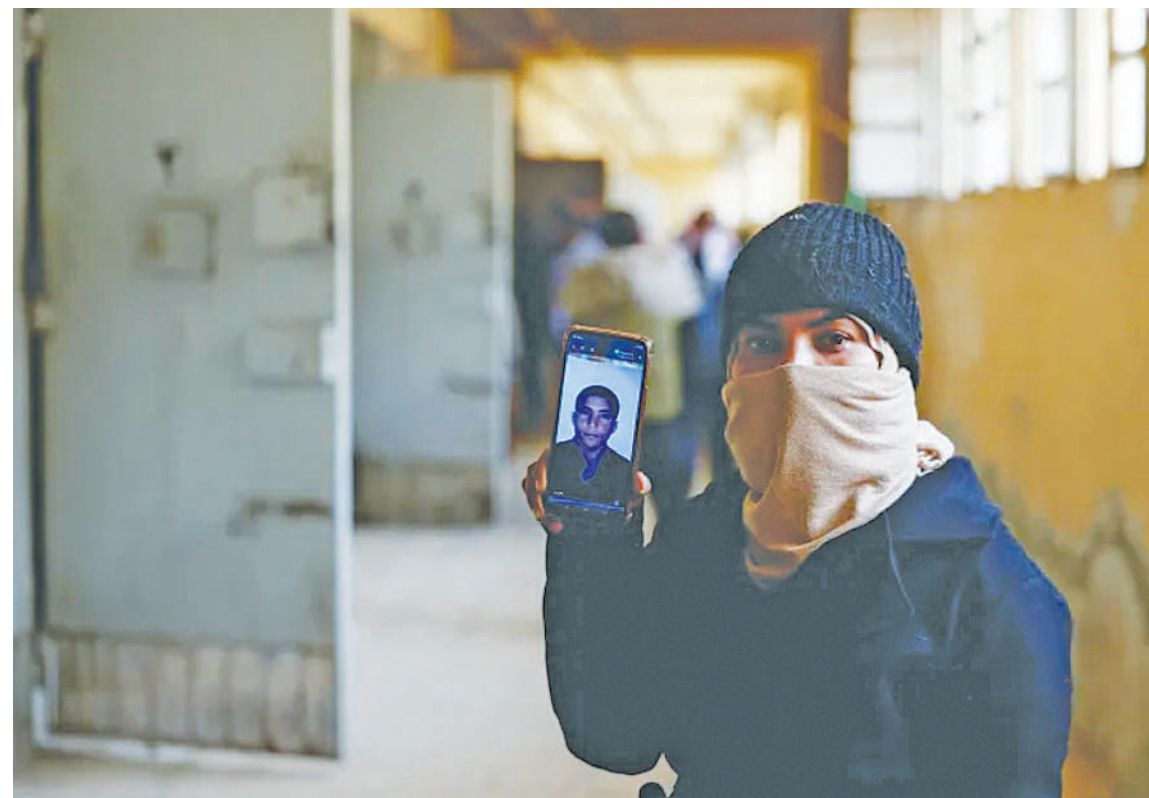
Someone had broken through and there were hopes they had found an entry to the rumoured cells. People began running towards the sound, shouting "God is the greatest".

But, seconds later, the shouts died down and people turned away - a false hope. There was no entrance.

"We're waiting, hoping that God will guide us to find the underground prison, because most of the prisoners who were released before, they say the prison has three underground levels," Jubbu said. "We only saw one floor."

Jubbu said he was searching for 20 people from his village, among them his cousins. All had been taken in the early years of the war, between 2011 and 2013 and were believed to have ended up at the "slaughterhouse".

But just a few hours later, a statement was released by the Association of Detainees and Missing in Sednaya Prison which said the last liberated



Hayat al-Turki, 27, holds up a phone with a picture of her brother at Syria's Sednaya prison, known as 'the human slaughterhouse' under Bashar al-Assad's rule. Al-Turki was searching for her relatives, on December 11, 2024

prisoner had been released at Ilam the day before.

The White Helmets, Syria's Civil Defence force, continued to search but finally suspended operations on Tuesday after finding no more prisoners.

'The smells are indescribable'

Syrian opposition fighters

liberated Aleppo, Hama, and Homs on their way to Damascus.

In each city, they opened up the prison doors and liberated tens of thousands of people.

But more remain missing.

On the road to Sednaya, people drove as far as they could before the crush of people forced them to park and con-

tinue on foot.

Young and old, men and women, some holding children - all climbed up the unpaved incline to the infamous prison.

Under the now-defeated regime, Sednaya was a military prison where many were held on charges of "terrorism" which, in reality, meant had

been arrested for any number of arbitrary reasons.

Many of the people said their relatives had done nothing wrong.

Some weren't even sure their loved ones were here, they had come because they'd heard from someone that their relative "might" be here. Or they had checked other prisons and still hadn't found any trace.

Mohammad al-Bakour, 32, said his brother Abdullah was arrested in 2012 for protesting peacefully in Aleppo. He has not seen him since.

At 2am the previous morning - around the time al-Assad fled Damascus for Moscow - al-Bakour headed straight from his home town near Aleppo to Sednaya to search for his brother.

"His children are now young adults, they don't remember him and wouldn't recognise him," al-Bakour said.

Inside, he searched the prison for any sign of Abdullah.

"The smells in there are indescribable. The suffering of the prisoners inside is unimaginable," he said. "Many times, they wished for death but couldn't find it. Death became one of the prisoners' dreams."

Life in limbo

At Sednaya, many prisoners said they had been tortured and raped. Others were killed so the world won't know what happened to them.

The corpse of prominent activist Mazen al-Hamada was found in a military hospital morgue showing signs of torture.

Another former prisoner, Youssef Abu Wadie, described to Al Jazeera how the guards treated inmates: "They would knock on the door, yell, 'Quiet, you dog!' and wouldn't let us speak. The food was scarce. They would take us outside, beat us, break us."

"Sometimes two people would hold us down and beat us. They would drag us around and take away our medicine."

Many inmates told Amnesty International in 2016 that they were not allowed any contact with the outside world or to send anything to family members.

In many cases, families of prisoners were told incorrectly that a prisoner had died, according to Amnesty's report. Most inmates in the report had also witnessed at least one death during their time in Sednaya.

Without any confirmed proof of life or death for their relatives and friends, many Syrians continue life in limbo. Almost all of them say that without any official confirmation, they will continue searching.

One of those people is 50-year-old Lamis Salama. She was also at Sednaya on Monday looking for news of her son, who had been detained seven years previously and would now be 33 years old; and of her brother, who was arrested 12 years ago.

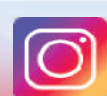
"My feelings are fear, terror. I want to see my son, I want to know if he's alive or dead," Salama said. "This is a pain in my heart. If he's dead, I could stop looking and start trying to accept that, but if he's alive, I'll keep searching for him until my last breath, just to know where he is."

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Irakoze: Bridging generations through memories of 1994 genocide in Rwanda

By Franck Kuwona

CLAVER Irakoze, a survivor of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, faces the complex challenge of explaining this dark period to his children. Striving to avoid passing on trauma or at least minimizing this real threat, he has authored books aimed at young readers, using storytelling to impart lessons of history, healing, and hope. Ahead of the 30th anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, Irakoze shares his approach to keeping the memory alive through education and dialogue, emphasizing the importance of preserving these narratives without causing harm.

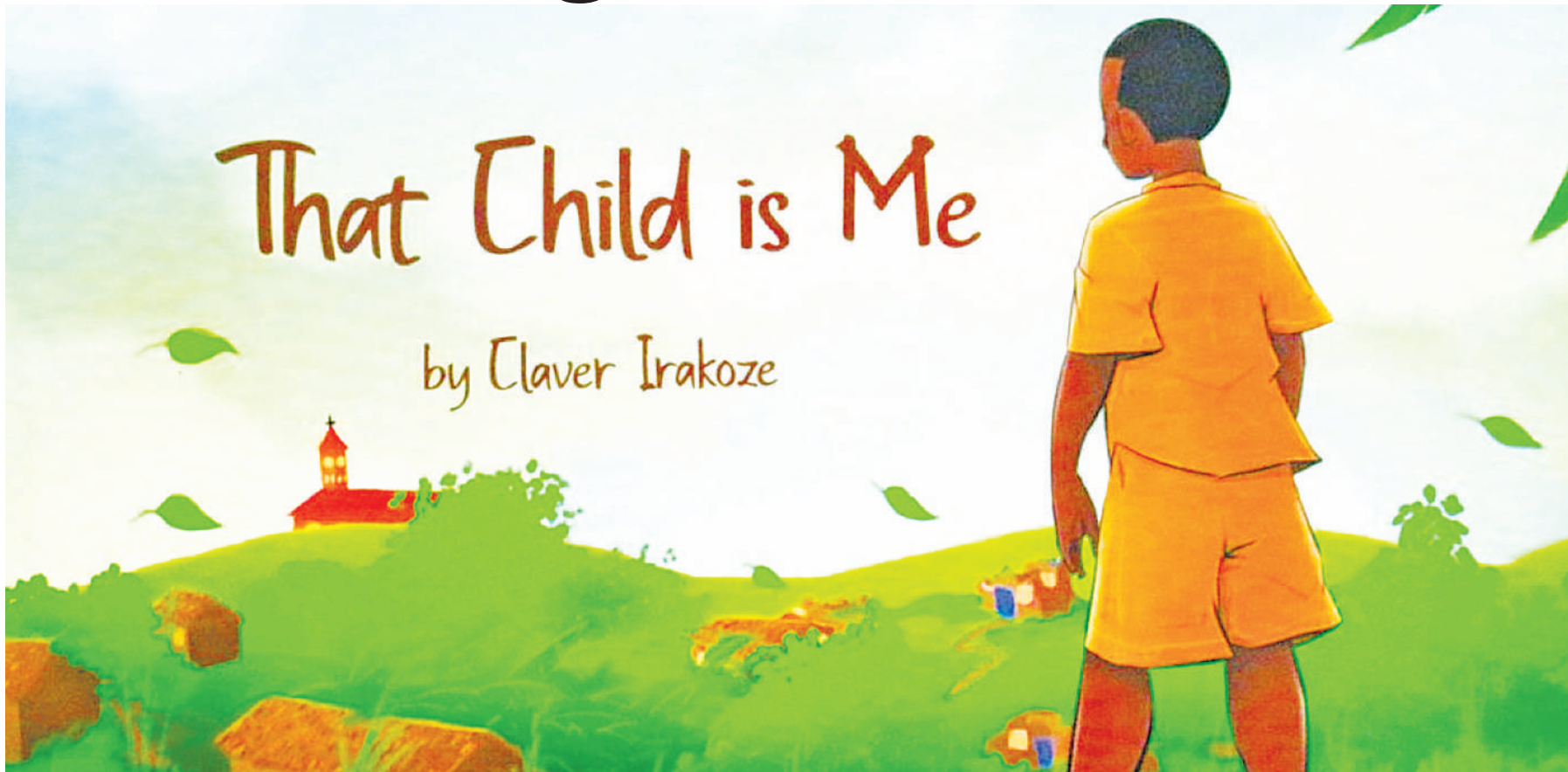
Irakoze, a survivor of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, was less concerned about what to tell his children, but rather, how to say it.

"We shouldn't pass on [our] trauma to our kids," he said, in a recent conversation with Africa Renewal from his home in Kigali. "Still, we shouldn't withhold everything either."

He was 11 years old when his father and 60 other adult males, sheltering in the buildings of College Saint Joseph, a secondary school in Kabgayi, 60km south of the capital Kigali, were taken away by soldiers on April 28th, 1994, never to be seen again. There, the community witnessed horrendous acts, including the targeted taking and killing of individuals, like Irakoze's father.

Now an adult with a family of his own and faced with the innocence of his own children's inquiries about their lineage and history, he acknowledged an "urgent duty as survivors to testify to the dangers of hatred and discrimination."

With that sense of duty, Irakoze has written two books on the tragedy. First, "That Child in Me" was published in 2019, then "Transmitting Memories in Rwanda - From a Survivor Parent to the Next Generation"



which he co-wrote and published in 2022.

He is not the first person to document the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, but he is unique for having written with young children in mind.

Communicating atrocities to children

In writing "That Child in Me," the author's primary goal was to connect with a young audience—specifically those aged three to twelve, he explained. But as navigating the delicate process of sharing stories of personal and historical significance with children presents a unique challenge, Irakoze decided to tread carefully by using illustrations, images, and simplified text designed to be accessible and engaging for them.

A music video titled "Umurage w'amateka" (the legacy of history) and published the year preceding the book

gave early indications of the approach Claver would later take.

The video featured engaging animations, aimed at enabling audiences to visualize the difficult topics of the dark past and the present in a child-friendly manner.

"I used illustrations, images, very light texts that children can understand. And my intention was not to talk about the suffering of the past. The content is a combination of blissful memories that I had with my family and the dark that I'm not able to (directly) describe as genocide, but rather mentioned it as something that happened and changed my life."

The result is a nuanced view of his childhood experiences, avoiding explicit references to genocide, and opting instead for language that conveys significant change and impact without inducing trauma.

With the second book, Ira-

koze aimed to initiate sensitive conversations, offering parents a means to engage with their children on the genocide.

"Transmitting Memories in Rwanda - From a Survivor Parent to the Next Generation," being more academic in its style, appears to be speaking to parents and attempting to equip them with tips to engage in meaningful conversations about the past with their children.

"We write to inspire, we write to preserve the memory, but we also write to educate," Irakoze explained.

And the feedback he received from both parents and children, he said, is positive, highlighting the books' role in fostering inter-generational conversation.

Healing through writing But as much as writing is a means to preserve memory and inspire others, he pointed out the experience is emotionally draining.

Yet, at the end of the day, "it helps you navigate and make sense of your past and present."

In so saying, Irakoze echoes a general understanding among psychologists, grief counsellors, and practitioners that there is an intricate relationship between writing, memory preservation, and the healing process.

His act of writing hence turned out to be both a personal cathartic journey and a public act of memorialization, helping him and potentially his targeted audience: parents and their children navigate the complexities of trauma and recovery.

"By revisiting your past, you confront that fear that resides within you, and it helps you heal progressively," he remarked.

He uses his writing to engage in a dialogue with both the past and the future, aiming to heal personal wounds while contributing to a

broader understanding and remembrance of the atrocities experienced.

That experience is not straightforward, nonetheless.

"I cannot say the healing is completely achieved," he conceded, "because healing is not linear. Today you are at a good level, and you feel better, but tomorrow a life experience hits you, and it reminds you what you miss or what you lost, and it takes you back."

While acknowledging the therapeutic potential of sharing and documenting traumatic experiences, Irakoze also recognizes the mental health risks associated with re-traumatization for both the storyteller and the audience.

He warned that the dual objectives of educating the public and preserving the dignity of survivors' stories must be navigated carefully to ensure that the education-

al value does not come at the expense of emotional harm.

Writing as an advocacy tool That non-linearity of the process lends its force to continued advocacy. Because, in addition to memorialization and personal healing, he insists that writing, can also serve as a critical tool for advocacy.

