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GOVT KEEPS ITS WORD ON ROAD REPAIR

Vehicular traffic is temporarily back along the previously rock-solid Nangurukuru/Somanga stretch of the strategic all-weather tarmac highway linking Dar es Salaam city and Mtwara-Mikindani municipality via Lindi municipality that was swept away by cyclone-induced floodwaters only days ago. Works minister Innocent Bashungwa quickly travelled to the site, promising completion of rehabilitation within at most two days. Photo courtesy of Works ministry

Samia: Local industries can develop 'block chain' linkages

A total of 526 projects were registered by the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) last year, with 237 in manufacturing and 45 percent the leading project creating sector

By Carlos Banda

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has asserted that local industries can come up with a 'block chain' arrangement where one manufacturer can supply production tools to another and vice versa. This instruction was issued when launching a vehicle assembly plant operated by Saturn Corporation Ltd, a distributor of the Howo brand of trucks, which the president praised for increasing employment opportunities. Such investments create more industrial sector jobs, vital for economic growth and

supporting other sectors like agriculture, she said, elated that the firm has already rolled out 250 direct jobs and 1800 indirect jobs. This will stimulate money circulation in its Kigamboni location and the city of Dar es Salaam as a whole, she stated, underlining that the plant's inauguration is evidence that current investment policies can bring positive results. After company officials had informed the president that the number of spare parts used in the assembly plant are more than 2,400 and mostly imported, potentially curbing its growth prospects, the president said the plant

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'Hidaya' aftermath: PM sets the picture

By Guardian Reporter

THE government is busy working to provide basic needs support and restoration of roads and social services affected by tropical cyclone Hidaya. Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa made this affirmation in the National Assembly yesterday when presenting a brief report on the situation in the aftermath of the tropical cyclone, Hidaya. Priority support was directed to Kilwa in Lindi Region, Mafia and Rufiji in Coast and Ifakara in Morogoro Region, with sector ministries, regional and district authorities, disaster management committees at the national and regional level and other stakeholders being involved. Measures taken in Kilwa district include a search and rescue exercise where 4,080 people were lifted from flooded areas, meanwhile work to restore parts of the 396-kilometre road from Dar es Salaam to Lindi and onward to Mtwara was being completed. Road portions were washed away by flash floods destroying bridges including the Somanga-Mtama Bridge, he said, noting that in Rufiji and Kibiti, health workers provided psychological and social support to 1,941 flood victims, instructing

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Piped water supply stands at 7bn litres

The agency evaluated and approved new water service prices for seven sanitation authorities, listed as Dodoma, Makonde, Sumbawanga, Orkesumet, Mombo, Bariadi and Lindi

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

PIPED water generation has increased to 7 billion litres per annum, marginally increasing by 1.78 percent to the previous year. Jumaa Aweso, the sector minister, cited this datum from a report by the Energy

and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA), when delivering budget estimates to the National Assembly yesterday. He said the report also shows an increase in treated water infrastructure by 16.94 percent over the [past year, with an 11 percent increase in the number of peo-

ple accessing water services timely. The report says that challenges facing the water authorities include increases in water leakage as it has reached 37 percent, the lack of sanitation service infrastructure and unsatisfactory ratio of increased water demand to treated water supply. Urban water services are overseen by the regulator in a similar manner as with energy, thus bringing water and sanitation, electricity, petroleum and natural gas under the same umbrella, he said. EWURA's responsibilities include issuing licenses, overseeing adherence to license conditions, monitoring the qual-

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Z'bar ups petrol prices, as diesel, kerosene slide

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE price of petrol in Zanzibar has risen to 3,182 per litre this month, a difference of 29/- from last month's price of 3,133/-. Mbaraka Hassan Haji, the head of communication and public relations at the Zanzibar Utilities Regulatory Authority (ZURA), told journalists yesterday that while the prices of petrol have risen, diesel has gone down to 3,146/- this month from 3,165/- earlier.

The price increase arose from global market hikes, noting that jet fuel prices dropped, in a manner similar to diesel, due to global market changes and foreign currency shifts. Jet oil prices for this month stand at 2,790/-, slightly less than the 2,792/- price quoted last month, so the price of kerosene has remained at 3,200/- respectively. The regulator sets cap prices from average price changes in the global market along with fuel import prices at the Dar es Salaam and Tanga ports, he said, high-

lighting the role of foreign currency exchange shifts. Such changes are vital as foreign currency is used to import fuel, transportation charges, insurance, taxes and quotations on profits amounts for wholesale and retail traders, he elaborated, urging that people buy fuel in registered selling points and obtain electronic tickets after sale. Fuel buyers complain that prices have been rising for three months in a row, while the cost of living was rising.

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Joselu inspires Madrid comeback with 'heart' to beat Bayern, reach Champions League final

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Tanzania Football Federation should improve 2023/24 awards



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provides additional opportunities in manufacturing.

The country can benefit from industry producing spare parts and machines taking into account we've under-utilised iron ore and coal deposits in Mchuchuma and Liganga, she said.

Prof Kitila Mkumbo, the Planning and Investment state minister in the President's Office, said that the economy has experienced steady growth for most of the past three decades hovering at six percent, with agriculture, services and infrastructure construction accounting for most growth.

Industrial sector has seen fast growth but it only had a 10 percent contribution to the economy. Its growth rate was hampered by electricity power cuts, pushing the government to address the matter and ensure power supply is efficient.

A total of 526 projects were registered by the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) last year, with 237 in manufacturing, and 45 percent the leading project creating sector, he said, noting that industrial sector contribution to GDP will be rising in the future.

Rehmtullah Habib, the company director, said the plant's construction was completed on March 10, with a total of 150 vehicles produced. The industry can assemble 30 tractors and nine tipper trucks,

with the level of production depending on market demand, he said.

Implementation of the project took consideration of directives in the country's investment policy, to ensure there is transfer of knowledge from Chinese experts to local engineers, he said, citing the wish to reduce the number of expatriates from 18 to four in future, paving the way for operations of the industry to be locally driven by 85 percent.

In her remarks, the president similarly reminded the gathering that the government reduced corporate tax from 30 percent to 10 percent for five years starting this year, to attract more industrial investments.



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Piped water supply stands at 7bn litres

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ity and efficiency of service delivery, evaluating requests and setting cap prices in service delivery, and resolving disputes between service providers and clients.

Until April 2024, EWURA issued four licenses to sanitation and environmental sanitation authorities in urban areas of Rombo, Kyela Kasumulu, Njombe and Busega, he said.

The agency evaluated and ap-

proved new water service prices for seven sanitation authorities, listed as Dodoma, Makonde, Sumbawanga, Orkesumet, Mombo, Bariadi and Lindi, he said.

During the period, EWURA reviewed business plans of 11 sanitation and environmental sanitation authorities and approved six customer service contracts for Musoma, Liwale, Makambako, Lindi, Biharamulo and Geita authorities, he added.

Z'bar ups petrol prices, as diesel, kerosene slide

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Ali Bakari, a motorcycle rider, said that the slight increase pushes up somewhat fare pressures in public transport.

"Due to the increase in the price of petrol, other costs will also increase," he said, asserting that mo-

torcycle riders will be compelled to increase basic trip fares, risking customer complaints.

Other observers noted that fare demands were not being pushed up or optimally charged as often there is a big number of service providers compared to the demand, outside peak hours.

'Hidaya' aftermath: PM sets the picture

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1,023 residents on child protection during emergencies.

In Mafia District, measures taken include connecting displaced people with relatives and neighbours for temporary shelter after their houses collapsed or were surrounded by water, and in Kilwa the government has set up temporary shelters in Mchakama, Ruhatwe and Ndende primary schools.

Basic needs including flour, beans and edible oil have been delivered, while district disaster committees monitor the situation to ensure that people are properly served, the premier indicated, noting that things were similar in parts of Mtwara Re-

gion.

Residents in Mbasa, Viwanja Sini, Kibaoni and Katindiuka in Ifakara District in Morogoro Region who have badly been affected by floods, have been shifted to safe places.

"The residents have been kept in some school buildings and they receive basic support for food, medicines and other essentials," he said, pointing at 7,021 households with 18,862 people being affected in the various areas.

The tropical cyclone Hidaya approached Tanzania's coast on Friday causing heavy rain and floods before it completely lost its strength close to Mafia Island on Saturday, meteorologists reported.



Muheza township traders in talks with district commissioner Zainab Abdallah (3rd-R) yesterday mainly concerning their working relations with Tanzania Revenue Authority officials. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

Africa now seeks health workers from diaspora

WINDHOEK

THE World Health Organization (WHO) says Africa has a shortage of health care workers. The issue was addressed in Namibia this week at a forum in Windhoek.

Speaking at the first WHO Africa Health Workforce Forum held in the capital, Namibia's minister of health and social services, Kalumbi Shangula, warned that Africa's shortage of health workers will impede the continent from achieving universal health coverage by 2030.

In order to reach universal health coverage by 2030 as envisaged in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals report, Africa needs to invest in training programmes, offer incentives for health practitioners to remain in their home countries, and create initiatives to attract health professionals in the diaspora back to the continent.

Shangula spoke at the Africa

Health Workforce Investment Charter event.

"The number of Africans who have left the continent in search of greener pastures in other parts of the world is staggering," Shangula said. "It is a matter that needs to be addressed as a top priority for African governments and indeed all those who wish to see a shift in the historical as well as current trends."

Africa has a ratio of 1.55 health workers per 1,000 people. That is below the recommended WHO threshold of 4.55 health workers per 1,000 people.

Africa's Center for Disease Control Director-General Jean Kesaya said achieving universal health coverage by 2030 will require an additional 1.8 million health workers on the continent.

He said the critical shortage is projected to reach about 6.1 million by 2030 and is made worse by recurrent public health emergencies faced by countries on a daily basis.

"In 2023 alone, Africa recorded 166 disease outbreaks and the trend I see in 2024 is not good," Kesaya said. "AU member states are far from realizing the 2017 AU Assembly decisions that called for rapid recruitment, training and deployment of 2 million institutionalized community health workers by 2030," he said.

Lee Whitaker, Global Health Director for the Africa Diaspora Development Institute (ADDI), said the institution has opened doors for Diasporas healthcare workers to return to Africa and reverse the brain drain. He says the organization has "access to over forty-five-thousand black African physicians in America and only needs an invitation from the heart of any African state to come abroad."

Dr Arikana Chihombori is the president of the ADDI, an organization that is mobilizing the African diaspora to return and invest in the continent.

"Let the diaspora come in and invest in for-profit-clinics in Africa as well as for volunteer work in Africa," Chihombori said. "It has to be balanced! Because if they are going to leave their work where they are in Europe, in America, they can be here a little bit longer if they are going to make money and also donate some of their time. So a program that allows them to make money while they are stopping Africans from going to India and at the same time also giving to those who are less fortunate is actually a program that can be sustained but to completely hundred percent volunteer is not going to work, it's not sustainable."

The forum, which was attended by health dignitaries from all over the world, concluded Wednesday with the launch of the Africa Health Workforce Investment Charter that aims to mobilize and sustain development, performance and retention of the health workforce in African Union countries.



Zanzibar's Education and Vocational Training minister, Lela Muhamed Mussa (R), has a quick word with Japan's Ambassador to Tanzania, Yasushi Misawa (3rd-R), in the course of consultations on plans to transforming a Zanzibar cinema hall into a modern cultural centre. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

Doctors in Kenya agree to end their long strike

NAIROBI

KENYA'S public hospital doctors yesterday agreed to resume work, calling off a nationwide strike which lasted for close to two months.

Davji Atallah, union medical practitioners' secretary general confirmed that doctors had decided to place their trust in the government to address the issues leading to the

strike. These issues primarily revolve around inadequate pay and working conditions.

This development comes after a labour court in Kenya on Tuesday gave doctors and the government 48 hours to sign a return to work agreement, failure to which the matter would be determined by the court. Kenya's Health Minister Susan Nakhumicha said the doctors

had proved to be better negotiators than the government side, adding that they had put up "quite a fight."

The end of the strike comes as a relief to millions of Kenyans seeking health services from public hospitals that had been crippled by the strike.

Some hospitals had decided to hire temporary doctors for emergency services.

In 2017, doctors at Kenya's public hospitals held a 100-day strike – the longest ever held in the country – to demand better wages and for the government to restore the country's dilapidated public health facilities.

Kenya is currently dealing with the devastating effects of flooding that has affected 235,000 people since mid-March when the rainy season started.



Pupils of Mtwara-Mikindani municipality's Rwelu Primary School literally waded through floodwaters on a road while heading to school earlier this week. It was all due to the recent incessant heavy rains. Photo: Correspondent Hamis Nasri

Partnership to extend emergency medical services to village level

By Getrude Mbago

THE government has announced plans to further strengthen its partnership with US-based Abbott Fund and other stakeholders to expand emergency medical services to rural areas and save lives.

After establishment of Emergency Medicine Department (EMD) at Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH), zonal referral hospitals, regional and some district hospitals, the collaboration will now facilitate rural dwellers to also access immediate and quality medical services at village level.

Dr Erasto Sylvanus, head of emergency and clinical care at the Ministry of Health said this in Dar es Salaam yesterday during a meeting with officials from Abbott Fund.

The meeting which also involved a short tour to the improved facilities at MNH emergency department underscored the importance of increasing collaborations between the government and private sector to invest in emergency care.

According to him, establishment of emergency services at MNH and other areas have greatly helped reduce mortality rate by over 50 percent as patients receive needed services on time.

He said that using the model implemented at MNH, the government will also establish emergency services in some villages before rolling it out in other areas as per availability of funds.

"Prior to the introduction of well-equipped emergency services at MNH in 2010, the situation was very bad as many patients who could have been rescued by getting immediate care ended up losing their lives. We thank the government and with support from Abbott Fund, things have greatly changed and many lives are now saved," he said.

Dr John Rwegasha, director of medical services at MNH, said that due to the investment, patients who die at the emergency department are 0.5 percent thus having 99 percent assurance of patient survival at the department.

He said Abbott Fund helped MNH renovate the central laboratory and provided support for several of its facilities to improve emergency care.

He said various training for health professionals, research, quality of service, information and communication technology systems and more have been funded by Abbott.

He said MNH serves a total of 200 to 250 emergency patients per day from various parts of the country and neighbouring countries.

Dr Juma Mfinanga, head of EMD at MNH said: "Every day we touch the lives of mothers, fathers, children and this is our priority; serving people and restoring smiles to families and the nation," he said.

Prof Hendry Sawe, executive director of Abbott Fund Tanzania pledged that the foundation will continue working with the government in various areas, including building capacity for medical equipment specialists and addressing some of the hitches that will be identified in the future.

He said Abbott Fund has worked with the government since 2001 to strengthen the country's healthcare system. In 2009, after upgrading outpatient care and completing a nationwide hospital lab modernization programme, a partnership commenced by introducing emergency medicine in Tanzania.

Abbott Fund opened six more emergency medicine facilities across Tanzania in Mbeya, Arusha, Dodoma and Coast regions as well as at Bantu village in Mkinga District, Tanga Region," he said.

New 29 cholera cases confirmed in Kishapu

By Guardian Correspondent, Kishapu

TWENTY nine people have contracted cholera in Kishapu District, Shinyanga Region with some in critical condition.

Dr Joseph Bahati, Kishapu District Medical Officer, said this yesterday during councillors' meeting while presenting a nutrition report and state of the disease.

He said patients with symptoms of the disease have been put under quarantine in its isolated camp for observation and support.

"Within these three days since the disease was reported in Mwataga, Mwachhele and Mwakipoya wards, there has been no death and many patients are doing well," he said.

Dr Bahati urged area residents to ensure that their surroundings are clean to avert cholera, the deadly diarrheal disease that can kill within hours if left untreated.

He further encouraged them to ensure they drink clean and safe water and use proper toilet facilities.

This comes three months after

the disease broke in the region.

William Jijimya, Kishapu District Council Chairman, said cholera is a war as it takes people's lives and asked residents to adhere to the advice given by experts.

He also asked all health professionals to educate people on how to overcome the disease.

As per experts, the situation is exacerbated by heavy rainfall due to the El Niño weather phenomenon, overwhelmed wastewater systems and other infrastructures, particularly in densely populated areas.

Since September last year, the Ministry of Health has reported cholera outbreak in 13 regions in Tanzania Mainland, namely Mara, Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Kigoma, Kagera, Singida, Simiyu, Shinyanga, Tabora, Ruvuma, Dodoma, Mwanza and Geita.

According to the 2015 Cholera Situation Report, the outbreak started in Dar es Salaam in late August 2015 and progressively extended to 19 regions of Tanzania, stretching local capacities and resources with high risks in terms of lives and economic impact.

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Government ICT experts advised to network with private sector for modern tech

By Correspondent James Kandoya

INFORMATION and Communication Technology (ICT) experts in government institutions have been advised to collaborate with private institutions that are connected with global innovation companies to improve efficiency of their database systems.

Exaud Kimboi, managing director of a Dar es Salaam based ICT Company Dynatech Solutions, made the call in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday when opening the first ever Oracle and Dynatech forum for the public sector in Tanzania.

He said that the forum brought together various ICT experts from government institutions to share experiences and knowledge on the new emerging technologies in the world.

"I would like to advise government institutions to get a chance to sit with vendors or experts while purchasing database systems to discuss their needs -both current and future -so that they can get the most up-to-date technology," he said.

Kimboi said that the government will be able to avoid having to purchase additional systems in

future after the same is overloaded due to increased activity.

"Services in public institutions will be delivered more easily if the systems are tailor-made. Customised systems normally accelerate service delivery," he said.

Kimboi added that the most up-to-date technology will not only enable the institutions to improve efficiency but also transparency and accountability.

Moses Mwangi, account executive for the public sector in East Africa at Oracle, said that both government and private institutions need to be more resilient in the application of cutting-edge technologies.

"If one patient goes to more than one hospital, their information ought to be the same and there is no need to write a new diagnosis. So, there should be systems that work together in different institutions," he said.

Majaliwa John, ICT officer at Tanzania Building Agency, said that the aim of the forum was to increase awareness of the Oracle database.

"The database is mostly used in our public institutions, including TBA because it is simple to connect with other systems," he said.



Bank of Africa (T) Ltd board chairman Nehemiah Mchechu (facing camera) has an audience in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday with the bank's incoming managing director, Esther Maruma (3rd-R), regional director Kobby Andah, Bank of Africa Group sales coordinator Hamza Cherkaoui, deputy managing director Wasia Mushi, and general manager (finance) Derick Lugemala. Photo: Correspondent Ramadhan Issa

By Guardian Reporter

PERMANENT Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Coordination and Parliamentary Affairs) Dr Jim Yonazi yesterday received a cash donation amounting to 13.7m/- from leaders of a social group to help victims of Hanang mudslides.

Speaking after receiving the support in Dodoma, Dr Yonazi commended members of the group for taking part in supporting victims of mudslides which took place in December last year.

He said the aid supports the government's ongoing efforts to restore normalcy for the victims,

Group donates 13m/- to victims of December Hanang mudslides

including building 108 houses so that they continue to earn a living.

"We thank our colleagues for the patriotism they showed for this great contribution they made. I ask my fellow Tanzanians to hold hands together especially in these times when various disasters occur in many parts of the country," he said.

Benjamin Thompson, one of the members of the group, said that the group is made up of various

government leaders, public institutions, the private sector, university lecturers, political parties and members of the diaspora.

Thompson said the donations were collected from 145 of the 600 members in the group who were able to contribute at the time.

Archarad Kato, another member, said members of the group were touched by the Hanang disaster and therefore saw the importance of giving donations in support of

the government's efforts to help victims.

"We promise that we will continue to help the government with the little we have in helping victims of disasters like this," he said.

Hanang disaster occurred on December 3, last year in Manyara Region and resulted in the deaths of more than 80 people while hundreds of others were left homeless aside from major infrastructure damage.

Families of DRC's attack victims mourn loved ones

GOMA

FAMILIES of victims of last week's bomb attacks in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday mourned their loved ones at a ceremony in Goma.

The bombings at Mugunga and Lac Vert camps killed 18 and injured 32. The type of explosives used remains unclear. Most victims were women and children.

Alimeti Kigiho, who survived the attack, had sought shelter from eastern Congo's long war at the Mugunga

displacement camp in February, only to be shaken by explosions while going to fetch water.

He ran back to his tent, where he found the bodies of his wife and two young children, aged six and two, in pieces.

"War has taken everything from me," Kigiho, 45, told the Associated Press.

The Congolese army and a rebel group known as M23 have blamed each other for the bombings. The March 23 Movement, or M23, is a rebel military group mainly made up of ethnic Tutsis that broke away from the Congolese army 12 years ago.

The decades-long conflict in eastern Congo has produced one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with over 100 armed groups fighting in the region, most for land and control of mines with valuable minerals.

Some are fighting to try to protect their communities. Many groups are accused of carrying out mass killings, rapes and other human rights violations.

President Felix Tshisekedi accuses neighbouring Rwanda of destabilizing Congo by backing the M23 rebels. UN experts, along with the U.S State Department, have also accused Rwanda of backing the rebels. Rwanda denies the claims.

Some of the mourners at the ceremony on Monday criticized President Tshisekedi along with the international community for failing to end the long-running conflict.

"If he is unable to end this war, he should resign," Bienfait Bonane, a youth from Goma, told the Associated Press.

The violence has displaced about seven million people, including thousands living in temporary camps like the ones attacked last week. Many others are beyond the reach of aid.

The attacks have driven some residents in the camp to consider returning to their homes, despite the dangers that caused them to flee in the first place.



Business visibly worryingly slow at Dar es Salaam's modern Mwenge bus stand, a multi-billion-shilling complex which began operations only weeks ago. Photo: John Badi

Possible genocide committed against non-Arabs in Sudan, says HRW report

By Barbara Plett, Khartoum

A GENOCIDE may have been committed in the West Darfur city of El Geneina in one of the worst atrocities of the year-long Sudanese civil war, according to a report released yesterday by Human Rights Watch (HRW).

It says ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity have been committed against ethnic Massalit and non-Arab communities in the city by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and its Arab allies.

The report calls for sanctions for those responsible for the atrocities, including the RSF leader, Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, widely known as Hemedti.

About 15,000 people are feared to have been killed in El Geneina last year.

The HRW report documents evidence of a systematic campaign last year by the RSF and allied militias to remove Massalit

residents from El Geneina.

Witnesses described how the RSF rounded up and shot men, women and children who attempted to escape the ethnic violence in the restive city.

At least "thousands of people" were killed and "hundreds of thousands" left as refugees between April and November 2023, the 218-page report said.

"The events are among the worst atrocities against civilians so far in the current conflict in Sudan," it added.

RSF leader Gen Hemedti has denied his fighters deliberately attacked civilians.

But HRW says he is among those with command responsibility over the forces which carried out the atrocities.

The HRW researchers interviewed more than 220 Sudanese refugees in Chad, Uganda, Kenya, and South Sudan, as well as remotely between June

2023 and April 2024.

They also reviewed and analysed over 120 photos and videos of the events, satellite imagery, and documents shared by humanitarian organisations to corroborate accounts of the abuses.

The rights body called for further investigations to find out if there was an intention to eliminate the Massalit community, which would indicate a genocide.

The UN and the prosecutor for the International Criminal Court have talked about war crimes in Darfur but they have not specifically mentioned genocide.

Last June, West Darfur Governor Khamis Abakar was killed hours after accusing RSF of committing genocide. He is the most senior official known to have been killed since the conflict began in April.

