



TRC to improve railway infrastructure at three ports

Page 3



TARI unveils tool to transform farming practices

Page 4



Govt, other stakeholders working on transport sector oversight body

Page 5



Usyk outposts Fury to retain world heavyweight crowns

Page 20

IGP reshuffles traffic police command

By Guardian Reporter

POLICE headquarters yesterday announced a wide ranging reshuffle of senior officials in its traffic department.

DCP David Misime, spokesman for police headquarters, said in a statement yesterday that Inspector General Camillus Wambura had or-

dered the changes, describing the shifts as involving 'minor adjustments' to strengthening the department's operations and improving service delivery.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Ramadhani Ng'anzi leaves his post as commander of the traffic division, reassigned to the criminal investigation department at police

headquarters in Dodoma. He will be heading its social ethics and offences department, the statement indicated.

Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police (SACP) William Mkonda, takes over as traffic police division commander, moving from heading the traffic police unit for the Dar es Salaam special police zone.

Boniphace Mbaio, the head of traffic police in the capital, is being transferred to the special police zone of Dar es Salaam in the same position, while ACP Michael Deleli, who oversaw public education at traffic police unit in Dar es Salaam, shifts to police headquarters to head the national celebrations unit. ACP Nassoro Sisiwa, previously

head of operations for the traffic police, shifts to Kilimanjaro Region to head the traffic police unit in the region.

The reshuffle comes in the wake of reports indicating a slight decrease in the number of accidents and fatalities, as a police headquarters report on crimes and safety affirmed that 479 accidents occurred

between July and September 2024, down from 512 during the same period last year.

A total of 453 people died in road accidents between July and September 2024, a slight decrease from 477 fatalities in the same period for 2023. Still, the number of people injured rose to 835, up from 782 the previous year, it added.

11 die, 16 injured in 'freak' bus accident

By Guardian Reporter

ELEVEN people died and 16 were injured after a Capco One bus suffered brake failure, rolled backwards and collided with a smaller vehicle.

Brasius Chatanda, the Kagera regional police commander, said yesterday that the accident occurred on Saturday afternoon at Kabango village on a road patch in Kasibdaga forest area in Biharamulo District.

The accident took place at around two in the afternoon after the bus experienced brake failure while stationary, while the conductor was assisting

a child enter another vehicle bound for Muleba District. The child had missed the relevant bus stop, he said.

While the bus driver waited for the conductor, the bus suddenly began moving backwards, which the driver tried to stop and regain control. He failed and the bus plunged into a ravine, the RPC explained.

"The vehicle overturned, causing the upper section to be torn off, leaving most seats in place. This resulted in the deaths of 11 people and injuries to 16 others," stated, affirming that investigations are being pursued on the incident.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa pictured yesterday while on an inspection tour of progress in the reconstruction of Simiyu Bridge, a strategic link for Mwanza, Simiyu and Mara regions. The work is expected to cost 48.7 billion/-. Photo: PMO

Police handed rented station, as crime rises

By Guardian

Correspondent, Kahama

RISING criminal activity in Mhongolo ward of Kahama municipality, have-pooled resources to rent a house for a police station, tired of being victims of a persistent crime wave.

Janeth Magomi, the regional police commander formally inaugurated the station, hailing the residents' initiative as worthy of emulating by other wards to bring police ser-

vices closer to the people.

Asserting that the government cannot address all issues on its own, she promise to deploy officers to tackle the rising crime wave, appealing to officers to engage directly with the community to address various challenges, not waiting for district or other officials to intervene.

She assured the community that The regional command would pay attention to the new station

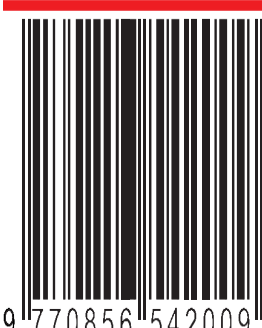
TURN TO Page2

Media 'excellence' awards for review

By Guardian Correspondent

OPENING entrances for the Tanzania Journalism Excellence Awards (EJAT) for 2024 has been postponed while the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) works on a new for-

TURN TO Page2



9 770856 542009 >

DERM group

Derm Group (T) Ltd and its subsidiaries wishes to inform its esteemed clients and business partners that our offices will be closed during the festive season with effect from **Saturday, 21st December 2024.**

Business will resume on Monday 6th January 2025.

Our site operations and regional offices in Kagera, Dodoma, Geita, Songwe, Tanga, Mbeya, Kigoma, Dar es salaam and Shinyanga shall not be affected by this closure.

Any inconveniences caused is highly regretted. We would like to thank all our clients and business partners for their continued patronage of our services throughout the year.

"We wish you all a Merry Christmas and prosperous, productive and innovative 2025".

dermgroupptz
 info@derm.co.tz
 www.derm.co.tz

CHANJA KIJANJA

CHAPA MKWANJA!

25. 12. 2024

Celebrate Christmas with your Exim card. Enjoy secure payments and earn cashback rewards on your purchases.

* Terms and Conditions apply

For more information Call 0800 780 111 or Email us customer@eximbank.co.tz

EXIM BANK
Innovation is life

Police handed rented station, as crime rises

FROM PAGE 1

to ensure it is provided with capacity for essential services such as case filing, night patrols and hands on support for victims of crime.

Lack of security fall back prompted local residents to pool resources and rent a house for a small police station, with several residents, including Sharifu Said, expressed concerns about the security situation in the area, during the launch.

They reported incidents of thieves breaking into homes at night, and at times, even robbing shops. Drug use, particularly cannabis, has also become commonplace significant issue.

Having a police station in the area would assist in tackling crimes and ease the fear of losing property or being hurt, being able to open shops till late evening or early night, instead of close their shops

early to avoid attacks.

There was also fear of robbing them of their earnings on their way home, they said, while Magembe Chimu, the chairman of the local business association, said that every resident had contributed to the renting of the house for a police station, donating towards its rent that was paid for a year.

He stated that there had been numerous thefts in the area, including break-ins at homes and business stalls, as well as incidents where women had their handbags and phones pulled away at night.

Anitha Ngeiyamu, the ward executive officer, explained that the idea of setting up the station came after growing concerns among residents and traders about escalating crime.

The nearest police station was consulted and gave approval for the residents' initiative, she added.



Home Affairs minister Innocent Bashungwa (2nd-R) pictured yesterday consoling one of the people who were on board the bus involved in Saturday's fatal accident at Kabukome in Nyarubango ward, Biharamulo District, and are now admitted to hospital with injuries. Photo: Correspondent Restituta Damian

Media 'excellence' awards for review

FROM PAGE 1

mat for the competition.

Ernest Sungura, the MCT executive secretary, told journalists in Dar es Salaam over the weekend that the council will conduct a review to identify more journalists, including those not submitting any work for consideration.

Typically opening during the final months of the year, the window has been delayed to allow for a review to find better methods of selecting award winners, moving away from individual presentation of published news or other items.

MCT has been holding journalism excellence events since 2009, awarding stories published or aired in outlets like print, radio, television and online media.

"The research for the awards will be carried out nationwide from January to March 2025, aligned with the digital transformation plan, enabling MCT to work more closely with the public," he stated.

The focus of the review is the structure of awards, the process of selecting winners and how to engage the public in producing stories that address social challenges.

"After using this award system for 15 years, the council will make adjustments to ensure that every journalist who completes a story can be reached," he stated.

One new method to identify winners would involve tracking and evaluating strong stories from journalists without their knowledge, in contrast to the situation where journalists submit their own work for consideration, he said.

"There are many journalists producing excellent work who have never submitted their stories for awards. Our goal is to identify every journalist with praiseworthy work," he stated.

He also pointed at some overlooked groups, who contribute to producing award-winning stories, who need to be recognised in future awards, hinting that awards will also include categories for photographers, news readers and sports broadcasters.

After the review is completed mid next year, the awards would appraise the best stories covering 2024 and 2025, with overall winners in various categories being eligible for international awards, he added.

Refugees overwhelming Sudan border services, says UNHRC

GENEVA

After 20 months, there are no signs the war in Sudan is slowing down, and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) warned Friday that the recent surge of arrivals in South Sudan is overwhelming services in border areas.

Volker Türk, the UN human rights chief said, "The continuing siege of El Fasher and the relentless fighting are devastating lives every day on a massive scale. This alarming situation cannot continue."

"The Rapid Support Forces must end this horrible siege, and I urge all parties to the conflict to stop attacks on civilians and civilian objects. I call on them to comply with their obligations and commitments under international law."

UNHCR representative in South Sudan, Marie-Helene Verney said at a UN press conference in Geneva the humanitarian response to support the sudden influx remains "woefully underfunded," with only 24 per cent of people's needs this year received.

"In less than three weeks, over 80,000 people have sought safety in South Sudan following the escalation of fighting in Sudan's White Nile, Sennar, and Blue Nile States - more than tripling the average number of daily arrivals compared to previous weeks," said Verney at a UN press conference.

The lack of funding is threatening endeavours to address this new emergency and to significantly support new arrivals and the communities hosting them with the UNHCR, along with 48 part-

ners, needing \$468 million in 2025 to support refugees and host communities.

Sudan has been mired by fighting between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) since April 2023, and almost one million people have arrived in South Sudan which has itself in recent times experienced conflicts.

Those fleeing the latest wave of violence in Sudan are not only Sudanese, but also South Sudanese refugees previously living in Sudan's White Nile State, which had been relatively safe since the conflict started, said the refugee agency official.

"Refugees and returning South Sudanese are staying in makeshift shelters, and some are sheltering under trees," said Verney.

"MSince the Sudan conflict

started in April 2023, almost one million people have arrived in South Sudan which has in recent times experienced its own conflicts.

any are reluctant to move onwards, hoping the security situation improves in Sudan, allowing them to return home swiftly."

The refugee agency official said that assessments at Joda, the main border crossing between Sudan and South Sudan, show malnutrition rates exceeding the emergency threshold.

Food supplies are critically low, worsening the nutrition situation, particularly for children aged under five, and pregnant and lactating women, said Verney.

"Lack of clean water and insufficient latrines and sanitation facilities are also exacerbating the situation, pos-

ing a real risk of the spread of cholera and other deadly diseases. Local health facilities are either limited, overwhelmed, or non-functional," she noted.

"There is also a great need for psychosocial support services, as those fleeing recount traumatic experiences that forced them to flee, including aerial bombardments and witnessing mass killings."

Verney said that in places, people spoke of having to walk for up to two weeks seeking safety, with several in the group reportedly dying during the journey from hunger, dehydration, and exhaustion.

Land is sought for new reception centres and existing transit places are expanding to accelerate registration and relocation to areas hosting refugees countrywide.

Marburg outbreak in Rwanda declared over

KIGALI

The outbreak of Marburg virus disease was declared over last week by the government with no new cases reported over the last 42 days after the last patient tested negative for the virus twice, as per the usual

protocol for ending these types of outbreaks.

The outbreak, confirmed on 27 September 2024, was the first Marburg Virus Disease outbreak Rwanda has experienced. A total of 66 confirmed cases and 15 deaths were recorded. Almost 80 per cent of the cases were

among health workers who were infected while providing clinical care to their colleagues and other patients.

To halt the spread of the virus and save lives, Rwandan health authorities, with support from World Health Organisation (WHO) and partners, mounted a

comprehensive response, with a large range of measures from disease surveillance, testing, infection prevention and control, contact tracing, to clinical care and public awareness. These actions helped to curb the spread of the outbreak, with cases halved between weeks two and three after detection and declining by around 90 per cent thereafter.

"The robust response by Rwanda shows how committed leadership, concerted efforts by partners and a strong health system are crucial in addressing public health emergencies, saving and protecting lives as well as safeguarding the health of individuals and communities," said Dr Brian Chirombo, WHO representative in Rwanda.

The deployment of WHO experts, a team of national first responders from other countries in the region and the strong mobilization of national efforts were instrumental in enhancing the outbreak response.

The last confirmed case received their second negative PCR result

on 7 November, kicking off the 42-day countdown to declaring the end of the outbreak, as per WHO recommendation.

WHO continues to work closely with the national authorities to maintain critical measures to ensure swift detection and response in case of any flare-up or new spillover of the virus.

WHO will continue to support the Ministry of Health to implement and sustain a holistic care programme for people who recovered from Marburg Virus Disease to help them overcome any after-effects they may experience. The virus which causes Marburg, is in the same family as the virus that causes Ebola virus disease.

It is highly virulent with a fatality rate ranging from 24 per cent to 88 per cent. In this outbreak, the fatality rate was on the lower end, at around 23 per cent. Marburg virus is transmitted to people from fruit bats and spreads among humans through direct contact with the bodily fluids of infected people, surfaces and materials.



Transport deputy minister David Kihenzile delivers address at the 40th graduation ceremony of the National Institute of Transport held in Dar es Salaam at the weekend. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

TRC to improve railway infrastructure for 3 ports

By Guardian Reporter, Tanga

THE government, through the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) has outlined plans to construct modern railway infrastructure at three key ports in the country to improve cargo transportation efficiency and reduce unnecessary congestion.

The initiative aims to streamline the transportation of goods, providing better connectivity between the ports and inland destinations.

According to the Minister for Transport, Prof. Makame Mbarawa, the new railway infrastructure will be developed at the ports of Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, and Tanga.

Prof. Mbarawa shared the details over the weekend during a visit at Tanga port.

He emphasised that without an effective railway system, any port would face significant congestion, particularly during the cargo loading and unloading processes.

He further assured that the government is committed to building modern railway lines to alleviate this congestion and ensure that the ports operate with maximum efficiency.

"A port without railway access faces much greater congestion when it comes to loading goods. I will ensure that modern railway infrastructure is built to reduce this congestion and guarantee that these ports operate efficiently," Mbarawa stated.

He highlighted that a well-functioning port requires both road and rail infrastructure. However, rail transportation is much more efficient compared to other forms of transport.

The minister reassured that efforts to build modern rail networks at Dar es Salaam, Mwanza and Tanga ports will significantly improve port operations and reduce the logistical bottlenecks currently being experienced.

"Although the infrastructure here in Tanga is present, it has challenges. I will ensure that the rail network effectively connects with the ports and collaborates with other ports, so that the efficiency in loading and unloading cargo is significantly improved," he said.

In addition to rail infrastructure improvements, Mbarawa revealed that the government plans further upgrades at Tanga port, with the goal of increasing its annual revenue from the current 100 billion Tanzanian shillings to 400 billion shillings.

"The government will also construct a new dock extending 350 meters, bringing the total length of the dock to 750 meters, along with 400 meters of prior upgrades," Mbarawa noted.



MANY THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT...: Tanzania Revenue Authority's Taxpayer Education manager, Paul Walalaze (4th-R), presents a cake to The Guardian newspaper managing editor Wallace Mauggo, who received it on behalf of the newspaper publishing company. It was at a short ceremony held late last week at the offices of The Guardian Limited (TGL) in Dar es Salaam. The TRA executive described the event as a pre-festive season gesture of appreciation to the company "for steadfastly standing as a loyal and reliable taxpayer also involved in spreading the word across its workforce on the importance of voluntary tax compliance". Looking on are other TRA officials and members of the TGL management team, led by Deputy General Manager Jackson Paulo (5th-L). Photo: Chief Photographer Selemani Mpochi

Dar to host international coffee conference, fair next February

By Guardian Correspondent, Moshi

THE Tanzania Coffee Board (TCB) has announced coffee producers who will represent Tanzania in at the upcoming international conference and exhibition on fine coffee in Africa, set to take place in February next year, in Dar es Salaam.

The conference involving 55 coffee-producing nations across Africa is organised under the African Fine Coffee Association (AFCA) and will be held from February 26 to 28.

Speaking at the weekend here, during the ceremony to present trophies and certificates to the winners of the Fine Coffee Competition 2024, the acting Director General of TCB, Kajiru Kisenge, said: "Today we witness the great work done by our farmers and

coffee producers in the country." He said: "On behalf of TCB, who organised this competition in collaboration with AFCA, we offer heartfelt congratulations to everyone who participated by submitting samples. The winners, our coffee producers, have shown commitment, innovation, patience, and have consistently fulfilled their responsibility to produce high-quality coffee."

He said the competitions have also provided an opportunity to showcase the quality of our coffee and take it to the international market.

"The holding of these competitions is a way to position our coffee for international competitions that will take place early next year."

Grace Mukayisenga from

Rwanda, Chief Judge of the competition, noted that the competition involved a group of robusta coffee, predominantly grown in the Kagera Region, and natural arabica (hard arabica), which undergoes minimal or no water usage at the initial processing stage by the farmer.

Another category included washed arabica coffee (soft coffee), which involves water in its initial preparation stage, performed at the farmer's level during washing and fermentation.

The winners in the Natural Robusta category were: First: Ubumwe Company Ltd (Ngara, Kagera) second: Karagwe Estate (Kagera) and third: Karagwe District Co-operative Union Ltd (Kagera)

In the Arabica Naturals category, the winners were: First one was Mara Farmers (Mara),

second: Burka Coffee Estate (Arusha) and third: Pinagro Plantations (Arusha)

In the Washed Arabica category, the winners were: First: Finagro Plantations (Arusha), second: Amkeni Gourmet Coffee Group (Kilimanjaro), third: Mwika North East Amcos (Kilimanjaro).

One of the winners, Jasson Mpita, the chairman of the Board of Directors of Ubumwe Ltd, expressed gratitude to TCB management, who have been key advisors in the entire process, enabling farmers to see their positions in the entire value chain of the coffee industry.

He advised TCB to continue creating an environment that encourages farmers to embrace coffee production and cultivate it profitably.

MARCAS
NOTISI YA KULIPIA DENI NA MNADA WA HADHARA

Kampuni ya MARCAS DEBT COLLECTORS & AUCTIONEERS LTD
Kwa kuhini tulipowe na MTEJA WETU tunatoa notisi ya siku kumi na nne ya kulipa dharama itazawa kwa njia ya MNADA WA HADHARA, mnda utafanyika siku na tarehe kamama inayozoeleka na hapa chini. Mnda utafanyika kuanzia saa 8:00 mchana na kuendelea mataji dhama hapa kama inayozoeleka hapa chini.

NO. JINA LA MNDARA	DHAMA/MAHALI/LOT	TAREHE YA MNADA
1. JOSEPH PAUL LEHAR	SAAI NABSA: 2415 PLLOT NO. 2, Kiji cha Kirew, jiji Arusha	Jumata, 09/02/25 Kuanzia saa 08:00 mchana
	SAAI NABSA: 5806 PLLOT NO. 001, Somerets, Mwanza/Arusha	Jumata, 09/02/25 Kuanzia saa 08:00 mchana
	SAAI NABSA: 2387 PLLOT NO. 706, Them, Mwanza/Arusha	Jumata, 09/02/25 Kuanzia saa 08:00 mchana

MASHARTI YA MNADA
1. Dhama itazawa kama iliyovyo.
2. Mmunda atatakiwa kulipia 25% ya bei ya mnada siku ya mnada na kiasi cha pesa kilichobaki kilipwe ndani ya siku 14, kinyume cha hapa kiasi kilichotolewa awali hakitarudishwa na mnada utarudishwa tena.
3. Dhama za kubadilishwa haki miliki (transfer of ownership) na gharama nyingine ni za mmunda.
4. Ukaguzi wa dhama utafanyika kuanzia siku ya tangazo hii kutoka kuanzia saa 02:00 asubuhi na kuendelea.
5. Kwa mawasiliano zaidi, piga simu na: 076722222

Wishing you cheerful holidays!

We sincerely appreciate and value your continued support.

From the Management and Staff of
The Guardian Limited

www.ippmedia.com | epaper.ippmedia.com

The Guardian | **Nipashe**

PM gives 55 - ultimatum to finish Bujora-Kisesa water tank programme

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has given Mwanza Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (MWAUWASA) 55-day ultimatum to complete the Bujora-Kisesa water tank project in Mwanza city.

Majaliwa issued the directive yesterday during his visit in the region to assess the progress of ongoing development projects. The water tank project, valued at over 3.5bn/-, is set to be completed by February 15, 2025.

During his inspection to the Bujora-Kisesa water tank project, which is currently 93 percent complete, Majaliwa highlighted that the tank will have a storage capacity of five million litres of water, benefiting more than 75,000 people in Bujora, Kisesa and surrounding areas?

He emphasized the importance of completing the project on time to ensure a consistent and reliable water supply for the residents of Kisesa.

"At this stage, I am confident that water will be available by February 2025. If God permits, I will return and find the water flowing for the residents of Bujora, Kisesa, and other areas," Majaliwa said.

MWAUWASA Acting Director, Neli Msuya assured that the project would be completed on time, as stipulated in the contract, which specifies that it must be finished by February 15, 2025, and ready to begin supplying water.

Msuya explained that the project is part of a broader initiative to improve water services in areas within Mwanza Region that have been struggling with water access.

He also revealed that the government has allocated 49bn/- for water supply projects in Mwanza city, including the construction of five water tanks with a combined storage capacity of 31 million litres, including the Kisesa tank, which will hold five million litres.

Other tanks to be constructed include Nyamazobe (10 million litres), Buhongwa (five million litres),

Fumagila (10 million litres), and Usagara (one million litres).

He added that the contractor had received specific instructions to begin laying pipes from the Sahwa station to the new tank. The project, which began in June 2023, has already seen the contractor paid 2.9bn/-.

In a separate development, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa instructed the Manager of the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) in Mwanza to ensure that all roads in Magu District are passable to accommodate the district's rapid growth.

Majaliwa made the statement after laying the foundation stone for the construction of a new 70-metre Sukuma bridge and connecting roads at Mahaha in Magu District, a project valued at over nine billion Tanzanian shillings.

He emphasised that Magu is a hub of business and economic opportunities and urged residents to begin a campaign to accelerate development, as Mwanza has now reached a point where there is no time to waste.

Earlier, during a project briefing, the Executive Director of TANROADS, Eng. Mohamed Besta, said that the new Sukuma Bridge will be 70 metres long and 11.35 metres wide.

He said the bridge will be located 800 metres from the old bridge, with work being carried out by the local contractor, Mumangi Construction Ltd. The project is expected to be completed by June 5, 2025.

During his one-day visit, Majaliwa also inspected the construction of the Simiyu River Bridge, which will be 175 metres long with a three-kilometre connecting road.

The project is valued at 48bn/- and will be 12.3 metres wide. Majaliwa directed that the construction pace be increased so that the bridge is completed by April 25, 2025, to alleviate the difficulties caused by the narrow bridge built before independence.



Charcoal dealer visibly overwhelmed by the sheer size, volume and height of his luggage. Roving correspondent Sabato Kasika caught up with him in Dar es Salaam's Kinyerezi suburb at the weekend.

TARI unveils tool to transform farming practices in Tanzania

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) has developed a new innovative tool that promises to transform the country's farming landscape.