Irakoze uses writing as a form of advocacy—utilizing personal narratives to educate, inspire, and foster a culture of remembrance, peace and tolerance.

He believes that writing enables survivors to process their experiences, navigate their memories, and contribute to a collective understanding of the tragedy. He hopes that sharing personal stories would inspire others, especially survivors, to document their narratives, thereby preserving memory and educating future generations.

Through his books, he seeks to convey messages of hope, the importance of critical thinking, and the value of making wise choices to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past.

Personal responsibility

As a survivor and memory worker, Irakoze feels a profound responsibility to share his experiences, advocate for understanding and tolerance, and support the healing of others.

"Genocide prevention cannot be achieved if we don't invest in educating the young generation to understand genocide in its comprehensive and wide sphere...the root causes of genocide, which are fueled by hatred and divisions."

"Diversity should not mean division," he asserted, championing a future where the lessons gleaned from the darkest chapters of history pave the way for peace and unity.

When through writing, a survivor can turn his profound grief and the collective sorrow of a nation into a source of inspiration, urging the young and the old alike to remember, understand, and learn from the past, there is the transformative role of literature in fostering healing, reconciliation, and hope in the aftermath of tragedy.

However, most books on the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, by Irakoze and others, have been written in internationally dominant languages: English and French.

Blood samples are used in testing for prostate cancer

By Paul Adepoju

EARLY testing is key to addressing the rise in cases of prostate cancer in Africa - and it doesn't have to be an invasive procedure.

That's the message from cancer survivors and health experts on the continent where prostate cancer is one of the most diagnosed cancers and men face unique genetic risks.

In 2020, the disease was the leading cancer among men in 40 sub-Saharan African countries.

In southern Africa, prostate cancer mortality rates are 2.7 times the global average, reflecting a combination of limited access to healthcare, inadequate early detection programmes, and underlying genetic risk factors.

"By focusing on African populations, we uncovered critical genetic risk factors previously unidentified," said Carl Chen, lead researcher, Men of African Descent and Carcinoma of the Prostate Consortium (MADCaP)

Despite its prevalence, knowledge of prostate cancer symptoms is lacking and many men are diagnosed too late.

In Nigeria, late-stage presentation of the disease is particularly common, complicating treatments and contributing to poor outcomes.

Why are African men at risk?

A growing body of research is now linking African ancestry to an increased risk of prostate cancer and the likelihood of more aggressive disease progression.

To address these challenges, a landmark study by the Men of African Descent and Carcinoma of the

Prostate Consortium (MADCaP) is shedding light on the genetic risks specific to African men.

Published in the journal Nature Genetics in October, the study analysed data from nearly 8,000 participants across five African countries, making it the largest genome study on prostate cancer conducted on the continent.

The research revealed three genetic regions, or loci, associated with higher prostate cancer risk, with variations unique to African populations.

These findings, the researchers say, underline the importance of tailoring screening and treatment strategies to reflect the genetic diversity of African populations.

Genetic markers

Carl Chen, a lead researcher with MADCaP, explained that the study's focus on African genomes allowed researchers to uncover genetic markers that have often been overlooked in studies focusing on non-African populations.

"By focusing on African populations, we uncovered critical genetic risk factors previously unidentified," he said.

"This approach highlights Africa's unique genetic landscape and lays a foundation for interventions that could address the specific health needs of African men."

Early intervention is vital for managing prostate cancer, Chen stressed.

"With data specific to African genetics, we're in a better position to inform screening protocols that could improve survival rates," he added.



Blood samples are used in testing for prostate cancer. Research highlights genetic risks for African men and that early testing for prostate cancer is vital.

Busting prostate cancer myths

Despite these advances, barriers to effective prostate cancer care persist. In many African countries, misinformation and stigma around prostate cancer screening prevent men from seeking timely testing. In Nigeria, for instance, many men mistakenly believe that screening involves invasive procedures, which discourages participation.

Dare Adeosun, a 52-year-old Nigerian who was diagnosed

with early-stage prostate cancer in late 2022, shared how understanding the simplicity of the screening process made a difference in his case.

"When I first heard about prostate cancer screening, I thought it was an uncomfortable procedure," he said.

"Like many men, I had the impression that it involved a physical examination that no one looks forward to. But after speaking with my doctor during my routine annual medical check-up, I learned it was just a

simple blood test. That made all the difference for me—I went in without hesitation."

'Non-invasive' screening

Adeosun credits early testing for his positive prognosis and is calling for greater efforts to inform men about the ease and importance of prostate cancer screening.

Prostate cancer advocates, including health tech entrepreneur Ifeoluwa Dare-Johnson, have similarly emphasised the need to simplify messaging

around screening. Dare-Johnson, whose company Healthtracka offers prostate cancer screening, noted that educating men on the simplicity of the process has increased participation.

"Educating men on the ease and importance of screening makes a real difference," she said.

"We're seeing increased willingness to test when men understand that screening doesn't necessarily involve invasive procedures."

How can research help?

Beyond raising awareness, Chen and his co-authors say local investment in prostate cancer research is crucial for improving outcomes.

"Establishing research facilities and training scientists in Africa is essential to addressing the continent's health challenges," Chen said.

"This study demonstrates that African researchers can and should lead research on health issues affecting African populations."

While infectious diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis have traditionally dominated Africa's health agenda, Chen and his colleagues argue that non-communicable diseases like prostate cancer require dedicated attention and resources.

With prostate cancer among the leading causes of cancer-related deaths in African men, Dare-Johnson says that locally informed strategies offer an opportunity to significantly improve survival rates.

"Prostate cancer is a significant health burden, and locally informed strategies offer an opportunity to address it more effectively," says Dare-Johnson.

Africa's worsening food crisis: It's time for an agricultural revolution

By William Moseley

RATES of hunger in Africa are unacceptably high and getting worse. The UN State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 report reveals that food insecurity in Africa is the highest of any world region. The prevalence of undernourishment is 20.4% (some 298.4 million Africans) - over twice the global average. The figure has grown steadily since 2015.

Climate change and conflict are contributing to this problem. But I suggest that something more fundamental lies at the heart of the challenge: the ideas and plans used in the postcolonial period to guide how Africa produces food and seeks to reduce malnutrition. While rates of food insecurity vary across the continent, and are worse in central and west Africa, this is a region-wide challenge.

I'm a scholar of African food security and agriculture. In a new book, *Decolonising African Agriculture: Food Security, Agroecology and the Need for Radical Transformation*, I argue that to feed Africa better, decision-makers and donors ought to:

Reduce the focus on commercial agricultural production as a way to address food insecurity

Stop thinking that agricultural development is solely about commercialising farming and supporting other industries

Adopt an agroecological approach that uses farmer knowledge and natural ecological processes to grow more with fewer external inputs, such as fertilisers.

Conventional approaches have failed across various contexts and countries. I look at what's going wrong with how governments think about agriculture - and where the focus needs to be instead to tackle Africa's hunger crisis.

Focus on production agriculture
Many of the core ideas around agriculture date back to the colonial era.



Modern crop science, or agronomy, was developed in Europe to serve colonial interests. The goal was to produce crops that would benefit European economies. Although this approach has been criticised, it still heavily influences agriculture today. The idea is that producing more food will solve food insecurity.

Food security has six dimensions. While increased food production might address one of these dimensions - food availability - it often fails to address the other five: access, stability, utilisation, sustainability and agency.

Food insecurity is not always about an absolute lack of food, but about people's inability to get the food that is there.

Unstable prices may be one reason. Or people may not have cooking fuel. Agricultural prac-

tices may be unsustainable. This often happens when farmers have limited control over how and what they farm.

The west African nation of Mali, for example, has focused on cotton exports based on the idea that it would bolster economic growth and that cotton farmers could use their new equipment and fertiliser to grow more food. Research shows, however, that this led to the destruction of soil resources, indebtedness for farmers, and alarming rates of child malnutrition.

Another example is South Africa's post-apartheid land reform initiatives, which adopted a large scale commercial agricultural model. This has led to high rates of project failure and has done little to address high rates of malnutrition.

Agriculture as a first step

The second major challenge in addressing Africa's high malnutrition rates is that many countries and international organisations don't value agricultural development for itself. It's seen as the first step towards industrialisation.

Commercial agriculture has become paramount. It tends to focus on a single crop, with expensive inputs (like fertilisers) and with connections to far-away markets. Smaller farms, focused on production for home consumption and local markets, are less valued. These farms may not add to national economic growth in an important way, but they help the poor achieve food security.

For example, the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa funded a rice commercialisation project in Burkina Faso. Women

farmers were encouraged to leave traditional practices behind, buy inputs, work with improved seeds, and sell to bigger urban markets. Sadly, research I worked on revealed that this didn't provide great nutritional gains for the participants.

In another case, as its diamond exports boomed, Botswana largely gave up on pursuing food self sufficiency in the 1980s. Crop agriculture was not seen as a significant contributor to the economy. This undermined the food security of poorer rural inhabitants and women.

Agroecology as the way forward

Mounting evidence of failure suggests it's time to try a different way of addressing Africa's food security woes.

Agroecology - farming with nature - is a more decolonial approach. It covers formal research by scientists and informal knowledge of farmers who experiment in their fields.

Agroecologists study the interactions between different crops, crops and insects, and crops and the soil. This can reveal ways to produce more with fewer costly external inputs. It's a more sustainable and cheaper option.

Common examples of agroecological practices in African farming systems are polycropping - planting different complementary crops in the same field - and agroforestry - mixing trees and crops. These diverse systems tend to have fewer pest problems and are better at maintaining soil fertility.

No African country has fully embraced agroecology yet, but there are promising examples, many unplanned, that point to its potential.

In Mali, for example, farmers briefly abandoned cotton in 2007-2008 due to low prices. There was then an upsurge in sorghum production. This largely saved the country from the social unrest and food price protests that happened in most neighbouring countries.

A few land reform projects in South Africa allowed larger farms to be split into smaller plots, which had higher rates of success and more food security benefits. This suggests that a different, less commercial approach is in order.

The beginning of a revolution

Agroecology is a promising way forward in addressing Africa's worsening food crisis.

It also has the backing of many African civil society organisations, such as the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa and Network of West African Farmer Organisations and Agricultural Producers.

African government leaders and donors have been slower to recognise the need for a different approach. We are beginning to see signs of change, though. For example, Senegal's former agriculture minister, Papa Abdoulaye Seck, trained as a traditional agronomist. He now sees agroecology as a better way forward for his country. And the European Union has also begun funding a small number of experimental agroecology programmes.

It's time for a major shift in perspective. We will hopefully look back on this era as the turning point that ended intellectual colonisation in the agronomic sciences.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

How a young African woman is fighting cyber threats

By Aimable Twahirwa

Nyungwe natural reserve is known to be home to 278 species of birds - 26 of those are found only in the few forests of the Albertine Rift. The latest scientific estimates show that there are seven other important birding areas in Rwanda, including three wetland areas at Akanyaru (south), Nyabarongo river system (south), and Rugezi swamp (north), where there are efforts to recover the biodiversity from human activities that led to the degradation of these hotspots. The urban wetland in Kigali city has also received massive investment and is radically improving.

"This task requires much practice for people so that they are able to decode all those different bird songs and calls," Ntoyinkima said.

At present, the first ever Rwandan citizen science initiative, which has been running since 2021, focuses on equipping young students, many from rural communities, with the skills to observe, audio record, and scientifically label birds by their sounds, songs, and calls.

By using affordable sound recording equipment aimed at entry-level citizen scientists, participants are trained in audio-data collection, verification, preparation, and storage for both higher-level scientists and other citizen scientists. Currently, different existing teams deployed across birding hotspots in Rwanda are divided into categories, including recordists and verifiers.

Experts also point out that using the available dataset with multiple records of the songs and calls of the bird population has been crucial to ensuring the protection of species that are forest-dependent.

Through the "Bioacoustics Recording" initiative, which the foundation and other stakeholders jointly run, MacBean has been

involved in mentoring and training young bird guides from Rwanda for international tourism while also educating local guides and students about bird sounds.

"Key focus has been on equipping communities with skills on how to work with bioacoustics data collected in the field as a means to identify bird species in the recordings with confidence," she said.

During the implementation phase, data collection is done by using a smart phone with downloadable free apps and a ParaChirp, an acoustic parabolic reflector designed for educational use to promote learning about birds and product design. The technology focuses mainly on individual bird songs and calls collected in their natural or semi-natural habitat.

The latest official estimates by the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) show that Rwanda boasts more than 703 bird species, making it one of the countries with the highest concentration of bird populations in Africa.

However, Protais Niyigaba, the Nyungwe Forest National Park's manager said that much effort has been put into providing migratory birds with safe habitats and breeding sites.

"These solutions with available recording data are currently helping to understand the routes of these migratory birds and make sure visitors are able to locate them easily by sound," Niyigaba said.

The project had uploaded 226 recordings as of the time of the Foundation's 2023 audit report, with 37 of those being in national parks. The number of recordings is constantly growing, with multiple records of the songs and calls of about 120 bird species across Rwanda.

By December 2024, the Foundation has set a goal of generating 275 recordings, including 75 bird



Favour Chioma Ugwoke is empowering individuals and organizations with the knowledge and tools to protect against cyber attacks

sounds, from existing national parks across Rwanda. The target set for 2025 is 300 species, according to official projections.

"We create music from bird sound and, in the Rwandan context, focus on the community benefits of citizen science, bird sound collection for scientific monitoring, and building the identification skills of tourist guides," MacBean said.

With this integration of bird sound recordings to protect and preserve these species and their habitats, stakeholders focus on labelling the collected data so that their identification, locational and time data, behavioural data, and habitat data are all recorded. The sounds are then validated by assigned verifiers, processed, and stored

for use in science.

Recordings generated by Planet Birdsong's citizen scientists are stored globally with e-bird, and researchers are collaborating with the Macaulay Library at Cornell University to ensure access to locally recorded bird sounds for both citizen scientists and specialists.

For the specific case of Rwanda, data collected in Rwanda is also supplied to the Rwanda Biodiversity Information System developed by the Centre of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management at University of Rwanda for use in local natural science. Yet these innovations are playing pivotal roles in Rwanda's bird protection, and some researchers believe that maintaining data availability is essential for

effective bird biodiversity conservation.

Prof Beth Kaplin, a prominent conservation scientist based in Rwanda said that getting local researchers, students, and youth involved in data collection and management is important to developing a sense of ownership and stewardship of the data recording for bird sounds.

Despite current efforts, conservation experts point out that limited funding to support people and pay their fieldwork expenses is another major challenge affecting project implementation since the majority of local residents work mainly on a volunteer basis. Some individuals engaged in the project also have problems with equipment such as phones and PCs, plus the cost of the internet.

Dr Marie Laure Rurangwa, a Rwandan female conservation scientist said that one of the challenges facing people engaged in this activity is much about processing time with much editing [of recordings] and the skillsets needed in terms of sound recognition for different bird species.

