

MPs: Fast-track evaluation of PSSSF

In another observation, the committee asked the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) to take stern measures against employers in the private sector who submit meagre contributions compared to actual dues required on the basis of employee salaries

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE government needs to fast-track evaluation of the Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF) to start reviewing monthly pension payments for retired public servants, a parliamentary committee has suggested.

Fatma Taufiq, chairperson of the Social Welfare and Development standing committee of the National Assembly put up this appeal in presenting the committee's report for the period covering February 2023 to January 2024.

Complaints abound from

public service retirees of receiving meagre amounts that don't cater for routine living requirements, she said, affirming that clearer information on the actual value of PSSSF will enhance confidence in revising pension payment amounts, with a view to stem difficulties arising from the rising cost of living.

PSSSF has paid long-term obligations amounting to 2.17trn/-, out of an overall debt totalling 4.6trn/-, she stated, detailing the debts as including members' contributions, loans for

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Vice President Dr Philip Mpango addresses stakeholders and delegates from over 50 African countries when gracing the opening of the two-day Seventh Africa Social Partners Summit in Dar es Salaam yesterday. The event, which serves as a crucial platform for stakeholders from diverse sectors, including labour and employment, was lined up to deliberate on the progress and challenges in job creation across the African continent. Jointly organised by the Association of Tanzania Employees and the International Organisation of Employers, it is being held in Tanzania's commercial capital for the first time. Photo: Carlos Banda

VP projects AI input into agriculture, job creation

By Carlos Banda

VICE President Dr Philip Mpango has called on African countries to explore measures to exploit incessant advancement of technology to spur productivity and economic growth in the continent.

Opening the 7th African Social Partners' Summit in Dar es Salaam yesterday, a two-day conference grouping 50 countries across Africa, he stated that the advent of artificial intelligence should be viewed as an opportunity rather than a threat to job security.

"In the area of technological advancement, it can be expected that job creation will be affected by AI. If you read the literature, one strand of thought is that AI will lead to a significant reduction in available jobs, however another strand of thought on the use of AI is that it can create new jobs especially those that require technical skills," the VP explained.

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Matola: Simba took advantage of Tabora's weaknesses

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CECAFA Senior Challenge Cup could make 2024 return

18bn/- SMEs uplift funds not disbursed

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE government has not disbursed 18bn/- for the past two financial years in soft loans to small and medium entrepreneurs (SMEs) for them to establish new businesses and grow existing ones.

Fatma Taufiq, the chairperson for the social welfare and development standing committee of the National Assembly, made this remark when tabling the committee report covering the February 2023 to January 2024 period.

As of last month a total of 18.5bn/- approved by the legislature to be allocated to SMEs in soft loans had not yet been remitted, she said, noting that failure in the disbursement of funds to weak administration.

There are scattered economic

empowerment funds coordination is poor between the Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups ministry and Treasury, she stated.

The government needs to merge special groups' economic empowerment funds intended for entrepreneurs, women, youths and the disabled for them to be monitored properly, she asserted.

The gender and special groups ministry was still waiting for the Treasury to remit the funds, she elaborated, demanding that the government speed up issuance of digital identification cards for SMEs to ease access to soft loans when they are disbursed.

A guideline manual for coordination, monitoring and disbursement of the funds is needed, as the committee learned

that the proposed seven percent to be charged on the soft loans is too high for beneficiaries to prosper in small scale ventures, the committee proposed.

Citing an example, she said the Youth Development Fund was supposed to be allocated 3bn/- over the past three financial years but had so far received 1bn/- with another 1bn/- for empowering people with disabilities slated for the current financial year is unremitted.

Soft loan project applications taking up 6.7bn/- from women, youths and disabled were submitted, to be worked upon by the Labour, Youth, Employment and Disabled division at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) during the year from 184 districts.

That demand was far in excess of

available funds pegged at 3.6bn/- thus disorienting distribution of funds in relation to loan requests, the chairperson further noted.

The skills development programme faces financial challenges negatively impacting youth enrolment as allocation for funds for its implementation dropped to 9bn/- during the current financial year, slipping gradually from 18bn/- for fiscal 2019/20.

Upwards of 12,000 youths were enrolled, down from 42,000 youths in the benchmark year, while the Five Year National Development Plan projects 681,000 youths being enrolled, with a 109.8bn/- budgetary allocation annually.

Riziki Lulida (Special Seats) argued that merging economic empowerment funds will facilitate transparency and accountability.

NHC, PBZ teaming up in mortgage financing

By Correspondent James Kandoya

KEY public corporate entities, the National Housing Corporation (NHC) and the People's Bank of Zanzibar (PBZ) have signed an agreement to enable potential buyers to access loans to purchase houses built by the NHC.

Hamadi Abdallah, the NHC director general, said at the signing ceremony in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the agreement brings to 22 commercial banks that have so far

agreed to provide loans to potential house buyers.

Access to mortgage loans will enable potential buyers to cut short the waiting time to buy houses and live in them, he said, asserting that at present it takes up to 20 years for an average Tanzanian family to build a house using its own savings.

A wide section of the public hesitate to take up mortgage financing as overall lending rates remain high, he said, affirming that NHC is liaising with commercial banks to

provide access to mortgage loans directed at NHC houses.

Under the agreement, a potential customer is issued with a title deed for a prospective house that will be submitted to the bank as collateral for the loan, he said.

The banks will start refinancing mortgage lenders after one year, depending on a particular purchase agreement, he explained.

In recent years, NHC has embarked on a strategic partnership with international investors and

development organizations, expanding its horizons and elevating its capabilities, he said.

He said NHC was forward-thinking, embracing technology and innovative practices to ensure the highest standards, referring to the Samia housing scheme as having reached 50 percent of its target.

Out of 560 homes planned, only four remain unsold, he said, pointing at the Morocco Square

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Bomb blasts kill dozens day before Pakistan vote

LONDON and ISLAMABAD

TWO bomb explosions have killed at least 22 people in Pakistan's Balochistan province on the eve of general elections, officials said yesterday. The first blast killed 14 people in front of an independent candidate's party office in Pishin district and a second explosion left eight people dead in Qillah Saif Ullah district, about 150km (93 miles) away. Many others were injured in the two blasts. The has been marred by violence and claims of poll-rigging. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack in Pishin, a town about 50km from the city of Quetta and 100km south-east of the Afghan border. The provincial authorities said 25 people were also wounded. Images on social media show cars and motorbikes blown apart by the force of

the explosion. It took place outside the election office of a local independent candidate who officials told the BBC was meeting his polling agent at the time. Details of the second blast are still emerging. A senior police official said that it took place in Qila Saifullah's main bazaar, targeting the election office of the JUI-F party. There have been violent incidents in both Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces in the last week or so in the build-up to Thursday's vote. Police are trying to determine the cause of the blasts and the injured have been transported to nearby hospitals. The Balochistan government said the vote would proceed as planned. "Rest assured, we will not allow terrorists to undermine or sabotage this crucial democratic process," provincial information minister Jan Achakzai posted on X, formerly Twitter.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa receives weighing scales from Industry and Trade minister Dr Ashatu Kijaji (in head-cloth) during yesterday's laying of the foundation stone for the headquarters of the Weights and Measures Agency at Medeli on the outskirts of Dodoma city. Right is the agency's CEO, Stella Kahwa. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

NHC, PBZ teaming up in mortgage financing

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apartment complex where 60 percent of planned units have been sold. NHC is set to announce the sale of apartments in the Kawe 711 project in the next two weeks, where 410 units are meant for residential purposes and 1,000 houses are commercial units, he said. The complex will be housing altogether over 1200 people working and living there, with 400 other people expected to generate income from the

premises, he said. Dr Muhsin Masoud, the PBZ director general, commended NHC for its having gone an extra mile, urging potential buyers to seek out PBZ services as interest rates it extended are affordable, repaid for up to 25 years. By the end of last year PBZ assets had reached 2.0trmn/- with profits increasing by 10 percent from the previous year. Other banks involved in the mortgage financing arrangements with NHC are DCB Bank, CRDB Bank, BancABC and NIC Bank, he added.

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projects that scattered schemes merged in the past decade extended to the government. The government needs to pay the 2.45trn/- remaining so that the fund can meet its ob-

ligations in a more predictable manner, she said. PSSF was established under the Public Service Social Security Fund Act, Cap 371, following the merger of PSPF, LAFP, GEPP and PPF schemes serving different branches of the public sector.

In another observation, the committee asked the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) to take stern measures against employers in the private sector who submit meagre contributions compared to actual dues required on the basis of employee salaries.

They also fail to provide employment contracts and deceive on the actual number of employees under contract, the committee observed, noting that there are employers who submit contributions unrelated to their employees' salaries, thus affecting the collection of

eligible contributions. Until June 2023, NSSF was owed 1.39trn/- by the government in debts arising from loans disbursed to finance development projects, including 624.33bn/- actual loan and accrued interest of 769.58bn/-, she added.



Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba (R) exchanges greetings in Dodoma city yesterday with Harris Charalambos Tsangarides, a consultant with the Africa department of the International Monetary Fund. It was shortly after the opening of talks between Tanzanian government officials and an IMF delegation. The thrust was on the evaluation of an Extended Credit Facility programme involving the availability of soft loans to support the growth and stabilisation of the country's economy through the production sectors. Photo courtesy of Finance ministry

VP projects AI input into agriculture, jobs

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"Some low-quality jobs such as data entry clerks and typists were displaced by modern technology. As such, I am of the view that artificial intelligence can also translate into an opportunity to reignite productivity, income and economic growth in our continent, he said. The advent of AI implies that governments and the private sector need to equip employees with more advanced skills to enable them to fit in the new job market, he asserted.

New training and career development interventions are necessary to reposition employees to labour market demands of the future, which calls for identifying sectors that are likely to see a significant number of job opportunities, he elaborated. "The sector where artificial intelligence can augment high skilled jobs and is a particular area of my interest is the agricultural sector," he said, specifying that AI is likely to foster job creation in agricultural research targeted at improving high yield seed varieties.

It also lines up drought resistant seeds spurring higher productivity and future jobs, he said, expressing the view that these are issues that deserve the main attention at this time. Suzanne Ndonga-Doran, the Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE) CEO, said the summit will delve into matters of job creation to come up with recommendations to advise regional leaders. The summit has contributions of different documents that have been helpful for social partners and employers, she said.

Roberto Suarez Santos, the International Organization of Employers (IOE) secretary general, said the summit presents an opportunity to create solutions and joint approaches to address the challenge of jobs for youth and social instability. Saidi Wamba, the Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA) deputy secretary general, said as stakeholders the organization looks forward to deliberate on ways to pursue dialogues to improve the relationship between trade unions and employers.

White House still denies Mideast turmoil linked to Gaza

WASHINGTON DC

The Biden administration continues to deny any connections between the war in Gaza and the ongoing conflicts involving U.S. forces in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. The White House's position that these are all unrelated conflicts that are just cropping up at the same time can't be squared with the evidence showing that the war in Gaza has fueled regional instability and violence, including the recent drone attack by an Iraqi militia that killed three American service members and injured more than 40 at a base in Jordan earlier this week. As much as the administration might want to keep the conflict confined to Gaza, the truth is that it has spread to several other countries. It is a disservice to the American people and to American military personnel to pretend that U.S. support for the war in Gaza hasn't already had serious negative consequences for regional stability and for American forces in the region when it clearly has. When he was asked about this "same, larger conflict" at a press conference on Wednesday, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby dismissed any link between Gaza and the U.S. fight with the Houthis or the back-and-forth strikes between local militias and U.S. forces. "I absolutely don't agree with your description of the same, larger conflict. There's a conflict going on between Israel and Hamas... and we're going to make sure that we continue to get Israel the support that they need to defend themselves against this still viable threat," Kirby said. "There were attacks on our

troops and facilities in Iraq and Syria well before the seventh of October, certainly in the last administration as well. As for the Houthis, they can claim all they want that this is linked to Gaza, but two-thirds of the ships that they're hitting have no connection to Israel whatsoever. So it's just not true, it's a falsehood." Kirby's answer is misleading and false. The umbrella group for the attack in Jordan, the Islamic Resistance of Iraq, explicitly stated that its attack was connected to the war in Gaza. The Houthi leadership has been emphatic that their attacks will continue for as long as the war does. The decision of other actors to jump on a cause's bandwagon may be cynical or not, but there is no denying that they have jumped on the bandwagon. Refusing to face the reality of the connections between these conflicts guarantees that the U.S. will pursue ineffective and counterproductive policies by ignoring that the key to defusing regional tensions is to bring the war in Gaza to an end as quickly as possible. Kirby did not mention that militia attacks on U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria had ceased for several months prior to October 7 because of the understanding that the U.S. and Iran had reached in connection with the prisoner exchange deal. It was only after October 7 that those attacks resumed and then increased to record levels. Local militias have additional reasons of their own for targeting U.S. forces that predate the war, but there is no way to understand the intensity of the attacks in re-

cent months or their cessation during the pause in fighting in Gaza last year without recognizing that they are linked to Israel's war. The same goes for the Houthi attacks. The Houthis did not launch a campaign against commercial shipping during their war with the Saudi coalition, so this is not something that they have usually done since seizing power in 2014. The first Houthi attacks after October 7 were aimed at Israel itself. The Houthis shifted tactics to targeting commercial vessels, but it was clear that they were doing so in response to the war. No doubt the Houthis are acting opportunistically and are launching these attacks partly to bolster their own political fortunes in Yemen, but that doesn't change the reality that these attacks are happening now because of the war in Gaza. If that's true, it also seems reasonable to conclude that the attacks against shipping could be ended with a ceasefire there as well. The Biden administration has strong political incentives to deny links between these different conflicts. If they acknowledge a link, that makes it harder for them to justify their unconditional backing for Israel's war because of the greater costs involved. It also undermines their argument for military action in Yemen against the Houthis. The White House needs Americans to think that the costs of continued support for the war are lower than they are, and they also need Americans to buy that the strikes on Yemen aren't related to their stubborn opposition to a ceasefire in Gaza.

Outcry as liquor shortage continues to bite in Z'bar

By Guardian Correspondent, Zanzibar

TOURISM stakeholders here now say the government through Zanzibar Liquor Board (ZLB) should take the blame for economic consequences after discontinuing importation permits of experienced companies.

In separate interviews here yesterday, Zanzibar economists, politicians and ordinary people said that introducing new importers without the capacity to satisfy the market needs is a big mistake that needs to be admitted and resolved.

Those who spoke said according to the law of 2020, article 33 passed by the Zanzibar House of Representatives, there must be three importers of alcoholic beverages and they must be of the highest competence level.

Abdulahamid Mshangama, financial expert and economist said: "The liquor board has broken the law and this is hurting patriotic investors in the sector,

including those who have been in the alcoholic beverages business for more than 30 years here in Zanzibar."

He said that in order to save the tourism sector, the minister in charge of liquor importation permits should consider the problems that arose after a severe shortage of alcohol in hotels and the biggest victims were tourists. He said: "Right now bar owners have been going to the Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF) camps to look for alcohol, but the amount they get is very minimal hence the current outcry."

"Economically, it will shake us a lot; we'll enter the tourism season and we'll see its effects because the visitors who leave will give negative reviews about Zanzibar," he said.

Former Kikwajuni MP Paramuk Sigha Hogan said that 80 percent of Zanzibar's foreign currency depends on the tourism sector, so it's important for the government to solve the problem as soon as possible.

"Denying permits to local

traders is a mistake because they have been doing this business for many years," he said.

He said the time has come for the government to review the liquor law to allow a free market so that companies that import alcohol are allowed to import and the government should work to collect taxes instead of setting conditions for three companies that import alcohol in Zanzibar.

Veteran politician in isles Mohamed Baraka Shante cited the presence of some leaders who are involved in the business while having the guarantee of leadership as one source of the problem.

Former Zanzibar Minister for Tourism and Heritage Simai Mohamed Said resigned two weeks ago, citing "unfavourable and disruptive working conditions."

His resignation has been linked to the alcohol shortage facing the Indian Ocean archipelago which threatens the tourism sector of one of Africa's top travel destinations.



Constitution and Legal Affairs minister Dr Pindi Chana (R) briefs journalists in Dodoma city yesterday on preparations for a five-day annual Commonwealth Legal Affairs Ministers Meeting expected to be held in Zanzibar from March 4. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Samia to grace Commonwealth justice ministers' meeting

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan is scheduled to grace the biennial Commonwealth justice ministers meeting to be attended by 56 ministers from member states next month to set common ground on innovation and technology development law.

Dr Pindi Chana, the Constitution and Legal Affairs minister, disclosed this here yesterday when addressing journalists on the

meeting that to be held in Zanzibar from March 4th to 8th, this year.

She said that Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Mwinyi will on March 8th wrap-up the forum themed 'Technology and Innovation: How Digitization Paves the Way for the Development of People-Centred Access to Justice intends to enhance and improve the use of technology in justice dispensation'.

Dr Chana said Commonwealth member countries endorsed Tanzania to host the meeting as they

were assured of delegates' security throughout their stay in the country.

The minister said with two-thirds of the world's population without meaningful access to justice, the meeting will focus on examining responsible ways to use technology to make legal services and information more affordable and accessible to people.

The meeting will bring together law ministers and attorneys-general from the 56 member countries

to discuss recent legal developments in their jurisdictions and drive action on people-centred access to justice for 2.5 billion Commonwealth citizens.

Key commitments and new initiatives will be announced at the meeting, especially around improving access to justice for all, protection of women and girls from violence and climate change mitigation.

The minister said that Tanzania is eyeing for two awards through

dispensation of legal services under President Samia Legal Aid Campaign.

More than 300 delegates from 56 countries are expected to attend the meeting, which Dr Chana said will also be used to promote tourist attractions in the country.

She called upon the public to utilise all opportunities available to access legal services as the government uses digital platforms to bring services closer to the communities.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
IN THE COURT OF APPEAL OF TANZANIA
AT DAR ES SALAAM
CIVIL APPEAL NO.292 OF 2023
JUSTINE F. BUFURE.....APPELLANT
VERSUS
HAJI R. MWIKALO.....1ST RESPONDENT
JACK PEMBA.....2ND RESPONDENT
TO: JACK PEMBA
"WHEREVER YOU ARE"
TAKE NOTICE that the hearing of this Appeal will take place at Dar Es Salaam on 14th day of February, 2024 at 09:00am.
If no appearance is made on your behalf by yourself, your pleader or by someone authorized by law to act for you in this Appeal, it will be heard and decided in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Court this 18th day of January, 2024.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF KINONDONI AT KINONDONI
CIVIL CASE 44 OF 2023
IBRAHIM DICKSON MALABEJA.....PLAINTIFF
VERSUS
NO ASSURANCE COMPANY LTD AND OTHERS
.....DEFENDANT
To
JSR ENGINEERING TRADING arg sarl, CONGO-DRC
Since the applicant has brought applications which the application instructions are described in the copies of applications which may be available in this court, therefore you are required to appear in this court by the personal Resident Magistrate or attorney or authorized representative before the date 12th FEBRUARY, 2024. This document is issued by my order and seal of the court this date 8th February, 2024.

COMMUNITY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS CONSORTIUM

ADVERTISEMENT

INVITATION FOR THE APPLICATIONS TO INVEST IN TOURIST HUNTING BLOCKS ARE LOCATED IN MAGINGO WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA).

[Made under section 31 (7) of the Wildlife Conservation Act No. 5 of 2009 and Regulation 55(2) of WMA Regulations of 2018 and its amendments]

To ensure a competitive bidding process, The Magingo Authorized Associations (AAs) of Liwale District invite applications from interested outfitter companies to conduct business in its Tourist hunting blocks for the period commencing June 2024. The table below provides key information concerning the respective Hunting Blocks.

AA	DISTRICT	BLOCK	SIZE IN KM SQ	CATEGORY	APPLICATION FEE (USD)	ECOSYSTEM
MAGINGO	LIWALE	Hokororo	1097.59	II	2000	Nyerere - Selous - Mikumi
		Nachengo	854.33	II	2000	
		Naimba Plain	617	II	2000	

Both new and existing tourist hunting companies are invited. Criteria for evaluating tourist hunting companies are stipulated in Regulation 9(2) of Tourist Hunting Regulations (2015) and its amendments.

Application forms are available at the CWMAC office located at Igombe Street, Mikocheni B Area, Dar es Salaam and in Magingo WMA office in Liwale

Applications (filled application forms, paid bank slips, and all other supporting documents) should be sent to the Magingo Authorized Associations through the postal address indicated in the table below or to the CWMAC office in Dar es Salaam by the 27th of February 2024.

AA MAILING BOX	AA BANK ACCOUNT
JUMUIYA YA HIFADHI YA WANYAMAPORI NA MATUMIZI ENDELEVU LIWALE - MAGINGO, S.L.P 86, LIWALE	A/C NO. 7032300087 NMB, LIWALE BRANCH

Terms and conditions articulated in the Wildlife Conservation Act No.5 of 2009, Tourist Hunting Regulations (2015), WMA Regulations (2018) and their amendments shall apply. For more information, please call +255 711 640 226 or Email: info@cwmac.or.tz

Prepared By
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF ZANZIBAR
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - FINANCE AND PLANNING

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The People's Bank of Zanzibar was established in 1966 under Cap 153 of the Zanzibar Companies Degree. Its primary function is to carry on businesses on commercial banking both in **Conventional and Islamic Banking Services** in all its branches and departments within the United Republic of Tanzania. The bank is offering services in Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, Dodoma and Mtwara with power to receive deposits, invest lend money and other related banking services.

PBZ is 100% owned by the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar under supervision of the President's Office - Finance and Planning. The bank is currently undertaking expansion of its network on products and services and thus hereby invites applications from qualified and energetic Tanzanians with the right knowledge and skills for the post of Managing Director who will also be the CEO of the Bank.

A. Duties and responsibilities: He/She will be in charge of duties and responsibilities as stipulated in the **PBZ MEMART** and those assigned by the Board and the Shareholder. Among the duties and responsibilities are:

- Coordinating the supervision of the activities of the bank and ensuring that they comply with country laws, Bank of Tanzania Regulations, Rules and Guidelines, internal policies and procedures, Board directives and generally accepted banking practices;
- Managing day-to-day operations of the Bank so as to ensure that the bank operates within sound commercial principles;
- Leading the management team in supervising the implementation of the Bank's Strategic Plan and ensuring that the targets set therein are achieved;
- Ensuring the Annual Business Plan is prepared and submitted to the Board of Directors for approval and the operations of the bank are in conformity with approved business plan;
- Ensuring that the annual budgets are prepared and submitted to the Board of Directors for approval for every ensuing year and that the bank operations are conducted within the approved budget;
- Ensuring the bank performance reports including progress reports on the financial performance and staff development are prepared and submitted to the Board of Directors quarterly;
- Ensuring the financial accounts of the bank are audited every year and reports submitted to the Board of Directors in accordance requirements of the law;
- Ensuring various Policies and Programs for management of operational risks, credit risks, liquidity risks, foreign exchange risks and any other inherent risks are put in place and implemented accordingly;
- Ensuring that there are schemes in place for supervising recruitment, performance evaluation, promotion or disciplining of employees whose recruitment are within the powers of Management;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the Organization Structure of the bank and proposing to the Board of Directors changes when deemed necessary;
- Developing the strategies alliances and building effective working relationship with Government leaders, Regulatory Bodies and Business Partners in the market to enhance further business opportunities;
- Resourcing, Motivating, coaching, developing and retaining high performance teams committed to achieve success; and
- Undertaking any other duties that may arise as assigned by the Board of Directors or as result of government policy and strategic directions.

B. Qualifications, Experience and Competency: Master's Degree in Finance, Banking, Accounting, Economics or Law from a recognized Institution. Holding another Master's Degree in International Development, Business Administration, Taxation or Entrepreneurship will be an added advantage. **Qualified Zanzibaris are encouraged to apply.** Minimum of 10 years of working experience in senior management positions in banking industry. Must be familiar with corporate banking law, regulations and management best practices. A strong IT systems management and must be people oriented. High level of integrity, good interpersonal, and communication skills in both English and Kiswahili languages. Excellent analytical problem solving skills.

C. Mode of Contract: Fixed Term /Renewable Contract.

D. Remuneration: As per Organization Salary Scale/Negotiable.

Mode of Application and Timeline: Applications (signed application letters, detailed CV with certified academic certificates) from interested candidates should be sent to the following address not later than **20th February 2024.**

**Principal Secretary,
President's Office - Finance and Planning,
P.O. BOX 1154 Zanzibar,
71402 Urban West,
12 Kenneth Kaunda Road
Vuga Street
ZANZIBAR**

E. All applications submitted through info@mofzanzibar.go.tz. **Hard copy applications** (physical submission) will neither be received nor acknowledged.