Dr Thomas Bwana, Director General of TARI, introduced the "Rafiki Planet" tool at the recent Science and Technology Exhibition, organised by Costech and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

The innovative device is designed to streamline seed planting, improving efficiency and precision in crop

cultivation.

Dr Bwana highlighted the importance of TARI's work in addressing the challenges faced by farmers through cutting-edge research and technological solutions.

"Our primary responsibility at TARI is to solve the problems of our citizens by conducting research and ensuring the outcomes are technologically viable," he said.

The Rafiki Planet tool is set to revolutionize farming practices by enabling farmers to plant seeds in straight rows and at precise intervals.

According to Dr. Bwana, traditional farming methods can take days to plant a hectare, but with Rafiki Planet, the task can be completed in just one hour.

"This tool is designed to reduce farmers' time spent planting crops in rural areas," he said.

Initially developed for cotton planting, Rafiki Planet has since been adapted for use with other crops, including sunflower and maize.

Dr Bwana emphasized that the tool is a game-changer for small-scale farmers, helping to reduce

labor and improve planting consistency, which directly impacts crop yields.

Dauson Joseph, an innovator and researcher at TARI, further explained the technical capabilities of Rafiki Planet.

The tool ensures that seeds are spaced accurately—30 centimeters between plants and 60 centimeters between rows—making it particularly suitable for crops like sunflowers and maize.

Joseph pointed out that precision in planting is essential for high yields, and that manual planting using

hoes often takes up to eight hours to cover just one hectare.

"With Rafiki Planet, the same task can be done in just one hour, drastically boosting productivity," he said.

The innovation aligns with TARI's broader mission to enhance agricultural productivity in Tanzania.

In addition to developing tools like Rafiki Planet, the institute has also focused on improving seed quality, expanding market access, and providing proper storage solutions for farmers.



Prosper Tesha (L), a dealer in precious stones based at Mundarara village in Longido District, Arusha Region, pictured late last week assisting entrepreneur Nembulis Malipeti Laizer in smashing stones believed to have 'ruby content' Photo: Correspondent Mary Margwe

Teachers thank govt for special clinic for addressing challenges

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

TEACHERS in Dodoma Region have expressed appreciation to the government's initiative to launch a special clinic dedicated to addressing various issues facing educators in the country.

The clinic among others works on the resolutions of salary arrears, promotion delays and leave allowances.

The initiative is part of a broader effort to enhance the working conditions of teachers and ensure that their grievances are properly ad-

dressed.

In separate interview yesterday here, the teachers emphasised that the clinic will play a crucial role in resolving long-standing challenges, improving their professional environment, and ultimately increasing their effectiveness in the classroom.

Prisca Barnabas, one of the teachers, called on the government to accelerate the provision of these services in their region. She highlighted that President Samia Suluhu Hassan's vision is to ensure that teachers work in environments that are conducive to their professional duties and

personal well-being.

"Teachers are still facing numerous challenges, including issues related to promotions, salary increments, and the settlement of leave arrears. The establishment of this clinic provides an opportunity to address these issues comprehensively and in a timely manner," she said.

Barnabas also commended the efforts of the Tanzania Teachers Union (TTU) for its continuous support and collaboration with the government to tackle the challenges faced by teachers across the nation.

"We are extremely grateful

for initiating this clinic. I urge my fellow teachers to take full advantage of this opportunity to address their long-standing issues," she added.

Ahmed Ng'eni, another beneficiary of the new service, noted that the clinic would be particularly beneficial for those teachers who have faced difficulties accessing services at the district level due to geographical constraints or time limitations.

"I would like to commend our government for this thoughtful initiative. It will serve as a great help to teachers across the country, from the ward level all the way

up to the national level. This clinic offers us the chance to resolve our long-standing issues and improve our work efficiency," he said.

The launch of the clinic follows a direct mandate from President Samia Suluhu Hassan, who instructed the establishment of a nationwide service to address teachers' concerns.

The service is designed to be accessible at various levels, starting from the local ward level and extending to the national level, ensuring that every teacher's issue is heard and addressed in a timely and efficient manner.

UN extends peacekeeping mission in DRC until 2025

UNITED NATIONS

THE United Nations (UN) Security Council has voted to extend the mandate for the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for another year, delaying an agreed withdrawal from the country's eastern provinces.

The mission, known as MONUSCO, will now continue its operations until at least December 2025.

The extension comes after ongoing conflict and instability in the eastern DRC, particularly in regions affected by armed groups and militias.

The government of the DRC had previously urged MONUSCO to leave, citing a desire for greater self-reliance in handling security issues. However, recent developments have led Kinshasa to request the extension, emphasizing the need for continued international support.

MONUSCO, the largest and longest-running U.N. peacekeeping mission, has been stationed in the DRC since 1999, tasked with stabilising the country and protecting civilians from violence.

The mission currently deploys nearly 11,000 peacekeepers across the country, focused

mainly in the eastern provinces, where ongoing conflicts between government forces and rebel groups have led to significant humanitarian crises.

The decision to extend the mission underscores the persistent instability in the region and the complex challenges facing both the Congolese government and the UN MONUSCO's mandate has evolved over the years, but the situation in the DRC remains precarious, with tens of thousands of people displaced due to conflict and violence.

While some local communities have voiced frustration with the presence of foreign peacekeepers, others continue to rely on MONUSCO's protection from the violence that persists in the region.

The extension reflects the UN's commitment to addressing the security and humanitarian needs in the DRC, though it also highlights the ongoing debate about the effectiveness and future of international peacekeeping efforts.

The renewal of the mandate indicates that the path to peace in the DRC remains uncertain, with both local and international stakeholders needing to work together toward a sustainable resolution.

Kenya removes work permit fees for EAC member states

NAIROBI

KENYA has introduced a 'Class R' work permit, allowing nationals of the East African Community (EAC) member states to obtain the document free of charge.

According to a gazette notice issued on Tuesday by Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi who doubles as Foreign Affairs minister, EAC citizens will only need to provide proof of citizenship.

Kenya joins Rwanda as the other EAC partner state that has abolished work permit fees for East African nationals.

Nairobi has also revised the nomad work permit fees, reducing the minimum annual income requirement for applicants from \$55,000 to \$24,000. This change makes it easier for international workers to live and work remotely from Kenya.

The changes are contained in the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration (Amendment) Regulations, 2024.

Mudavadi said that Kenya has revised the work permit fees to style itself as a multilateral hub.

"Apart from the UN, the World Bank office in Nairobi is the largest outside Washington, DC. So it's the hub for the whole continent. Our policy is to leverage these opportunities. That explains one of the classes of work permit in the changes," he said.

The new Class R permit is meant to harmonise fees for citizens of the EAC "to allow the EAC integration to work better."

"Others have been doing it and have been ahead of us," Mudavadi said. "Now, we are not charging EAC nationals. We have taken corrective measures on that."

The nomad visa combines investors, skilled workers, traders and farmers, under a single, simplified category as defined in the EAC Common Market protocol.

The nomad visa, Mudavadi said, is for those in the digital space.

"There are about 40 million individuals globally who are actually operating in that space. The young Kenyans are very tech-savvy and we want to give them an opportunity and a platform to operate and make this truly an ICT hub," he said.

"We have already established the virtual university at Konza. So, we are in a way putting together the building blocks that will make use of ICT more lucrative and inclusive for people of Kenya and those who want to live here."

A major change introduced by the regulations is the introduction of a new permit category, Class P, for employees of international institutions such as the UN, diplomatic missions and international NGOs. The permit fee for this class is \$200, plus an annual fee of \$1,000.

Professionals working for religious or charitable organisations will pay up to Ksh1 million.



Members of staff of a Dodoma city company engaged in land surveying and social services in Dodoma serving meals to people cared for at Hombolo Bwawani's Mother Teresa Centre for the elderly at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

TFS utilises drone tech to tackle deforestation

By Guardian Correspondent, Korogwe

TANZANIA Forest Service Agency (TFS) Northern Zone has begun deploying drones to detect and monitor forest destruction caused by human activities in a strategic initiative aimed at preventing further degradation of the country's vital forest resources.

Speaking at a forestry stakeholders' meeting here at the weekend, Korogwe District Commissioner William Mwakilema underscored the government's commitment to protecting forests.

He emphasised that regional authorities were commuted to eliminating all encroachers from forest reserves and ensuring strict compliance with environmental protection laws.

He said human activities such as shifting agriculture, charcoal production, and illegal mining are identified as the primary drivers of deforestation and forest degradation across various regions in Tanzania.

The activities threaten biodiversity, disrupt ecosystems, and contribute to soil erosion and climate change. To combat the issues, TFS leverages cutting-edge drone technology to enhance monitoring capabilities, enabling more accurate identification of forest areas affected by encroachment.

"Drones will provide real-time aerial imagery, allowing for rapid response and more effective enforcement of conservation measures," he said.

TFS hopes that the use of drones will improve forest resource management by

enabling more efficient surveillance over large and remote areas that are difficult to monitor through traditional methods.

Drones can cover vast tracts of land quickly and identify problematic areas with greater precision. This technological approach not only allows for faster detection of illegal activities but also supports evidence collection for legal action against violators.

The TFS initiative is part of broader efforts to strengthen environmental protection and sustainable resource management in Tanzania.

Through the modern approach, TFS aims to enhance the enforcement of conservation laws and prevent further destruction of Tanzania's critical forest ecosystems which play an essential role in maintaining the country's eco-

logical balance and combating climate change impacts.

In addition to monitoring, TFS plans to use drone data for restoration projects, mapping degraded areas, and identifying regions where reforestation efforts can be most effective.

The technological shift also aligns with the country's long-term conservation goals, supporting sustainable development while safeguarding the natural heritage for future generations.

Govt, stakeholders working on transport sector oversight body

By Guardian Correspondent

THE government in collaboration with various stakeholders in the transport sector is working on proposals to enact legislation for establishment of a transport board tasked with identifying and registering professionals in the sector.

Deputy Minister for Transport, David Kihenzile, made the announcement in Dar es Salaam at the weekend during the 40th graduation ceremony of the National Institute of Transport (NIT).

The new board will also oversee professionalism and ethics of transport experts in Tanzania. According to Kihenzile, the board will ensure that transportation operations are managed by qualified professionals.

"The government in collaboration with various stakeholders including NIT, is in the process of preparing proposals to enact a law for the Board of Registration of Transport Experts," he said.

The goal is to identify, register and elevate ethics of transport experts in Tanzania Mainland to ensure that all transportation works are managed by skilled professionals.

The deputy minister also reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting NIT by improving its teaching infrastructure, enabling the institute to better prepare experts, conduct research, and

provide professional advice to ensure sustainable development in transport sector.

Kihenzile urged other stakeholders in the transport sector to support NIT's efforts by providing practical training opportunities for students and promoting development of innovations produced at the institute for the country's advancement.

NIT Rector Dr Prosper Mgaya said that a total of 4,176 experts had been awarded certificates across various levels, with 2,581 male and 1,595 female.

Dr Mgaya also addressed challenges such as limited infrastructure and human resources in light of the increasing student admissions.

To tackle the issues, NIT is building new dormitories, classrooms, offices and garages with three buildings expected to be completed by February 2025. The construction is funded by the World Bank through the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration (EAST-TRIP) project.

Additionally, NIT works to establish new campuses in Lindi and Kilimanjaro regions to ease congestion at the Dar es Salaam campus.

Dr Mgaya further said that the institute continues to request employment permits from the government to address human resources shortages and reduce reliance on temporary lecturers.

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF A LIQUIDATOR TRADE KINGS TANZANIA PTY LIMITED REG NO. 124014

Notice is hereby given that the Members of the above Company i.e. **TRADE KINGS TANZANIA PTY LIMITED** with Registration No. 124014 (the Company) have resolved to wind up the company voluntarily and Mr. Florian Mutagwaba (Advocate) of PKF Advisory Limited, Girl Guides Building, 1st Floor, Tower B, Kibasila Road, Upanga P.O. Box 7323, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, has been appointed as a liquidator for the purpose of winding up the Company with effect from 16th December 2024.

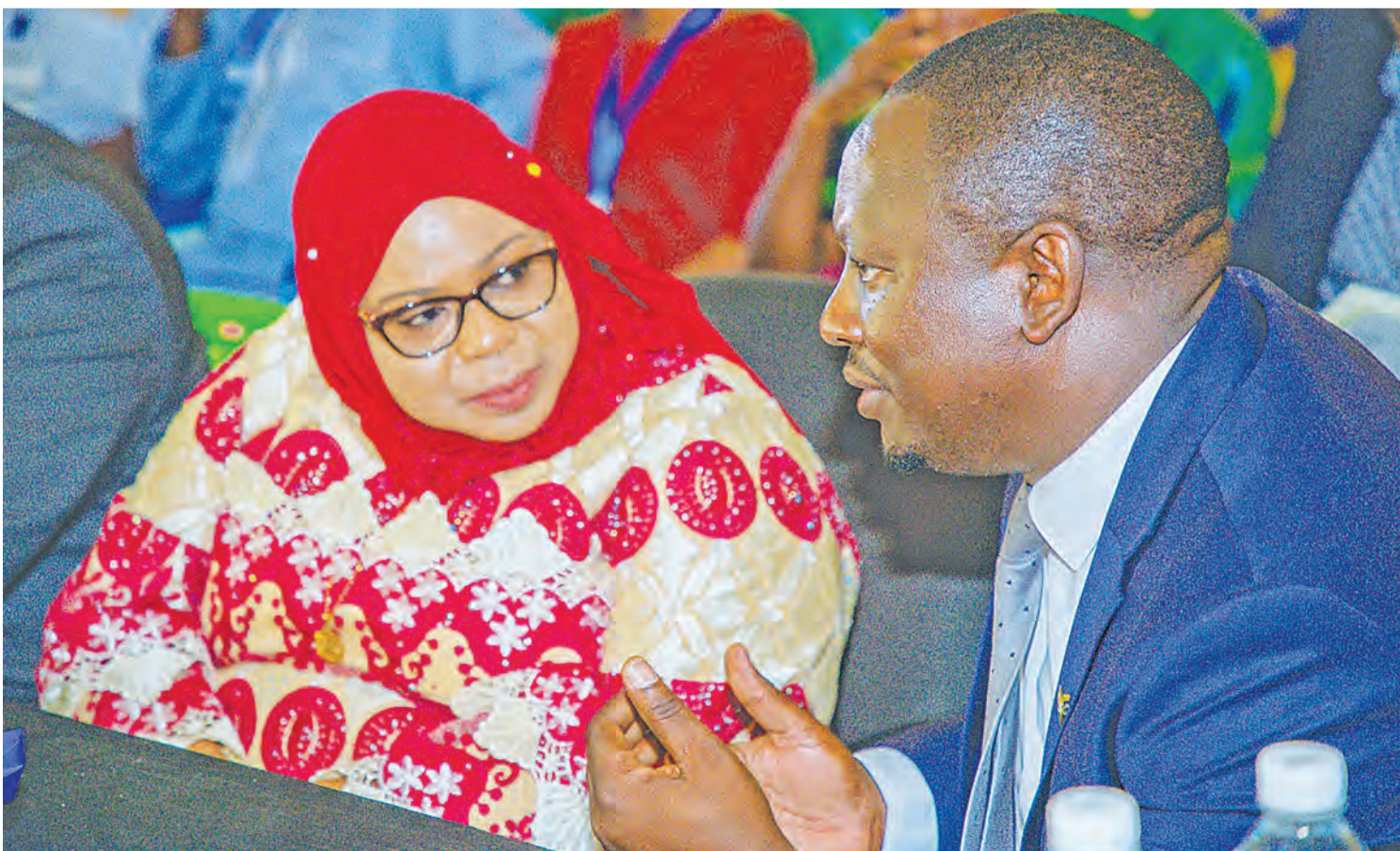
The Public is Hereby notified Accordingly.

Any person who has claims against the Company is required within Thirty (30) days after the issuance of this notice to send to the liquidator, full particulars of any claim against the Company supported by appropriate documentation thereof. Claims which are not supported and substantiated shall be excluded from the benefits of any distribution to be made.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Florian Mutagwaba,
PKF Advisory Limited, 1st Floor,
Tower B, Girl Guides Building,
Kibasila Street-Upanga P.O. Box 7323,
Dar es Salaam.

218304401



Community Development, Gender Women, and Special Groups deputy minister Mwanaidi Ali Khamis (L) has a word at Mbalizi Secondary School Hall in Mbeya Region at the weekend with Benedict Mugumbi, Director of Geographic Information Systems at the National Bureau of Statistics, at the opening of training on the Dissemination and Use of the 2022 Population and Housing Census Results for Mbeya Rural District officials. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
BANK OF TANZANIA



23th December, 2024

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Bank of Tanzania continues to promote the adoption and usage of digital payments in the United Republic of Tanzania. One of the key measures taken is ensuring that payments made using debit, credit or prepaid cards at merchant Point of Sale (POS) terminals are completely free of charge for consumers.

The Bank hereby reminds the public that merchants are strictly prohibited from imposing any additional fees or surcharges on card transactions.

Digital payments are a safe, convenient and cost-effective method for conducting transactions. Their adoption contributes to building a cash-lite economy while offering the benefits of enhanced security, transparency and ease of use.

In case you encounter any charges or surcharges while making payments at a POS terminal, please report the issue to your respective bank or contact the Bank of Tanzania's Consumer Complaints Desk via:

Email: Complaints.Desk@bot.go.tz or botcommunications@bot.go.tz
Phone: +255 22 223 3246 / +255 22 223 3265 / +255 22 223 2541

GOVERNOR
BANK OF TANZANIA

2,000 trees planted in Mwanza to promote environmental upkeep

By Guardian Correspondent

TWO thousand trees have been planted in Mwanza City as part of NCBA Bank Tanzania's ongoing commitment to promote environmental conservation and enhancing community development.

The initiative is part of the bank's 2024 ultimate goal of planting 6,000 trees across the country, leading to green spaces and supporting local ecosystems.

The tree-planting event, held late last week, brought together officials and various other members of staff of the bank, students, teachers, government officials including Mwanza Regional Commissioner Said Mtanda, and members of the public, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting environmental sustainability.

"This initiative is a clear demonstration of how organisations like the bank can make a meaningful impact on the state of the environment. Planting trees is an investment in the future of both the country as a whole and Mwanza Region in particular," said the RC.

Charles Mbatia, Head of Strategy and Sustainability at the bank, said: "At our bank, we believe that environmental

sustainability is not just a responsibility but a legacy we must leave for future generations."

He added: "By planting these 2,000 trees here in Mwanza City, we are taking concrete steps towards restoring the environment, supporting biodiversity and building healthier communities. This initiative is a testament to the power of partnership and shared commitment in community development initiatives."

The event followed similar drives by the bank in Zanzibar, where 1,000 trees were planted to support coastal conservation, and in Arusha Region, where another 1,000 trees enhanced the greening of various open spaces at a hospital in Arusha City.

The bank has also previously partnered with Dar es Salaam's Jangwani Girls Secondary School in planting 1,000 trees, improving the school's learning environment and raising environmental awareness among students there.

It also engaged students and community members in an awareness session on the importance of trees in combating climate change, preserving biodiversity, and creating a sustainable ecology.



Shinyanga Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority executive director Yusuph Katopola (R) leads late last week's inspection of progress in the expansion of a sewage treatment plant, the idea being to serve Shinyanga municipality doubly efficiently. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

KINSHASA

A FERRY overloaded with people returning home for Christmas capsized on the Busira River in north-eastern Congo, leaving 38 people confirmed dead and more than 100 others missing, officials and eyewitnesses said at the weekend.

Twenty people were reportedly rescued.

The sinking of the ferry late on Friday came less than four days after another boat capsized in the country's north-east, killing 25 people.

The ferry was travelling as part of a convoy of other vessels and the passengers were primarily merchants returning home for Christmas, said Joseph Kangolingo, the mayor of Ingende, the last

Ferry capsizes in DRC, kills 38, over 100 remain missing

town on the river before the site of the accident.

According to Ingende resident Ndolo Kaddy, the ferry contained "more than 400 people because it made two ports, Ingende and Loolo, on the way to Boende, so there is reason to believe there were more deaths".

Congolese officials have often warned against overloading boats and vowed to punish those violating safety measures on rivers. However, in remote areas many people cannot afford public transportation on the few available roads.

At least 78 people drowned in October when an overloaded boat sank in the country's east while 80 lost their lives in a similar accident near Kinshasa in June.

The latest accident prompted anger at the government for not equipping the convoy with flotation devices.

Nesty Bonina, a member of the local government and a prominent figure in Mbandaka, the capital of the Equateur province where the ferry sank, condemned authorities for not properly handling the recent events.

"How can a ship navigate at

night under the watchful eye of river service agents? And now we're recording over a hundred deaths," said Bonina.

The capsizing of overloaded boats is becoming increasingly frequent in this central African nation as more people are giving up the few available roads in favour of wooden vessels crumbling under the weight of passengers and their goods for security reasons.

The roads are often caught up in the deadly clashes between Congolese security forces and rebels that sometimes block major access routes.

Firm revolutionising farming in Africa with data-driven solution

By Special Correspondent

AN AgTech company- UfarmX has invested in satellite imagery, mobile applications and AI-powered analytics to address key challenges in the agriculture sector in Africa.

Founded by Alexander Zanders in 2019, the company is focused on improving farming practices through climate-smart solutions, better financial access, and youth engagement in agriculture.

The company was born out of Zanders' personal experience managing an organic farm in Nigeria, where he encountered challenges such as poor market access, fluctuating prices, and inadequate infrastructure. The difficulties motivated him to establish UfarmX with the goal of solving the issues faced by small farmers.

Through extensive research and collaboration with farmers, UfarmX discovered that access to high-quality agricultural inputs, such as drought-resistant seeds and organic fertilizers, was a major barrier to success. By addressing the issues, the company helped farmers triple their crop yields and significantly increase their incomes.

In addition to providing improved inputs, UfarmX has created a system that allows farmers to access these resources on credit.

The company uses blockchain technology to track farming operations transparently, which helps farmers qualify for loans and financial services.

The system also increases the appeal of their products in global markets, opening up new opportunities for revenue and sustainability.

UfarmX also focuses on increasing

the use of technology in farming, employing local agents—often young people familiar with both technology and their communities—to bridge the gap between farmers and modern agricultural solutions. The approach makes it easier for farmers to trust and adopt new technologies.

One notable example of UfarmX's impact is its work with Fatoumata Mballo, a farmer in Senegal. When Mballo faced a drop in crop yields due to a shortened rainy season, UfarmX analyzed regional data and discovered that post-harvest losses were a significant issue. The company then partnered with Africa GreenTec to provide Mballo's village with a solar-powered cold storage unit, allowing them to store produce and sell it when market conditions were more favourable.

To further expand market access, UfarmX works with AgroDealers—local partners who help farmers sell their products and distribute them to other markets. This partnership creates additional opportunities for young people to get involved in the agricultural sector. Zanders stresses the importance of engaging young people in agriculture, highlighting that without the next generation's involvement, vital agricultural skills and food security could be at risk.

