



Guardian BUSINESS Spurring the future: Uniting for clean energy innovation and IP protection

Worldwide clean energy innovation and intellectual property protection are key to spurring the future, says a report from the International Patent Protection Association (IPPA) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

The report, titled 'Spurring the Future: Uniting for Clean Energy Innovation and IP Protection', highlights the importance of strong IP protection in the clean energy sector. It notes that clean energy technologies, such as solar, wind, and hydrogen, are highly innovative and require robust IP protection to attract investment and drive growth.

The report also emphasizes the need for international cooperation and harmonization of IP laws to facilitate cross-border trade and investment in clean energy. It calls for governments and industry leaders to work together to create a supportive environment for clean energy innovation and IP protection.

Rising cyber threats pose serious concerns for financial stability

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Seven pupils die in flooded gorge

By Marc Nkwame, Arusha

SEVEN pupils died after their school bus was swept by flood water at a gorge close to Arusha city centre at Engosheraton, an accident that Arusha Urban MP blames on the power supply monopoly for refusing to allow bridge construction on the spot.

Bodies of the pupils were found after a day-long police and rescue teams' search effort while three pupils with their teacher cheated death in the accident, rescued by a Good Samaritans and rushed to Muriet health centre.

SACP Justin Masejo, the regional police commander, said they were still investigating the incident and will release a report soon, while President Samia Suluhu Hassan sent condolences to the grieved families, and the school management

MP blames TANESCO for impeding bridge construction

said they will issue a statement later.

Mrisho Gambo, the MP, said they had raised money for bridge construction across the gorge as it gets filled with water when heavy rains occur, "but the management of the Tanzania Electric Supply Co. (Tanesco) has been preventing the bridge construction without providing any plausible reasons."

Efforts to contact the Tanesco regional management here proved futile as they were not

in office and didn't pick phones.

The Toyota Hiace commuter van, T 496 EFK serving as a school bus for Ghati Memorial Academy, was dragged into the water-filled gorge early yesterday.

Witnesses said the vehicle had 13 people on board, namely 11 pupils, their teacher and the driver, where three children and the teacher were rescued.

They said the driver tried to escape shortly after the accident 12 kilometers from the city centre but was chased, caught but couldn't speak as he seemed confused.

He was driving the children from home to the school but upon reaching a road section with gushing torrent, he trusted that he would negotiate the water against all odds.

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President Samia Suluhu Hassan moves to lay a wreath at the grave of former prime minister Edward Moringe Sokoine at Monduli Juu in Arusha Region yesterday. Photo: State House

40 YEARS OF SOKOINE'S DEATH

Morogoro, Coast floods: 33 dead, 1,014 rescued

By Carlos Banda

THIRTY three people have died in devastating floods in Morogoro and Coast regions while roads, bridges, houses, schools and health centres were swept or severely damaged by gushing water.

Mobhare Matinyi, the chief government spokesman, said at a media briefing in Dar es Salaam that 28 people lost their lives in eight districts in Morogoro Region, while two deaths were reported in Rufiji District; two deaths in Kibiti District and one death in Kisarawe District.

Two people have been injured in Kibiti while three injuries were reported in Kisarawe, and a total of 1,014 people were rescued in Rufiji alone, he said, pointing out that 1,035 houses were destroyed and 6,074 houses were surrounded by water but still standing.

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Gov to revive stalled technical centre

By Marc Nkwame - Arusha

THE government will rescue the stalled vocational and technical training centre project slated for Monduli in Arusha Region.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan made this promise yesterday when leading the national commemoration of 40 years of death of then Prime Minister Edward Sokoine.

She aired the fact that as Monduli MP he

Four education institutions have been set up in Monduli District in the past three years,

had donated land for the construction of the center in the budding town, to be implemented by the Catholic Church, but so far the project is yet to be realized.

She requested the Arusha Archdiocese

to consult with the Regional Commissioner with a view to reviving the project, noting that works, noting that vocational and technical training plus work studies are crucial in the revised education policy rolled out in January.

Four education institutions have been set up in Monduli District in the past three years, she said, listing the completed projects as Imairete primary school, and Misirani, Mswakini secondary schools while Lepurko secondary school has elevated

facilities.

The government had also invested over 7bn/- for school feeding programmes in the district, while completing the Lolikisale Health Center in the town, she said.

Upwards of 27bn/- has been allocated for ongoing projects to supply water from Arusha City to 17 villages in Monduli, she further noted, adding to remarks by Am-

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Residents of Sinoni ward in Arusha view the wreck of the Ghati Memorial School mini-bus which plunged into Mbasi River yesterday morning, leaving eight pupils dead and three injured. Photo: Correspondent Getrude Mpezya

Indian medical firm ties with Mwanza hospital

By Carlos Banda

TANZANITE Hospital based in Mwanza has entered into a partnership set at \$5m with an Indian medical franchise, ES Health (Africa).

Gilead Teri, the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) executive director, made this affirmation in a press conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday after a meeting with the joint venture companies.

The link will facilitate installation of modern equipment and deployment of specialists, boosting the provision of quality health services, hailed the firms for the partnership, likely to cut the number of Tanzanians seeking medical services abroad.

He said that local institutions need to utilize opportunities for partnership projects with foreign investors, underlining that elevated facilities end the need to meet costs of travelling, accommodation and health expenses in such trips.