Only qualified shortlisted applications shall be contacted.

Protests as hyenas kill one, injure two people

NAIROBI

MARAUDING hyenas killed a man and wounded two people near a university outside the Kenyan capital, officials have said.

Anthony Pasha was dismembered and killed by hyenas while he was collecting firewood at a forest close to his home, according to family members.

"The hyena attacked him and it chased him away from the forest. He left his firewood and then the hyenas dragged him down the stream and finished him off," said his cousin Kaaji Lesian.

Pasha's brother ran to his rescue after hearing screams from the 21-year-old student, Kevin Mwenda, not knowing that his brother was also being attacked.

With incidents involving hyenas increasingly frequent in the area which borders the Nairobi National Park, residents are angry.

"The government should help us. Everything has been killed in this homestead. Cows were killed, goats, and now its people. We haven't found any part of the deceased," said Pasha's relative, Gladys Maingu.

"We have not been given any help. The other two in-

jured victims have been admitted to the hospital. We have not been offered any help from the authorities. How long must we suffer?"

One of the wounded was a student at Kenya's Multimedia University who was attacked by the hyenas late Monday on a road that borders the Nairobi National Park. The incident has prompted hundreds of students to block streets in protests against what they say is a lack of security on campus.

"The university is not safe because we are near the national park," said Ochieng Kefah, who was among the protesters.

"So what the government should be doing is maybe putting some restrictions on the movement of the animals. The students walk here, so when an animal escapes one may also be attacked," he said.

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) said Tuesday it had tracked down and killed a hyena following the attacks and its carcass was being tested for rabies and other diseases.

Faced with increasing attacks, KWS in January released guidelines on how to react when confronted by hyenas.



Flora Ndaba, Tanzania Gender Networking Programme's acting head of programmes, activism and movement building, briefs journalists at Kivule in suburban Dar es Salaam on Tuesday during celebrations to mark International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (Feb 6). This is a UN-sponsored annual awareness day commemorated as part of the UN's efforts to eradicate FGM. Photo: Correspondent Mary Kadoko

PM demands value for money in construction projects

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has ordered close monitoring of the construction projects implemented by the government countrywide, including government city in Dodoma, so that they give value for money.

Majaliwa made the call on Tuesday when speaking shortly after laying the foundation stone for the headquarters of Weight and Measurement Agency (WMA)

at Medeli area in Dodoma Region.

"Public institutions need to complete construction of their buildings in Dodoma so that they can use them. I am aware that there is a procedure to transfer government properties but each institution needs to observe the established procedures," he said.

The premier said that the construction of offices should take into account a close involvement to enable infrastructure management in order to have a

better system that is compatible with government's plan to implement the concept of smart cities.

Speaking on the progress of construction of government institutions, he said the government continues to implement the plan to shift to Dodoma whereby the first phase of the construction of government institutions at Mtumba is completed.

Majaliwa said the second phase which is construction of minist-

rial offices to meet the needs of all public servants is ongoing. This phase consists of 29 buildings, 26 of them are ministerial offices and three for other public institutions.

"AS of January this year, the progress of constructing building had reached 73.4 percent, adding that some institutions had made significant strides, such as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism which has reached 99.9 percent, Ministry of Water (99.5 percent) and President Office (Public Ser-

vice Management and Good Governance) which stood at 94.5 percent.

The PM said the buildings' construction plan is being implemented in tandem with construction of permanent infrastructures that are underground, adding that some buildings are nearing completion and the procedure of procuring furniture was going on so that when the buildings are completed, all employees can move in.



Minerals minister Anthony Mavunde (R) and Kilosa constituency legislator Prof Palamagamba Kabudi exchange views at the Parliament grounds in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Samia pledges to pay passport fees for truckers

By Guardian Correspondent, Songwe

CCM national chairperson Samia Suluhu Hassan has promised to pay passport fees for all Tanzanian truck drivers who transport goods to neighbouring countries to ease their travels.

Paul Makonda, the party's Ideology and Publicity Secretary said this yesterday when addressing residents of Mlowo area in Songwe Region.

He said passports have been a challenge to truck drivers and the matter was presented to President Samia who agreed to help them.

"Many truck drivers who deliver goods to Zambia, Malawi, DR Congo and other countries do not have travel documents; they depend on temporary permits which cause a lot of inconveniences to them," said Makonda.

"I informed the party chairperson on

the challenge that most of them have no passports because of the costs and she asked me to inform you that she will resolve the matter, taking into account that the Port of Dar es Salaam's improvements will create more jobs."

He added: "She asked me to tell all the drivers who don't have passport that the President will pay for them. Just make sure you have all the documents including National Identification Authority (NIDA)

identity cards and birth certificates."

Earlier, a cross-section of truck drivers said that they were facing challenges to access passports and that they always depend on temporary travel permits.

They also cited harassment when they are in neighboring countries, meagre salaries and lack of legal agreements with their employers as among the challenges they face.

Minister lauds e-GA for boosting efficiency, revenue collection

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

MINISTER of State in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance) George Simbachawene has claimed that Tanzania is one of the countries in sub-Saharan African region with the best electronic government (eGA) systems.

Simbachawene said this yesterday while addressing participants of a three-day 4th e-Government Annual General Meeting taking place at the Arusha International Conference Centre.

He insisted that all government institutions and public service entities must be linked to the e-government system which is the only way to curb corruption and address delays in transactions.

"We also want to totally eradicate queues and delays as people scramble to be served at public institutions and organisations, something that has been raising many complaints from people across the country," he said.

Some participants called for seamless linkage of data and individual profiles between government agencies such as the police, Tanzania Revenue

Authority (TRA), Immigration Department and National Identification Authority (NIDA) to create a single national pool of information to ease access and speed up service provision.

Simbachawene commended the Judiciary for taking the leading role in linking to the e-government system, saying there are some institutions which join the system but not fully.

On this, the minister said the government was losing revenues due to lack of proper linkage to technology, including the new electronic payment system.

Benedict Ndomba, director general of e-GA said that the fourth eGA General Meeting targeted to address challenges arising from related digital services in the country, especially where technology development and data upgrading are concerned as well as boosting the system's performance.

Selestine Kakele, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology said the ministry is responsible for overseeing security of the general public when it comes to matters ICT as well as provision of services without favour.

African govts urged to develop similar standards for ICT gadgets

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

AFRICAN governments have been urged to develop similar standards for telecommunication equipment such as computer and mobile devices to promote interoperability of ICT devices across borders.

John Omo, African Telecommunication Union (ATU) secretary-general threw the challenge on Monday in Nairobi, Kenya when speaking at the second ATU forum for preparation of the World Telecommunication Assembly.

The forum was attended by more than 200 stakeholders comprising telecoms regulators and the private sector from Africa to discuss how common standards will promote universal access to advanced wireless, broadband and multimedia technologies.

"Africa also needs a common emergency telecommunication number so that countries can cooperate in responding to disasters such as floods," Omo said, adding that the continent also requires developing a common cybersecurity framework for telecommunication networks to ensure that the region is safe from online threats.

Eliud Owalo, Kenya's cabinet secretary for Information, Communications and Digital Economy, said that common telecommunication standards will provide African manufacturers with a solid basis on which to compete in the global marketplace, unhindered by technical barriers.

Owalo said that harmonized standards across the continent will benefit consumers who will have devices that are compatible and seamless across diverse platforms and technologies.

Seizo Onoe, director of telecommunication standardization bureau at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) which is a specialized agency of the United Nations, said that telecommunication standards are the lifeblood of information communication and technology connectivity and industry developments.

Onoe noted that unified telecommunication standards in Africa will result in economies of scale and affordable digital services for consumers.

David Mugonyi, director general of the Communications Authority of Kenya (CA), urged Africa to adopt harmonized telecommunication standards because it will boost cross-border interactions and interoperability of devices and systems.



Inspector General of Police Camilius Wambura pictured in Dodoma city yesterday launching a tree planting campaign at one of the sites allotted to the Force. This is at Nzuguni Police Barracks but a similar operation was held at Madenge Hill grounds shortly later. Photo: Police Force

W.African bloc asks Senegal to reverse the presidential election delay

DAKAR

Authorities in Senegal should hold the presidential election this month as scheduled instead of delaying it by 10 months, West Africa's regional bloc said Tuesday, as the United Nations human rights office expressed concern about the unprecedented decision in one of Africa's most stable democracies.

President Macky Sall postponed the Feb. 25 vote, citing an electoral dispute between the parliament and the judiciary regarding some candidacies. Opposition leaders and candidates rejected the decision, calling it a "coup."

Several opposition lawmakers were blocked from voting on Monday as parliament rescheduled the election for December, prompting outrage and condemnation. Sall's time in office had been set to end on

April 2.

"We are disappointed in my country," said Moustapha Kane, a teacher in the capital, Dakar, as the unrest of past days appeared to calm. "We used to be a great democracy. Now we are in danger of being the laughingstock of other countries." The vote has been surrounded by months of controversies, from deadly clashes that resulted in Sall announcing that he would not seek a third term to the disqualification of two opposition leaders by the high-electoral authority.

The West African bloc known as ECOWAS, which has struggled to contain a surge in coups in the region, encouraged the political class "to take steps urgently to restore the electoral calendar in accordance with the provisions of Senegal's Constitution."

Senegal's presidential election has never been

postponed. The constitution does empower the Constitutional Council, the highest election authority, to reschedule the vote in certain circumstances including "the death, permanent incapacity or withdrawal" of candidates.

United Nations human rights office spokeswoman Liz Throssell expressed concern about the situation in Senegal and said any decision to postpone elections should be "based on broad-based consultations."

U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin, who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the postponement "puts the country (Senegal) on a dangerous path towards dictatorship, and must not be allowed to stand."

The crisis comes at a time when the West African bloc is struggling to retain its members. Three coup-hit nations pulled out last week after accusing it of "inhu-

mane" sanctions in response to military takeovers.

The bloc must limit its interference in member nations' politics or expand its supervisory role, said Oluwole Ojewale, a West and Central Africa analyst with the Africa-focused Institute for Security Studies.

"ECOWAS is inconsistent," Ojewale said. "It cannot be alert to condemning military coups and threatening intervention while condoning irresponsible political behaviour in other contexts."

ZCTV partnership with Airtel out to ensure subscribers get better services

By Guardian correspondent, Zanzibar

AIRTEL Tanzania has entered into a strategic partnership with Zanzibar Cable Television (ZCTV) to facilitate seamless payment for the latter's subscribers.

Speaking at the signing ceremony in Zanzibar yesterday, Zanzibar Minister for Communication and Transport Dr Khali Mohamed said that the partnership also aims at improving financial inclusion.

He said the collaboration is a significant step towards supporting the government's financial inclusion agenda through provision of swift and secure financial services hence narrowing the financial divide.

"It is indeed commendable for Airtel Tanzania and ZCTV to form a strategic partnership which not only promises to further their business growth but also contributes significantly to our national economy," he said.

Mohamed said that such collaborations between private entities not only aims to expand their operational footprint but also play a crucial role in fostering employment opportunities and align with the government's initiatives that are geared towards bolstering economic development and job creation.

Andrew Rugamba, director of Airtel Money Services, said the

partnership is of mutual benefit for the two entities.

"Airtel Money is dedicated to delivering services that meet the evolving digital needs of our customers," he said.

He said the partnership enables ZCTV subscribers to manage their payments efficiently and effortlessly through Airtel Money, adding that the goal is to simplify everyday transactions, enhance customer experiences and empower consumers to leverage their mobile devices for a broader range of activities.

Rugamba said the partnership is set to deliver substantial benefits to subscribers of both entities, allowing not only for the convenient management of ZCTV subscriptions through Airtel Money but also enabling package upgrades, error resolutions and access to live content.

Hafidhi Kassim, ZCTV operations director lauded the introduction of the new payment solution through Airtel Money which allows for much more convenient and efficient access than ever before.

"ZCTV is driven to ensure that all our subscribers are delighted with the total offering, and we are continuously looking to improve business processes to provide the best services to our customers, transcending traditional boundaries," he said.



Ruhinde Street, Plot 92, Ada Estate, Kinondoni, PO Box 9270 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

REF: KSL/IOM/046/2024 Date: 08 February 2024

INVITATION TO BID

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is an intergovernmental organization established in 1951 and is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits both migrants and society.

In the framework of IOM Operations in Tanzania, the IOM Bids Evaluation and Awards Committee ("BEAC") now invites Bidders to submit "Bid" for purchasing for the following Vehicles.

Item No	Minimum technical requirements	Unit	Quantity
LOT 1.	Commuter Bus, 15-seater. Turbo diesel (Airbags / Driver & Front passenger; Air conditioning (non-CFC), ABS Brakes, Power Door Locks - front, side and back; LHD.) Transmission 5 speed, Manual. Brakes: Front: Disc, Rear: Drum, Drive Type: 4x2 Seats 15-Seater. Radio: CD, AM/FM, MP3 player, Bluetooth, AUX jack & USB	PCS	2
LOT 2.	Min Bus w/cooler, D-30 Seats, Air conditioning, High roof, 4.2 Diesel, LHD.; Transmission 5 speed, Manual. Brakes: Front: Disc, Rear: Drum, Drive Type: 4x2 Radio: CD, AM/FM, MP3 player, Bluetooth, AUX jack & USB	PCS	2
LOT 3	Luxury Bus w/cooler, 49 - 55 Seats, Air conditioning, High roof; Diesel engine. LHD. Transmission 5 speed, Manual. Brakes: Front: Disc, Rear: Drum: Radio: CD, AM/FM, MP3 player, Bluetooth, AUX jack & USB	Pcs	4
LOT 4	Light vehicle Sedan LHD; Transmission: Automatic; Drive type: Front wheel drive; Cylinders- Inline 4; Seating capacity 5 Radio: CD, AM/FM, MP3 player, Bluetooth, AUX jack & USB	PCS	2

Interested bidders shall obtain a complete set of the "Instruction to Bidders" for specific vehicle able to supply. The Instruction to Bidders will be obtained at IOM Office in Dar es Salaam and Kasulu Sub Office for further.

- IOM Dar es Salaam Office is located at Ruhinde Street, Plot 92, Ada Estate, Kinondoni, P. O. BOX 9270 Dar es Salaam.
- IOM Kasulu is located at Kasulu Town, Mulubona road, near Kasulu TTC. Box 303, Kasulu.

Submission of Bid is due (see above-mentioned dates). Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened within validity period of the bid.

IOM reserve the right to accept or reject any bids, and to cancel the procurement process and reject all bids at any time prior to award Contract, without obligation to inform the affected Bidder/s of the ground IOM action.

Very truly yours,
IOM- Tanzania Bids Evaluation and Awards Committee

Mission in the United Republic of Tanzania
Tel: +255 689 103 096 • E-mail: iomdar@iom.int Website: www.iom.int

BBC MEDIA ACTION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Survey - BBC Media Action's Understanding of Consumer Voices in a Changing Food Environment

BBC Media Action

BBC Media Action is the international development charity of the BBC. Established in 1999, the organisation seeks to reduce poverty and provide information to people around the world, through media programmes and campaigns that inspire and inform. Since its foundation, BBC Media Action has worked in developing and transitional countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe on projects that deal with issues of health, resilience, governance, education, environment, livelihoods, and emergency response.

The Research Project

This research project seeks to contribute to human rights-based approaches to the promotion of a healthier food environment in Tanzania by including the voices of consumers ranging from individuals, communities, and local authorities in shaping public discourse and policies through:

- Identifying communication approaches that are best suited to increasing consumers' voices and actions in addressing the nutrition transition.
- Identifying ways to support consumers to enable them to have a voice in generating local demand for affordable and protective foods.
- Identifying how behaviour change communications can be used to promote action among people and decision makers for more effective and accountable public policies addressing malnutrition in all its forms.
- Understanding factors affecting the food environment at individual, household, and community levels as shaped by regional variation.
- Understanding the current food environment linked to food consumption patterns and its impact(s) across consumers of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds in Tanzania.

The survey will be used to collect audience data for 19 regions in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar with Tanzania aged 18-80 years old as follows: Central Zone (Dodoma and Tabora), Coast Zone (Dar es Salaam, Mtwara and Morogoro), Northern Zone (Kilimanjaro and Arusha), Southern Zone (Mbeya, Njombe, and Rukwa), Western zone (Kigoma), Lake Zone (Kagera, Shinyanga, and Mwanza), and Zanzibar (Unguja South, Unguja North, Mjini Magharibi Pemba South and Pemba North).

The full proposal, including both technical and financial components, should be no more than 20 pages. The proposal should be written in a font no smaller than 11 points. Annexes may be included with the proposal and will not count against the 20-page maximum limit. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP should address the research objectives set out in this brief and should be written in English.

The proposal should be sealed and submitted in hand at the BBC Media Action office at Tangaza house in Mikocheini Area, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

The full Request for Proposals should be obtained through this email: catherine.maita@tz.bbcmediaaction.org

DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS SUBMISSION: 22nd February 2024

Zanzibar govt hints at changing media law

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE government of Zanzibar has promised to enact friendly laws to facilitate free operation of media in the isles to promote good governance.

Tabia Maulid Mwita, Minister for Information, Youth, Culture, and Sports, made the pledge during a special meeting with media stakeholders aimed at discussing challenges posed by media laws and steps that can be taken to address them.

She said the government is ready to implement changes towards the realization of a new media law to replace the current one.

"The government itself recognises that the existing law no longer aligns with the good intentions of our leader. It fails to meet the new conditions brought about by the rapid growth of technology, transparency and accountability," she said.

She said after receiving several opinions and recommendations from media stakeholders and human rights activists, the government was in the final stages of enacting the new law.

"It is our hope that 2024 will be the opportune time to witness the realization of this objective of having a new, mutually beneficial media law. Additionally, media stakeholders stand ready to provide cooperation to achieve this goal," she said.

During Zanzibar Media Stakeholders Committee (ZAMECO) meeting, members delved into the challenges posed by Zanzibar's media laws and various steps to be taken by stakeholders to provide input, particularly by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the laws that hinder journalists in effectively performing their duties.

According to ZAMECO, conducive environment is created by friendly laws that guarantee broad freedom of expression and independence of media organizations in seeking, processing, and disseminating diverse information to the public.

The main laws in need of amendment, according to ZAMECO, are the Newspaper Act No. 5 of 1988, as amended by Act No. 8 of 1997, and the Broadcasting Act No. 7 of 1997, as amended by Act No. 1 of 2010.



Shabani Mndende (L), a senior official with the southern highlands zone of the Land Transport Regulatory Authority of Tanzania (Latra), has an audience with transport stakeholders in Mbeya city earlier this week. The focus was on ways to improve services. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

Call for action as FGM remains prevalent despite purge efforts

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

AS the world marked the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation on Tuesday this week, the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) called on Tanzanians to come together and fight the gender based violence.

Flora Ndaba, acting head of programme, activism and movement building at TGNP made the call in Dar es Salaam during a discussion held on a bus that engaged passengers from TGNP headquarters in Mabibo to Kivule ward in the city.

Dubbed 'Her Voice Her Future', the commemoration was designed to remind Tanzanians that FGM is still prevalent in many parts of the country and call for collective action

against it.

The discussion engaged some passengers who were stationed at Banana, Buguruni, Kivule, Kipunguni, Mombasa, Gongo la Mboto and Ukonga whereby they were supposed to understand this year's theme and have their say on the matter.

Ndaba said the FGM is a growing practice globally and it does not only need stakeholders' action but also communities where the cut is deeply entrenched as a rite of passage.

"Let us invest to rescue FGM victims to support the government's initiatives to fight the vice. We are glad that on our way to Kivule, people opened up and shared their testimonies and made a call to communities to take action," she said.

"We have organised a youth bo-

nanza at Kivule market where people will watch a film produced by TGNP through United Nations funding for youth to understand FGM and its complications."

According to her, the 2015/2016 Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey found that Ilala Municipality had higher indicators of FGM than the rest of the municipalities in Dar es Salaam Region. However, the 2022/2023 survey found that Coast Region had more indicators than Dar es Salaam.

"FGM cases are anticipated to increase this year and that means we have to work hard to look for indicators, victims or those in a vulnerable environment and see what we can do as stakeholders to control the problem," she said.

Ndaba further said that the plan

is to ensure that TGNP supports the government through Ministry for Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups' target of ensuring zero FGM cases by 2030.

Magdalena Msaki, social welfare officer with Dar es Salaam City Council said its time parents practicing FGM understood the current reality on the problem rather than focusing on what they benefit from the act.

"Is it true that a girl cannot be married if she is not circumcised? It's time parents understood that the world has changed and we do not live in the past anymore. I urge FGM-practising communities to understand the complications a girl faces rather than focusing on the offered materials that hinder victims' development," she said.

According to United Nations estimates, over the last three decades, the prevalence of FGM has declined globally. Today, a girl is one-third less likely to undergo FGM than 30 years ago. However, sustaining these achievements in the face of humanitarian crises such as disease outbreaks, climate change, armed conflict and more could cause a rollback of progress toward achieving gender equality and the elimination of FGM by 2030.

More than 200 million girls and women alive today have undergone female genital mutilation, according to the UN which estimates that this year alone, nearly 4.4 million girls will be at risk of this harmful practice. This equates to more than 12,000 cases every day, continent.



Dodoma city acting director Joseph Fungo (L) pictured yesterday addressing heads of primary and secondary schools at a meeting called to discuss ways of enhancing diligence, with a view to helping students do better academically. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

Dodoma to house cancer centre of excellence for sub-Saharan Africa's use

By Correspondent Christina Mwakanga

MINISTRY of Health and the United States' Global Health Catalyst (GHC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the construction of a centre of excellence for cancer in Dodoma Region at the cost of \$5million (12.7bn/-).

The agreement is meant to intensify the fight against cancer with the project dubbed Tanzania-USA Regional Advanced Cancer Centre of Excellence (TRACE) whose main objective is to provide modern cancer services—treatment, research, training and therapy—with the use of artificial intelligence.

The signing ceremony took place in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday on the sidelines of the Tanzania-USA Investors Forum on the future of cancer care in Africa and was witnessed by Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Mwinyi.

Minister for Health Umyy Mwalimu said the centre will develop cancer infrastructure in the country in collaboration with Ocean Road Cancer Institute, adding that the centre is expected to serve Sub-Saharan Africa.

"We believe that through this project, we will be receiving patients from other countries. We have already seen 124 patients from different countries. The presence of this centre in our country will also promote medical tourism."

The minister noted that cancer is still a heavy burden with global

deaths estimated to increase from the current 500,000 to one million annually by 2030.

Mwalimu also stated that the establishment of a modern facility in Tanzania will be a huge boost in the battle against the disease.

According to her, in Tanzania, at least 40,000 cancer cases are reported every year and around 26,000 deaths are recorded.

"Only 30 percent of cancer patients reach health facilities but most of them get there when the disease is at an advanced stage when treatment costs are so high," she said.

The minister clarified that some 80 percent of those who make it to the hospitals arrive when their cancer level is beyond the treatment.

Dr Mwinyi said the government's obligation is to ensure that everyone who encounters challenges gets good services, adding that Tanzania has made some progress in the health sector.

Hassan Khamisi Hafidh, Zanzibar Deputy Minister for Health said that the state of health services has continued to improve in Zanzibar, explaining that 11 district hospital buildings were constructed recently while construction of referral hospitals in each region was ongoing.

Prof Wil Ngwa, Global Health Director said their goal is to reduce cancer by 50 percent by 2050 and eventually eradicate it completely, noting that the signed MoU marks the journey towards that direction.

New UNICEF head prioritises efforts to curb stunting

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has promised to help Tanzania on nutrition issues to deal with stunting in children which affects brain development and hence the economy.

Hamad Hassan Chande, Deputy Finance Minister said this in Dodoma yesterday while speaking with Elke Wisch, the new UNICEF Resident Representative in Tanzania.

Chande said that UNICEF has been helping Tanzania with various budgetary issues whereby in 2023/24 financial year, it provided \$20.3 million (50bn/-).

He appealed to UNICEF to continue supporting Tanzania in its efforts to improve the lives of its young citizens.

The deputy minister also commended UNICEF for continuing to cooperate with the government and promised that the government will continue to cooperate with the organisation as it fulfils its re-

sponsibilities in the country.

Wisch said that UNICEF will invest in children's nutrition to help eliminate stunting which affects development of a child's brain and consequently slows down the nation's economic development.