The RSF says it is not involved in what it describes as a "tribal conflict" in Darfur.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
JUDICIARY
IN THE PRIMARY COURT OF SENEREMA DISTRICT
AT SENEREMA URBAN
CIVIL CASE NO. 57 OF 2024
MONIQUE LODGE (MAYI WIMBALATA
FAUSTINI) (PLAINTIFFS)
VERSUS
AVM - DRILLINGHAM CONSTRUCTION INTERNATION INC.
TURKIYE (DEFENDANTS)
TO:
AVM - DRILLINGHAM CONSTRUCTION INTERNATION INC.
TURKIYE

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rikolto

A CONSULTANT IS NEEDED- FOOD SCAPE STUDY.

Rikolto is implementing the EU-funded IncluCities program in Tanga City, focusing on improving business services for the agrifood sector, particularly for women and youth. The program addresses challenges like limited awareness of opportunities and access to resources. A foodscape study is essential to tackle these issues effectively, analyzing food production, distribution, consumption, and waste disposal. Understanding these dynamics helps identify gaps and vulnerabilities, enabling targeted interventions for better access to nutritious food. Additionally, it supports the growth of sustainable food enterprises, fosters local economic development, and informs efforts to reduce environmental impact. Rikolto seeks a consultant to conduct this vital study.

Therefore, a consultant is needed to conduct a foodscape study aiming to enhance inclusivity, resilience, and sustainability in Tanga communities' food systems. The study aims to offer valuable insights guiding efforts for positive change. Interested applicants are invited to apply by **May 19, 2024**, by sending applications to eastafrica.recruitment@rikolto.org.

For more information about the assignment please visit our Rikolto East African website Consultant needed- Foodscape study in Tanga | Rikolto in East Africa.



This used to be known as Mbao Bridge, since renamed Moa Bridge. It lies in Saranga ward in Dar es Salaam Region's Ubungu municipality and is of strategic importance to residents of Upendo Street. However, it is now all but impassable and cause for endless appeals for its swift rehabilitation. This scene was captured yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

AfDB chief wants strong media outlet to tell stories from Africa

By Kelvin Jakachira, Nairtobi

PRESIDENT of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) Akinwumi Adesina has made an urgent call for the formation of a globally respected African media outlet that will positively project the news of Africa to the world.

Adesina told delegates attending the AllAfrica Media Leaders' Summit 2024 in Nairobi that Western media outlets were not projecting the African story in positive light as they are only focused on negative stories about the African continent.

Adesina said current media narratives are focused on the 0.1 percent of Africa's problems rather than the 99.9 percent of the continent's progress and positivity.

He said this fuels misconceptions of risks and make capital investments costly than in other regions. In his keynote address, Adesina said the lack of financing is constraining African media houses from efficiently covering the African story that could bring value to the continent. He said lack of financing has been cited by more than 92 percent of editors, journalists, and media houses, as a constraint to covering stories in Africa.

Adesina said: "I would like to propose that there is a strategic business case for financial institutions to put significant resources together to finance a credible African media institution to make it have a global footprint, because the development news about our continent must be properly prioritized and disseminated to attract even more foreign investments."

"Positive news stories about African investment opportunities need to be well showcased as, unfortunately, they do not get sufficient coverage if at all in many of the Western media."

To a tumultuous applause from the more than 300 delegates drawn from across the African continent, Adesina added: "I would like to, therefore, propose that the African

Development bank, the African import and export bank, and all regional financial institutions, pull resources together to support the emergence of a globally respected African media company that will position and project the news of Africa to the world. Africa must shape its own narrative and not depend on what others think."

Adesina bemoaned the current situation in which stories about the African continent are being disseminated by non-Africans at foreign media houses.

He announced that the AfDB will work with all African media and corporates to establish an Annual Africa Media Prize to reward and recognize journalists promoting positive news stories on Africa that attract investment.

He also called for the formation of the African journalists and correspondents fellowships to help build and strengthen the capacities of journalists and correspondents working on Africa. "Working with partners and corporates we also have to establish the African journalists and correspondents' fellowships to help to build capacities of journalists and correspondents working on Africa," he said.

"Africans must tell their own stories. Not the stories that others write about us. Not the stories impregnated with post-colonial mindsets or cold war divisions... The stories of us, Africans, written by Africans, about Africa, and confidently projected to the world."

Media owners, chief executives, editors and other categories of journalists travelled to Nairobi for the biggest summit running from May 8th to 10th.

The AllAfrica Media Leaders' Summit 2024 focuses on African economic transformation, AI, technology and digitization, regional integration and peace building, misinformation and disinformation, governance, standards, and capacity building, and creating sustainable business models.

LOS ANGELES

TIKTOK will begin labelling content created using artificial intelligence when it's uploaded from outside its own platform.

The move announced yesterday aims to address concerns about misinformation proliferating on the popular social media platform.

"AI enables incredible creative opportunities, but can confuse or mislead viewers if they don't know the content was AI-generated," the company said in a statement.

"Labelling helps make that context clear—which is why we label AIGC made with TikTok AI effects and have required creators to label realistic AIGC for over a year."

TikTok said that it's teaming with the Coalition for Content Provenance and Authenticity and

TikTok to scratch all AI-generated content

will use its Content Credentials technology.

The company said that the technology can attach metadata to content, which it can use to instantly recognize and label AI-generated content. TikTok said its use of the capability started yesterday on images and videos and will be coming to audio-only content soon.

Over the upcoming months, Content Credentials will be attached to content made on TikTok, which will remain on the content when

downloaded. This will help identify AI-generated content that's made on TikTok and help people learn when, where and how the content was made or edited. Other platforms that adopt Content Credentials will be able to automatically label it.

TikTok said it's the first video-sharing platform to put the credentials into practice and will join the Adobe-led Content Authenticity Initiative to help push the adoption of the credentials within the industry.

"Our users and our creators are so excited about AI and what it can do for their creativity and their ability to connect with audiences," Adam Presser, TikTok's Head of Operations and Trust and Safety told ABC News.

"And at the same time, we want to make sure that people have that ability to understand what fact is and what is fiction," he said.

The announcement initially came on ABC's "Good Morning America" yesterday.



Heidelberg Materials

TANZANIA PORTLAND CEMENT PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS

Notice is hereby given that the 32nd Annual General Meeting of the shareholders of the above company will be held at:

**Johari Rotana Hotel, Almasi Ballroom, 6th Floor
Sokoine Drive, Dar-es-Salaam,
On Wednesday, 5th June, 2024 at 10:00 am.**

AGENDA

1. Constitution of the Meeting: The Secretary to read the notice convening the meeting and determine if a quorum is present.
2. To confirm the minutes of the 31st Annual General Meeting held on 31st May 2023.
3. To Receive, Consider and, if thought fit, Adopt the Directors' Report, Auditors' Report and the Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2023.
4. To Receive, Consider and, if thought fit, Approve the Declaration of Dividend for Year 2023.
5. To approve the appointment of the Statutory Auditors for the year ending 31st December 2024.
6. To transact any other business of the Company of which due notice has been received.

**By Order of the Board
Dated 10th May 2024**

Company Secretary

1. Any member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy or proxies to attend and vote in his/ her stead. The proxy form is available on the company's website (<https://www.twigacement.com>).
2. A proxy appointed need not be a member of the Company. A completed proxy form should be deposited at the company's registered office, Wazo Hill, Dar es Salaam not less than 24 hours before the time for holding the meeting, failing which it shall be invalid.
3. Shareholders should come with their share certificates together with identity cards (e.g. Passport, Driving License, National ID, Employment ID, or Voters ID).
4. A full set of audited accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 is available at the company's registered office at Wazo Hill, Dar es Salaam, or can be downloaded from the website (<https://www.twigacement.com>).



Funded by the European Union



SPECIFICATIONS CORRECTION

REQUEST FOR TENDER – SUPPLY OF BRAND-NEW MOTOR VEHICLES

1. Reference is made to the advert appeared in The Guardian Newspaper dated Wednesday, 8th May 2024 (page 12) with the heading "request for tender - RFT supply of brand-new motor vehicles, motor cycles, patrol boats, drones & radio communication systems"
2. WWF wants to inform our esteemed applicants with regard to correction of the specifications for the motor vehicles to read as below;

LOT NO.	Description	# Qty/Units	Brief Requirements
Lot 1	Supply of a Brand-New Motor Vehicle for WWF	03 units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4WD Pick Ups Double Cab. Diesel Engine. not more than 12 months from date of manufacture. Strong and suitable for conducting longer field patrols • Front seat capacity should be 3 (1+2 bench arrangement). • Provision of Rear benches and rail guards to support longer field team

5.1 Electronic tenders shall be sent to the procurement email at procurement@wwftz.org; addressed to The Secretary, Procurement Committee, WWF Tanzania; Off Mwai Kibaki Street Mikocheni, P.O. Box 63117 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Tel: +255 22 277 5346/277 2455/270 0077; website; wwf.or.tz

5.2 All tenders should reach us by or before **10am, Tuesday, 21st May 2024 – EAT** Interested applicants may get the detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) through the following websites: https://www.wwf.or.tz/jobs_and_opportunities/consultancies_and_tenders/

5.3 Other terms and conditions remain unchanged

5.4 Sorry for any inconvenience that might have been caused and please, be advised



Swiss envoy for protection of civilians during conflicts

By Correspondent James Kandoya

SWITZERLAND has called on all states and institutions to use their influence to prevent violations of International humanitarian law (IHL) to ensure all populations remain safe.

Didier Chassot, Ambassador of Switzerland to Tanzania made the call in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday at the exhibition and panel discussion to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day.

The event brought together stakeholders in humanitarian operations, university students, representatives of civil society, academia, Tanzania People Defence Force (TPDF), diplomatic missions, government officials as well as local and international organisations.

There was a photo exhibition which aimed at giving visitors a better understanding of and deeper insight into the significance and impact of the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

The envoy said that states must take concrete actions at the national level, including ratification of the additional protocols, adoption of laws implementing Geneva Conventions and their dissemination within the armed forces and among the civilian population.

Chassot said effective implementation also requires establishment of national commissions for the implementation of IHL and the drafting of voluntary reports on implementation of the same.

He said that Tanzania is an important and respected actor in the region and beyond which can and should play an important role in that regard.

"We are therefore very pleased to have this opportunity tonight to mark this anniversary here in Dar es Salaam, and to put the focus on the

1949 Geneva Conventions," he said.

The envoy said that states should affirm and reaffirm their political will to respect the IHL.

The Geneva Conventions continue to save millions of lives threatened by hundreds of conflicts around the World, reunite thousands of separated family members and comfort thousands of prisoners of war.

"It is therefore essential that all states disseminate and promote compliance with these norms well before the outbreak of conflict and establish a culture within their population where there is clear expectation that these rules will be rigorously observed from the very outset of hostilities," he said.

Joseph Masangu, a fourth year student pursuing a bachelor degree in Law at the University of Dar es Salaam stressed on the importance of the conventions to protect civilians and other non-combatant individuals during conflicts.

He said the IHL is very important to ensure that people are safe, adding that the conventions do not stipulate whether the start of the armed conflict is legitimate or not but seek to regulate behaviour of parties once conflicts break out.



We are therefore very pleased to have this opportunity tonight to mark this anniversary here in Dar es Salaam, and to put the focus on the 1949 Geneva Conventions



Peer educator Ales Ngilangwa conducts a health education and safe menstruation session for Wanging'ombe Secondary School students in Njombe Region yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Elizabeth John

UN launches appeal to assist drought-hit SADC countries

UNITED NATIONS

THE United Nations has launched an appeal to assist landlocked countries suffering from drought including Zambia, a spokesman has said.

Stephane Dujarric, chief spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said yesterday that the appeal of \$228 million would assist 4.6 million people between now and December.

"Zambia is experiencing its driest agricultural season in more than 40 years, resulting in crop losses, increased livestock deaths and worsening poverty," he said.

"Nearly half of the 2 million

hectares of maize planted in the country have been destroyed by the drought and, according to authorities, cereal production is forecasted to decline by nearly 50 percent this year."

The spokesman said the government reported that more than nine million people-nearly half the population-are food insecure and need humanitarian assistance.

The spokesman said emergency relief coordinator Martin Griffiths released \$13.5 million from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) last month to shore up support to address the El Nino-induced drought in southern Africa. Zambia received \$5.5 million of the

CERF allocation in April and an earlier \$2.5 million allocation.

He said the government declared a national drought disaster back in February.

As for the East Africa drought victims, Dujarric said the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was working with the governments and UN humanitarian partners in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

The spokesman said that in Burundi, IOM provides emergency shelter, blankets, dignity kits and other items to more than 5,000 people and supports relocating those affected to safer and less flood-prone areas.

He said that in Kenya, IOM and partners reported delivering shelter and essential household items to support 39,000 people in the country's most severely flood-impacted parts. He said that IOM targets approximately 240,000 people in neighbouring Somalia with shelter materials and other essential items and services.

The spokesman said that in Ethiopia, IOM has supported over 70,000 people impacted by floods across Somali and Oromia regions.

"The agency says that at this critical moment, the call remains urgent for sustainable efforts to address human mobility spurred by a changing climate," Dujarric said.

Africa's circular economy set to secure global future

By Special Correspondent

IN the face of the triple crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, Africa finds itself at a pivotal moment.

As it seeks to advance towards a green and sustainable future, the continent finds itself increasingly key to advancing global climate action agenda.

As a result, the urgent need to shift to a circular economy has never been more critical and the African Development Bank, through the Africa Circular Economy Facility (ACEF) and the African Circular Economy Alliance (ACEA), is at the forefront of these efforts.

At the recent World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF) in Brussels, the two bank-supported entities emphasised Africa's crucial role in the global shift towards circular economy and outlined strategic measures to fast-track this vital transition.

Represented by Principal Programme Coordinator for ACEF Davinah Milenge and Margaret

Kamau, ACEA Task Manager, they presented Africa's perspectives on the importance of circular economy and the continent's unique context during several sessions.

During the event plenary titled 'Turning Circular Visions to Action', the African Development Bank's Dr Al-Hamdou Dorsouma joined Vivianne Heijnen, the Netherlands' Minister for the Environment, and Ambroise Fayolle, European Investment Bank Vice President, to address an audience of nearly 1,500.

Dr Dorsouma, who represented the Bank Group's Director for Climate Change and Green Growth Anthony Nyong, declared: "Support for Africa's circular transition is now more than ever a dire necessity, not a choice. This is a worldwide and urgent matter."

With Africa's population projected to double to 2.5 billion by 2050 and 83 percent of its countries heavily reliant on natural resources for revenue and economic growth, the continent's future steps could either bolster global climate efforts

or set them back, depending on whether emissions profiles resemble those of countries such as Botswana or Egypt, which produce comparable levels of greenhouse gas emissions annually.

ACEF's interventions underscored actionable strategies to accelerate circular transformation in Africa, complemented by ACEA's insights on the continent's specific context. ACEF presented some of these strategies during a session titled "Bridging Borders: Financing the circular economy with promotional banks" and through other engagements.

These strategies entail a three-pronged approach to driving a systemic circular transformation across all levels, the need for tailored financial solutions and sectoral support to meet Africa's unique needs, and close collaboration among stakeholders to align and reinforce the continent's circular economy goals. This will require backing ACEA's work and aligning with the African Union's Circular Economy Action Plan.



Oh, how polluted this bridge section of Dar es Salaam's Jangwani valley is! But, then, guess what the young man to the right could be planning to do with whatever he is collecting... Correspondent Miraji Msala captured the scene yesterday.

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

EXPRESSION OF INTERESTS (EOI)

Travel Agency

GIZ is a federally owned enterprise operating worldwide, assisting the German Government in achieving its policy objectives in the field of international cooperation. It offers demand-driven, tailor-made and effective services for sustainable development worldwide. In Tanzania and across the region GIZ supports the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the EAC in attaining their development goals.

GIZ Tanzania is looking for a sustainable Travel Agent Company for provision of travel services for its operations in Tanzania.

Therefore, GIZ would like to request Travel Agent Companies to send their Expression of Interest (EOI) as per below details;

SPECIFICATION OF THE SERVICE

- Expected Major Service from Travel Agency.
- Handle flight ticket booking requests from GIZ
 - Provide smooth information on most competitive travel itinerary based on carbon dioxide (CO2) consumption.
 - Issue electronic flight tickets with all possible tickets price details in a timely manner (including reservations of seats)
 - Prepare and submit the regular CO2 consumption report
 - Any special or seasonal offer or a special discount provided by the Airline should be disseminated to GIZ by the Travel Agent.
 - Reconfirmation and revalidation of airline tickets, re-issue tickets which are returned as a result of changed routing or fare structures.
 - Register all booked and issued tickets in one spread sheet and invoice all tickets only twice at the beginning of the following month to GIZ Office (one in USD and one in TZS)
 - Negotiate group/corporate fares/facilities with airlines Notify travelers of airport check-in time, known cancellations or delayed flights or voyages.

DETAILS OF YOUR TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

The interested companies are requested to submit the following Information and documents to qualify for the further procedure in selection process.

- Company profile with a clear physical address and Contact persons addresses (Telephone number, email address and physical address)
- Business Registration Certificate /Trade License in the field.
- TIN/VAT Registration Certificate.
- Valid latest Tax clearance certificate from Revenue Authority.
- At least five 5 references of similar service /Supply executed proven by certificates of good completion.
- Address of your main office or branch offices located at least in each region.
- Quality of service related to any other document.

After evaluation of EOI, GIZ may contact only the selected companies for further process.

Submission of EOI

Please submit your EOI Documents to tz_quotation@giz.de (TZ underscore _ Quotation @ giz . de) latest by **Monday the 27th May 2024.**

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URL Link:

Visit Other GIZ Tanzania open Tenders at: <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/136046.html>



Tanzania Institute of Accountancy rector Prof William Palangyo (R) and Business Registration and Licensing Agency (Brela) CEO Godfrey Nyaya exchange documents in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly after signing a cooperation agreement. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Brela signs agreement with three entities to protect creative works

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

BUSINESS Registration and Licensing Agency (Brela) has signed agreements with three institutions to promote and protect creative works.

The institutions are Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA), Tanzania Plant Health and Pesticides Authority (TPHPA) and Mzumbe University.

The trio signed the agreements in Dar es Salaam yesterday in front of Deputy Minister for Culture, Arts and Sports Hamis Mwinjuma during celebration of the World Intellectual Property Day.

Speaking immediately after signing the agreements, TIA Rector Prof William Pallangyo, said the agreement was of great benefit to the institute.

He said that through the cooperation, they will increase research capacity through works carried out by the institute as well as consultancy and technical support works.

Prof Pallangyo said that Brela will help TIA students through various steps to register their inventions as many currently do not know what to do to protect and develop their work legally.

"Our students will benefit a lot from this collaboration because when they have works of creativity, they fail to protect them because they don't have knowledge of what to do," he said.

He said that through the cooperation they will organize and participate in various seminars and conferences to promote understanding of students and tutors about matters related to business registration and business operations professionally and to protect innovations of young

innovators. "TIA will organize various workshops to provide an opportunity for Brela at all seven campuses to provide education about intellectual property and alumni will also have the opportunity to learn about innovations and get business registration education that will be provided," he said.

Prof William Senkondo, Vice Chancellor of Mzumbe University, said the institution signed the agreement so that it can benefit from various opportunities in the area of intellectual property.

He said they were conducting research and preparing new curricula and have been holding various conferences; therefore, the collaboration will enable them to become more modern.

"We have been thinking of enabling our institution to offer courses that open it up more internationally and solve various challenges in society. We will collaborate on matters that affect professions and titles. We will also prepare new curricula and courses in collaboration," he said.

"We will prepare publications together to distribute intellectual property education to the people and we are ready in the area of competence; we are well organized to ensure that this cooperation brings about a big change to ensure that youth have the opportunity to contribute to the economy of this country."

"Our students will benefit a lot from this collaboration because when they have works of creativity, they fail to protect them because they don't have knowledge of what to do"

Vaccination campaign kicks off to curb wild meningitis in Niger

NIAMEY

NIGER has launched vaccination campaign to control rapid increase in the number of meningitis.

By mid-April, the country recorded 2012 cases with 123 deaths according to World health organization. Last year, 1,389 cases were recorded with 72 deaths in the first 16 weeks of the year. By the end April, 143 deaths were recorded. Vaccination was launched in early May in Niamey to contain the spread of the disease. Amina Boubacar came with her child to get the jab.

"People are talking about this disease everywhere in Niamey but not everyone has the means to pay to get vaccinated. So I think, this is very good initiative," she said.

Just like Boubacar, many families were enticed by the fact that the vaccination is free of charge.

The vaccine used is a new one and has the advantage of protecting targets against five strains which are the main causes of meningitis in Niger. "We started with the schools on Thursday and Friday, then on Saturday and Sunday we moved into the neighbourhoods. The

population is coming and we're doing it in a calm atmosphere, really, we haven't had any problems so far," Nurse Abdou Mamou Sidou said.

The mobile unit teams say they have vaccinated 1,000 people in the city in 4 days. Unlike previous vaccines, the one used is a single dose.

The region of Niamey has recorded the highest number of cases so far this year with a cumulative incidence proportion of 52.2 cases per 100,000 inhabitants.

Niamey official Sahabi Assoumane

said more health districts will be targeted.

"Given the epidemic threshold was reached in 3 health districts, the ministry of public health and social affairs filed a request to the International Coordinating Group (ICG) on Vaccine Provision to ask for operational support. To respond to the epidemic, a vaccination campaign will be conducted in all 5 health districts of the region," he said.

Agadez and Dosso are the most affected after Niamey. Vaccination is for people aged 1 to 19.

By Special Correspondent, Lagos

Partnership billed to increase cross-border payments Africa

ACCESS Bank Group yesterday launched an innovative solution in collaboration with Mastercard to expand access to cross-border payments and remittances to and from the continent, bringing Africa closer to the global economy.

By leveraging the network and treasury capabilities of Mastercard Move, Access Bank, through its cutting-edge Access Africa platform, shall empower individuals and businesses to enjoy instant, traceable, seamless, and cost-effective international transactions.

Effective today, the newly launched solution will be operational across Africa, with expansion plans in place for further penetration across the continent.

The solution offers a global gateway for businesses and individuals that are leveraging Access Bank Group's deep understanding of the African markets and forward-looking vision that aims to realise customers' aspirations through innovative product sets.

Stitching together Mastercard's multiple complementary network assets and the treasury

capabilities of Mastercard Move, this collaboration offers customers more choices with their payment means.

Cross-border remittances continue to play an important role in Africa's economy, with flows to Sub-Saharan Africa increasing by approximately 1.9 percent in 2023 to \$54 billion as a result of strong remittance growth in Mozambique, Rwanda and Ethiopia, with Nigeria accounting for 38 percent of the remittance flows.

In 2024, remittance flows to the region are projected to increase by 2.5 percent. B2B Cross Border payments serve as a lifeline to a large section of businesses which are reliant on regional and international trade to fuel the growth of the African economies.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with Mastercard to advance financial inclusion in Africa through the Access Africa initiative," said Robert Giles, Senior Advisor, Retail Banking, Access Bank.

"By combining our strengths,


we can unlock new opportunities, bridge the financial divide, and create a more inclusive and prosperous future for all Africans."

Customers in Access Bank's operating countries in Africa are now enabled to send and receive cross-border payments globally through to and from various channels including bank accounts, mobile wallets, cards, and cash.