Rurangwa is a co-author of the latest peer review study showing how land use change (modification from primary forest to other land use types) has affected bird communities within Nyungwe forest in Rwanda

"Access to some of these remote birding hotspots has been another challenge for recordists because of limited resources and a lack of appropriate equipment to reach these remote areas," Rurangwa points out.

But in Gisakura, a remote village nestled on the outskirts of Nyungwe Forest, Ntoyinkima and his team are trying to use affordable means in their field recording by splitting into small groups of five people each.

Before their deployment to various sites inside and outside the forest, each group has to travel several kilometres to reach the selected birding hotspots. As they walk quietly along a narrow trail and water flows beneath their feet, the team has to stop sometimes to better identify birds through their vocalizations.

Yet most trained people are able to capture data and generate robust, sound recognition results. Expert verifiers are sometimes asked to provide support when some recordists are stuck for identification or to confirm when in doubt.

"These young people are still volunteering here, but in most cases, the majority of them end up being hired as tour guides because they are well trained in bird vocalizations," Ntoyinkima said.

Nigerians urged to support made-in-nigeria products

ABUJA

The federal government has called on Nigerians to patronise and promote Made-in-Nigeria goods and services for sustainable economic development of the country.

The permanent secretary, special services office and supervising permanent secretary, political and economic affairs office in the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Mohammed Sanusi Danjuma, made the call at the Regional and State Coordinators Conference of Made-in-Nigeria in Abuja.

The permanent secretary, who was represented at the event by the director, International Organisation Department (IOD), Musiliu Oladunjoye, stated that the conference was a crucial step in Nigeria's journey towards economic growth and development.

He added that effective collaboration, innovative solutions and capacity building would serve as a booster to the Made-in-Nigeria project.

The national coordinator of the Made in Nigeria Project under the International Organisation Department in the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, George Nwabueze said the "Made in Nigeria" project was beyond a slogan but a movement that had the capacity to boost Nigeria's economic fortune.

He urged all Nigerians to take pride in patronising products and services that are homegrown, crafted, and delivered by talented entrepreneurs, artisans and innovators in the country.

While delivering his keynote address, Barrister Promise Oga-dinma Mbani, the Eastern Coordinator of Made-in-Nigeria Products observed that one of the major setbacks for the 'Made in Nigeria' products is the cultural preference for foreign products.

He advocated for registration, standardisation and promotion of Made-in-Nigeria products and services in the country in order to improve patronage within and outside the shores of the country.

He further emphasised the need to educate, sensitise and create awareness among Nigerians.

Meanwhile, former President Olusegun Obasanjo has highlighted Nigeria's rich resources, talents, expertise and opportunities as assets capable of transforming the country's economy. Obasanjo stated this at the Design and Build Expo 2024, an initiative of Ecobank Nigeria which ended in Lagos weekend.

The former Nigerian President who commended the bank for the initiative while urging others to take a cue, also disclosed his ambition to have a house completely designed with made-in-Nigeria furniture products.

Speaking at the Julius Berger-AFP pavilion at the expo, Obasanjo expressed his admiration for the high quality of furniture products on display.

The former president who was accompanied by the Managing Director of Ecobank, Mobolaji La-wal and was welcomed to the AFP stand by the General Manager of the furniture company, Oliver Cohnen, said, I want to have a house completely designed with furniture made in Nigeria like these ones; this is very important to me, even as he added, I am impressed with what I am seeing here; and I like it so much.

Another visitor to the AFP stand was the Head of SMEs, Partnerships and Collaborations at Ecobank Nigeria, Omoboye Odu who expressed her enthusiasm about the strong lineup of partnerships and exhibitors.

She emphasized Ecobank commitment to deliver a seamless and mutually beneficial experience, provide a platform to showcase cutting-edge trends, innovations and sustainable practice across architecture, construction, building materials and household appliances, engineering and interior design.

She said the expo serves as a prime opportunity for professionals in the architecture and building sectors to present and market their products to a broader audience

The czar of Doyin Industries, Prince Chief Adedoyin who also visited, was impressed that such beautiful furnitures are being produced in Nigeria. He described the company's furniture range as, of a very high standard; while the Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Lands Bureau, Kamar Olowoshago also visited the AFP stand. He was captivated with the beautiful furniture range and interior decor displayed by the company.

In his welcome address, the Managing Director who also doubles as a Regional Executive of Ecobank, stated that the exhibition was designed to highlight the latest trends, innovations and sustainable practices in architecture, construction, building materials, household appliances, engineering and interior design.

According to him, the expo serves as a hub to empower businesses to offer tailored financial solutions, promote economic growth and strengthen relationships with key stakeholders in the real estate, design, and construction sectors.

The expo's objective includes facilitating connections between industry professionals, including architects, builders, suppliers, and clients, offering education and training as well as raising awareness about sustainable building practices and materials, encouraging eco-friendly designs and low-impact construction methods, La-wal said.

The bank chief continued: the expo also aims to foster partnerships between designers, contractors and suppliers to streamline the design and construction process, as well as provide insights into market trends, consumer preferences, and emerging technologies in the design and construction sectors."

Africa urged to pursue home-grown tobacco harm reduction regulations



An indigenous woman works at a tobacco field near the Sangu River at Thanchi on January 2, 2017 in Bandarban, Bangladesh. Tobacco cultivation has been found to destroy soil fertility and groundwater resources.

HARARE

“From these assessments, policymakers can also be advised on what to do with our own data and research as African countries. That way, I think it might help our communities because we can use and rely on local data rather than imported data which might not be of much help to local communities.”

DATA from Statista, a data-gathering platform, projects that the prevalence of tobacco smoking among adults living on the African continent will decline from 14.5% in 2000 to 7.4% in 2025. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that, due to a rapidly growing youthful population in Sub-Saharan Africa, increasing incomes, and the expanding presence of the tobacco industry, the number of young tobacco users will rise significantly.

By 1995, Zimbabwe and Malawi were the only major tobacco leaf-growing countries in Africa. However, the number of tobacco-growing nations in Africa has grown exponentially since then. WHO estimates that 8 million people globally die from tobacco use yearly, with 80% living in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Due to the projected increase in youthful smokers, the region is expected to face a heavier burden of tobacco-related diseases, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and deaths in the future.

In an effort to curb the growing disease burden and reduce the harm associated with tobacco, several regulations have been introduced globally. These include the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), which has been ratified by many countries in the region. The Global State of Tobacco Harm Reduction (GSTHR) 2024 reveals that, in Africa, five of the 48 countries in the region—Eritrea, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, and Sudan—have not ratified the WHO FCTC.

The WHO FCTC has influenced numerous bans on tobacco and nicotine products, even those deemed as less harmful alternatives to

combustible cigarettes. In Kenya, the government has introduced a tax on electronic cigarettes: 3,000 Kenyan shillings (around \$30) per e-cigarette device and 2,500 Kenyan shillings per cartridge. Similarly, South Africa has been pushing for heavy taxation on e-cigarettes.

Tobacco Harm Reduction (THR) experts and advocates have raised concerns about non-scientific bans and regulations, which they believe could drive people toward using more harmful tobacco products.

In an interview with AllAfrica at the 4th edition of the Harm Reduction Exchange (HRE) in Nairobi, Wilson Box, a Harm Reduction expert from Zimbabwe, emphasised the need for Africa to develop home-grown THR regulations tailored to its unique challenges.

“Personally, I think that there is a need to have national or regional assessments on Tobacco Harm Reduction to identify which territories are implementing it and those that are not,” said Mr Box.

“From these assessments, policymakers can also be advised on what to do with our own data and research as African countries. That way, I think it might help our communities because we can use and rely on local data rather than imported data which might not be of much help to local communities.”

He added that the issue of regulations is complex, as some territories have effective regulations while others face challenges in implementing and enforcing them.

“Regulations depend on each jurisdiction because, in most cases, regulations are put in place to serve the needs of those particular jurisdictions. In the United Kingdom (UK), they have their own regulations that support the use of Tobacco Harm

Reduction because they are mainly worried about the effects of tobacco, especially among the youthful generations. The same applies to countries like South Africa. They also have their regulations in place, but the only challenge is that you mostly find international companies pouring in a lot of money, which might cause the regulations in South Africa to be problematic.”

He cautioned, however, that the WHO FCTC is not relevant to the African context and needs to be amended to address the needs of modern African nicotine users.

Data shows that the African region has limited evidence on safer nicotine products (SNPs), except for nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). To date, NRT is marketed in 18 countries, not marketed in 25, and no information is available for five countries. There are also no specific laws regulating the use and sale of safer nicotine products in most African countries. The sale of snus is allowed in 22 countries, while 26 have no specific laws.

For nicotine vaping products (e-cigarettes), no specific laws exist in 38 African countries. They are allowed in five countries and banned in five. In Ethiopia, Uganda, Gambia, Seychelles, and Mauritius, e-cigarettes are legal to use but illegal to sell, though the Seychelles government announced in 2019 its intention to lift the ban and regulate e-cigarettes. For heated tobacco products, no specific laws exist in 44 countries; sales are allowed in three countries and banned in one.

Evidence also indicates a slight increase in the availability of Harm Reduction services since the Global State of Harm Reduction report in 2022.

“However, substantial regional differences still exist, so first of all,

Africa must be united for Africa to be able to address tobacco-related challenges in different communities,” said Samuel Hanu of the Harm Reduction Alliance of Ghana.

He added that 108 countries include Harm Reduction in national policies. However, criminalisation and punitive responses to drug use remain dominant in most places. These approaches undermine Harm Reduction efforts, fuel stigma and discrimination, and deter people who use drugs from seeking vital, life-saving services.

He emphasized that the stigmatisation and criminalisation of drug users, smokers, and users of nicotine products remain significant issues in Africa.

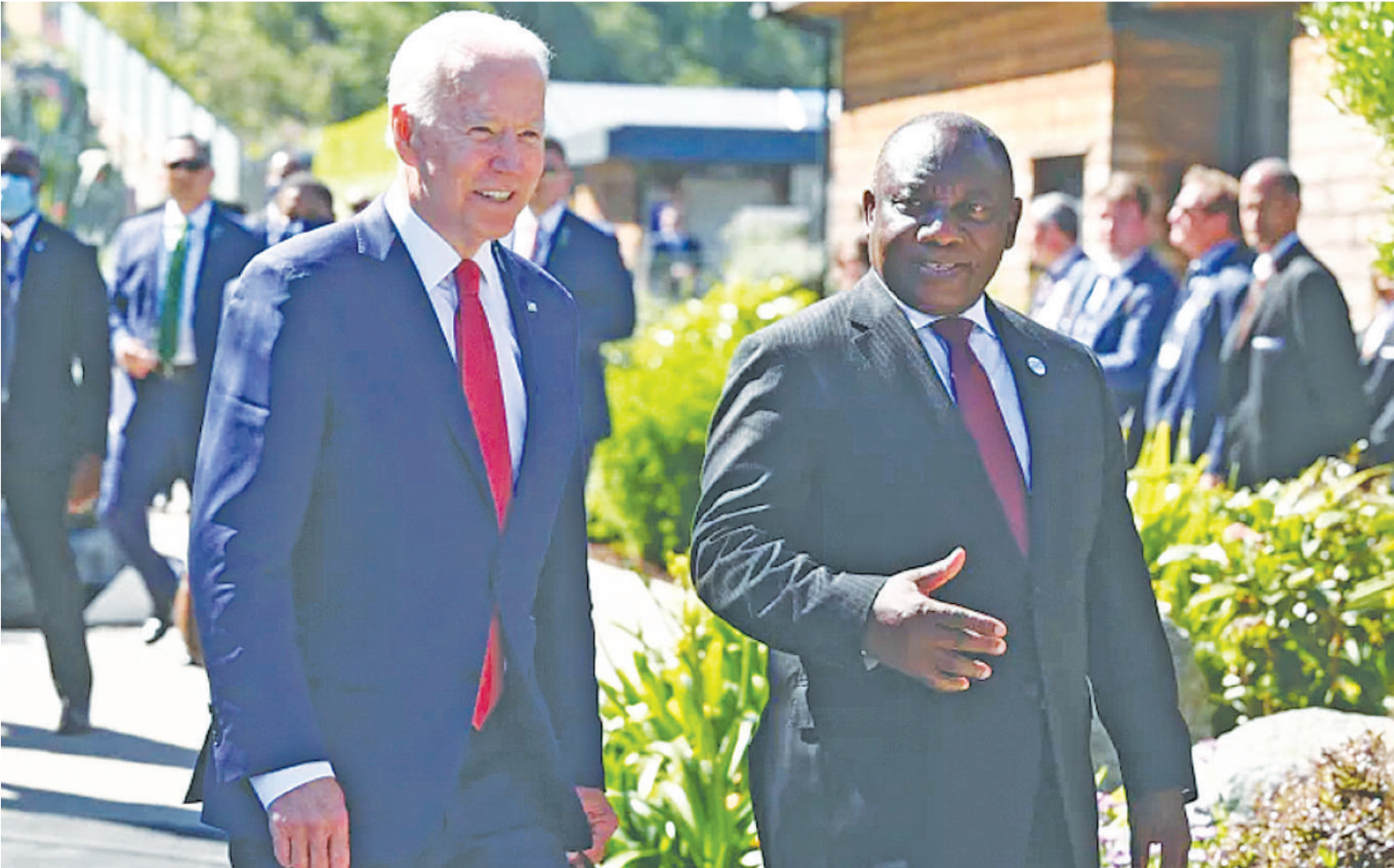
“This impedes access to existing Harm Reduction services and undermines the political and financial support needed to implement and expand these services,” said Hanu.

He further stated that the biggest funding boost for Harm Reduction in Eastern and Southern Africa would come from governments halting funding for punitive approaches to drug use and instead investing in Harm Reduction. He also called for leveraging technology and innovation to combat THR misinformation and disinformation.

“The Overdose Risk Information Tool (ORION) is an innovative e-health tool implemented in clinical settings across Europe. It incorporates overdose risk assessments and provides individuals with information on future Harm Reduction practices and behaviors aimed at reducing overdose rates.”

The Scottish Government launched the Digital Lifelines Scotland (DLS) program to enhance the provision of digital technology in Harm Reduction and other support services.





Former US President Joe Biden walks with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa outside the West Wing of the White House following their meeting in Washington, DC 2022.

South Africa's arms trade dilemma under spotlight

PRETORIA

THE global arms trade has always been a shadowy industry, operating in the margins where war and profit intersect. It's a world most people don't think about until a story like Rheinmetall comes along. In South Africa, this German arms manufacturer has been a quiet fixture for years, producing artillery shells at a factory tucked away from public scrutiny. But now, Rheinmetall is in the spotlight, and not for the right reasons.

Over the last six months, NGOs, activists, and critics have raised

alarm bells. They claim Rheinmetall's South African factory is playing a part in a dangerous game: re-exporting weapons to conflict zones like Israel and Ukraine. Groups such as Open Secrets, the Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute (SAFCEI), and individual activists like Terry Crawford-Browne, a long-time critic of the arms trade, have publicly criticized both Rheinmetall and the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC). They argue that regulatory failures and corporate loopholes are allowing South African-made munitions to fuel international conflicts.