She added that UNICEF ensures that it supports budgetary matters and the ongoing programmes in Tanzania since their goal is to support development of children and women as members of the

United Nations and UNICEF as its agency.

Wisch said that she came to introduce herself and used the opportunity to explain areas which the organisation will invest in, including empowering children.

She lauded Tanzania for the cooperation which she said helps to improve nutrition for children and women as well as issues of education, climate change and sustainable development.



INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF HP INK CATRIDGES TO GEITA GOLD MINING LIMITED.

I. INTRODUCTION

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

The Company is in the process of obtaining suppliers for HP ink cartridges and is, therefore, inviting interested eligible suppliers to submit Expressions of Interest for the supply as detailed below.

NB: THE DOCUMENTS REQUESTED BELOW MUST BE SUBMITTED WHEN EXPRESSING INTEREST ON THIS SUPPLY. SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE SUBJECTED TO ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI VETTING PROCESS.

Scope of Supply:

REFERENCE NUMBER	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
GGME01792	SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF HP INK CATRIDGES

I. INFORMATION REQUIRED

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS (MANDATORY)	20%
COMMERCIAL	
Company Profile and updated organogram	2%
Company Code of Conduct and Ethics	2%
Copy of Current Business Permit and Trade license	2%
Copy of Incorporation Certificate, the most recent BRELA search, and the latest BRELA application of annual return.	3%
Copy of Valid Tax Clearance Certificate (TCC), TIN Certificate and VRN certificate	4%
Copy of company memorandum and article of association	3%
Compliance with Mining Act-Approved Local Content Plan.	4%
FINANCIAL POSITION & TERMS OF TRADE	
Supplier's audited financial statements for the past three consecutive years.	2%
At least 1 reference from the applicant's bankers regarding supplier's credit position. If any.	1%
All bank statements of the Supplier's active bank accounts for the past 6 months to date	1%
A guarantee from a reputable financial institution to support any declared alternative source of funds.	1%
SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	
OSHA Compliance Certificate	1.5%
Environmental compliance certificate	1.5%
Workers' compensation fund certificate	1%
Safety and Environmental policy	1%
OTHER POLICIES	
Gifts / Hospitality / Sponsorship Policy / Procedure	1%
Policies / Procedures dealing with Forced and Child Labor	1%
Policies / Procedures dealing with Abuse, Discrimination and Harassment	1%
Grievance Procedure	1%
Human Rights Policy / Procedure / Program	1%
PAST EXPERIENCE	
At least 3 names of the applicant's clients, value and duration of the contracts entered with the clients in the past two years (must be listed)	1%
Signed contracts/LPOs (proof of the above)	1%
Acceptance certificates /completion certificates (Prove of a. above where applicable)	1%
Provide at least 3 recommendation letters from different clients	2%
TECHNICAL CRITERIA (GGME01792)	
Dealership letter from the Manufacturer	20%
Proof of track record for supplying similar products to the Company or other similar mining industry	15%
Warranty terms and support (specify warranty terms and the availability of after-sales support)	15%
Capability of keeping cartridges in stock and under required conditions (Adequate storage facility)	10%
Total	100%

III. Interested suppliers must submit their expression Letters of Interest ("LOI") **by quoting GGME01792 – SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF HP INK CATRIDGES on THE SUBJECT OF THE EMAIL.** Interested suppliers must also provide full name, address, telephone and e-mail address of the company, name of the principal contact and signed by an authorized representative. The LOI must outline why the supplier is of interest to work with, what the prospective supplier has to offer and how the skills and experience are valuable to the Company.

IV. All LOIs and support documentation **(in PDF format)** must be submitted to the Company's Office via e-mail at geita.eoi@anglogoldashanti.com without copying any individual from the Company. Submission must not be later than **8.30AM 27 February 2024.** (the "LOI" Submission Deadline"). EOI submissions should not exceed 150MB per email. **In case the size of the email exceeds 150MB, please split the submissions into multiple email.**

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

=END OF ADVERTISEMENT=



INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – PREQUALIFICATION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR PROVISION OF MOTOROLA RADIO COMMUNICATION SYSTEM TRAINING AT GEITA GOLD MINING LIMITED.

I. INTRODUCTION

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

The Company is in the process of recruiting a service provider for Motorola radio communication system training and is, therefore, inviting interested eligible service providers to submit Expressions of Interest for this service as detailed below.

NB: THE DOCUMENTS REQUESTED BELOW MUST BE SUBMITTED WHEN EXPRESSING INTEREST ON THIS SERVICE/WORK. SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS WILL BE SUBJECTED TO ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI VETTING PROCESS.

Scope of Service:

REFERENCE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
GGME01801	PROVISION OF MOTOROLA RADIO COMMUNICATION SYSTEM TRAINING

I. INFORMATION REQUIRED

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	20%
COMMERCIAL	
Company Profile and updated organogram	2%
Company Code of Conduct and Ethics	2%
Copy of Current Business License	2%
Copy of Incorporation Certificate, the most recent BRELA search, and the latest BRELA application of annual return.	2%
Copy of Valid Tax Clearance Certificate (TCC), TIN Certificate and VRN certificate	3%
NSSF compliance certificate	4%
Copy of company memorandum and article of association	2%
Compliance with Mining Act-Approved Local Content Plan.	3%
FINANCIAL POSITION & TERMS OF TRADE	
Supplier's audited financial statements for the past three consecutive years	2%
At least 1 reference from the applicant's bankers regarding supplier's credit position. If any.	1%
All bank statements of the Supplier's active bank accounts for the past 6 months to date	1%
A guarantee from a reputable financial institution to support any declared alternative source of funds.	1%
SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	
OSHA Compliance Certificate	1.5%
Environmental compliance certificate	1.5%
Workers' compensation fund certificate	1%
Safety and Environmental policy	1%
OTHER POLICIES	
Gifts / Hospitality / Sponsorship Policy / Procedure	1%
Policies / Procedures dealing with Forced and Child Labor	1%
Policies / Procedures dealing with Abuse, Discrimination and Harassment	1%
Grievance Procedure	1%
Human Rights Policy / Procedure / Program	1%
PAST EXPERIENCE	
At least 3 names of the applicant's clients, value and duration of the contracts entered with the clients in the past two years (must be listed)	2.5%
Provide at least 3 recommendation letters from different clients	2.5%
TECHNICAL CRITERIA (GGME01801)	
Provide detailed CVs and certificates of all professionals (s) who will facilitate training	20%
Provide at least two references (contracts) from previous large-scale clients on similar service and full contact details	15%
Provide set of training contents and course implementation flow onsite	15%
Provide accreditation evidence to conduct technical training	10%
Total	100%

III. Interested Companies must submit their expression Letters of Interest ("LOI") **by quoting GGME01801 – PROVISION OF MOTOROLA RADIO COMMUNICATION SYSTEM TRAINING on THE SUBJECT OF THE EMAIL.** Interested companies must also provide full name, address, telephone and e-mail address of the company, name of the principal contact and signed by an authorized representative. The LOI must outline why the company is of interest to work with, what the prospective company has to offer and how the skills and experience are valuable to the company.

IV. All LOIs and support documentation **(in PDF format)** must be submitted to the Company's Office via e-mail at geita.eoi@anglogoldashanti.com without copying any individual from the Company. Submission should not be later than **8.30AM 27 February 2024** (the "LOI" Submission Deadline"). EOI submissions must not exceed 150MB per email. **In case the size of the email exceeds 150MB, please split the submissions into more than one email.**

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

=END OF ADVERTISEMENT=

With an effort, school-based feeding could stem stunting

A regional committee is reported to be working on directives to take action against district authorities defaulting on the implementation of a nutrition agreement intended to control stunting among under-fives.

A directive by the acting regional administrative secretary was insistent on the matter, but there are already evident snags.

The notice relates to controlling stunting among under-fives, when they are just starting to see school for two years of preliminary exposure to classrooms.

In that context, what the regional authorities are trying to do is not consonant with the sort of objective issued at the start, and thus the action needs to be taken up differently.

Feeding in schools is meant to actually attract pupils to go to school and finish the day there, without being hindered by hunger and therefore skipping or in fact abandoning classes.

If they are already stunted, their learning there will be minimal in terms of reading and writing capacities, but interaction will open up their minds to other things.

There is a vast difference between malnutrition that leads to stunting and thus slow learning in class and acute malnutrition that places health itself at serious risk by inviting all sorts of diseases. There are also other spheres of stunting which can scarcely make their way to non-governmental activists in their brainstorming sessions on the extent to which culture contributes to stunting.

Research on such issues would have to take up other parameters and test their efficacy in how we grow up, which would be tedious or impractical at the very least. We stop short of all that.

The very idea that the regional nutritional committee meeting sought to chart out ways to fight malnutrition

in the region by converging on what schools ought to do is a preliminary issue.

It is not at this level that the problem can be sorted out but merely followed up on the basis of a practical strategy involving child development in terms of the physical, nutritional and mental or psychological environment.

Many children are born with potential stunting as their mothers, especially the young and unwed, often care for pregnancy in tears.

Urging regional officials to wake up and supervise district councils that do not implement the nutrition agreement with the regional authorities and send back information to the regional authorities is laudable, as it shows that they are at least doing something.

They are acting where there are levers they can apply and get a few things done, namely, to ensure a minimum of nutrition for young children.

It isn't a proper solution for stunting as at five years of age the stunting is by and large confirmed rather than developing and hence capable of being acted upon.

All the same, the regional administrator appeared to believe that the plan would actually rid the region of the substance of stunting if properly carried out.

He is reported to have stated that nutrition was an important matter to residents of the area, and thus the committee members "must ensure that the region was safe".

There is perhaps precious little that members of the committee could do on that score, but they could possibly ensure that most children attend school and there are nutritional meals there.

In the 'business as usual' scenario at the household level, that would imply controlling stunting in terms of preventing the situation from worsening, or perhaps even working for the realisation of a better scenario.

nouncements.

Reform criteria clearly missing even after elaborate lists on key measures

THERE are times when the government comes up with a policy pronouncement and then there is a testy environment between top-level authorities and those charged with implementation.

This is often for reasons of a dichotomy of interests, or what some psychologists would say is a contention of 'comfort zones'.

That was in a sense visible as the minister under whose docket falls the responsibility of maintaining government vehicles recently challenged the Tanzania Electrical, Mechanical and Electronics Services Agency (TEMESA) to undertake its activities commercially.

The agency was being called upon to rectify the manner in which it conducts its activities rather than having a new plan brought upon it, like merger, acquisition, sale, etc.

It is not only in this case that policy pronouncements are difficult to put in place - and execute - in the manner in which they were pronounced.

In this particular case, it was in relation to a schedule by the Planning and Investment ministerial 'wing' on how make public organisations function more effectively and productively.

Few of those proposals and measures were heard of as the legislature debated reports of its various committees. And in this case, when the respective minister was out to handle problems with one of the listed parastatals.

Those who remember categorical pronouncements around the third quarter last year will recall that there was a series of reorganisation measures envisaged.

Only months later, a parliamentary committee takes up the files of companies in the telecommunications and postal delivery area with scant reference to what was said in those pro-

posals brought to the legislature were singularly traditional in character, including that the government should consider absorbing the debts and recapitalise those agencies. There was little to be surprised about as the government has definitely done that for all public agencies it is proud of.

There is an expression in some European languages that 'the more it changes, the more it remains the same', which basically refers to culture.

What it means in part is that countries 'change' by virtue of events and administrators coming and going, but deep underneath things remain the same.

It is not that it remains the same eternally but its core tenets of culture, or mode of governance, are altered in a mild way from one period to another - but never really abandoned.

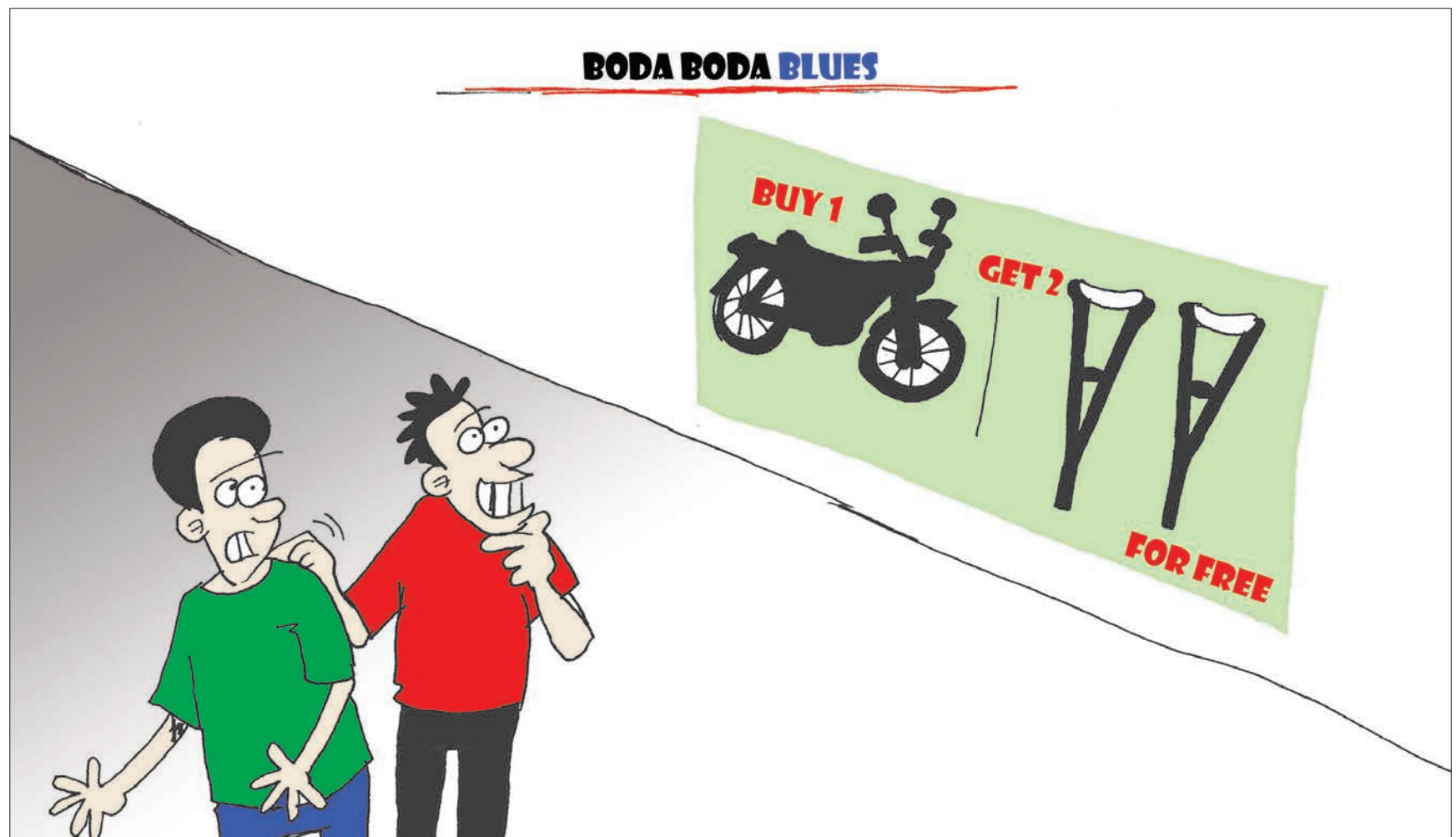
"Take debts and recapitalise" is a central tenet in our business or parastatal culture and, while those in authority seek to obviate, there is little enthusiasm from policy-setting parliamentary committees. It is live and let live.

So no one should be surprised if what looked like clear reform commitment as part of the 4Rs philosophy is sidelined in preference for more familiar ways of doing things, which have greater resonance with public expectations.

Some observers or commentators will say that structural reform is wrong in the first place as it places public entities in the hands of the rich.

These will have supporters across the globe, the result being the unfolding of more parts of the world saddled with vast unemployment and inflation. Thus, the burden of debt the public authorities face is simply too high for economic stability.

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Being diagnosed with cancer is serious, but starting treatment calls for caution

By Jinping Xu

Although about 1 in 8 men in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime, only about 1 in 44 will die from it.

Most men diagnosed with prostate cancer die from other causes, especially those with a low-risk prostate cancer that usually grows so slowly that it isn't life-threatening.

However, until about a decade ago, most men diagnosed with low-risk prostate cancer were immediately treated with surgery or radiation.

Although both surgery and radiation can cure the cancer, they can also have serious, life-changing complications, including urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction.

I am a family physician and researcher studying how patient-physician relationships and decision-making processes affect prostate cancer screening and treatment.

In our recently published research, my colleagues and I found that men are increasingly opting against immediate treatment. Instead, they are choosing a more conservative approach known as active surveillance: keeping a close eye on the cancer and holding off on treatment until there are signs of progression.

Prostate cancer screening trouble

Prostate cancer screening is controversial because it often leads to overdiagnosis and overtreatment of cancers that would have otherwise been harmless if left undetected and untreated.

Don't let yourself be misled. Understand issues with help from experts. Screening for prostate cancer typically uses a blood test that measures levels of a protein that prostate cells produce; it is called prostate specific antigen, or PSA.

Elevated PSA levels may indicate the presence of prostate cancer, but not all cases are aggressive or life-threatening. And PSA levels can also be elevated for reasons other than prostate cancer, like prostate gland enlarging due to aging.

Owing to widespread PSA screening in the US, over half of prostate cancers detected through screening are low-risk.

Concerns about overdiagnosis and overtreatment of low-risk cancers are the main reasons screening is not recommended unless patients still want to be screened after discussing the pros and cons with their doctors.

What is active surveillance?

Active surveillance is a safe and effective way to manage low-risk prostate cancer by limiting treatments such as surgery or radiation only to cancers that are



growing or becoming more aggressive. It involves monitoring tumours through regular checkups and tests.

Active surveillance is different from "watchful waiting," another conservative strategy with a less intense type of follow-up that includes fewer tests and only relieves symptoms. In contrast, active surveillance involves more rigorous monitoring, with more tests to keep a close eye on cancer with the intention to cure if needed.

Active surveillance has the same survival rates as aggressive treatment for low-risk prostate cancer. Active surveillance allows patients to delay or avoid invasive treatments and their associated side-effects. It is meant to balance keeping a close watch on the cancer while avoiding treatments unless they are truly needed.

All leading medical groups recommend active surveillance as the preferred approach to caring for men diagnosed with low-risk prostate cancer. However, until recently, the number of patients opting for active surveillance in the US has been low, ranging from under 15 per cent in 2010 to about 40 per cent in 2015. As to specifically why active surveillance is underutilised in the US is not well understood.

Facilitators and barriers

What factors influence treatment decisions? To answer this question, my team and I surveyed 1,341 white and 347 Black men with newly diagnosed low-risk prostate cancer from 2014 to 2017.

We recruited participants from two cancer registries in metropolitan Detroit and the state of Georgia, regions with large Black populations.

Overall, more than half of the men opted for active surveillance. This was much higher than a similar study our team conducted nearly a decade ago, which found that only 10 per cent of men chose active surveillance.

Increased uptake of active surveillance is good news, but it is not where it

needs to be. The US is still lagging behind many European countries, such as Sweden, where over 80 per cent of patients diagnosed with low-risk prostate cancer select active surveillance.

To figure out what influenced patients to choose active surveillance, we decided to ask them directly. A urologist's recommendation had the strongest effect: Nearly 85 per cent of patients who chose active surveillance stated that their urologists had recommended it.

Other factors included a shared patient-physician treatment decision and greater knowledge about prostate cancer. Interestingly, participants living in metropolitan Detroit were more likely to choose active surveillance than those living in Georgia.

Conversely, men were less likely to try active surveillance if they had a strong desire to achieve a cure, expected to live longer with treatment or perceived their diagnosis of low-risk cancer as more serious.

Almost three-quarters of patients who chose immediate treatment expected to live at least five years longer than they otherwise would without treatment, which is unrealistic and not based on existing evidence.

Misperceptions, unrealistic treatment expectations and biases may make patients choose unnecessarily aggressive treatment, suffering its harms with no survival benefit and potentially regretting their decision later.

Racial and geographic differences

We also found racial and geographic differences in the rate of active surveillance adoption. On average, Black patients had a higher risk of developing - and dying from - prostate cancer compared with white patients.

Additionally, as data supporting the use of active surveillance have been predominantly based on white men, the risks and benefits of active surveillance in Black patients are more controversial. Indeed, our study found that 51 per

cent of Black patients chose active surveillance compared with 61 per cent of white patients.

Notably, Black men reported receiving fewer active surveillance recommendations from urologists and were less engaged in shared decision-making with their doctors compared with white men.

This racial difference in active surveillance rates is no longer significant after accounting for urologists' recommendations, decision-making style and other factors.

However, geographic differences persisted: Patients living in Detroit were more likely to undergo active surveillance than those living in Georgia. This likely reflects to some degree the entrenched care patterns of some urologists.

Some studies have found that the longer a urologist was in practice, the less likely she or he was to have recommended active surveillance to their patients.

Encouraging active surveillance

Our findings are encouraging in that they show that active surveillance has become more acceptable to both patients and urologists over the past decade. However, the results also suggest that greater physician engagement and better patient education can support increased adoption of active surveillance.

For example, when physicians appropriately describe low-risk prostate cancer as small or not aggressive, coupled with a favourable prognosis or diagnosis, this can give patients a sense of relief. Patients in turn feel more comfortable with undergoing active surveillance.

Conversely, a patient's misperception of how serious her or his cancer is may lead to unnecessary treatment. Physicians can reassure patients that active surveillance is a safe and preferred alternative. They can also explain that aggressive treatments don't improve survival for most low-risk patients and can cause significant long-term side-effects.

More shared treatment decision-making involving patients and their physicians can improve the likelihood of choosing active surveillance compared with patients who make decisions on their own.

* A dispatch by The Conversation, a network of nonprofit media outlets publishing news stories and research reports online, with accompanying expert opinion and analysis. The pieces are written by academics and researchers under a Creative Commons licence, allowing reuse. Jinping Xu is Chair of Family Medicine and Public Health Sciences at Wayne State University - a public research university in Detroit, Michigan, in the US.

Teachers will gain more from authority than power to add meaning to their jobs

TEACHERS are leaders who guide learners in the path of knowledge and progress. As leaders, they need to have influence to enable individuals follow what they direct.

The success of teachers is when they can make those they lead able to follow what they propose or guide to be done.

Some thinkers believe that a leader possesses two main attributes which are power and authority. Being a leader, a teacher must possess the same attributes.

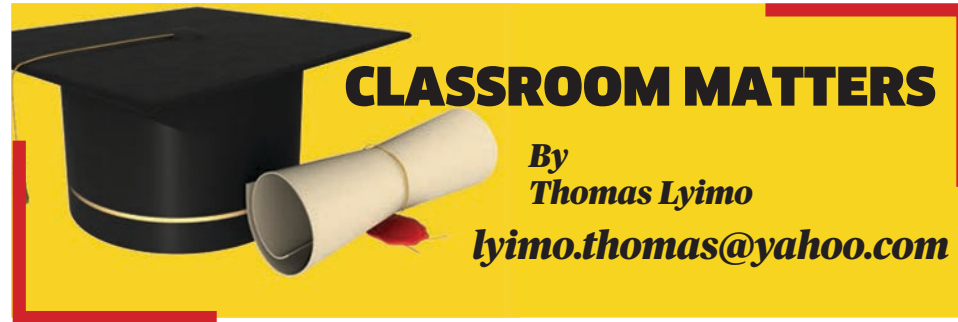
The two attributes are useful as there are different situations in the teaching and learning process which demand different approaches. The nature of learners is different taking into account the kind of upbringing which they have received.

The English people propose that we should put people where they belong. This is to say that in the teaching and learning process the reaction of the teacher to learners cannot be uniform.

There are some learners who when warned or punished they stop misbehaving but there are those who unless they are punished cannot change.

Punishment has its place in the correction of behavior thus why it has not been abolished at all in schools but only putting into place some rules and regulations to make it administered in a right way.

If the leader who in our case is the teacher has to possess power and authority it means that both of the two attributes has to be used in different situations and in different proportion.



When teachers embrace power and authority they should not forget that learning is willingness. There is a place of willingness in the teaching and learning process so that we can see positive results though the teacher should not stop convincing learners to love learning.

We cannot rely on probability though it can work in some cases. This is the reason why some thinkers such as Robert Schuler encourage us to embrace possibility thinking.

Although power can work in making learners conform to the required standards but is application is not smooth and encompassing comfortability. The other attribute of authority seems to be more efficient and friendly in enhancing positive results in the teaching and learning process.