"Empowering Access Bank customers with innovative solutions that prioritize choice, security, and flexibility is an achievement that fills us with great pride. This collaboration signifies our commitment to transforming payment experiences as it not only brings cutting-edge payment solutions to the bank's diverse clientele, but also extends the reach of Mastercard's financial and digital ecosystem, ensuring millions from underserved communities can actively participate in the evolving financial and digital economy," said Mark Elliott, Division President for Africa at Mastercard.



Jubilee Insurance Tanzania managing director Dipankar Achanya (L) symbolically presents an award to Three Kids Insurance Agency director Jesse Jems in Dar es Salaam yesterday for outstanding performance in providing insurance services insurance. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala



ROOM TO READ

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

		2023	2022
	Notes	TZS	TZS
Income from non-exchange transactions			
Grants income	6 (a)	9,958,665,721	6,139,719,136
Amortisation of capital grants	17	83,372,877	66,988,405
Other income	6 (b)	23,182,959	4,080,000
		10,065,221,557	6,210,787,541
Operating Expenditures			
Staff costs	7	3,442,437,557	3,219,482,455
Program costs	8	5,619,675,433	1,701,298,984
Administrative costs	9	764,022,209	1,078,975,711
Travel costs	10	153,788,481	144,041,986
Equipment costs	11	1,925,000	-
Depreciation	15	83,372,877	66,988,405
		10,065,221,557	6,210,787,541
Surplus for the year		-	-

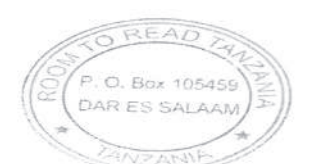
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

		2023	2022
	Notes	TZS	TZS
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and bank balances	12	30,052,295	136,503,376
Other receivables	13	277,769,055	106,612,800
Inventories in Transit	14	-	1,766,423,346
		307,821,350	2,009,539,522
Non-current assets			
Property and equipment	15	97,622,162	119,991,730
		97,622,162	119,991,730
TOTAL ASSETS		405,443,512	2,129,531,252
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Deferred revenue grants	16	-	1,766,423,346
Other payables	18	386,900,201	322,195,026
		386,900,201	2,088,618,372
Non-current liabilities			
Deferred capital grants	17	97,622,161	119,991,730
Total liabilities		484,522,362	2,208,610,102
NET ASSETS		(79,078,850)	(79,078,850)
NET ASSETS			
Represented by:		(79,078,850)	(79,078,850)
Accumulated deficit		(79,078,850)	(79,078,850)
TOTAL NET ASSETS AND LIABILITIES		405,443,512	2,129,531,252

The financial statements were approved by the Management of Room to Read Tanzania on 02/APRIL 2024 and were signed its behalf by:

Juvenalius Kuruletera
Country Director

Joan Msuni
Accounting and Finance Manager



Climate change paralysing traditional landholding, setting space for reform

WOES attached to the prevailing impact of climate change, primarily in the form of intensified El Nino conditions, are producing more shocks than may have been previously expected even among the most pessimistic observers.

Rising levels of Lake Victoria waters are causing a vast impact across the zone, with more than 500 households left without shelter and the pace of rains and floods still having a stretch of time this month before all is calm again.

The big lesson here is that those forced to move from their areas should not seek to rebuild there as the next rains could be worse owing to climate change.

One relatively familiar result from waterlogging and disruption of daily activities is the threat of water-borne epidemics, while for the specific Lake Victoria zone environment, there is fear of invasions by crocodiles from the edges of the lake as its vegetated wetlands hold a large population of Nile crocodiles.

Several residents of the areas are killed each year, with up to 19 killed since 2019 or thereabouts, but the danger could intensify if the lake waters remain too long at current levels.

Again, there is need for those displaced to relocate to areas or sites lying a safe distance from where they were earlier.

What this implies is that when land use planners sit to examine how to move people living close to rivers, dams, seashores or some islands, there will be extraordinary pressure to leave far too wide a stretch of territory than they are used to.

At the same time, while traditional land use situations expect that the community has reasonable legroom to expand their farming or livestock

keeping activities, such space will be narrowing further with the current need for resettling significant numbers of people in many areas. Tradition would thus have started to fail.

Going by how the government has been moving so far with respect to the issuance of customary land occupancy titles (which many apologists call land ownership titles), there is a likelihood of seeing much similar titles issued in the areas where people will be resettled.

Traditional issuance of customary titles was tied to the fact that the land has its indigenous occupants, so to speak, whose mode of ownership was that the land is inherited from father to son - with the patriarch able to divide the land among his sons or leave all of it to the last born. The others would have to pick up patches of land elsewhere, etc.

Map makers will have a harrowing time trying to figure out what will be the normal level of water in lakes or rivers in the next five years and further beyond.

Issuing land titles for 33, 66 or 99 years was tied up with stability of other factors determining the usability of the all-important natural resource.

There was a rule leaving out at least ten meters from river banks without farming anything, but now the threat is widening. Hillsides were also being pointed at for lack of vegetation induced by charcoal burning, but now the threat has changed form. Bare landscapes are exposed to landslides without durable vegetation, so it is another threat.

The best titles would now be individual so that well-moneyed hold sway, suggesting intensification in the challenges on the horizon and pointing top the need to change tack in in seeking more sustainable ways out of the mess.

Intellectual property being reduced more to brand copyright protection

WITH lots of what humans might want to see discovered having been created, each African country is beset with devising its own intellectual property regulatory format to ensure peace between different stakeholders in the design and sell marketplace.

The notion of intellectual property is moving from industrial and scientific discovery or innovation, to the ownership of lyrics, brand signs or passwords, and perhaps sounds or grunts.

With digital equipment aiding, fine details of how songs or just lines are created, and could bear some resemblance to someone else's work. It is in this sphere where contests of intellectual property are often heard, much less in academia or commodity brands.

World trade experience shows that newcomers have a habit of picking up names of well-known brands to push goods that were not perhaps sufficiently out of their trial phase but they are given out as new commodities bearing the name of a familiar brand.

This kind of imitation destroys original brands for faulty goods that pose as familiar brands. That was before some newcomers to international trade were properly integrated and has tended to disappear over the past two or even three decades. That is why intellectual property contests tend to focus on adaptations or twisting signs of a brand, as it also pays.

Just what is being done at the local level was the subject of a familiarisation seminar for the World Intellectual Property Day (April 26), with the high-flung thematic slogan, of 'Intellectual property: Building our Common Future with Innovation and Creativity'.

Whether that is an overall global

slogan or it was also usable at the national level wasn't clear, for it is one thing to talk about global innovation and creativity in how it impacts African countries for that matter.

It is another thing to belabour the issue of local innovation or creativity and how it may impact lives, and especially in relation to productivity.

The ministerial agency looking at that aspect of industry and registration issues, where brands and their particulars are part of intellectual property, has decided to come up with a campaign to familiarise students and others, after realising the low level of awareness of those issues.

That is of course unhealthy as someone might proceed with a mental creation by inspiration from somewhere, unaware that there is a company or estate owning that intellectual input from where hid idea came from.

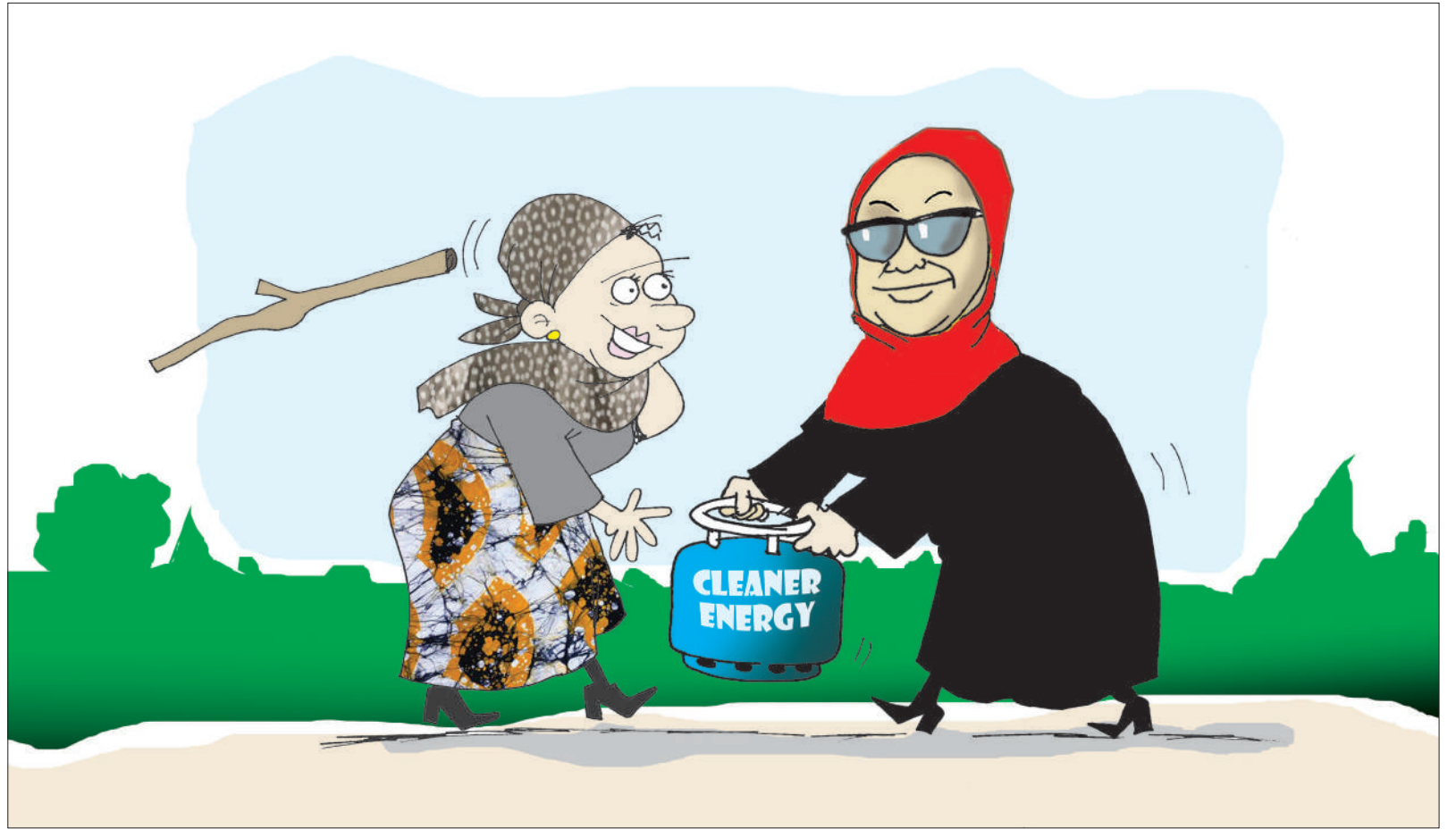
It implies that ignorance of property issues could occasion losses to individuals, and it could be worse it could be institutions embarking on research, committing funds and then just being upended.

The Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (Costech) and the Business Registrations and Licensing Agency (Brela) have been making efforts to reach innovators of various technologies after the commission hacked various innovation efforts.

There are technologies brought up by youths in different institutions, counting 25 youth technology applications altogether. They are all designed to solve one or other social problem, with ability to showcase such innovations via online exposure being an addition - to get market opening.

The public might not hear much of such innovations, but it is helpful in that youths can make even drones.

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Managing Editor: WALLACE MAUGGO Circulation Manager: DENNIS NTAITA feedback@guardian.co.tz	News Editor: LUSEKELO PHILEMON 0757154767 General line: 0745700710 E-mail: guardian@guardian.co.tz	Mobile: 0677020701 E-mails: advertise@guardian.co.tz Website: www.ippmedia.com epaper.ippmedia.com



AI newsroom guidelines look very similar... and this is bad news

By Gretel Kahn

TOMÁS Dodds, who has looked at 37 artificial intelligence (AI) rules in 17 countries, has warned against "rigid, top-down" principles and calls to celebrate a diversity of approaches.

Newsrooms around the world are trying to figure out the best ways to apply generative AI to their work without falling into a hype trap. This is a delicate balance, especially at a time of uncertainty about the technology and the business of news.

How are journalists and media managers reacting to the rise of this new technology? Are they fearful, hopeful or both? Which kinds of guidelines are they putting in place?

These are the questions at the heart of my conversation with researcher Tomás Dodds, who has studied these issues in the last few years and who recently shared his findings at a talk at the Oxford Internet Institute.

Q: For your research, you and your collaborators analysed 37 AI guidelines in newsrooms in 17 countries across the world. What commonalities have you found in those guidelines and what is missing?

A.: We found that most of the guidelines highlight the importance of having editorial values in place that supersede the use of these technologies. The need to protect users and users' privacy is mostly prevalent in European newsrooms, which I think correlates with the regulations and probably decisions that the EU is making are putting in place - which is really good.

We also see that guidelines have highlighted the need to ensure the ethical implementation of AI in journalism and that includes having human oversight, the explainability of AI systems and the disclosure of automated content. That was super interesting. But what was more interesting was a high degree of isomorphism. This means that these guidelines were very similar to each other, and that made us suspect a little bit of how they were being made, especially given how quickly they emerged in Europe and North America.

As soon as we started doing interviews, my suspicions were confirmed: a lot of these guidelines were made from the top down. They were made individually by an editor-in-chief or sometimes by parent companies, without any consultation of journalists.

How can we create guidelines from the bottom up? How can we create guidelines involving journalists and all the stakeholders involved in news production? It shouldn't surprise us that journalists are still making decisions based on their gut feeling. Even with all of these guidelines

in place, journalists are still going to make decisions based on what they and their community feel it's important.

If you impose guidelines from the top down, they are not going to be very effective because journalism is based on gut feeling. So we need to encourage newsrooms to have a conversation with their journalists and ask them about how these technologies should be put in place.

What is driving this pressure to publish AI guidelines in newsrooms?

I think we all are. I do have the impression that we in academia have rushed to write papers and speak in conferences about how journalists are creating guidelines, and we have put a lot of pressure into newsrooms to come up with a response. We asked journalists to do all the legwork and have everything solved within weeks and this will actually be dangerous.

What I saw is that journalists are trying to understand how these technologies work, and how they should use them. They are trying to educate themselves. And yet we kind of pushed them to have an answer to this question really quickly and that could be counterproductive because if you end up with really rigid, top-down guidelines, that's not going to correspond with how journalists actually want to use AI.

This idea brings me to the hype around AI and the fact that journalists, including us at the Reuters Institute, are focusing on this topic. Do you think this hype is warranted or are we - in the industry - focusing too much on AI?

We need to try to understand what hype is and what hype does, which is to simplify very difficult concepts like innovation or how these technologies actually work. By hyping these technologies, we are reducing the framework of our understanding of what these technologies actually are and how we should appropriate them.

At the same time, hype also distracts us from the consequences that these technologies could have in real life. When we hype technologies, what we are doing is kind of creating a myth around them and not putting the focus on the political, cultural and social consequences that these technologies are going to have.

However, what I have seen in my research is that journalists are really trying to avoid falling for that hype in different ways. One of those ways is by refusing to engage in this conversation on the terms set by big tech platforms. That is a huge shift in tech journalism.

Until not very long ago, most tech journalism was about the newest

shiny gadget. Now newsrooms are investing in tech journalism by hiring experts on these matters who can actually contribute to the debates about how newsrooms should approach these technologies. These nerds are way more critical and more likely to avoid hype.

It's also important to say that when we are avoiding hype, we are not stopping the conversation with these big tech platforms because they are still very important social actors that we need to engage with. It is our job as journalists to hold them accountable.

When you look at attitudes towards AI, do you see any differences between top editors and the rank-and-file?

We need to understand that work hierarchies do not correspond necessarily with knowledge hierarchies. Our research suggests that knowledge about AI inside newsrooms is very siloed. Most of the people we have interviewed believe that AI is important, but they are trying to learn knowledge that is very concentrated in these knowledge silos.

This is problematic because it means that there are some journalists that are working with AI systems unsupervised by their editors. It doesn't mean that they are doing unethical things, but some of them are doing things that dance on the edge of the ethical borders of journalism.

The way that journalists decide what is ethical or what isn't is in your discussions with your editor and your peers. So when you have peers and editors and supervisors who do not know or do not understand the technologies you are working with, it is very difficult for them to determine what is ethical and what is not. It is very difficult to regulate something you don't understand. That is why we need to create information sharing practices that allow newsrooms to break these silos and take advantage of the people who know a lot about AI.

We have seen first hand how quickly AI can change and I have a feeling that a lot of things are going to continue to change very quickly in the next few years. How prepared do you think newsrooms are for these changes?

I am now collaborating on a project with Rodrigo Zamith and Seth Lewis, and Rodrigo made this beautiful analogy the other day: that the innovations in journalism in terms of technology have always kind of pointed towards acceleration. We have social media to write faster and shorter, we have bigger audiences, podcasts and digital journalism. Everything was about acceleration - what he called a hamster wheel of

acceleration in journalism.

Generative AI made some journalists step out of this hamster wheel for once and look at the technology with a more critical eye. We think this happened because of the threats that generative AI poses to journalism as it redefines basic concepts of what it means to be a journalist. What does it mean to be a journalist when you don't have to write headlines or summaries? This made a lot of journalists step out of this wheel approach these technologies in a way that they didn't do with social media.

With social media, we jumped to the promise of distribution and monetisation. So the most important thing that newsrooms did this time was for once to stop that hamster wheel, step out and look at it from outside and say: 'We are going to get a little better at preparing because we know that we don't know how these systems work.'

How important is it for the news industry to be on the same page when it comes to the adoption of AI?

I am aware that most of my research was conducted in the Netherlands in newsrooms that have big budgets and the luxury of pausing and deciding how to approach or negotiate with these platforms. Not every newsroom in the world is going to have that level of power. This means that you will probably see newsrooms with fewer resources which won't have the luxury of stepping out of the hamster wheel - and they will be more dependent on these tech platforms even when they are aware of the consequences.

But I don't think it is fair to ask them to behave in the same way because each newsroom is an ecosystem in itself. Eventually journalism is going to regulate itself, so you can't ask newsrooms to behave the same way. That's why the fact that the guidelines are the same is kind of problematic. Isomorphism in journalism is bad news. You want to have diversity and newsrooms innovating on how they approach these technologies.

Academics, policymakers and other stakeholders need to avoid making a call for journalists to approach these technologies in the same way. We need to celebrate the diversity of approaches and strategies that newsrooms are trying to come up with. We shouldn't force journalists to behave the way we want them to behave. We need to help them define for themselves how they want to do it.

*** A Reuters Institute dispatch. Tomás Dodds is Assistant Professor at Leiden University (in the Netherlands) and Faculty Associate at the Berkman Klein Centre for Internet & Society at Harvard University.**

By Correspondent James

Kandoya

Drowning: A preventable tragedy that claims numerous annually

IN Tanzania, drowning is one of the major causes of death to people whose livelihoods depend entirely on open water and travellers moving across water bodies such as lakes, rivers and the Indian Ocean.

The country has experienced sinking of MV Bukoba in May 21, 1996, an accident which killing over 800 people, MV Ukerewe in 2018 that killed over 200 people—all happened in Lake Victoria while in the Indian Ocean, MV Spice Islander killed 187 people in 2011.

However, lack of correct data related to such deaths and injuries has caused it to be under-recognized as a serious problem.

Laki Ally Rajabu, a resident of Uzimbanindogo village, in Unguja's South Region, Zanzibar and three others cheated death after a locally made canoe they were travelling with hit a stone and capsized.

Rajabu told The Guardian that he was thrown away to the mangroves where she successfully struggled and climbed on it as he waited for rescuers to arrive at the scene. Following the accident, he lost all her properties including mobile phones and shoes

Narrating his story, he said: "We stayed in the water for several hours until evening when fishermen travelling in a fibre boat passed nearby and decided to assist us. They successfully took us to the coast."

According to him, many people in Uzimbanindogo village die in water mostly being fishermen and sea-



On May 21st, 1996, MV Bukoba sank 30 nautical miles (56 km) off Mwanza city in 25 metres of water, killing more than 800 people.

weed growers, but yet the problem has not been taken seriously by authorities.

Rajabu says he opted to undergo a fifteen days swimming training to improve his swimming skills thus be able to rescue himself when such disasters happen.

He was trained by The Panje Project (TPP)—a non-governmental organization dedicated to providing swimming training to children and the public.

The initiative by TPP is a response to the alarming statistics that show a high incidence of drowning in low- and middle-income countries, particularly in Africa. It also empowers women seaweed farmers in Zanzibar through swim-

ming lessons and water safety education.

In 2024, the project aims to equip 1,000 children and youth with swimming skills as well as 70,000 children and youth in water safety education. So far, over 25,000 women including seaweed growers in both Unguja and Pemba islands have been trained essential survival skills.

In an interview with The Guardian, Saleh Abdallah Mohamed, Operational and Rescue Officer from the Office of the Second Vice President Office-Zanzibar (Disaster Management Commission) underscored the need for increased community awareness on essential survival skills during accidents that happen

in water bodies.

"The government is taking a number of initiatives which includes incorporating swimming lessons in school curricula," he said mentioning the common observed risk behaviours among fishermen as fishing in poorly maintained boats and using boats powered with oars.

Mohamed said that some fishermen conduct their activities at night and in bad weather; not wearing a life jacket and sometimes fishing while intoxicated with drugs or alcohol.

The official added that a recent household survey on drowning in Zanzibar showed that there are high risks of drowning that are linked with knowledge

gaps, partially driven by lack of access to information and lack of skills.

Dr David Meddings, Department of the Social Determinants of Health, at the World Health Organization (WHO) said in Dar es Salaam recently that Tanzania has an average mortality of 5.8 percent per 100,000 deaths noting that in Lake Victoria alone the drowning mortality rate was 217 per 100,000 deaths.

Addressing delegates during a recent meeting in Dar es Salaam which brought together stakeholders from five ministries, WHO and other stakeholders to discuss key issues to consider when preparing the national drowning strategy,

he noted that 0.8 percent of deaths are due to drowning and that in Lake Victoria, the drowning mortality rate is 1416 per 100,000.

In Lake Zone communities, the drowning mortality is higher than malaria, tuberculosis and Human Immune Virus (HIV), he said adding that drowning deaths recorded in the country are 12 times higher than in the United Kingdom.

Dr Ntuli Kapologwe, Director of Preventive Services at the Ministry of Health raised concerns that absence of data regarding the scale and circumstances of drowning incidents contributes to its under-recognized as a significant and preventable problem.

He said Tanzania, as other countries in the world, has no excuse to implement the United Nation's General Assembly resolutions on drowning that reminds member states to take action and response to control the drowning situation in the country.

"Promoting community engagement and behaviour changes can be achieved through collaboration among stakeholders at region and global level. We need to increase public awareness on drowning and how to prevent it; this will help us in reducing preventable deaths," he added.

Dr Kapologwe stated that the government in collaboration with stakeholders is preparing a roadmap towards the formulation of a national drowning strategy—the silent epidemic that affects the nation's workforce.

The first ever household survey on evidence, perceptions and knowledge on communities' perceptions about drowning risks, suggests that a high drowning rate is caused by some knowledge gaps, partially driven by lack of access to information and lack of skills.

The study was carried in Zanzibar in 2013 with support from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). The survey indicates that people perceive drowning risks to be linked to poor governance, economic marginalization, and the increasing effects of climate change on ocean.

However, a study conducted by Environmental Management and Economic Development Organization (EMEDO) on the perception risk of drowning around Lake Victoria showed that rates of drowning in fishing communities is high.