In line with this, UfarmX has partnered with The SEED Project to provide 2,000 students with hands-on experience in farming, job training, and direct employment pathways, showing youth that agriculture is a viable and rewarding career.

UfarmX's innovative approach is set to revolutionize African agriculture, helping smallholder farmers become more productive, resilient, and connected to global market.



Malindi (Zanzibar) constituency legislator Mohamed Salumu Ahmada (2nd-R, in cap) joins a social event at the CCM Gulioni branch in Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Martin Kabemba

Tanzanian specialists, partners undertake cardiac operations on children in Zambia

LUSAKA

AN Israeli humanitarian organization conducted a life-saving mission in Zambia last week, treating 25 children with congenital heart defects in a groundbreaking collaboration between medical teams from Israel, Tanzania and Zambia.

Save a Child's Heart, an international team comprising cardiologists, surgeons, anaesthesiologists, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) specialists, technicians, and nurses, successfully performed open heart surgeries and catheterisation procedures.

The team worked together at Zambia's National Heart Hospital, with doctors from Israel's Wolfson Medical Centre, Tanzania's

Jakaya Kikwete Cardiac Institute (JKCI) and Zambia's National Heart Hospital.

Dr. Godwin Sharau of Tanzania and Dr. Mudaniso Ziwa of Zambia, both of whom were trained by Save a Child's Heart in Israel, led the efforts, alongside Tanzanian and Zambian teams who have undergone specialized cardiac training in Israel.

Dr. Lior Sasson, the director of paediatric cardiac surgery at Wolfson Medical Centre, observed the collaboration, which involved doctors from two generations he has trained in Israel. Together, they saved the lives of 10 children.

In addition to performing open-heart surgeries, the team also worked on less invasive procedures to repair heart defects in

children, avoiding the need for open-heart surgery.

To ensure the success of these complex interventions, Save a Child's Heart donated essential medical supplies, including a portable echocardiography machine.

Since 2017, Save a Child's Heart has worked closely with Zambia's Ministry of Health to strengthen pediatric cardiac care in the country. This partnership has already resulted in the treatment of over 100 Zambian children and the training of numerous medical professionals in advanced cardiac care techniques. The organization has also trained 10 nurses from Zambia in Tanzania.

Dr Chabwela Shumba, Senior Medical Superintendent at Zambia's National Heart

Hospital, expressed gratitude for the international collaboration: "We are delighted to welcome an international team to the National Heart Hospital.

The exchange of knowledge and expertise is invaluable, and we sincerely thank Save a Child's Heart Israel for their commitment to training both our team and the visiting professionals."

Dr Lior Sasson of Save a Child's Heart reflected on the success of the mission: "It is incredibly rewarding to see the doctors we trained in Israel now leading life-saving missions and building sustainable cardiac care programs in their home countries. The specialized training they received at Wolfson Medical Centre has empowered them to

perform complex heart surgeries and train others, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond Israel."

Ambassador Ofra Farhi, Israel's Ambassador to Zambia, emphasized the importance of international cooperation: "This mission represents the best of international cooperation and humanitarian commitment.

Israel's dedication to training medical professionals and sharing life-saving expertise underscores our deep belief in the power of partnerships to create a healthier, more compassionate world."

In recognition of his contributions to paediatric cardiac care, Dr Sasson was honoured in 2018 at Jewish News' Night of Heroes with the Israel Hero Award.



Sihaba Haji Kidume (gesturing), a coordinator with a food systems resilience project being implemented in Zanzibar, addresses farmers at Cheju in Zanzibar at the weekend while on an inspection tour of their activities. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

UN peacekeepers now guard Congolese farmers in camps

KINSHASA

THE United Nations mission has faced increasing scrutiny over the years as the conflict between rebel groups, self-defence forces and other militias has escalated in the east.

However, in this corner of Djuju territory, in the village of Dhendro, farmers are resolute in their support for the U.N. force known by the acronym MONUSCO. Many of these farmers, displaced from their homes by the conflict, now live in camps near the U.N. bases.

"I came here because of the presence of MONUSCO. It's thanks to their presence that I'm going to the field; otherwise I'm afraid," said 23-year-old Lokana Heritier, who left his village to live closer to the blue helmets, in an interview with Reuters.

MONUSCO has been deployed in Congo since 2010, taking over from an earlier U.N. operation aimed at securing the troubled eastern region, which borders Rwanda.

The operation to protect farmers who grow corn, beans, potatoes, and manioc is known as "Secure Harvest." Its goal is to allow them to work freely during the harvesting season and to provide protection from militia groups who steal crops and kill people.

"The main objective is to secure the farmers in their farmland when they are working. We believe this is directly linked to the protection of civilians that MONUSCO is mandated for," Brigadier General Monzurul Alam told Reuters.

Last year, the U.N. Security Council approved the end of the mission at the request of President Felix Tshisekedi. The 13,500-strong force had faced attacks and protests over perceptions that it had failed to secure the population.

In July, Congo's government reversed its position and asked MONUSCO to remain in the Ituri and North Kivu provinces until conditions were met for the force's departure.

Chinese men accused of running illegal gold mine in DRC nabbed

KINSHASA

SEVENTEEN Chinese men have been arrested on suspicion of running an illegal gold mine in the Democratic Republic of Congo, authorities said there at the weekend as the government pressed

on with a crackdown on unlicensed extraction of minerals.

The men were brought into the press conference called to announce their detention in Bukavu, the main town in strife-torn South Kivu province. They sat on chairs with

out restraints and did not speak to journalists.

The men were arrested after a government delegation made an unannounced visit to the mine site in the village of Karhembo on Thursday, Bernard Muhindo, the province's finance minister and acting mines

minister, said.

"We asked them to present us with the company's documents. There were no documents, zero. No certificate, no status, no national identification, nothing," Muhindo said.

Around 60 Chinese

nationals were at the site and officials detained 17 who appeared to be in charge, along with some people from Congo and neighbouring Burundi, he added.

The Chinese embassy in Kinshasa did not immediately respond to a Reu-

ters request for comment.

Burundi's embassy said it was still waiting for details from its representative in Bukavu.

The central African country says it has been struggling to stop unlicensed companies and in some cases armed groups

from exploiting its rich reserves of cobalt, copper, gold and other minerals.

Competition over mining operations has fuelled fighting in the region that borders Rwanda.

In July, the province's governor, Jean-Jacques Purusi Sadiki, suspended

mining operations there and ordered companies and operators to leave in a bid to "restore order to mining operations".

They were later resumed but authorities said they would continue investigations into the sector.

French troops begin leaving Chad ahead of set ultimatum

N'DJAMENA

FRANCE began withdrawing soldiers from Chad at the weekend, according to the Chadian Defense Ministry, after N'Djamena abruptly ended military cooperation with the former colonial power last month.

"The General Staff of the Armed Forces informs National and International Opinion that after the withdrawal of French fighter planes from Chad, the beginning of troop withdrawal has just begun today," it said in a statement.

This sequential withdrawal of Combat Units will be carried out in conjunction with the transport of logistics."

Chad gave Paris six weeks to remove 1,000 soldiers and their equipment by January 31.

The Chadian Foreign Ministry announced November 28 as the end of military cooperation with France.

France withdrew fighter jets from Chad after a disagreement last month.

French soldiers and fighter aircraft have been stationed in Chad almost continuously since the country's independence in 1960, helping to train the Chadian military.

Chad was the last country to host French military units in Africa's Sahel region after Paris withdrew units from Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.

France's relations with Mali and Burkina Faso deteriorated after military administrations took power in those countries in 2020 and 2022.

Residents in Mali and Burkina Faso, two former French colonies, protested French presence in their countries.



Medical officers from health centres, dispensaries, and hospitals in Muheza District follow proceedings at a preparatory meeting for the 2025/2026 Comprehensive Health Plan held at the Muheza District Hospital late last week. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

'BoT payment systems are secure and robust'

By Guardian Reporter

GOVERNOR of the Bank of Tanzania (BoT), Emmanuel Tutuba has assured Tanzanians that all payment systems involving government accounts, banks and mobile phones are secure and robust, enabling smooth and secure transactions.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam over the weekend during a visit by officials from the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to acknowledge the bank's contribution to tax

payments, Governor Tutuba emphasised that the payment systems overseen by BoT are fully strengthened and provide a guarantee of safety for Tanzanians.

He urged the public to use formal payment systems to ensure their funds are securely transferred to the relevant accounts.

"Our systems are solid and operate without challenges. Whether you pay by cheque, bank account, or transfer funds from an account to a mobile phone, all methods

are secure. All government accounts are protected, and funds are deposited directly without any hurdles," Governor Tutuba said.

He added that BoT manages all government accounts as well as those of banks, and also ensures the security of funds held in mobile phone companies.

According to him, specialised teams monitoring online fraud work around the clock to ensure no security threats affect these systems.

"Our job is to ensure that the systems work all the time, and even those attempting to hack are unsuccessful because we control everything in real time," he said.

Tutuba reiterated the importance of collaboration between BoT and TRA to strengthen the revenue collection systems in the country.

"We work closely to ensure that all payments are made safely and easily," he said.

He also praised TRA for successfully achieving 105%

of its revenue target for the past six months, a sign of the authority's committed efforts in improving revenue collection.

TRA's Director of Finance, Dinah Edward, announced that the authority expects to collect 15.27trn/- between January and June 2025, with a target of 3.46trn/- set for December this year.

Edward explained that the target is part of a broader plan to achieve a total tax collection of 31.05 trillion shillings for the 2024/2025

fiscal year.

"By November this year, TRA has collected 12.94trn/-, which is 105.1 per cent of the period's target or 41.67 per cent of the annual target," she said.

Edward also highlighted that TRA executes measures to improve the tax collection environment by strengthening electronic systems and collaborating with various institutions, including BoT, to ensure tax collection goals are achieved, climate change.

MONDAY 23 DECEMBER 2024

**Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995**

Research findings on accessing of public services tell sad story

WHILE findings unveiled last week on the state of the citizenry's accessing of public services was stark enough, it is hard to say if Accra-based pan-university survey outfit Afrobarometer had an inkling of what to do about it.

The findings indicated that many Africans face significant challenges striving to access public services, including healthcare, education, identification documents and police assistance, with a high level of disrespect encountered in these interactions.

It is the latter aspect that caught a breadth of imagination as a routine failing in state corridor attitudes.

The report, circulated online, highlighted findings on surveyed experiences of Africans who sought services over the past year, with the data drawn from 39 countries.

The theme of disrespectful treatment by public service providers kept coming up in whatever cohort the survey was conducted, but it is the institute's reaction that leaves much to be desired.

It says that the data paint a grim picture, where anything between one-third and two-thirds of people seeking public services are treated with vivid disrespect and look like beggars.

Those reporting such treatment include up to 58 per cent of respondents who interacted with public healthcare facilities, 34 per cent engaged with public schools and 33 per cent seeking identification documents from government agencies.

Going by the survey, over 40 per cent of people also sought assistance from the police and encountered the same situation such that the report affirms that police officers rarely, if ever, operated professionally or respected citizens' rights.

It was simply not the sort of attitude for which the police were trained to do, but systems change

people.

Police officers aren't trained to take bribes while at work, but once hired some absorb what they find around them and know when it is perfectly safe to take a bribe, not to say to extort random payments for whatever cause.

Still, this picture as generalised for African countries although there are genuine variations of civil service breakdown and arrogance in the delivery of social services, is what Africans can show to the world more than 60 years since independence!

The signs started showing early, but at that time just as it is today, no one will admit that independence sowed decline.

A cartoonist in a regional newspaper came up with a satiric image of East African Community summit participants united by the common policy of abductions after a Ugandan opposition leader was abducted in Kenya when attending a book launch.

This newly found penchant for ways to handle criticism has been spreading not exactly like wildfire, but it is hard to find countries where low levels of violence against dissidents aren't conducted with benign lack of concern at upper levels of state organs.

What Afrobarometer did not do was to figure out why this is the case and what ought to be done to roll it back.

To take the rather cynical cartoon insinuation a bit further, it is possible to say that African states are capable of avoiding a Haiti-style type syndrome in the future, as many of them grew out of life presidencies or family rule.

Meanwhile, capital is flowing more steadily into Africa than it did in the case of Haiti, though there are dangers of an exploding urban population having little to do, being drawn into gangs for survival, decimating the social fabric and public order.

Our investment promotions must know the interests of foreign business groups

FRESH from a Saudi business and investors forum that lasted three days up to December 20, top Tanzanian officials exuded in strong affirmations that the event would have served as a catalyst for investment in our country's energy sector.

There was fairly needless repetition that our country boasted numerous opportunities in natural gas, electricity and clean cooking energy, precisely what was relayed to over 250 business leaders and investors in the bilateral event. Unbeknownst to the top official, though, the proper signal there was a mild 'NO' as to really opening up.

It is true that there are opportunities, but often one must go one step further and demand if this sort of information was the proper target of those who organised the forum, or they could have obtained it in brochures, etc.

The current role model at the local level on what can be done with big foreign firms is the leasing of the Dar es Salaam port container terminal and its results, and if there are similar opportunities in the energy sector, for instance.

Yes, the port contract involves no share opening up but it is not easy to repeat a stand-alone project of that size in various sectors without merging the capital with that of an investor.

Trouble is that we have learned to believe that it will by definition not be to our interest, unless an investor

starts a project. As ordinarily happens, major investors prefer purchasing most shares in reputable businesses and then expand, not start a firm to grow it from scratch, as it were.

When we tell foreign investors that the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project is a key initiative, we don't really realise that we are in year 2024 where generating even 2,200MW is fairly modest.

Just for comparison's sake: Ethiopia isn't an industrialised state; it has twice the level of our power generation and as much the size of our population.

The point is that foreign fund holders usually wish to be able to take large portions of the power generation sector and, in much the same way, the natural gas field. Such opportunities didn't come up.

Instead of taking up shares in the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation, our state-owned petroleum development giant, there is another method of issuing 99-year leases so that the return on capital and the use of such land to obtain venture capital loans or convince potential partners to join the venture is on firmer footing.

That we may not be having any such ideas 63 years after Independence and 40 years or so after getting into economic reforms points to a tendency to stagnate, like many other countries in Africa and elsewhere. It may help to view this as food for thought...

The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

Managing Editor: WALLACE MAUGGO
Circulation Manager: EMMANUEL LYIMO,
0716 500500

Newsdesk

General Line: 0745 700710
News Editor: LUSEKELO PHILEMON
0757154767
E-mail: guardian@guardian.co.tz

Advertising

Mob 0782253676
E-mails: advertise@guardian.co.tz
Website: www.ippmedia.com,
epaper.ippmedia.com



Americans in the grip of a historical phenomenon they do not understand

By D. D. Riler

Everyone has got his or her pet theory on why Donald Trump's hold on half of the US electorate wouldn't budge despite corruption, criminality, old age, compulsive lying, bullying and undemocratic sentiment - and, as it turns out, so does Donald Trump himself.

"I became president because of the brand. I wouldn't swap it for any other brand in the world - 'Trump.'" Trump made the strange remark to reporters in March 2024 following a court hearing.

What Trump was saying is that a lifetime spent marketing Trump-branded properties, goods, services and entertainment to the American people has earned him the name the same sort of blind trust and cozy familiarity that's enjoyed by great American brands like Coca Cola, Nike and Apple.

Trump is implying that he's the human equivalent of McDonald's, and his people are loving it because nobody can do it like Trump can and they deserve a break today.

Can it be that Donald Trump's self-assessment is more accurate than the countless takes of journalists and pundits? Can the blame for Trump's incorruptible bond with his followers really be laid at the door of something as ridiculously banal as a corporate marketing tactic?

It's an idea that feels immediately wrong in a world that's collapsing under the weight of real problems. Who cares about Trump's silly "brand" when Americans are at each other's throats over substantive issues like war, inflation, immigration, abortion, housing, crime and climate change? Didn't voters pick Trump because of his positions on issues like these?

Unfortunately, not entirely. Trump was right to point out that his brand played a major part because when corporate branding tactics are applied to a human being like Donald Trump instead of to a product like a Big Mac, things do start to get weird.

A living symbol

Despite its central role in corporate marketing, the concept of a "brand" remains fuzzy and hard to define. More than just a trademarked logo, a brand is variously explained as a product or company's personality, reputation, perceived identity, or distinguishing characteristics.

The brand is the reason people

associate a Mac with creativity, imagination and bold individualism and a PC with functionality, spreadsheets and office work.

Rationally, everyone knows that Apple and Microsoft computers are substantially similar, but they elicit very different emotional responses from customers - and that's the power of a brand.

Since it came to fully appreciate the magical power of branding in the 1980s, corporate America hasn't been the same. This was when our ever-greedy corporations realised that making truly offensive amounts of money has more to do with having a brand that resonates deeply with the consumer than with having a great product.

The newfound corporate obsession with branding was famously and epically skewered by Naomi Klein in 1999's No Logo. To illustrate the new corporate mindset, Klein quotes CEO Phil Knight's explanation of Nike's enviable success: "For years we thought of ourselves as a production-oriented company, meaning that we put all our emphasis on designing and manufacturing the product. But now we understand that the most important thing we do is market the product."

Why was cultivating its "Air Jordan" brand through a now-iconic ad campaign, shoe design and logo more fruitful for the previously struggling Nike than simply making the best sneaker on the market?

Because effectively, when all the ambiguities are stripped away, a "brand" is simply the corporate version of an already existing age-old concept - the concept of a symbol. And nothing exerts a more powerful mental hold on the human psyche than symbols.

The immense power of symbols comes from their ability to express complex abstract aspects of individual or group identity - so abstract that they're beyond words.

These can be aspects of group identity - the way a flag symbolises the nation - or aspects of individual identity - the way a tattoo or T-shirt design allows individuals to express components of their personal identities.

An incontrovertible fact of human consciousness is that we're all wired to be irresistibly drawn to symbols that express who we are and who we aspire to be. And corporations are more than happy to oblige by marketing their products as symbols the consumer can identify with.

For them, the ultimate branding coup is worming their way into the customer's deepest sense of identity

to make the customer say, in the words of influential 1980s advertising executive Joseph Plummer, "I see myself in that brand, or I see that brand in myself."

Because once the brand becomes entangled with consumers' very sense of identity to the point that they see themselves as a Coke person rather than a Pepsi person, an Apple person rather than a Microsoft person, or a Nike person rather than an Adidas person, they will likely remain loyal customers for life.

Little did corporations and advertisers realise that in wading into the world of symbols, they were unleashing a force more powerful than they could handle.

And that force began to stir when entrepreneurs and business-savvy celebrities - Michael Jordan, and, yes, a certain Donald Trump - started imitating corporations by introducing the world to what Klein called a "new breed of branded humans".

These branded humans, like corporations, marketed themselves as symbols - Michael Jordan symbolising more-than-human athletic prowess, Donald Trump symbolising the ultimate American business success - to sell millions of dollars' worth of merchandise emblazoned with their own personal logos, representing their own personal brands.

Nothing wrong with that, in theory, except for one crucial but overlooked detail: there is no greater power in the human world than the power of humans who become living symbols in the minds of their fellow humans.

An incorruptible symbol

In an often-quoted scene from the 2005 blockbuster Batman Begins, billionaire Bruce Wayne offers the following rationale for creating his crime-fighting alter ego Batman: "As a man, I'm flesh and blood. I can be ignored. I can be destroyed. But as a symbol - as a symbol I can be incorruptible. I can be everlasting."

To become a living symbol, Wayne largely follows the same branding playbook a marketer would... Except that, despite being a larger-than-life symbol that comes to have a powerful mental hold on the populace, Batman is not a brand.

A brand isn't just any old symbol - it's a specific type of symbol created by corporations for the purpose of forging an incorruptible emotional bond between consumer and product. And, while it's true that Batman proudly displays his iconic logo on his armor and all his Bat-accesso-

ries, Bruce Wayne isn't selling anything.

But if he's not selling anything, then why does Batman have a corporate-style logo to begin with? The answer is, he doesn't. What is usually referred to as Batman's logo isn't really a logo at all. It's more of an emblem. Batman isn't a living symbol in the modern, corporate sense.

To their subjects and followers, pre-modern, pre-democratic rulers of humanity were larger-than-life symbols of military might, of power, of authority, of law and order, of justice, of integrity, of ferocity, of prosperity, of victory, of courage, of honour, of faith, of security, of a certain cultural tradition, of the values of the tribe and the aspirations of the nation.

These living symbols were incorruptible and everlasting, their mental hold so powerful that no mere flesh and blood human could compete with them.

Under the reign of beings dripping with so much symbolism that they scarcely seemed human, the very notion of an election is not only unnecessary but absurd. And that, precisely, was the point.

This is the sort of power Donald Trump - who openly admires dictators who rule, in his words, "with an iron fist", who, in the 1980s, attempted to build a 60-story Trump Castle in the middle of Manhattan, and who repurposed a genuine European aristocratic crest as his brand logo - has always aspired to.

And to his great fortune he has found that corporate branding tactics are so similar to the mind-manipulation tactics used by the Old-World aristocrats he so admires, that he could deploy them to become the living, incorruptible symbol of the MAGA nation.

A tribal symbol

Of course, there could be no MAGA nation if social media hadn't come along to transform brands into social entities...

It didn't take long to find out. With smartphones and major social media platforms taking the world by storm a few years later, brand-name humans didn't lose any time building brand communities of their very own.

And now that they're larger-than-life symbols to armies of devoted followers who gather, interact and participate in collective rituals online (and even offline), today's branded humans - though they do love offloading overpriced, cheaply produced branded merchandise

Continued on Page 9



This decision was made during the 24th Ordinary Summit of the East African Heads of State in Tanzania, where amendments to Article 137 of the EAC Treaty were signed and approved. Photo: Handout

Kiswahili's official recognition in EAC: A milestone for unity and integration

By Correspondent Emmanuel

Onyango

KISWAHILI, also known as Swahili in English, has long been a unifying language across East and Central Africa, spoken by millions of people from diverse ethnic groups along the eastern coast of Africa.

It serves as a common medium of communication, transcending regional and linguistic barriers, and is now officially recognized in the East African Community (EAC) meetings.

Kiswahili is the national language of both Tanzania and Kenya, and it is widely spoken in countries such as Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, Somalia, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The language, with approximately 250 million speakers, has its roots in Bantu languages, enriched with vocabulary from Arabic, English, and other languages.

In Tanzania, Kiswahili became central to national unity after the

country gained independence in 1961. With over 120 ethnic languages spoken in Tanzania, Kiswahili has helped bring together people from different cultural backgrounds. It is used in education, government affairs, and mass media across the country.

As a distinctive feature among Sub-Saharan African languages, Kiswahili is phonetic, meaning it is written as it is pronounced, which makes it relatively easier to learn and use. Its widespread use, especially along Africa's eastern coastline and in the Great Lakes region, has made it a prominent language in regional communication.