Competence of the teacher can help in retaining authority. Learning is motivational and therefore demands the teachers to be able to attract learners to learn.

Learners need to see why they should learn. They need to get convinced that their decision to learn is not a waste of time. As a result a teacher needs to rely on authority than power because of the following reasons.

One is readiness to learn. When learners agree that teachers have the right to guide them throughout the process, the readiness to learn also increases.

Teachers should not force learners to learn but rather convince them until they appreciate the

importance of learning. In the modern world it is believed that learners are the center of learning and therefore it becomes a wrong practice trying to teach someone who is not ready to learn. Readiness increases assurance for success in the teaching and learning process.

Secondly, authority enhances efficiency in the teaching and learning process. Efficiency can be expressed in relation to time used to achieve a certain objective.

When learners have faith in the person who guides them in the learning process there is a high possibility of reaching objectives within a short period of time due to assured cooperation between them.

Accomplishing objectives within or before the expected time period is a kind of motivation to both the teacher and the

learner. The teacher becomes more comfortable when average efforts produce tremendous impact in the teaching and learning process.

Third is building a common consensus. When teachers and learners speak the same language due to the belief that learners have on their teachers it becomes easy to reach success.

People who respect someone can easily listen to them. If learners respect their teachers they agree to what they say. Common understanding is a catalyst in the teaching and learning process.

Fourth is that authority increases comfortability and a sense of satisfaction. It is a good thing to see people believe and accept what you tell them or guide them to do.

Teachers are emotional beings as other professionals and therefore

when what they do is appreciated they become comfortable and energetic. Appreciation by learners helps the teacher to avoid losing energy unnecessarily when preoccupied by thoughts of whether the learners are satisfied or not.

Therefore comfortability and satisfaction is a driving force in the teaching and learning process.

The English people believe that you can take a horse to a spring but you cannot force it to drink water. The same applies to education. The learning process becomes more meaningful when the learner values the teacher and they are ready to learn.

When learners appreciate what the teacher does it is when the teacher becomes more comfortable. Teaching is retaining authority.

By Special Correspondent

LANDLOCKED developing countries need greater support from the international community so that they are no longer left behind when it comes to progressing with the SDGs, says the UN High Representative of the least developed countries.

The Third UN Conference of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3) is set to be hosted in Kigali, Rwanda, in June. A preparatory committee for the conference has been established and convened its first meeting on Monday.

The overarching theme of the conference, "Driving Progress through Partnerships," is expected to highlight the importance of support from the global community in enabling LLDCs to meet their potential and achieve the SDGs. The conference invites the participation of multiple stakeholders, including heads of state and government, the private sector, and civil society. Several senior leaders in the UN system, including Secretary-General António Guterres, are expected to attend the LLDC3 conference.

Thirty-two countries are classified as LLDCs, 17 of which are also classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Sixteen are in Africa, and the remaining are located across Asia, Europe, and South America. This year will mark the first time that the LLDC Conference will be hosted in Africa.

Rabab Fatima, Under Secretary-General and High Representative of the Office for the Least Developed Countries, and the Secretary-General of the LLDC3 Conference, remarked that the conference would be a "once-in-a-decade opportunity" for the global community to address the needs of the LLDCs in order to "ensure that nobody is left behind."

"The 32 landlocked developing countries are grappling with unique challenges due to their geographical and structural constraints and lack of integration into world trade and global value chains. Their situation has been further exacerbated by the lingering effects of the pandemic, climate change, and conflict," she said.

The lack of direct access to coastal ports means that LLDCs rely on transit countries to connect them with international markets. This can lead to high trade costs and delays in the movement of goods. In other cases, many of the LLDCs' transit neighbours are also developing countries with their own economic challenges. According to Fatima, the average cargo travel time for LLDCs was



Third UN conference of landlocked developing countries will be an opportunity to address development issues the countries are facing.

Landlocked developing countries' conference to address development

twelve days, compared to seven days for transit countries.

As a result of the slow progress in development, twenty-eight percent of people in LLDCs live in poverty. At least a third of the people are at a high risk of or already live with some form of debt distress, and fifty-eight percent of people deal with moderate to severe food insecurity.

Enkhbold Vorshilov, Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the UN, noted that the conference would be a 'critical juncture' for the LLDCs. He also serves as the co-chair of the preparatory committee along with the Permanent Representative of Austria.

He added, "Despite our varied cultural and economic structures, we share common challenges that impede our development and economic growth."

The preparatory committee will negotiate the details of the conference's outcome document, which has been prepared to "encapsulate the challenges and aspirations of the LLDCs," according to Gladys Mokhawa, Permanent Representative for Botswana and the Chair of the Global Group of Landlocked Developing Countries.

Mokhawa expressed that the document has so far received general support from member states and that the final draft would be comprehensive and committed to addressing the challenges that LLDCs face "that align with their specific needs and aspirations."

"A vision is clear: to transform the geographical challenges and to ensure that our landlocked status is nothing more than a detail of geography," she said

adding: "We believe that our collective efforts can and will make a difference."

"Our goal is not merely to draft a document but to build positive, genuine partnerships that will empower landlocked developing countries to overcome their challenges and achieve sustainable prosperity," said Vorshilov.

He added that, along with support from neighbouring transit countries, cooperation from development partners and financial institutions would be important to mobilize the resources needed to support the LLDCs.

The document is intended to serve as a guideline for the LLDCs for the next decade and will touch on several areas of interest. In addition to addressing transport and trade, it will

focus on emerging issues, such as science, technology, and innovation, and improving capacity and resilience against issues arising from climate change.

Earlier meetings, including the first meeting of the committee, have seen delegations express solidarity with the LLDCs and support for the agenda of the upcoming conference.

Ambassador Stavros Lambrinidis, Permanent Representative of the European Union Delegation to the UN, stated that development challenges call for 'more efficient allocation of financial resources on the path toward the SDGs' and that an 'essential element' of their partnership would be the development of connections and transport corridors for the benefit of all peoples.

Speaking on behalf of the Af-

rica Group, Ambassador Marc Hermanne Araba of Benin noted that Africa has faced the brunt of the challenges faced by the LLDCs and their neighbouring transit countries.

He added that the present moment was an opportunity to "chart a transformative agenda for the LLDCs," and therefore it is important for the global community to reaffirm its commitment to address the LLDCs' challenges together to "ensure that these countries are not left behind."

Fatima welcomed the media as a 'key partner', through which the voices of LLDCs would have a platform, and to bridge the gap between the conference and those communities who will be most affected by the outcomes by sharing their perspectives.

Hit by climate change, Indian authorities seek to improve saffron yields in Kashmir

By Athar Parvaiz

SAFFRON, the expensive spice from the Kashmir Himalayas, has been facing challenges for years, mostly related to yields and inadequate irrigation compounded by the climate crisis.

While the government launched the 4.1 billion rupee National Saffron Mission (NMS) in 2010 to mitigate these challenges and rejuvenate saffron cultivation in Kashmir, its efficacy remains questionable, farmers say.

Saffron is one of Kashmir's major industries, along with horticulture and agriculture, supporting some 17,000 families in the region. India contributes 5 percent of the world's total production, of which 90 percent is supplied from the Kashmir Himalayan region.

The spice has been cultivated since 500 AD in the Kashmir valley and reached its peak in the 1990s at an annual average yield of around 15.5 tonnes from 5,700 hectares (14,085 acres), but both the land farmed for saffron and yields have declined since then.

According to a study, prolonged periods of drought have caused significant concerns among saffron farmers.

"Since the crop heavily relies on rainfall, insufficient precipitation has resulted in the region experiencing its lowest saffron productivity in the past three decades," the study says.

"In addition to the challenges posed by drought, the region is also facing issues related to urbanization and increasing population growth," the study further says. According to Kashmir's agriculture department, saffron land has reduced from 5,700 hectares in the 1990s to 3,715 hectares in 2016 due to land-use conversions.

Saffron farmers, who grow the "king of spices" in fields sprawling across several thousand hectares, mainly in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, have been complaining for years that lack of rainfall at crucial times has led to a decline in saffron production.

One or two spells of rain in September and October are vital for the crop to flower, farmers say. But in most years since the late 1990s, it either hasn't rained in those months or has rained too much, damaging the crop,



Farmers checking the saffron flowers on their farm in Pampore, Kashmir. Photo: Athar Parvaiz

says farmer Mohammad Reshi, adding that farmers still rely on the weather in the cropping season.

"The sprinkle irrigation system, which the government claims has been put in place, should have been functional by now. But it is not working. You can see for yourself what has happened to these pipes and the bore wells. They are not serving any purpose," Reshi tells IPS while pointing at the defunct sprinkle irrigation system in a saffron field in Pampore, where saffron cultivation is concentrated in Kashmir.

Though, Reshi says, tube wells have been dug and pipes have been laid in saffron fields for years now, "we are yet to see the water in saffron fields."

According to him, the project was supposed to be completed years ago, but it still lingers. Denying the allegations of saffron farmers, Ghulam Mohammad Dhobi, Joint Director of Kashmir's agriculture depart-

ment, who is also the Nodal Officer for NMS, says that the government is trying its best to help the farmers get good yields.

"The farmers have not to wait for long to see the positive results of the irrigation infrastructure, as we are expecting its completion soon after it will function properly," Dhobi tells IPS.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), which has given saffron cultivation in Kashmir a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) status, saffron cultivation has been facing severe challenges of sustainability and livelihood security, with an urgent need to adopt appropriate technologies to address water scarcity, productivity loss, and market volatility.

Scientific research has established that irrigation plays the most important role in saffron cultivation in Kashmir. Firdous Nahvi, a former agriculture scientist at

Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, says that saffron yields have traditionally depended on rainfall in the crucial months from August to October in Kashmir, and saffron yields have fallen in recent years because of the irrigation problem.

According to Nahvi, until 1999-2000, Kashmir received well-distributed precipitation of 1,000 to 1,200 mm per year in the form of rain and snow, but that has now decreased to 600 to 800 mm.

"In any part of the world, farming is unthinkable without water," Nahvi says and adds: "Creating irrigation facilities was the critical part of the project because we have observed in recent years that it doesn't rain when the crop needs the moisture." Nahvi was the expert who advised the NMS implementers about the need for installing the sprinkle irrigation system for saffron cultivation in Kashmir.

“So, the solution we are offering to the farmers is to plant the optimum number of corms (50 corms per square meter) and replace the corms after every four years.”

Solutions in farming methods

Bashir Allie, an agricultural scientist who heads Kashmir's Saffron Research Station, says that he has also advised the agriculture and irrigation departments of the Kashmir government that creating drip irrigation facilities is crucial for improving saffron yields.

"But we are also working with farmers through our field awareness program to enhance saffron yield," Allie tells IPS, adding that he and his team are telling the farmers to plant the optimum number of corms in the saffron fields rather than planting them haphazardly.

For example, Allie says, the farmers mostly plant up to 300,000 corms per hectare, "whereas we advise them to go for 500,000 to one million corms per hectare (or 50 corms per square meter)." This, he says, will help the farmers increase their yields, provided they uproot the old corms every four years and plant new corms.

"What we have also observed is that the farmers keep the corms in the fields for up to 20 years and leave them unattended," he tells IPS, adding that this affects the yield as the older corms keep producing new corms, which increases the competition for nutrients within the population and the entire population underperforms (in producing flowers), thus affecting the yield.

"So, the solution we are offering to the farmers is to plant the optimum number of corms (50 corms per square meter) and replace the corms after every four years," Allie informs.

To mitigate the impact of drought conditions on saffron crops, Allie says that he and his team have advised the farmers to start growing almond trees in saffron fields at a distance of four to five meters so that they provide shade and help the farmers retain moisture in their saffron fields.

"Once the almond trees produce branches, they will provide shade to saffron fields, as saffron is a shade-loving plant. Also, the moisture in the soil will be retained," Allie says, adding that the almond trees, besides providing shade, will also produce almonds, thereby helping the farmers increase their income.

Pakistan General Election: Can next government bring economic stability?

By Abid Hussain

IT is often tempting to declare every election as the most significant in a country's history. But when Pakistan goes to polls today - in what some critics warn may be the un-free election to date - it is no hyperbole to say the stakes are enormously high.

Former Prime Minister Imran Khan languishes in jail as the authorities crack down on his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, while previously imprisoned and exiled former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is back to contest the vote alongside an array of other candidates from the left to the right.

However, the focus of this election is not only on addressing nearly two years of political instability but, crucially, on establishing a new, steady government that can stabilise an economy in crisis for Pakistan's 241 million people.

Some 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, inflation has skyrocketed to more than 30 percent, and according to a poll released this week, about 70 percent of Pakistanis believe economic conditions are worsening.

Last June, Pakistan faced the imminent threat of default, with foreign reserves plummeting to \$4.4bn

- barely covering a month's worth of imports - while the currency shed more than 50 percent of its value against the United States dollar.

As the country found itself at a precarious juncture, then-Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif managed to secure a crucial bailout package from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) - its 23rd fund programme since 1958 - just weeks before the government's term expired.

The interim government, assuming power in August 2023, confronted the primary challenge of ensuring the continuity of the IMF programme, valued at \$3bn.

Spanning nine months, this Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) IMF deal necessitated tough measures, including the elimination of subsidies on essential commodities, and allowing the rupee value to be determined by the open market.

With the current IMF programme concluding in March, just as the new government will take power, analysts emphasise that the winning party's first order of business must be to re-enter negotiations with the global lender to maintain stability.

Simultaneously, Pakistan faces a looming debt payment crisis, with the central bank reporting \$24bn of external debt obligations due by June 2024.



Inflation in Pakistan hit a record high in 2023

Anti-populist steps

The incoming government needs to negotiate with the IMF for a new programme, while also taking steps to reduce expenses and balance the budget deficit, Karachi-based economist Asad Sayeed emphasises.

"The government has to continue to take steps which are anti-populist in nature, subsidies on gas and petroleum cannot be resumed, exchange rate cannot be manipulated, and the focus should be to reduce expenses and balance the budget deficit," Sayeed, who is a director at the research firm Collective for Social Science Research (CSSR), told Al Jazeera.

Sajid Amin Javed, a senior economist associated with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Is-

lamabad (SDPI), urges the incoming government - regardless of its political affiliation - to prioritise economic decisions over political considerations and immediately engage with the IMF.

"The new government must keep politics separate from economics. They must avoid populism-driven decisions which were taken by some of its predecessors," Javed told Al Jazeera.

The urgency conveyed by economists underscores the critical state of Pakistan's \$340bn economy amid a volatile political landscape.

The recent history of economic challenges includes Pakistan entering a \$6bn, 39-month-long IMF bailout programme in 2019.

In early 2022, then-Prime Minis-

ter Khan's decision to reduce fuel prices amid global spikes due to the Ukraine-Russia war violated IMF requirements, leading to challenges for the subsequent government.

Khan's government was deposed in April 2022, replaced by a coalition government formed under the banner of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) - an alliance that also includes Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) party.

In August 2022, the PDM government resumed the IMF programme but soon replaced the finance minister, Miftah Ismail, with a two-time former finance minister, Ishaq Dar.

However, economists have argued that Dar's attempts to control the exchange rate has had adverse effects on the economy, similar to the PTI

government's decision to cut petrol prices.

Economist Sayeed said one of his concerns with the government of the PMLN - the frontrunners in the election - was if they bring back the same economic policies that were pushed by Dar, who is a senior member of the party.

"If the PMLN wins a simple majority and come in [to] power, they can end up taking steps which may derail the already delicately placed economy. You will again be teetering on the edge of a crisis and a potential default," he said.

Tackling inflation

Additionally, the impact of inflation over the past year and a half is another pressing issue, which has led economists to underline the incoming government's need to recalibrate its priorities.

Islamabad-based economist Javed warned that the wrong policies could jeopardise the delicately balanced economy, potentially leading to a crisis and default.

"Tackling inflation and protecting people from side effects of stabilisation policies must be top priority," he said.

"The people, particularly the poor, have suffered a lot. Prolonged higher inflation and unemployment have pushed many below the poverty line. They need to be supported.

Ali Hasanain, an associate professor of economics at Lahore University of Management Sciences, highlighted the enduring challenge of balance-of-payment crises throughout Pakistan's history.

"There is no decade in which we have not stumbled through a balance-of-payment crisis and suffered 'sudden stops' in our economic management, accompanied by rapid, unplanned devaluations of the rupee and a painful spike in the costs of living," he told Al Jazeera.

Illegal artisanal mining threatens Amazon jungle and the indigenous people in Brazil

By Mario Osava, Rio de Janeiro

ARTISANAL mining has returned to the headlines as a factor in the deaths of Yanomami indigenous people, whose territory in the extreme north of Brazil suffers constant encroachment by miners, which has intensified in recent years.

In the first few days of the year, Yanomami spokespersons denounced new invasions of their land and the suspension of health services, in addition to the violence committed by miners or “garimpeiros”, which coincided with the fact that the military withdrew from areas they were protecting.

Furthermore, the media published new photos of extremely malnourished children. In response, the government promised to establish permanent posts of health care and protection in the indigenous territory.

“But what they are involved in there is not garimpo but illegal and inhumane mining practices,” said Gilson Camboim, president of the Peixoto River Valley Garimpeiros Cooperative (Coogavepe), which defends the activity as environmentally and socially sustainable when properly carried out.

“Garimpo is mining recognized by the Brazilian constitution, with its own legislation, which pays taxes, is practiced with an environmental license and respects the laws, employs many workers, strengthens the economy and distributes income,” he told IPS by telephone from the headquarters of his cooperative in Peixoto de Azevedo, a town of 33,000 people in the northern state of Mato Grosso.

Coogavepe was founded in 2008 with 23 members. Today it has 7,000 members and seeks to promote legal garimpo and environmental practices, such as the restoration of areas degraded by mining.

But it is difficult to salvage the reputation of this legal part of an activity whose damage is demonstrated by photos of emaciated children and families decimated by hunger and malaria, because the encroachment of miners pollutes rivers, kills fish and introduces diseases to which indigenous people are vulnerable because they have not developed immune defenses.

The humanitarian tragedy among the Yanomami people became big news in January 2023 when Sumaúma, an Amazonian online media outlet, denounced



An area of illegal mining activity was raided by the Brazilian Federal Police in the eastern Amazon where their precarious installations and housing, as well as their equipment, were destroyed. The fight against illegal mining, especially in indigenous territories, intensified after a new tragedy of deaths of Yanomami indigenous people caused by encroaching garimpeiros or informal miners became headline news.

the deaths of 570 children under five years of age, due to malnutrition and preventable diseases, during the far-right government of former president Jair Bolsonaro (2019-2022).

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who took office on Jan. 1, 2023, visited Yanomami territory and mobilized his government to care for the sick and expel illegal miners, destroying their equipment and camps. But a year later, the resumption of mining activity and a resurgence of hunger and deaths were reported.

Moreover, the entire extractivist sector has a terrible reputation due to tragedies caused by industrial mining. Two tailings dams broke in the southeastern state of Minas Gerais in 2015 and 2019, killing 289 people and muddying an 853-kilometer-long river and a 510-kilometer-long river.

Brazil is the world's second largest producer of iron ore, following Australia. Iron ore is the main focus of industrial mining in the country.

Garimpo is mainly dedicat-

ed to gold, and accounts for 86 percent of its production. Garimpeiros also produce cassiterite (the mineral from which tin ore is extracted) and precious stones, such as emeralds and diamonds. Its major expansion, many decades ago, was along rivers in the Amazon jungle, to the detriment of indigenous peoples and tropical forests.

Currently, 97.7 percent of the area occupied in Brazil by artisanal mining is in the Amazon rainforest, where it reaches 101,100 hectares, according to MapBiomass, a project launched by non-governmental organizations, universities and technology companies to monitor Brazilian biomes using satellite images and other data sources.

The production of gold uses mercury, which has contaminated many Amazonian rivers and a large part of their riverside population, including indigenous groups, such as the Mundurucu people, who live in the basin of the Tapajós River, one of the great tributaries of the Amazon with an extension of 2,700 kilometers.

Garimpo dumps about 150 tons of mercury in the Brazilian Amazon rainforest every year, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) estimates. The fear is that the tragedy of Minamata, the Japanese city where mercury dumped by a chemical industry in the mid-20th century killed about 900 people and caused neurological damage in tens of thousands, may be repeated here.

Brazil produced 94.6 tons of gold in 2022, according to the National Mining Agency. But the way it is extracted varies greatly, based mainly on informal mining, of which illegal mining makes up an unknown percentage.

Three prices govern this production, according to Armin Mathis, a professor at the Núcleo de Altos Estudos Amazônicos of the Federal University of Pará, who lives in Belém, the capital of this Amazonian state, with 1.3 million inhabitants.

The price of gold in Brazil; the price of diesel, which represents a third of the cost of gold mining; and the cost of labor are the three elements

that determine whether the garimpo business is profitable, the German-born PhD in political science, who has been studying this activity since he arrived in Brazil in 1987, explained from Belém.

This mining was in fact artisanal, but it began to use machines, especially the backhoe, in the 1980s, which is why diesel increased its costs. And unemployment and periods of economic recession, in the 1980s and in 2015-2016, made garimpo more attractive.

In those periods and the following years, invasions of Yanomami territory, which also extends through the state of Amazonas in southwestern Venezuela, became more massive and aggressive. But the consequences for the native people living in vast areas of the rainforest only become news on some occasions, like now.

Small airplanes seized by police and environmental authorities were at the service of illegal miners in Roraima, an Amazonian state in the extreme north of Brazil. This is where most of the Yanomami

Indians live, currently the main victims of illegal, mechanized mining. CREDIT: Federal Police

Small airplanes seized by police and environmental authorities were at the service of illegal miners in Roraima, an Amazonian state in the extreme north of Brazil. This is where most of the Yanomami Indians live, currently the main victims of illegal, mechanized mining. CREDIT: Federal Police

Mechanization has restructured the activity. Machines are expensive and require financiers. Entrepreneurs have emerged to manage the now more complex operations, as well as others who only own and rent out the equipment.

In addition, the owners of small airplanes that supply the mining areas and facilitate the trade of the extracted gold became more powerful. The hierarchy of the business has expanded.

“We must differentiate between garimpo and the garimpeiros. This is not a rhetorical distinction. The garimpeiro, who works directly in the ex-

traction of gold, is more a victim than a perpetrator of illegal, predatory and criminal mining. The person responsible lives far away and gets rich by exploiting workers in slavery-like labor relations,” observed Mauricio Torres, a geographer and professor at the Federal University of Pará.

“The garimpeiro, depicted as a criminal by the media, pays for the damage,” he said in telephone interview from Belém.

The workers recognize that they are exploited, but feel that they are a partner of the garimpo owner, as they earn a percentage of the gold obtained. They work hard because the more they work, the more they earn.

A large part of the garimpeiros along the Tapajós River, where this kind of mining has been practiced since the middle of the last century, are actually landless peasant farmers who supplement their income in the garimpo business, when agriculture or fishing does not provide what they need to support their families, Torres explained.

Therefore, agrarian reform and other government initiatives that offer sufficient income to this population could reduce the pressure of the garimpo on the environment in the Amazon rainforest, which affects the region's indigenous and traditional peoples, he said.

The situation of the garimpeiros also differs according to the areas where they work in the Amazon jungle, Mathis pointed out. In the Tapajós River, where the activity has been taking place for a longer period of time and is already legal in large part, coexistence is better with the indigenous Mundurucu people, some of whom also became garimpeiros.

In Roraima, a state in the extreme north on the border with Venezuela and Guyana, where a large part of the territory is made up of indigenous reserves, illegal mining is widespread and includes the more or less violent invasion of Yanomami lands.

On the other hand, as the local economy depends on gold, the population's support for garimpo, even illegal and more invasive practices, is broader than elsewhere. There, former president Bolsonaro, a supporter of garimpo, won 76 percent of the votes in the 2022 runoff election in which he was defeated by Lula.

Another component that aggravates the violence surrounding garimpo and, therefore, the crackdown on the activity, is the expansion of drug trafficking in the Amazon rainforest. The informality of the mining industry has facilitated its relationship with organized crime, whether in the drug trade or money laundering, said Mathis.

Boeing: Bolts missing from door, says blowout report

By Theo Leggett

A DOOR that blew away from a Boeing 737 Max shortly after take-off may not have been properly secured, a new report says.

The US National Transportation Safety Board has released initial findings from its probe into the incident on an Alaska Airlines plane in January.

It says four key bolts that were meant to lock the unused door to the fuselage appeared to be missing.

Repeating to the report, Boeing said it was accountable for what happened.

In a statement, Boeing's president Dave Calhoun said: “An event like this must not happen on an airplane that leaves our factory. We simply must do better for our customers and their passengers.”