What's happening here isn't just about one company. It's about South Africa's place in the world, the ethics of war, and the uneasy tension between profit and principles.

What's going on at Rheinmetall?

For years, Rheinmetall's South African facility has been churning out artillery shells, mostly unnoticed. But things started heating up in mid-2024 when reports suggested those shells were ending up in places they shouldn't. Investigative pieces, like one published by Africa is a Country, accuse Rheinmetall of using its global network to sidestep South

Africa's strict export controls. The claims suggest that munitions from the factory are being rerouted through Germany or other countries and then sent to conflict zones.

Open Secrets, a local NGO known for digging into economic crimes, hasn't minced words. They believe Rheinmetall is exploiting loopholes in South Africa's export laws. The NCACC, which is supposed to oversee arms exports, has been slammed for what critics call either a lack of oversight or outright complicity.

If these allegations are true, it's a direct challenge to South Africa's policy of staying neutral

in global conflicts. And for a country already grappling with its international reputation, that's a big deal.

What the critics are saying

The critics aren't just making noise; they're bringing evidence. Open Secrets, in particular, has been relentless in its pursuit of Rheinmetall. They've linked the company's operations to a broader history of South Africa's questionable arms exports. For example, during the Yemen conflict, South African weapons reportedly ended up in the hands of warring factions, despite clear laws against it.

This history casts a long shadow. It makes it harder to dismiss the idea that something similar could be happening now. Critics argue that Rheinmetall's actions, and the NCACC's inaction, undermine South Africa's stance as a country committed to peace.

These accusations have struck a nerve, especially with South Africans angry about the ongoing war in Gaza. Protests outside Rheinmetall's factory have become more frequent since August 2024. People have painted anti-war messages on the walls, and employees have faced verbal abuse from activists. It's a tense situation, to say the least.

The government's position

The NCACC isn't taking this lying down. Officials from the committee, including its chairperson and spokesperson, recently told News24 that South Africa has some of the strictest arms export controls in the world. They insist that weapons made in the country aren't sold to places in active conflict. But critics aren't buying it. They point out that the government has a track record of failing to enforce these controls effectively. The protests outside Rheinmetall's factory are a clear indicator of the growing public distrust in the government's assurances.

Rheinmetall's problems aren't just in South Africa

What's happening in South Africa is just one chapter in Rheinmetall's growing list of controversies. Across Europe and beyond, the company has faced backlash for its role in the arms trade. Earlier this year, Rheinmetall was linked to accusations of bypassing export restrictions in Germany to meet increased demand for munitions, raising further questions about its global practices.

These challenges highlight the complex ethical terrain of arms manufac-

turing. For a company like Rheinmetall, such controversies are not just reputational risks they are a signal of growing resistance to the normalization of war profiteering.

Profit over principle

Despite the criticism, one undeniable fact remains: Rheinmetall and other defense companies are making substantial profits as global conflicts drive demand for arms. Financial reports reveal that Rheinmetall's revenues have surged in recent months, underscoring the profitability of the defense industry.

Critics argue that as long as war remains good business, companies like Rheinmetall will keep finding ways to operate—legally or not. And governments, even well-meaning ones, will struggle to keep up.

What's next?

So, where does this leave South Africa? For starters, the NCACC needs to step up. If it's going to be the country's gatekeeper for arms exports, it has to prove it can do the job. That means closing loopholes, increasing transparency, and taking public concerns seriously.

For Rheinmetall, the pressure isn't going away anytime soon. The protests will continue, and the investigations will likely dig deeper. Whether this leads to real change or just more PR spin remains to be seen.

But there's a bigger lesson here, one that goes beyond South Africa or Rheinmetall. The global arms trade thrives in the shadows, where accountability is hard to enforce. Shining a light on it, as Open Secrets and others are doing, is the first step toward change.

At the end of the day, this isn't just about artillery shells or export licenses. It's about who we are as a society and what we're willing to accept in the name of profit. And while the answers aren't easy, the questions are worth asking.

Cooking gas launch due to promote clean energy

KAMPALA

Fuel company, Rubis Energy Uganda has launched its own cooking gas brand as one of the ways to promote clean energy in the country.

Named Rubis gas, the new product was launched at the company headquarters in Nalukolongo, Kampala as the company moves to provide a safe, efficient, and an environmentally friendly cooking solution.

Speaking at the launch, Olivier Gatera, Country Manager of RUBIS Energy Uganda said the move is part of their efforts to ensure a clean environment.

"Every aspect of Rubis Gas, from the cylinders to the filling process and the distribution network has been designed with the end user in mind. We have always been at the forefront of delivering innovative energy solutions. Today's launch aligns with our broader vision to support Uganda's transition to clean



energy and contribute to a greener, healthier future. We believe that access to affordable, sustainable energy is a catalyst for progress" Gatera said.

According to officials, the new cooking gas is equipped with advanced safety features to ensure secure usage in homes and businesses with cylinders in various sizes including 6kg,

12kg, 25kg and 50kg. They will be available at all the company's fuel stations across the country.

"We understand that today's consumer seeks not only efficiency and affordability but also safety and environmental sustainability. RUBIS Gas delivers on all these fronts. Rubis Gas is available in more than

70 stations operated by Rubis Energy. With robust safety features and international compliance standards, we provide peace of mind for every family and business. It's also designed for optimal energy output, ensuring customers get value for their money," said Olivia Nahwera, the Fuel Sales and Specialties Manager at RUBIS Energy Uganda.

Malawi, Zambia suspend fuel imports via Beira port

MAPUTO

ZAMBIA and Malawi have suspended the import of fuel via the central Mozambican port of Beira because of the demonstrations and riots following allegations of massive fraud in the general elections held on 9 October.

According to a report in the independent daily "O Pais", the fuel company Puma Energy Zambia in early November ordered all its trucks in Mozambique to be parked in secure places.

Malawian fuel companies then suspended partially the import of fuel via Beira.

The spokesperson for the Malawian National Petroleum Company, Raymond Likambale, cited by Radio Mozambique, said that, in light of the disruption caused by the post-election disturbances, fuel will be imported via Tanzania, even though the distance to Malawi from the port of Dar es Salaam is much longer than from Beira.

The situation is likely to worsen fuel shortages in southern Malawi, particularly the city of Blantyre, which was already dependent on imports via Tanzania.

Likambale said the switch to Dar es Salaam will last until the

current unrest in Mozambique ceases.

The obvious alternative is the northern Mozambican port of Nacala, and Likambale said a million litres of diesel is currently on its way to Malawi from Nacala.

But the circulation of trains along the Nacala rail corridor is limited: rioters attacked and set on fire one goods train on the Nacala line last Tuesday.

According to the Malawian Energy Regulatory Authority, under normal circumstances, Malawi imports 50 per cent of its fuel via Beira, 20 per cent via Nacala and 30 per cent via Dar es Salaam.



Mozambican unrest threatens Eswatini exports

MAPUTO

THE riots and demonstrations in Mozambique are threatening Eswatini's exports of sugar to the European and US markets.

Under normal circumstances, Eswatini uses the sugar terminal in Maputo port to export its raw sugar. The terminal is jointly owned by all the main sugar producers in the region - South Africa, Zimbabwe, Eswatini and Mozambique itself.

Nontobeko Mabuza, of the Eswatini Sugar Association (ESA), cited by the Voice of America radio station, warned that the unrest in Mozambique poses a grave threat to Eswatini's exports.

The alternative would be to move the sugar via the South African port of Durban, "but this would come at an additional cost," Mabuza said. "For consistency and safe delivery, our customers might choose to migrate to using the Durban port as the port from which we ship. This would, however, strain the transport infrastructure and potentially come at an additional cost."

Furthermore, there would be longer turnaround times as the ships are diverted from Mozambique to South Africa.

According to Bhekizwe Maziya, chief executive of the



A drone view shows stranded trucks at the side of the road, near the Lebombo border outside Mbombela, South Africa, Nov. 29, 2024. Mozambique's political instability has caused traffic congestion and delays at its borders, affecting neighboring areas.

Eswatini national agriculture marketing board, the unrest in Mozambique caused severe traffic congestion and delays at the borders with Eswatini.

What was mainly happening, Maziya said, was closure of the Lebombo/Ressano Garcia border post between South Africa and Mozambique. "So transport had to be rerouted to

Eswatini from South Africa and en route to Mozambique. The effects were the congestion at our

borders and the delays that were experienced by importers and exporters," he said.

Sugar is a key Eswatini export. In 2023, the ESA generated 305 million dollars from more than

26,000 tons of sugar exports to the United States and other markets.

A light in the dark: Empowering rural healthcare through renewable energy

ANTANANARIVO

DR Manda examining a patient. For Dr Manda, a stable electricity supply would allow the health centre to properly store vaccines and temperature-sensitive samples, utilize laboratory equipment to its full potential and ultimately expand its treatment services.

In a dimly lit room, in a local health centre that lies over 160 kilometres west of the capital of Madagascar, a young mother's face radiates with joy and relief as she reaches for her newborn. The exhaustion from hours of labour fades away as she holds her baby for the first time and expresses her gratitude. Firstly, to the small team of health workers led by the town's only physician, Dr Manda, who ensured the safe delivery of her newborn, eternally grateful that the lights stayed on during the entire procedure.

This young mother's story is a microcosm of the challenges faced by the Mahasolo Health Centre. The ability of Dr Manda and his team to provide essential medical services to the 12,300 residents who rely on this facility, despite being severely hampered by an unreliable electricity supply, is nothing short of a miracle. Like the vast majority of rural facilities in the country, the health centre relies on a basic solar power system consisting of just two car batteries and a few solar panels. This inadequate set-up leads to frequent power outages, which hinder the team's ability to treat patients effectively, particularly during the night. According to Dr Manda, "electricity is a matter of life and death", with an unreliable supply of electricity rendering essential equipment, such as microscopes and refrigerators for storing vaccines, virtually useless.

Despite these daunting obstacles, Dr Manda remains optimistic about the future of the health centre thanks to a new

project that promises to bring reliable energy to the town. The Universal Energy Facility (UEF) aims to deliver stable and continuous renewable energy to rural communities such as Mahasolo, powering vital services and economic activities.

The UEF is a results-based financing (RBF) facility that incentivizes private developers to supply, install, operate and maintain mini-grids of solar panels as well as to deploy high-capacity solar and battery storage systems to businesses and institutions in developing countries. It is managed by Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL), an international organization that works in partnership with the United Nations, and funded by the private sector and other donors.

To date, 27 mini-grids have been installed, with more than 5,600 new verified connections benefitting approximately 25,000 people across the country.

For Dr Manda, a stable electricity supply would allow the health centre to properly store vaccines and temperature-sensitive samples, utilize laboratory equipment to its full potential and ultimately expand its treatment services. Moreover, deliveries and operations would no longer be confined to daylight hours, and the fear of power outages would cease to be an ever-present threat.

The promise of a brighter, more reliable future for the Mahasolo Health Centre not only brings joy to Dr Manda's heart, but also offers hope for improved health outcomes for the entire community, ensuring that more mothers and their newborns can experience the simple yet profound joy of a safe delivery. He says, "I love my job because I am helping people to fight against their disease. When people are healthy, I have joy and peace in my heart."



MONDAY - WEDNESDAY FROM 10:30 PM



ITV

WEDNESDAY 18 DEC

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
 6:00 HABARI
 6:40 Kumekucha
 7:30 HABARI
 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
 8:55 Habari za saa
 9:00 Kumekucha
 Kishindo
 9:30 Soap: Laws of love
 9:55 Habari za saa
 10:00 Watoto wetu
 10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt
 10:55 Habari za saa
 11:00 Mjue zaidi
 11:40 Maji Kilimanjaro
 11:55 Habari za saa
 12:00 Al Jazeera
 12:30 Bundesliga na DW
 12:55 Habari za saa
 13:00 Dakika 45 rpt
 13:55 Habari za saa
 14:00 Chetu ni chetu rpt
 14:40 Mapishi
 14:55 Habari za saa
 15:00 Meza huru
 16:30 Watoto Wetu
 17:00 Music: The Base
 18:00 Hapa na Pale
 18:15 Doc rpt: Beyond Narrative
 18:25 Jarida la wanawake
 19:00 Kipindi maalum: BOT
 19:30 Soap: Laws of love
 20:00 Habari
 21:05 Aibu Yako
 21:05 Kipindi maalum: Tanesco
 21:35 Kipindi maalum: Ripoti maalum
 21:50 Soap: Uzalo
 22:50 Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot
 23:00 Music: The Base
 00:00 Al Jazeera

THURSDAY 19 DEC

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
 6:00 HABARI
 6:40 Kumekucha
 7:30 HABARI
 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
 8:55 Habari za saa
 9:00 Kumekucha

9:30 Soap rpt: Laws of love
 9:55 Habari za saa
 10:00 Watoto wetu
 10:30 Shamba lulu
 10:55 Habari za saa
 11:00 Ripoti maalum
 11:45 Kipindi maalum rpt
 11:55 Habari za saa
 12:00 Al Jazeera
 12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt
 12:55 Habari za saa
 13:00 Kipindi maalum rpt: BOT
 13:30 Art and Lifestyle
 13:55 Habari za saa
 14:00 Shamsham za pwani rpt
 14:55 Habari za saa
 15:00 Meza huru
 16:30 Watoto wetu
 17:00 The Base
 18:00 Hapa na Pale
 18:15 Mapishi
 18:30 Jagina
 19:00 Usafiri wako
 19:30 Soap: Laws of love
 20:00 Habari
 21:05 Malumbano ya hoja
 22:50 Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot
 23:00 Jiji letu
 23:00 Music: The Base
 00:30 Al Jazeera

FRIDAY 20 DEC

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
 6:00 HABARI
 6:40 Kumekucha
 7:30 HABARI
 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
 8:55 Habari za saa
 9:00 Kumekucha
 Kishindo
 9:30 Soap rpt: Laws of love
 9:55 Habari za saa
 10:00 Watoto wetu
 10:30 Usafiri wako
 10:55 Habari za saa
 11:00 Kipindi maalum: Watumishi housing
 11:20 Jagina
 11:55 Habari za saa
 12:00 Al Jazeera

12:30 Kipindi maalum rpt: Tanesco
 12:55 Habari za saa
 13:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Maisha ni nyumba
 13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na mahakama
 13:55 Habari za saa
 14:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na mahakama
 14:30 DW: Afrimaxx rpt
 14:55 Habari za saa
 15:00 Meza huru:
 16:30 Watoto Wetu
 17:00 The Base (DJ Show)
 17:30 Kiislam
 18:00 Hapa na Pale
 18:15 ITV Top 10
 19:00 Shamba lulu
 19:30 Soap: Laws of love
 20:00 Habari
 21:05 Kipindi Joto
 22:50 Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot
 23:00 Jiji letu
 23:30 The Base
 00:30 Al Jazeera