Given its broad adoption, Kiswahili was officially recognized as one of the EAC's official languages at the 24th Ordinary Summit of the East African Heads of State held in Arusha, Tanzania, at the end of November 2023.

The EAC decision to adopt Kiswahili as an official language alongside English and French marks a significant step toward regional integration. This decision was made to fa-

ilitate communication on matters of economic, political, and social importance among EAC member states, benefiting citizens across the region.

The decision to embrace Kiswahili was formalized with the signing of amendments to Article 137 of the EAC Treaty, which now recognizes Kiswahili, English, and French as the official languages for EAC communications. The move was part of broader efforts to enhance communication and cooperation within the community.

Regional integration

Kiswahili's adoption as an official language will help improve access to official discussions and meetings, ensuring that citizens across the region can engage in the community's activities in a language they understand. The move reflects the language's role in fostering unity and shared cultural identity among East Africans.

Kenya's President, Dr. William Ruto, who assumed the chairmanship of the EAC in 2023, emphasized that Kiswahili serves as a unifying

force in East Africa.

"Kiswahili is a language that unites us all, and it reflects our shared culture. It is spoken by many across the region, making it an ideal choice for communication," Ruto said in his address to the summit. He also highlighted how the language's official recognition would strengthen East Africans' sense of identity and help promote the EAC's vision of economic integration, regional peace, and security.

The EAC summit in Arusha also marked the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the community's revival, with discussions focusing on achievements such as regional trade, digital transformation, and peace initiatives. The anniversary theme, EAC@25: A Reflective Journey and Future Aspirations, reflected on the community's progress since its formal re-establishment in 1999, when Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda signed the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community.

Kiswahili's rise to prominence within the EAC is also celebrated

globally. Since 2021, UNESCO has designated July 7th as World Kiswahili Language Day, a day to honor the language's cultural significance. In 2022, Zanzibar hosted the first celebration, followed by Kampala, Uganda, in 2023, and Mombasa, Kenya, in 2024. These celebrations acknowledge Kiswahili's role as a bridge for communication and its growing influence in international affairs.

The EAC faces ongoing challenges, including ethnic tensions and political instability in some member states. However, initiatives such as the Single Customs Territory and the One Stop Border Posts have been successful in easing trade barriers and boosting economic cooperation. The region has also made strides in digital transformation, facilitating cross-border transactions and improving service delivery.

In his address, President Ruto also stressed the importance of peace and stability for the sustainability of regional development. Kenya has played a critical role in mediating conflicts in South Sudan, Somalia,

and the DRC, and Ruto underscored the need for continued collective leadership in resolving regional disputes.

Despite these challenges, the EAC continues to make significant progress in its goal of regional integration. Dr. Ruto also acknowledged Tanzania's recent growth in regional trade, especially in services, and praised the overall economic integration of the bloc.

Environmental challenges and regional cooperation

Tanzania's President, Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, highlighted the importance of collaboration with the private sector to ensure affordable and reliable access to clean cooking energy. She called on fellow East African leaders to work together to address environmental challenges, such as deforestation, which is particularly pressing in Tanzania, where the country loses 400,000 hectares of forest annually due to charcoal and firewood production.

The formal adoption of Kiswahili as one of the official languages of the EAC represents a major step forward in regional cooperation. This milestone will not only improve communication within the community but also reinforce the cultural and linguistic ties that bind East Africa together, advancing the EAC's goals of peace, economic integration, and shared prosperity.

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

IN a remarkable effort to assist drug addicts in Bagamoyo District, Coast Region, approximately 935 individuals have received education on their basic human rights over the past year, thanks to the Life & Hope Rehabilitation Organization (LHRO).

The initiative, which began earlier this year, targeted five wards in the district, with a focus on providing education to individuals struggling with substance abuse.

The achievement was highlighted during the closing of the project last week in Bagamoyo, where LHRO Director, Al-Karim Bhanji, shared a report with stakeholders attending the event.

According to Bhanji, the organization exceeded its initial goal of reaching 800 addicts, impacting a total of 935 individuals, including 29 women, from Dunda, Magomeni, Kisutu, Njanjema, and Kiromo wards.

"We're proud to have exceeded our initial target, reaching 935 individuals in a year. The project was made possible by timely support from our donors," Bhanji said, commending the local government for the cooperation they received from government officials.

Bhanji also linked the recorded success with improved training for educational providers, which contributed to positive project's achievement.

As part of the initiative, LHRO worked with drug addicts to help them change their behaviour, whereas a total of 422 individuals were enrolled for methadone, among them, 11 are women.

However, there are still 513 others who have yet to begin methadone treatment. Bhanji noted that the willingness to overcome addiction is a personal decision, emphasized that continued funding from donors would allow LHRO to extend its efforts, especially for youth at risk of drug abuse and further reduce the stigma against them.

Project implementation and outreach



LHRO Director Al-Karim Bhanji (left), presenting the project report at a recent stakeholders meeting in Bagamoyo District, Coast Region. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika.

Education initiative empowers 935 drug addicts in Bagamoyo District

To achieve its goals, the project utilized a range of methods, including orientation seminars, individual education sessions, public meetings, media campaigns, sermons, and peer group training.

Educational outreach was provided in a variety of community settings, including nine schools (five primary schools), 14 Boda Boda rider stations, four markets, three churches, six mosques, two courts, and police stations across the district.

Bhanji highlighted that all police stations in targeted wards across Bagamoyo Dis-

trict have established gender desk whereas officers were also trained on addressing the stigma surrounding drug addicts and the violation of their rights.

LHRO focused on educating 18 locations frequently visited by drug addicts, aiming to foster support for the rehabilitation process and challenge the societal stigma against those struggling with addiction.

The initiative also targeted ward executives and district council employees involved in health and economic policy implementation, thus ensuring a broader societal impact.

However, two young people from each ward receiving recovery services were trained to help implement the project's goals and assist other addicts in the community.

"We would like to extend our gratitude to the U.S. Ambassador Fund for HIV/AIDS Relief (AFHR Grant) and The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for their financial support, as well as other stakeholders such as CDC and Tanzania Health Promotion Support (THPS) contributions to the Medically Assisted Therapy (MAT) clinic project," Bhanji remarked, calling upon

the government to continue empowering peer educators who can identify, educate, and monitor addicts on methadone treatment and anti-HIV medication.

Recommendations

Dr Kandji Lussingu, the district's chief physician, urged LHRO to continue collaborating with the government to develop activities for young people who have overcome drug addiction. He emphasized that without a supportive environment, these individuals may relapse into old habits.

"I encourage LHRO to create small-scale projects that these young people can engage in to generate income. This will not only keep them occupied but also give them a sense of purpose. The government will support such initiatives," Lussingu said.

Lussingu also suggested incorporating patriotism education into the programme, recommending that young people be taught songs and values that inspire a sense of citizenship and belonging.

"This will help them reintegrate into society as responsible citizens," he added.

Veronica Salala, the Acting Chief of the District Investigation Unit, also called on the police to identify young people who have recovered from drug addiction and put in place strategies to prevent them from relapsing.

"Regular check-ins and motivating them to engage in legitimate income-generating activities will help ensure they stay and on the right path," she said.

The success of this educational initiative in Bagamoyo represents a significant step toward empowering drug addicts with knowledge of their rights and providing them with the tools to recover and reintegrate into society.

With continued support from both local and international stakeholders, the Life & Hope Rehabilitation Organization aims to expand its efforts and continue to transform lives in the region.

Americans in the grip of a historical phenomenon they do not understand

FROM PAGE 8

onto their followers - increasingly have less in common with the corporations that spawned them and more in common with ancient tribal leaders. Appropriately, we don't even call them "brands" anymore, but "influencers".

The dangerous question is: what will these neo-tribal influencers do with the mental hold they have over their followers?

On January 6, 2021, Donald Trump - who, with nearly 90 million Twitter followers, was one of the biggest influencers of them all - had his follower army storm the Capitol to hang someone he had labelled an enemy and a traitor in a display of real-world tribalism that officers on the scene described as "medieval".

Since that day, countless efforts - from social media bans to outrageous exposés to criminal charges - have been made to break the apparently incorruptible emotional bond between Donald Trump and his followers, and all had failed.

An ancient, personal and emotional form of power over people has been unleashed - and now exists alongside modern forms of institutional power that are ill-equipped to compete with it.

Should this new, influencer-driven tribalism continue its incursion into the political realm, Americans may well find themselves increasingly trapped in the same situation most of humanity - in endless thrall to power-drunk living symbols - had been in for most of human history.

They could lie powerless, anxious, timid, mired in a crushing stream of debts, rents, fees and taxes, surviving but hardly thriving, mistrustful and insecure in a harsh and violent world, yet not plotting revolutions.

Instead, they could be cheering for their magnificent leader's latest triumph, gossiping about his children and his scandalous affairs, confident in the guidance of his elite associates, and taking comfort in the belief that surely, under his leadership, better days lie ahead.

• free factor/medium.com

Illegal timber from Amazon carbon credit projects reaches Europe, US

By Fernanda Wenzel

HIGH-CLASS pool decks, furniture, floors, ceilings and boats. Those are some of the primary destinations of the valuable tropical timber that leaves South America in large containers to supply markets in Europe and the U.S.

But consumers may be taking home the spoils of crime. That may be the case for 21,538 cubic meters (760,607 cubic feet) of Brazilian timber exported to the U.S., Portugal, Belgium, Spain and France between 2023 and early 2024, according to an investigation by the Brazilian Federal Police.

This timber originated in forest management plans owned by Ricardo Stoppe, a physician and entrepreneur who is suspected of leading a criminal group responsible for extracting 38,000 truckloads of illegal wood from the Amazon Rainforest.

In May, findings showed that connections between Stoppe – until then known as an Amazon conservationist and Brazil's largest seller of carbon credits – and an illegal logging scheme.

A few weeks later, the Federal Police targeted the group in Operation Greenwashing, which also revealed Stoppe's role in land-grabbing a plot of public land three times the size of São Paulo, Brazil's largest metropolis, in Amazonas state.

Stoppe used the area to develop five REDD+ projects, whose carbon credits have been sold to companies such as GOL Airlines, Nestlé, Toshiba, Spotify, Boeing and PwC.

REDD+ refers to a program aimed at reducing deforestation and forest degradation emissions. It operates on the principle that landowners are financially rewarded for preserving areas at risk of deforestation.

The emissions prevented by this conservation effort can be sold as carbon credits, which companies can purchase to claim they are "offsetting" their carbon footprint. By doing so, these businesses claim to fight climate change by ensuring the protection of vital forests.

According to available technical reports, a significant portion of the timber illegally taken from Indigenous territories and protected areas was exported.

"This practice highlights the transnational dimension of the criminal operations, amplifying the consequences of the legal-administrative land-grabbing scheme perpetrated by the organization," the investigators wrote in a report.

The largest timber importer was the Portuguese company Costa & Durães. Based in Braga, it bought 21,184 m³ (748,105 ft³) of ipê (Tabebuia serratifolia) from Stoppe's forest management plans, valued at 87,832 reais (\$14,641).

Brazil is by far the world's largest ipê exporter. Thanks to its beautiful, hard and sturdy wood, it is the most popular Brazilian species on



Timber illegally extracted from the Amazon by Ricardo Stoppe's group was sold to the USA and Europe.

the global luxury timber market. The trees, which take between 80 and 100 years to reach maturity, have almost disappeared from the Amazon.

"There are already local extinctions of ipê in the Amazon," Rômulo Batista, Greenpeace's spokesperson in Brazil, said. "To give you an idea, when mahogany was still allowed to be sold, its highest value was \$2,500. Today, a cubic meter of ipê decking is worth \$3,500."

Costa & Durães bought the timber from an exporter called Madeiamazonia, based in Rondônia's state capital, Porto Velho, and targeted in 2017 by Operation Arquimedes – Brazil's largest raid against illegal timber exports. Madeiamazonia, in turn, bought it from a sawmill in Rondônia, which owes 1.8 million reais (\$300,065) in environmental fines and supplied the product from Stoppe.

Both Madeiamazonia and Costa & Durães have the same owner, the Portuguese entrepreneur Carlos Manuel Fernandes Durães.

"These companies had an obligation to trace the wood from the exact point where it was cut until it was sold on the European market," Batista said, adding that both the U.S. and the European Union have specific legislation requiring due diligence in timber imports. In France, courts have already sentenced two companies for buying illegal timber. "They have to assess any risk of illegality," Batista said.

The origin of the timber was also confirmed by an on-site joint inspection carried out at Costa & Durães headquarters in November 2023 by the Portuguese National Republican Guard and the Brazilian Federal Police.

"There was this situation in which the wood that left Ricardo



Ipê timber is used in rich countries to build decks and make furniture.

Stoppe's farm ended up being seized in Portugal," the federal deputy Thiago Marrese Scarpellini, chief Operation Greenwashing investigator, said.

Dimapex, from Ariquemes municipality, in Rondônia, also exported Stoppe's timber. According to official documents, it sold 354.8 m³ (12,531 ft³), valued at 3.6 million reais (\$600,000), of ipê and angelim pedra (Hymenolobium petraeum), to customers including the U.S.-based companies Industrial Pine Products (42 m³ or 1,483 ft³), Oregon-Canadian Forest Products (35.3 m³ or 1,245 ft³), J.Gibson McIlvain (62.5 m³ or 2,207 ft³) and Rockland Wood Products (35.2 m³ or 1,243 ft³).

Dimapex also sold Stoppe's timber to Vandecasteele (115 m³ or 4,061 ft³), in Belgium, and Select Timber Company (31 m³ or 1,094 ft³), which received it in France and Spain.

Vandecasteele, Select Timber Company and J. Gibson McIlvain had already been mentioned in a 2018 Greenpeace report as having supplied timber from fraudulent forest management plans.

Dimapex confirmed the purchase from Stoppe's areas and said it was surprised by the alleged irregularities since all its purchases undergo rigorous due diligence. Read the complete statement here.

Vandecasteele said every ship-

ment from Brazil undergoes a comprehensive due diligence procedure, including "thorough documentation, satellite imagery, and a detailed review of each company's history within the supply chain." Read the complete statement here.

Industrial Pine Products said it had no interest in commenting. Oregon-Canadian Forest Products, J. Gibson McIlvain and Rockland Wood Products didn't respond.

In Brazil, all logged timber must be accompanied by paperwork called a forest origin document (DOF), also known as a timber credit. Once environmental authorities approve a forest management plan, its owner can issue a certain number of DOFs, corresponding to the volume of trees they're allowed to extract from that area.

Given the DOF's significance to the timber trade, criminal groups in the Amazon specialize in getting approval for forest management plans in areas that won't be fully explored. They then sell spare DOFs from unexploited timber to loggers who logged forbidden areas. By attaching the document to the illegal timber, criminals manage to introduce this wood into the legal market, a system disseminated in the Amazon logging industry, according to experts. These tactics are known as timber laundering.

"The entire production chain in the Amazon is contaminated," said Greenpeace's Batista. "This wood is a great motivator for opening up extensive roads within the forest, which ends up opening the door to other cycles of deforestation, land-grabbing and violence against Indigenous and traditional peoples."

From August 2022 to July 23, the area illegally logged in the Amazon increased 19% from the same period a year earlier, according

to Simex, the logging monitoring system developed by independent research institutes such as Imazon, Imaflora, Idesam and ICV. Kaxarari Indigenous Territory, which is in the surroundings of Stoppe's forest management plans, is one of the most affected.

Phantom cattle

Besides profiting from carbon credits and illegal timber, Stoppe's group is also being investigated for cattle laundering – in which herds from an illegally deforested area are sold as if they were raised on a legal ranch.

"He set up a scheme to win on all sides," federal deputy Scarpellini said. "He took possession of federal land valued at 800 million reais (\$133.3 million). Over it, he started making forest management plans, moving more than a million cubic meters of wood worth 600 million reais (\$109 million).

At the same time, he is doing carbon credit projects, where he would have amassed 180 million reais [\$30 million]. And now we have the hypothesis that he was using the animal transport documents to launder cattle raised in neighboring deforested areas."

The alarm was triggered by the large number of animals reported from one of Stoppe's farms, Nossa Senhora das Cachoeiras do Ituxi. According to the cattle transit guides (GTAs), documents that track the movement of cattle herds in Brazil, the property would have 6,258 cattle. The ranch, however, has only 624 hectares (1,542 acres) of pasture, enough to feed around 1,100 cattle.

According to the experts, this means part of this herd is actually elsewhere, and false information had been inserted in the GTAs. "The Stoppe nucleus has a phantom production of cattle to serve breeding in other rural areas with restrictions, resulting in significant negative environmental impacts, including deforestation," Federal Police agents wrote in a report.

Cattle laundering is commonly used in the Amazon to sidestep slaughterhouses' control mechanisms, which forbid the purchase of cattle from illegally deforested land.

The Center for Climate Crime Analysis (CCCA) looked at GTAs to verify the cattle movement in Stoppe's area between 2019 and 2021. The organization, a Netherlands-based nonprofit investigating emitters of climate-warming greenhouse gases, found that Nossa Senhora das Cachoeiras do Ituxi reportedly sent 3,772 cattle heads to 10 ranches over this period.

Two of these farms, both in Porto Velho, supplied JBS' slaughterhouse in the same city, Rondônia's capital. Sítio Cumaru, which received 111 cattle from Stoppe in May 2019, sold 180 animals for JBS from July to August of the same year. Sítio Garça Branca, in turn, supplied 130 cattle from Stoppe in March 2019 and sold 20 animals for JBS in July.

CCCA can't confirm if the same animals that left Stoppe's area were the ones sent to slaughterhouses, since they may have been mixed up with other herds in the intermediary farm.

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 UMJUUYO 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

BEIRUT

LEBANON is grappling with an overwhelming surge in health needs following months of intense conflict, and the situation remains dire for the country's war-impacted population.

Thousands of civilians now require reconstructive surgeries and physical rehabilitation, while the country's health system continues to operate under significant strain. All but one hospital has gradually reopened, but most are still not operating at full capacity, facing shortages of medical supplies and trained personnel.

The ceasefire, which took effect on 27 November, has brought temporary relief to millions of civilians caught in the conflict. However, Lebanon's suffering is far from over, with staggering unmet health needs. Lebanon, situated between Syria and Israel, has long been burdened by a fragile health system, exacerbated by an ongoing economic crisis, political deadlock, and the refugee crisis.

Currently, Lebanon hosts 1.5 million Syrian refugees, and the events unfolding in Syria continue to impact Lebanon's capacity to respond to emergencies. The dynamics are complex, with Syrian nationals entering Lebanon while others return to Syria from Lebanon.

"The health system, already decimated, remarkably withstood this latest storm but has been further weakened," said Dr. Abdinasir Abubakar, WHO Representative to Lebanon. "The challenges are complex and call for specialized, sustained support."

A rocky road ahead

The future of Lebanon's health system looks increasingly uncertain, with major challenges ahead. Lebanon's real GDP has shrunk by 38 percent since 2019, according to the World Bank, and the ongoing war has only added to the country's woes.

Over 1 million displaced people have returned to southern Lebanon, where both physical and health infrastructure is in ruins. Many health facilities remain closed, and the majority of hospitals are operating well below capacity due to financial constraints, staff shortages, and the overwhelming need for medical care.

Since the onset of the conflict in October 2023, more than 4,000 people have been killed, and over 17,000 others have been injured.

Lebanon: Soaring needs for trauma treatment, needs and rehabilitation



Thousands of civilians require reconstructive surgeries and physical rehabilitation. All but one hospital are gradually reopening, while most are not operating at full capacity.

As ceasefire allows access to previously hard-hit areas, the death toll continues to rise, and recovery efforts are hampered by widespread destruction.

An estimated 8 million tonnes of debris are left behind as over 16,000 buildings have been damaged or destroyed. Thousands of health workers have been killed, injured, displaced, or have emigrated, leaving the healthcare system in even more dire straits.

"The need for health workers is dire," Dr Abubakar noted. "Hospitals are struggling to meet the overwhelming health needs of the population."

In addition to physical damage, water and sanitation systems have been severely disrupted, which increases the risk of disease outbreaks.

Thousands of people remain displaced, and those who have returned to their homes face the threat of explosive remnants of war, further exacerbating health risks.

Growing need for specialized trauma care

The magnitude of trauma inflicted on civilians is staggering. Complex injuries, including open wounds, fractures, and life-threatening conditions, require advanced medical care. Many of the treatments provided during the war were suboptimal, leaving patients in need of multiple surgeries to prevent complications and disabilities.

Dr. Ahmad Alchaikh Hassan, WHO's Trauma Technical Officer, explained, "The physical

destruction is similar to what you see after an earthquake, and that has resulted in complex injuries. Those who were treated during the war often require further surgeries."

One in four individuals with life-changing injuries will require long-term rehabilitation, including prosthetics and assistive technologies. Lebanon's current healthcare infrastructure lacks the capacity to meet this growing demand for specialized care.

"This need for specialized healthcare will persist for months and years to come," Dr. Abubakar stated. "Lebanon needs reconstructive surgeons, eye doctors for those injured in the war, physiotherapists for amputees, and prosthetists to assist with assistive devices."

WHO's response

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has been working closely with the Ministry of Public Health to address Lebanon's urgent healthcare needs. Key priorities include replenishing medical supplies, training healthcare workers, scaling up trauma care capacity, and improving mental health services for both patients and health workers.

WHO has conducted mass casualty management trainings across Lebanon, resulting in stronger, life-saving responses to the crisis. Additionally, WHO provided 5,000 contingency blood bags and reagents to blood banks and distributed awareness materials on unexploded ordnance and other health risks for first responders

and civilians.

"We are continuing to scale up trauma care capacity, training surgeons in specialized trauma care, and preparing for future health impacts," Dr. Hassan added. "The road to recovery will be long, but we are committed to supporting Lebanon's health system."

Despite ongoing challenges, WHO and Lebanon's health authorities are working to rebuild and strengthen the healthcare infrastructure, ensuring that it is better prepared for future crises.

"The need for technical and financial support has never been greater," Dr. Abubakar concluded. "We are grateful for our partners' support, but this is just the beginning. Lebanon's health system must be resilient and ready for the road ahead."

East Africa remembers victims of deadly Indian Ocean tsunami

NAIROBI

MWALOLA wa Mwalola, a long time fisherman on the Kenyan coast, vividly recalls the events of the deadly tsunami that struck the Indian Ocean 20 years ago. A survivor of the disaster, Mwalola credits the knowledge and experience of local fisherfolk with saving his life.

On the fateful day of December 26, 2004, when a massive earthquake off the coast of Sumatra triggered a devastating tsunami, Mwalola and his colleagues sensed the danger and decided to stay away from the ocean.

"My place of work was hit, but I was not affected because I heeded the warning," he recalls. "We avoided losses because we warned our colleagues of the impending danger and asked everyone to keep off the ocean that day."

The tsunami, generated by a powerful earthquake off the Indonesian island of Sumatra, devastated the Indian Ocean region, including East Africa.