It reveals that those who work around Lakes, living in flood affected informal settlements and children are at heightened risk but beyond little is known about drowning.

The study pointed out risk factors characteristics such as characteristics fishers' communities face such as exposure to strong winds, poor maintenance of boats, and navigation devices unaffordable and limited to life jackets.

Other factors are lack of water safety awareness, safe boating skills, swimming skills and navigation devices.

The study further reveals that fishers also sometimes tend to use local landmarks and stars when navigating, sleeping on anchored boats at night without lights and excessive use of alcohol.

Cause for alarm as trust in public institutions worldwide diminishes

By Telesphor Magobe

A 2024 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) trends report shows there is diminishing trust in public institutions worldwide, which is a worrying phenomenon and something must be done about it. To trust, according to the Cambridge International Dictionary of English, is to have belief or confidence in the honesty, goodness, skill or safety of (a person, organisation or thing). But this belief or confidence, especially in public institutions, seems to fade away in different parts of the world.

"Against a background of deteriorating democracy worldwide, this trust deficit is undermining social contracts between governments and people," the report says. It adds that reactions range from apathy to activism, across the political spectrum and in different political systems.

"Over 70 elections this year will give over half the world a chance to vote. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered threats like more convincing deep fakes may spread disinformation and intensify polarisation - threatening to undermine the legitimacy of newly elected governments and provoke civil unrest," the report states,

highlighting three trends namely, democratic backsliding and shrinking of civic space, decreasing government trust and increasing polarisation. This trust deficit, according to the report, will put political engagement and trust in democratic systems to the test.

Citing V-Dem Institute findings, the report says "the level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen in 2022 was down to 1986 levels, with drastic deterioration in the last 10 years in freedom of expression, quality of elections, government censorship of the media and repression of civil society. There have been seven successful coups d'état or unconstitutional transfers of power in Africa since 2020."

This diminishing trust trend is inconsistent with Aspiration 3 of "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," which envisages an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law. Article 27 of "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want" states that: "Africa shall have a universal culture of good governance, democratic values, gender equality, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law." Furthermore, Article 28 states that "We aspire that by 2063, Africa will be a continent where democratic values, cul-



ture, practices, universal principles of human rights, gender equality, justice and the rule of law are entrenched; and have capable institutions and transformative leadership in place at all levels."

Although the African Charter on democracy, elections and governance was adopted in Addis Ababa on January 30, 2007 and entered into force on February 15, 2012, as of June 28, 2019 (seven years later) only 34 out of 55 member states that make up the African Union (AU) had formerly consented by way of ratification, accession or succession of the African Charter on democracy, elections and governance. Twenty one other countries, including Tanzania, had not yet ratified and deposited their instrument to be legally bound by the AU Charter on democracy,

elections and governance by June 28, 2019. This can be seen as a setback to AU Charter's collective consent to and enforcement of democracy, free and fair elections and good governance.

On diminishing democracy, which is an aspect of trust deficit, the 2024 UNDP trends report says, according to the Edelman Trust Barometer, people see their governments as far less competent and less ethical than business and nongovernmental organisations. They also believe that over 60 per cent of leaders in government, business and the media try to mislead the people by saying things they know to be false and which they don't believe themselves. "These levels of distrust are driving polarisation: seen as the 3rd greatest short-term global risk."

The report says 81 per cent of people interviewed by the last World Values Survey (WVS) said living in a democratic country mattered a lot to them. "Yet, 52 per cent agreed a strong leader beholden to legislature or elections was a good thing. Dissatisfaction with the actual functioning of democracy is [also] growing..."

Furthermore, the report says conflicts, surging inflation, pandemics, energy security, disasters, climate change and environmental degradation - are intersecting and compounding one another: a "polycrisis" of interconnected events. On growing conflict it says the world became less peaceful for the 13th time in the last 15 years. "Conflict intensified, with deaths and conflict events increasing by

14 per cent and 28 per cent respectively (2022-2023). Political risk reached a 5-year high in 2023. At least 43 countries have seen a significant increase in the risk to human security since 2020."

On increasing disaster risk, the report says disasters have multiplied five-fold in the last 50 years, driven by the impacts of climate change. Environmental degradation (40 per cent of the earth) makes hazards more intense and more frequent and people more vulnerable.

On weaker communities, the report says increasing loneliness and disconnection are reducing civic engagement, weakening social cohesion and making people more vulnerable to polarisation: one of the world's top 10 short-term risks.

"Growing wealth and income inequalities are another driver of social discontent and more polarised societies. Although global inequality (across countries) has broadly declined since the 1990s (with some exceptions, like sub-Saharan Africa), inequality within countries has risen. Income inequality has risen within most advanced economies and major emerging economies (equal to two-thirds of global population)."

The report adds that "stability threats may emerge where least expected, like jellyfish proliferating due to climate change, forcing nuclear power station shutdowns." What can be done to revive trust in public institutions? We need and reckon to see capable, efficient and effective public institutions and ethical and transformative leadership. Cooperation is needed to address global challenges by taking local initiative (doing something at local level) - 'thinking globally and acting locally'.

Scientists explore nature's promise in combating plastic waste

By Claire Asher

PLASTIC is a remarkably versatile and durable material, which has made it indispensable in almost every area of modern life. But these same properties, amplified by our "take-make-waste" linear economy, have created a brewing environmental catastrophe.

It's hard to grasp the gigantic scale of our global plastic waste problem. Since 1950, humanity has produced more than 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic. Most has ended up in landfills or the environment, where it is harmful to wildlife, ecosystem functioning and human health.

Once in the environment, plastic slowly breaks down into smaller and smaller fragments, known as micro- and nanoplastics. But it can take hundreds or even thousands of years for plastic, which itself contains thousands of chemicals, to degrade into its basic natural components. That's because plastics are made up of repeating units of tightly bonded carbon-rich molecules, which makes them very difficult to break down.

But nature brings cause for hope: scientists are working on a range of biological solutions to address the plastic pollution crisis at every stage of the material's life cycle, from capturing waste to before it enters the environment, to upcycling plastics into new, useful products.

Nature-based filters: Microplastics come to a sticky end

Micro- and nanoplastic pollution is a fast-growing global issue, with few practical solutions. While larger pieces of plastic waste can be laboriously collected, these tiny fragments represent a much bigger challenge to clean up.

"Nano- or microplastics are really challenging [to capture] because they each have a different size, different chemical composition, different hydrophobicity. So, there's no single material that can remove the wide spectrum of nano- or microplastics," says Junling Guo, a materials scientist at Sichuan University in China.

But there's hope: Guo led an international research team that developed a plant-based filter that can capture micro- and nanoplastics suspended in water, which they named bioCap.

The filter is composed of a sawdust base laced with plant tannins, or polyphenols – chemicals produced by plants to repel hungry herbivores, and also responsible for that dry sensation we get after drinking tea or red wine. This mouth-puckering effect is what makes tannins ideal for capturing microplastics.

"One of the most interesting properties of polyphenols is that they are sticky molecules," Guo explains. Recognizing this trait, he realized it might be possible to "use the polyphenol as a nano glue to capture the microplastics regardless of their chemical compositions, or any other properties."

The chemical characteristics of polyphenols allow bioCap to trap plastic particles of all types. "Polyphenols can form multiple molecular interactions with different types of nano- or microplastics," says Guo. In laboratory tests, the bioCap filter captured between 95 and 99% of plastic particles in a water sample.



Since 1950, humanity has produced more than 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic. Most has ended up in landfills or the environment, where it has harmful effects on wildlife, ecosystem functioning and human health. Nature-based solutions could help clean up plastic waste and put it to good use.

Nature-based filter technology is a growing field of research. In 2022, scientists in Finland reported initial tests of a cellulose nanofiber filter made from wood pulp that can capture polystyrene micro- and nanoplastic particles suspended in water.

And scientists in Hong Kong have demonstrated that microscopic films of bacteria, known as biofilms, also have sticky properties that can capture microplastics and then release them on demand, ready for recycling or upcycling.

Filters like these could be a game-changer for removing microplastic contamination in drinking water, and prevent pollution from industrial and domestic wastewater reaching rivers and oceans. But Guo acknowledges such technologies aren't a complete solution to plastic pollution: "We use a polyphenol to capture the micro- and nanoplastics, but they are still there," needing to be disposed of somehow.

Guo's team is currently collaborating with other scientists who are developing plastic-degrading enzymes, and hope to eventually incorporate these into the bioCap filter, creating a "complete loop to eliminate micro- and nanoplastics," he says.

Plastic-munching caterpillars

Biological breakdown of other types of plastic have proved more elusive, but progress is being made. In 2017, Federica Bertocchini, a molecular biologist at the Spanish National Research Council in Madrid, discovered that caterpillars of the wax moth species (*Galleria mellonella*) can break down polyethylene (PE), a common

plastic used in packaging. Since then, Bertocchini and her colleagues have worked to understand how the caterpillars achieve this feat, and to isolate the enzyme or enzymes responsible.

Bertocchini's team has now tracked the plastic-degrading effect to the caterpillar's saliva. The enzymes found there produce a variety of chemical products that have useful applications, for example in the manufacture of nylon and cosmetics.

A tasty solution

Biological solutions able to break down plastics into their chemical components are only part of the story, though. "We need to move away from just thinking about how we depolymerize the plastic and [move toward thinking about] what we do with the plastic after that," says Joanna Sadler, a biotechnology research fellow at Scotland's University of Edinburgh.

Currently, "the chemical pathways we can access using ... the existing toolbox [of enzymes] is a little bit limited," she explains. This, in turn, limits the chemical products that can be generated from plastic waste.

Take PET degradation, for example: "We don't necessarily want lots of terephthalic acid and ethylene glycol in the world. There's a limit to how useful that is if you just stop there," Sadler explains.

Sadler is developing microbes able to upcycle plastics into new, useful chemicals that could be part of a circular economy. For example, she and her colleagues have engineered *E. coli* to convert PET into vanillin, the chemical responsible for the taste and smell

of vanilla, using a suite of six enzymes.

Putting nature-based solutions to work

A key question, as these new technologies mature, is where and how they can most effectively be deployed. Experts agree that biological plastic recycling or upcycling solutions are best applied within dedicated bioreactors, situated at landfill sites or other waste-collecting locations – before waste enters the environment. To achieve this, scientists and technologists need to "interact with industries at the waste generation point ... and intercept post-consumer plastic before it gets discarded," says Sadler.

The alternative – releasing plastic-degrading enzymes or microbes directly into the environment to degrade plastics – comes with serious problems, ranging from environmental safety and ethical concerns, to the need to collect the useful chemical products of plastic breakdown for reuse once they have diffused into the wider world. Also, as microbes act on plastics, toxic additives and other pollutants bound to it would be released to the environment, posing health risks.

That's why the release of genetically engineered microbes into the environment to clean up waste is not "a particularly useful or sensible way forward," Sadler says.

But some researchers hope plastic degradation will take place in the environment one day. Lu says his vision is to "engineer microbes to break down the plastic in the landfill and then release carbon substitutes that could serve as fertilizers" for crops.

The future of plastics

Another fundamental and daunting conundrum confronting researchers today: As they, policymakers and the public seek plastic pollution solutions, the petrochemical industry continues churning out old and new plastics in astronomical amounts. Without action and research funding, the plastics crisis seems fated to outpace all attempts at solving it.

The world's best hope to stem the flow of petrochemical pollution may be United Nations negotiations now underway to create a legally binding international agreement to address plastic pollution, with a final text due to be delivered at the end of this year.

But while the 65 nations of the High Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution want a treaty that places binding caps on the production of new virgin plastics, along with a ban on the most toxic plastic chemicals, low-ambition nations want a voluntary agreement focused on recycling, with no production limits. Among the resisters to date are the United States, China, Russia, Iran and other oil- or plastics-producing nations. The plastics and petrochemical industry is also strongly opposed to regulation, sending nearly 200 lobbyists to the April 2024 U.N. treaty meeting in Ottawa, Canada.

If the result of the negotiations is a strong comprehensive treaty, then safe, scalable and economical solutions to the global plastics crises, like those described here, could become an essential part of the new circular plastics economy.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Handing over the reins of conservation to communities

By Correspondent Deoda-
Mfugale, Sumbawanga

MARY Ernest Shauri of Nkomolo 2 Village of Nkasi District in Rukwa region recalls how communities alongside Lyamba Iya Mfipa Forest were on the brink of a disaster four years ago.

Community members in various villages started to experience water shortages. Deforestation had led to land degradation and reduced its capacity to support agriculture.

There were fears that with the unchecked environmental destruction people could face severe impacts of climate change and lose economic resilience.

Although both Sumbawanga and Nkasi Districts are endowed with abundant natural resources, community members had embarked on irrational harvesting of the resources that was reflected in reduced flows of rivers, unpredictable seasons and degradation of the Lyamba Iya Mfipa Forest which used to provide ecosystem services to the communities.

"In some villages farmers and pastoralists started fighting for water during the dry season. That was unheard of! Illegal harvesting of forest products was rampant. Land conflicts were becoming common and violent. There was such chaos, some people feared the forest would be wiped off and this would accelerate desertification, a situation that could lead to significant reduction in food production," she explains.

Today, however, the situation has changed. Conservation of the environment and sustainable harvesting of forests has seen rivers flowing normally and averting water shortage. Forests and natural vegetation have recovered from degradation, thanks to Usimamizi Endelevu wa Maliasili project, implemented by LEAT, RUSUDEO and communities led by village governments.



During the four years of its implementation the project has focused generally on community-based conservation that empowers local people to take the lead in protecting biodiversity by infusing local knowledge, practicality and setting their priorities. Rural communities live alongside fragile ecosystems and hold in their hands the power to save the environment and natural resources.

"The success of community based conservation is built on the goal of alleviating people from poverty and improving human welfare while supporting conservation efforts and reducing pressure on biodiversity. In the long run these communities build climate and economic resilience and live better lives," says Hana Lupembe, the Project Supervisor. Indeed success in any community conservation project lies on the people.

The project is now on its final lap of implementation and questions abound whether the benefits realized by stakeholders will be sustained or will be flushed down the drain once the last chapter of the project is closed.

Nicholaus Mchome, Rukwa Regional Natural Resources Officer explains that during its implementation the project has built the foundations of conservation, sustainable

and rational use of natural resources. It has also strengthened adaption and climate resilience through education, awareness and participation of community members.

"Individuals and communities alike have enjoyed social and economic benefits which otherwise they would not have realized. The benefits are a catalyst which will drive villagers to continue with conservation and protection of natural resources with the view to sustaining climate and economic resilience," says Mchome, adding that accountability among village government leaders has been strengthened. "In any case villagers have acquired the courage to question their leaders on their deeds and misdeeds and there is no way the community will fall back to old ways of allowing their leaders get away with it when they don't deliver."

Among things that will make community members to continue to conserve the environment is the legal ownership of land and secure tenure. People know the importance and value of land and are prepared to protect their rights. With high knowledge and awareness about conservation of natural resources ownership of land will help build climate adaptation and economic resilience among villagers.

"Villagers acknowledge

the link between a healthy environment and climate resilience and they also know that their wellbeing is attached to conservation of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources," says Mchome.

Some villagers are also optimistic about the future. "There is no going back. We have the knowledge and awareness to conserve the environment and use natural resource in a sustainable manner. Besides, primary and secondary school children have participated in implementing the project. Through their Mazingira Clubs they will carry on with the work for years to come," explains Veronica Simon Kiutu of Kizungu Village. "However, education on conservation and protection of the environment should be continuous not only to pupils but to all community members. People tend to forget; they should be reminded from time to time," she adds.

According to Kiutu women have learned to do small businesses as a way of diversifying sources of income. They are able to sustain the businesses for now but in future they will need more education in order to not only make businesses grow but also to deal with the challenges of doing business that could emerge.

One of the major activities to rehabilitate the de-

graded environment was tree planting. This will be carried on in future but for better results communities need to plant trees according to environmental conditions, and not just to plant any tree anywhere. In some areas the trees planted did not do well because of poor environmental conditions.

The project has been supplying tree seedlings to be planted by communities. But if tree planting has to be sustained then the situation must change. "We should be taught how to prepare tree seedlings ourselves instead of waiting for project officials to give them to us. The demand for seedlings is increasing and if we are to meet this demand in future, we must produce our own seedlings. This will increase the sustainability of the project," says Florence Magambo, Executive Officer for Nkwilo village.

Elia Wiston Ndabila of Kalumbeza A village says that the tree planting activity has been bogged down by termites who eat the seedlings. This has to a great extent affected the survival rate of the tree seedlings planted in the village which he estimated to be 70 percent. He advised that villages should be given insecticides that kill or repel termites before they plant tree seedlings.

It is expected that villages will take conservation knowledge and practice into the future so that they will not revert to the era of destruction of the environment and natural resources. "Of course there are still a few people who illegally make timber, charcoal or cut logs from Lyamba Iya Mfipa Forest. Village governments and community members will have to find ways to deal with them if project benefits are to be sustained," says Edwin Mangazini, a resident of Kizungu Village.

It is also important that villagers continue to manage the land they own as a community as well as individuals. Land has been surveyed and mapped and some people have been issued with Customary Certificates of Right of Occupancy (CCROs). The demand for CCROs by com-

munity members is high but process to survey, map and issue CCROs is costly. "While the District Council would like to issue CCROs to more people in future, this might take a long time due to shortage of funds," says Frederick Odhiambo, Senior District Land Officer for Nkasi District.

"But more efforts should be directed on educating people about the importance of land use plans. Despite the fact that many people in the District own land and have been given CCROs as proof of ownership and security of tenure, there are villagers who are still skeptical about this development. They still think that behind surveys, mapping and land use plans stand secret plans by government to grab their land or even subject them to some kind of land tax. There are still some people who believe that land use plans will finally lead to land grabbing. There is a need for reassurance through more education and awareness campaigns," says Odhiambo.

The fact that some community members are still not comfortable with land ownership and tenure process has also been expressed by residents of Nkwilo, Nkomolo 2, Kizungu, Mbwilo and Kalumbaleza A, among others. It is imperative that district councils step up education and awareness campaigns in order to clear the apprehension that is rife among communities.

"Even those who have acquired CCROs are still not comfortable with their tenure. They think that the whole process was meant to pave way for the government to take away their land. I think people need more education in order to change this mindset and clear their worries," notes Edgar Merikio, a member of Social Accountability Monitoring committee in Kalumbaleza A village.

Now women also own land with legal evidence and secure tenure through acquisition of CCROs. They conduct petty businesses and run community conservation banks where one may earn about 500,000/- annually. The economic independence that women

continue to gain has also raised their social status, as they feel free to give their views and opinions in all matters in the community. They have the courage to ask questions to village government leaders and have the confidence to vie for leadership posts.

With all these benefits, women are in the forefront to conserve the environment and will not relent on this noble cause. They know that should they step back and let environmental degradation and destruction of natural resources creep in, then they will be inviting poverty amidst their families.

Maria Zahoro is the environment teacher at Mazoka Secondary School in Sumbawanga Rural District. She says that the school, like many others in the project area, has participated in planting trees on their compound and surrounding areas.

"Conservation of the environment and protection of natural resources is also one of the subjects we teach here. With knowledge and practice, students have a role to play in their families and communities in ensuring that the spirit of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources is maintained. Education is continuous. As some students complete secondary school education and new ones come in, so will the education and practice be passed down to the community long after the project winds up. This is important in order to cope with emerging challenges of conservation of the environment and natural resources. Students are agents of change," she explains.

Projects like Usimamizi Endelevu wa Maliasili provide reason for communities to protect, and conserve the environment and natural resources. This has been achieved through creating sustainable employment opportunities, focusing on education, building the capacity of locals and improving the quality of life for community members in ways that protect biodiversity.

By Peter MacJob, Lagos

Our arrival in Nigeria's self-proclaimed capital of twins to investigate the proliferation of multiple births in the small rural town of Igbo-Ora, we are greeted by the news that a woman has just delivered a healthy pair of babies at the local clinic.

Her mother is a twin - her twin brother is in the ward taking photos of the new arrivals, his nephew and niece. Surrounding the bed are the babies' grandmother, who is herself a twin, and their great-grandmother, who has given birth to two sets of twins.

"That's how we do it here. We give birth to twins. It makes our town special," the five-hour-old twins' grandmother says.

"It makes us proud and we love them. We love our twins. They bring us success," she said.

"People are disappointed if they don't give birth to twins."

It is true that Igbo-Ora, in south-western Nigeria, appears to have a higher-than-usual number of twins - walking through the town it is easy to spot younger sets of twins, who tend to wear matching clothes.

The global average birth rate for twins is around 12 per 1,000 births, but in Igbo-Ora it is reported to be about 45 per 1,000.

Nigeria, twins and a love-hate relationship

In Yoruba culture, which predominates in the south-west of the country, twins are a blessing and their names are predestined.

Twins are often dressed in matching outfits and the older sibling is called Taiwo and the younger Kehinde

Irrespective of gender, the older twin is called Taiwo, meaning "the one that tests the world", the younger is called Kehinde, meaning "the one that came after".

The next day, at Igbo-Ora's high school we find out that these names tend to dominate roll-call. When we ask a group of around 1,500 students during morning assembly to raise their hand if they are a twin, or have a twin in the family, nearly everyone's arm shoots up.

So why are there so many twins in the area?

According to oral folklore, the village was founded in the 14th Century by an exiled prince of the Oyo Kingdom, who was told to make specific offerings to the Yoruba gods in pairs and in return, the village was blessed with twins.

Many locals though put their fertility down to a dish called "ilasa", made from okra leaves. These spinach-like leaves are added to a



Twins pictured in Igbo-Ora, Nigeria

pot of boiling water along with salt and spices, locust beans and melon seeds.

The reason behind Igbo-Ora's multiple births is a genuine subject of study in Nigeria.

Only a minority of the twins born in Igbo-Ora are identical - when one egg is fertilised and then divides.

The majority are non-identical, meaning multiple eggs are released and fertilised at the same time.

Researchers are investigating whether natural chemicals in the local food, like ilasa or perhaps even the local yams, might make women produce multiple eggs.

Prof Akinola Kehinde Akinlabi, rector of the Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology based in Igbo-Ora, thinks genetics may have more to do with it. The academic, who is himself a twin - and father of twins - says someone born a twin in these parts will not find it hard to find a wife or husband.

"Twins are venerated almost as deities who bring good fortune and protection. People present twins and their families with gifts, money and offers of help. All that encourages people to marry those from twin-producing families," he says.

The traditional ruler of the town,

known as an oba, is eagerly awaiting the results of scientific studies.

Jimoh Olajide hopes that in a country with a love of setting Guinness World Records, Igbo-Ora will soon be officially recognised for its phenomenal fertility - given nearly every home in town has at least one set of twins.

"My vision for this town is to see us holding the world record for highest multiple births in the whole world," says Oba Olajide, who is of course a father of twins.

"Things that will follow will be tourism, hotels." With this in mind, the town launched an annual international twin festival several years ago.

Prof Akinlabi hopes the focus on twins will also lead to investment for the broader community to tackle things like its poorly equipped and old health centres.

Such is the status of twins that despite the adoption of Islam and Christianity in this area the traditional Yoruba worship of them is still prevalent.

Kehinde Adeleke, our local guide and a younger twin, takes us to witness a ritual offering, including palm wine and beans, to the twin gods at a shrine in her family's com-

munity. "I feel specially blessed as a twin," says Adeleke who has two children, but no multiple births as yet.