“We are implementing a comprehensive plan to strengthen quality and the confidence of our stakeholders,” he added.

The incident happened minutes after Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 took off,

and involved a panel covering an unused emergency exit - known as a door plug. This suddenly blew out, leaving a gaping hole in the side of the main body of the aircraft, the fuselage.

The missing bolts appeared to have allowed the door panel to move out of position and break away from the aircraft, the report says.

It happened just moments after the flight took off from Portland International Airport.

The plane then suffered a rapid loss of cabin pressure, as air rushed out and the atmosphere within the plane equalised with the thinner air outside.

The door plug was manufactured by Boeing's supplier Spirit AeroSystems, and originally installed in the fuselage before being delivered to the aerospace giant.

According to the preliminary report, this door plug was later removed in the factory due to damage that had occurred during the

production process.

Photographic evidence suggests that when the plug was reinstalled, at least three of the four locking bolts were not put back in place.

Damage to the door plug and its hinges, as well as a lack of damage to the areas where the bolts should have been, suggests that the bolts were missing before the door moved out of its normal position, the report said.

Spirit AeroSystems said it remain focused on working closely with Boeing and regulators “on continuous improvement in our processes and meeting the highest standards of safety, quality and reliability”.

The findings are likely to make uncomfortable reading for Boeing, which has already faced harsh criticism over its corporate culture and quality control processes.

Inspections have already revealed loose bolts and fixings on other planes of the same specification, raising questions about the



Boeing 737 MAX missing critical bolts in Alaska Airlines blowout, NTSB Says

way they were built.

In his response, Boeing's president and chief executive said its improvement plan would “take significant, demonstrated action and transparency at every turn”.

Calhoun said the airline manufacturer would implement new inspections of door plug assembly and fully document when the plug is removed.

Additional inspections into the supply chain and an inde-

pendent assessment would also be included in the plans.

“This added scrutiny - from ourselves, from our regulator and from our customers - will make us better. It's that simple,” Calhoun said.

Prior to the Alaska Airlines incident, there had been other serious problems on the 737 Max production line, including the discovery of manufacturing defects affecting key parts of the planes, as well as a part

protecting the central fuel tank against lightning strikes.

The scrutiny is all the more intense because of the history of the 737 Max itself.

The plane - a new version of Boeing's decades old workhorse - was involved in two major accidents in late 2018 and early 2019, in which 346 people were killed.

Those crashes were attributed to badly-designed flight control software, which forced

both aircraft into catastrophic dives that the pilots were powerless to prevent.

In the aftermath, Boeing faced accusations from lawmakers and safety campaigners that it had put profits above the safety of passengers.

Testifying before US lawmakers today, the head of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Mike Whitaker said inspections of 737 Max aircraft had shown that “the quality system issues at Boeing were unacceptable and require further scrutiny”.

He promised to put more “boots on the ground” in Boeing's factories in order to increase scrutiny of the manufacturer.

Boeing would be held accountable for any future failure or refusal to comply with the FAA, he added.

Last month, Boeing's chief executive Dave Calhoun told staff at the company it would co-operate with investigators and regulators “to ensure all the procedures are put into place, inspections, and all the readiness actions that are required to ensure every next airplane that moves into the sky is in fact safe and that this event can never happen again”.

Waste management: Dar es Salaam's garbage collectors turning waste into an opportunity



Members of the Kimara waste pickers' cooperative society. Photo: Jenifer Gilla

By Jenifer Gilla

BEFORE the Waste to Zero initiative was launched at the COP28 Climate Change conference in December 2023, an inspiring group of women in Dar es Salaam have been spearheading an approach to tackle the waste crisis in the city by transforming waste into opportunities.

The women are members of Kimara Waste Pickers Cooperative Society which collect, sort and repurpose waste for recycling. They are also members of Nipe Fagio (give me a broom in Kiswahili), an initiative started ten years ago to address the problem of waste management in the city.

It is estimated that the city produces over 5,600 tonnes of waste daily, but less than 40 percent of it is collected. When collected, it is all mixed up and ends up in one location – the Pugu Kinyamwezi dumpsite, located nearly 35 kilometers from the city centre.

The dumpsite was planned to be constructed as an engineered landfill site with all the pollution control mechanisms in place in the mid-2000s.

However, due to funding constraints, these plans failed, resulting in what is today – an open dumping site without any fencing, barrier layers, soil cover and gas collection or treatment systems.

Most of the garbage is dumped illegally, buried or burnt and when it rains, it clog waterways, contaminates soil and increases urban air pollution. Open dumping of solid waste is a major health and environmental threat to communities surrounding city dump sites.

Numerous studies have shown the severe impacts of open dumping of solid waste on the environment, public health and climate change. These include soil degradation and contamination of water sources as hazardous chemicals leak into the ground.

This, in turn, disrupts ecosystems and poses a threat to biodiversity. Open dumps become breeding grounds for disease vectors, leading to the spread of infectious diseases such as cholera and respiratory illnesses, especially among communities living near such dumpsites who are exposed to harmful toxins and pollutants.

Additionally, the release of methane, a potent greenhouse gas that is even more dangerous than carbon dioxide, from decomposing organic matter in open dumpsites, significantly contributes to climate change, worsening global warming.

The 2023 report by the Global Climate and Health Alliance said landfills and wastewater make up

It would also prevent 255,000 premature deaths, 775,000 asthma-related hospital visits, 73 billion hours of lost labour from extreme heat, and 26 million tonnes of crop losses globally, every year.

about 20 per cent of global anthropogenic emissions. Anthropogenic emissions are pollutants or substances released into the air, water, or soil as a result of human activities.

These emissions come from various human-related sources such as factories, vehicles, power plants, and other industrial processes.

Examples of anthropogenic emissions include carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels, pollutants from industrial processes, and waste disposal. Essentially, anthropogenic emissions are human-made contributions to environmental pollution.

Reducing human-caused methane emissions by as much as 45 per cent, or 180 million tonnes a year by 2030 will avoid nearly 0.3°C of global warming by the 2040s.

"It would also prevent 255,000 premature deaths, 775,000 asthma-related hospital visits, 73 billion hours of lost labour from extreme heat, and 26 million tonnes of crop losses globally, every year," according to a report by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

Climate change impacts are not 'gender neutral' as women and girls experience disproportionate challenges from climate change. They depend more on, yet have less access to, natural resources.

In Tanzania, like many other regions in the world, women bear a disproportionate responsibility for securing food, water, and fuel. Women, as agricultural workers and primary procurers, work harder to secure income and resources for their families.

According to a paper by the World Bank, in poor households, for every 100 poor men aged 25 to 34 years, there are 122 poor women in the same age group, with countries in Africa having the largest gender poverty gap.

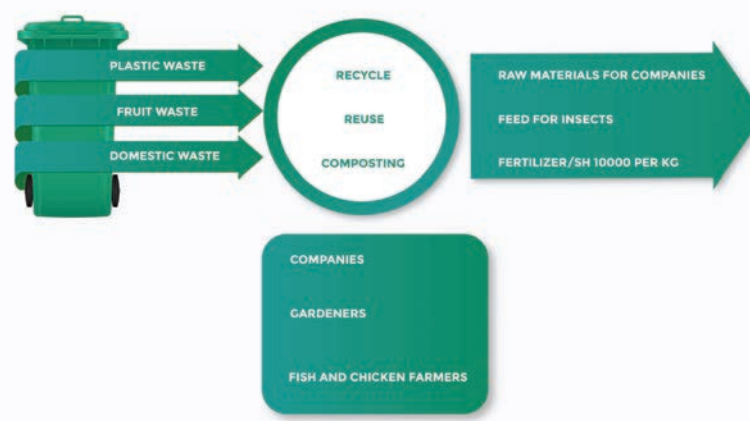
In urban areas, such as Dar es Salaam, households headed by women have a 20 percent poverty rate, compared to a 14 percent poverty rate in households headed by men.

It is in this context that the Kimara based women group came together to see what they could do to address some of these challenges and at the same time, contribute to the wellbeing of their communities.

Rehema Tamimu, chairperson of the group recounts how they decided to come together to not only make their environment clean but also make money out of waste.

"There used to be waste thrown all over the place. The mounds of garbage would stink,

Zero waste model by Tanzanian women



Source: Nipe Fagio, 2023

but we did not know what to do. When it was collected, it was just dumped. That is when we reached out to 'Nipe Fagio' for help on how to deal with the problem," she says.

This training opened their eyes to the potential of waste as a valuable resource.

"After getting the training and seed funding from 'Nipe Fagio', we are making money out of waste," she adds.

'Nipe Fagio' provided the women with training on the impact of waste on their environment, and how to safely separate garbage for recycling.

The women collect the garbage from households in their neighbourhood, store it at a decentralized centre where it is sorted and separated into four categories – organic, recyclable and domestic hazardous waste.

Organic waste is kitchen waste such as vegetables, fruits, and leaves, while toxic or domestic hazardous waste includes such things as batteries, paint, old medicines and other chemicals. Recyclable waste includes glass, cardboard, paper, plastics and metals.

Halima Muda, a member of the cooperative proudly explains how she and other members sort and segregate the waste for sale. Plastic waste is sold for recycling.

The plastic waste is sorted according to density, melted and then mixed with sand to produce bricks, paving blocks or tiles which have been used for the construction of affordable housing, public toilets and other buildings, especially in rural areas.

Organic waste is transformed into fertilizer, which is sought after by gardeners. The women sell the organic fertilizer at

10,000/- per kilogram.

The fruit waste is fed to black soldier flies whose larvae are used as feed by chicken and fish farmers. The women sell the larvae at 5,000/- per kilogram. The Dar es Salaam city centre and 'Nipe Fagio' provide the women's cooperative with market connections to sell their products.

Halima highlights the 'double profit' generated by their initiative. They make money from collecting waste from households. For this service, they charge each household between 2,000/- and 5,000/- per month.

They also make money from processed materials such as fertilizer and from the sale of recyclable waste such as plastics, paper, wood and other such products which are recycled into other products.

The group makes 800,000/- on average which is then shared among members. They retain a percentage of their earnings which is then given out as loans and to cater for their operational costs and taxes.

The initiative has transformed the lives of women and their families as they are not only employed but can also count on having money to meet their basic needs.

Halima says the group has transformed her life. Her weekly income has increased to between 40,000/- and 50,000/- per week from the previous 10,000/-.

Halima, a single mother of three, relishes her newfound financial stability which has enabled her to meet her family's needs such as school fees and other essentials and also save some money.

"This is something I never thought I would be able to do.

Open an account and save money," Halima says.

Her colleague, Anusiata Mapunda has opened a side business where she is raising chicken for eggs and meat. The extra income she makes from the business and the stability of having a regular income from the waste processing job means she is now able to pay school fees for her only child who is attending a government owned English school.

"Before I used to collect only 10,000/- per week, but since I joined this group and started selling bottles and making fertilizers and fish food, I earn between 50,000 and 60,000/-." I can afford to pay for my son's fee of 300,000/- per year," she said.

The women not only earn a stable income but also contribute to keeping the streets clean and reduce health risks associated with waste mismanagement.

Waste picking is not considered to be 'decent' work, particularly for women. Since waste picking is predominately conducted by men, members of the Kimara Waste Pickers Cooperative Society face unique challenges.

These range from lack of modern work tools, health hazards during waste collection, and societal stigma. They also often face negative perceptions from the community, hindering their participation in waste management activities.

"Sometimes people think we are mentally unstable or are thieves and this makes our work difficult," narrates Sauda Salum.

"When people see us wearing dirty clothes and no identification mark for the work we do, they think we are strange or weird. There was a day when I went out to collect waste from a household and they thought I was a thief because of how I looked – dirty clothes and all. If we had proper equipment, especially protective clothing, we could avoid some of these challenges," Sauda adds.

To create awareness about the essential services they provide, the women teach households how to separate their waste. They also provide them with different baskets or containers to keep the waste separate. This makes it easier for the women to collect and sort the garbage for recycling or processing.

'Nipe Fagio' also conducts community awareness campaigns and encourages them to sort their waste. Willyhard Shishikaye, Nipe Fagio's Zero Waste System Coordinator, explains that the organization

provides both technical and financial assistance to the cooperative.

"Our goal is to empower communities to manage their waste effectively and contribute to a cleaner and healthier environment," says Shishikaye.

'Nipe Fagio' conducts house-to-house education sessions on street waste collection and encourages residents to actively sort their waste into different categories: organic, recyclable, and hazardous.

It has a decentralized material waste processing facilities where the collected waste – particularly hazardous household waste, is treated. Other recyclable waste such as paper, glass and plastic is also collected at these facilities for onward distribution to the recycling firms.

Shishikaye envisions a future where this zero waste system becomes part of the national strategy on solid waste management. The organization has already expanded to Zanzibar and Arusha, with plans to expand to other regions.

Shishikaye notes that the government has already shown interest in the 'Nipe Fagio' model whereas through the President's Office-Regional Administrations and Local Governments (PO-RALG) they have invited to share its knowledge and expertise, paving the way for wider implementation.

The head of the Ilala District Waste Management and Cleaning Department, Rajabu Ngoda says their education and public awareness campaigns are geared towards making people see waste management opportunities instead of seeing waste collection as a burden.

To encourage more people to exploit these opportunities, the government provides loans – usually with a repayment of 10 percent interest – to interested youth groups, women and people living with disabilities. The funds are to help the waste pickers buy protective equipment and set up their waste processing such as fertilizer and animal feeds.

Local government authorities and municipalities are, under the Environmental Management Act of 2004, responsible for collection, storage, sorting and transportation of waste to achieve the zero waste goals set out by the National Environmental Conservation and Management Council (NEMC).

However, most of the waste produced in the country is not managed, thus posing a threat to the environment and public health.

"For example, at least 96 percent, or about 319,000 tonnes, of the plastic waste produced in Tanzania annually is not managed. This is despite the ban on single-use plastic bags," says Natural Resources and Environment Conservation Officer from the Dar es Salaam City Council, Enock Tumbo.

He says community-driven waste management initiatives such as Nipe Fagio are important in bridging this gap. The council is also considering setting up a landfill site with pollution control mechanisms to partially address the problem of waste management.

The Waste to Zero initiative, as exemplified by the women of Kimara, not only addresses environmental and health challenges but also provides a sustainable solution to waste management.

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Thursday 8 February 2024

By Guardian Reporter

ABOUT 780 job seekers in Tanzania grabbed employment opportunities in banking sector, after commercial banks recorded the increased number of new employees in 2023, when compared to employees who were serving the industry in 2022.

According to The Banker's analysis obtained from recent 34 banks' published unaudited financial statements for 2023, only twelve banks recorded the decreased number of employees.

One of the bankers noted that apart from creating formal banks' halls employees, the industry has also indirectly created thousands of employment opportunities among Tanzanians through agency banking.

"As you are aware that many banks are also focusing more on extending their services to underserved segment of the population, through agency banking, which has created many jobs to Tanzanians," he said.

The analysis has found that new jobs among three largest banks including the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE)-listed CRDB Bank Plc and NMB Bank Plc, as well as NBC Bank, accounted for half of newly created employment opportunities.

CRDB Group topped all banks by creating the highest number of jobs by 232, after recording 3,961 employees last year, compared to 3,729 in 2022, and continues to maintain its first position as the largest employer in banking industry.

The CRDB Group's data show, number of branch network also increased to 250 physical branches last year, from 240 recorded in 2022, of which nine new branches were opened by the Tanzanian subsidiary (CRDB Bank Tanzania).

CRDB is also the leading bank with the highest number of branch networks.

The second largest employer NMB Bank Plc, created 98 new



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa (2nd R) and Tanzanian Bankers Association chairman Theobald Sabi (3rd L) unveil plaque to open an NBC Bank branch in Simiyu. File photo

Banks create 775 new jobs, with 24 branches in 2023

jobs, after number of employees increased to 3,642 last year, compared to 3,544 recorded in 2022.

During the reviewed period, data show NMB, the second largest bank in terms of assets, opened new four branches as it had 231 across

Tanzania in 2023, higher than 227 branches which were available in 2022.

The analysis has found that NBC Bank became the third top job creator during the reviewed period, after employing 85 new staff during

last year.

Its financial statements show that in 2023, NBC Bank had 1,069 employees, higher than 984 who were on its books in 2022, with number of branches remained flat at 47.

Amana Bank emerged fourth in

adding number of employees, after recording 64 new jobs to 328 last year, compared to 264 whom were available in 2022, followed by Stanbic Bank, which increased its number of employees by 51 to 594 last year compared to 543 in 2022.

Equity Bank Tanzania and Exim Bank Group followed by recording a uniform increased new jobs by 37 each, after number of employees increased to 1,105 and 484 in 2023 respectively, compared to 968 and 447 recorded in 2022.

According to the statement, Mwanga-Hakika bank increased 32 new jobs, after recording 124 employees in 2023 last year, compared to 108 in 2022, while DTB Bank has similar increase, after increased its employees to 609 compared to 577 respectively.

Other banks which increased number of employees during the period include Absa Bank Tanzania (24), KCB Bank Tanzania (21), Mkombozi Commercial Bank (18) and I&M Bank Tanzania (8).

The statements show the slight increase numbers of new jobs were also recorded by PBZ (6) with two new branches, NCBA Tanzania (5), Maendeleo Bank (5), Bank of Baroda (5), Uchumi Commercial Bank (3), Citi Bank Tanzania (3) and Kilimajaro Co-operative Bank (2).

Banks which reported the declined number of employees include DCB Commercial Bank (31), TIB Development Bank (9), Access Microfinance (8), BancABC Tanzania (6), Tanzania Commercial Bank (6), Canara Bank (2), Standard Chartered Bank (3) and Habib Bank (2).

The reports show number of employees for Ecobank, Tandahimba Community Bank, BOA, International Commercial Bank declined by 1 each. However, only two banks including Guaranty Bank and Bank of India (BOI) recorded unchanged number of employees during the reviewed period.

Other banks with the highest number of branches apart from top three, NMB, CRDB and NBC, include TCB (52), Exim Bank (46), of which 30 are in Tanzania, PBZ (31), DTB Bank (29), KCB bank (16), Absa Bank (15) and equity Bank (15).

Banks with only one branch include Citibank, Guaranty, Tandahimba Community Bank, Canara, and Kilimajaro Co-operative Bank Limited (KCBL).

Emerging market currencies to gain steadily - Reuters poll

BENGALURU/JOHANNESBURG

MOST emerging market currencies will struggle to recoup this year's losses against the dollar in coming months as expectations for aggressive rate cuts from the U.S. Federal Reserve diminish, a Reuters poll of FX strategists found.

After ending 2023 on a positive note, the rally in the emerging market currency basket has run out of steam and was down 1.2 percent for the year, hurt by higher US Treasury yields.

Better than expected US economic data and hawkish comments from Fed policymakers have led investors and markets to roll back on rate cut predictions, pushing the dollar index up 3 percent in only a few weeks.

In the Feb. 2-6 Reuters poll of 50 FX strategists, almost all emerging market currencies were expected to barely recoup year-to-date losses six months from now.

"The rally we had been anticipating especially out of currencies and rates has already materialized. Emerging market currencies are relatively very fairly priced...and we're not expecting for them to appreciate much," said Phoenix Kalen, global head of emerging markets research at Societe Generale.

"The Fed rate cuts are already well priced and the consequences of US exceptionalism are still unfolding and that's going to have positive implications for the dollar index and negative implications for EM currencies."

While the Indian rupee was predicted to gain only around 0.6 percent by end-July, the Thai baht and South Korean won which lost 3.4 percent and 2.5 percent respectively this year were predicted to gain around 3.5 percent

in the next six months.

While EM currencies were largely dependent on the global interest rate cycle mainly led by the Fed, growth headwinds in China remain a key obstacle on their performance.

The Chinese yuan was forecast to just recoup its 1.3 percent losses so far this year in the next six months.

South Africa's rand was expected to gain around 2.3 percent to 18.41/\$ in six months as it catches up to broad EM gains, but that would still not wipe out the fall of almost 7 percent last year.

Goldman Sachs wrote in a note the rand offers one of the most attractive combinations of value and real carry, supported by more benign inflation forecasts.

However, it remains one of the most dollar-sensitive EM currencies, which makes the risk-reward less compelling under its baseline trajectory of more gradual broad dollar depreciation.

The Russian rouble is expected to lose nearly 2 percent to 92.28/\$ while the Turkish lira will weaken over 9 percent to 33.67/\$ in the next six months.

According to International Banker magazine, emerging markets (EMs) bore the brunt of the challenging, tough economic conditions that prevailed from the monumental monetary tightening that intensified worldwide during 2023.

And yet, JPMorgan Chase noted on December 14 that while the eurozone, the United Kingdom, Canada and China disappointed, it was those emerging economies that "ended up surprising positively", with the likes of India, Mexico and Brazil defying expectations and remaining resilient amid a deteriorating global macroeconomic environment.

East Africa real GDP to increase by 193 pc in 2040, says Euromonitor

By Guardian Reporter

THE Growth Domestic Product (GDP) for East Africa block is expected to rise by 193 percent in real terms, come 2040, a considerably faster rate than Central Africa (+128 percent), West Africa (+105 percent) and Southern Africa (+79 percent).

This is according to a study dubbed 'Sub-Saharan Africa: A Raising Economic Frontier,' conducted by Euromonitor International which also forecasted Sub-Saharan Africa' GDP to double by the year 2040 from the 2022 figure of US\$2 trillion to over US\$4.5 trillion.

In fact, they looked at the economies of 46 countries in Africa as part of its research into the continent's economic conditions, current and future.

According to the report, rising consumption, commodity exports and foreign direct investment are expected to drive Africa's economic growth, backed by a surge in the economies of East Africa.

"East Africa's economic growth is predicted to be one of the fastest globally, outpacing other emerg-



Fransua Vytautas Razvadauskas, Insights Manager, Euromonitor International

ing and developing markets such as India (+164 percent), Vietnam (+171 percent) and Indonesia (+130 percent)," the report reads in part.

It adds: "The region is predicted to become a US\$1 trillion economy by 2037 and is anticipated to overtake Southern Africa as the second largest regional economy by 2039."

The researcher predicts that by 2040, East Africa is expected to account for 28 percent of Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP, up from 21 percent in 2022.

"The region's key heavyweight economies of Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania will drive this economic growth,

with average GDP across all four expected to surge by 200 percent over the forecast period," the report further reads.

Continued foreign direct investment inflows into East Africa are anticipated to sustain the region's strong economic momentum with investments expected to go to technology, energy, manufacturing and services sectors, as well as IT services and renewable energy solutions.

On the other hand, the research found that in 2022, based on Sub-Saharan Africa's growth over 2000-2014, its total GDP could have potentially reached US\$2.7 trillion,

well above the current USD 2.0 trillion.

GDP per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa could have been 35 percent higher in 2022 based on growth trends over 2000-2014.

Political and economic instability, weak business appeal, financial inequality, inadequate infrastructure and a lack of education opportunities were identified as the defining factors that weakened the growth trajectory, and remain challenges that will need to be addressed by governments and businesses for the region to reach its full potential.

Whilst many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa have displayed slowing economic growth since 2015, some economies have continued to remain resilient.

Over 2015-2022, real GDP growth in Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire and Tanzania reached 7.6 percent, 6.2 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively, compared to the Sub-Saharan Africa and world averages of 2.6 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively.

This was even faster than the pace of growth in fast-growing emerging markets such as China (+5.9 percent) and India (+5.0 percent).

Reflecting on the findings, Fransua Vytautas Razvadauskas, Insights Manager at Euromonitor International, said: "While sub-Saharan Africa has its fair share of issues and hurdles to overcome, based on projections by Euromonitor International, it is well positioned to become the next global economic frontier, elevating this often-overlooked region of the world to a prominent powerhouse on the global stage by 2040."

Sub-Saharan Africa has the potential to leverage its favourable landscape and climate to benefit from investments in green and sustainable energy, Euromonitor notes.

This has become especially clear amid the war in Ukraine which has led to countries reevaluating their dependence on fossil fuels.

Different ways banks can protect consumer-1

By Kelvin Mkwawa

TANZANIA, like most of the African countries, has a long history of mistreatment of consumers in the financial services sector. Consumer protection in the banking industry is an increasing priority for policymakers around the world as it has been proven as a contributing factor to the healthy development of the financial sector, financial inclusion, and broader economic growth. In Tanzania, we have Financial Consumer Protection Regulations 2019 to guide financial services providers to have in place the effective complaints handling mechanism to resolve customer complaints.