SATURDAY 21 DEC

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
 6:00 HABARI
 6:40 Kumekucha
 7:00 Habari
 8:00 Al Jazeera
 9:00 Watoto wetu
 10:05 Shika Bamba 5
 10:35 Mjue Zaidi rpt
 11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
 11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
 12:50 Art and lifestyle
 13:20 Shamba lulu
 13:50 Soap rpt: Laws of love
 15:45 Doc rpt: Beyond Narrative
 16:10 Igizo: Haikufuma
 17:00 Shamsham za Pwani
 18:00 Hapa na Pale
 18:10 ITV Top 10 rpt
 19:00 Jungu kuu
 19:30 Shika Bamba
 20:00 Habari
 21:05 Kipindi maalum: Tatu Mzuka
 21:15 Igizo: Haikufuma
 21:45 Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Min Jackpot
 21:55 Art and Lifestyle

22:15 ITV Top 10
 23:00 Hawavumi lakini wamo
 23:40 Soap: Uzalo rpt
 00:30 Al Jazeera

SUNDAY 22 DEC

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
 6:00 HABARI
 6:40 Kumekucha
 7:00 Habari
 8:00 Al Jazeera
 09:00 Watoto Wetu
 10:00 Soap rpt: Laws of love
 11:45 Hawavumi lakini wamo rpt:
 12:45 Mjue zaidi
 13:30 Usafiri wako
 14:00 Tamasha la Michezo
 15:30 Mwangaza
 16:30 ITV Top 10 rpt
 17:20 Kipindi cha kikristo
 18:00 Hapa na Pale
 18:15 Mapishi
 18:30 Matukio ya wiki
 19:30 Igizo: Haikufuma
 20:00 Habari
 21:05 Igizo: Bongo DSM
 21:20 Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot
 21:40 Mjue Zaidi
 22:15 Soap: Uzalo rpt
 00:30 Al Jazeera

CAPITAL TV

WED 18 DEC

06:00 Al Jazeera
 09:00 Kumekucha Michezo
 10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
 11:30 Capchat
 12:30 Décor Rpt
 13:00 Telenovela In Love With Ramon rpt
 14:00 Culinary rpt
 14:30 Ripoti Maalum
 15:00 Dk 45 rpt
 16:00 Dw News Africa rpt
 17:30 Meza huru
 19:00 Rev
 19:00 Beyond the Narrative RPT
 20:00 Aibu Yako
 20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition
 20:45 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon ep#116
 21:30 Capital Prime News
 22:00 Malumbano Hoja Rpt
 00:00 Al Jazeera

THURS 19 DEC

06:00 Al Jazeera
 09:00 Kumekucha Michezo rpt
 10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
 11:30 Spots gazette
 12:00 Innovation
 12:30 Culinary delight rpt
 13:00 Telenovela rpt: In Love With Ramon rpt
 14:00 Our Earth rpt
 14:30 DW news Africa rpt
 15:00 Beyond the Narrative rpt
 15:45 Décor Rpt
 16:00 Tomorrow Today
 16:30 Business edition rpt
 17:00 In good shape
 17:30 Meza huru
 19:00 Out & About Rpt
 19:30 Eco@Africa
 20:00 Our Earth Rpt
 20:45 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon ep#115
 21:30 Capital Prime News
 22:00 Capchat rpt
 23:00 Al Jazeera

FRID 20 DEC

06:00 Al Jazeera
 09:00 Kumekucha Michezo rpt
 10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
 11:30 Capchat
 12:30 Décor Rpt
 13:00 Telenovela In Love With Ramon rpt
 14:00 Culinary rpt
 14:30 Ripoti Maalum
 15:00 Dk 45 rpt
 16:00 Dw News Africa rpt
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 19:00 Beyond the Narrative RPT
 20:00 Aibu Yako
 20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition
 20:45 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon ep#116
 21:30 Capital Prime News
 22:00 Malumbano Hoja Rpt
 00:00 Al Jazeera

WORLD

DRC files criminal complaints against Apple in Europe over conflict minerals

PARIS

THE Democratic Republic of the Congo has filed criminal complaints against Apple subsidiaries in France and Belgium, accusing the tech firm of using conflict minerals in its supply chain, lawyers for the Congolese government told Reuters.

The DRC is a major source of tin, tantalum and tungsten, so-called 3T minerals used in computers and mobile phones. But some artisanal mines are run by armed groups involved in massacres of civilians, mass rapes, looting and other crimes, according to UN experts and human rights groups.

Apple does not directly source primary minerals and says it audits suppliers, publishes findings and funds bodies that seek to improve mineral traceability.

Its 2023 filing on conflict minerals to the US Securities and Exchange Commission said none of the smelters or refiners of 3T minerals or gold in its supply chain had financed or benefited armed groups in Congo or neighboring countries.

But international lawyers representing Congo argue that Apple uses minerals pillaged from Congo and laundered through international supply chains, which they say renders the firm complicit in crimes taking place in Congo.

In parallel complaints filed to the Paris prosecutor's office and to a Belgian investigating magistrate's office on Monday, Congo accuses local subsidiaries Apple France, Apple Retail France and Apple Retail Belgium of a range of offenses.

These include covering up war crimes

and the laundering of tainted minerals, handling stolen goods, and carrying out deceptive commercial practices to assure consumers supply chains are clean.

"It is clear that the Apple group, Apple France and Apple Retail France know very well that their minerals supply chain relies on systemic wrongdoing," says the French complaint, after citing UN and rights reports on conflict in east Congo.

Belgium had a particular moral duty to act because looting of Congo's resources began during the 19th century colonial rule of its King Leopold II, DRC's Belgian lawyer Christophe Marchand said.

"It is incumbent on Belgium to help Congo in its effort to use judicial means to end the pillaging," he said.

The complaints, prepared by the lawyers on behalf of the DRC's justice minister, make allegations not just against the local subsidiaries but against the Apple group as a whole.

France and Belgium were chosen because of their perceived strong emphasis on corporate accountability. Judicial authorities in both nations will decide whether to investigate the complaints further and bring criminal charges.

In an unrelated case in March this year, a US federal court rejected an attempt by private plaintiffs to hold Apple, Google, Tesla, Dell and Microsoft accountable for what the plaintiffs described as their dependence on child labor in Congolese cobalt mines.

Minerals fuel violence

Since the 1990s, the DRC's mining heart-



Artisanal miners work in the Kamituga artisanal mine, in the South Kivu province in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, on Sept 20, 2024. AFP

lands in the east have been devastated by waves of fighting between armed groups. Millions of civilians have died and been displaced.

Competition for minerals is one of the main drivers of conflict as armed groups sustain themselves and buy weapons with the proceeds of exports, often smuggled via Rwanda, according to UN experts and human rights organizations.

Rwanda denies benefiting from the trade.

Among the appendices to Congo's legal complaint in France was a statement issued by the US State Department in July, expressing concerns about the role of the illicit trade in minerals from Congo, including tantalum, in financing conflict.

The statement was a response to requests from the private sector for the US government to clarify potential risks associated with manufacturing products using minerals extracted, transported or exported from eastern DRC, Rwanda and Uganda.

Congo's complaints focus on ITSCI, a metals industry-funded monitoring and certification scheme designed to help companies perform due diligence on suppliers of 3T minerals exported from DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda.

Congo's lawyers argue that ITSCI has been discredited, including by the Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI) of which Apple is a member, and that Apple nevertheless uses ITSCI as a fig leaf to falsely present its supply chain as clean.

The RMI, whose members include more than 500 companies, announced in 2022 it was removing ITSCI from its list of approved traceability schemes.

In July this year, it said it was prolonging the suspension until at least 2026, saying ITSCI had not provided field observations from high-risk sites or explained how it was responding to an escalation of violence in North Kivu province, which borders Rwanda and is a key 3T mining area.

ITSCI criticized the RMI's own processes and defended its work in Congo as reliable. It has also rejected allegations in a 2022 report by campaigning group Global Witness entitled "The ITSCI Laundromat", cited in Congo's legal complaint in France, that it was complicit in the false labelling of minerals from conflict zones as coming from mines located in peaceful areas.

Apple mentioned ITSCI five times in its 2023 filing on conflict minerals. The filing also made multiple mentions of the RMI, in which Apple said it had continued active participation and leadership, but did not mention the RMI's ditching of ITSCI.

In its July statement, the US State Department said flaws in traceability schemes have not garnered sufficient engagement and attention to lead to changes needed.

Robert Amsterdam, a US-based lawyer for the DRC, said the French and Belgian complaints were the first criminal complaints by the Congolese state against a major tech company, describing them as a "first salvo" only.

CE strives for reforms under Xi's guidance

HONG KONG

HONG KONG Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu vowed yesterday to seek innovative ways to achieve greater prosperity for the city, following directions outlined by President Xi Jinping.

Last Friday, Lee reported on Hong Kong's situation and the HKSAR government's work to Xi during his duty visit to Beijing.

He said that the president fully recognized the SAR government's work during the past year and reiterated the central government's determination to uphold the "one country, two systems" principle.

Acknowledging that the SAR is in a favorable position for stable development, Lee called for proactive reform for the city to better align with national strategies and foster new economic momentum.

Under Xi's guidance, Lee pledged to boost Hong Kong's economic growth with a range of innovative approaches.

He mentioned that the Policy Address has received wide recognition from society,

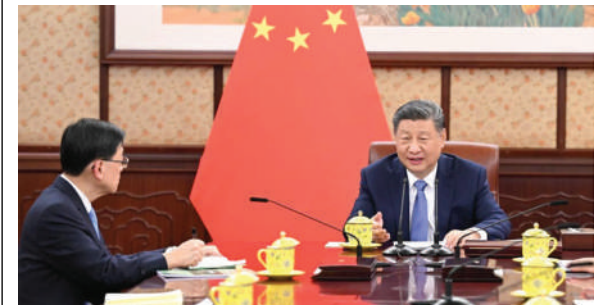
highlighting measures to unleash the SAR's advantages, such as building Hong Kong into an international hub for high-caliber talents, expanding economic and trade networks with Belt and Road countries, and building an international gold trading market.

He also outlined major achievements of his administration over the past 2.5 years, including the city's rise in global rankings in the areas of finance and talent. He said he believes these results demonstrate the SAR's correct policy direction and international society's confidence in the city.

On attracting talent and enterprises, the number of overseas or Chinese mainland companies with offices in Hong Kong rose to 9,960 in 2024, a 10 percent increase from last year. The Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises has successfully introduced 66 key enterprise offices, nearly half of which are industry-leading giants, Lee said.

With the assistance of Invest Hong Kong, the number of mainland or overseas companies that established or expanded operations in Hong Kong reached 535 during the first 11 months in 2024, which is 1.5 times the number in the same period last year, surpassing the target set in 2022, he added.

Xinhua



In this Dec 13, 2024, photo, Chinese President Xi Jinping (right) meets Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu, who is on a duty visit to Beijing, China. XINHUA

Russia to continue its military operation, as West only offers fake peace plans - UN envoy

UNITED NATIONS

RUSSIA will continue pursuing its goals in the special military operation in Ukraine strategically, as long as Kiev's Western allies offer ineffective solutions to the conflict, Russia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Vasily Nebenzya said at the UN Security Council meeting on the situation in Ukraine.

"Russia's conditions are clear and logical, and they have nothing in common with those fake solutions that fail to eliminate the threat posed to Russia by the Kiev regime. These proposals have recently been put forward by Kiev's Western allies increasingly more often," he emphasized.

The permanent representative added that Russia would respond to actions taken by the Ukrainian authorities appropriately. "As long as this is taking place, we will continue to pursue the goal of our special military operation in a strategic manner and respond to the Kiev regime's provocations in the same way as we did on December 13," he noted.



S. African president calls for unity to heal historical wounds, build inclusive future

CAPE TOWN

SOUTH African President Cyril Ramaphosa on Monday called for unity and collective action to heal historical wounds and build an inclusive future, as the country observed the National Day of Reconciliation.

Ramaphosa (pictured) made the remark when delivering the keynote address at an official commemoration event held at Vredendal in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The National Day of Reconciliation is a public holiday celebrated in South Africa annually on Dec. 16 after the country ended apartheid in 1994.

This year's theme is "Healing Historical Wounds and Forging New Futures." In his address, Ramaphosa noted that the day serves as a reminder of the country's journey toward healing and forgiveness since the end of apartheid. "Reconciliation Day is about advancing reconciliation, justice and nation-building.

It promotes social cohesion and healing. The past may be behind us, but we are



left with its wounds," he said. "We have deep scars as a reminder of our painful experiences. We cannot heal these historical wounds by forgetting our past. There are things that should be done to heal the wounds of the past," he stressed.

The president urged all South Africans to work together to address pressing challenges, promote social justice and build an inclusive economy.

"Reconciliation involves both the healing of historical wounds

and the bridging of social, economic and racial divides," said Ramaphosa. "Our goal is to foster unity and social cohesion amongst the country's diverse communities, and encourage mutual respect and understanding."

He underlined that reconciliation is not a symbolic act, but requires a fundamental transformation of society to create a fair and just nation. "The program of the Government of National Unity has therefore prioritized inclusive growth, job creation and transfor-

mation.

It has prioritized the fight against poverty and building a capable, developmental state that meets the needs of all South Africans. Through this work, we will together transform our society," he said.

Ramaphosa also announced that South Africa will hold a National Dialogue next year to enable a conversation among citizens on shaping the country's future developmental path.

"The National Dialogue will give us an opportunity to address the challenges we have been facing for the past 15 years of low growth and unemployment, poverty and hunger, poor governance, slow land reform and corruption," he said, revealing that all the necessary structures and processes of the National Dialogue will be in place in early 2025. "We expect that the National Dialogue will reach agreement on the critical challenges facing the nation.

It is expected to develop a shared vision of what it means to be a South African and of a common value system that will guide current and future generations," he said.

"With a renewed commitment to social justice, economic empowerment, and cultural understanding, our country can continue to build on its achievements. We can fulfill our destiny to be a truly reconciled, equal, caring and united nation," he added. Xinhua

Conflict in Sudan escalates amid continued clashes between army, paramilitary forces

KHARTOUM

THE armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has been escalating, particularly in Khartoum and central and western Sudan, with the two warring parties mobilizing for decisive battles.

In Khartoum, violent clashes erupted on Monday morning between the SAF and the RSF in the Al-Mugran area in central Khartoum. "Since yesterday (Sunday), the SAF has expanded its operations in the Al-Mugran area, while the clashes have intensified on Monday," a military source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Xinhua.

He noted that the area constitutes

a priority for the SAF as controlling it would mean controlling the river navigation at the confluence of the two Niles -- the White Nile and the Blue Nile, not to mention that the area is also a gateway to sovereign centers such as the Republican Palace and the Parliament.

A Xinhua correspondent in Omdurman city, north of Khartoum, said, "Columns of smoke have been rising since Monday morning from central Bahri (north of Khartoum), amid violent explosions from the Shambat and Al-Halfaya neighborhoods of the city."

Warplanes also flew intensive sorties, with the SAF shelling RSF sites in central Bahri from bases in Omdurman, the correspondent noted. Also on Monday, the Bahri

Emergency Room, a local civil society in Khartoum, announced in a statement the evacuation of residents of the city's neighborhoods of Shambat, Al-Halfaya, and Al-Samrab to safety in the East Nile area amid escalating clashes.