"I will be disappointed if I don't have twins - it's the twins I need," she admits amid the drumming and singing at the ceremony.

These figurines represent the twin deities at a traditional shrine in Igbo-Ora

Such attitudes were a complete anathema for some members of the minority Bassa-Komo community near the capital, Abuja. Twins for them have been a source of fear.

In the mid-1990s, Nigerian missionary Olusola Stevens heard the villagers in this remote and poorly developed area thought twins were evil and that they were mysteriously dying. Such beliefs were not unheard of in Nigeria - especially in the south-east of the country where different communities once killed twins, though such practices ended long ago.

Pastor Stevens, based in Gwagwalada, about 600km (500 miles) north-east of Igbo-Ora, decided to investigate.

"We started going from community to community asking: 'Where are the twins?' The normal response was that the gods had killed them. In fact in some cases, the mother would not breastfeed them so they died naturally," he says.

Need to unlock the potential of African youth in agri-food sector

By Jean Jacques Muhinda and Siki

Kigongo

At over 450 million, Africans aged between 15 and 35 years represent over a third of the continent's population. This segment of the population continues to grow rapidly and is expected to reach 850 million by 2050.

While 20 million youth enter the labour market annually, only 3 million jobs are created each year in the formal economy leaving a huge gap in employment.

With unemployment rates of 25 percent in some countries and underemployment rates at 70 percent in others, the African Union's development agenda rightly places youth at its core, acknowledging that none of its aspirations can be achieved without their meaningful engagement.

However, the reality on the ground presents formidable challenges. Despite the immense potential, Africa faces a deficit of 17 million jobs for youth entering the workforce; with youth unemployment rates double those of adults. These statistics underscore the urgent need for action, but they also highlight the tremendous opportunities that lie within the agri-food sector.

The Malabo/CAADP Declaration, endorsed by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in 2014, sets forth youth-specific targets, recognizing the crucial role young people play in transforming Africa's agricultural landscape. In alignment with this declaration, the AU has developed the African Agribusiness Youth Strategy (AAYS), a continental framework aimed at unlocking the vast un-



Exploring the potential of youth in agri-food sector requires addressing barriers to youth participation such as access to finance, land, market opportunities and skills development.

tapped agribusiness opportunities for youth across various agricultural value chains.

The AAYS provides a comprehensive framework for developing context-specific strategies that empower youth in decision-making and value chains. By leveraging their unique perspectives and capacity for innovation, young people can drive transformative change across all segments of the agricultural value chains, from pre-production to consumption.

The implementation of the AAYS requires a cohesive approach from all stakeholders,

mainly driven by mandated institutions such as the AU's Department for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy & Sustainable Environment (AUC-DARBE); the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD); and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). By convening workshops and engaging with organizations such as AGRA and its programs like Youth Employment for the Future of Agriculture (YEFFA) which align with the AAYS, the AU aims to develop a roadmap that aligns regional priorities with the strategy's objectives.

Domestication and harmonization of AAYS into regional and national agricultural strategies and investment plans shall enhance enabling environment for creation of work opportunities for youth.

One of the key challenges in realizing the potential of youth in agri-food sector is changing the perception of farming from a traditional livelihood to a viable and attractive enterprise. This shift requires addressing barriers to youth participation, such as access to finance, land, market opportunities, and skills development. Moreover, it's essential to

recognize the dynamic trends shaping employment opportunities in the agricultural sector, including changes in consumption patterns, the adoption of digital technologies, and the transformation of agri-food systems to incorporate climate-smart practices and sustainable blue growth.

In Uganda for instance, initiatives like the Presidential Zonal Industrial Hubs, the Uganda Industrial Research Institute Innovation Centre, and the Youth Livelihood Programme are providing young people with marketable skills in agri-food processing and

product development, ICT, agricultural mechanization, and entrepreneurship.

To augment the support for digital transformation, the government launched the Digital Skills Acceleration Program and the Digital Transformation Program, which aim to increase access and usage of ICT by vulnerable groups, including rural smallholder farmers.

Furthermore, the success of the Youth Employment Agency Bill and the National Youth Policy in Ghana is a further example of efforts to upskill and support youth to enter the agribusiness sector. As part of its plan to industrialize agriculture, increase food security and employment opportunities, and lower poverty rates, the Government of Ghana launched the Youth in Agriculture Programme (YIAP), which promotes youth-focused initiatives to change the negative perception of farmers as uneducated, unskilled labourers with low economic returns.

In moving forward, it's crucial to build upon existing structures, institutions, and programs wherever possible, ensuring that efforts are coordinated, and resources maximized. This approach will not only streamline implementation but also foster collaboration and synergy among stakeholders at all levels. By viewing youth not as a liability but as an asset with untapped potential, we can unlock new opportunities for economic growth, social development, and sustainable prosperity across the continent.

By Adonis Byemelwa

A series of military coups has rocked West Africa, throwing the region into a state of political turmoil and raising questions about the future of regional integration and multilateralism. Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, and Niger have all experienced military takeovers, challenging the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to restore civilian rule and uphold democratic norms.

ECOWAS, established in 1975 to foster economic integration, has expanded its mandate to address peace and governance challenges in the region. Despite amendments aimed at promoting democracy and good governance, recent events have exposed vulnerabilities in ECOWAS' effectiveness.

The emergence of the Alliance of Sahel States (ASS) adds a new dimension to West African geopolitics. This defense and economic pact, known as AES, seeks to provide joint military assistance and establish a new currency, the 'Sahel'. Supported by Russia, China, and Turkey, the ASS poses a significant challenge to ECOWAS' authority and ability to maintain stability and governance in the region.

The decision by three West African nations to withdraw from ECOWAS and form the AES has raised eyebrows across the region. This move, prompted by sanctions following military coups, signals growing dissatisfaction with ECOWAS' handling of the situation and perceived influence by foreign powers. It also raises questions about ECOWAS' mechanisms for handling such exits and the potential establishment of cross-regional frameworks between ECOWAS and AES.

Furthermore, the acceptance of military coups as a means to remove unpopular regimes threatens the credibility of regional organizations like ECOWAS in promoting democracy and good governance. The African Union's adjustment of its stance on unconstitutional changes of government adds to these concerns, potentially legiti-

West Africa's political turmoil: A threat to regional integration and multilateralism



ECOWAS headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria

mizing "good coups" under certain circumstances.

As ECOUT countries align themselves more closely with Moscow, the international community must draw lessons from this development. ECOUT's success could embolden other countries to bolster bilateral relations, capitalizing on regional organizations' weaknesses and failures to isolate them as pariah states.

In this context, the future of multilateralism in Africa hangs in the balance. ECOWAS and other regional organizations must adapt to evolving challenges, uphold democratic principles, and strengthen mechanisms for promoting stability and governance to address the crisis in democracy and maintain regional security.

However, the challenges facing ECOWAS extend beyond West Africa. In Eastern Africa, Somalia's recent accession to the East African

Community (EAC) contrasts with the Democratic Republic of Congo's hesitancy, casting shadows over regional integration efforts. Additionally, Sudan's intention to withdraw from the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) further weakens ECOWAS' ability to address security challenges in the volatile Horn of Africa region.

The recent refusal of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to allow the EAC to monitor its elections highlights a broader trend of RECs supporting incumbents who manipulate elections and constitutional processes to retain power. This undermines ECOWAS' credibility as a champion of democracy and good governance.

If ECOUT countries evade ECOWAS sanctions and remain under military rule, it will signify a failure of the prohibition against unconstitutional changes of government and highlight the declining influence of

multilateralism in Africa. These developments underscore the urgent need for regional organizations to uphold democratic principles and strengthen mechanisms for promoting stability and governance.

The political crisis unfolding in West Africa poses a significant threat to the decades-long efforts toward regional integration and multilateral cooperation. The recent emergence of the Alliance of Sahel States (ASS) adds another layer of complexity to an already volatile situation. With the ASS aiming to establish joint military assistance and economic cooperation, the traditional alliances and frameworks within West Africa are being challenged like never before.

Regional integration in West Africa has long been championed by ECOWAS, which has sought to foster economic cooperation, political stability, and social development among its member states. However,

the recent string of military coups and the subsequent formation of the ASS have exposed deep fault lines within the region's integration efforts.

One of the primary pitfalls facing regional integration efforts in West Africa is the lack of cohesion and consensus among member states. While ECOWAS has made strides in promoting democracy and good governance, the recent withdrawal of three member states in favor of the ASS highlights the challenges of maintaining unity and solidarity in the face of diverging interests.

Additionally, the rise of external actors such as Russia, China, and Turkey, who are backing initiatives like the ASS, further complicates the regional integration landscape. These external powers often have their own geopolitical agendas, which may not always align with the interests of West African states or regional organizations like ECOWAS.

Another obstacle to regional integration is the persistence of internal conflicts and security challenges within West Africa. From Boko Haram in Nigeria to the ongoing conflict in Mali, the region faces a myriad of security threats that undermine efforts toward political stability and economic development. Addressing these security challenges requires a co-

ordinated and unified approach, which is difficult to achieve in the current climate of political uncertainty and discord.

Also, the erosion of democratic norms and institutions in some West African countries poses a significant challenge to regional integration efforts. The acceptance of military coups as a means of regime change undermines the principles of democracy and the rule of law, which are essential pillars of regional integration and cooperation.

In light of these challenges, regional organizations like ECOWAS must adapt and revitalize themselves to remain relevant in the face of shifting alliances and geopolitical pressures. This may require a reassessment of existing frameworks and mechanisms, as well as a renewed commitment to promoting democracy, good governance, and inclusive development across the region.

Ultimately, the future of regional integration in West Africa will depend on the ability of regional organizations and member states to overcome these challenges and forge a path toward greater unity, stability, and prosperity. This will require bold leadership, innovative solutions, and a collective commitment to the shared goals of peace, security, and development in the region.

MORTGAGE REFINANCE FIRM SHAREHOLDERS TO POCKET 937M/- IN FINAL DIVIDENDS

By Guardian Reporter

In line with company's dividend policy, the Tanzania Mortgage Refinance Company Limited (TMRC) board has proposed dividends amounting to 939.7m/- for the financial year ended in December 2023, which is equivalent to 40.15/- per share.

According to the audited financial statement for 2023, this is an increase of 88.8m/- compared to 850.96m/- or 36.90/- per share paid during the year ended in December 2022.

The report shows that the Company recorded a net profit of 2.3bn/- last year compared to 2.1bn/- earned in 2022.

The result was mainly attributed to creation and maintenance of good investment portfolio as well as effective cost management, the report reads.

Return on equity increased to 6.2 percent last year, compared to 5.8 percent in 2022, while basic earnings per share

improved by 10 percent to 101.5m/- compared to 92.4/- recorded during the previous financial year.

During the year, total income increased from 8.25bn/- in the prior year to 9.76bn/-, an increase of 18.05 percent, while revenue amounted to 23.22bn/- last year, compared to 21.50bn/- respectively.

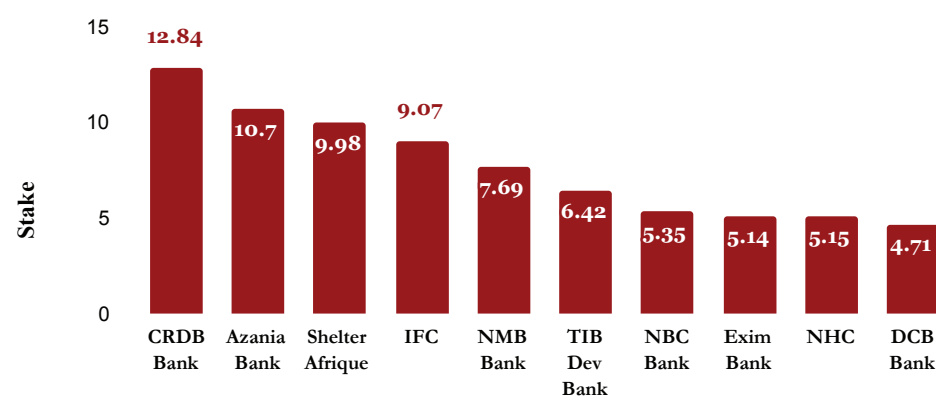
Revenue mainly comprises of the interest on the outstanding loans advanced to the borrowers and interest from government securities.

Loan portfolio increased by nine percent to 160.1bn/- during last year, compared to 146bn/- recorded during the previous year.

However, company saw its total assets falling by 2.7 percent to 217.7bn/- last year, compared to 221.7bn/- recorded during the previous year as well as shareholders' equity, which declined to 34.97bn/- from 40.33bn/- respectively.

TMRC currently has 15 borrowing members (all of which are now offering mortgage loans) and has already extend-

Top ten shareholders of Tanzania Mortgage Refinance Company by December 2023



Shareholders

ed loans worth 158.70bn/- to fourteen (14) of its member banks and four (4) non-member banks.

As at 31st December, 2023, refinancing and pre-financing mortgages advanced by TMRC to its member and non-member banking institutions was equivalent to 26.72 percent of the total outstanding mort-

gage debt. The report notes that TMRC's contribution to the growth of the housing market is expected to significantly increase over the coming years as the new financing will build on the achievements of the ongoing Housing Finance Project (HFP) which is playing a key role in developing the mortgage market.

In addition, bond issuance long term line of credit will continue to be the source of further TMRC lending to Primary Mortgage Lenders (PMLs) which continue to offer mortgages to their clients.

So far, TMRC has issued bond in four tranches since 2018 to 2023 which were all oversubscribed. In the thir-

teen years that TMRC has been operational, a significant impact has been noted in the mortgage market, the report says.

The number of banks offering mortgage loans has grown from only 3 banks in 2010 to 31 banks on 31st December 2023 and mortgage repayment period has increased from the maximum of 7 years that was previously offered in 2011 to between 15 and 25 years that banks offer now.

In effort to grow mortgage market in Tanzania TMRC has also focused its growth strategy on ensuring the company obtain alternative concessionary funding either by working with the government and/or from DFI's using government guarantee.

The company is expecting to improve its IT system and staffs' skills through training program.

As at the end of 2023, the report says, TMRC had a pipeline of 45bn/- billion which was awaiting disbursement and discussions with financi-

ers for concessionary funding to refinance the pipeline was still on-going.

To boost its cash flow, TMRC Management has set out various strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainable funding which can be used to on lend to the PMLs.

One of the strategies is engaging different Development Finance Institutions (DFI) who will be able to lend to TMRC at a low cost given that TMRC has low risk profile.

The company reports that it is currently in discussion with several DFIs and some of these discussions are in a very advanced stage.

Also sourcing funds locally is part of TMRC strategy of raising long term funding through corporate bond issuance.

However, the company notes that, raising funds through capital markets is more expensive, so management is looking for options of blending these funds with concessionary funds to make them affordable for the PMLs.

Absa opens office in China, gateway to growth

By Francis Kajubi

In a bid to extend its global presence, Absa Group has opened a non-banking subsidiary in the People's Republic of China, fortifying the vital economic bridge between Africa and China.

The subsidiary office in Beijing is a continuation of a decision made two years back when the Group opened two non-banking subsidiaries in London and New York.

The decision is rooted in Absa's belief that Africa is endowed with talent, mineral wealth and a young population poised to play an increasingly influential role in global trade, as investors recognise its status as the emerging true frontier in global growth.

Absa Bank Tanzania Acting Corporate Director, Nellyana Mmanyi told the press yesterday that Absa Group isn't merely acquiring a new location but affirming its dedication to expanding global presence and playing a critical role in facilitating growth on the continent.

According to her, the China-Africa investment relationship has flourished for decades, with China emerging as the continent's largest bilateral trade partner. This has been fuelled by Chinese investment in Africa's vast natural



Absa Bank Tanzania's Acting Corporate Director, Nellyana Mmanyi (R), addresses a media on the official opening of the bank's office in China at a brief occasion held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. She is with the bank's Head of Marketing and Corporate Affairs.. Aron Luhanga. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

resources and infrastructure projects, creating huge commercial opportunities for both regions.

"Our decision to establish a presence in China was driven by our ambition to better connect trade, investment flows and clients into Africa, where we will serve them across our extensive continental footprint. Absa Group intimately understands the continent and seeks to be a partner of choice for organisations

looking to access opportunities on the continent," said Mmanyi.

She asserted that Absa Group's expansion into China highlights Absa's client-centric approach, in being able to innately understand their client's needs.

She affirmed that the Beijing office will operate under a wholly foreign owned enterprise licence which permits the financial institution to provide

general advisory services to clients based in China for concluding transactions across the African continent, as a non-banking subsidiary of Absa Group Limited.

Absa Bank Tanzania Head of Marketing and Corporate Affairs, Aron Luhanga said that the subsidiary office allows the Absa Group to provide general advisory services to clients based in China for concluding transactions across the African continent.

"The new office will enable Absa Group to offer local support to Chinese clients and stakeholders to conclude transactions across the African continent, helping to support clients' needs, goals, and ambitions;

This is part of a wider commitment from Absa to expand its operations with an international presence in strategic markets and offer deep expertise in African markets to its overseas clients," said Luhanga adding;

"Our presence in China will help to firmly establish Absa's capability to provide general advisory services to clients based in China for concluding transactions across the African continent. This will not only give us a physical presence in the region but also help us to meet the needs of our clients operating in this rapidly growing market."

Emirates to move to new airport by 2034

DUBAI

Dubai carrier Emirates will move to its new home at Al Maktoum International Airport by 2034, the airline's Chairman and Chief Executive confirmed on Tuesday.

"We have an existing terminal that has capacity for 35 million passengers and, as of next year, flydubai will also increase operations out of the existing terminal. When we talk about an airport that has a capacity of 260 million passengers, it needs at least 8 to 10 years of construction. We are going from one to five runways. That will take some time. That will give the airport time to open without putting constraints on existing traffic," Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum said.

Last month, Dubai announced that construction had started on the new \$35 billion Al Maktoum International Airport terminal, which will be the world's largest, with a capacity for 260 million passengers upon completion.

However, the Emirates chief refused to commit to a possible IPO, although Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways has reportedly been tapping banks according to last week's Bloomberg report.

"But when it comes to financing, any project that we are a part of will draw attention from a lot of companies, and government authorities that will be keen on financing the project... I am not worried. We will always find a way to finance."

While speaking at the Arabian Travel Market at the Dubai World Trade Centre, Sheikh Ahmed also said that the recent Dubai rains had resulted in a financial impact on the airline.

"I won't talk numbers, but the recent rains cost us a lot. We needed to park 260 aircraft with 160 gates, putting up 26,000 people in hotels in Dubai. And I think we were exceptionally hit hard on the baggage side," Sheikh Ahmed revealed.

With an order book of 200 aircraft to be delivered by the end of 2029, Sheikh Ahmed also said he was "not happy" with the 777x delays.

"The [Boeing's] management has said it will put in a lot of effort to fix Boeing deliveries and the 777x delays. I have met with the management, and they said they are doing best to fix it. But until I see certification announced, I will not say much," Sheikh Ahmed added.

The airline head said delivery was expected by the first quarter of 2025, adding: "We are in communication with Boeing to be able to determine a date. It puts a lot of pressure on the current Emirates seat capacity, which is why we announced our plans to retrofit 71 planes," alluding to Tuesday's announcement that the airline would be completely refurbishing another 43 A380s and 28 Boeing 777 aircraft, expanding its retrofit programme to 191 aircraft from the original 120."

Farmers urged to produce sorghum on large scale

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Kongwa

FARMERS in the central zone corridor have been encouraging to embark into larger cultivation of sorghum as the cereal crop is currently attracting vast reliable market.

In Tanzania, sorghum is grown in almost all the semi-arid areas by subsistence farmers for food, feed, and beer. A total of 6.2 million hectare is used for cereal crop production, of which 0.9 million hectares (15 percent) is under sorghum cultivation.

For years, millet growers faced a challenge of assured market for their produce, but thank to the Tanzania Breweries Limited (TBL) for decided to

chip in and started to purchase the crop from the farmers with purpose for brewing beers.

Not only that, but the country's beer maker company has also established a special scheme for capacitating the farmers, in terms of entering into a special contract with them in order to produce in abundant and at needed quality so as to supply for the company.

Speaking during the farmer's field day (FFD) held in Mlali ward of Kongwa district, Dodoma region, Dr Andekile Mwachonje, the agricultural experts from the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) said the farmers are currently blessed with a prestigious opportunity to benefiting highly from the

crop. The FFD was organised by Dodoma Agriculture Seed Production Association (DASPA) in cooperation with TARI, International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture, as well as the Accelerated Varietal Improvement and Seed Systems in Africa (AVISA).

Among others, the event was tailored to provide a crucial podium to help impart the sorghum farmers in the semi-arid district with key awareness on the needed agronomic practices for the growing of the cereal crop, as well as certified seed varieties.

"Dodoma, specifically Kong-

wa district has potential to grow sorghum, the vital economic opportunity which must be used by the farmers to produce in large scale in order to improve their livelihoods as there's vast reliable market," he observed.

He challenged the farmers to make brave use of outcomes from the agricultural pundits research, as well as technologies in order to adopt better cultivation methods and seeds, and thus, improve their yields.

Speaking for her part, Janeth Nyamayahasi, the chairperson of DASPA said the Association was working round the clock to ensure the farmers are getting enough, but improved seed varieties for the crop.

"Improved seeds is vital in enabling the farmers to cul-

tivate more productive that's why we've striving all the best to make sure farmers are equipped with enough seeds in order to boost their production and productivity," she detailed.

Jesca Michael, a sorghum farmer from Mlali village said the event, FFD, has helped to give them crucial knowledge and relevant technologies, the development she said would help them improve their farming works.

In concerted efforts to improve performance of the sub-sector, TARI in sync with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has researched and introduce to the farmers at least four seed varieties for sorghum.

PROTECTING FINANCIAL ASSETS THROUGH FIGHTING DIGITAL FRAUD

By Pamela Nnkya

TECHNOLOGY has woven itself into the fabric of our lives, transforming how we interact with everything, including our finances.

The fast pace of technical innovation in the financial services space has leaped from the age of the ATM to providing us with mobile banking apps, online banking platforms, payment applications, and other suit services offering unparalleled convenience.

Depending on your choices, you can now effectively manage your financial affairs anytime and from anywhere. However, this revolution comes with a dark side - the growing threat of digital fraud.

Gone are the days of armed bank robberies, today's perpetrators operate through cables and internet connections, social media, and phones, siphoning funds without ever showing their faces.

This reality is particularly concerning in Tanzania. Recent statistics from the Bank of Tanzania reveal a significantly higher proportion of digital frauds reported by banks and financial institutions and a staggering 84 percent

increase in digital fraud during the last quarter of 2023. In total, this translates to a loss of 4.89 billion Tanzanian Shillings stolen through cyberspace alone in 2023.

This threat is not unique to Tanzania; it reflects a broader trend across Africa and the globe.

The 2022 World Bank report 'Cyber Threats to the Financial Sector in Africa' warns that "Large-scale rapid digitalization of financial products provides new avenues of opportunity for threat actors."

Greater levels of digitally enabled financial inclusion, coupled with customers who are unfamiliar with those products and services, open new targets for scammers. Digitalization also comes with an expanded supply chain, which will provide threat actors with new access vectors."

One of the most common scams used to access individual information and perpetrate theft is phishing. It involves tricking people into revealing credentials, bank details, or other personal information to the perpetrators.

Email or SMS are sent to make recipients reveal sensitive information either by clicking a link



to install key logging malware, inputting data into an unsecured web page, or just responding with the requested information.