The regulation introduces a variety of protections for consumers in terms of how

financial service providers market, offer, and deal with complaints related to the services they provide. Also, the regulation provides the Bank of Tanzania (BOT) with a clear supervisor mandate concerning the objective of financial consumer protection. This means BOT has the power to take pre-emptive measures to address non-compliance and investigate any potential breaches of the regulations through means including onsite examinations and complaint handling.

Many consumers are not aware of their rights when it comes to the banking industry but that is changing slowly as the Financial Consumer Protection Regulations 2019 promote transparency of financial products and raise awareness of consumers' rights. Strong consumer protection is key



Kelvin Mkwawa

to ensuring that expanded access to financial services benefits consumers, enabling them to make well-informed decisions on how best to use financial services, building trust in the formal financial sector, and contributing to healthy and competitive financial markets.

One of the main goals of the Financial Consumer Protection Regulations 2019 is to collect, monitor, and share data on consumer complaints but how that information is used is still not clear. However, I believe the collection of information will expose the banks to the public and increase public scrutiny. Hence the banks will have to make sure they treat their customers fairly. Furthermore, with the rise of social media and the accessibility of consumer complaints, we are likely to see increasing consumer engagement on the part of banks. To protect their brand and reputation, and ensure they are compliant with the Financial Consumer Protection Regulations 2019, I will share a few things that every bank should do:

Commit to change your culture - Consumer protection

should be taken seriously and that has to start at the top as the tone is always set at the top. Bank leaders should emphasize their commitment to consumer protection to every employee (including the bank's authorized agents) at all times.

The bank should add consumer protections to the company's core values so that it can be an integral part of the culture of a bank and ensure its employees are trained well to achieve the required level of competency to deal with consumers professionally. Also, banks should commit to providing up-to-date information about products, services, and charges to consumers all the time. This information should be easily accessible, clear, and simple to understand, and should include any potential risk for the consumer. Further-

more, banks should commit to developing programs and seminars that help consumers develop knowledge, skills, and confidence to appropriately manage their financial risks.

Know the rules - Banks should learn and live by the Financial Consumer Protection Regulations 2019. Not knowing it is not an option at all! A bank's success depends on its knowledge about consumer protection, regulations, and how they might affect the bank's operations.

A bank needs to know when it is supposed to inform consumers about credit costs, prohibit discrimination in credit transactions or any other type of discrimination, and protect consumers from unlawful government scrutiny of their financial records. A bank must only allow access to consumer information to staff who are

authorized and for business purposes only based upon that staff's duties and job description. Banks must have a plan to comply with the Financial Consumer Protection Regulations 2019 at all times.

Banks can't afford to comply. Banks that aren't on top of the rules and regulations and don't swiftly make necessary changes to comply with the rules, are subjecting themselves to fines, reputational damage, and potentially expensive litigation.

Next week I will share more actions banks should do to ensure they are compliant with the Financial Consumer Protection Regulations 2019.

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The Bank of England in London. Photograph: Yui Mok/PA

Bank of England policymaker talks of 'downside risks' for UK economy

LONDON

A Bank of England rate setter has warned that the central bank may be "underplaying the downside risks" for the UK economy as she called for immediate interest rate cuts because of weak consumer spending and declining inflation.

Swati Dhingra, an external member of the bank's Monetary Policy Committee, was the only person to vote for a reduction in interest rates at the latest meeting last week. She advocated a quarter-point cut from 5.25 per cent.

In an interview after the MPC held rates on Thursday, the associate professor of economics at the London School of Economics told the Financial Times she did not see much danger of resurgent price growth given the feeble state of household demand.

"I'm not fully convinced there's some kind of really sharp excess demand in the economy coming from the consumption side," she

said. "I'm more concerned that we might be underplaying the downside risks."

With pandemic-era savings diminishing and job vacancies declining, there were fewer "buffers" propping up UK households' finances, she added.

"You might see the real economy start to get negatively hit in a more profound way - and I don't see why we should be risking that," Dhingra said.

Given the weak state of consumption, "it is hard to imagine how that will get reversed so sharply that you will see a resurgence of inflation [driven by] demand pressure", she added.

Despite keeping rates on hold last week for a fourth meeting, the central bank has now opened the door to cuts but only once there is "more evidence" that inflation will continue to decline.

Headline consumer price inflation was 4 per cent in December, less than half the rate at the start of 2023.

Huw Pill, the bank's chief economist, said on Monday that it was now a question of when, not if, the BoE lowers rates, but he said the time was not yet appropriate.

Dhingra added that sitting tight would come with a risk of "overtightening" monetary policy as inflation declines.

Her decision to vote for a cut for the first time was triggered in part by the very poor retail sales figures seen in December, which underscored the weakness of household demand.

The quantity of goods bought in Great Britain fell 3.2 per cent between November and December, the largest monthly fall since January 2021, according to the Office for National Statistics.

"The retail sales was pretty convincing... I didn't think they would fall so much," she said.

While the central bank has been worried by the sticky nature of services price inflation, Dhingra argued that goods price deflation would be potent

enough to keep UK inflation at the central bank's 2 per cent target this year.

The bank predicted last week that inflation will fall towards 2 per cent in the second quarter before rebounding later in 2024.

Dhingra said it was now six months since inflation had firmly shifted downward, with widespread declines by components that make up the consumer prices index.

"It's been a pretty consistent drop that's been happening," she said. "I was fairly convinced that this wasn't just energy driving everything; this was much more broad-based than we had seen."

At the same time the economy hasn't seen a wage-price spiral that would threaten the central bank's ability to return inflation to target, she added.

Given the lags in the operation of monetary policy, Dhingra said, "even if you cut now... we're basically still looking at a pretty restrictive period of monetary policy".

PBZ Bank sees 310 percent growth in profit for 3 years

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

PBZ Bank has attained 310 percent growth of its profitability in the last three years.

The bank's managing director Dr Muhsin Salim Masoud highlighted that the profitability staggered to 75.2bn/- last year, compared to 18.3bn/- recorded in 2020, securing 8th place in the Tanzanian banking industry in terms of profit.

Dr Muhsin, said this during the event held at Golden Tulip Airport Hotel in Zanzibar by pointing out that at during the start of Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi's administration in 2020, the bank had total assets amounting to 752bn/-, but at the end of 2023, the assets had risen by 173 percent to 2.05trn/-.

The event was held to highlight the bank's successes during the 3 years of President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, Dr. Mwinyi's administration.

He explained that the bank had surpassed various other performance indicators during this time, including uplifted in deposits by 199 percent as well as loans and advances, which more than doubled by 123 percent.

The MD said the bank has also managed to reduce the rate of Non-Performing Loans (NPL) from 4.77 percent in 2020, down to 2.47 percent, due to increased efficiency, customer trust and loyalty.

Dr. Muhsin also explained that the bank has expanded its footprint in recent years, with a number of branches being opened in Tanzania mainland, including additional branches in Dar es Salaam, and Dodoma, with new branches set to be opened soon in Morogoro, Mbeya, Arusha, Mwanza and Tanga regions.

The managing director also asserted that various measures have

been implemented by the bank to revolutionize digital and alternative channels, including the revamping internet and mobile banking, the expansion of ATM network and agency banking.

Dr. Muhsin thanked the staff of PBZ Bank, who through their hard work, commitment and dedication, have enabled the bank to grow fast in a short period of time, at an extraordinary pace.

He also thanked various stakeholders, including customers, the Board of Directors and government officials, some of whom were present at the event for their patronage and support towards the bank over the past three years.

He pointed out that without those important stakeholders, the bank would not have managed to achieve the strong successes demonstrated recently.

The President of Zanzibar Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi had the opportunity to address PBZ staff and attendees during the event, through video conference, by congratulating the bank's staff for the impressive performance by expressing his appreciation for the contribution that the bank has had on the isles' economic growth in recent years.

Commenting on the bank's performance, the guest of honor at the event, Minister of State, President's Office, Finance and Planning, Dr. Saada Salum Mkuuya, lauded PBZ for its outstanding performances, outlining the bank's key role as one of the state's major employers and tax contributor.

The minister thanked the bank's management and specifically the member of staff, for their unwavering commitment towards excellence and support to delivering President Dr. Mwinyi's vision for Zanzibar and its people.



Dr Muhsin Salim Masoud, MD, People's Bank of Zanzibar

Y9 launches the world's first ever banking phone

DELAWARE

Y9 Inc, the digital bank from the USA and operating in Africa, has launched the world's first device embedded with providing microfinance services in its today's business operations.

Ashok Kavinattamai, the CEO of Y9 Microfinance Tanzania, a subsidiary of Y9 Inc has expressed his excitement about the launch, stating: "At Y9 Microfinance, our vision is deeply rooted in empowering Tanzanians through digital and financial inclusion".

He noted that with the addition of the 4G Smart Feature Phone called TZI in Tanzania in the device financing service, the company is taking a bold step towards making modern technology a reality for a broader segment of the population.

"We aim to bridge the gap, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their economic status, can leverage the benefits of connectivity and financial access," he said.

For an extremely affordable price, individuals can now own a 4G smart feature phone, built in with the latest technology such as "Tap pay" contactless payment system which is soon to be enabled, embedded with all popular Applications making TZI very beneficial in its range.

This is reaffirming Y9 Microfinance's commitment to offer intelligent, affordable, and accessible device financing services for the unbanked and underbanked.

Furthermore, he said Y9 Microfinance is permeating the market, breaking down barriers to provide digital access and financial empowerment.

Device Financing Service opens avenues for individuals who may have found the upfront cost of smartphones prohibitive.

By adding reasonably priced 4G smart feature phones to its product portfolio such as cash loans, utility loans and salary loans, he noted Y9 Microfinance aims to empower a wider audience, enabling them to harness the power of the internet, digital services, and mobile connectivity for personal and financial growth.

"Y9 Microfinance's Device Financing Service aligns seamlessly with its broader mission of fostering digital inclusion across Tanzania. The organization envisions a future where every individual, regardless of socioeconomic status, has the tools and opportunities to take part meaningfully in the digital economy," he said.

Kavinattamai highlighted this evolution, adding, "Our experience with providing 4G smartphones demonstrated the demand for advanced mobile technology. However, we recognized the need to reach an even broader audience."



INTERVIEW:

The future of IoT in retail banking

THE Internet of Things (IoT) is already a widespread theme in retail banking, but there are still avenues for growth. Retail Banker International spoke to ROB COTTRILL, technology director at digital transformation company ANS about what the landscape is like now, where it's going and why.

What does the IoT in the retail banking space look like at the moment?

I think there are two sides to that question. You get the perspective of the consumer who is leveraging the IoT, and a lot of the stuff that's happening within the IoT space is aimed towards the consumer for convenience. You don't have to go into physical banks anymore, you can do more things with your smartphone, more things with devices, you can use Alexa to make payments or send money. You know, all of that is IoT-related, it's all around convenience and customer experience.

Virtual cards are a great example; you no longer need a physical card. You can generate multiple virtual cards so if you're buying stuff from somewhere you don't typically buy from, it's very easy to generate a virtual card, spend on it, cancel it. You've got no risk of fraud.

When you look at it from the banking institution's side, it's less about the convenience to the consumer, but more about the power it gives them in terms of having edge computing and edge power at these devices. Real-time transactions and real-time information is a big part of it. When someone uses an IoT device or makes a payment electronically, things happen really

quickly; it goes into the ether, and then the banks can work with that straight away.

Obviously, that leads to a great source of data for fraud detection, real-time transactions and monitoring consumer habits. They can tailor that information for customer profiles to really get to know customers a lot better and pivot how they interact with that consumer. It's a much more efficient way for them to work and operate, which is why they're investing quite significantly in it.

How well do you really know your competitors?

Access the most comprehensive Company Profiles on the market, powered by GlobalData. Save hours of research. Gain competitive edge.

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How are banks making sure they're not misusing data collected in terms of cybersecurity and data handling?

It's a question that swirls around not just the banking industry, but other industries as well. The data they're collecting needs to be secure; it needs to be done in a very controlled way. Since a lot of the data they collect is auditable, they know where it's being used, what they're collecting, and when they're collecting it. A lot of the risk from IoT devices certainly comes from the misuse of the IoT device.

ATMs are a good example of

an early IoT-type device. The physical attempts to breach that security [included] cameras stuck up top so people can see the card number and the pins or a fake keypad. That changes slightly when you look at more of the modern IoT devices. It's really the compromise within the device or software layer that they need to worry about, some of which is outside of their control. So they need to do a lot of checks and balances on their side.

This unlocks the ability to use IoT devices for payments, but it's not foolproof. It's much more easy to trick people into social engineering to get access to devices. Certainly, older generations are much more susceptible to that social engineering aspect. The thing is acceptable risk within banks where the convenience and the real-time data they're getting does offset a lot of the losses from fraud and allows them to compensate an account for that within the flaws and vulnerabilities of such IoT devices.

Where do you see IoT in banking going from here?

For me, it's going to be focused on convenience for the consumer and customer insights for the banks and institutions. I think those are the two key drivers of how [banks] can make it more convenient for consumers to spend money, whether that's on a phone, on a watch, with Alexa. ATMs might be upgraded, maybe it's a finger or face scan rather than a four-digit PIN code, all of those sorts of innovations are possible.

If you remove the hassle of spending money, you tend to spend more, and that's where

we want to get to. To make it much easier for us to spend money and consume goods and remove that barrier to entry, while also giving us the safeguards and protections that are needed.

From [the banks'] side, the more we spend, the better they get to learn our habits to better understand how we operate, and how we want to spend money. That allows them to be much more proactive in fighting fraud, but also make tailored recommendations to us, in terms of borrowing money, spending money, using money.

It's those sorts of insights that they want to lean on for us to use more money with them. They make more profit and our lives are much more convenient. So it's a relationship of harmony, but the insights we give them are arguably more powerful than the convenience we get out of it. I think you'll find when you start reading the small print of some of these [contracts] when signing up for a new credit card, taking out a loan, [it] will actually cover quite a lot of that of the data they collect and how they use it and what you're signing up for.

Is that something you think customers should be worried about?

I think so. I'd always advocate to read small print. It's definitely worth understanding how your data is going to be used, and how they proceed when using it. You're agreeing for them to use data to do fraud protection and tracking and everything else; that will be in that small print.

The sad reality is, though, that I think a lot of the banking insti-

tutions will be doing the same thing, and the same small print will be there. So you've got a choice of accept it or don't bank. But it's definitely something that we should be taking more concern over as IoT devices get more capable.

What do you currently see as the main hurdles to this implementation?

Digital equality might be a good way to start. [Banks] probably would love to shift to a full digital model overnight. It's much easier for them if it's all self-contained, everything's digital, physical money doesn't really exist anymore. What they probably struggle with is consumers who don't have access to the same level of technology. So they're not got the same capability, you know, someone might still have a really old phone that can't do contactless payment and can't do online banking. So they still have to facilitate those as well. Technical laggards [are] probably what's slowing down that transition for us.

I think that's going to be a gradual phase over the next couple of generations. Once that shift starts to happen more, that's when we'll start to see a massive spike in innovation due to technology and IoT devices, because it won't have to accommodate the legacy way of using spending money, if that makes sense, which is probably what's that I say holding the innovation back. We've certainly seen a massive innovation over the last 10 years in terms of digital banking, but it's not accessible to everyone at the minute due to their own personal circumstances, so they need to accommodate both.

New York Community Bancorp sued by shareholders

NEW YORK

NEW York Community Bancorp was sued on Tuesday by shareholders after the embattled lender posted unexpected commercial real estate loan losses and slashed its dividend, causing its stock price to sink to a nearly 27-year low.

In a proposed class action filed in Brooklyn federal court, shareholders said the regional bank defrauded them by failing to disclose it would set aside more money for credit losses, and cut its dividend 71 percent to shore up its balance sheet.

Led by Tennessee resident Walter Lemm, shareholders accused the bank of having inflated its stock price since last March by offering an "unrealisti-

cally positive assessment of the Company and its financial well-being and prospects."

New York Community Bancorp did not respond to requests for comment. Chief Executive Thomas Cangemi and Chief Financial Officer John Pinto are also defendants.

The Hicksville, New York-based lender operates about 420 branches under several brands, including the original name Queens County Savings Bank.

New York Community Bancorp shares closed down \$1.22, or 22.2 percent, at \$4.20 on Tuesday. They earlier fell below \$4 to a level last seen in April 1997, according to Reuters data.

The stock price has fallen 60 percent in the last



week.

They declined further after market hours as Moody's Investors Service downgraded many of the bank's credit ratings to "junk" status, and said the bank could face limited financial flexibility as well as "potential confidence

sensitivity."

New York Community Bancorp last Wednesday posted a surprise \$260 million fourth-quarter loss, reflecting loan deterioration tied to offices and apartment buildings, and said the dividend cut would preserve capital to

meet regulatory requirements.

The bank's purchase last spring of the failed Signature Bank in a government-arranged auction, and the December 2022 purchase of Flagstar Bank, boosted overall assets to more than \$116 bil-

lion. New York Community Bancorp's problems have spurred concern about other midsized lenders exposed to commercial real estate.

Landlords have been struggling with low occupancy rates because of the pandemic, while elevated interest rates make it costlier to refinance loans. Two other midsized regional banks, Silicon Valley Bank and First Republic, also failed early last year.

It is common for companies to be sued by shareholders after unexpected news that causes stock prices to fall.

The case is Lemm v New York Community Bancorp et al, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York, No. 24-00903.

BANKING & FINANCE

Nigeria central bank targets to reduce inflation by Q4, 2024

LAGOS

THE Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Olayemi Cardoso (pictured), has assured that the policies initiated by the bank will bring down inflation in the country to 21.4 percent by Q4 2024.

He admitted that the country's foreign exchange market is currently facing increased demand pressures, causing a continuous decline in the value of the naira, and enumerated factors contributing to the situation to include speculative forex demand, inadequate forex supply due to non-remittance of crude oil earnings to the CBN, increased capital outflows, and excess liquidity from fiscal activities.

Mr. Cardoso said, "Inflationary pressures are expected to decline in 2024 due to the CBN's inflation-targeting policy, aiming to rein in inflation to 21.4 percent, aided by improved agricultural productivity and easing global supply chain pressures.

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"Inflation pressures may persist, albeit temporarily, but are expected to moderate significantly by Q4 2024. Exchange rate pressures are also expected to reduce with the smooth functioning of the foreign exchange market".

The CBN Governor who stated this on Tuesday when he appeared before the House of Representatives on an invitation to sectoral debates said he is dedicated to refocusing the Bank by giving primacy to price stability.

He noted that the Bank also aims to build confidence in the Nigerian economy through the maintenance of stability in consumer prices and the foreign exchange market.

According to the CBN Governor, "We are aware that the twin challenges of inflation and exchange rate depreciation

on our economy are daunting, however, they are not insurmountable.

"Monetary policy actions are sometimes inhibited by transmission lags, nonetheless, it is expected that the policy measures implemented by the Bank will permeate the economy in the short-to medium-term.

"We are committed to implementing policies that will ensure a stable macroeconomic environment and guarantee improved livelihoods for all Nigerians". Cardoso explained that the CBN's inflation-targeting framework involves clear communication and collaboration with fiscal authorities to achieve price stability, potentially leading to lowered policy rates, stimulating investment, and creating job opportunities.

On the situation in the FX market, Cardoso said, "The Nigerian foreign exchange market is currently facing increased demand pressures, causing a continuous decline in the value of the naira.

"Factors contributing to this situation



include speculative forex demand, inadequate forex supply due to non-remittance of crude oil earnings to the CBN, increased capital outflows, and excess liquidity from fiscal activities".

He submitted that the shift to a market-driven exchange rate was intended to create a stable macroeconomic environment and discourage currency hoarding, however, he attributed short-term volatilities to arbitrage and speculation.

To address exchange rate volatility, he said that a comprehensive strategy has been initiated to enhance liquidity in the FX markets.

This, he noted, includes unifying FX market segments, clearing outstanding FX obligations, introducing new operational mechanisms for BDCs, enforcing the Net Open Position limit, and adjusting the remunerable Standing Deposit Facility cap.

He acknowledged the economic costs of these developments not just for the economy, but also as they affect ordinary Nigerians, and assured that the costs are temporary as the Bank's decisions will address a lot of fundamental issues bothering Nigeria's macroeconomic landscape.

WORLD

King Charles seen in public for the first time since cancer diagnosis

LONDON

KING Charles smiled and waved to passers-by on Tuesday as he was seen in public for the first time since it was revealed he was suffering from a form of cancer and as his estranged younger son Prince Harry flew to Britain to see him.

Buckingham Palace announced on Monday that Charles, 75, on the throne for less than 18 months since the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth, had been diagnosed with the disease and would postpone his public engagements to undergo treatment.

Charles waved to passers-by on Tuesday afternoon as he was driven the short distance from his Clarence House home in central London to Buckingham Palace. He and his wife Queen Camilla then took a helicopter to his Sandringham estate in rural eastern England to begin his recuperation.

Shortly before the king's departure, Harry, who has fallen out with the rest of the royal family since he stepped down from royal duties almost four years ago, was pictured arriving at Clarence House, and had a brief reunion with his father according to newspaper reports.

However, a royal source said there were no plans for Harry to see his elder brother, heir-to-the-throne Prince William, during his visit to Britain.

William is expected to step up to fulfill some of the monarch's duties, along with other senior royals while Charles begins a series of out-patient treatments.

The palace has said the king was remaining "wholly positive", and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak earlier on Tuesday said the cancer had been caught early.

Despite the diagnosis, Charles is planning to continue with much of his private work as monarch including his weekly audience with the prime minister and dealing with state papers. Sunak said he was in regular contact with the king.

"That will of course continue as normal and we'll crack on with everything," he said.

The cancer was discovered when Charles stayed three nights in hospital last month where he underwent a corrective procedure for a benign enlarged prostate. Beyond confirming it was not prostate cancer, the palace has not given any further details.

The royal family usually keep medical matters private, but the palace said Charles had chosen to go public as he was patron of a number of cancer-related charities.

While the king will receive expert private care, his diagnosis will draw attention to Britain's rising cancer waiting times within the state-run National Health Service (NHS) which is widely regarded as being in crisis.



Britain's King Charles and Queen Camilla leave Clarence House, the day after it was announced King Charles has been diagnosed with cancer, in London, Britain, on Tuesday. REUTERS

Survival rates for cancer in Britain lag those of other European countries for nine out of 10 of the most common types of the disease, according to an NHS Confederation report published in January.

Early last year, Harry published his auto surprise diagnosis.

The surprise diagnosis, which has dominated British media since the announcement was made, is another personal blow for Charles during his year and a half on the throne.

biography Spare, which contained damning revelations about his father and elder brother, while Charles has also had to contend with ongoing allegations against his brother Prince Andrew relating to the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

Harry, who quit royal duties in 2020, jetted back to Britain from California where he lives with his American wife Meghan and two children to see his father after Charles told him and his other immediate family of his diagnosis.

The king's cancer revelation comes as

Kate, the Princess of Wales and wife of heir William, recuperates at home after spending two weeks in hospital following planned abdominal surgery for an unspecified but non-cancerous condition.

She is not expected to return to public duties until after Easter and the absence of the senior figures will put pressure on the other working royals to perform extra engagements.

Charles has always been keen to have a more slimmed-down monarchy but with his younger brother Andrew and Harry no longer involved, all those who currently carry out royal engagements are aged over 50 apart from William and Kate, with some now in their 80s.

His sister, Princess Anne, often tops the list for being the busiest royal, followed by Charles.

Royal biographer Matthew Dennison said that Charles, as a workaholic, would be impatient to return to "the everyday business of the public side of monarchy".

Agencies

'Pray you are able to secure 40..'

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on Congress using West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's remarks on differences in the INDIA bloc over seat-sharing and said he prays that the opposition party is able to secure 40 seats in the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls.



Replying to the debate on the motion of thanks to President's address in the Rajya Sabha, the Prime Minister said the Congress whose leader and policy have "no guarantee" is raising questions on his policies.

"A challenge has been posed before you from West Bengal that Congress will not be able to cross 40 (in Lok Sabha elections 2024). I pray that you are able to secure 40," the Prime Minister said.

Mamata Banerjee had last week slammed Congress and also took a dig at the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, saying she had proposed that it take BJP in the Hindi heartland states and contest 300 seats across the country but they did not heed and she has doubts "if they will secure even 40 seats if they contested 300".

Both Congress and Trinamool Congress are part of the INDIA bloc. Lok Sabha elections are expected to be held in April-May this year.

The Prime Minister said that President Droupadi Murmu in her address spoke about India's potential, strength, and bright future and thanked her for address to the joint sitting of two Houses of Parliament.