For about a week, the SAF has been intensifying its operations in Bahri, controlling large parts of the Al-Samrab area, and advancing towards the Kafouri neighborhood, a stronghold of the RSF, aiming to open the way to the command of the Signal

Corps in the far south of the city. In central Sudan, the SAF is mobilizing its forces from three fronts prior to advancing towards Wad Madani, the capital of Gezira State.

SAF-affiliated units the Special

Work Forces on Monday published videos for deployment of combat units south of Gezira in preparation for what it called the "battle to liberate Wad Madani."

The Sudanese army has recently achieved significant progress towards Wad Madani, seizing several areas south of Gezira, according to Abdul-Jalil Ismail, a Sudanese military expert.

"It is clear that there is going to be a decisive battle, through which the army aims to retake Wad Madani," Ismail told Xinhua. In El Fasher, capital city of North Darfur State in western Sudan, clashes take place almost daily between the SAF and the RSF amid continued exchanges of artillery shelling and drone attacks.

The command of the SAF's 6th Infantry Division in El Fasher said in a statement on Monday that "the situation is stable, our forces are deployed everywhere and are in control, and we repel daily attempts by the militia to enter the city."

For about two weeks, the RSF has continued to shell the Zamzam displacement camp south of El Fasher amid local and international condemnations.

On Monday, the RSF accused the SAF and allied armed movements of attempting "to turn the Zamzam camp into a military barracks" in a statement.

Ibrahim Khatir, director-general of North Darfur State's health ministry, told Xinhua the RSF's repeated and deliberate shelling of the Za-

mzam camp has killed 73 civilians and injured 377 others. Fighting between the two warring parties has raged in El Fasher since May 10.

The conflict between the SAF and the RSF, which began in mid-April 2023, has killed more than 28,700 people and displaced over 14 million, according to the latest estimates by international organizations.



Corps in the far south of the city. In central Sudan, the SAF is mobilizing its forces from three fronts prior to advancing

Barrick update on Mali operations

TORONTO

Barrick Gold Corporation reports that although it had previously agreed on a framework to achieve a global resolution of the disputes with the Government of Mali over the Loulo-Gounkoto complex, it has to date been unsuccessful in arriving at a final resolution despite numerous good-faith attempts to negotiate and a willingness to compromise beyond its legal rights.

Barrick has engaged constructively with the Malian government and its external advisors over the past 12 months, addressing their requests for an increased share of the economic benefits generated by Loulo-Gounkoto.

Notably, the government, a 20% shareholder, has to date received the majority of these benefits. Barrick's proposals toward a Memorandum of Agreement, which included significant concessions, have not been meaningfully considered and have been rejected by the Government of Mali. Even though the 2023 Mining Code has no

application to existing operations such as Loulo-Gounkoto, the government insists on forcing Loulo-Gounkoto under the framework of that Code.

Local operating conditions have deteriorated significantly with employees imprisoned without cause and gold shipments blocked. If shipments remain suspended, Barrick will be compelled to suspend operations, further impacting the viability of this critical economic driver for Mali.

Over 29 years, Barrick has invested more than \$10 billion in Mali, with its mines contributing 5% to 10% of the country's GDP annually. In 2023 alone, Barrick contributed over \$1 billion to the economy.

Loulo-Gounkoto remains one of Mali's largest taxpayers and employers, with 97% of its 8,000-strong workforce comprising Malian nationals. To date, the Malian state has received more than 70% of the economic benefits from the complex.

Agencies

Trump blasts Biden's permission to use US weapons for strikes inside Russia as 'stupid'

NEW YORK

US President-elect Donald Trump attacked the current US leader Joe Biden's move to allow deeper missile strikes inside Russia as wrong and stupid.

"I don't think they should have allowed missiles to be shot 200 miles into Russia. I think that was a bad thing," he said at his first news conference since the election win. "That did a lot of bad things."

"I don't think that should have been allowed," Trump went on to say, speaking at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. "Certainly not just weeks before I take over."

"I thought it was a very stupid thing to do," he continued.

The president-elect said he wasn't asked to weigh in on the decision. Trump said he would have acted differently and could reconsider the decision when he takes office.

Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov earlier said Trump's statement about the peril of using US long-range ATACMS missiles for deeper strikes inside Russia is fully in line with Moscow's position.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said



on November 21 that the US and its NATO allies had announced authorizing the use of longer-range weapons. Following the announcement, US and UK missiles attacked Russian targets in the Kursk and Bryansk regions, according to the president.

Russia responded by firing its newest Oreshnik intermediate-range ballistic missile with a non-nuclear warhead at a Ukrainian defense industry plant called Yuzhmash in the city of Dneps, Putin said. The Russian president said the West could bring upon itself heavy consequences, should its inflammatory policies prompt further escalation of the conflict.

Agencies

Syria's new leader seeks to 'gain voice' in UN Security Council

DOHA

THE new Syrian government wants to "gain a voice" in the UN Security Council, said Ahmad al-Sharaa, the leader of the armed groups that seized power in the country.

"We want to gain a voice in the Security Council," the leader, also known under his nom de guerre Abu Mohammed al-Golani, told Asharq television.

Al-Sharaa (pictured) didn't say exactly what role the new Syrian government sees for itself in the UNSC. According to the leader, some UN resolutions pertaining to Syria require a revision.

Al-Sharaa commented on the talks on Syria, which were held in the Jordanian city of Aqaba on December 14 with the participation of foreign ministers from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, Lebanon, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, as well as the US Secretary of State and the top EU diplomat. He said the meeting had its "upside and downside" and lamented that Syria was not represented.

Syria's armed opposition units started a



major offensive on government troops in the Aleppo and Idlib governorates on November 27. By the evening of December 7, they seized several large cities, including Aleppo, Hama, Daraa and Homs. On December 8, they entered Damascus while government troops withdrew from the city. Bashar Assad resigned as president and left the country.

Mohammed al-Bashir announced on December 10 that he will lead a transitional cabinet in Syria until March 2025. He had previously headed the opposition's Salvation Government in Idlib since January 2024. Agencies

'Hope India puts efforts towards peace'

NEW DELHI

FINNISH Ambassador to India, Kimmo Lahdevirta hoped that India would put in its weight for the efforts towards peace between Russia and Ukraine and also spoke about the growing India-Finland ties.

Ambassador Lahdevirta delivered the remarks on the sidelines of the premiere of the documentary 'All I Want for Christmas', in New Delhi.

Speaking about the film based on Ukrainian refugees finding shelter in Norway, the Finnish Ambassador said, "I think it really is a remarkable film and of course the circumstances are tragic and people have had to flee from their own country because of the war (Russia-Ukraine). But, I think it also shows that there is hope and certainly Christmas is one of those times of year when hope, friendliness and positive things can change people's lives. So I think it gives a very good balance on how things can go badly but also how they can go better".

In a conversation with ANI on the progress of the resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Ambassador Lahdevirta said, "It's very difficult to predict how war goes. And I certainly hope that we can achieve a solution that is acceptable to the Ukrainian people soon. But difficult really to predict anything. War always is very unpredictable by its nature".

He added, "We hope certainly that India also puts its weight for the efforts towards peace. I think that's very important indeed".

Speaking about India-Finland ties, he said that 2024 marks the celebration of "75 years of friendship between our countries".

ANI

US tech kiss ring of power by donating millions to Trump's inauguration

NEW YORK

ONE after another, U.S. tech giants have bowed to President-elect Donald Trump, with Meta, Amazon and OpenAI each pledging 1 million U.S. dollars to his inauguration fund. On Jan. 20, Trump will kick off his second term with the promise to drain the bloated federal government.

OpenAI confirmed on Friday that CEO Sam Altman intends to make a personal donation of 1 million dollars, following reports that Meta, the parent company of Instagram and Facebook, has already contributed 1 million dollars to the fund.

Amazon has also promised 1 million dollars to the fund. Meanwhile, Google CEO Sundar Pichai has an upcoming meeting scheduled with Trump. Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff, remarking on his relationship with Trump, said "We are turning the page," while Time, the publication he owns, named Trump "Person of Year."

Meanwhile, Elon Musk, the world's richest man and CEO of X, Tesla and SpaceX, has become a regular presence by Trump's side at Mar-a-Lago. He spent 277 million dollars to help get Trump elected.

As part of the power game, many in Silicon Valley view billionaire Musk's role as an adviser in the Trump administration as a line into the White House. Musk has vowed to drastically cut government regulations, which has been applauded by many in the tech industry.

RING KISSING

Taken together, the donations and other celebratory gestures showcase an industry kissing the ring of an incoming president in hopes of something in return. Margaret O'Mara, a Silicon Valley historian at the University of Washington, told National Public Radio.

"It's just a recognition that there's not much to be gained in outspoken opposition, but perhaps there is something to be gained by being very clear about your support and hope that Trump does well," she said.

To a multi-trillion-dollar company, a 1-million-dollar donation amounts to "a rounding error," noted the historian. But companies are eager for Trump not to regulate sectors like artificial intelligence and cryptocurrency, where "many of



Donald Trump (2nd, R) attends the opening bell ceremony at the New York Stock Exchange in New York, the United States, on Dec. 12, 2024. (NYSE Group/Handout via Xinhua)

them have made personal, and as businesses, major investments."

Corporations have traditionally made up a large share of donors to U.S. presidential inaugurations, with an exception in 2009, when then-President-elect Barack Obama refused to accept corporate donations.

He reversed course for his second inaugural in 2013. Facebook did not donate to either Joe Biden's 2021 inaugural or Trump's 2017 inaugural. Amazon donated roughly 58,000 dollars to Trump's 2017 inaugural.

Google donated 285,000 dollars each to Trump's first inaugural and Biden's inaugural, according to the Federal Election Commission records.

Microsoft gave 1 million dollars to Obama's second inaugural, but only 500,000 dollars to Trump in 2017 and Biden in 2021. For Trump's 2017 inauguration, which raised an eye-popping 107 million dollars, his biggest donors were largely affiliated with sports teams, casinos, venture capital firms and banks.

PATCHING TIES

"Trump's relationship with social media and tech companies has, in the past, been tenuous if not downright hostile," said CBS News on Friday.

Macao: magnetic Chinese hub with multiple charms

MACAO

FANG FAN, a resident of Guangzhou, had a clear goal for her recent trip to Macao: to enjoy a front-row seat at a performance by U.S. musical icon Herbie Hancock.

For showgoers like Fang, Macao -- just a two-hour drive south of Guangzhou -- has emerged as a vibrant destination where stardom dreams can come true. With an expanding array of high-quality performances and easier access to tickets compared to mainland metropolises, the city is rapidly growing in cultural appeal.

As a major trade port under Portuguese occupation for centuries, Macao returned to the motherland, China, on Dec. 20, 1999, when the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) was established.

Over the past 25 years, Macao has transformed into a multifaceted hub, evolving beyond its moniker as the "Las Vegas of the East." It now seeks to establish itself as a global center for tourism and leisure, while also diversifying into industries such as culture and sport.

CITY OF PERFORMING ARTS

Years ago, Macao's cultural landscape was vastly different. Few people considered traveling there for live concerts. Wu Zhiliang, president of the Board of Directors of the Macao Foundation and a resident of the city for nearly 40 years, recalled a time when even free performances failed to draw local audiences.

Since its return to the motherland, however, Macao has developed into a destination capable of attracting world-class artists such as Spanish tenor Placido Domingo and Herbie Hancock.

This transformation has been fueled by the SAR's growing prosperity under the "one country, two systems" policy -- a unique arrangement that allows it to maintain its capitalist system and way of life within socialist China.



Tourists visit the Ruins of St. Paul's in south China's Macao, Dec. 12, 2024. Xinhua

By 2023, Macao's per capita GDP had more than quadrupled compared to 1999, reaching nearly 70,000 U.S. dollars.

Modern venues like the Macao Cultural Center have played a pivotal role in hosting performances, while the SAR has also leveraged its rich cultural heritage. In October 2024, renowned Chinese-American pipa virtuoso Wu Man performed at the Dom Pedro V Theater, the first Western-style theater built in China in 1860.

"The historic venue blends beautifully with the pipa, a traditional Chinese instrument," Wu Man told Xinhua. "The atmosphere was excellent, and I could feel the audience's enthusiasm for the captivating sounds and melodies."

Major entertainment companies are also recognizing Macao's potential. On Dec. 7, 2024, the Galaxy Arena hosted the iQIYI Scream Night, a star-studded event celebrating top entertainment achievements. This marked the second consecutive year the leading online entertainment platform chose Macao for its annual extravaganza. According to iQIYI, the event drew hundreds of industry stars, thousands of live spectators, and hundreds of millions of online viewers.

The city's growing reputation as a cultural hub is evident in its

statistics. The SAR's 2023 Yearbook of Statistics reported over 55,000 public performances and cultural exhibitions held that year, a significant increase from approximately 38,000 in 2013.

Generation Z artist Kun Wang-tou, an emerging figure in the local art scene, said exhibitions are now a constant presence in the city.

Despite his youth, Kun's reputation has kept him busy traveling between Macao and the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, Zhuhai. His works are currently being showcased in both locations, where he often provides personal introductions for visitors.

Kun, who initially worked as a photographer after earning his bachelor's degree in Boston, decided to return to his hometown to focus on his art. "I am deeply indebted to my hometown for the unwavering support it has given me," he said.

APPEAL OF HIGHER LEARNING

Yanick De Almeida, a freshman at the University of Macao (UM), chose this city for its reputation as a calm and secure place to live. When the young Angolan arrived, he was pleasantly surprised by what he found.

"I initially thought Macao

would be like the Chinese mainland, where everyone speaks Putonghua," Almeida said. "But I quickly discovered that many of my fellow students here also speak Portuguese or English."

For Sofia Costa, an exchange student from the University of Porto in Portugal, studying in Macao has been a transformative journey of personal and professional growth. Currently studying supramolecular chemistry and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) at UM, she described learning TCM as "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

"Immersing myself in Chinese medicine has been a fascinating experience," Sofia said. "I'm confident that the knowledge I gain here will be invaluable throughout my career."

Data from UM shows that the university currently hosts more than 350 international students from about 50 countries and regions, including the United States and Japan, marking a 360 percent increase compared to a decade ago.

UM is one of 10 higher education institutions in Macao, a city with a population of about 690,000. Among them, the Macao University of Science and Technology (MUST) stands out as a prime example of the SAR's growing appeal as an academic destination.

Founded in 2000, MUST has rapidly developed into the largest multi-disciplinary university in Macao, enrolling approximately 23,000 students, 94 percent of whom come from outside the SAR.

Over the past 25 years, Macao's academic reputation has grown significantly. As the historical site of St. Paul's College -- the first university in the Far East -- Macao continues to build on its legacy of higher education. Today, UM ranks among the top 250 universities globally, underscoring the SAR's commitment to academic excellence.

Xinhua

Gymkhana cricketers win 2024 TCA Dar T20 Cup Division B trophy



Gymkhana Cricket Club players celebrate with a trophy after the completion of the 2024 Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Dar T20 Cup Division B showdown in Dar es Salaam recently. They lifted the top honour with victory over Caravans B in the final.