The impact was catastrophic: 228,000 lives were lost, with more than 300 of those fatalities occurring in the East African nations of Kenya, Tanzania, and Somalia, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The disaster highlighted the urgent need for



Tsunami aftermath in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, where only a few structures remained standing. The 20th anniversary will be observed on December 26, this year. (FILE)

better tsunami detection, forecasting, and preparedness.

For coastal communities in East Africa, the 2004 tsunami was a grim wake-up call. Although Mwalola and others in his community managed to avoid the worst due to their ocean knowledge, the event

underscored the vulnerability of coastal regions and the lack of a formal tsunami warning system. Since then, global awareness about the risks of tsunamis has grown, but experts argue that much more needs to be done, particularly in East Africa.

Shamim Wasii Nyanda, an environmental activist at the Tanzania Ocean Climate Innovation Hub in Dar es Salaam, emphasizes that the growing threat of tsunamis and other disasters is compounded by the impacts of climate change. "There's an increase in

vulnerability due to climate change, but also limited adaptation funding," Nyanda said. "Most of the coastal cities lack sufficient financial resources to implement these climate adaptation measures, particularly in urban, under-resourced communities."

The challenges of climate change, coupled with rapid urbanization, are adding to the risks. Nyanda points to Dar es Salaam as an example, where informal settlements continue to encroach on vulnerable coastal areas, making them more susceptible to natural disasters like tsunamis.

"People build housing in areas where they shouldn't," she said. "When these disasters come, they are not prepared. They do not have the technology or the infrastructure, and what happens? They are just swept away."

As East African nations mark the 20th anniversary of the 2004 tsunami, experts stress the importance of investing in preparedness, prevention, and mitigation measures. While improvements have been made in monitoring and warning systems, much remains to be done to ensure coastal communities are better equipped to handle the threat of tsunamis in the future.

Strengthening infrastructure, raising awareness, and securing funding for disaster resilience are seen as crucial steps in reducing the risk of a similar catastrophe.

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami left an indelible mark on the world and has since spurred international efforts to build resilience against such events. However, as climate change continues to exacerbate the risks faced by coastal regions, the need for concerted action and improved disaster management remains ever more urgent.

By Telesphor Magobe

THE term “justice” is often avoided by both political and religious leaders when addressing their audiences. It can easily be mentioned by ordinary people, but is hardly mentioned by public leaders.

John Rawls in his book “A Theory of Justice (Revision Edition, Harvard University: 1999)” calls justice “fairness”. When he talks about the role of justice in society, he says “Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought.”

He adds: “A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust.” This is simply because unfair laws, systems and institutions never serve public interests.

Justice James Mwalusanya in the preface of the book titled “Justice and Rule of Law in Tanzania: Selected Judgements and Writings of Justice James L. Mwalusanya and Commentaries” authored by Helen Kijo-Bisimba and Chris Maina Peter (2005) wrote “Our courts must be courts of justice, not merely courts of law.” Justice Mwalusanya believes “the rule of law means more than acting in accordance with the law.”

What he means is that “the rule of law must also mean fairness of the government...if by the rule of law all it means is that the government will operate in accordance with the law, then the doctrine of the rule of law becomes a betrayal of the individual if the laws themselves are unfair, but oppressive and degrading.”

In most public statements political and religious leaders are heard saying how they are going “to protect peace at all costs,” but not how they are going “to promote or make justice prevail at all costs.” This has been raising questions among members of the public some of who suggest “peace is the result of justice.” In other words, where there is justice there is necessarily peace, but peace itself is not necessarily a



Justice as first virtue of social institutions, peaceful societies

Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought.

result of justice. For instance, people may outwardly look peaceful, but inwardly could be boiling with anger and revenge. This means what they have is false peace, and not genuine peace, also called “just peace”, which suggests “social order is only peaceful if it is just”.

In Global Peace Index (GPI) 2024 positive peace is defined

as “the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.” This can happen in countries which have established just operating systems through which people experience fairness in the provision of social services and access to justice.

We often experience injustice even in the administration of justice, when a miscar-

riage of justice is occasioned like when evidence is cooked so that an “innocent person” can be declared “guilty” and the “guilty person” can be declared “innocent” or when justice is arbitrarily delayed or denied. Martin Luther King Jr put it this way: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” because it can easily permeate the entire fabric of

society.

People may have false peace when they comply for a while with the rules of the game, but cursing in their hearts. Think of the spouses who live together not because they love each other, but for just the sake of the children they are blessed with. For convenience’s sake they create false peace and may look to be getting along

with each other outwardly, but their hearts are far from each other for nothing genuine binds them together anymore.

Etymologically, justice is contained in the concepts of judgement (Hebrew, mišp t) and righteousness (Hebrew, sedek or sed k h, in Greek dikaiosyn). Sedek or sed k h denotes uprightness, a right claim, a right or right conduct and is most commonly used in legal processes where it is translated as just, saddik or justice.

Mišp t too is commonly used in the legal context and is mostly translated as judgement and sometimes as justice. Justice (Latin, ius) is defined as a fair, reasonable and morally right action or situation that builds up and maintains decent human relations. It manifests itself in the practices of appropriate moral standards and values, while injustice occurs where there is a breach of those standards and values. Sedek (or sed k h) and mišp t refer to a covenant or interpersonal relationship between God and people. It means to live, as loved and cherished by God, is to relate to others in a way that is morally correct, fair or saddik.

Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (1995) defines justice as “right and fair behaviour or treatment” (a concern for justice, peace, and genuine respect for people).

It is difficult to hear justice spoken or promoted by public leaders because they are expected to act justly or fairly towards their people whom they often disregard, oppress or subject them to untold sufferings or injustices.

When public leaders act justly or fairly it means they have just attitudes, they have set up systems and institutions through which people access justice, live and create peaceful societies. But where does injustice come from? It comes from personal interests which drive out justice, and replace it with injustice or unfairness. So, let us act justly or fairly to each other, and in so doing create peaceful societies in which each of us lives happily with each other.

Global trade in wild animals is soaring: SA laws aren’t doing enough to prevent harm

By Angie Elwin and Neil D’Cruze

THE quantity and complexity of commercial wildlife trade laws has grown globally over the past century. A new study examines wildlife trade laws in 11 countries and finds that a country’s Global Biodiversity Index does not correlate with the extent of its legislation that addresses the trade in wildlife. The authors are here speaking about their South Africa-specific findings.

How big an issue is the global trade in wild animals?

It’s expanding rapidly as businesses exploit more species for financial gain. Legal wildlife trade averaged US\$220 billion per annum between 1997 and 2016. Legal wild animal exports originating from Africa are estimated to be worth US\$245 million each year.

While this can bring some short-term economic benefits, unsustainable and unregulated trade also poses serious risks to biodiversity, animal welfare and public health.

Most wildlife trade laws focus on extraction and transport, neglecting the management of animals in captivity. Alarmingly, animal welfare is often overlooked, despite its effects on both animals and humans.

How much wildlife trade takes place in South Africa?

South Africa plays a significant role in the global wildlife trade. It is a source and destination for live animals and animal parts.

It is the largest exporter of species listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa. Over 3.1 million live wild animals were legally exported for commercial purposes between 2014 and 2024. The list includes reptiles, mammals and birds.

It is also one of the leading countries for trophy hunting. The industry in South Africa is estimated to be worth US\$176.1 million per year. More than 140,000 wild and cap-



tive bred animals were killed by foreign hunters in South Africa between 2018 and 2022. Asia, the US and Europe are the major export markets.

Commercial captive breeding or “wildlife farming” also contributes significantly to the trade. At least 344 captive bred species were exported from South Africa for commercial purposes over the past decade. In 2022 alone 285,000 individual animals of 170 species were exported.

How many wildlife trade laws are there in South Africa?

We wanted to explore how wildlife trade is governed in some of the world’s most biodiverse countries. So we reviewed laws on the commercial extraction, transport, captive breeding and sale of terrestrial wildlife.

Our main resource was Ecolex, a global environmental law database. We also consulted country experts and additional sources like the Animal Law Legal Centre

and World Legal Information Institute to ensure our data was up to date.

For South Africa, we identified seven laws enacted since 1962. They contain 34 provisions related to wildlife extraction, trade and captive management.

Examples are the Animals Protection Act (1962) and the Animal Matters Amendment Act (1993).

These laws – like those in other megadiverse countries – focus heavily on species extraction and transport. Captive management, including practices like wildlife farming, receives far less attention. A megadiverse country refers to a collection of countries that house the majority of the world’s species as well as a large number of endemic species.

Although South Africa has a higher number of welfare related laws and provisions compared to other megadiverse countries such as Indonesia, Ecuador and Peru, challenges remain.

How effective are South Africa’s wildlife laws?

South Africa’s lion farming industry offers a revealing case study of the weaknesses in its wildlife laws.

Since the 1990s, the industry has grown rapidly. There were nearly 8,000 captive lions across 342 facilities in 2023. These lions are bred for activities like canned hunting and bone exports to Asia. Such practices raise serious ethical, conservation and legal concerns.

The government announced plans to phase out lion farming in 2021, reaffirmed by a ministerial task team report published in February 2024. However, progress remains slow. Currently, only the export of lion bones is illegal. This follows a 2019 court ruling that declared such exports unconstitutional due to animal cruelty.

A fragmented legislative framework has enabled this industry to thrive. While national

laws like the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act and Threatened or Protected Species Regulations set some standards relating to captive lions, each of South Africa’s nine provinces has its own regulations.

This creates a patchwork of overlapping and inconsistent laws governing the breeding, trade, hunting and keeping of lions. Legal loopholes and weak enforcement allow harmful and irregular practices to continue. This makes effective regulation, and now the phasing out of lion farming, exceedingly difficult.

Though the country has animal welfare related legislation, it is also inadequate. The Animals Protection Act, South Africa’s main animal welfare statute, focuses on preventing cruelty rather than promoting well-being. It also falls under the Department of Agriculture, which can confuse a mandate of promoting productivity over the welfare of the animals used for commercial purposes.

A recent amendment to the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act introduced a clause and definition of animal wellbeing. But this development has been procedurally challenged by the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association. The implementation of this important amendment could be delayed as a result.

Enforcement falls primarily to the underfunded nonprofit National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, in practice the only body that handles wild animal welfare complaints. Operating on minimal resources without state support, it struggles to inspect or monitor the industry effectively, leaving welfare violations unchecked.

The inadequacy of South Africa’s wildlife laws also has implications for other species held in captivity. This is true for non-native species, like tigers, which are afforded less protection.

Consequently, concerns have been raised that the commercial captive lion industry will simply shift its focus to breeding other predators.

Recent research found that a total of 2,315 other predators with at least 626 tigers, 272 leopards, 484 cheetahs and 339 servals were being kept on commercial lion farms across 342 facilities in September 2023.

How can these legal shortcomings be overcome?

South Africa urgently needs to adopt a streamlined and interconnected approach to wildlife trade law at the provincial, national and international levels.

Our research highlights the need to ensure that both biodiversity conservation and animal welfare are fully considered in wildlife trade law relating to every step of the trade chain. This must be focused on the rapidly expanding commercial captive breeding industry.

As a case in point, South Africa’s wildlife economy is growing, often under the premise of “sustainable use and job creation”. The 2024 Draft National Biodiversity Economy Strategy exemplifies this push. However, concerns remain that rapid commercialisation is proceeding at pace without adequately considering the animal welfare, public health and long term biodiversity implications.

Addressing these challenges requires harmonising national and provincial legislation to eliminate loopholes. Animal wellbeing must also be prioritised in legal frameworks like the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act. Increased training for Environmental Management Inspectors for animal welfare inspections, and increasing funding for enforcement bodies like the National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is also needed. Together, these measures can support sustainable wildlife management and ethical conservation practices.

BUSINESS

NSSF to implement lucrative investment project in Dodoma

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE National Social Security Fund (NSSF) has announced plans to implement a multi-purpose investment project in the national capital, including a five-star hotel.

The ambitious project, whose initial phase is expected to cost 148.4 billion/-, is expected to get going from May 2025. It will include a 120-room hotel featuring a presidential suite as well as office spaces for commercial businesses, a sports bar and a commercial bank.

The twin-tower complex is expected to stimulate economic growth and tourism in the capital city, it was announced here on Friday. NSSF Director General Masha Mshomba unveiled the news during a visit to the project site graced by Dodoma regional commissioner Rosemary Senyamule.

The visit ran alongside a tree-planting activity in the city's Njedengwa suburb involving members of the NSSF management team. Mshomba stated that NSSF decided to invest in the project "because investment activities are crucial in preserving the value of members' contributions to enable the Fund to pay member benefits".

He said the implementation of the project will begin in May 2025 and will take within three years to complete, adding: "The benefits expected from investment project include promoting conference tourism, attracting investors and creating direct and indirect jobs."

The DG expressed gratitude to President Samia Suluhu Hassan for her efforts to improve the country's investment sector and open the doors for more and more Tanzanian and foreign investors to invest in Tanzania.

He said these efforts have enabled NSSF to achieve significant milestones in recent years, including increasing membership size and contributions, which have raised the Fund's value to 8.5 trillion/-.

"All these achievements stem from the president's remarkable efforts to enhance the investment sector, as well as the supervision from the fund's Board of Trustees as well as guidance from the Prime Minister's Office and the Bank of Tanzania," he added.

Mshomba explained that during her visit to Mwanza Region in June 2023, President Samia toured the site earmarked for the project and advised NSSF to consider investing in various other parts of the country. The current Mwanza city project is thus in line with NSSF's investment strategy while also tallying with the president's vision.

Speaking at Friday's event, Senyamule applauded NSSF for initiating the project, which she said would drive economic growth and tourism in the region in general and the country's capital city in particular.

She added that the investment would elevate the status of both the country's Central Zone status and the nation as a whole.

The RC noted that the government continues to implement various strategies aimed at boosting the economy and tourism, with many already having started to bear fruit.

She cited the launch of 'The Royal Tour' documentary featuring President Samia as a key factor behind the increase in the number of foreign tourists Tanzania kept witnessing.

Helmes Pantaleo, NSSF's project management engineer, earlier said the 16-storey building would feature three sections: offices, a hotel, and large retail shops.



A side view of a bus terminal under construction at Lundusi village in Songea District. Photo: Francis Kajubi.

686mn/- bus terminal project to benefit residents of Songea

By Francis Kajubi

MORE than 2,000 residents of Lundusi Village in Songea District in Ruvuma Region are going to benefit economically from the construction of a modern bus terminal project in the village fetching an estimated budget worth 686mn/-.

The construction of the bus terminal which kicked off in August 2023 has so far generated more than 300 direct and indirect job opportunities for the residents of that village and from the neighboring villages.

The construction of the bus stand funded by the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) has been completed by 78 percent and is expected to transform the economy of the people when it is fully completed in January 2025 and brought into 24-hours operation.

The bus stand is built 45 kilometers away from Songea town to the village and about 20 kilometers from Peramiho town. This distance has been a long-term challenge for the residents of the village in accessing upcountry transport services.

Residents of Lundusi village have been living in the middle of the challenge of getting easy travel services to Songea town and other neighboring places.

The same challenge has also been affecting the residents of the neighboring towns such as Peramiho and other wards of the district that are far from Songea Township.

Speaking about the implementation of TASAF projects executed in the Songea District Council including the Lundusi bus stand project, Songea Acting District Executive Director Hassan Mtamba said the construction of the bus stand is aimed at bringing to an end travel challenges by bringing the services even closer to people's residence and relief them from incurring high fare costs.

Mtamba said that the residents of the village have been struggling for travel services to be brought closer, thus making people's lives easy for the challenge that has existed since the district was formed.

"When this bus stand is completed and starts offering travel services, it will relieve the inconvenience and cost incurred by residents of this village and neighboring ones who have to go to Songea town for transport services to other regions, I commend the government through TASAF for providing us with this bus stand," he said.

According to him, the bus stand is also going to benefit government employees of the district, some of whom have built their

homes in the village.

Lundusi Village Executive Officer, Imelda Mbawa said that people from the village and neighboring villages have faced hardships of traveling to other places where they have to go to Songea town to board buses.

Mbawa said that people have been spending a lot of money, for example when a resident of the village wants to go to Dar es Salaam, Iringa and Mbeya, he has to leave early to spend a night in Songea so that he can take a bus the next day.

By doing so, travellers incur unnecessary extra expenses of accommodation, food and pay for the motorcycle to take them to Songea paying not less than 20,000/-.

A resident of the village who is also a member of the bus stand's construction committee, Henrick Haule said that when the stand is completed, it will provide opportunities for people, especially youth and women, to run small businesses and expand their income generating activities.

Haule commended TASAF for implementing the project that will stimulate the economic growth of individuals such as Bajaj and motorcycle drivers and food and fruit vendors.

Songea Municipality TASAF Programme Coordinator, Hosana Ngunge said the implementation

of the project was based on the long requests of the village residents.

He said that the speed of construction of the stand is satisfactory. Under the existing agreement the project should be completed in January 2025.

He asserted that despite having a contractor in place who is continuing with the construction works, TASAF beneficiaries are taking part in the construction through the public works programmes (PWP) where they are paid for the jobs they do.

Project Construction Engineer Peter Mashine, said that as of last week construction work has been accomplished by 78 percent and the work is progressing at a satisfactory pace.

Mashine said that the construction started in August 2023 and when it is finished it will have a bus parking area, 36 shops for small businesses, a public toilet, an administration block and a security guards' block.

Selina Kasembe, a resident of Lundusi village, said the project will enable residents to do various small businesses.

"This project will attract people from different places because it has attracted people from other tribes to come and buy plots in order to start development projects such as the construction of guest houses," said Kasembe.



NGO pleads for inclusive economy in Vision 2050

By Beatrice Philemon

WOMEN's rights activists have urged the government to ensure that the National Development Vision 2050 prioritizes a stable and equitable economy.

Jane Magigita, Equality for Growth (EFG)'s managing director said recently at a meeting with senior government officials that the economy must be people-centered, including the poor.

"If we want to grow the economy, the economy should grow, but it must also reach the poor, we do not want to leave women behind, especially those working as street vendors (Mama mtilie)," she says.

Vision 2050 should ensure that women are not left behind, as they also contribute taxes to the district councils.

Magigita made the call when speaking with Stanlaus Nyongo, the Deputy Minister of State in the President's Office - Planning and In-

vestment, during a meeting to review the draft of the National Development Vision 2050.

The meeting was held at the Women Fund Tanzania Trust (WFTT) and involved participants from Women Action Towards Economic Development (WATED), Equity for Growth (EFG), Tanzania women Cross-Party Platform, Caravan: Women and Youth for Change, Msichana Initiative, Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) and others.

Rebeca Gyumi, the Msichana Initiative managing director, further advocated for peace, security and governance.

She called on the government to ensure that the National Development Vision 2050 clearly defines what peace is when we talk about peace.

In this vision, peace and security should be viewed broadly, from the household level to the national level.

"We want the government to add clarification that peace also involves protecting socie-

ty from gender-based violence, how can we talk about peace when women and children are being abused?" Peace also means that a woman should be safe in her own country," she says.

They also suggested that when people talk about peace, it should begin at home, within the household, because many people are abusing each other at home. In the technology sector, the government should invest more in technological systems for online security in this vision.

"How can we assess our security systems, how are they protected, and how do they combat cyber threats, since wars also exist online? She says Maria Matui, Women Action Towards Entrepreneurship Development (WATED)'s coordinator advocated for land and climate change.

She says they want to see women and girls become part of the development in vision 2050 especially in the



blue economy, carbon trading, financial resources, and women's leadership in climate change.

"Also, we cannot discuss issues of biodiversity, climate change, and disasters without touching on land. Regarding land, we want to see where a woman's role lies in land ownership, not just in climate change," she says.

Additionally, they want to see what role a woman has in contributing her experience and knowledge in addressing climate change, land conservation, and promoting climate-

resilient agriculture. Also, in the Vision 2050, they want to see how a woman can own land in a way that helps her tackle climate change.

"Women and girls are the ones who are affected by climate change and tend to experience an inequitable environmental burden," she says.

Women should be empowered to own land and benefit from it.

Prof Ruth Meena, a veteran activist and member of the Women Coalition and Vision 2050 urged the government to ensure that the National Del-

opment Vision 2050 focuses on addressing gender-specific barriers in the informal sector to empower women economically and ensure they are not left behind.

The private sector is growing and becoming stronger, but it should not leave women behind. "In Vision 2050, they do not want to see women left behind," she says.

Anna Kulaya, Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF)'s managing director added that gender issues should be considered in every aspect and in every area in vi-

sion 2050, "We should look at how women can be fully involved in development matters," she says.

Additionally, in the governance area, we should have a society that respects human rights, as well as the rights of women, children, and special groups.

Mary Ndaru, the Caravan Women and Youth for Change's director added that a woman who is not safe cannot raise a child properly. Many women are still poor and need to be empowered so they can escape poverty.

Elon Musk's curious fixation with Britain

LONDON

In 2012, Elon Musk had just completed a business trip to London and Oxford. "Just returned... I met with many interesting people," he wrote on Twitter. "I really like Britain!"

Fast-forward to 2024, and Musk's views on Britain are a little different.

"Civil war is inevitable" ... "Britain is going full Stalin" ... "The people of Britain have had enough of a tyrannical police state".

These are just some of his recent comments on X, as he renamed the site after he bought it.

He has repeatedly got into spats with politicians including Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, he has amplified voices on the right and far-right online and is in talks to donate to Reform UK, according to the party's leader Nigel Farage.