The Prime Minister had given reply to the debate on the motion of thanks in Lok Sabha on Monday. ANI

Public in West should know how Kiev kills civilians with West's arms, says top Russian senator

NEW DELHI

RUSSIAN embassies in those Western countries that supply weapons to Kiev must inform the citizens of such donor nations how the weapons bought and supplied with their taxes are being used to target and kill innocent civilians, Russian Federation Council (upper house of parliament, or "senate") Speaker Valentina Matviyenko (pictured) said.

"It's crucial for people in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the US and the Czech Republic to be made aware of how their taxpayer money is being spent on lethal weapons, which are then sent to Ukraine. With their tacit consent, such weapons are used against civilians and civilian infrastructure facilities such as hospitals, schools and buses," the senate speaker emphasized.

She expressed confidence that the majority of citizens in such countries would condemn weapons supplies if they were fully informed about how they are being used. "National parliaments are certainly to blame because they make decisions and approve funding for the weapons that they allow to be used against [innocent] civilians. This happens all the time," Matviyenko stressed.

Commenting on the Federation Council's newly passed declaration stating that those Western countries that have been supplying weapons to Ukraine are directly responsible for the deaths of Russian civilians, the upper house chairperson noted that it was not enough to just forward the document to the respective parliaments of the weapons supplying countries, but stressed that Russian embassies should also be involved in the task of "conveying this [critical] information to the citizens of those countries."



Chinese leaders extend Spring Festival greetings to veterans

BEIJING

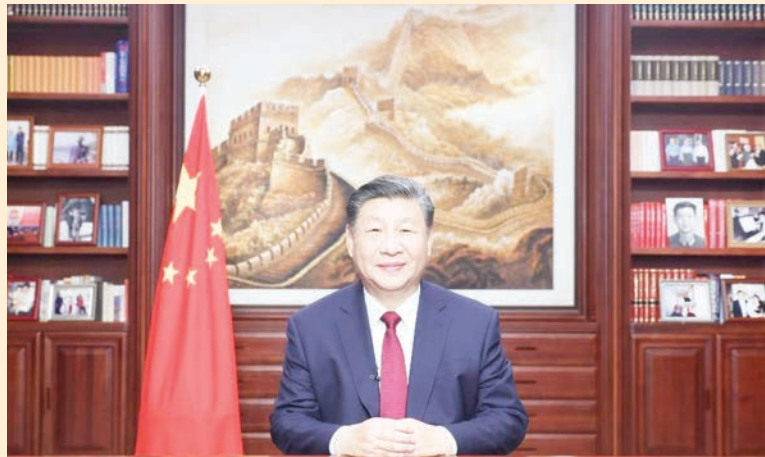
PRESIDENT Xi Jinping and other Chinese leaders have visited or entrusted officials of relevant departments to visit veteran comrades to extend festive greetings ahead of the Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, and other Party and state leaders wished the veteran comrades a happy Spring Festival, good health and longevity.

The veteran comrades spoke highly of the solid progress made by the whole Party, the entire military, and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups toward building China into a modern socialist country in all respects under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core over the past year.

They voiced wholehearted support for Xi's core position in the CPC Central Committee and in the Party as a whole.

The veteran comrades expressed the hope that the Party, the military and Chinese people of all ethnic groups



Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a New Year message via China Media Group and the Internet Sunday evening in Beijing to ring in 2024. XINHUA

would unite even more closely around the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, and continuously enhance cohesion and forge the Party's soul with Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

They called for efforts to forge ahead with firm confidence and strive tirelessly for the cause of building China into a stronger country and rejuvenating the Chinese nation on all fronts by pursuing Chinese modernization. Xinhua

This year's Spring Festival falls on Feb 10. Xinhua

US House rejects Republican-led effort to pass Israel-only aid bill

WASHINGTON

THE US House of Representatives rejected a Republican-led bill on Tuesday that would provide \$17.6 billion to Israel, as Democrats said they wanted a vote instead on a broader measure that would also provide assistance to Ukraine, international humanitarian funding and new money for border security.

The vote was 250 to 180, falling short because it was introduced under an expedited procedure requiring a two-thirds majority for passage. The vote was largely along party lines, although 14 Republicans opposed the bill and 46 Democrats supported it.

Aid for Israel - one of the largest recipients of US foreign aid - has traditionally received strong bipartisan support in Congress. But many opponents called the House legislation a political ploy by Republicans to distract from their opposition

to a \$118 billion Senate bill combining an overhaul of US immigration policy and new funding for border security with billions of dollars in emergency aid for Ukraine, Israel and partners in the Indo-Pacific region.

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson had said the Senate bill was "dead on arrival" in the chamber even before it was introduced. And Senate Republican leaders said on Tuesday they did not think the measure would receive enough votes to pass.

"This accomplishes nothing and delays aid getting out to our allies and providing humanitarian relief," said Representative Rosa DeLauro, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, urging opposition to the Israel-only bill. "Our allies are facing existential threats and our friends and foes around the globe are watching, waiting to see how America will respond."

Democratic President Joe Biden, who supports the Senate bill, promised to veto the House's Israel-only measure.

Struggle to send security assistance

The Israel bill's supporters insisted it was not a political stunt, saying it was important to move quickly to support the Jewish state as it responds to the deadly Oct 7 assault by militants from Hamas-ruled Gaza.

"This bill simply provides necessary resources to our closest ally in the region and our own military," said Republican Representative Ken Calvert, the Republican Defense Appropriations Subcommittee chairman who introduced the measure.

Israel began its offensive in Gaza after militants killed 1,200 people and took 253 hostages in southern Israel on Oct 7.

Some Democrats also blasted the House bill for failing to provide humanitarian assistance for Palestinian civilians. Gaza's health military says at least 27,585 Palestinians have been confirmed killed in the campaign, with thousands more feared buried in neighborhoods reduced to rubble.

Members of Congress have been struggling for months to find a way to send security assistance abroad, particularly to Ukraine as it battles Russian military operations. Biden has twice sent Congress requests for emergency spending bills, most recently in October.

The Republican-majority House passed an Israel-only bill in November, but it was never taken up in the Democratic-led Senate, as negotiators worked on Biden's request for a broader emergency security package and Republican demands that any security assistance be combined with changes in immigration policy and security at the border with Mexico.

The failed Israel House vote was the second in quick succession for Johnson's Republican majority on Tuesday. It came immediately after the chamber voted against impeaching Biden's top border official, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

China's PV industry sees accelerated development, expanded overseas market

In the city of Shannan, located on a plateau at an elevation of 4,994 to 5,100 meters in southwest China's Xizang autonomous region, nearly 80,000 solar panels were glistening under the sunlight.

This solar farm was connected to the grid and started generating electricity on Dec. 30, 2023. It is the world's highest solar project and supplies electricity for nearly 4,000 households.

"The project employs our ultra high-power components, and from order placement to delivery completion, it took just over a month," said Gao Jifan, chairman of TrinaSolar Co., Ltd. (TrinaSolar).

Gao, who came to Xizang 22 years ago, shared his experience of building photovoltaic (PV) power stations in the autonomous region.

"Back then, the equipment had to be

carried on horses to construction sites. An average PV power station was only around 20 kilowatts, with a few dozen solar panels, which were imported," Gao said.

At that time, China's PV industry was just starting out, with only a handful of companies manufacturing PV products. TrinaSolar, which has a history of only five years, didn't even have a component factory back then and its annual revenue was just about 100 million yuan (\$14.07 million).

However, in the first three quarters of 2023 alone, the company's revenue exceeded 80 billion yuan, with a year-on-year growth of over 40 percent. Its profit more than doubled.

China's PV industry has undergone a remarkable transformation, from a

situation where raw materials, equipment, and markets were heavily reliant on foreign sources to becoming a global leader with nearly half of the world's installed solar power capacity and over 80 percent of major manufacturing output.

According to data released by the China Photovoltaic Industry Association, the manufacturing output of the PV sector exceeded 1.3 trillion yuan in the first ten months of 2023. In the first three quarters of 2023, the export volume of silicon wafers, solar cells, and modules increased by 88.3 percent, 74.3 percent, and 33 percent year on year, respectively.

Behind the steady expansion of the PV industry lie the opportunities brought about by global green and low-carbon transformation and China's efforts to achieve its "dual carbon" goals - reaching

peak carbon emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060.

At the same time, the expansion of the industry is also the dividend resulting from companies accelerating technological iteration and driving cost reduction.

In December 2023, Chinese solar technology giant LONGi set a new world record of 27.09 percent for the efficiency of crystalline silicon heterojunction back-contact (HBC) solar cells, breaking the 26.81 percent efficiency record it announced in November 2022.

The secret to these breakthroughs comes from continuous research and development. On one hand, the company explores different promising technological paths and industry sectors; on the other hand, it focuses its efforts on scaling up the production of selected

technologies.

Over the past five years, LONGi has invested over 18 billion yuan in research and development.

Since 2014, Chinese companies have shattered records in PV cell conversion efficiency for over 50 times. Cao Renxian, secretary-general of the China Photovoltaic Industry Association and chairman of Sungrow Power Supply Co., Ltd., noted that with the accelerated industrialization of several advanced technologies, the conversion efficiency of perovskite and tandem solar cells made new highs last year, marking China's global leadership in PV technology.

Guided by the "dual carbon" goals, the PV sector is deeply integrating with industries, construction, transportation, and other fields. Through the innovation

in application models, the market continues to expand in depth and breadth.

On Dongyu Island in south China's Hainan province, where the permanent venue of the Boao Forum for Asia is located, hotels and parking lot shelters have been equipped with building-integrated photovoltaics (BIPV).

Unlike traditional installations where solar panels are mounted on rooftop brackets, the roofs of such buildings on the island are composed of inner panels, insulation cotton, outer panels, and a photovoltaic power generation layer.

BIPV allows solar panels to become a part of buildings, eliminating the need for separate pathways during installation. This means that the same roof area can accommodate larger-capacity components, resulting in an increase in electricity generation of approximately 15 percent. People's daily

DPRK seeks no war, but whether any is waged in 2024 depends on US, Russian envoy asserts

MOSCOW

PYONGYANG is not seeking to go to war, while the potential start of any conflict will totally depend on the United States, Russian Ambassador to Pyongyang Alexander Matsegora said in an interview with TASS.

"The DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea - TASS) is not seeking a war," he emphasized. "Whether 2024 will be a peaceful year in Korea or whether there will be a military conflict depends entirely on the Americans," he added.

In this context, Matsegora (pictured) recounted that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un told the country's Supreme People's Assembly at a recent meeting that "there is no reason for us to opt for war, and therefore, there is no intention of unilaterally going to war."

Test nukes amid US provocations

Matsegora also said, North Korea may decide to conduct another nuclear test if the United States continues taking provocative steps in the region.

"Western countries and UN Secretariat officials cannot know a priori if arrangements are underway here for a seventh nuclear test," the Russian diplomat said, commenting on Western



allegations that Pyongyang is working to prepare yet another nuclear test, as he dismissed any such rhetoric as mere "speculations."

"I think whether or not there will be another nuclear experiment in North Korea depends on how the military-political situation on the peninsula will unfold.

If expanded US-South Korean nuclear deterrence <...> or other provocative steps toward the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continue or if US Air Force strategic bombers continue to fly over the peninsula, the North Korean leadership may as well decide to conduct a new nuclear test for the sake of further strengthening of its defense capabilities," Matsegora explained.

According to the envoy, the responsibility for such unwelcome developments "will lie completely with Washington" and with Seoul, too, even though he admitted that little depends on the latter here. **Agencies**

Fifth meeting of Somalia Quint Member States convenes in Abu Dhabi

DUBAI

THE United Arab Emirates hosted the fifth meeting of Somalia Quint Member States, which included representatives from the United Arab Emirates, the State of Qatar, the Republic of Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States, in Abu Dhabi.

The participants welcomed the participation of the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Dr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. The meeting held under the theme "United for a More Prosperous Somalia" examined the current situation in Somalia, particularly security, political and humanitarian issues, and discussed ways to help support Somalia in its endeavours toward achieving long-term peace, security, stability, and development which included discussions on the development of comprehensive strategic road map for 2024.

The participants affirmed their support to the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia, upholding its endorsement for Somalia's reconciliation efforts to achieve stability. In this regard, the importance of collaborative efforts and coordination with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union to ensure security in the Horn of Africa, as well as for dialogue and diplomacy was underlined.

The meeting also discussed the progress achieved by the National Consultative Council and the political leaders of Somalia and emphasized the importance of ensuring a political process that includes the contributions of Somali citizens.

Moreover, Somalia's efforts to significantly engage in regional and international forums, through joining the East African Community (EAC) was underscored. The meeting examined the steps taken by the Federal Government of Somalia towards achieving stronger economic development and climate resilience.

At the conclusion of the meeting partners expressed their deep appreciation to the UAE for hosting the session, and agreed to reconvene for a sixth meeting of the Somali. **ANI**

US transportation authority report finds missing bolts in Boeing door plug blowout

SAN FRANCISCO

THE U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said on Tuesday in its preliminary investigative report that four key bolts were "missing" when a door plug blew off an Alaska Airlines flight in midair on Jan. 5.

"Overall, the observed damage patterns and absence of contact damage or deformation around holes associated with the vertical movement arrestor bolts and upper guide track bolts in the upper guide fittings, hinge fittings, and recovered aft lower hinge guide fitting indicate that four bolts that prevent upward movement of the MED plug were missing before the MED plug moved upward off the stop pads," the NTSB said in the report.

The door plug was originally installed by contractor Spirit AeroSystems in Kansas. When it was shipped to Boeing's factory in Renton, Washington, for assembly, damaged rivets were discovered on the fuselage that required the door plug to be opened for repairs.

After repair work was completed by Spirit AeroSystems personnel at the Boeing plant, the bolts were not reinstalled, according to photo evidence provided to the NTSB by Boeing.

Boeing said that it appreciates the NTSB's work and will review their findings expeditiously. "We will continue to cooperate fully and transparently with the NTSB and the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) investigations," the company said in a statement.

"Whatever final conclusions are reached, Boeing is accountable for what happened. An event like this must not happen on an airplane that leaves our factory. We simply must do better for our customers and their passengers,"

Boeing President and CEO Dave Calhoun said.

According to Calhoun, Boeing is implementing a comprehensive plan to strengthen quality with "significant, demonstrated action and transparency at every turn."

The company has implemented a control plan to ensure all 737-9 mid-exit door plugs are installed according to specifications, Boeing said, adding that it is implementing plans to improve overall quality and stability across the 737 production system.

"In addition to these Boeing actions, we are opening our factory to 737 customers to conduct their own additional reviews, and will fully and transparently support the FAA's investigation, audit and oversight actions," Calhoun noted. "This added scrutiny - from ourselves, from our regulator and from our customers - will make us better. It's that simple," he said. **Xinhua**

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Global forum on AI addresses ethics, sovereignty concerns

BEIJING

THE Global Forum on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (AI) 2024, under the patronage of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was held on Monday and Tuesday, addressing crucial themes such as equality and diversity in the rapidly advancing field of digital technology.

In the past year, countries worldwide have been actively engaged in AI development tailored for local languages, reflecting their profound considerations in the domain of digital sovereignty. In late 2022, the release of the English generative AI ChatGPT by the U.S.-based company OpenAI sparked a global trend in developing generative AI models for local languages. Notably, in China, models like Baidu's ERNIE Bot and iFlytek's Xinghuo have undergone rapid iterations, showcasing impressive Chinese language-processing capabilities and serving as productivity tools for many businesses.

"China has made rapid progress in relevant research, with some cross-domain large models achieving breakthroughs, and the development trend of large models for vertical domains is also very promising," Chen Xiaoping, chairman of the AI Ethics Committee of the Chinese Artificial Intelligence Association, told Xinhua.

The generative AI landscape is also thriving in Europe. In France, by September of the previous year, 79 startups were already specializing in the field. Notably, Mistral, an AI company valued at almost 2 billion euros (around 215 billion U.S. dollars), stands out for introducing the versatile "Mixtral8x7B" model proficient in French, Spanish, Italian, English, and German. In Russia, YandexGPT said it outperformed ChatGPT 3.5 in Russian language responses and has passed the Russian Unified State Exam.

Simultaneously, countries like Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and Singapore are actively participating in the development of generative AI models tailored to their respective languages.

This global trend not only un-



An utilitarian robot is seen at GoTech World exhibition in Bucharest, Romania, on Nov. 9, 2023. GoTech World, a two-day IT and digital event in Central and Eastern Europe, showcases technological solutions mainly based on Artificial Intelligence. Xinhua

derscores the dynamic evolution of generative AI across diverse linguistic landscapes, but also highlights the growing significance of "sovereign AI" worldwide.

"Sovereign AI" is a frequently mentioned concept in the wake of the popularity of generative AI. It generally refers to a country's support for AI infrastructure development, training large models with data that align with the country's culture and thinking, and fostering a local ecosystem for AI products.

People and countries now recognize that they have to utilize their own data, keep their own data, process that data, and develop their own AI, said Nvidia Corp chief executive Jensen Huang. Last year, French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire publicly stated that France and Europe at large must develop their own generative AI. He pledged to increase the funds raised to invest in tech innovation.

Similar concerns have been voiced by various countries, including India. "We are determined that we must have our own sovereign AI," Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Indian minister of state for electronics and information technology, said recently.

"People realize that they can't afford to export their country's knowledge, their country's culture for somebody else to then resell AI back to them," Huang said. Such words underscore a significant

challenge in developing sovereign AI globally.

Currently, American enterprises dominate the field of AI, and for other countries to keep pace, they must adopt American products, and such dependence could potentially constrain their subsequent development.

Against this backdrop, data analysis experts caution that the predominant use of English in building AI language models, coupled with most suppliers originating from the United States, may result in a heavy reliance on American providers, leading to a lack of full independence in many AI technologies.

The global development of generative AI is uneven, potentially leading to new inequalities. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting earlier this year: "We need a systematic effort to increase access to AI so that developing economies can benefit from its enormous potential."

We need to bridge the digital divide instead of deepening it. Chen pointed out that for the new problems arising in the era of AI, it is necessary to pursue a unity of economic and social benefits while maintaining high-quality development, to effectively ensure and improve the well-being of society and mankind as a whole. In this process, China has shown good momentum in the field of AI. Ronnie Lins, director of the China-Brazil Center for Research and Business, told reporters

in April last year that Brazil's AI development is not yet sufficient, while China and the United States have invested heavily in AI.

AI could have an impact on jobs globally, Lins noted, expecting China to leverage its strengths and contribute to creating new opportunities for young people through the application of new technologies.

The Global Forum on the Ethics of AI 2024 addressed the aforementioned issues. In the current landscape of diverse language AI developments, Gabriela Ramos, assistant director-general for the Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, emphasized the need for global cooperation. "We need true global coordination and knowledge-sharing to build a responsible AI ecosystem that benefits everyone," said Ramos. **Xinhua**

China sees emerging forms of Spring Festival trips

AS the most important traditional festival of the Chinese nation, the Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, offers an abundance of customs and rituals, making it a perfect time for a cultural trip.

Dai Bin, president of the China Tourism Academy, estimated that the Spring Festival holiday in 2024 would become a "super golden week," with high enthusiasm for travel and consumption.

China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism recently launched a series of 25 Spring Festival-themed activities, covering seven major categories including popular cultural performances, public service events, intangible cultural heritage experiences, tourism and leisure consumption, winter sports and educational trips, cultural and historical exhibitions, as well as international and domestic celebrations. These activities will offer a wide range of choices for people to celebrate the Chinese New Year and enjoy a joyful holiday.

The museum remains an important destination for offline cultural tours. Statistics show that in 2023, museums across China received a total of 1.24 billion visits, 2.1 times the number in 2022.

During the Spring Festival holiday in 2024, most national museums and provincial museums will continue to be open to the public. In addition to permanent exhibitions, they plan to launch exhibitions themed with the Year of the Dragon and featured exhibitions.

According to an official with China's National Cultural Heritage Administration, more than 400 themed exhibitions have been planned nationwide, including one on the culture of northern Xinjiang and a digital exhibition on cultural relics about Loong collected by the Shaanxi History Museum.

Besides, over 1,000 social education and cultural activities will be hosted, including rubbing experiences and ancient Chinese music performances. These activities aim to offer a cultural feast to the audience.

"Since last year, new trends have emerged in the stage performance market, with many people hitting new destinations to attend art performances," said Zhang Yi, an official with China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

During the Spring Festival this year, 10 national art troupes under the direct administration of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism will hold 204 offline performances, including Peking Opera masterpieces, dance drama tours, as well as a musical presented by the China National Theatre for Children.

In addition, Art China and many other online broad-



South Korean tourists go through border inspection in Yantai, east China's Shandong province, Dec. 31, 2023. (People's Daily Online/Tang Ke)

casting platforms will launch special programs for the Chinese New Year, showcasing to the audience the splendid achievements and artistic essence of China's stage arts in the past year.

Apart from enjoying high-quality art performances, during the holiday, people can also watch videos and livestream, and listen to Chinese New Year-themed songs on their mobile phones to experience the festive atmosphere around the world without leaving their homes.

Recently, a livestream event was hosted in Changsha, central China's Hunan province to celebrate the upcoming Chinese New Year. It was organized by the China Association of Performing Arts in collaboration with Douyin, Kuaishou, Tencent Video and other platforms. By setting up dedicated livestream areas, it allowed netizens to experience the joyful and peaceful atmosphere of the Spring Festival in the virtual world.

Various regions in China are leveraging their unique cultural and tourism resources to launch a diverse range of Spring Festival travel products.

Jilin, Liaoning, Xinjiang and other places, in combination with local resources including sports, recreation, hot springs, and folk activities, have hosted colorful events to mark the Chinese New Year, featuring a series of ice and snow-themed tourism products and preferential measures for the public.

Eleven provinces, including Anhui, Jiangxi, Shandong, Hainan, and Sichuan, have launched study tour activities that focus on the natural ecological environment as well as regional cultural characteristics. For example, Sichuan has launched a study tour that introduces the habitats of pandas, while Shandong is also showcasing the charm of traditional Chinese etiquette.

The "Happy Chinese New Year" activities have been held globally for over 20 years, including family day activities held in the U.S., parades on the Trafalgar Square in the UK, temple fairs in Russia and a grand temple fair in Egypt.

As the 2024 Spring Festival approaches, the "Happy Chinese New Year" activities will be organized in nearly 100 countries and regions worldwide, with nearly 500 diverse exchange activities. In around 20 countries such as the Netherlands, Kazakhstan and New Zealand, lantern lighting events will take place, spreading the joy and harmony of the Chinese New Year to the world.

Shi Zeyi, deputy director of the international exchange and cooperation bureau of China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, noted that during the Spring Festival, various tourism promotion activities will be carried out overseas to encourage domestic enterprises to launch more culturally rich inbound tourism products, and allow more foreign tourists to experience the charm of the Spring Festival in China. **People's Daily**

Calling the bluff: TFF wasn't waiting for AFCON finals funds

By Correspondent John Kimbute

AFTER a rather mild media outcry on reports of unpaid allowances for players of the senior national side, Taifa Stars, where at least one radio talk show interviewed a Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) secretariat official on the matter, the head of the federation owned up and explained.

He declared as the squad was arriving in Cairo for at least one preparatory international friendly as part of preparations, that the federation had not received funds from the Confederation of African Football (CAF) in anticipation of its preparations for the finals.

That was surprising but it may have convinced a stretch of the soccer public due to its reasoning mode.

From a procedural point of view, it is hard to figure out under what conditions the country's preparations for AFCON finals would be paid for by the continental organization, as participation is a condition of membership.

When a country has qualified for the finals the premise for participation remains its membership, and the conditions are implicitly identical at the qualifying stage by groups, and then in confirming sending a team to the finals.

It is part of membership obligations and can in no way be sponsored by either CAF or any other agency, so the claim was in a sense gratuitous as it was referring to an event that was unlikely to ever happen.

That claim was however based on a model of a different kind of competition, not the CAF Champions League as participation relates to membership obligations, but a commercial event conducted for the first time at the start of the current premier league season.

It was the African Football League involving several top sides in the continent, where at the local level Simba SC was involved and indeed hosted the opening encounter with Egyptian giants Al Ahly.

It is the only tourney rather recently where participation is cushioned by organizing agents, as it isn't an event where membership to the continental organiza-



Tanzania senior national football team (Taifa Stars). PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

tion imposes any obligations.

In other words, the TFF leader wanted the public to comprehend that players were not paid their camp allowances for either one or two call-ups during the preparatory run as TFF was waiting for funds to be disbursed.