By Correspondent
Japheth Kazenga

GYMKHANA Cricket Club emerged as the 2024 Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Dar T20 Cup Division B winner after commanding a resounding six-wicket win over Caravans B in the final recently.

A spirited showing by Gymkhana Cricket Club bowlers proved decisive when the side came up against Caravans B in the almost one-sided fixture at the Annadil Burhani Oval in Dar es Salaam.

The Manoj Kumar-led Caravans B had the chance to take the crease first but they had trouble when it came to scoring runs.

The cricketers ended

with a mere 90/9 in the allotted 20 overs, with Anand Ram-who notched 34 runs not out becoming the sole batsman with a standout display during their turn with the bat.

Woeful batting by Caravans B witnessed the club's top-order batsmen getting back to the pavilion in quick succession.

Openers Wilbert Martin and Praveen Puthanpurayil were the early victims of the capitulation having notched six runs apiece in their short stay at the crease.

Even though Salmin Yusuph did all he could to stay longer, the youthful player, unfortunately, ended one run short of a two-digit score.

Caravans B kept on dropping wickets in the latter stages, finding it dif-

ficult to contain the resolute Gymkhana Cricket Club bowlers.

Seasoned cricketer Sreejith Kumar was so far the batting squad's other performer with notable contributions after garnering 14 runs.

Jayaraj Malayil, who scored two runs not out, also ended with a bat in hand but his contribution could not improve Caravans B's figure.

Spinner Tambwe Rashidi led the Gymkhana Cricket Club surge when they fielded, having taken 2-13, and was efficiently assisted by Nikila Nishanga and Amit Raghunvashi.

Nishanga completed his bowling quota with 2-17 and Raghunvashi was equally ruthless-finishing with 2-24.

Needing a mere 91 runs from 120 balls to lift the title, the Gymkhana cricketers could not waste time, notching 94/4 in 16.3 overs to come out victorious.

They were 44-2 after the dismissal of the openers Nishanga and Raghunvashi within the six overs.

Nishanga garnered 23 runs and skipper Raghunvashi chipped in with 13 runs.

An early dismissal of Arman Khan could hardly frustrate Gymkhana Cricket Club's batting tenacity, given another experienced player, Harshel Shah, carried the day.

Shah was ultimately the cricketer with the best outing for the batting side, nailing 29 runs not

out.

He formed a determined fifth-wicket stand with youthful Mohamed Yunus to make certain of their club's triumph.

Yunus wound up with 14 runs not out for the eventual champions.

Nishanga (Gymkhana) laid his hands on the Player of the Tournament prize.

Salmin Yusuph (Caravans B) prevented a clean sweep of prizes by Gymkhana Cricket Club players, given the youthful performer got the Best Batsman prize.

Spinner Rashidi (Gymkhana) scooped the tournament's Best Bowler honour.

Nishanga (Gymkhana) moreover walked away with the Man of the Match prize in the final.

Listen, Learn, and Enjoy: Joel Strauss' mission to save Jazz and Blues

By Guardian Correspondent

ENTERING Joel Strauss' flat in Dar es Salaam, you will be greeted by his eight-foot pet giraffe. And you know this is not your usual Dar flat. Because behind JJ the giraffe you see shelves and shelves and more shelves of cassette tapes.

QUESTION: "How many cassettes do you have?"

ANSWER: "Oh, 3,000 give or take. Plus maybe a thousand CDs."

Q: "That many?"

A: "And 12,000 music folders on MP3."

Q: "You're really into music, aren't you?"

A: "Definitely."

Q: "When did you get into it?"

A: "The day I was brought home from the hospital after being born. The whole family is musical. My old man could play almost any instrument he picked up. He sat in with Frankie Trumbauer's band in St. Louis in the early 1920s."

"My mother had a degree in music and was a music teacher in public schools. She played violin in the Joplin Missouri symphony orchestra and gave piano lessons at home."

"My sister is a singer/songwriter in California, has several gold records and was nominated for an Emmy. I started on violin at six but was so lousy I switched to clarinet at eight. Played clarinet in school orchestras through high school."

"In Boy Scouts I played campfire harmonica. I bought a pawn shop saxophone when I was 15 to play rock and roll, then added guitar to do folk music and blues at 18."

Q: "What sort of music did you hear around the house?"

A: "Everything. The old man had jazz on 78rpm records, Mom had classical and Broadway musicals. I collected jazz, blues, rock n roll on 45rpm records."

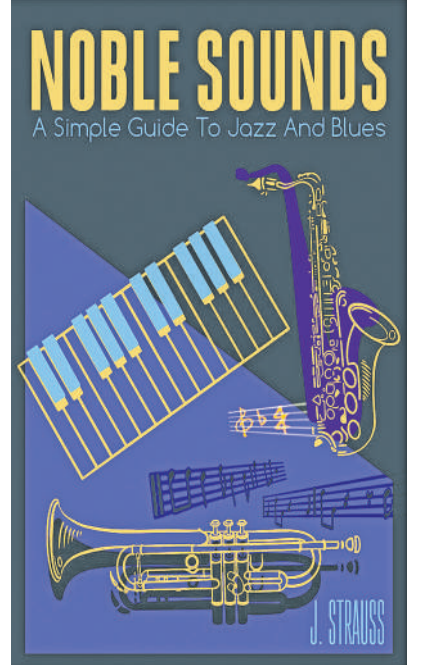
"We listened to the Top 10 pop music on the Hit Parade every Saturday night. And living in Joplin, Gateway to the Ozarks, a lot of hillbilly music came over the radio - now it's called country music. Music was music - we listened to it all."

Q: "Well that does explain all the cassettes. You have a bit of everything?"

A: "I'd estimate about two-thirds jazz and blues; one-third everything else."

Q: "That brings us to the book you just published: 'Noble Sounds: A Simple Guide to Jazz and Blues.' Tell us what it's about."

A: "I'll start with why I wrote 'Noble Sounds.' Of all music sold in the US, jazz ranks near the bottom at 1%. Blues doesn't even mer-



it a statistic.

"Jazz and blues are among America's greatest contributions to world culture and very few people listen to it. Ask people why and you hear that jazz is too complicated and blues all sound the same."

"'Noble Sounds' is a book for anyone interested in jazz and blues, or would like to learn more. Maybe the connoisseurs and pundits will say I'm not serious enough, that 'Noble Sounds' is just a light entertaining read."

"Exactly my aim: to present the music I enjoy in a way the readers will enjoy. We listen to 25 jazz and 25 blues songs. I give a bit of background and explain what's happening when the song plays."

"Complicated jazz is not complicated to listen to and not all blues are alike...if you know how to listen."

Q: "So 'Noble Sounds' is about listening?"

A: Yes. Listening and enjoying what you hear. Music surrounds us every day - birthdays, weddings, funerals. It's on the radio, TV, internet, social media.

"Most people listen to what they're exposed to. You can't like what you don't hear. 'Noble Sounds' gives the readers an opportunity to sample a selection of jazz and blues."

"It's not what the critics say or even what I say. Once the readers listen to these songs, they will decide for themselves. There's only one criterion: I like it or I don't like it. No more, no less."

"It's 'A Simple Guide to Jazz and Blues.' Once they make the journey with me, they won't need a guide anymore. I think many will continue listening to jazz and blues on their own."

Q: "Any last words?"

A: "The last words in 'Noble Sounds' are: 'Boogie On!'"



Australia frustrated as India avoid follow-on in Gabba test



By Ian Ransom

JASPRIT Bumrah and Akash Deep mounted a defiant 10th wicket stand to help India avoid the follow-on on day four of the third test in Brisbane yesterday as Australia's slight hopes of victory were further diminished by an injury to Josh Hazlewood.

Opener KL Rahul and recalled all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja also scored brave fifties as India dug deep on another rain-blighted day at the Gabba.

With a gloom falling over the stadium, Deep sent a thick edge off Pat Cummins flying over a leaping fielder at gully for four runs to push India to safety, sparking celebrations among teammates watching in the stands.

Number 11 Deep smashed the Australia captain for six two balls later with a touch of arrogance, then blocked another delivery before stumps were called due to failing light.

Deep was unbeaten on 27, with Bumrah on 10, the tailenders having pushed India to 252 for nine, still 193 runs behind Australia's first innings 445.

Their unbroken 39-run partnership has all but saved India from defeat and a 2-1 deficit in the five-test series, with Australia forced to bat again and left with little time to take another 10 wickets.

The hosts' task has been made tougher with a calf injury to fast bowler Hazlewood, who has been ruled out of the remainder of the test and is expected to miss the rest of the five-match series.

"It was not just the runs they got but the heart they showed. It will give us as a group a lot of

confidence," Rahul said of the Deep-Bumrah rearguard.

"When it mattered they played some very exciting shots. It is really good to see that they could get that partnership and avoid the follow-on."

"It makes a huge difference knowing that there is a bit of rain around. We needed to find a way to stay in the game. Bumrah and Akash did that. It was a good way to end the day for us."

India had resumed on 201 for seven after tea, still 45 runs short of avoiding the follow-on.

It looked bleak for them when Jadeja holed out with a pull-shot off Cummins to fall for 77, with Mitchell Marsh bolting in from deep square leg to take a fine, low catch.

Mitchell Starc had earlier done for Mohammed Siraj, the

number nine caught behind for one.

But with Hazlewood out of commission and spinner Nathan Lyon ineffective, a fatigued Starc and Cummins were unable to grab the last wicket.

Rain breaks continuously sapped Australia's momentum but Cummins found time to take the wicket of Nitish Kumar Reddy for 16 before tea when the all-rounder chopped onto his stumps. That broke a patient 53-run stand with Jadeja, who was crucial to India avoiding the follow-on.

As was Rahul.

Steve Smith dropped Rahul on 33 with the first ball of the morning when Cummins had the opener edge to the slips.

Rahul went on to score 84 be-

fore Smith redeemed himself with a stunning catch at slip to deny him a century, leaping to his right to pluck a one-hander off Lyon's bowling.

Though Australia have dominated the rain-hit test, time will most likely deny the hosts.

Whichever way the match goes, India captain Rohit Sharma will face more scrutiny after another failure with the bat.

He was caught behind for 10 in the morning, nicking fast bowler Cummins with a lead-footed drive after being softened up by a bouncer from the Australian skipper.

Rohit has 19 runs from his three innings in the series, having missed India's victory in Perth while caring for his newborn son.

REUTERS

Man City fan dies after collapsing during derby defeat

By Ben Rumsby

A MANCHESTER City season-ticket holder has died following "a medical emergency" during the club's Manchester derby defeat on Sunday.

City confirmed a male supporter died in the wake of their 2-1 Premier League home reverse against Manchester United.

"Manchester City are aware of the tragic news that one of our supporters passed away following a medical incident at yesterday's match," City said in a post on X.

"The thoughts of everyone at the club are with their family and friends at this incredibly difficult time."

Several users of the social media platform replied expressing their condolences, including one who indicated he knew the deceased, who was said to have suffered a heart attack.

Sunday's match was not paused over the medical incident and City did not confirm the identity or age of the supporter or explain the exact cause of death.

But they did confirm to Telegraph Sport the fan was male and had been a season-ticket holder since the club moved to the Etihad Stadium 21 years ago. The Premier League champions lost Sunday's game thanks to a late Amad Diallo-inspired comeback from United.

City were leading 1-0 until the 88th minute thanks to Josko Gvardiol's header but Diallo won a penalty - from which Bruno Fernandes equalised - before netting a brilliant stoppage-time winner.

Pep Guardiola's side have now lost eight of their last 11 games across all competitions, winning only one of them and their manager said: "There's no defence. We didn't lose eight games in two seasons. Now, we lose eight in a few days. We cannot talk about targets when we lose a lot of games, and most of the time these things have happened."

"We have to move on and try to find the solution and try to win games. We need results to lift our mood."

"When it happens, getting worse and worse, the reality is like this. I'm the manager of these players and this club. I have to find a solution and, so far, I haven't found it. This is the truth."

THE TELEGRAPH

Inzaghi hails Inter for turning tough start into 6-0 thrashing of Lazio

MILAN

INTER Milan coach Simone Inzaghi has praised his players for standing up to hosts Lazio in a challenging opening half hour on Monday before turning the performance into one of club's most dominant in Serie A.

Lazio showed greater determination at the start but the defending champions grew into the game and stormed to a 6-0 win, scoring quick-fire goals either side of halftime in a superb display that silenced the Stadio Olimpico.

"In the first 25 minutes we were good at keeping our distance with a Lazio team that played well technically," Inzaghi told a press conference.

"We then too grew a lot technically, we managed to score two goals and the third at the start of the second half, closing out a game against a team of absolute value penalised by absences and injuries. We had some players out too but I'm happy."

Lazio were without suspended forward Valentin Castellanos as well as injured defender Alessio Romagnoli and midfielder Matias Vecino, while Inter were missing defenders Francesco Acerbi and Benjamin Pavard.

"We were playing against a team that won 16 out of (their previous) 22 games (in all competitions), and when they lost they didn't deserve it," Inzaghi added.

"We needed a game of great pace and determination, and we did it because the Italian championship always puts so many pitfalls in front of you."

Six different players were on the scoresheet in an away Serie A fixture for the first time in Inter's history as Hakan Calhanoglu, Federico Dimarco, Nicolo Barella, Denzel Dumfries, Carlos Augusto and Marcus Thuram all found the net.

Three of them - Dumfries, Dimarco and Calhanoglu - ended the game with a goal and an assist.

"Going into individual performances after a display like that is not easy," Inzaghi said. "(Stefan) De Vrij ... has extraordinary consistency, Lautaro (Martinez) had a great game, for me it is as if he had scored a goal. He was very happy in the dressing room, he must continue to work like this and he will get satisfaction."

Inter increased the pressure at the top of the table as they sit third on 34 points, three points off Atalanta and a point behind Napoli with a game in hand on the top two. Fourth-placed Fiorentina and Lazio in fifth are three points behind them.

REUTERS

Lookman and Banda named African players of the year



Atalanta's Ademola Lookman celebrates with the Europa League trophy after the Serie A match against Torino at Stadio Atleti Azzurri, in Bergamo, Italy on May 26, 2024. REUTERS

MARRAKECH, Morocco

NIGERIA'S Ademola Lookman has been crowned the 2024 African Footballer of the Year at the Confederation of African Football (Caf) Awards in Marrakesh.

The Atalanta forward saw off competition from Ivory Coast's Simon Adingra, Guinea's Serhou Guirassy, Achraf Hakimi of Morocco and South Africa's Ronwen Williams.

Lookman is the second consecutive Nigerian to claim the award after Victor Osimhen in

2023.

Orlando Pride striker Barbra Banda made history as the first Zambian to win the women's prize, finishing ahead of Moroccan Sanaa Mssoudy and Nigeria's Chiamaka Nnadozie.

The winners are voted for by a panel of experts which includes members of Caf's technical committee plus African media professionals, players and coaches.

***Lookman's stand-out year**

Lookman, 27, was hot favourite to pick up the award for the first time in his career after an

impressive 2023-24 season.