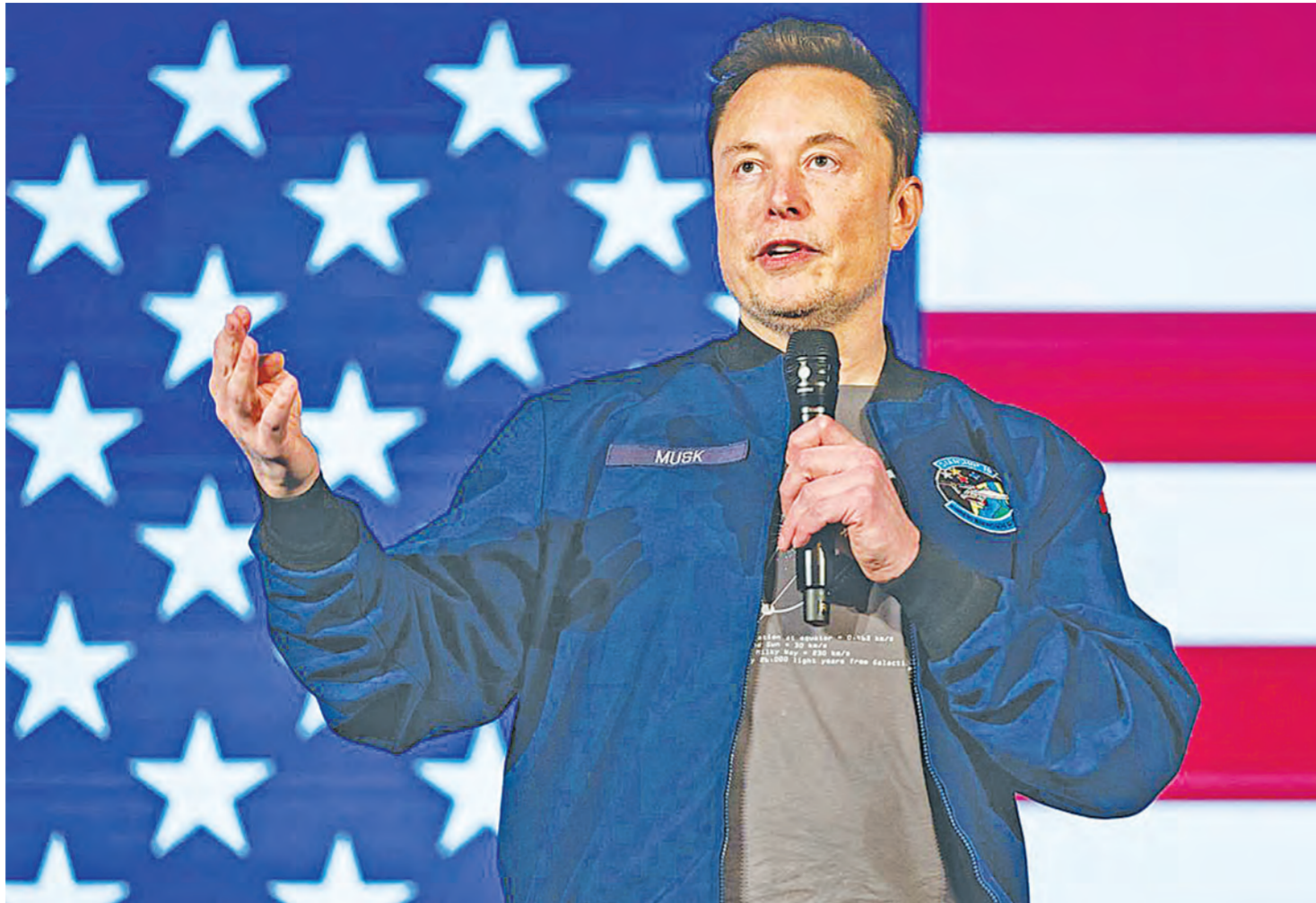
So why has Musk's relationship with America's closest ally apparently soured and what, if anything, does he hope to achieve?

We would love to ask him ourselves but he didn't respond to our requests for an interview. His X timeline offers some clues though.

The self-proclaimed "Chief Troll Officer" often exaggerates in an ambiguous way, unclear if he's being sincere or ironic.

When he writes, "Is this Britain or the Soviet Union?" he doesn't really mean that Britain is a totalitarian Communist state but also, he sort of does. Often he reposts content with just a single word - "interesting" - or an emoji, rather than going into details.

In recent years, however, Musk watchers have noticed that the kinds of things he boasts to his 200 million followers tend to come from a particular place: a world view



Elon Musk.

that is libertarian and "anti-woke", against progressives and centrists.

The shift was explicit during last summer's riots following the horrific killing of three girls at a dance class in the north-west England town of Southport. False rumours about the attacker were circulated on X, including by far-right accounts which had been unbanned since Musk took over the company two years before.

As a protest turned violent and rioting flared, Sir Keir issued a warning: "To large social media companies, and those who run them - violent disorder, clearly whipped up online, that is also a crime. It's happening on your

premises, and the law must be upheld everywhere."

Musk replied with one word: "Insane".

Later, he would state that "civil war is inevitable" and spread a false message from the leader of a far-right party, claiming that Sir Keir was considering building detainment camps for rioters on the Falkland Islands. By the time he deleted the post, it had been viewed more than a million times.

Musk also criticised Britain's "prison overcrowding situation" on Joe Rogan's podcast - watched 19m times on YouTube - saying we should "make Orwell fiction again", a reference to George Orwell's writings about dystopian so-

ciety.

While free speech is not Musk's only big issue - he appears to care a lot about existential questions around the future of humanity too - it's a subject that the Tesla, SpaceX and X owner has repeatedly returned to.

Just a few weeks ago, in response to a tweet from a right-wing American influencer, making an exaggerated claim about a report from the last government on radicalisation, he commented: "What is happening in the UK?"

And he may be planning to do more than tweet. He was recently pictured with Farage and Reform UK treasurer Nick Candy, amid reports he is preparing to donate a large sum

of money to the party.

Musk's interest in UK affairs could be a reflection of how his own political beliefs have changed. He previously described himself as a centrist and even donated to Hillary Clinton's campaign, but now he talks a lot about the "woke mind virus".

According to interviews he's given and a recent biography, the transition of one of his children from male to female - and that child, Vivian Wilson, subsequently cutting him off from her life - appears to be one of the key turning points.

Winston Marshall, a former Mumford & Sons guitarist turned podcast host and right-leaning political commentator whose father jointly owns TV

channel GB News, speculates that Musk could be picking fights because "he cares very deeply about the UK".

"Britain is the birthplace of liberal democracy, of many of the great philosophies that underpin America," Marshall says.

"So then he looks over to the UK and he sees what's been going on for several years, but which is now crescendoing after the August riots, with many, many people being given long jail sentences for literally Facebook memes in some cases."

"Facebook memes" sounds pretty harmless but these examples include - for instance - a three-month jail sentence for a person who posted a meme along with the caption "let's [expletive] riot" on a Facebook group with "riot/protest" in the name during the Southport disorder.

Some question whether the tycoon is really as committed to free speech as he claims.

The Center for Countering Digital Hate, which scrutinises social media companies, was critical of Musk's tenure at X - prompting the tycoon to sue, accusing the organisation of misusing data and scaring off advertisers. The case was thrown out by a US judge.

Its CEO Imran Ahmed called the incident "indicative of the mindset of a man who simply cannot understand that freedom of speech is a freedom afforded to all, not just to him".

Other critics have pointed out that Musk has been careful not to criticise the president of China, a country where Tesla has huge business interests, despite Beijing's well-documented culture of censorship.

He has far less at stake, business-wise, in Britain, but the country could still affect his bottom line via the Online Safety Act, passed by Parliament in late 2023. It will allow

regulator Ofcom to issue huge fines to social media companies if they're found to have certain types of illegal content on their platforms.

Andrew Chadwick, professor of political communication at Loughborough University, explains that while some provisions in the bill are uncontroversial, "where it gets a bit more tricky is where this illegal content blurs across into what we might call the kinds of disinformation or misinformation that we see circulate on a daily basis on social media platforms".

This could include "racially or religiously aggravated public order offences or the incitement of violence," he says. The Act comes with some potentially huge punishments - a fine of up to 10% of qualifying worldwide revenue.

Could it be that Musk is worried about Britain biting off a chunk of X's revenues - or even, as the Act allows for in some circumstances, blocking access to the site in the UK?

Defenders of the Act argue that it's got nothing to do with censoring free speech. Gawain Towler, former head of press for Reform UK, says while Musk might not have "a forensic knowledge of all the details of backbench committee" he does "see the bigger picture" - what Reform activists and others describe as a creeping culture of censorship.

"You don't have to concentrate always on the trees. And I think Musk sees the forest quite, quite well," he adds.

Nobody can read the mind of the world's richest man.

But it's clear that Musk has funnelled his vast wealth into influence and is now exporting his values - including a mainstream American view of free speech and largely unfettered capitalism - around the world.

And one thing's for sure - he's not yet done with the UK.

Conglomerate acquires cement firm

NAIROBI

SHAREHOLDERS of Bamburi Cement agreed to transfer 350.4 million shares to Tanzania's conglomerate Amson's Group in a buyout deal that might lead to the potential delisting of the cement manufacturer.

According to a public notice by Amsons Industries (K), minority shareholders retained 12.6 million shares, representing 3.46 percent of the total shareholding. The competing offeror - Savannah Clinker - withdrew the offer, just hours before the closure of the acceptance date on 5th December, leaving Amsons as the sole bidder.

Now having surpassed the 75 percent acceptance threshold, Amsons might take steps towards delisting the cement manufacturer from the Nairobi bourse, subject to corporate and regulatory approvals.

"Should the Offeror achieve acceptances of 75 percent or more of the Offer Shares, the Offeror (Amsons) will evaluate the continued efficacy of Bamburi remaining listed and may then, subject to compliance and approval from the CMA, apply for Bamburi to be delisted from the NSE," Amsons stated in its offer document.

Bamburi principal shareholders accounted for 92.2 percent, led by Fincem Holding Limited and Kencem Holding Limited, each owning 29.30 percent of the cement maker.

Other major shareholders include Standard Chartered Nominees with 15.68 per-



cent and Aksaya Investment Holdings Limited with 11.75 percent.

The buyout was prompted by Holcim's strategy to restructure its global footprint and streamline operations to focus on more profitable markets. The Swiss-based firm recently sold its Nigerian unit to a Chinese firm subsequent to divestments from about 15 African units since 2015.

Founded in 1951 by Dr. Felix Mandl, an Austrian working for Cementia Holding AG Zurich, Bamburi Cement was originally named British Standard Portland Cement Co. Ltd., and later Bamburi Portland Cement Ltd. Construction began in 1952, with the first production and dispatch happening two years later.

It produced 140,000 tons of cement in that first year, and soon began exporting to Tanzania and Mauritius, and eventually, the Arabian Gulf.

The company was listed on the Nairobi Securities Ex-

change (NSE) Construction and Allied category in 1970.

It was partially acquired by LaFarge Group in 1989, after the Swiss multinational acquired Cementia Holding, before LaFarge became majority shareholder by also acquiring Blue Circle Industries in 2001. Bamburi itself acquired Hima Cement in Uganda in 1999, and a 20 percent stake in Athi River Mining in 2000.

It also owns a minority shareholding (12.50 percent) in East African Portland Cement (EAPC), although its ownership has always been seen from the perspective of LaFarge/Holcim's total shareholding through various subsidiaries, which is 41.7 percent.

Tanzania's Amsons Group has kicked off the KSh 23.6 billion Bamburi Cement buyout deal, acquiring the first batch of the listed cement manufacturer's shares at KSh 8.91 billion in a block trade.

"Today's market turnover

surged significantly to KSh 9 billion, up from KSh 152 million in the previous session, driven by a block trade in Bamburi Cement," NSE said in its daily report on Wednesday.

The total volume of shares traded in the day surged 1864 percent to 174 million from 8.8 million traded previously, with Bamburi accounting for 78 percent of the day's session.

"The total volume of traded shares jumped to 174 million, compared to 8.8 million shares in the prior session, with the block transaction contributing substantially to the day's activity," NSE added.

Bamburi's principal shareholders are Fincem Holding Limited and Kencem Holding Limited, each owning 29.30 percent of the cement maker. Other major shareholders include Standard Chartered Nominees with 15.68 percent, and Aksaya Investment Holdings Limited with 11.12 percent.

Pressure piles on parents for Instagram-worthy Christmas

NEW YORK

Gone are the days when children would circle their favourite toy in the catalogue in the hope of getting what they want from Santa.

Instead, social media hauls - where influencers display items they have bought - are the now go-to catalogue, with some parents saying it heaps added pressure on an already stressful time. Parenting blogger Charlotte Harding said she found the cost of Christmas presents this year "quite stressful".

"As the boys have got older, the presents have become more expensive," she added.

Charlotte said game consoles and concert tickets were the main items on the wish list, but it is not just presents on the big day that add up.

"The boys have asked for advent calendars that are about £25 plus, which to be honest would be a Christmas present in itself. But this is for the run up to Christmas."

She said she had also heard of young girls asking for beauty

advent calendars costing hundreds of pounds.

Charlotte said social media played a big role when children make their Christmas lists, in particular "younger and younger" influencers who advertise products.

"But children don't know the amount of money these things cost... and the parents are really starting to feel the pressure of it."

But it is not just Christmas presents and gifts that are costly.

Social media trends such as Elf on the Shelf and Christmas Eve Boxes, as well as attending events, are also driving prices up around the festive period.

"The latest trend I've seen is a plane and you go see Santa, and apparently it's amazing," said parent blogger Stephanie Handwell.

Stephanie is behind the blog Welsh Mummy Steph and she's felt the pressure of social trends in the past.

"You've got the Polar Express, the Santa experiences and afternoon tea with Santa. I sometimes have to check

myself and think when I was a child, I saw Santa once and it was still magical," she said.

"It was probably the things we did as a family that I really remember."

She admitted she has felt the pressure of social trends in the past.

"I've decided to keep my PR calendar minimised because it creates this expectation, and I don't like that because I feel that myself as a parent," she said.

Caitlin Acreman, who is behind the Haul at 4 Instagram page, has also scaled back her Christmas-related content because of the cost of living crisis.

"You can still have an amazing Christmas and make loads of memories in a budget-friendly way," she said.

Caitlin said she loves to see people celebrating Christmas events online, but she believes "comparison is the thief of joy".

"I like to go on my stories a show there is a person there, I'm a mum of two and I'm constantly finding ways to be budget friendly and save those pennies."



WORLD

Hamas: Gaza peace deal 'closer than ever' if Israel sets no new conditions

GAZA

LEADERS of three Palestinian factions have agreed that a ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip is "closer than ever" if Israel stops setting new conditions, Hamas said on Saturday.

These remarks followed a meeting in Cairo on Friday among leaders from Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, according to a statement from Hamas.

The three factions reviewed the latest developments in ceasefire negotiations and the prisoner-for-hostage exchange deal, reaffirming their shared commitment to ending the "aggression" against the Pales-

tinian people, which has persisted for over 14 months, said the statement.

It noted that the delegations also discussed the possibility of establishing a community support committee to manage post-war Gaza.

Also on Saturday, at least nine people were killed in Israeli shelling on the Gaza Strip, according to Palestinian sources.

Israeli warplanes targeted in the morning a gathering of Palestinians west of the al-Shati refugee camp, said Mahmoud Basal, spokesman for Civil Defense in Gaza.

Basal told Xinhua that seven people were killed and some others injured in the strike, all of whom were taken to the Baptist Hospital in Gaza City.



A man inspects the damage following an Israeli strike on a home belonging to the al-Zaytouniyah family, in the al-Daraj neighbourhood in Gaza City, in the central Gaza Strip on Dec 19, 2024, amid the continuing war between Israel and the Palestinian militant Hamas group. AFP

Medical workers also recovered a body and a number of wounded persons after an Israeli airstrike on a house in the vicinity of al-Ta'min school in central Gaza, according to Basal.

In southern Gaza's Rafah, medics told Xinhua that a Palestinian was killed by an Israeli drone in the Khirbet al-Adas area, north of the city.

Local sources and eyewitnesses reported the Israeli army has been blowing up residential buildings in the al-Janina neighborhood, east of Rafah, since morning hours.

The Israeli army has not commented on these incidents.

Meanwhile, Hussam Abu Safiya, director of Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia, northern Gaza, warned of the seriousness of the situation inside the hospital.

"Shells landed Friday on the third floor and at the doors. Fortunately, there were no casualties reported. However, it caused terror and fear among the wounded and children," Abu Safiya said.

"Until now, we have not received all the necessary electricity, water, and oxygen supplies," he complained.

Abu Safiya noted that the Israeli army "has not agreed to allow the entry of all the required medical supplies, and medical staff are prevented from entering."

He urged the international community to facilitate the rapid entry of humanitarian aid, including medical supplies, surgical instruments, and medics, to continue providing services to the wounded and sick in northern Gaza.

Israel has been conducting a large-scale offensive against Hamas in Gaza to retaliate against a Hamas rampage through the southern Israeli border on Oct 7, 2023, during which about 1,200 people were killed and about 250 taken hostage.

The Palestinian death toll from ongoing Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip has risen to 45,227, Gaza-based health authorities said in a statement on Saturday. **Agencies**

Russia ready to normalise relations with US without detriment to its interests – Putin

MOSCOW



RUSSIA is ready to normalize relations with the United States and other Western countries but without detriment to its interests, Russian President Vladimir Putin said in an interview with VGTRK journalist Pavel Zarubin yesterday.

"It is possible to do everything upon wish. We have never abandoned this wish," the head of state said, responding to a question about the possibility for Russia and the United States to normalize their relations.

Everything changes in international relations and only interests remain invariable, in this case, "the interests of Russia and its people," the Russian leader stressed.

"If we see that the situation changes in a way that there are opportunities and prospects for building relations with other countries, then we are ready for that. It is not a question of us but it's a question of them. But this should be without detriment to interests of the Russian Federation," Putin emphasized.

Speaking about changes in international relations, the Russian leader gave examples from the 19th and 20th centuries. In particular, he recalled that after the Crimea War of 1853-1856, when a series of restrictions were imposed on Russia, many wrote that it isolated itself and did not respond to injustices occurring in the world.

In response to that, as Putin went on to say, then-Foreign Minister of the Russian Empire Alexander Gorchakov sent out a letter with the following words: "Russia is not angry. Russia is concentrating." "Gradually, as Russia was concentrating, it returned all its rights in the Black Sea as well, grew stronger and so on," the Russian leader said. Putin also drew attention to the fact that some historians described the Crimea War as 'World War Zero' as practically all the European powers participated in it against Russia. However, as he went on to say, the situation changed and these same countries were already Russia's allies during World War I.

"Everything changes and only interests remain invariable," the Russian leader concluded.

Previous generation of politicians ruined Russia as desired by West, says Putin. The previous generation of Russian politicians chose the course towards the country's destruction for the sake of joining the so-called civilized world but this was what the West wanted, President Vladimir Putin said in an interview with VGTRK journalist Pavel Zarubin yesterday.

"In the newest history, we have passed the period when our previous generation of politicians, in my view, set course even towards the destruction of their own country in the hope that Russia would become a part of the so-called civilized world. And this was what the civilized world wanted," the Russian leader said.

As Putin pointed out, "as soon as Russia's potential dwindled and it became weaker, they [the West] began to ruin it instead of making it an equitable partner and a participant in this civilized world."

"Unfortunately, this is how the world is arranged, at least today. And if we will build relations with someone, we will build them only on the basis of the interests of the Russian state," Putin said, speaking about the prospect for Russia to normalize relations with the West.

FS draws Xi's inspiration in boosting cross-boundary, global links

HONG KONG

HONG KONG will ramp up efforts to promote innovations in finance and technology, and strengthen its international profile and position as an important link between the Chinese mainland and overseas markets, Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po said on Sunday.

Writing in his weekly blog, Chan said he was inspired by President Xi Jinping's speech at a ceremony in Macao on Dec 20 celebrating the 25th anniversary of the city's return to the motherland, in which the president said: "Hong Kong and Macao should be more open and inclusive, expand international linkages, and raise their global standing and appeal." To ensure Hong Kong's long-standing advantages in finance, Chan said the special administrative region should drive more innovations across systems, products and cross-border collaboration.

He cited the Stock Connect – the two-way trading link between the mainland and Hong Kong – which celebrated its 10th anniversary last month. As a policy innovation, the program has contributed net inflows of \$690 billion to both stock markets, and has been the most important channel for external capital to invest in mainland markets.

PM Modi interacts with Indian workers at Gulf Spic Labour Camp in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday visited the Gulf Spic Labour Camp in Kuwait, where he interacted with Indian workers and highlighted their contribution to the country's development.

PM Modi spoke about the aspirations of Indian workers, linking them to his vision for a "Viksit Bharat 2047" (Developed India 2047).

Interacting with the Indian workers, he stated, "I talk about Viksit Bharat 2047 because the labour brothers of my country who have come so far to work also think about how an international airport can be made in his village. This aspiration is the strength of my country."

The Prime Minister also emphasised the hard work of Indian farmers and labourers. "I keep thinking the whole day about how hard our farmers work, how hard our labourers work in the fields," he said.

He expressed that seeing their ded-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi (L) being accorded with a ceremonial welcome and Guard of Honour at Bayan Palace, on Sunday, Kuwait Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah is also present. ANI

ication motivates him to work harder, adding, When I see all these people working hard, I feel that if they work for 10 hours, then I should also work for 11 hours if they work for 11 hours, then I should also work

for 12 hours."

PM Modi also shared his personal motivation, saying, "Do you work hard for your family or not? I also work for my family, there are 140 crore people in my family, so I have

to work a little more."

Further, PM Modi also noted that India now has the cheapest data rates globally, making communication easier for people everywhere.

PM Modi stated, "India has the cheapest data (internet) and if we want to talk online anywhere in the world or even in India, then the cost is much less. Even if you do video conferences, the cost is very low. People have a great convenience, they can speak to their family members every evening through video conference."

PM Modi is on a two-day visit to the Gulf nation of Kuwait at the invitation of Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait. This is the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Kuwait in 43 years.

On his arrival, PM Modi was received by Kuwait's first Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, along with the country's Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya and several other dignitaries.

Notably, the Indian diaspora in Kuwait expressed a wave of excitement and enthusiasm ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address at the community event 'Hala Modi' at Shaikh Saad Al Abdullah Indoor Sports Complex.

ANI

Chinese envoy calls on US to stop stoking confrontation in Ukraine

UNITED NATIONS

A Chinese envoy on Friday called on the United States to stop its senseless blame game and stop provoking confrontation on the Ukraine issue.

"The crisis in Ukraine continues to drag on, and the fighting has shown no signs of abatement," Geng Shuang (pictured), China's deputy permanent representative to the UN, told the UN Security Council.

Stressing that weapons may help win the war, but cannot bring about lasting

peace, he called on the parties to the conflict to start peace talks at an early date, and on the international community to actively create conditions to this end.

Since the conflict started, China has been calling on the parties to realize a ceasefire, start negotiations, and restore peace as soon as possible, Geng said. "Russia, Ukraine, countries of the Global South and many European countries have all welcomed China's role and contribution to the resolution of the Ukraine crisis," he said.

He further said that the United States is the only country that has chosen to turn a blind eye to China's efforts and continued to spread false information.

"China did not create the Ukraine crisis, nor is it a party to the crisis," the ambassador said. "The United States cannot, on the one hand, hope that China will play a greater role in ending



the war, while on the other hand, keeps discrediting China's efforts for peace and continues to slander and put pressure on China." "We hope that the US will stop its senseless blame game and its provocation of antagonism and confrontation," he added.

Geng urged the United States to work with the countries concerned, including China, to build solidarity and consensus, and create conditions and an atmosphere conducive to the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

Xinhua

To promote common development with global solidarity

ON Dec. 10, Chinese President Xi Jinping had a collective meeting in Beijing with heads of major international economic organizations, who were here to attend the "I+10" dialogue. During the meeting, he stressed that it would be impossible to promote global growth without effective and proactive global economic governance.

He said that China is ready to work with the major international economic organizations to practice multilateralism, promote international cooperation, and support the development of Global South countries, so as to advance an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and build a just world of common development.