Beware of those urgent emails posing to be from your bank or giving you unusual sudden rewards and pressuring you to urgently provide information. Other variants include vishing which is the use of voice calls to attempt

to get the same result.

Theft through ATM cards, either through skimming or social engineering is also a common occurrence.

Beware who has access to your card, PIN, and the security of the environment where you use your ATM card.

Another area where individuals are vulnerable is the use of

insecure online and mobile payment platforms to pay for goods and services locally and globally.

Sometimes related directly to phishing but this could also just be a result of weak payment site security.

Users should ensure they understand and trust the security behind platforms where their financial access details are used or stored.

Fortunately, there are steps that can be taken to combat this growing threat through a multi-pronged approach including state-of-the-art cyber security technology and robust authentication processes for digital banking.

These processes function as checkpoints, verifying a user's identity before allowing access to financial information and providing an extra layer of security making it significantly harder for fraudsters to breach accounts.

It is important to note that the responsibility of safeguarding against digital fraud does not rest solely on the shoulders of financial institutions. The responsibility extends to every individual who engages in digital transactions.

As consumers, we must exercise caution and remain vigilant against suspicious activity.

Simple steps, such as being cautious against unusual emails, SMS, and calls, and not disclosing your personal and financial details in unsecure online platforms. In addition to that, as consumers we need to monitor account statements regularly, avoid sharing passwords and PIN access, and promptly report any anomalies.

Such measures can help keep would-be fraudsters at bay or, at the very least minimize associated losses.

Embracing digital literacy is paramount for the user, educating ourselves about the risks and best practices of digital finance products and channels we use empowers us to make more informed and safer decisions and protect our financial assets.

By working together, banks, financial institutions, and the public can create a more robust defense against digital fraud and embrace the evolution of technology for a safer and more prosperous future.

Pamela Nnkya (pictured) is the financial expert based in Dar es Salaam.

Bank announces winners of campaign's raffle draw

By Guardian Correspondent

CRDB Bank has announced three winners of motorbikes and three-wheeler bike, following the raffle draw of an ongoing SimBanking campaign.

The winners including Rashid Majaliwa, resident of Mwanza who has won a three-wheeler bike as well as Martin Alfred Mlowe from Njombe and Vale Abdalla Myombe from Mpanda whom both have won motorcycles.

Speaking during a telephone call after the raffle draw, Mlowe, one of the winners of the motorcycles from Njombe said the won prize is expected to help him in conducting movements of his business.

"I am doing a timber business which I obtain from the villages. This motorcycle is expected to help me to simplify my movements," he said, noting that the transactions



Julius Ritte, Head of marketing, CRDB Bank (C) makes a follow up when Winnie Mzava (R), a bank official, was speaking to the winner of the raffle draw. Left is the bank's Marketing Officer Salim Mohammed. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

that have enabled him to win are those which he used to pay suppliers of timber through their mobile money accounts.

Another winner, Ally from Mwanza, a small trader said the obtained three-wheeler cycle is expected to create another source of income,

as he is currently vending clothes.

Julius Ritte, the head of marketing, CRDB Bank, said during the raffle draw that the ongoing campaign will continue throughout the year and two motorcycle and one bajaj winners will be selected each month.

"Up to now, we have obtained four winners of motorcycles, two winners of bajaj and one winner of brand new Nissan Dualis. In March, we announced the winners of the first raffle draw and last month was for these three winners we are announcing today," he said. "The aim of this campaign is to enable our customers to reduce their costs in conducting banking transactions through the use of SimBanking."

He said SimBanking is using highly advanced technology and is safe and reliable, which enable a customer to conduct up to 95 percent of the bank's services.

Mauritius expected to host property forum

By Guardian Correspondent

Mauritius is expected to host the second Mauritius & Indian Ocean Property Forum, which will be held on 13th June at the InterContinental Hotel & Resort, 15km from Port Louis and Gand Baie, promises to be a landmark event.

The gathering is a testament to Mauritius's growing status as a destination for real estate investment and corporate expansion.

With its favourable business environment, safety, strategic location, and growing economy, Mauritius is poised to attract increased foreign direct investment and become a major player in the regional business landscape.

This one-of-a-kind event covers opportunities for buyers and developers as well as Mauritius's significant potential as a business hub for Africa and the region.

The forum, a gathering of local and international stakeholders, offers a unique opportunity to connect with key players in the industry. With its well-structured schedule, diverse sessions, and high-profile speakers, the event promises to provide valuable insights and networking opportunities for all.

Murray Anderson-Ogle, GM of marketing and commercial at API Events, says, "The API Mauritius & Indian Ocean Property Forum is easy to attend and comes with plenty of opportunities in residential, hospitality and commercial property, property management, and more. It also coincides with one of the best months to visit this beautiful island nation." Adding that this year's theme "Building the Future - Leading Tomorrow's Africa" provides a unique platform to share insights into the opportunities in Africa's fastest growing and impactful business hub."

JLL, a second-time sponsor, is the largest global real estate advisor present in Africa and has been active in Mauritius for more than a decade, advising investors, lenders, developers, occupi-

ers and the public sector on a broad spectrum of asset classes, with the aim of linking global capital and innovation with local platforms and expertise.

Wayne Godwin, Co-CEO of JLL Africa, comments, "The success of the inaugural event in 2023 really highlighted the appetite for Mauritius from the regional and local investor community and 2024 will no doubt build on this success. Mauritius has weathered many of the global headwinds better than other regional economies and the fundamentals are amongst the best in Africa for recovery through 2024. As JLL, we are very proud of the partnership with API and the forum's ability to raise awareness of the opportunity for investment into Mauritian and African real estate."

Robin Hardin, CEO of Bloomage Property Fund, comments, "Our strong permeating belief in 'Real Estate with a Heartbeat' supports our dedication to positively contribute to Mauritius's economy through the real estate sector. By collaborating with API Mauritius, we reinforce our role as a reliable partner in developing the property market both locally and in the region."

"Our principle of 'Real Estate with a Heartbeat' underscores our dedication to enhancing Mauritius's economy through the real estate sector. By supporting API Mauritius, we reinforce our role as a reliable partner in developing the property market both locally and in the region."

Sandee Teeroovengadam, Head of Marketing & Communication at Landscape Mauritius, says, "API Mauritius aligns with the organization's intent of promoting sustainable and cutting-edge real estate development in Mauritius. As a repeat sponsor, we are pleased to demonstrate our ongoing support for the Summit, which serves as a valuable platform connecting international and local real estate professionals and leveraging on a wealth of industry expertise and pan-African knowledge."

Bank donates medical outfits to Mpitimbi Hospital

By Guardian Correspondent,

Songea

NBC Bank has donated medical equipment worth over 11.5m/- to Mpitimbi Hospital in Songea, Ruvuma Region, to enhance healthcare services at the facility.

The donation, which was handed over yesterday, includes 1 delivery bed, 15 patient beds, 15 mattresses, medicines, and other medical supplies. The equipment was received by the Acting Regional Secretary, Eng. Gilbert Donatius Simya, on behalf of the Ruvuma Regional Commissioner.

The handover ceremony was attended by senior officials from the region and the hospital, including the Director of the Songea Council, Elizabeth Gumbo, and the Priest of the Songea Catholic Diocese, Father Wilhelm Soni.

Elibariki Masuke, the Director of Retail Banking at NBC Bank led other bank officials in delivering the aid.

Masuke said the donation is part of the bank's efforts to support the government's initiatives in improving the healthcare sector, as well as fulfil its community support policy,



NBC Bank director of retail banking Elibariki Masuke (3rd L), hands over part of the medical equipment aid to Acting Regional Secretary of Ruvuma Region, Eng Gilbert Simya, to support the improvement of healthcare services at Mpitimbi Hospital in Songea, Ruvuma Region. The handover ceremony took place at the hospital yesterday and was attended by senior officials from the region and the hospital, as well as NBC Bank employees. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

particularly in enhancing community health.

"At NBC Bank, we believe in improving the health of mothers and children. It is because of this commitment that today we are handing over this equipment to contribute to the improvement of the health of the people of Mpitimbi, Songea," Masuke said.

He highlighted some of the bank's other healthcare

initiatives, including the NBC Dodoma Marathon, through which the bank raises funds to fight cervical cancer in women, and the sponsorship of midwife training programs to improve maternal and child health.

"Through the marathon, we have raised awareness among 23,000 women, and more than 1,090 of them have been diagnosed with

cervical cancer and received treatment," he said adding that "Through the initiative, we provide training sponsorships for 100 midwives in collaboration with the Benjamin Mkapa Foundation to improve safe maternal and child healthcare in Tanzania. We are proud to say that so far, 50 midwives have received this training and gone back to work with enhanced

skills to save the lives of mothers and children," he said. He added that the bank has sponsored and coordinated the NBC mobile clinics, which are mobile clinics in Zanzibar, aimed at improving the health of the citizens in various parts of the islands.

Eng. Simya expressed gratitude for the donation, explaining that it will significantly impact the hospital's ability to serve the large number of patients who seek medical care there, including residents of the area and neighboring regions.

"Despite the government's ongoing efforts to improve healthcare services, the support of various stakeholders is still needed to achieve these efforts... so I urge stakeholders like NBC to continue supporting various efforts made by the government to improve various sectors, including health," he said.

Father Wilhelm Soni also thanked NBC Bank for the aid, noting that the hospital receives many inpatient and maternity patients, and the donated beds and supplies will greatly enhance its capacity to serve the patients.

CONSTRUCTION

MSALALA DISTRICT COUNSELLED ON USE OF FUNDS FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

By Guardian Correspondent

The acting Msalala district council executive director Abdulkadir Mfilinge has urged the district officials to ensure proper use of funds provided by the government in implementing various development projects.

Mfilinge made the call yesterday during the councilors meeting to evaluate the implementation of the budget for the third quarter of the current financial year.

He reminded the district council officials to ensure that they are dealing with all challenges ahead of civic education later this year.

"I urge all district officials to implement the government directive of regular supervise the implementation of the development projects as well as solving the problems facing the people," he said.

During the two day meeting, Mfilinge said during the meeting between the office of the president, regional administration and



Msalala district council councilors follow the proceeding of the council meeting for the third quarter of the current financial year.

local governments and all district executive directors earlier this week, it was directed that all district officials to start preparing for civic elections as well as solv-

ing people's problem.

"The meeting directed for the start of preparations for civic education, proper supervision of the implementation of develop-

ment projects, increase revenue collections and resolve conflicts between district councils chairpersons with executive directors," he said.

He said during the next financial year, the government has promised to direct more funds to implement development projects in education and health.

"When these funds will be disbursed, I ask the local government authorities to proper supervise their use," he said.

Mfilinge also congratulated the district executive director Khamis Katimba for enabling the council to obtain unqualified opinion for the financial year 2022/23 by the Controller Auditor General (CAG).

"Some of the major efforts the district executive director has been doing is to hold progress meetings at village, ward and council levels, which has ensured good governance," he said.

"Our district executive director is very serious because all efforts he is making have enabled our district council to attain fastest speed of development," he said.

On behalf of fellow councilors, the councilor for Bulyanhulu ward Joseph Luyombya, con-

gratulated the district executive director for proper implementation of development projects, revenue collection, good governance and improvement of overall welfare of the people.

The meeting also discussed various reports from different committees.

"As councilors, would like to congratulate our DED for serving the people, implement development projects and promoting good governance which has enabled our council to receive unqualified opinion by the CAG," he said.

He said Katimba has enabled the collection of 98 percent of all targeted revenue for 2023/2024, ahead of the end of the financial year.

Speaking during the meeting, the assistant district administrative secretary, supervision and audit Ibrahim Makana has emphasized on an increased speed of revenue collections.

Bank launches digital platform for community savings groups

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

THE Tanzania Commercial Bank (TCB) has launched a digital platform for community savings groups, an innovative initiative that marks a significant step promoting financial inclusion, through bringing traditional savings practices into the digital age.

Speaking during the launching of the platform in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Adam Mihayo, Chief Executive Officer, TCB said that as the technology continues to evolve, the bank remains committed to meeting the changing needs of its customers, by investing in reliable and secured digital banking solutions.

"The launch of Kikoba comes at a time when consumers increasingly seek greater control and convenience in their banking transactions. TCB being the bank that listens and understands the needs of its customers has taken the lead in spearheading digital banking, hence launching its highly innovative digital saving product, KIKOBA for the financial and economic benefits of the



Adam Mihayo, CEO, Tanzania Commercial Bank (3rd R) poses in a photo during the launching of a Community Savings Groups Digital Platform in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Looking on are representatives from telecommunication providers. Photo: Correspondent Mary Kadoke.

bank's customers and Tanzanians at large," he said.

The CEO said 'Kikoba' is more than just a digital platform that represents an encompassing and more inclusive, transparent and secured

approach towards saving and financial management.

He added: Today's constantly technology has led consumers to become more connected and digital savvy. This has led to their desire

for more control on when and how they want to make their transactions and access banking services hence the transformation has seen the banking sector increase investment in technologies that

offer reliable and more secure digital banking solutions to customers."

Sonia Choteka, Tabata Goodhope Vikoba secretary, underscored TCB's essence of ensuring the accessibility of modern technology at the palm of their hands.

"The platform has eased our day-to-day activities. Initially we failed to reach consensus on how to execute our tasks based on the network varieties. With that scenario, the launched platform will now engage all community savings participants regardless of their networks," said Choteka.

For the first time ever, one will be able to register or join a 'Kikoba' via all mobile providers including Tigo, Airtel, Halotel and Vodacom.

Vikoba is derived from the Swahili word 'Vikoba' for savings groups, and is now seamlessly accessible through mobile devices.

"The partnership with telecommunication providers in the country will ensure widespread access and convenience for customers across the country," said Choteka.

Winners of WEP project get fund from EXIM Bank

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

EXIM Bank has disbursed a total of 16m/- to three deserving winners who successfully completed entrepreneurship, business, and empowerment training provided by the bank.

The initiative was designed specifically to empower women economically across Tanzania. The recipients of the financial support including Beatrice Msafiri, the first-place winner receiving 8m/-. Catherine Assenga, the second-place winner with 5m/-, and Rukia Mohamed, the third-place winner who obtained 3m/-.

Through its philanthropic initiative, 'Exim Cares', EXIM Bank launched the Women Empowerment Program (WEP) in 2023.

The program aims to foster inclusivity and gender equality for women in Africa, focusing on countries where EXIM bank operates, including Tanzania, Comoros, Djibouti, and Uganda.

Stanley Kafu, Head of Marketing at EXIM Bank, emphasized during the graduation ceremony that, "The WEP Program is an integral part of a broader strategy to create a platform for women to excel in all aspects of life, particularly in the economic realm."

He noted that this marks the second consecutive year of the Women's Economic Empowerment Program and extended congratulations to all the winners, expressing confidence in their ability to utilize the funds to expand their businesses.

Reflecting on her victory, Rukia says, "I am grateful for this substantial capital injection, as it will greatly facilitate the expansion of my business. With these funds, I plan to enhance my operations by scaling up my poultry production and investing in additional chicken coops, thereby fueling the growth of my enterprise."

Beatrice, on the other hand, shared insights gained from the training, "I have gained valuable insights on customer segmentation, enabling me to tailor my products to meet their specific needs and preferences. Additionally, I have acquired skills in crafting strategic business plans aimed at enhancing the overall performance and success of my enterprises."

Additionally, all 25 participants in the training program were offered the opportunity to access interest-free loans of up to \$10,000.

Participants were selected through a rigorous process involving registration, application submission, and joint team verification. The top three winners were chosen based on presentations to a panel of judges, who assessed various criteria, including business viability, product quality, and market demand.

EXIM Bank reaffirmed its commitment to women's empowerment and entrepreneurship, recognizing their pivotal role in Tanzania and Africa's development agenda. The WEP project is envisioned to be sustainable for five years, aiming to positively impact over 600,000 women by 2028.

Aligned with Tanzania's Vision 2025 and Zanzibar's Vision 2050, EXIM Bank's initiative will contribute to advancing social and economic prosperity for women, underscoring its ongoing support for national development efforts.

Oman's residential leasing market buoyant, occupancy up

Muscat

Oman's residential leasing market is buoyant with occupancy significantly increasing in well-managed assets, according to an industry expert.

"This trend persists despite a decline in expatriate numbers compared to the beginning of the year," Ihsan Kharouf, Head of Savills Oman, said in an exclusive interview with the Times of Oman.

"However, considering the major population influx last year, tenants are gradually transitioning from their initial quick-fix accommodations towards more suitable, longer-term homes," he added.

He said this at the sidelines of the Oman Real Estate Expo which was held recently at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

"The real estate exhibition in Oman for 2024 has been the best I have ever seen in terms of attendance, number, and scale of exhibitors," he said.

These exhibitions serve as



a great barometer for the market, not just reflecting current market conditions but also indicating market confidence for the upcoming period. This is positive news for the market, as such confidence can be self-

fulfilling, he further added.

"The office market continues its positive momentum from 2023, with Savills recording the best commercial leasing numbers in a decade," Ihsan Kharouf said. "Meanwhile,

there remains a delicate balance between supply and demand, with owners leveraging active market intelligence in pricing to ensure maximum occupancy," he further added.

Elaborating on the retail sec-

tor, he said that it can be categorised into three main segments. Prime retail is performing strongly, with waiting lists even present. In contrast, secondary retail tenants maintain a strong negotiating position due to oversupply.

Lastly, localised, community, or destination retail, actively managed in line with market demand, is performing well, with key money being exchanged to accommodate some tenants.

"It is evident that we are entering a dynamic period in the Omani market, especially with the launch of the Muscat Structure Plan and the announcement of numerous new projects in Muscat and other major cities. These developments will have a significant impact on the real estate landscape," Ihsan Kharouf said.

WORLD

Biden says US won't provide weapons to Israel for Rafah invasion



US President Joe Biden speaks about his Investing in America agenda, at Gateway Technical College in Sturtevant, Wisconsin, on Wednesday AFP

WASHINGTON

THE United States will not send weapons to Israel if they are to be used in a major military operation in Rafah, in southern Gaza Strip, US President Joe Biden told CNN on Wednesday.

The president's remarks were his first to address US arms supply to Israel following the administration's decision last week to put the shipment of bombs on hold, a warning that Israel should not launch an invasion in Rafah absent credible protection of civilian lives.

"Civilians have been killed in Gaza as a consequence of those bombs and other ways in which they go after popu-

lation centers," Biden said, referring to 2,000-pound bombs whose delivery to Israel has been halted. US media reported that also being delayed was the transfer of 500-pound bombs.

"We're going to continue to make sure Israel is secure in terms of Iron Dome and their ability to respond to attacks that came out of the Middle East recently," Biden said. "But it's, it's just wrong. We're not going to -- we're not going to supply the weapons and artillery shells."

The Israel Defense Forces has now taken control of the Gazan side of the Rafah crossing linking Egypt and Gaza. Biden said Israel's actions so far have yet to cross a red line of entering heavily populated ar-

eas in Rafah.

"They haven't gone into the population centers. What they did is right on the border. And it's causing problems with, right now, in terms of - with Egypt, which I've worked very hard to make sure we have a relationship and help," Biden said.

"I've made it clear to (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu) and the (Israeli) War Cabinet: They're not going to get our support, if in fact they go on these population centers," he said.

Biden's words were interpreted by US media as drawing a red line for the Israeli government.

What's also significant is that the president acknowledged that bombs his nation sent to Israel

had been used to kill civilians in the conflict in Gaza, indicating that the United States played a role in the slaughter.

Earlier in the day, as he testified on the Pentagon's Fiscal Year 2025 budget proposal, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told Senators on Capitol Hill that the Pentagon is "going to continue to do what's necessary to ensure that Israel has the means to defend itself. But that said, we are currently reviewing some near-term security assistance shipments in the context of unfolding events in Rafah."

"We haven't made any decisions," Austin added. "We did pause as we reevaluated some of the security assistance we're providing." **Xinhua**

Xi concludes Serbia visit with elevated ties, emotional moments

BELGRADE

CHINESE President Xi Jinping wrapped up his state visit to Serbia on Wednesday, bundling up a multitude of deals and a strengthened bond of friendship with the country.

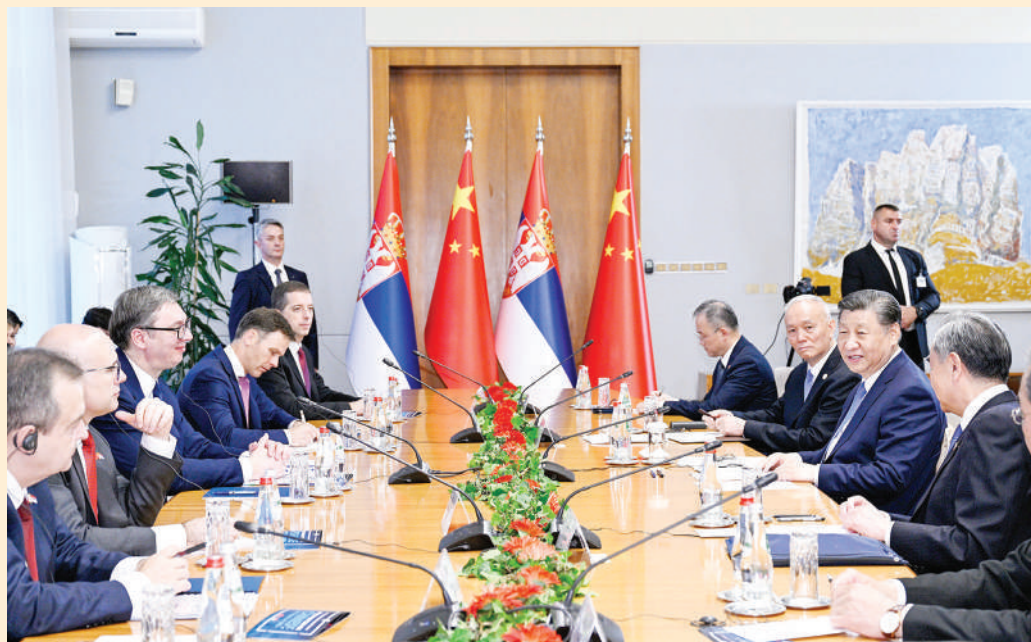
At the end of a fully-packed day, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic bid farewell to Xi at the Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport, where he had welcomed the Chinese president the day before.

Earlier in the day, Xi and Vucic signed a joint statement on the building of a China-Serbia community with a shared future in the new era, an upgrade of relations from the comprehensive strategic partnership established in 2016.

The deal makes Serbia the first European country to build such a community with China. Countries like Laos, Pakistan and Thailand have also endorsed a high-level engagement of this kind with China.

"With this agreement, Serbia is leading the way in its relations with China," said Ivona Ladjevac, deputy director at the Institute for International Politics and Economics in Belgrade.

Aleksandar Mitic, a research fellow also with the institute said this improvement of strategic cooperation should be



President Xi Jinping and Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic hold discussions with their delegations in Belgrade on Wednesday. XINHUA

viewed very positively. "It is not directed against anyone."

Serbia has long been known as "the gateway to the Balkans" on the European continent. "Everything that has been done so far and will be done in the future can serve as an example to other countries in the region and throughout Europe to get involved as much as possible," said Mitic. "The principle of mutual benefit can really work."

In support of the building of the China-Serbia community with a shared future in

the new era, Xi announced six measures when he met the press together with Vucic. Notable among the measures are a free trade agreement between China and Serbia which will take effect on July 1 and an exchange program under which Serbian youths and young Serbian scientists are invited to visit China in the next three years.