How far this explanation sank in the minds of soccer pundits was another issue, as not much debate was heard thereafter - and indeed little follow-up of the matter since then.

It is not clear if they were later paid, at least by the time they arrived in Ivory Coast, for the opening, given that there was a fundraising event for various sports, a good occasion which took place in Dar es Salaam.

Since it is clear that TFF did not in all probability expect preparatory funds from the continental organization, that explanation was in a way meant to boomerang on higher sports authorities.

It would imply that there was either an acute or acknowledged need for preparatory funds to send the national soccer side to the AFCON finals, but as CAF was unlikely to do it, local funding authorities ought to have taken over.

No reference to the TFF budget could have been raised as the qualification was a bit of

a surprise to them, and given their mode of work, they could not have had significant contingency funds for the purpose. It is a point that does not need to be overstressed.

As it was noticed earlier, qualifying for higher stages of continental tournaments is not part of the routine expectations of the football establishment, so the premier league board had to alter the schedule when the two city giants qualified for the Group Stage of the CAF Champions League.

In that manner, TFF would have to alter its budgeting for the year after the national side qualified for the AFCON finals, as in both cases this wasn't habitual.

It was distinct from the CAF Champions League where the Msimbazi Street side has an experimented capacity for either the Group Stage or beyond.

As soccer clubs are sponsored within the private sector, issues of preparing for whatever tournament by using public coffers do not arise, while at the continental stage, it is the membership's responsibility to finance participation.

There are cash awards at the end of any tournament which are part of motivating participation and prizing the tourna-

ments, but funding preparations are way out of place concerning tourneys that arise from membership obligations.

Failing to travel for a return match after a loss of the home opening game for instance is not just met with the loss of three points but tournament disqualification, also implying membership cessation.

Zanzibar learned this aspect of things the hard way when it lost CAF membership on account of failing to honour a CAF match date in South Africa, apparently under the impression that a cash crunch alibi would be accepted.

It took well over a decade for the Isles to find their way into CAF contests again, assuring the CAF leadership or councils that such hiccups were not likely to recur in the future.

That is why TFF is possibly unaware of self-sponsorship, including paying up all allowances and opting to pick up a commercial context, where clubs participated by invitation, as the model for its AFCON preparations.

It also shows something on the level of sophistication it expected in the public reaction to its explanations, as on the whole, it obtained something like the benefit of the doubt, due to our aid mentality.

Kilimanjaro Marathon 2024 announces race number collection schedule

By Guardian Correspondent

THE organizers of the Kilimanjaro Premium Lager International Marathon 2024 have announced the race number and running vest collection schedule which starts next weekend in Dar es Salaam.

This comes after closure of the registration as the entries capacity had been reached for the Kilimanjaro Premium Lager 42 Km and Tigo 21 Km races even before the February 6, 2024 deadline that had been set by the organizers.

A statement issued by the organizers, however, indicated that the Gee Soseji 5km Fun Run entries are still open and on sale. Participants can register through Tigopesa by dialing *150*01#, then press 5 LKS, then press 5 (Ticket) and follow instructions to complete their registration or online through www.kilimanjaramarathon.com.

According to the statement, the number collection will take place on Saturday, February 17, and Sunday, February 18, at the Mlimani City Mall from 12 noon to 6 pm.

After Dar es Salaam, the exercise will move to Arusha on Tuesday, February 20, and Wednesday, February 21, from 2 pm to 7 pm at the Kibo Palace Hotel.

The last collection point will be Moshi on Thursday, February 22 (12noon to 5pm), Friday, February 23 (10 am to 6 pm), and Saturday, February 24 (from 9 am to 5 pm), at the Moshi Cooperatives University (MoCU) Stadium.

The organizers called on the participants to observe the announced times to avoid inconveniences and

also called on those collecting numbers for their friends or relatives to ensure they have copies of their identity cards or consent letters allowing the representatives to collect on their behalf.

"It is our hope that the participants will turn up in numbers at the collection points in Dar es Salaam and Arusha in order to reduce congestion in Moshi," said the organizers, adding that once the exercise is closed no more numbers or kits will be issued in race day.

The organizers also issued stern warning against those selling numbers online illegally, saying that legal action will be taken against them.

"This is illegal and we take legal action against them," said the organizers.

Also targeted are those intending to run with fake numbers as they will be withdrawn from the races, their results nullified and banned from participating in the Kilimanjaro International Marathon.

This year's sponsors include Kilimanjaro Premium Lager-42km (Main Sponsor), Tigo - 21km Half Marathon, Gee Soseji - 5Km Fun Run, while water table sponsors are Simba Cement, Kilimanjaro Water, TotalEnergies, CRDB Bank and TPC Sugar. Official partners are Garda World Security, CMC Automobiles, Salinero Hotels and suppliers are Kibo Palace Hotel and Keys Hotel.

Kili Marathon, which will be held on Sunday, February 2024, at the MoCU Stadium, is organised by the Kilimanjaro Marathon Company Limited and nationally coordinated by Executive Solutions Limited.

CECAFA Senior Challenge Cup could make 2024 return

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi & Agencies

THE Council of East and Central Africa Football Associations (CECAFA) has officially opened the bidding process for willing member associations to host any tournament in the region this year.

CECAFA Competitions Director Yussuf Mossi confirmed that the bidding process was opened on February 1, 2024, and will be closed on February 16.

He confirmed that the Competitions Committee, chaired by Ethiopian Football Federation boss Isayas Jira, had sat in Nairobi, Kenya a few days ago to draw a competition calendar for 2024.

Mossi made it clear that the four compulsory tournaments which will be staged include AFCON U-17 Boys qualifiers, AFCON U-20 Boys qualifiers, CAF Women's Champions League Zonal qualifiers, and the Africa Schools Football Championships Zonal qualifiers.

The CECAFA U-20 Girls Championship and the CECAFA Senior Challenge Cup are the other two tournaments on the calendar.

CECAFA will announce the host member associations during the non-elective General Assembly slated for February 23 in Mombasa, Kenya.

It is understood Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya re-focused on CAF 2027 innovations of stadiums and are less interested in hosting this year's Senior Challenge Cup while Burundi, Rwanda and Ethiopia are front runners.

The Assembly had originally been scheduled to take place on February 16, but a change was made since all presidents of member associations will be attending meetings in Abidjan, Ivory Coast which will end on February 14.

At the club level, the last CECAFA Kagame Cup was held in 2021 when Uganda's Express FC beat Malawian outfit Nyasa Big Bullets FC 1-0 in the final played in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Denmark now plans to recruit young footballers

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

DENMARK, whose soccer scouts have just started a Tanzanian itinerary, plans to have at least 48 youth soccer players groomed in Arusha ready to outfit three teams for future international football tourneys.

So far a total of 14 candidates from Arusha and Dar-es-salaam have started full-time training at the Tanzanian branch of Young Boys Academy which is based in Denmark.

The first batch of students involves 12 boys from Arusha and two youngsters from Dar es Salaam all undergoing sports scholarship training at the Young Boys Academy's sports center in Ngongongare area of Meru, in the Arusha region.

"We opened the center this January, 2024, dealing with young students aged between eight to 12 years from class four to seven though we have two candidates that have just been enrolled in Form One," said Richard Pallangyo, the director of Young Boys Academy in Tanzania.

The two attend Ilanga Secondary School in Meru District under special sponsorship by the center.

Pallangyo explained that the talent spotting and recruitment was conducted in December 2023.

In association with the Silver Leaf Academy of Usa-River, the Young Boys institute works to recruit and groom young Tanzanian footballers preparing them for international events.

The Arusha institution is intended to be a hybrid institution, combining academic knowledge and sports training, according to Holger Kristiansen, the founder of Young Boys FD, the Denmark professional football club based in Silkeborg.

As for the Tanzanian director, the center aims at taking on board more than 48 students between 2024 and 2026 in addition to the pioneering 14 enlisted this year.

"We have selected 14 fore-runner candidates to start the academy in 2024, but we shall add 24 others along the way because the target is to create three teams," explained Pallangyo.



Dar es Salaam Secondary School's students playing basketball at the Jakaya Kikwete grounds in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA



CECAFA President Wallace Karia. (Agencies)

Pochettino won't lose his hair over Chelsea crisis

LONDON

MAURICIO Pochettino insists he won't lose his hair because of Chelsea's dismal form as the under-fire Blues boss called for perspective over their slump.

Pochettino's side headed to Aston Villa for an FA Cup fourth-round replay later yesterday reeling after successive heavy defeats.

Chelsea lost 4-1 at Liverpool, then slumped to a chastening 4-2 home defeat against Wolves on Sunday.

Pochettino was jeered by angry Chelsea fans during the Wolves capitulation, leading to fresh speculation that the Argentine could be in danger of the sack.

The former Tottenham boss has been unable to make positive impact on

Chelsea despite major investment in new signings since taking charge in the close-season.

With Chelsea languishing in 11th place in the Premier League, an FA Cup exit at Villa would only add to the pressure.

But Pochettino insisted he would retain a sense of enjoyment in the job even in trying times.

"Football is my passion, not my job," he told reporters on Tuesday. "Sometimes we say 'job' but it's the wrong word. Football is entertainment. 'Being coach, I need to keep a sense of why I am here. We cannot suffer because of business and other things. We need to be focused to play football."

"To be focused in football, you need to feel free in your mind. You cannot be affected because the stock in New York or Tokyo, or the weather or

because the farm doesn't grow.

"That's why I keep my hair like this, because I don't suffer from things that I am not in charge of. I only suffer for football, to try to improve the players, to provide them a good platform to win games.

"If there is no rain on my farm, you kill the business of my farm. That is a stress. You can lose your hair. But I cannot lose my hair because we're not winning because the opponent was better than us."

With 15 league games to go, Chelsea are just one place higher in the table than they finished last season.

That campaign featured the sackings of Thomas Tuchel and Graham Potter, paving the way for Pochettino's eventual arrival at Stamford Bridge.

Pochettino claims he

maintains a strong relationship with Chelsea co-owner Todd Boehly, revealing he received a "good" text from the club hierarchy recently.

In a bid to turn the tide, Pochettino this week addressed his squad with a rallying cry ahead of the key run of fixtures that includes the League Cup final against Liverpool.

"I told the players today in a meeting that I trust you more than ever. I'm going to support you more than ever," he said.

"I'm not a normal boss. I'm the leader and I need to reflect with every single action that I really trust the players.

"If they don't perform it is my responsibility and the players' responsibility always because they are on the pitch.

"I trust we can turn the situation around and change the results."



AFP Mauricio Pochettino and his side were booed again at Stamford Bridge. Agencies

Cameroon Football Federation rejects Samuel Eto'o's resignation as president

YAOUNDÉ, Cameroon

SAMUEL Eto'o tendered his resignation as president of the Cameroon Football Federation on Monday only to have it rejected by its executive committee.

Eto'o, who won the African player of the year a record four times, has been dogged by allegations of improper conduct, match-fixing and corruption.

The federation said its executive committee met in Cameroon's capital, Yaoundé, on Monday to evaluate the national team's performance at the Africa Cup of Nations, and that the meeting started with Eto'o offering to step down while inviting the other members "to do likewise in good faith."

"At the end of discussions and subsequent deliberations, the members of the executive committee decided to maintain their current mandates and thus unanimously rejected the president's resignation thereby renewing their confidence in him to continue with the same spirit of reconstruction and development of Cameroon football at all levels as envisaged in his plan adopted by the elective general assembly of Dec. 11, 2021," the federa-

tion said in a statement, referring to the date Eto'o took over as president.

The federation made no mention in the statement of any other decisions taken or conclusions drawn. Cameroon coach Rigobert Song's future was uncertain after a disappointing Africa Cup campaign.

Cameroon, the five-time champion, needed a win in its final group game to be sure of progressing to the group stage, scored late to achieve it, and was then eliminated by Nigeria after a lackluster performance in the round of 16.

Eto'o, who celebrated with the team after its dramatic win over Gambia in their final group game, has been dogged by corruption allegations in the last year.

Last week, sports website The Athletic reported that it had seen WhatsApp messages, emails, letters and audio recordings that allegedly support a wide-range of accusations, including "match-fixing, abuse of power, physical threats, inciting violence and spreading false

information in Cameroon."

It said a file had been sent to FIFA's ethics committee and that it is also being investigated by the Confederation of African Football.

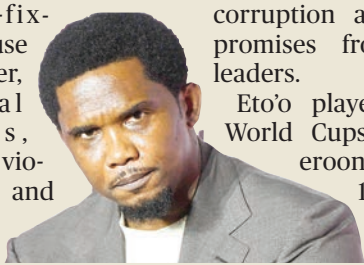
CAF was already investigating what it said were "serious" allegations from "several Cameroonian football stakeholders" against Eto'o. It noted that the former Barcelona and Inter Milan star was "presumed to be innocent until an appropriate judicial body concludes otherwise."

Questions were raised in Cameroon about Eto'o's ambassadorial role with a sports betting company. At least one club complained to the Cameroonian federation about the deal, which could violate the institution's codes.

Cameroonian soccer had plenty of problems in the past. Before Eto'o was elected president, the national league had been tainted by interference from the government, allegations of corruption and broken promises from soccer leaders.

Eto'o played at four World Cups for Cameroon between 1998 and 2014.

AFP



'Devastated' Son apologises as South Korea dumped out of Asian Cup

DOHA

SON Heung-min apologised and said he was "devastated" after South Korea crashed out of the Asian Cup with a stunning 2-0 semi-final defeat to underdogs Jordan on Tuesday.

The Koreans were aiming to win the tournament for the first time since 1960 but they failed to muster a single shot on target against a Jordan side ranked 64 places below them in the world.

Tottenham star Son said his team had been nervous and "did not want to make a mistake". "Very disappointing, devastated about this result," the 31-year-old skipper told beIN Sports.

"Jordan are having an

amazing journey at this tournament. They deserve it, they fought to the end.

"For us it was a very disappointing night."

South Korea were on the brink of elimination in both previous knockout rounds but survived after scoring equalisers in second-half injury time.

This time they had no reply when Yazan Al-Naimat and Mousa Al-Tamari fired Jordan in front in the second half, with Jurgen Klinsmann's men rarely looking capable of scoring.

Jordan reached the final for the first time and will face either Iran or Qatar for the title on Saturday.

Son said South Korea

had to "learn from these mistakes".

"We have to look forward, there is no time for regret," he said.

"Now I have to go back to my club and be ready for the rest of the season."

Son scored three goals at the tournament -- two coming from the penalty spot and one a free-kick in extra time that gave them a quarter-final win over Australia.

The forward apologised to Korean fans, saying he was "terribly sorry that we didn't live up to their expectations".

"I will try to get better as a player and also help our national team take the next step," he told reporters.

AFP

Old Trafford is crumbling but Sir Jim Ratcliffe is sitting on pot of gold



Old Trafford has fallen behind the home stadiums of Manchester United's biggest rivals. Agencies

By James Ducker

THERE are plenty at Manchester United who wonder if the team would be in quite the mess they are if the Glazers had applied the same forensic approach to squad building as they have the commercial arm of the business.

The "regionalisation" of what many would regard as global territories, for example, has been one of the secrets behind United's commercial expansion under their American owners.

As a senior executive once put it: "We use a scalpel, not a spade, to carve up our rights", hence why it has not been uncommon for United to have three tyre partners alone across India, the Middle East, Thailand, Indonesia, Russia and Taiwan rather than just one.

And yet arguably the biggest commercial opportunity of the lot has been not in Asia or Africa or the US but on United's own doorstep, staring the Glazers in the face, only to go unrealised in the near two decades since their hostile takeover in M16.

Indeed, it is remarkable to think that United have reached 2024 and only now, as a minority shareholder seemingly hellbent on trying to shake the club from its slumber enters the fray, are the rich possibilities around a new stadium being more widely discussed.

United are in the privileged position of owning considerable swathes of

land around Old Trafford but have done precious little with it.

The fact that it was a group of former players led by Gary Neville and Ryan Giggs and a Singapore businessman, Peter Lim, who managed to build a hotel in the shadow of Old Trafford and not the club itself is an illustration of how the Glazers have been asleep on the job, at least when it comes to opportunities in and around the stadium footprint.

By contrast, the idea of a spectacular new stadium - a so-called "Wembley of the North" - forming the centrepiece of a village boasting entertainment, sport and leisure, retail, commercial and community facilities is the sort of exciting vision that better owners would have sought to swing into action long before now.

The feeling, at least in the early days of the Glazers' "strategic review", was that the Qatari bid headed by the mysterious figure of Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad Al Thani and with its promise of big investment in infrastructure and the community, was greater in scope and potential than that being presented by Sir Jim Ratcliffe.

Yet Ratcliffe, it is quickly becoming clear, has grand ambitions of his own for United, both on and off the field, and appears to be in a hurry to get the ball rolling after years watching from afar and seeing the club stagnate.

His presence at Old Trafford on Tuesday for a service to mark the 66th anniversary of the Munich air disaster was evidence of a man who understands what matters to fans.

Ratcliffe has already met with staff, supporters and local civic and community leaders, including the Mayor for Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham. Doubtlessly encouraged in part by the Glazers' willingness to give him a significant sphere of influence, the Ineos founder is already aiming high.

Of course, it would

come to something if United were to secure government funding as part of any plan to reimagine Old Trafford and the surrounding area. With the biggest supporter base in the country and no shortage of local leaders eager to redress the balance in wealth between north and south, there could certainly be a persuasive argument made for public money towards a regeneration project that would create jobs, boost the local economy, attract tourism and improve national infrastructure.

Yet United should not be dissuaded from thinking big even if the financing ultimately falls squarely on the club and Ratcliffe's shoulders. Old Trafford as we know it is crumbling but a new stadium could spearhead a new era of rapid growth, pride and optimism.

United make just over £4 million per game currently selling out 73,000 every week. Revenues would soar in a new 90,000 ca-

capacity ground with the best hospitality on offer, no fan would run the risk of being unable to watch their team for a few seasons - a threat if the club go down the redevelopment route - and match-day rituals would remain unchanged.

The rise of the Manchester Citys and Paris St-Germains of this world have challenged the established elite and, while rivals - like Arsenal and Spurs - relocated to new grounds and others, such as Liverpool and Real Madrid, revamped existing homes to keep pace, United risk losing more and more ground.

The only realistic route to closing the gap and regaining supremacy is to speculate to accumulate, a model demonstrated with success over the past decade by Spurs.

By the start of 2020, the final build of their new stadium had cost the club £1.2 billion but, four years on, Tottenham top up their status as the second-highest earning club, behind United, with NFL, rugby union and music concerts by acts as big as Beyonce, Pink, Lady Gaga and Guns N'Roses.

In Deloitte's latest money league table, the trophy-starved club had leapfrogged Chelsea as London's highest-earning team, with annual revenues of £549.2 million. Sam Boor, a director in Deloitte's Sport Business Group, said: "A huge reason for Tottenham's growth is the club being able to fully leverage and monetise the stadium, both in terms of the match-day income and the commercial activities."

Imagine the possibilities, then, for a club of United's reach. The Glazers missed a trick. Ratcliffe appears determined to rectify that.

THE TELEGRAPH

Gwiji by David Chikoko



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Sadio Kanoute (No 8) scores the second goal for Simba SC during their NBC Premier League match against Tabora United at Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium in Tabora on Tuesday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

For us, it is a big game, but in football, it is not that big. It is a game of strategy. Game plan. We know Yanga, they are a good team that has players who can decide the outcome of a game.

Yanga out to take grip on top spot as they host Mashujaa

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

YOUNG Africans will attempt to consolidate their place at the top of the NBC Premier League table when they play host to Mashujaa at Chamazi Complex in the evening.

The defending champions lead the league table by a slender margin of two points over Azam.

The upcoming match is expected to provide a snapshot into the intense title race that is unfolding.

Miguel Gamondi's side collected maximum points the hard way last time out, as Mudathir Yahya netted a dramatic 86th minute winner, just when Dodoma Jiji were temporarily reduced to ten men on the pitch.

It was their 11th NBC Premier League win of the season that took them back to the summit.

Victory against Mashujaa will open up a five-point lead at the top ahead of Simba versus Azam tomorrow's game. Wananchi will be confident of claiming three more points as they have won all of their last 19 home meetings.

In general, Young Africans are undefeated in their last 39 home league fixtures. Mashujaa make the trip to the Chamazi Stadium on the back of a 1-0 defeat at home against Simba on Saturday.

The loss means that Mashujaa has lost four of their previous five matches in the league.

The Kigoma side is winless in their last ten league games and now find themselves six points adrift of the safety of the 12th placed Tabora United.

The fact that they have collected only one point in five away league games while suffering four defeats has not helped their chances of escaping the bottom two. Head coach Mohammed 'Baresi' Abdallah admitted the gulf in quality between the two sides but radiated optimism for the game.

Baresi insists they need to start winning games and they have worked on a game plan to stop Young Africans.

"For us, it is a big game, but in football, it is not that big. It is a game of strategy. Game plan. We know Yanga, they are a good team that has players who can decide the outcome of a game.

"However, on our side, the technical bench has prepared a game plan of how we can play with Yanga and how to get the three points," he said.



Miguel Gamondi

Simba took advantage of Tabora's weaknesses, says Selemani Matola

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

ASSISTANT coach Selemani Matola has explained what made the difference for Simba after they beat Tabora United in an NBC Premier League game on Tuesday.

The Msimbazi Reds cruised to a confident 4-0 thrashing of hosts Tabora United at Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium, further displaying their qualities as they look to stay in the title

race with Azam and Young Africans.

Pa Omar Jobe gave Simba the lead in the 19th minute following a well-played free kick by Clatous Chama that he headed home past goalkeeper John Noble.

Sadio Kanoute put Simba 2-0 up when he rose highest to power home a cross from Shomari Kapombe in the 36th minute.

Che Malone killed off the game with a third goal at the hour mark before Freddy Koublan came off the bench and

made it 4-0 three minutes to stoppage time.

The result saw Simba move within two points of second placed Azam ahead of their tomorrow's meeting in Mwanza.

During a post-match interview, Matola revealed Simba's attacking through the exposed wide areas of Tabora United had made the difference.

"It was not an easy match. Tabora United is one of the most difficult teams when they are at home. We knew that and were able to work on

it. I congratulate the players for being able to apply and follow the instructions we gave them. That is the biggest secret to our victory today.

"Anyone can concede four goals. Tabora United is a very good team, so conceding four goals does not mean they were bad. We could see that they tend to overlap and leave space in the wide areas.

If you look at the three goals we scored, they all came from the flanks. Their mistakes allowed us to score the goals and emerge with a 4-0 victo-

ry," he said.

Matola also detailed how they had to accommodate the pitch surface's poor condition in their game plan.

"We came while knowing the pitch condition because of the advanced party we sent. And yesterday, we looked at the pitch and said we have to play according to its demands. We didn't start playing our usual brand of football. We played long balls and we were successful and later we managed the game with our own style of play," he added.

Goran Kopunovic rues individual mistakes in Tabora's loss to Simba

By Guardian Correspondent

TABORA United slumped to their fifth defeat of the NBC Premier League season in dramatic fashion, falling 4-0 to Simba in front of their home crowd at Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium on Tuesday.

Head coach Goran Kopunovic conceded individual errors were once again costly for his team. He opines Simba took advantage and made the most of the mistakes that were made by his players.

For at least two of Simba's goals, they were a direct result of individual errors from Tabora United players.

Kopunovic explained that Simba were deserved winners in the afternoon and that Tabora United made too many individual errors against an experienced side that is in the title race.

"I am very disappointed because all four goals came after individual mistakes. Big mistakes. I don't know what was the reason for the mistakes made by my players. In the last 24 hours many things happened," he said.

"I couldn't use the new players. After the first round, I lost

two key players, Paulin and Mbanza.

"They were very important for me, my team and tactics. This was one big challenge for us, a big opportunity but we did not take it," he said.

"Simba have experienced players. If you give a chance to a big team, only one chance an experienced player will score. After it was 2-0, it was very difficult to come back to the game. I think this was not an absolute surprise because an experienced team like Simba uses every mistake of the op-

ponent.

"We must concentrate on the next game now because we are not on the same level as Simba and Yanga. We must look at our level," he said.

That result leaves them just one point above Kagera United in the last relegation place as the league hits the halfway mark this weekend.

The next assignment for the topflight debutants as they seek to bounce back to winning ways is a home match against eighth-placed Namungo on Sunday.



Flexibles by David Chikoko

WOULD YOU GO FOR A PERSON WHO LIKES YOU OR A PERSON WHO LOVES YOU?