The world economy is facing many difficulties and challenges, and unilateralism and protectionism are clearly on the rise. How to bring the world economy onto a path of strong and sustainable growth is a major question for the international community.

In a world of deepening economic globalization, humanity is a community with a shared future where all people rise and fall together. Countries are not riding separately in some 190 small boats, but are rather all in a giant ship on which their shared future hinges. As such, they should see each other's development as opportunities rather than challenges, and treat each other as partners rather than rivals.

Making Global solidarity, cooperation, mutual benefit and win-win

the defining theme of the times is a shared responsibility of all countries and the only right choice for global economic development. To bring the world economy onto a path of strong and sustainable growth, it is important to build an open world economy.

The world today is gripped by anemic growth, and each economy faces its own set of challenges. The greater the difficulties and challenges are, the more important it is to strengthen solidarity and cooperation, and take responsible actions.

Against this backdrop, it is imperative for all countries in the world to build an open world economy through cooperation, drive development through innovation, seize the important opportunities of the digital economy, artificial intelligence

and low-carbon technology, foster new sources of economic growth, and support the cross-border flow of knowledge, technology and talent.

For countries, economic interdependence should be seen as a good thing that enables all to draw on each other's strengths for mutual benefit and win-win results. It should not be taken as a risk.

China has been expanding high-level opening up, joining hands with all countries to advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, implementing the Global Development Initiative, and advocating for a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, so as to ensure that more development gains will be shared more fairly by people across the world. It is a doer and go-getter in

building an open world economy.

To bring the world economy onto a path of strong and sustainable growth, it is important to make the global economic governance system more just and equitable.

The world today has seen the collective rise of Global South countries, which account for over 40 percent of the world economy.

International economic organizations need to keep abreast with the changing circumstances, and respond to the call of the times and the aspirations of the world's people. They need to actively engage in and push for reforms of the global economic governance system to make it more just and equitable and reflective of the changing world economic landscape, with greater representa-

tion and voice of Global South countries. To advance effective and proactive global economic governance, countries around the world must adhere to the principle of extensive consultation and joint contribution for shared benefit, uphold true multilateralism, and ensure equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules for all countries.

From being the first to explicitly support the African Union's accession to the G20, to striving to bridge the North-South "digital divide" and promoting the reform of the international financial architecture, China has always contributed to improving the global governance system and increasing the representation and voice of the Global South countries.

People's Daily

Record graduate cohort creates steady pilot pipeline for aviation

DUBAI

COURAGE, commitment and passion were all in evidence today at Emirates Flight Training Academy's (EFTA) fifth graduation ceremony, which marked the academy's biggest cohort to date. EFTA also announced the launch of an Advanced Diploma in Pilot Licensing Training (Aeroplane) on the back of the academy's recognition as an Accredited Training Provider (ATP) by the UAE National Qualifications Centre (NQC).

The graduation ceremony was headlined by His Highness, Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive Emirates Airline & Group, the Group's senior leadership team, graduates, their families and friends, and the academy's faculty and cadets.

HH Sheikh Ahmed congratulated and presented certificates to the cadet graduates. He said: "Our Emirates Flight Training Academy was built on a vision and a solid strategy, and its journey so far has been nothing short of inspiring, even thrilling. The recognition by the NQC validates our commitment and our robust investments in our academy that is future-fit for the next generation.

"EFTA plays a vital role in nurturing the next generation of pilots, not just for the industry in the UAE but for world aviation, creating a steady and talented pilot pipeline. It's incredible that we are training, developing and empowering young adults to drive the future of aviation - right here in Dubai. I'm confident our graduates will make their mark in shaping the future of our industry. Congratulations to the class of 2024!"

After months of rigorous training on the ground and in the skies, 85 bright and talented cadets are now fully equipped to take on every aviator challenge. The cohort includes 67 UAE National and 18 international cadets. Since EFTA's launch, 271 cadets have been transformed from school leavers with no knowledge of flying to world-class professional pilots. EFTA also honoured four cadets for their exceptional performance throughout the year: Humaid Al Hammadi, Abdulla Ra'isi, Alessandro Muffolini and Sarah Shah; and Abdulla Alkaabi for being the most diligent.

Captain Abdulla Al Hammadi, Divisional Vice President Emirates Flight Training Academy said: "Today, we've witnessed not just a graduation ceremony, but the fulfilment of many collective dreams. After countless hours of hard work, chal-

lenges and accomplishments, our cadets have proven they are ready to conquer the skies. They've come far - both personally and professionally - and EFTA is proud to see them step into a world full of opportunities with their new and richly deserved wings. Congratulations to our graduates!

"Our new Advanced Diploma in Pilot Licensing Training will be available to all EFTA graduates and will provide a strong academic foundation for future professional pilots, complementing the exceptional practical skills they've developed with us. At EFTA, we continue to elevate aviation education and prepare the next generation of skilled aviators, further supporting the GCAA* and strengthening the UAE's aviation industry."

The Diploma, with 94 credit hours, paves the path for cadets to obtain Bachelor's and Master's degrees from any university.

Every cadet in the class of 2024 completed around 113 weeks of training with over 1,100 hours of ground-based and 270 hours of flight training. Located in Dubai South, the Academy combines cutting-edge learning technologies and a modern fleet of 32 training aircraft to train cadets with no previous knowledge of flying.

This year marked a brand new chapter in EFTA's international journey as the academy is well on its way to achieving European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) accreditation in early 2025. With this, cadets who graduate from EFTA will receive both a GCAA and an EASA** licence, opening doors to exceptional career opportunities worldwide.

At the graduation, speaking on behalf of the Class of 2024, Faris Ahmed, cadet graduate said: "Growing up, I was inspired by my father's love of aviation and I followed in his footsteps to take to the skies. These past few years have been life-changing, to say the least. They were filled with intense training, unwavering support, and the forging of lifelong bonds.

"We've spent countless hours in simulators and classrooms, mastering every tiny detail. And who could forget the thrill of our first solo flight or when we saw the inside of a flight deck for the very first time? Today's ceremony not only signifies the years of commitment and diligence, but the beginning of our careers as professional pilots, having received the highest standards of training from this world-class academy."

Agencies

Kiev takes out its anger for military defeats on Russian people, says diplomat

MOSCOW

KIEV is taking out its anger for tangible military defeats on Russia's peaceful population, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in connection with the Kiev regime's terrorist attack on Kazan.

"Kiev is taking out its impotent anger for tangible military defeats on the peaceful population of Russia. The attack on the capital of Tatarstan is also a kind of revenge for the successful BRICS summit in October 2024, which demonstrated the power and influence of this association, as well as an attempt to intimidate the population of one of the dynamically developing regions of our country," she pointed out.

"It is no coincidence that all Ukrainian media outlets and Telegram channels are posting footage from Kazan with sadistic pleasure, accompanying it with lewd verbal outbursts. This is the inhuman essence of the regime of the 'overdue president'," Zakharova added.

At the same time, the spokeswoman called Kiev's actions a "cynical attack" because residential neighborhoods and exclusively civilian infrastructure facilities in the city were damaged.

According to the diplomat, Russia once again calls on the world community to make a harsh assessment of the criminal actions of Vladimir Zelensky's junta. "Once again, we urge the international community to make a harsh assessment of the criminal actions of Zelensky's junta. There is no justification for terrorism. It cannot be ignored. It deserves condemnation and zero tolerance," she emphasized.

Zakharova also emphasized that Moscow is outraged by the hypocritical silence of the West and its media on the terrorist attacks in Russia. "We are outraged by the demonstrative hypo-

critical silence of the collective West and its mass media, which immediately react to any outbreak of extremism and even more to terrorist attacks in different parts of the world, but in the case of Russia they act as if nothing is happening," the spokeswoman pointed out.

Ukraine's attack on Kazan

Eight drone strikes were reported in Kazan on Saturday, six of which targeted residential buildings. According to preliminary reports, there were no casualties. One of the drones attempted to attack an industrial facility, but failed to hit its target.

According to the Russian Defense Ministry, the drones were fired from different directions during the attack on Kazan. Three of them were destroyed by on-duty air defenses, and another three were suppressed by electronic warfare equipment.



Coffee farming provides lifeline for Kenya's central region



A farmer picks coffee berries in a coffee farm in Kirinyaga, Kenya, Dec. 20, 2024. Xinhua

NAIROBI

IT was just past midday when Richard Muthie stood at the gate of the Mutira Farmers' Cooperative Society coffee factory, ready to deliver his harvest. Along with the 50-year-old farmer were 30 kg of ripe, red coffee berries freshly picked by him earlier that morning.

Since the start of the year, Muthie has delivered 400 kg of coffee berries for processing at the cooperative's mill, located about four km from his half-acre farm in Kenya's central county of Kirinyaga. The land, inherited from his father, has been his source of livelihood. "Coffee provides me with income to meet my household needs," Muthie said.

Muthie is one of 8,000 smallholder farmers who collectively own the Mutira Farmers' Cooperative Society. They play a vital role in the cooperative's operations, which are deeply intertwined with the region's agricultural rhythms.

Martin Kinyua, the secretary of the cooperative, said that the coffee harvesting season begins in October and typically concludes by year's end. Farmers then wait for the long rains, expected in March 2025, for the next harvest as their crops depend heavily on rainfall.

In 2023, the cooperative processed about 4.88 million kg of coffee berries from its mem-

bers. Most of the cooperative's production was semi-processed and sold in bulk at the Nairobi Coffee Exchange. However, only one percent was fully processed and sold as a final product to local consumers.

To maximize profits for farmers, the cooperative has set an ambitious goal of fully processing at least five percent of their coffee and tap into overseas markets, including China.

Kinyua said that higher earnings have encouraged farmers to expand the land dedicated to coffee cultivation, which is expected to boost the mill's capacity this year.

Victor Munene, an agronomist at the cooperative, underlined the lucrative potential of coffee farming in the region. "A half-acre piece of land can generate about 96,000 Kenyan shillings (about 742 U.S. dollars) in annual earnings," Munene said.

He said Kenya is capable of producing specialty coffee, which commands premium prices globally, to its favorable acidic soils.

Statistics from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics underscore the sector's significance. In 2023, the country's coffee production reached 48,648 tonnes, generating about 251.86 million U.S. dollars in exports. Coffee remains one of Kenya's top foreign exchange earners, alongside tea and horticulture.

For farmers like Kellen Wambui, coffee means a lifeline, rather than simply a crop. The 50-year-old mother of three has been growing coffee for five years. "This year, I have delivered 500 kilograms of coffee berries to the factory," she said.

Earnings from coffee have enabled her to pay her children's school fees and meet other household needs.

For younger farmers like Naftali Kinyua Wachira, coffee represents an opportunity for stability and growth. Wachira, 27, was inspired to venture into coffee farming in 2017 after attending meetings at the Mutira Farmers' Cooperative Society.

On 0.75 acres of the 1.5-acre parcel he inherited from his parents, Wachira cultivates coffee. "Coffee earnings provide a stable income that helps me pay for my education," he said.

As Mutira Farmers' Cooperative Society looks to the future, its members see coffee not just as a crop, but as a path to financial independence and community development.

With ongoing efforts to improve processing capabilities and access international markets, the cooperative is setting its sights on ensuring farmers like Muthie, Wambui and Wachira reap benefits from one of the world's greatest coffee.

Mining gold of music: Eternal passion of Chinese 99-year-old conductor

IN July this year, the Shanghai Oriental Art Center (SHOAC) Citizens' Concert celebrated its 18th anniversary. As the curtain rose, Chinese conductor Cao Peng, at 99 years old, took to the stage in a wheelchair.

"Whenever Cao is on stage, we see a wave of passion, a vibrant zeal for life that energizes everyone around," said pianist Kong Xiangdong, who embraced Cao after the performance.

The audience erupted into thunderous applause, not only for his remarkable performance but also for his lifelong dedication to the stage.

Cao was born in 1925. In the 1960s, he held his first concert abroad, presenting Chinese musical pieces to international audiences and captivating everyone with the enchanting melodies of China's violin concerto Butterfly Lovers. In the 1970s, he led the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra on its first international tour, earning global acclaim for the exceptional performances and artistry. In the 1990s, Cao recorded over 50 Chinese symphony albums, a vivid chronicle of China's symphonic music.

Calmness, meticulousness, exquisiteness, and thoroughness - these qualities define Cao's commitment to the art of conducting. Whether conducting a professional orchestra or an amateur ensemble, he always upholds the principle that "there is no amateurism in symphony," maintaining high standards for artistic quality and zero tolerance for mistakes.

His exacting approach applied not only to his musicians but even more so to himself. Before every rehearsal, Cao would arrive at least half an hour early to prepare.

He believes that a conductor serves as the bridge between the symphony and the audience. Without a deep understanding and careful arrangement of a musical composition, it is nearly impossible



Photo shows Chinese conductor Cao Peng.

to convey the profound meaning of the music. He firmly rejects any shortcuts, opportunism, or capitulation, as he considers such practices harmful to music and culture.

Cao once raised an intriguing question: With so many children in China learning musical instruments today, how many of them grow up to become symphony enthusiasts?

He observed that many young learners focus solely on perfecting their skills, with little understanding of the deeper essence of music, which makes it difficult for them to truly appreciate the beauty of music. To this end, Cao ventured into villages, factories, communities, and schools in China, performing and helping people understand and develop a love for symphonic music.

When serving as the artistic director of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Cao organized a biweekly free concert series in collaboration with seven music ensembles in Shanghai. He also live-streamed symphony performances and shared his music expertise on a Radio Shanghai program to facilitate music appreciation. Thanks to the efforts of Cao and fellow musicians, the program became China's first

major brand for music promotion, nurturing a large number of music lovers.

After retiring, Cao devoted almost all his time to cultivating young musicians. He carefully selected age-appropriate pieces that combine artistic, technical, educational, and entertaining qualities. To make music more accessible, he created simplified special scores and catchy rhymes for children. With heartfelt dedication, he established several renowned student orchestras, including the symphony orchestra of Shanghai's Nanyang Model High School, the symphony orchestra of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and the Shanghai Student Symphony Orchestra.

Between 2017 and 2019 alone, Cao joined over 100 student orchestra rehearsals and coaching sessions, all on a voluntary basis. He also recorded more than 150 instructional audio and video materials at his own expense, which received over 15 million views. In 2008, with support from the Shanghai Charity Foundation, Cao and his daughter Cao Xiaoxia created the Angel Music Salon for children with autism, encouraging them to open their hearts and express themselves musically.

For children with autism, even leading a normal life can be challenging - learning to play a musical instrument seemed almost insurmountable. However, Cao and his daughter believe in the children's potential and the transformative power of music.

"Only beautiful sounds can reach the hearts of children with autism. That's why we purchased the finest instruments from the best suppliers," said Cao Xiaoxia, who inherited her father's meticulousness.

Music indeed worked its magic, bringing about remarkable changes to the children. They began to listen, learned to commu-

nicate, and even managed to take care of themselves for a short period without constant supervision from their parents.

"The changes in these children are nothing short of a medical miracle. Cao and his family have given hope to families like ours," said a parent of a child with autism. These children eventually performed on international stages, dazzling audiences at events like the Edinburgh International Festival and the Aberdeen International Youth Festival, touching countless hearts.

For Cao Xiaoxia, learning to play an instrument is a pathway to a greater end: helping children with autism integrate into society and, ultimately, achieve independence. To achieve this goal, they customized foundational learning programs and practical training centers for children with autism. As the first participants grew into adulthood, they began to seek partnerships with rehabilitation and care institutions to help these young adults secure suitable jobs and support themselves.

Over the past 16 years, the Angel Music Salon has brought together over 6,000 young volunteers. Love, carried on the wings of music, continues to reach higher and farther.

Cao Peng once said, "If music was a gold mine, I would be an old miner who never gives up and never retires, tirelessly digging and exploring with love and passion. For within this mine lie the essence of civilization, the truth of morality, and the brilliance of humanity."

"Even at the age of 99, Cao Peng continues his prominent presence in the arts. He has infused his life with the power of music while passing that vitality on to countless others. This exactly explains the infinity of art," said Xi Meijuan, chair of the Shanghai Federation of Literary and Art Circles.

People's Daily

Ambassador Chen hails China-Tanzania partnership at awards ceremony

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

THE Chinese Embassy in Tanzania has honoured winners of the China-Tanzania Friendship Photography and Video Competition in a ceremony aimed at strengthening bilateral ties and promoting cultural exchange.

The event, dubbed the 'Award Ceremony for China-Tanzania Friendship Photo and Video Competition,' was held in Dar es Salaam over the weekend to recognise and celebrate outstanding visual works that vividly depict the longstanding friendship and cultural connections between Tanzania and China.

Chen Mingjian, Chinese ambassador to Tanzania, noted that the competition serves as a platform for showcasing the strong bonds between the two nations and the fruitful outcomes of their cooperation.

"This photo and video competition reflects not only our shared history but also the practical achievements and deep people-to-people exchanges between Tanzania and China," she said.

She acknowledged the role of young participants in inspiring confidence in the future of bilateral relations, urging them to continue documenting and celebrating the evolving friendship.

Ambassador Chen emphasised the depth of the partnership, citing Tanzania's export of high-



Chinese Ambassador to Tanzania, Chen Mingjian (C), poses for a group photo with participants of the China-Tanzania Friendship Photo and Video Competition during the recent award ceremony held at the Chinese Embassy in Dar es Salaam. Photo: Correspondent Mary Kadoke

quality agricultural products like cashew nuts and honey to China, as well as major infrastructure projects, including the Magfuli Bridge and Julius Nyerere Hydropower Station.

"China remains Tanzania's largest trading partner, top investor, and primary project contractor. These accomplishments exemplify our shared commitment to mutual benefit and progress," she added.

Joseph Kahama, Secretary General of the Tanzania-China Friendship Promotion Association, hailed the

initiative as a unique way to celebrate and strengthen the bond between the two nations.

"This competition demonstrates the vital role photography and videography play in preserving history, building friendships, and enhancing cultural understanding," he said.

He added: "The ceremony underscores the transformative role of art in diplomacy, serving as a creative platform to celebrate the enduring ties between Tanzania and China."

Kahama further highlighted that photography

and videography serve as distinctive tools for capturing memories and fostering cultural connections.

The competition, he noted, emphasises the important role these visual mediums play not only in documenting history but also in strengthening friendships and promoting deeper cultural understanding between nations.

At the event, various winners were awarded prizes in recognition of their efforts to uphold the China-Tanzania friendship through impactful photos and videos that

told compelling stories.

The awards celebrated creativity and storytelling, highlighting the deep bonds and shared values between the two nations.

Through visual narratives, the winners showcased moments of cultural exchange, development projects, and personal connections that symbolise the enduring partnership between China and Tanzania.

The ceremony served as a platform to honour these storytellers while inspiring others to continue promoting unity and cooperation through art and media.

SPORT

Pamba Jiji look to turn season around with attacking focus

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

PAMBA Jiji head coach Fred Felix "Minziro" has acknowledged the team's struggles with scoring goals in the Premier League and stated that he is working on improving their attacking output for the second round of games.

Pamba Jiji returned to the Premier League this season after a 21-year absence, but their performance has fallen short of expectations.

Despite significant changes made during the off-season, including the dismissal of head coach Mbwana Makata and the release of several players, the team has struggled to find consistency.

The majority of the newly signed players have not lived up to expectations, leading to the dismissal of coach Goran Kuponovic after a string of losses.

Now under coach Felix "Minziro," the team is looking to improve in the second half of the Premier League season.

Minziro (pictured) has said that some experienced players will join the team and that he is developing tactics to solve the scoring problem.

Pamba are currently 13th in the league standings, having scored only seven goals and conceded 15 in 15 matches. Forwards George Mpole has scored two goals, while Erick Okutu has scored one.

With their strikers' performance not meeting expectations, Pamba Jiji have been active in the transfer market to bolster their attacking line.

Since the opening of the transfer window on December 15, the team has signed striker Habib Kyombo from Singida Black Stars, along with wingers Deus Kaseke, Hamad Majimengi, and Zabona Mayombya to boost their attack.

Minziro said that the team's finishing - scoring goals - is still a major concern because they create many scoring opportunities but don't convert them effectively.

However, he claimed that the recent signings will increase competition within the squad and address some of the challenges they face.

"It's true that finishing is still bothering us, and we have been trying to work



on it in training all the time, repeating it over and over.

"I think perhaps we also lack composure, so these are things we continue to work on. I believe that if they gain composure, we will score many goals," he said.

Speaking about the positive results he has achieved in the last six matches - winning three, drawing one, and losing two - Minziro said that they encourage the team, build their confidence, and give them the motivation to fight.

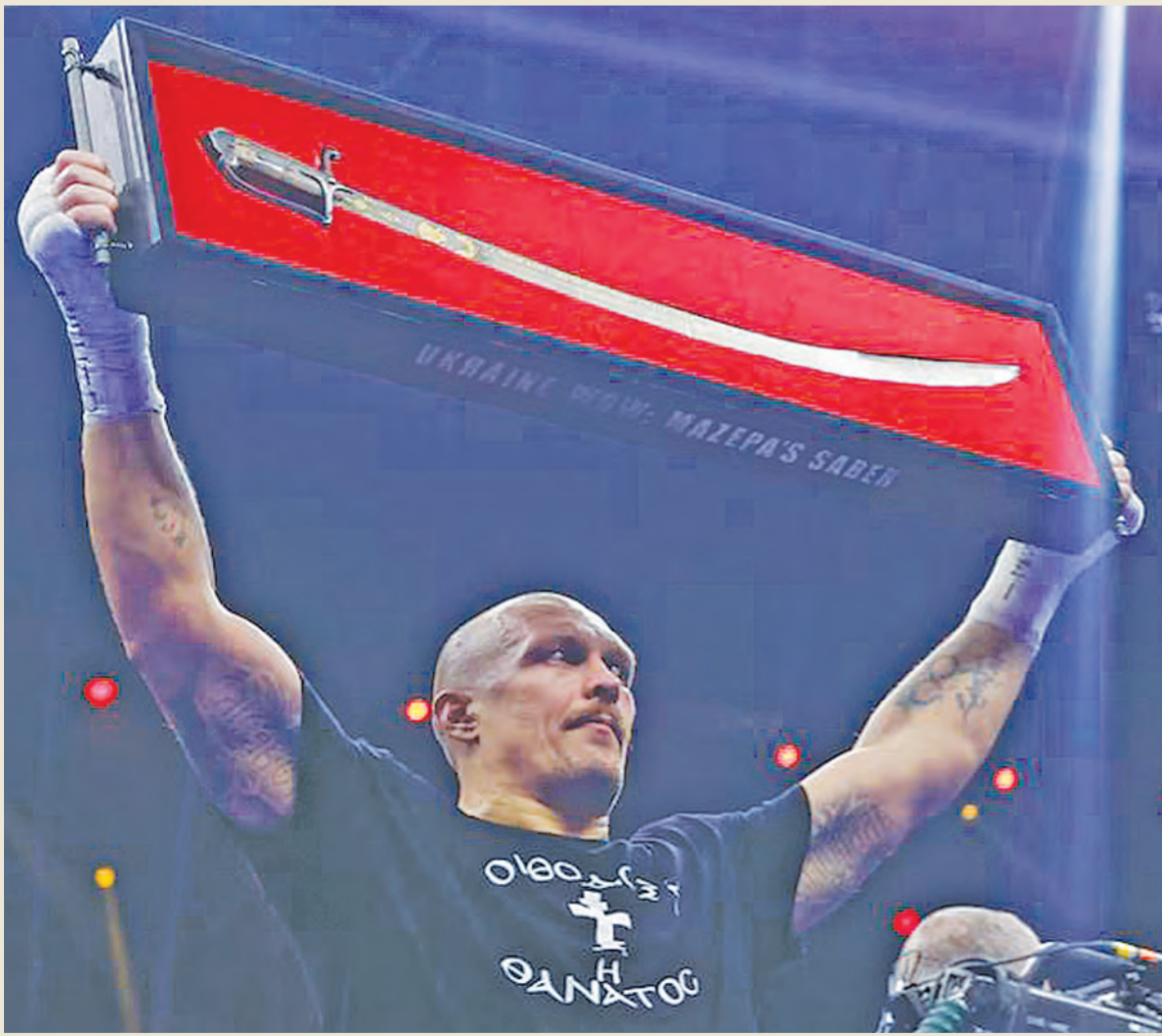
"While these results aren't where we need to be given our club's history, I'm encouraged by the team's high morale. "We know we need to improve, and with the recent signings, I'm confident we'll rise to the occasion in the second half of the season and move up the league standings," said Minziro.