"The sky is the limit," said Vucic, referring to the scope of cooperation with China.

"For Serbia, it obviously brings a great deal," said Alek-

sandar Pavic, a Serbian political expert. "The opening of the Chinese market with the Free Trade Agreement, academic exchanges ... those are very, very important."

"China offers a hand of co-operation on an equal footing, and offers great opportunities without conditions," Pavic said. "We've grown weary of the zero-sum game for far too long." The substantial deals added new testimony to the special bond of ironclad friendship enjoyed by China and Serbia.

Precious moments of good-

will and friendship are a signature of Xi's short but significant stay in Serbia, which lasts no more than 24 hours.

A telling moment was the grand welcoming ceremony held by Vucic on Wednesday morning with an impressive attendance of more than 10,000 Serbian people.

Crowds were waving the national flags of both countries and chanting "China! Serbia!" with applause and cheers pervading the atmosphere.

"We are here to show our friendship with China, and we want our Chinese friends to know that we cherish it very much," said Milos Tosic, a college professor present at the event. Tosic told Xinhua that it is not only his opinion, but one shared "by all the people here today".

At a welcoming banquet around noon, Xi shared his nostalgic memory with Vucic, reminiscing about the Yugoslav film 'The Bridge' and the song 'Bella Ciao', which have become the fondest memories in his youthful days. "China will work together with the friendly people of Serbia and make tireless efforts to build a China-Serbia community with a shared future in the new era," Xi pledged in his concluding remarks at the banquet toast, opening up a vista for the two countries. **Xinhua**

Putin congratulates parade participants on Victory Day

MOSCOW

THE Western elites' policy of instigating new conflicts are an element of revanchism, Russian President Vladimir Putin said during the Victory Day parade on Moscow's Red Square yesterday.

"Revanchism, the mockery of history and the striving to justify current followers of Nazism are part of the Western elites' general policy of instigating ever new regional conflicts, interethnic and inter-religious strife and containing sovereign, independent centers of world development," the Russian leader said.

Russia will do everything to prevent a global clash, says Putin. Putin calls revanchism part of Western elites' policy of stirring up new conflicts. Russia does not allow anyone to threaten it and its strategic forces are always at the ready.

West tries to incite global conflicts, interethnic hostility, restrain sovereign development centers, says Putin. During first years of Great Patriotic War, USSR fought alone against Nazism while entire Europe worked for Hitler. Russia does not belittle role of second front in World War II. Future of Russia depends on everyone, we must look up to generation of winners in Great Patriotic War.

Whole of Russia is with heroes of special military operation, says Putin.

"Russia will do everything to avert a global confrontation. At the same time, we will not allow anyone to threaten us. Our strategic forces are always combat ready," the Russian leader stressed.

"Russia is now going through a difficult, milestone period, the fate of the Motherland, its future depends on each of us," he said.

"Today, on Victory Day, we realize this even more acutely and clearly and invariably look up to the generation of victors - brave, noble, and wise, for their ability to cherish friendship and persevere in the face of adversity, for their confidence in themselves and their country, and for their sincere and unselfish love for their Motherland," Putin emphasized.

Putin is confident in ensuring free and safe future of Russia and its united people. Putin congratulates parade participants on Victory Day, calls it sacred holiday.

"Dear citizens of Russia! Dear veterans! Comrades soldiers and seamen, sergeants and master sergeants, ensigns and warrant officers, comrades officers, generals and admirals! Fighters, commanders, battlefield veterans and heroes of the special military operation! I congratulate you on Victory Day, our main and truly national, sacred holiday!" the Russian leader said, addressing the participants in the military parade on Moscow's Red Square.

"We reject the claims of any state or alliance to exclusivity. We know what such ambitions lead to," he said.

Agencies



African ministers renew commitment to transforming food systems

NAIROBI

THE quest to transform food systems in Africa has remained steadfast in helping the continent overcome the endemic challenges of hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty, ministers said on Wednesday.

Speaking during the second day of the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, African ministers of agriculture and foreign affairs reiterated their commitment to improving agricultural systems and enhancing their productivity in the face of climatic shocks and shrinking arable land.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Mauritians Abroad Mohamed Salem Merzoug said African countries should transform their food systems to enhance resilience and productivity.

He said that the key to realizing the continent's food security agenda lies in deploying innovations at the small-holder level to boost soil health and tackle crop pests, diseases and ecological challenges.

The summit, co-hosted by the African Union and the Kenyan government, is expected to chart a new pathway for regenerating the continent's soils and other vital ecosystems. **Xinhua**

Israeli forces launch operation against Hamas sites in Gaza's Zeitoun area

TEL AVIV

ISRAELI ground forces launched an operation in the Zeitoun area of central Gaza, targeting Hamas infrastructure and killing terrorists, the Israel Defence Forces said yesterday morning.

The operation began with a series of intelligence-based aerial strikes on ap-

proximately 25 terror targets, including military structures, terror tunnels, observation posts, sniper posts, and other terror infrastructure.

Overnight, the IDF detected numerous rocket launches from the area of Rafah towards the Kerem Shalom border crossing. All of the rockets fell in

Gaza without reaching Israeli territory.

On Sunday, Hamas fired a barrage of rockets at Kerem Shalom, killing four soldiers and forcing the crossing's closure.

Of all the Gaza crossings, Kerem Shalom is equipped to handle the most humanitarian aid. The crossing reopened

on Wednesday.

"The Hamas terrorist organization continues to deliberately endanger Gazan civilians and carry out terror attacks from within civilian areas to attempt to attack Israeli civilians and IDF troops." **ANI**

Global production landscape a result of market competition, international division of labour

SINCE the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, the continuous development of productivity and economic globalization has led to the accelerated flow of production factors worldwide.

As a result, the distribution of manufacturing capacity in different countries and regions has been constantly changing, forming a dynamic global pattern of production capacity.

This is an objective phenomenon determined by economic laws under market economy, which requires a science-based and rational understanding.

The global production landscape is a result of economic globalization. Under open market economy, an international division of labor has

been formed due to the comparative advantages of countries. Through international trade, they share the benefits brought about by this division of labor and specialization. This is the inherent logic behind economic globalization and free trade.

For example, according to a report by the Semiconductor Industry Association of the United States, semiconductor companies headquartered in the United States reported total sales of \$275 billion in 2022, accounting for 48 percent of the global market. In the \$180.5 billion semiconductor market in China, American companies held a share of 53.4 percent.

Another example is Japanese carmaker Toyota. The company sold nearly 10.31 million vehicles world-

wide in the 2023 fiscal year, and nearly 8.78 million were sold outside Japan.

This situation, where production capacity exceeds domestic market demand in a country, is not "overcapacity" as claimed. Instead, it is a natural phenomenon of international division of labor and specialization based on comparative advantages during the process of economic globalization. It is one of the manifestations of market mechanisms.

The global production landscape is a result of the law of value. In market competition, capacity with higher production efficiency can obtain higher profits by offering lower prices, thereby eliminating capacity with lower efficiency. In this process,

the coexistence of efficient and inefficient capacity is not indicative of overcapacity, but rather a necessary stage for the law of value to take effect.

For instance, with technological advancements and the growing popularity of green development concepts, new energy vehicles are gradually replacing traditional fuel-powered cars.

According to the International Energy Agency's "Global Electric Vehicle (EV) Outlook 2024" report, global EV sales reached nearly 14 million units in 2023, accounting for 18 percent of the total. It is projected that by 2030, 1/3 of cars running on Chinese roads will be electric, while the proportion in the United States

and the European Union is expected to approach 1/5.

Given the global trend of new energy vehicle development, the supply-demand gap in the global new energy vehicle industry is widening, indicating that efficient capacity is not in surplus but rather insufficient.

Therefore, it is the market that should determine, in the global context, which industries have overcapacity and identify surplus capacity. Excluding competition under the pretext of "overcapacity" goes against the fundamental principles and rules of a market economy and fails to meet the requirements of the law of value. It will inevitably lead to monopolies, inefficiency, and stagnation, which are detrimental to the

long-term development of any country.

The global production landscape is a result of economic laws and technological innovation. Regions with active innovation and rapid technological progress tend to have a greater variety of production capacities and faster capacity upgrades. Competition, mergers, and acquisitions among capacities with different technological levels and routes are inevitable in this process.

The rise of China's new energy vehicle industry can be attributed to the overall innovation in energy drive systems such as batteries and motors, which is driven by green and low-carbon development.

People's Daily

Experts say China's growth offers valuable lessons to developing countries

ABUJA

CHINA has increasingly emerged as a prominent player in global development, offering valuable lessons and insights to developing countries striving for progress, Nigerian scholars have said.

"Nigeria can benefit greatly by learning from Chinese development models, the 'Chinese Dream' vision, and poverty alleviation programs that emphasize scientific innovation and holistic development, offering valuable policy approaches," Adetoro Banwo, a lecturer with the Department of Linguistics, African and Asian Studies at the University of Lagos, said in an article recently published on several local media outlets.

In the article titled "Building a Community of a Shared Future in Nigeria – A Policy of Win-Win Initiatives," Banwo urged Nigerian policymakers to carefully adapt and integrate these models into the country's development framework. "China has emerged as a key development partner for Nigeria.

Through various projects and collaborations, China is actively driving progress in Nigeria's economy, infrastructure, and cultural sectors," said Banwo, highlighting that cooperation with China presents a wealth of opportunities for mutual growth.

Ikenna Emewu, an international research expert, told Xinhua in a recent interview that China's remarkable achievements in poverty alleviation will continue to inspire nations grappling with similar challenges.

"China's success in lifting hundreds of millions out of poverty demonstrates the efficacy of targeted policies that ef-

fectively prioritize human development," Emewu said, adding that Nigeria can draw valuable lessons from China's emphasis on scientific innovation and inclusive growth.

Nigeria and other developing countries can leverage China's vision to forge mutually beneficial collaborations while tapping into its expertise and resources, Emewu said, noting that a series of development initiatives proposed by China have well proved to be "not merely a national aspiration but a vision for global cooperation and shared prosperity."

Sheriff Ghali Ibrahim, head of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Abuja, urged African countries to embrace the three initiatives for China-Africa practical cooperation in support of Africa's industrialization, agricultural modernization, and talent development and assist in Africa's integration and modernization.

He said Chinese enterprises could contribute more in areas of industrialization, agricultural mechanization, and talent cultivation, which offer a roadmap for sustainable growth and prosperity. "Chinese enterprises can contribute to the realization of Africa's dream and goals in terms of development, growth, infrastructure, knowledge, healthcare, and agriculture," Ibrahim said.

Banwo also shared a similar view, saying that by embracing the principles of innovation, inclusivity, and cooperation espoused by China, developing nations can chart a course toward a brighter future for their citizens and the world at large. "To excel, we must collaborate to tackle the teething problems gripping most nations," he said. **Xinhua**

DRC's North Kivu province struggles with conflict, humanitarian crisis, military governor warns

GOMA

PLUNGED into conflict with armed rebels and overwhelmed by one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, North Kivu province, the epicenter of hostilities located in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), is grappling with a "worrisome" and "unpredictable" situation, warned the military governor of the province, Peter Chirimwami.

"WORRISOME" AND "UNPREDICTABLE" SITUATION

Chirimwami made these remarks in a recent interview with Xinhua in Goma, the capital city of the province, where fighting has been ongoing between the DRC military and multiple armed groups for years, leading to one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

According to Chirimwami, the rebel group known as the March 23 Movement (M23) has been advancing and strengthening its frontlines, particularly since February, in the southern part of the province.

Additionally, the province is facing a resurgence of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), rebels affiliated with the Islamic State group, in the north. In response to the violence perpetrated by the M23, the ADF and about a hundred other armed groups in the region, the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri have been under a state of siege since May 2021, during which the civilian administration has been replaced by military and police authorities.

Despite joint operations with the Ugandan armies, government forces have been unable to halt the advance of the rebel groups, Chirimwami said. The ADF has recently committed massacres against civilians and kidnappings.

The M23 aggression has intensified since February 2024, advancing to Sake, a strategic township considered the last barrier to Goma, both located in the southern part of the province.

On Wednesday, fresh clashes were reported early in the morning on several hills overlooking Sake, with heavy and light weapons fire heard throughout the Goma city.

On May 3, five rockets fell on several displaced camps along the Goma-Sake axis, resulting in the deaths of at least 18 displaced persons, mostly women and children, according to the United Nations.



Photo taken on April 11, 2024 shows a soldier of the Congolese Army standing guard in Goma, North Kivu province, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Xinhua

The organization warned that shelters in the area are highly exposed to elevated risks of insecurity and protection.

"WE ARE BESIEGED"

With the main roads between Goma and its surroundings cut off by the M23, the city, home to about two million people, has seen its population increase over several months due to the wave of displaced persons, and is now on the brink of suffocation.

Despite the appearance of calm on the ground, the situation on the frontlines is far from peaceful.

"All exits are practically blocked by the M23," Chirimwami said, noting that the province "has only one opening left," Lake Kivu, where civilian boats plying between Goma and a few villages in the neighboring South Kivu province are within artillery range of the M23.

"We are almost besieged. But it is not very serious because we have developed a resilience methodology," said the major general. In November 2012, M23 rebels took control of Goma and occupied it for about 10 days.

However, Chirimwami believes that the M23, which is once again attempting to capture the provincial capital, is deluding itself.

"The enemy's intention is to take control of Goma. They wanted to cut off all arteries to force us out of the city. I think they are mistaken because we are here. We are in the city (of Goma)," Chirimwami said.

Nevertheless, Goma is on edge due to the influx of civilians into displaced camps,

which risks exacerbating the already precarious humanitarian crisis, with food supplies heavily affected by the M23's advance.

According to a report in February 2024 by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), a humanitarian organization, the fighting threatens to isolate Goma and compromise humanitarian aid to millions of people.

"The progressive isolation of the city hampers the ability of international humanitarian organizations to reach displaced persons in the eastern region, exacerbating an already disastrous situation," the NRC warned.

"DEFENSIVE LINE IS THERE"

With the departure of a regional force deployed by member countries of the East African Community (EAC), the DRC now relies on joint military operations with the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

"We have SADC with us, so we have a force that allows us to resist for a long time," Chirimwami said, without providing further details about the upcoming plan. "But I know they are doing a good job, and they will continue to do so."

Composed mainly of military elements from South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi, this SADC force, with an offensive mandate, has replaced the EAC regional force since January 2024.

"Sake is still under our control. The defensive line is there. We continue to attack the rebels," Chirimwami said. "We and the people are certain that we are capable of resist-

EAM Jaishankar, UK NSA Barrow review progress in bilateral ties

NEW DELHI

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a meeting with UK National Security Adviser Tim Barrow in Delhi yesterday and discussed regional and global issues of importance. Jaishankar and Barrow reviewed the progress in bilateral ties.

In a post on X, Jaishankar stated, "Good to meet UK NSA Tim Barrow today in Delhi. Discussed a range of regional and global issues of importance. Also reviewed the progress in our bilateral ties."

On May 7, a 21-member delegation of the Royal College of Defence Studies began their India visit by laying a wreath to pay their homage at the war memorial in New Delhi.

The Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS) is a British military staff college that trains senior officers from the British Armed Forces, Civil Service, and Diplomatic Service in international security and national defence.

The college's goal is to develop strategic thinkers and leaders who can work at the strategic level in a cross-government and international environment.

The delegation of the UK-based academy is on an India visit and will be travelling across the country as part of their study tour.

Sharing details regarding the visit, UK Defence Adviser in India, Brigadier Nick Sawyer stated, "A delegation of the Royal College of Defence Studies today began their India visit by visiting the @salute2soldier in New Delhi and laying a wreath to pay their homage to the fallen soldiers. The 21-member cohort will be travelling across the country as part of their study tour."

Notably, the ties between India and the UK are bound by strong ties of history and culture, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). In 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UK's then-PM Boris Johnson agreed to the India-UK 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' and India-UK Roadmap 2030 to steer cooperation for the next 30 years. **ANI**

PM Modi condoles demise of Metropolitan of Believers Eastern Church

NEW DELHI

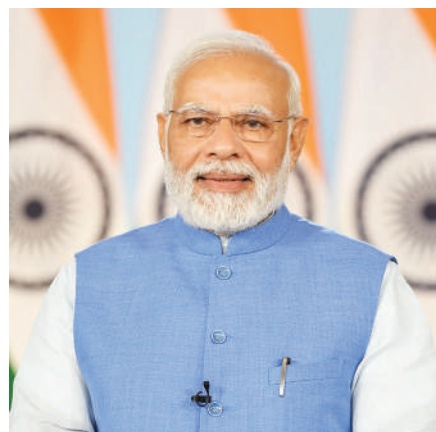
PRIME Minister Narendra Modi yesterday condoned the demise of Metropolitan of Believers Eastern Church, Moran Mor Athanasius Yohan. PM Modi stated that Moran Mor Athanasius Yohan will be remembered for his service to society and emphasis on improving the quality of life of the downtrodden.

In a post on X, PM Modi stated, "I am pained by the passing away of the Metropolitan of Believers Eastern Church, Moran Mor Athanasius Yohan. He will be remembered for his service to society and his emphasis on improving the quality of life of the downtrodden. My thoughts are with his family and all devotees of the Believers Church. May his soul rest in peace."

He passed away due to cardiac arrest in a hospital, days after being injured in an accident during his morning walk in the US, according to an official statement released by Believers Eastern Church.

In a statement, the Believers Eastern Church said, "He passed away due to sudden cardiac arrest in a hospital in Dallas, Texas where he had been receiving treatment since his accident. Additional information will be provided by the Holy Synod in due course. May his memory be eternal!"

Moran Mor Athanasius Yohan was born in an ordinary farming family at Niranat in Upper Kuttanad. He turned to Bible preaching as a teenager and joined Operation Mobilization at the age of 16.



In 1974, he enrolled in theological studies in Dallas, America. Spreading the word of God as a pastor and then a priestly life. He married Gisella, a German citizen who was active in the same field. In 1978, together with his wife, the organization called Gospel for Asia became a turning point in his life.

As the organization grew, Yohannan decided to work from the headquarters in Thiruvalla after a long stay abroad. In 2003, the Believers' Conference was formed to bring together the world's faith community. The Church became a distinct presence in the Athuravesana arena.

A medical college was also started in Thiruvalla to ensure the treatment for the common man at a minimal cost. In 2017, when the name was changed to Believers' Eastern Conference, KP Yohannan was entrusted with the first metropolitan position of the Church with roots all over the world. **ANI**

Hungary-Serbia Railway brings more convenience to local people

AS a flagship project of cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries, the Hungary-Serbia Railway is an important part of the European transport corridor and the China-Europe Land and Sea Express Line. It is of great significance to the synergetic development between the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and European development strategies. Since its commencement, the project has garnered widespread attention.

On March 19, 2022, the Belgrade- Novi Sad section of the Hungary-Serbia Railway in Serbia went into operation. This new route has not only facilitated local passengers, but also placed Serbia among the nations with high-speed rail. According to statistics, the Belgrade- Novi Sad section has carried 6.83 million passengers during its two years of operation.

On a morning at the Belgrade Center railway station, passengers were waiting in line on the platforms for the arrival of the train Coko, which is named after the Serbian word for falcon, a bird known for its speed. The Belgrade- Novi Sad section is as fast as a coko - the trip from Belgrade to Novi Sad can be completed in just half an hour.

"Substantially decreasing the distance between Serbia's two most vital cities, the high-speed rail has brought changes to our lives," said a passenger.

Passenger Milika often travels between the two cities. She said that a one-way high-speed rail ticket from Belgrade to Novi Sad costs less than 5 euros (\$5.33), and a monthly pass provides even greater affordability. Driving between the two cities would cost over 10 euros in tolls, fuel, and parking fees, with a travel time of over an hour, Milika added.

Nenad Stanisavljevi, head of public relations department of Serbian Railways, noted that an increasing number of Serbians are now accustomed to taking the high-speed rail, as it is comfortable and provides a safer and more convenient travel experience.

The waiting hall of the Novi Sad



A high-speed train arrives at the Novi Sad station, Serbia. (Liu Zhonghua/People's Daily)

station, built in 1964, is currently undergoing expansion in response to the rising passenger numbers since the opening of the high-speed rail line.

Veselin Simovi, a person in charge of railway infrastructure in the Novi Sad region, said that the original Hungary-Serbia railway line was constructed in 1883 and had severely aged. Some sections were no longer operational, while the maximum speed on the operational sections was less than 40 kilometers per hour. Delays of trains often happened, Simovi added.

However, the situation has dramatically changed with the opening of the Belgrade- Novi Sad high-speed rail section, according to Simovi.

"Now we have a stable daily ridership of 8,000 to 10,000 passengers, with even more on weekends. Taking a high-speed rail to Belgrade for work in the morning and returning to Novi Sad in the evening has become a choice for many people," said Simovi.

Milan Banovi, chief engineer of the Hungary-Serbia Railway, has joined the project since its inception. Speaking of his experience working with Chinese colleagues, he said, "I learned a lot from them, and together with my Serbian engineer colleagues, we helped our

Chinese counterparts resolve many localization issues. Our cooperation was very pleasant. Last year, I visited China twice and even rode on Chinese high-speed trains, which left a profound impression on me."

So far, China has offered training for over 40 Serbian technical personnel, fostering a group of young technical professionals proficient in the world's most advanced railway technologies in Serbia.

Near the Novi Sad station, track-laying work has commenced for the Novi Sad-Subotica section of the Hungary-Serbia Railway. The section is expected to be completed by the end of 2024, which will mark the completion of the Serbian section of the Hungary-Serbia Railway.

During his visit to the construction site, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said he was satisfied with the progress of the construction of the Novi Sad-Subotica railway section. He thanked the Chinese companies for their efforts to complete the project ahead of schedule.

"This is a significant change for the Serbian people and the entire country, as travel time between Belgrade and Subotica will be reduced to just 75 min-

utes," Vucic said, expecting the enhancement to attract more tourists.

Ivona Ladjevac, deputy director at the Institute of International Politics and Economics in Belgrade, has long been following the development of BRI.

In her view, Serbia needs a modernized railway to support the country's overall development. The Hungary-Serbia Railway not only facilitates transportation within Serbia but also connects the European continent, increasing freight capacity and transit capability.

"This railway is very important for the development of Europe. It has also provided many job opportunities for local communities. The areas along the high-speed rail line are gaining more development opportunities," said Ladjevac.



Bluefins' promising swimmer Shuneal Bharwani battles it out in this season's National Swimming Club Championship held in Dar es Salaam last month. Bharwani will be part of the Bluefins' team which will be all out to defend the title in the FK Blue Marlins invitational gala slated for this weekend. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Bluefins swimmers eye honours in FK Blue Marlins invitational gala

By Guardian Correspondent

BLUEFINS Swimming Club's performers will be all out to defend their crown in the FK Blue Marlins invitational swimming gala to be held at the FK International Schools swimming pool in Dar es Salaam this weekend.

The outfit, also the gala's defending champion, has selected a strong team of 45 swimmers for the showdown, which includes a mixture of experienced swimmers and some young swimmers who will be getting a taste of competitive swimming for the first time.

"We continue to provide the platform for young and talented swimmers to start their swimming journey from a young age - as long as they have the potential and the enthusiasm to develop their talent," Rahim Alidina, the club's head coach and founder noted.

"Our youngest swimmer in this gala will be six-year-old Abbas Hemani, who will be participating in a competitive gala for the first time," Alidina remarked.