He played a key role in helping his Italian club win the first European trophy in their history with a memorable hat-trick in the final against Bayer Leverkusen - making him the sixth player to score a treble in a European club final and the first since 1975.

On the international scene, Lookman was named in the team of the tournament at the Africa Cup of Nations in Ivory Coast, scoring three goals as the Super Eagles finished as runners-up to the hosts in February.

The former Everton, Fulham and Leicester City player was also the only African on this year's men's Ballon d'Or shortlist, finishing 14th.

Lookman has again proved instrumental for Atalanta this season, scoring eight goals in Serie A to help his team go top of the table.

***Banda's back-to-back awards**

Banda's success comes less than a month after she was voted the BBC Women's Footballer of the Year.

The 24-year-old was also named Most Valuable Player (MVP) in the

United States' National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) as she fired her team Orlando Pride to a first title.

The striker's 17 goals resulted in her finishing second in the scoring charts - behind only Malawi's Temwa Chawinga - with her most crucial strike coming in the Championship final as Pride beat Washington Spirit 1-0.

Banda was also in fine form for her country at the Paris Olympics, scoring four goals for Zambia's Copper Queens, including a first-half hat-trick against Australia.

Her 10 goals spread across two Games have made her the leading African scorer in Olympic history.

***Glittering line-up**

To celebrate the continent's top footballing performances over the past year, Caf put on a show of its own with a host of top African artists taking to the stage.

Tanzanian superstar Diamond Platnumz and Moroccan singer Dystinct led the entertainment on a night when Cameroon's President Paul Biya was given an outstanding achievement award.

It was presented on stage by Fifa president Gianni Infantino, who also congratulated Morocco after the nation was confirmed as co-hosts for the 2030 World Cup last week.

It was a good night for South Africa captain Williams, who - despite missing out on the main men's award - walked off with two trophies. The Mamelodi Sundowns shot-stopper

was named the Men's Goalkeeper of the Year and the Men's Interclub Player of the Year.

On a star-studded night in Marrakesh, it was also revealed who made the Caf/Fifa pro men's and women's Best XI line-ups.

2024 Caf Awards winners

Men's Player of the Year: Ademola Lookman (Nigeria & Atalanta)

Women's Player of the Year: Barbra Banda (Zambia & Orlando Pride)

Men's Coach of the Year: Emerse Fae (Ivory Coast)

Women's Coach of the Year: Lamia Boumeihdi (TP Mazembe)

Men's Goalkeeper of the Year: Ronwen Williams (South Africa & Mamelodi Sundowns)

Women's Goalkeeper of the Year: Chiamaka Nnadozie (Nigeria & Paris FC)

Men's Club of the Year: Al Ahly (Egypt)

Women's Club of the Year: TP Mazembe (DR Congo)

Men's Interclub Player of the Year: Ronwen Williams (South Africa & Mamelodi Sundowns)

Women's Interclub Player of the Year: Sanaa Mssoudy (Morocco & AS Far)

Men's Young Player of the Year: Lamine Camara (Senegal & Monaco)

Women's Young Player of the Year: Doha El Madani (Morocco & AS Far)

Men's National Team of the Year: Ivory Coast

Women's National Team of the Year: Nigeria

Goal of the Year (voted for by fans): Cristovao Mabalulu (Angola) - Angola v Namibia (Afcon 2023)

BBC

Both managers rue dropped points in Bournemouth draw with West Ham

BOURNEMOUTH, England

WEST Ham United manager Julen Lopetegui praised his side's resilience despite the disappointment of conceding a late equaliser in Monday's 1-1 draw at Bournemouth, a game which had more shots than any other Premier League fixture this season.

Bournemouth, whose manager Andoni Iraola was equally disappointed with a draw, had a club record 29 attempts and West Ham 16, but between them the two teams managed only 12 on target as both goals came from set-pieces.

Lucas Paqueta gave West Ham the lead from the penalty spot three minutes from time but Enes Unal equalised with a superb free-kick to earn a share of the points.

"I think it was a pity. We were thinking we would win in a difficult stadium," Lopetegui told Sky Sports.

"It was very close. In the first half we were better, in the second half they were one step ahead. We suffered a little bit but overcame this to score."

"It was an incredible goal from Unal. After they scored they put



AFC Bournemouth's Enes Unal scores their first goal past West Ham United's Lukasz Fabianski during their Premier League match at Vitality Stadium, in Bournemouth, Britain on December 16, 2024. Agencies

on a lot of pressure. We showed good behaviour in the last moments. We competed really well."

Spaniard Lopetegui

has been under pressure after West Ham's indifferent start to the season, but will be pleased about the attitude of his

players in a game where they were second-best for large parts.

"More than the point is the behaviour the

players showed. It was very good," he added.

The draw moves West Ham seven points clear of the relegation

zone. Sixth-placed Bournemouth have no such worries having amassed more points (25) at this stage of the season than in any of their other Premier League campaigns.

However, Bournemouth's Iraola felt it was two points dropped given the chances his side created.

"I don't think it is a good result for us even if we scored the goal at the end," he said.

"We were better in the second half. I didn't like the first half. We were pushing to win and then the penalty happened and we had to take the point. I don't think it's a good point for us."

"The game went very slow in the first half for us. We were not being brave enough to put them under real pressure. We improved in the second half but it wasn't enough to win it."

REUTERS

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Lookman and Banda named African players of the year



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Ramovic optimistic as Yanga focus on domestic success

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YOUNG Africans are ready to return to the Premier League tomorrow, with head coach Saed Ramovic expressing satisfaction with his team's tactical progress.

Ramovic (pictured) believes this development will be crucial as they prepare to resume their CAF Champions League campaign in early January.

The team's recent 1-1 draw against TP Mazembe in the CAF Champions League group stage has provided valuable experience in performance and tactical adjustments as they now turn their attention to domestic competition.

The Jangwani Street giants, who are set to face Mashujaa in the Premier League tomorrow, secured a late equalizer through substitute Prince Dube in the 94th minute, cancelling out Cheikh Fofana's first-half goal during Saturday's action. Despite the late equalizer, Young Africans remain at the bottom of Group A with just one point from three matches. TP Mazembe moved to two points, while Al Hilal and MC Alger lead the group with nine and four points, respectively.

Young Africans' campaign has been turbulent, with losses to Al Hilal and MC Alger in their opening two matches. The Tanzanian side must now win all three of their remaining group stage games to secure a spot in the quarter-finals for the second consecutive season. The team's struggles have coincided with a period of transition under coach Ramovic.

While initially the team faced challenges adapting to his style of play, the South African is now pleased with their tactical development and understanding.

Against TP Mazembe, Ramovic employed a double-pivot midfield with Khalid Aucho and Duke Abuya. This tactical tweak proved crucial in building attacks, especially when Mazembe's press forced Young Africans to play from deep. Mudathir Yahya was deployed in an advanced role, operating as a number 10, while Kennedy Musonda and Pacome Zouzou provided width and made attacking runs.

Young Africans' dominance throughout the match was a positive sign for the coach, who is under pressure to deliver results. In domestic competition, the team is currently in fourth place in the league, just one point behind rivals Simba SC and three points behind leaders Azam FC and Singida Black Stars.

"I believe we're on the right track, especially considering we salvaged a point from our fourth game. However, the most crucial aspect is the style of play we'll exhibit in the Premier League before we return to the CAF Champions League in January.

"I think we still have a chance to qualify. We just need to improve our domestic performances. In my opinion, the tactical approach and the players' understanding of my philosophy will be key to our success in these domestic fixtures," said Ramovic.

Young Africans have had a mixed bag of results this season. While they've struggled in the CAF Champions League, scoring only one goal and conceding five, their performance in the Premier League has been more impressive. With 16 goals scored and four conceded, they've shown strong attacking prowess. However, compared to previous seasons, their goal-scoring rate has been slightly slower this year.

Before the year ends, Young Africans have four crucial matches lined up. Only one of these games will be away, against Dodoma Jiji.

The remaining fixtures against Tanzania Prisons, Mashujaa, and Kagera Sugar will be hosted at KMC Stadium.



Fadlu Davids urges focus as Simba face KenGold FC challenge



By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC will look to carry their impressive momentum from continental success into domestic competition as they take on bottom-placed KenGold FC in the Premier League today at the KMC Stadium Complex.

Kick-off is set for 4:00 PM local time at the KMC Complex.

The Msimbazi Street-based side enter the fixture on a high after a dramatic 2-1 victory over CS Sfaxien at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in the CAF Confederation Cup. The win further cemented their continental aspirations, but the focus now shifts to their Premier League campaign, where they have been in outstanding form.

Simba head coach Fadlu Davids (pictured) acknowledged the challenge that KenGold could pose despite their struggles this season.

Speaking ahead of the en-

counter, Davids said: "This match will not be easy. A side like KenGold has nothing to lose against a team like Simba. In their last match against Namungo FC, they managed to score two goals and showed their quality."

He continued: "We are in very good form in the league currently, but that

doesn't mean we don't need to improve in certain areas. We must remain focused and approach every match with caution."

Davids also took the opportunity to rally the club's passionate supporters, urging them to fill the stands.

"I would like to call upon our fans to come to the stadium. Their presence gives

us energy and motivates the team to push even harder," he said.

Simba have enjoyed a solid domestic campaign so far. The team has won five of their last six league matches and remains unbeaten in their last five games across all competitions.

They sit in third place on the league table with 28 points after 11 matches, having won eight, drawn four, and lost just one.

A victory against KenGold would see Simba temporarily reclaim the top spot in the Premier League. League leaders Azam FC currently have 30 points from 14 matches, followed closely by Singida Black Stars, who also have 30 points but an inferior goal difference.

However, both teams have played three more games than Simba, giving the Msimbazi giants a crucial opportunity to take the lead.

Meanwhile, KenGold have endured a torrid start to their Premier League campaign. They sit at the bottom of the table in 16th position with just six points from 14 matches.

The team has won only once this season, drawn three games, and suffered 10 defeats. Despite their struggles, their recent 2-2 draw with Namungo FC showcased glimpses of potential, particularly in attack.

Simba fans have an added reason to celebrate ahead of today's clash, as winger Elie Mpanzu is set to make his much-anticipated debut.

Mpanzu, whose signing was finalized in September, has now been officially registered following the opening of the January transfer

window on December 16.

Local reports suggest that Simba have moved quickly to secure Mpanzu's place in their squad, utilizing the registration window to bring him into domestic competition.

The Congolese winger is expected to replace Moroccan goalkeeper Ayoub Lakred, who will no longer be part of the team's CAF Confederation Cup squad in January.

Mpanzu's addition comes at a critical juncture for Simba as they aim to maintain their title challenge in the Premier League and progress in the CAF Confederation Cup.

Fans have eagerly awaited his debut, and there is growing anticipation that he could provide the attacking spark the team needs to dismantle KenGold.

Given the disparity between the two sides, Simba will enter the match as overwhelming favourites. Their superior form and quality will pose a significant challenge for KenGold, who have struggled defensively throughout the season.

The bottom-placed side will need to be at their very best to avoid a heavy defeat.

For Simba, this match represents an opportunity to solidify their position at the top end of the league table and build confidence ahead of a demanding stretch of fixtures.

A win would extend their unbeaten run and send a strong message to their title rivals, Azam FC and Singida Black Stars.

Simba will be looking to capitalize on their excellent recent form, while KenGold will fight to avoid yet another setback in what has been a challenging campaign.

Simba face stiff competition after Bravos' win against CS Constantine

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC's hopes of securing a CAF Confederation Cup quarterfinal spot have become more challenging following Bravos do Maquis' dramatic 3-2 victory over CS Constantine at the Estádio 11 de Novembro in Angola.

The result means that three teams in Group A - Simba, Bravos, and Constantine - are now tied on six points, setting up a fiercely competitive battle for qualification.

Simba currently sit second in Group A, having earned six points from their three matches. They opened their campaign with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Bravos do Maquis at home before losing 2-1 to CS Constantine in Algeria.

On Sunday, they bounced back with another 2-1 win, this time against Tunisia's CS Sfaxien at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

Kibu Denis was the hero for Simba in their latest win, scoring a brace, including a 90+9th-minute winner, to secure all three points.

Despite conceding an early goal to Hazem Haj Hassen, Simba showed resilience to recover and dominate the second half.

The Tanzanian giants have now scored

four goals and conceded three in the group stage, keeping them well within the qualification race.

Simba's path to the quarterfinals became tougher after Bravos do Maquis defeated group leaders CS Constantine in a thrilling encounter. The Angolan side took a 2-0 lead by halftime through a Jo Paciencia penalty and a long-range effort from Francis.

However, CS Constantine staged a comeback, equalizing through Dadi Mouaki and Chahine Belaouel.

Just when it seemed the match would end in a draw, substitute Célio scored a dramatic winner in the 94th minute to hand Bravos their second win of the group stage.

With this victory, Bravos climbed to third place, joining Simba and Constantine on six points. They now have six goals scored and five conceded, under-scoring their attacking strength.

Despite the loss, CS Constantine remain at the top of the group, thanks to their superior goal difference.

The Algerian side has scored five goals and conceded four in three matches. Their two wins against Simba and CS Sfaxien have kept them in contention, but their defeat to Bravos highlights the unpredictable nature of this group.

For Simba, the next match against CS Sfaxien in Tunisia on January 5 is critical. While CS Sfaxien are yet to

win a match and sit at the bottom of the group with zero points, Simba cannot afford to underestimate their opponents.

A win in Tunisia would strengthen Simba's chances of progressing to the quarterfinals.

Simba will also need to address their away form, as their loss to CS Constantine highlighted vulnerabilities on the road. With only one home match remaining in the group stage, Simba must find a way to secure points in their away fixtures.

The current standings in Group A make it one of the most competitive groups in this year's CAF Confederation Cup. All three leading teams Simba, Bravos, and Constantine

are tied on six points, separated only by goal difference. With only two teams advancing to the quarterfinals, every match will be decisive.

Simba's head coach, Fadlu Davids, acknowledged the tough competition following their win over CS Sfaxien, urging his players to maintain focus and consistency.

"This group is very competitive, and we must fight for every point in the remaining matches. Our goal is to qualify, and we will give it our all," he said.

On January 5, Simba will face CS Sfaxien in Tunisia, while Bravos do Maquis travel to Algeria to take on CS Constantine. Both matches will be pivotal in shaping the group standings as the race for quarter-

final spots intensifies.

For Simba, securing maximum points against CS Sfaxien is essential. With Bravos and Constantine also in strong form, the Msimbazi Street-based side must capitalize on their opportunities and avoid slipping in the tightly contested group.

Simba's ambition of reaching the CAF Confederation Cup quarterfinals remains within reach, but the road ahead is anything but easy. With three clubs locked on six points, the Tanzanian giants must deliver strong performances in their remaining matches to stay in contention.

As the group stage progresses, Simba's resolve and ability to handle pressure will be tested. Their loyal fans, who have been a driving force behind the team's success, will be hoping for nothing less than a quarterfinal spot as the competition heats up.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