The Premier League is set to resume on December 26 this year, and Pamba Jiji will face Tanzania Prisons at Sokoine Stadium. This will be the second meeting between the two teams this season after a goalless draw in the first round.

Pamba Jiji have had a difficult start to the season, currently sitting in 13th place with only seven goals scored in 15 matches.

Tanzania Prisons are in 14th place with six goals scored while conceding 13 in 14 matches. Both teams will be looking to improve their attacking output in the second half of the season.

Usyk outpoints Fury to retain world heavyweight crowns



Oleksandr Usyk celebrates after winning the Heavyweight World Title against Tyson Fury at Kingdom Arena, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on December 22, 2024. Reuters

RIYADH

UKRAINE'S Oleksandr Usyk retained his WBA (Super), WBO and WBC world heavyweight titles by unanimous decision against Britain's Tyson Fury to remain undefeated after an enthralling clash in the Kingdom Arena on Saturday.

Giving up advantages in height, weight and reach to his much

bigger opponent, Usyk fought superbly throughout to win 116-112 on all three judges' scorecards as he again defeated Fury after his success in May made him the undisputed champion.

Fury, 36, was much-improved from that first encounter where he wilted in the ninth round but could still not solve the puzzle posed by the 37-year-old Usyk, whose superb movement saw

him force the Briton onto the back foot for much of the bout.

Tipping the scales at a career-high 281 pounds (127kg), 55 pounds (25kg) heavier than Usyk, Fury started at a high tempo and tried to control the centre of the ring using his jab, but the Ukrainian matched him and tried back his opponent up by ducking inside and unleashing combinations.

By the fourth round Usyk started to find the range for his left hand, but Fury adjusted and went hard to the body in the fifth as the fight ebbed and flowed.

Fury appeared to be stung late in the sixth with a right hand to the body followed by a sharp left that struck him on the forehead, and by the seventh he slowed, moving to southpaw late in the round as he struggled with fatigue.

Fury's reliance on hard shots in ones and twos to the body did little to stop Usyk from marching forward, usually finishing his flurries with his fearsome left hand.

A good start to the 10th by Fury did not last and Usyk was soon back controlling the angles, finishing the frame at a furious pace and coasting through the final two rounds to take a convincing victory.

Asked in his post-fight interview in the ring if he thought the scorecards were correct, Usyk shrugged.

"I win, it's good ... I'm not the judges, I'm a sportsman, I'm an athlete," Usyk said, before praising his sons who he said had been involved in judo competitions earlier on Saturday.

Usyk was called out in the ring by Britain's Daniel Dubois, who he beat with a ninth-round stoppage in controversial circumstances in August 2023 after a fifth-round knockdown of Usyk was ruled to have been a low blow.

Disappointed by the second loss of his professional career, the usually talkative Fury left the ring without doing an interview, leaving his promoter Frank Warren to speak on his behalf and express disbelief at the scoring.

"How can Tyson only get four rounds in this fight? It's impossible," Warren said, adding he thought Fury had won.

"He's very disappointed, as I am as well. But, I mean, I'm not saying there's any bias (on my part). Everybody along the front there, we all thought the same way."

REUTERS



Basketball youth team players pictured recently during a training session at the Jakaya Kikwete Sports Park grounds in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

City boss Guardiola continues to back players amid team's stunning free fall

BIRMINGHAM, England

MANCHESTER City's beleaguered boss Pep Guardiola insists he has "incredible trust" that the results will come for his team as the champions' crisis continued to grow with a 2-1 defeat to Aston Villa on Saturday.

Jhon Duran and Morgan Rogers scored to hand City a stunning ninth loss in 12 matches across all competitions. Villa climbed over Guardiola's team into fifth in the table, while City are sixth, and could plummet to as low as ninth by the end of the weekend. City's poor run has seen them drop 24 points in the league before even reaching the halfway point of the season. They dropped 23 points in total last season.

"We have to think positive and I have incredible trust in the guys," Guardiola told TNT Sports. "Some of them have incredible pride and desire to do it. We have to find a way, step by step, sooner or later to find a way back."

The manager gave his players two days off this week to clear their heads, saying the team's poor performance is "now all in our minds."

While they painted a picture of collective frustration on Saturday at Villa Park, Guardiola said he believes they will get their confidence back "step-by-step. We have nice personalities in the team and sooner or later we are going to find it."

City striker Erling Haaland said the team backs Guardiola, for whom this stretch is the worst in his otherwise glittering managerial career.

"He won the Premier League six times in seven years, so we will never forget that," Haaland told TNT. "He will find the solutions. He has been doing that every single year. We still believe in him, we have to work harder than ever right now."

Haaland, who was the Premier League's top scorer for the previous two seasons, has found the back of the net just twice in their last eight league games. He pointed the finger squarely at himself on Saturday.

"First I'm looking at myself. I haven't been scoring my chances," the Norwegian said. "I have to do better, I haven't been good enough."

REUTERS

Leverkusen's 5-1 win over Freiburg tougher than it seemed, says Alonso

BERLIN

BAYERN Leverkusen manager Xabi Alonso praised his team's determination after a commanding 5-1 win over Freiburg on Saturday, stressing the contest was more difficult than the scoreline suggested.

Leverkusen seemingly had little trouble cruising past Freiburg at home in the Bundesliga clash, with Patrik Schick scoring four times and Florian Wirtz adding another.

"The result may have been spectacular and Patrik scored four goals but the game was not as easy as it seemed. We had a good opponent and we had to prepare our actions intelligently," Alonso told reporters.

He praised Schick's impressive performance, noting it was the result of the team's collective effort.

"When a striker scores four goals you can't complain. Patrik also does a lot of work off the ball and when he does that well, that's why he scores the goal," he said.

"He helps the team and they make the chances for him."

The win puts second-placed Leverkusen on 32 points, four off Bayern Munich who thrashed RB Leipzig 5-1 on Friday. Asked about the significance of the result ahead of the new year, Alonso emphasised it was a much-needed one.

"It was a very important victory for us today. We wanted to continue our series and go into the break with a good feeling. We managed that. We will continue to attack in the new year," he said.

"That gives everyone a good feeling. We have big ambitions to continue fighting for our goals in 2025 and want to achieve a lot together."

Leverkusen will continue their campaign at Borussia Dortmund on Jan. 10.

REUTERS



Barca disappointed after Atletico loss but life goes on, says coach Flick



Atletico Madrid's Rodrigo De Paul scores their first goal past FC Barcelona's Inaki Pena during their LaLiga match at Estadi Olimpíic Lluís Companys, in Barcelona, Spain on December 21, 2024. REUTERS

BARCELONA

BARCELONA extended their poor run of form and slipped off the top of LaLiga by losing 2-1 at home to Atletico Madrid on Saturday but coach Hansi Flick urged his side to move on and come back stronger after the winter break.

Barca have now gone three games without a LaLiga win having picked up five points out of a possible 21, suffering defeats by Leganes and Las Palmas in their previous two home

games. They are three points behind Atletico having played a game more.

Despite their first home defeat against Atletico in 18 years, Flick said they put on a good performance and expected the winter break to help them regain their early season form.

"Today it was unbelievable how we played. Maybe this break came at the right time. I appreciate how we played. But we have to learn from these things. Losing nine points is not normal and we have to work on it," Flick told reporters.

"The points lost against Las Palmas and Leganes are in the past. We will show after the break how strong we are. We are very disappointed with the defeat, but life goes on."

In spite of their latest setbacks, the former Bayern Munich coach said he was proud of his young team and will work to restore their confidence.

"When I drive at 0630 to go to training I am happy because I can train with these players. Now there is not a good atmosphere in the dressing room, but that's football. We will be

back for sure," he said.

"We have to build confidence and make them proud of how they play. My job is to give confidence to all the players. In Munich there was another team with a lot of experienced players. But I'm happy with this team, it's young and has fantastic quality."

Meanwhile, Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone highlighted his side's resilience after they beat Barcelona 2-1 and climbed atop LaLiga on Saturday with their 12th straight win in all competitions.

Simeone acknowledged

Barca were the better side for much of the game and highlighted his players' fighting spirit after they rallied from a goal down to pick up their first win away to the Catalans since 2006, five years before his arrival at the club.

"I'm very happy with the team's effort. We were humble enough to suffer and to defend against a team that plays very well. In the first half and I think until our goal they were far superior to us," Simeone told reporters.

"Then I think we started to find our feet a bit in the

game, and we saw that we could compete in the game. The team managed to hold on."

Someone pointed to his substitutes as the key to claiming the hard-fought victory against a Barcelona side who are now second, three points off the pace having played a game more.

The Argentine manager took off talisman Antoine Griezmann and brought on Alexander Sorloth up front in the 73rd minute, a decision that paid off as the Norwegian scored a last-gasp winner after a counter-attack.

"That's what a team is, when one player comes off and another player comes on and gives a response," Simeone said.

"We took Griezmann off early, which is difficult for me, but I knew that Sorloth had something that could make us come out from the back to hold the ball."

"I think the substitutions gave us strength. Some attacking situations that you can find on the counter-attack, an exquisite play, a great goal by Sorloth that gave us the chance to win a very difficult game."

Someone also praised his goalkeeper Jan Oblak after his saves prevented Barca extending their lead after the break.

"We have a great goalkeeper who played a defining role in the match," he said.

REUTERS

Jesus returns to form in nick of time for Arsenal as Saka injured



Arsenal's Gabriel Jesus scores their first goal past Crystal Palace's Dean Henderson during their Premier League match at Selhurst Park, in London, Britain in December 21, 2024. REUTERS

LONDON

AN injury to Bukayo Saka ahead of a busy festive fixture list cast a shadow over Arsenal's 5-1 victory romp at Crystal Palace on Saturday but if manager Mikel Arteta was worried about that, at least Gabriel Jesus's form offered some comfort.

Before Wednesday's League Cup quarter-final at Palace, former Manchester City forward Jesus had scored only once in his previous 33 appearances for Arsenal.

But the Brazilian bagged a hat-trick in a 3-2 win in midweek and was razor sharp again with two more at Selhurst Park as third-placed Arsenal closed to three points behind Premier League leaders Liverpool.

Should Saka, Arsenal's player of the season so far, be out for a significant time with a hamstring injury, an in-form Jesus will

certainly be needed.

"He has certainly clicked and he needed that to unlock that confidence and belief," Arteta said. "To score five goals in two games is not easy in football."

"He has done it in a great way so let's continue."

Saka, who has scored five goals and has 10 assists in the Premier League this season, departed midway through the first half and left the stadium on crutches and must now be a serious doubt for the holiday fixtures.

"It's difficult to guess now. They have tested him but difficult to say how bad it is," is all Arteta would say.

Jesus looks like a man re-born after seemingly forgetting how to score. He fired home after six minutes and smashed his second into the top corner after 14 minutes to restore Arsenal's lead fol-

lowing Ismaila Sarr's leveller.

He almost made it back-to-back hat-tricks when his header hit the post and Kai Havertz followed up to make it 3-1 before halftime and really should have done so when he failed to score from close range in the second half, seconds before Gabriel Martinelli made it 4-1.

"At one point I was feeling (pressure) but still I never doubted my qual-

ity," Jesus told the BBC. "I never doubted I can score goals. Obviously when you are having a bad moment you have to keep your mind strong, and that's what I tried to do."

"Sometimes I know when I played and leave with a smile on my face everything is different because I am grateful to God, he's great with me and it's impossible to do it without him."

REUTERS

Hard to improve PSG's already solid squad, Luis Enrique says

PARIS

PARIS St Germain will focus on developing their young talent rather than pursuing reinforcements in the January transfer window as they already have a strong squad, manager Luis Enrique said ahead of Sunday's French Cup clash with RC Lens.

With the departure of talisman Kylian Mbappe, midfielders Manuel Ugarte, and Danilo Pereira last season, PSG have embraced a new chapter filled with emerging talent. The French champions, once known for spending big in the transfer market with high-profile signings such as Neymar Jr and Lionel Messi, have shifted to a more measured and attentive approach.

"What gift do I hope for at Christmas? I am very happy with the squad. The best approach during every transfer window is to stay attentive," the Spaniard told reporters on Saturday.

"It's difficult to improve our squad. We want to develop our young talents. As far as the market is concerned, we've got a very good team."

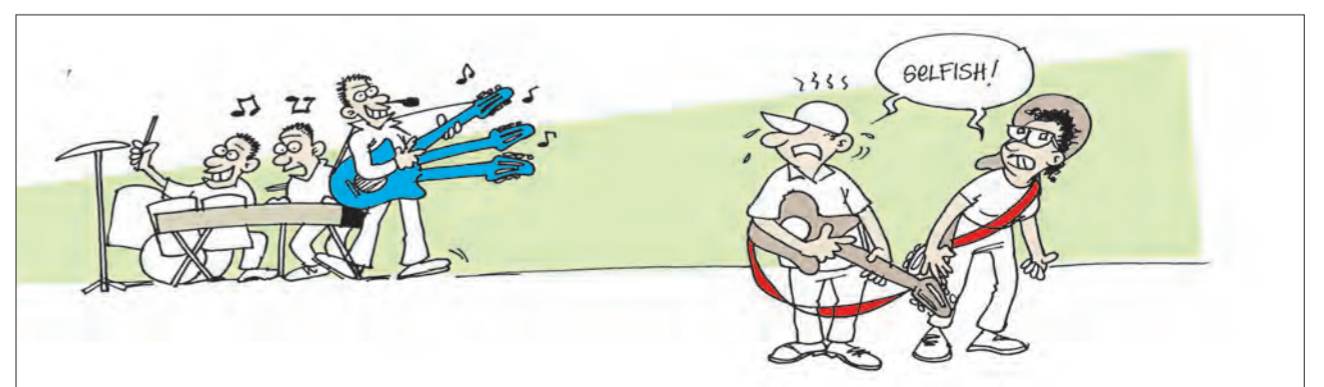
"Last year, we made more than 10 transfers. There's no urgency or need at the moment. If there's an opportunity to improve the squad then great but we already have a very strong team."

Holders PSG will aim to win the Coupe de France a record 16th time this season, starting with their first-round match against Lens, who are seventh in the Ligue 1 standings. PSG lead Ligue 1 with 40 points, 10 clear of second-placed Marseille but have struggled in the Champions League, sitting 25th and they will need to be at their best to stay alive in the competition, which resumes next month.

"From January onwards, we continue in all competitions, it will be very demanding... I like that the players are able to rest a bit. It's all about disconnecting now to be able to work as best as possible for the second half of the season," Luis Enrique added.

REUTERS

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Leverkusen's 5-1 win over Freiburg tougher than it seemed, says Alonso

PAGE 19



Root back in England ODI squad for India tour, Champions Trophy

LONDON

JOE Root returned to England's one-day international squad for the first time since their ill-fated World Cup title defence in November 2023, as the country's cricket board named players yesterday for a white-ball tour of India and the Champions Trophy.

The England and Wales Cricket Board added that Ben Stokes was not considered for selection as the test skipper continues to be assessed following a left hamstring injury sustained in their big defeat by New Zealand in the third test this month.

The talismanic all-rounder had come out of retirement in the 50-overs format to play in last year's World Cup, where England finished a dismal seventh out of 10 teams.

England play five Twenty20 internationals and three ODIs against India starting on Jan. 22 before heading to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy in February and March.

Pace bowler Mark Wood returned to both squads after missing the tours of Pakistan and New Zealand with an elbow injury, but there was no spot for Sam Curran or Reece Topley.

Rising batsman Jacob Bethell was also rewarded for his good form in New Zealand.

Leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed joined the T20 unit, while veteran Root was named only for the ODIs.

The Jos Buttler-led squads will depart on Jan. 17 with head coach Brendon McCullum, who was put in charge of the limited-overs sides in September.

New Zealand coach McCullum had previously taken the reins of the test team in May 2022 and quickly oversaw a huge improvement, introducing an ultra-aggressive style that came to be known as "Bazball".

England squads:

ODIs (India tour and ICC Champions Trophy): Jos Buttler (captain), Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Brydon Carse, Ben Duckett, Jamie Overton, Jamie Smith, Liam Livingstone, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Saqib Mahmood, Phil Salt, Mark Wood.

T20s (India tour): Jos Buttler (captain), Rehan Ahmed, Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Brydon Carse, Ben Duckett, Jamie Overton, Jamie Smith, Liam Livingstone, Adil Rashid, Saqib Mahmood, Phil Salt, Mark Wood.

REUTERS



Dube and Bacca now lead Yanga to a 4-0 rout over Tanzania Prisons



Young Africans striker Clement Mzize shoots past two Tanzania Prisons defender to score his side's first goal during their Premier League match at KMC Complex yesterday. Photo: Courtesy pf YASC

By Guardian Correspondent

YOUNG Africans secured a commanding 4-0 victory over Tanzania Prisons, climbing to second place in the Premier League during their match at the KMC Complex yesterday.

The Jangwani-based side opened their scoring through Clement Mzize in the 12th minute.

Mzize finished a brilliant defense-splitting pass from Prince Dube with clinical precision.

Tanzania Prisons came close to equalizing just two minutes later when Haruni Chanonga found himself in a promising position after Young Africans defender Dickson Job slipped and fell.

However, Chanongwa's hesitation allowed Job to recover and block his shot, missing a golden opportunity for the visitors.

Goalkeeper Samson Sebusebu was tested in the 37th minute, making an impressive save by punching away a powerful strike from Dube to keep Tanzania Prisons in the game.

Young Africans extended their lead in the 42nd minute when defender Ibrahim Bacca reacted swiftly to a free kick by Stephane Aziz Ki, which rebounded off the crossbar.

Bacca slotted it home to make it 2-0.

Moments later, in the 44th minute, Dube added the third goal, calmly finishing past Sebusebu, leaving Tanzania Prisons struggling to find their footing.

Young Africans sealed the win in the 83rd minute when Bacca headed in a corner kick delivered by Pacome Zouzoua.

Bacca, a central defender who is now among the club's top scorers alongside Dube with four goals, was named Man of the Match for his outstanding performance.

The victory propelled Young Africans to second place in the league standings with 33 points after 13 matches, behind leaders Simba with 34 points, as they continue their pursuit of the Premier League title.

Next match for Young Africans will be away against Dodoma Jiji on Wednesday before facing Fountain Gate on Sunday.

Young Africans face a gruelling schedule as they attempt to balance domestic and continental commitments.

Young Africans starting lineup:

Abdualib Msherry, Shomari Kapombe, Nickson Kibabage, Dickson Job, Ibrahim Bacca, Khalid Aucho, Farid Mussa, Mudathir Yahya, Prince Dube, Stephane Aziz Ki, Clement Mzize.

Dauids emphasizes clean sheets as Simba prepare for JKT Tanzania clash

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC head coach Fadlu Dauids expressed mixed emotions following his team's emphatic 5-2 victory over Kagera Sugar in the Premier League match at Kaitaba Stadium on Saturday.

While he praised his players for their offensive brilliance, he lamented the defensive lapses that allowed the opposition to score twice.

"I am proud of my players; we won 5-2, which is a huge win for us," Dauids (pictured) said. "But I am disappointed that we allowed two goals. This means we have to learn from our mistakes and address them. This was a match where we should have kept a clean sheet."

The victory propelled Simba back to the top of the league standings with 34 points, one ahead of Azam FC, who have played two more matches than Simba.

Dauids credited the substitutions for their impact in the second half, noting how they contributed to the team's success.

"Our substitutions were very effective. The players who came in helped us secure the win," he added. "The schedule is tight, so we need to ensure all players get minutes to maintain their fitness and readiness."

The Msimbazi Reds returned to Dar es Salaam yesterday to begin preparations for their next league encounter against JKT Tanzania at the KMC Complex tomorrow.

Simba are determined to finish 2024 at the top of the table and will need to secure victories in their remaining two matches of the year.

After facing JKT Tanzania, Simba will travel to Singida to take on Singida Black Stars on Saturday in what promises to be another crucial fixture.

"We now focus on our match against JKT Tanzania," Dauids

stated. "I am sure my players know what it takes, and our goal remains clear, to be at the top of the table by the end of the year."

Saturday's victory was marked by standout performances from key players, including Jean Charles Ahoua, who was named Man of the Match.

However, it was winger Ladark Chasambi who earned praise for his exceptional contributions during the 48 minutes he spent on the field.

Chasambi's corner kick led to Fabrice Ngoma's goal, and his skilful play set up two additional goals for Steven Mukwala.

His speed and ball control proved too much for Kagera Sugar's defense, making him a vital asset in the team's attacking strategy.

"Chasambi's performance was outstanding," Dauids said. "We have been using him strategically in some matches, and he has never let us down."



Another highlight of the match was the debut of Mpanzu, who joined Simba from AS Vita in DR Congo on September 30.

Wearing the number 34 jersey, Mpanzu played his first competitive game for Simba, contributing to the team's impressive victory and helping them reclaim the top spot in the standings.

Simba's 13th league match of the season was a decisive statement, showcasing their intent to dominate the title race, also underscored the team's depth and

quality across the squad.

With 34 points from 13 matches, Simba are firmly in contention for the league title. Their closest rivals, Azam FC, have completed 15 matches but trail by one point, giving Simba a crucial advantage as they head into the final stretch of the year.

The Msimbazi Reds will need to maintain their momentum against JKT Tanzania and Singida Black Stars to solidify their position at the summit of the Premier League standings.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