Alidina said they have selected seven-year-old talented swimmers to be part of our team for the event aiming at giving the experiences and exposure.

"Besides the young and upcoming talent that we will have at the gala, our team will have some experienced swimmers, some of whom have also represented Tanzania's national team at some point," the outfit's founder pointed out.

"They are Aaliya Takim, Sahal Harunani, and Kabeer Lakhani, who are part of Tanzania's national swimming team and will also be in action at the gala this weekend representing our club," he said.

He said his squad gears towards having intensive training under the panel of coaches, adding the latter expects the swimmers to do well and record Personal Best times (PBs).

The team will consist of 13 female and 32 male swimmers. The full squad, which will represent Bluefins Swim Club in the gala this weekend, is made up of Aaliya Takim, Sakina Abdulali, Aaradhya Barmeda, Inaya Raheel, Rania Noorani, Huda Tamim, Sukaina Latha, Ithra Kahemele, Imaan Kimario, Ayreen Lakhani, Amattullah Mustansir, Maahira Noorani, and Irhaa Raheel.

Male swimmers on the team are Burhanuddin Jivajee, Sahal Harunani, Kabeer Lakhani, Burhanuddin Jafferjee, Hussein Abbas, Ryan Mwangi, Burhanuddin Yusuf, Abbas Abdulali, Shuneal Bharwani, Burhanuddin Abdulkadir, Gulamabbas Dewji, and Hassan Harunani.

Others are Justin Wabbi, Burhanuddin Fazleabbas, Adam Hassanali, Uzair Harunani, Shabbir Hatim, Abbas Hemani, Taher Zavery, Burhanuddin Hatim and Sahil Jaffer.

Also in the list are Moiz Kaderbhai, Burhanddin Huzeifa, Qais KAnji, Rayyan Kassam, Saalih Mbonde, Burhanuddin Mustansir, Haadi Meghji, Is-Haq Suleiman, Zaeem Somji, Austin Wabbi, and Idris Zavery.

Tanzania Football Federation should improve 2023/24 awards

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THE 2023/24 NBC Premier League will draw to a close this month and most teams in the league had, before Thursday ties, five games to go. As it stands, Yanga is the front-runner to win the title, with second-placed Azam FC turning out to be the closest challenger.

Third-placed Simba SC is already out of the title race and the side's main focus is on qualifying for the CAF Champions League spot next season.

The battle to avoid relegation to next season's Championship League is also on, with Mtibwa Sugar, Geita Gold FC, and JKT Tanzania all fighting for their lives.

Once the NBC Premier League season ends, though, domestic football enthusiasts' discussions will shed light on the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) awards, which have sparked controversy since they were unveiled.

Credit should nevertheless be issued where it is due. In the 2022/23 season, TFF awarded players accordingly and deservedly.

In terms of everyone receiving accolades for their extraordinary seasonal achievement for the previous season, Simba SC midfielder Saidi Ntibazonkiza left with five awards as was the case with Fiston Mayele, who was then turning out for Yanga.

The federation hardly shied from handing over many awards to the duo, given both Mayele and Ntibazonkiza deserved the accolades.

We had a season like 2020/21 that saw Simba SC forward John Bocco receive the Player of the Year honour and the award sparked controversy because, in everyone's eyes - including mine, his teammate, Zambian Clatous Chama, deserved the prize.

Chama ended with 17 assists and eight goals in the league and catapulted his outfit to lifting the silverware, whereas Bocco notched 16 goals and two assists.

As per statistics, wise Chama had better statistics, he was probably not presented with the honour because he left for Morocco's RS Berkane before the awards night.

The federation felt the need to have the accolade remain in the country, the same day Luis Miquissone also unjustly lost out on lifting the Player of the Year award for the then Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC).

The Mozambican winger won the ASFC tournament title with Simba SC. He was the top goal scorer in the show-



Mtibwa Sugar's midfielder, Juma Nyangi (3rd L), shoots past Geita Gold FC's right-back Mwaita Gereza during the 2023/24 NBC Premier League duel played at Manungu Stadium in Morogoro recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF MTIBWASUGAR

piece with four goals.

Yet, midfielder Feisal Salum, who was then featuring for Yanga, won the prize much as his club had lost the showdown's final to Simba SC.

Miquissone might have failed to lift the award because he had been roped in by Egypt's Al Ahly. It became pointless for TFF to award the Egyptian Premier League player.

Trying to find a balance in off-field issues in soccer is malicious. Once Taifa Stars head coach calls players for the side's assignments, fans will look at the presence of Simba SC and Yanga players in the national squad. TFF and the Tanzania Premier League Board are seemingly following the same route.

Seeing to it that there is a balance between the two popular outfits - when it comes to either selection of footballers for the national team or handing over awards - is now quite familiar.

Domestic soccer governing bodies ought to have a professional approach to the NBC Premier League supervision, given the league is of late positioned sixth in CAF's ranking for best soccer leagues in Africa.

The 2023/24 NBC Premier League season is about to come to an end. In the remaining four games, Tanzanians will have already known the top flight's champion, and, as it stands, Yanga's Burkinabe midfielder Stephane Aziz Ki is bound to lay his hands on the Most Valuable Player prize in the league.

Per his current form, Aziz Ki is the joint-leading goal scorer having tied with Azam FC's Salum on 15 goals, he is by far the frontrunner for the Best Midfielder of the Season prize as well. It is, in this case, best that the issue of balancing awards should not be embraced this season.

Every player should win deservedly, foreign players like Aziz Ki have added value to the league, and fans pay for tickets to watch them play.

There is a possibility that the midfielder might win more than five awards this season, including making it to the season's Best First XI.

The Burkinabe midfielder has his place cemented alongside Salum of Azam FC - who is also enjoying a fantastic season.

We are learning a lot from developed countries. TFF should also begin awarding Premier League players - while four clashes are remaining - to do away with having plenty of off-season activities and debates. Such a move would see to it that every team focuses on the upcoming season.

There is no point in holding the TFF awards gala at the end of the season. It takes two months to hand over accolades to league players, some might fail to attend and deliver warm speeches after picking their awards because they are likely to be outside the country. It is about time the TFF changes the awarding schedules.

All contestants need to be present, there might be many categories, and not everyone should be eligible to win. Aziz Ki has had a great season with Yanga and has been the most consistent player in the league.

I can understand why there are many categories. Such an approach aims to encourage local players to strive for greatness, but there is a need for these awards to be delivered before the season ends. The federation should not shy from handing over more than five awards to Aziz Ki because he deserves it.

End-of-the-season accolades are not for everyone, they are for the few that had an impact throughout the season.

Aziz Ki is the joint leading goal scorer and has scored in all important and difficult games that Yanga honoured and needed to win.

He was an average player last season - especially in the second phase of the league - but,

this season, he has elevated his game in all competitions whilst turning out for Yanga.

Local players, especially the ones in the attacking force, have a lot to learn from their foreign counterparts. In recent years, domestic defenders have delivered so much - putting in top-class performances.

In the 2022/23 season, players, who won awards, complained of having not been presented with cash prizes. The TFF and TPLB should state the matter to clear the air, if awards and cash prizes are handed over simultaneously, players who will secure the awards ought to receive their cash prizes early.

This case happened a few seasons back, as I highlighted the issue concerning Chama and Miquissone. After the season ends, some players' contracts expire and the footballers join clubs outside the country.

Some coaches also get new offers outside Tanzania and leave. As a result, TFF ought to hand over awards and cash prizes (if present) early and players that have won should receive their awards before leaving.

Tanzania's soccer has grown massively and it is winning many followers beyond the country's borders. Simba SC and Yanga have brought so much attention to the Premier League due to their top performance in the CAF Champions League this season.

Taifa Stars' participation in the 2023 AFCON did not come by chance, it came about thanks to the presence of strong competition in the Premier League. Domestic footballers have gained a lot from their foreign counterparts they regularly come up against in the league.

With these achievements, domestic football needs leaders who align with the quality of the game and are open to learning useful new aspects that will lay the foundation for a more competitive, valuable league in the future.

Mashujaa FC coach vows to fight for NBC PL survival

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

MASHUJAA FC exacted sweet revenge on Kinondoni Municipal Council FC with a dominant 3-0 victory in their NBC Premier League clash at the Lake Tanganyika Stadium in Kigoma on Wednesday.

This win was a significant step for Mashujaa FC in the club's fight against relegation and the home side wasted no time in asserting the club's dominance. Jeremanus Josephat opened the scoring in the 12th minute, followed by Hassan Ali in the 22nd minute. Reliants Lusajo sealed the deal for Mashujaa with a third goal in the 60th minute.

Speaking after the match, a delighted Mashujaa FC head coach Abdallah Mo-

hamed attributed the win to his players' clinical finishing.

"I'm incredibly proud of the boys, we created many chances in previous matches but lacked the finishing touch. Today, we capitalized on our opportunities and defended brilliantly," Mohamed remarked.

The gaffer hinted at tactical adjustments that played a role in the victory, saying: "I made some changes to the squad and the players implemented the game plan very well. They also showcased excellent application from our training sessions, particularly in attack."

Looking ahead, Mohamed emphasized the importance of maintaining their attacking prowess, pointing out: "The

league is fiercely competitive, we need to continue scoring goals to secure victories in our remaining fixtures. Sharpening our attack is crucial to secure a spot in the NBC Premier League next season."

This victory held even greater significance for Mashujaa as it avenged their 3-2 defeat to Kinondoni Municipal Council FC in the first round on December 2, 2023.

The win also served as a crucial escape route from the relegation zone, although their fight for survival is far from over. With three wins needed from their remaining four matches, Mashujaa FC remains determined to secure the outfit's top-flight status.

Despite the win against Kinondoni Mu-

nicipal Council FC, Mashujaa FC's recent form has been inconsistent. The squad has only managed one win in the past five games, with two losses and two draws.

Their upcoming fixtures against Tabora United, Tanzania Prisons, Mtibwa Sugar, and Dodoma Jiji FC will be crucial in determining their fate.

This match marked a historic moment for Mashujaa FC. It was the first time since the squad's promotion to the NBC Premier League that it had secured a home victory with a margin of three goals.

This was not Mashujaa FC's only impressive performance this season. On February 25, the side secured a valuable 3-1 away victory against Geita Gold FC at Nyankumbu Stadium in Geita. This win

stands as the Kigoma club's other significant victory so far.

With Mashujaa FC having moved out of the relegation zone, the squad is determined to stay in the top flight. The squad's win against Kinondoni Municipal Council FC propelled it to 26 points, climbing one position from 14th to 13th in the league table.

As for Kinondoni Municipal Council FC, this defeat was a missed opportunity for the outfit to climb to the coveted fourth place.

The Dar es Salaam club remains placed fifth with 33 points after 26 matches, one point behind fourth-placed Coastal Union.

Bayern's Neuer laments 'brutal, bitter' Champions League howler

MADRID

BAYERN Munich goalkeeper Manuel Neuer said his late Champions League semi-final howler against Real Madrid was "extremely bitter" as his side were knocked out of the tournament.

With just two minutes remaining, Bayern were leading 1-0 thanks to a 68th-minute strike from Alphonso Davies, the Canadian's first Champions League goal, and seemingly on course to meet rivals Borussia Dortmund in the final at Wembley.

However, Vinicius Junior then sent in a simple-looking shot from outside the box and Neuer, who had impressed with a series of acrobatic saves all evening, spilled the ball into the path of Joselu, who levelled the scores.

Joselu scored again four minutes later as Real took the lead in the tie to win 2-1 and 4-3 on aggregate, booking their ticket to face Dortmund in the final next month.

"It's extremely bitter for me," the 38-year-old Neuer said to DAZN.

"I expected the ball to land a bit differently to my chest but it went a bit higher and it was difficult to get a hold of it. And then Joselu was there quicker and it was difficult to defend.

"For a goalkeeper who's been around for a while it's something I've already experienced, but the goal was brutal."

Bayern manager Thomas Tuchel said his captain's mistake was uncharacteristic.

"Manu' did incredibly well but then made a mistake he wouldn't have made for 100 years," said Tuchel.

"It's frustrating. If there's anyone who didn't deserve that, it's Manu. We know who he is, what he's achieved."

Defender Matthijs de Ligt, who had a late goal controversially chalked off for an offside in the lead-up, said Neuer was "unlucky."

Neuer had "world class saves after world class saves" De Ligt said, explaining "but that can happen, it's football. It's unlucky at the end."

Neuer, who returned this season after almost a year out with a broken leg, had begun to hit top form.

The 2014 World Cup winner is odds on favourite to be between the sticks for Germany at the Euros in summer, which kick off on June 14 in Munich against Scotland.

Wednesday's loss means Neuer and Bayern will finish the season without a trophy for the first time since 2012.

AFP

Crespo-Kewell Champions League rivalry renewed in Asian final

TOKYO

HARRY Kewell and Hernan Crespo, who once opposed each other in a UEFA Champions League final, will square up again in the Asian equivalent on Saturday.

Australian great Kewell is now in charge at Japan's Yokohama F-Marininos who will host the United Arab Emirates' Al Ain, coached by former Argentina striker Crespo, in the first leg of the AFC Champions League final.

Kewell was part of Liverpool's UEFA Champions League-winning side in Istanbul in 2005, when the Anfield Club found themselves 3-0 down at half-time to AC Milan, with Crespo scoring two of the goals, before famously coming back to draw 3-3 and win on penalties.

Crespo was a fan favourite at Chelsea, helping them to win the English Premier League in 2005-6 under Jose Mourinho, when Kewell's Liverpool came third.

Al Ain are the UAE's most successful club and will be playing in the final for the fourth time, having won it in 2002 and reached the final in 2005 and 2016.

Yokohama are attempting to become the fourth Japanese side to win the trophy after three-time winners Urawa Red Diamonds, Gamba Osaka and Kashima Antlers.

Kewell, who also played in the 2007 Champions League final and an FA Cup final for Liverpool, said the two-legged decider would be a whole new ball game.

"Finals are usually a one-off game and that's why I've always said two-legged semi-finals are always the toughest games," Kewell said.

"When you get to a final you should enjoy it. But this (home-and-away final) is something new for me as well.

"You're going to have to be able to control your emotions," he added.

"You're not going to be out of it from the first game. You're always going to have a second chance.

"Whatever happens on May 11 is not going to determine everything."

Crespo has guided Al Ain to the final against the odds, eliminating Cristiano Ronaldo's Saudi side Al Nassr in the quarter-final on penalties.

They then ended Al Hilal's record streak of 34 consecutive wins in the semi-final.

Goalkeeper Khalid Eisa was in the Al Ain side beaten by South Korea's Jeonbuk in the 2016 final and is grateful for a second chance under Crespo.

"I had a bad period before (this year's Asian Cup)," Eisa admitted.

AFP

Joselu inspires Madrid comeback with 'heart' to beat Bayern, reach Champions League final

MADRID

REAL Madrid produced a spectacular comeback with "heart" against Bayern Munich to reach the Champions League final on Wednesday with Joselu striking twice in the dying minutes, earning them a 2-1 win to progress 4-3 on aggregate.

Alphonso Davies smashed the visiting German giants ahead in the second half but record 14-time winners Madrid produced a sensational comeback with Joselu netting in the 88th and 91st minutes.

Spanish champions Real Madrid face another German side, Borussia Dortmund, in the Wembley final on June 1, after they stunned the team they call their "black beast".

"It's something magical, there's no explanation," said Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti, revelling in another electric night in the Spanish capital.

Journeyman striker and back-up option Joselu, on as a late substitute, wrote his name in Madrid's history books with his last-gasp brace, giving Europe's comeback kings another night to remember.

"(The comeback) was with feeling and with heart, as the coach told us -- you have to win games with heart," said Joselu.

Madrid had enjoyed the better of the match but it seemed Davies' superb strike had set up a repeat of the 2013 all-German final in London.



Moment to forget: Bayern Munich goalkeeper Manuel Neuer makes a mistake and Joselu brings Real level. AFP

Instead Joselu consigned Bayern to a first trophyless season since 2012, his first goal coming after a handling error from Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, who had superbly kept Madrid at bay until that point.

"(Before that) there were world class saves after world class saves, but that can happen, it's football," said Bayern defender Matthijs de Ligt.

Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel made three changes from the first leg, benching veteran Thomas Mueller and Leon Goretzka but the hosts dominated the opening stages.

Neuer produced a superb double save to stop Madrid nosing in front, tipping the electric Vinicius Junior's effort on to the post and then

saving Rodrigo's follow-up.

Bayern's Serge Gnabry limped off injured with Davies replacing him before England captain Harry Kane's first flash of danger, but Andriy Lunin pushed his vicious volley around the post.

Neuer palmed away a Vinicius free-kick as the teams ended a high-intensity, relentlessly frantic first half level.

The second period was just as fraught, with Davies' cross deflecting onto the roof of Lunin's goal.

Vinicius was unplayable down Madrid's left and Rodrigo prodded his low cross agonisingly wide of the far post.

The 38-year-old Neuer made superb saves to deny both Brazilian forwards again before the hour mark

as Madrid ratcheted up the pressure.

However, just as in Munich, when Los Blancos were at their strongest, Bayern pounced. Canada international Davies cut inside from the left and smashed a shot beyond Lunin into the far top corner after 68 minutes. Madrid thought they had levelled moments later through Nacho but after a VAR review the strike was ruled out as the defender had grabbed Joshua Kimmich's face before shooting.

Tuchel took off Kane, still chasing the first trophy of his career, in the final stages to try and hold on to victory but it slipped through his fingers as Madrid produced more indelible European memories.

Ancelotti, sacked by Bayern in 2017, has kept Madrid's squad players engaged and

committed to the cause all season and it paid dividends at a crucial time.

Neuer, who had been sublime to this point, fumbled what appeared a simple Vinicius strike and substitute Joselu gratefully bundled home from close range.

"We had one foot in London, we saw ourselves going through to the final," lamented the goalkeeper.

With Bayern reeling Madrid struck again, decisively. It was Joselu once more, the striker on loan from second-division side Espanyol, turning home after Antonio Rudiger cut the ball back to him.

The goal was ruled offside but officials overturned the decision after review, and after nearly 15 minutes of stoppage time, Madrid earned the chance to go for their 15th Champions League trophy.

"There have been a lot of times we have looked dead and buried, but we have that mentality of never say die," said Real midfielder Jude Bellingham.

Bayern were left raging at full-time after De Ligt netted but play had been stopped beforehand for an offside flag against Noussair Mazraoui.

"I don't want to say that it's always the referee's mistake with Real Madrid, but that made the difference today," grumbled De Ligt, saying play should have been allowed to continue.

"It's bitter, completely bitter," said Tuchel.

AFP

Why do Real Madrid keep creating magic in the Champions League?

By Miguel Delaney

"It's something unexplainable," Carlo Ancelotti said, more than once, on a night when he could have been talking about any number of elements. The Real Madrid manager was of course talking about his team's astonishing capacity for victory in this competition.

On the other side, looking at such relentless winners, Harry Kane was struggling to work out another high-profile defeat. And that was the thing - he really looked beaten. It was impossible not to feel sorry for Kane, especially given what the scenario was as he went off with what Thomas Tuchel said was a back injury. That was the 85th minute and Bayern Munich had one foot in the final. They were 1-0 up, and Real Madrid just couldn't seem to find a way through Manuel Neuer. He had been brilliant, which made it more inexplicable that he spilled the ball at Joselu's feet in the crucial moment.

What must the goal-scorer have been thinking? Just two years ago, the former Stoke City forward - as he now must be described by - was in Paris as a fan watching Real Madrid win the Champions League final. He's now sent them back to that stage, after scoring another goal that followed so quickly no one had time to make sense of it all.

"It happened again," Ancelotti smiled, "what has happened so many times."

And yet there was still

something more. There was still the most inexplicable moment of the night, which had so many elements to it that it's hard to make sense of. Tuchel's emotion was clear. He was furious. Matthijs de Ligt had the ball in the net for what seemed a dramatic stoppage-time equaliser but the pace of play had already indicated it was nothing like that. The assistant had flagged, the referee had whistled, and Real Madrid had stopped playing. Andriy Lunin barely made an attempt at a save.

Tuchel didn't even try to conceal his fury. He just launched into a tirade, escalating with every question about the decision. De Ligt himself had already claimed that the assistant told him he "made a mistake" before the defender himself called it "a big, big mistake". Tuchel went further.

"It's a huge, huge call, and it's the wrong call." "I don't know if we will know in the next 50 years why this happened."

"It's pretty clear... it's against every rule of modern football what happened there."

Tuchel is correct on the process there, especially given the protocol of the modern game has been for the assistant to wait to put up their flag. It was something else that was inexplicable.

Tuchel then came out with a more loaded comment.

"That wouldn't have happened on the other side."

De Ligt, however, had already gone further on that one himself.

"I don't want to say

that Real Madrid always has the referees with them but that made the difference today."

There was a more magnanimous comment from the defender, however.

"Real, when you think they are dead, have a last breath... that is why they have 14 Champions Leagues."

This is true, and that is one other element that is difficult to explain - although maybe not impossible. There is obviously a self-perpetuating power to it, as we saw with Manchester United scoring late goals under Sir Alex Ferguson. The knowledge they can do it empowers a side throughout games and then goes to another level in the most important moments, with that in turn causing doubt in the opposition. These little things can grow into something huge at the end of such games, as we've repeatedly seen.

It's like that line from Catch Me If You Can multiplied several times over. Why do the Yankees always win? "Because the other

teams can't stop staring at those damn pinstripes."

The white of Real Madrid can be blinding, for a number of reasons. Ancelotti meanwhile spoke of the "weight" of that shirt as he went into something deeper on why this keeps happening.

"Real Madrid is a family, that is very well managed by the president. It's a football club with history, tradition and weight, and the ones wearing this shirt, it's very important for them."

The mention of the president was all the more conspicuous because Ancelotti brought him up a few times, to a degree that was uncomfortably obsequious for a manager normally so lauded for his cool detachment.

"There's a captain here called Florentino Perez, and all the rest of us are sailors. The captain is Florentino, a fantastic president, who's been capable of creating a generation of footballers that have achieved a lot of things and can now

achieve another Champions League."

If so - and, given all of this, it really is difficult to expect much of Borussia Dortmund - it would be Perez's personal seventh and the club's 15th European title. That would be more than double the next club, Milan, who have seven, almost rendering the record a joke.

And yet there is a lot of explanation for that. While Madrid have always been one of Europe's most powerful and wealthy clubs, Perez has been utterly obsessed with keeping them at the top. That goes beyond astute squad building that is now far superior to either Galactico era. Responding to the threat of state-linked clubs like Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain, Perez realised his club weren't the great white shark of the food chain any more and empowered Brazilian head of recruitment Juni Calafat to go about things in a different way. That has created this vibrant young squad.

But there was more to it than that. In every

single Uefa or major club meeting, Perez has refused to accept anything that isn't for the better of Real Madrid.

They have led virtually every major decision that has ensured more and more prize money to the biggest clubs. The most influential of these was in 2016, and a moment when they were joined with Bayern Munich rather than opposing them. With Michel Platini having resigned as Uefa president, the two clubs used the vacuum to ensure that 30 per cent of all Champions League prize money went to clubs based on historic performance over 10 years. It was essentially "royalties".

In practical terms, it meant Newcastle United were this season only guaranteed £1.3m from that source but Manchester City were guaranteed £30m. Over a few years, and combined with other measures, this really builds up to create insurmountable gaps.

THE INDEPENDENT

Gwiji by David Chikoko