Local patients needed to fly to India to access state

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Morogoro, Coast floods: 33 dead, 1,014 rescued

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Vast acreage of crops have been destroyed, including maize, bananas, millet, sesame, cassava, rice and cotton, he stated, serious damage to roads and other public infrastructure like a health centre in Muhoro village in Rufiji District, swept away by water.

In total, 12 wards out of 13 in Rufiji District; five wards out of 13 in Kibiti District and one ward in Kisarawe District were waterlogged, while in Morogoro Region, 34,970 hectares of various crops were flooded, and 1,466 livestock marooned.

The TAZARA railway was under water at various spots, roads and bridges damaged, he said, affirming that regional and district disaster management committees were evaluating damage levels and needs in disaster areas.

Various donations from civic groups and public agencies had been received and were being

handed to affected people, he said, while the PMO-based disaster committee had met and would brief Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa ahead of wider cabinet consultations on the situation.

He said that El Nino rains had pushed releasing water from gates at the Julius Nyerere hydropower dam starting February, as TANESCO released 3000 to 6000 cubic metres of water, he said, pointing out that the flooding in the zone would have been felt from last October.

"In 2019, the construction of the plant started where until now it has reached 98 percent completion. One generator has started to operate and it generates 235 megawatts of electricity. There are nine generators which can produce 2,115 megawatts," he said, emphasizing that the dam was a long term factor in checking floods December 2022 but this season's rains were exceptional.

Govt to revive stalled technical centre

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bassador Joseph Sokoine, son of the late premier, who appealed to the president that a large water well which the premier had supervised its construction in the 1970s to trap rain water be rebuilt.

It would serve to control floods and provide a watering trough for local livestock, he stated.

The then premier was killed in a road accident on April 12, 1984 while commemorative events to celebrate his life are organised nationally every ten years.

The Sokoine Foundation is working to prepare a biography and memoirs, assisted by Uongozi Institute which has worked to build such heritage with past leaders like the late former presi-

dent Benjamin Mkapa, Ambassador Dr Salim Ahmed Salim and the late former president Ali Hassan Mwinyi.

The Sokoine biography is expected to be published later this year, the family scion noted.

Ex-president Jakaya Kikwete led the 30th anniversary event back in 2014, commissioning a new house for the family while in 2004, it was then Premier Frederick Sumaye who led his predecessors Dr Salim, John Malecela and Joseph Warioba in the 20th anniversary event in Monduli.

Until his death at Dakawa section of the Dar es Salaam - Dodoma highway near Morogoro, the late Sokoine was MP for Monduli, which was then extending to include Longido District.

Seven pupils die in flooded gorge

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"So he drove the van onto the crossing section without realizing that parts of the road were eroded by the rains that pounded Engosheraton, a part of Engosengiu ward, all night long," eyewitnesses narrated.

The front wheels were first to be dragged into the waters and eventually the entire vehicle fell into the gorge, they said, elaborating that the van was washed away and then

caught at the edge of the footbridge further downstream.

That prevented the bus from being swept away entirely, and as the little children tried to escape from the bus shell, water swept several of them downstream.

Some people in the area who witnessed the incident rushed to the rescue of those still struggling, rescuing the teacher and three other children, they added.



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi has a word with residents of Kilimani Tazari Kidoti village shortly after the prayers at Unguja's Hidaya Kilimani Tazari Mosque yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

Indian medical firm ties with hospital in Mwanza

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of the art health services, he stated, hailing President Samia Suluhu Hassan for making such investment possible on account of her state visit to India last year.

ES Health specialists will collaborate with Tanzanian doctors to improve the provision of health care services, which is what the public expects of Tanzanite

Hospital in the coming months, he said.

There has been a significant increase in strategic partnership investment projects, he said, affirming that from September to December 2023, up to 61 percent of projects registered by TIC were partnerships.

Jared Awando, the Tanzanite Hospital board vice chairman, praised TIC for presenting the opportunity to forge the strategic partnership.

"We have nine doctors from India who have already arrived and are expected to start work next week in areas such as surgery, dental care, optical services and many others," he said, elaborating that the hospital in Mwanza will strive to provide the lead in such treatment services.

In the near future as technology and machines are brought into place, a medicine storage facility and a training college to enhance specialized skills are on

the cards, he stated.

Yash Shah, the ES Health (Africa) PVT Ltd chairman said that half of the \$5m has already been dispatched for equipment and installation expenses to upgrade orthopedic, dental and physiotherapy services.

"We are coming up with more doctors," he said, expressing the medical franchise's excitement to provide such facilities to Tanzania and elsewhere.



Residents of Barikiwa village in Liwale District, Lindi Region, pictured earlier this week fetching water for domestic use at what they said was a "traditional spring". The little they ended up with was a liquid of highly suspicious quality, with the pipe usually supplying them with potable water reportedly damaged "for quite some time now". Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Graphite miner pays partners after first exploration

By Special Correspondent

MARULA Mining Plc on Friday issued a share-based payment to its joint venture partners at the Nyorinyori and NyoriGreen graphite projects.

The Africa-focused miner has conducted

an initial exploration programme in Tanzania projects alongside Takela Mining Tanzania Ltd and NyoriGreen Mining Ltd.

As announced in February, following completion of the initial exploration program, Marula was required to make a share-based payment of GBP100, 000 to Takela

through the issue of 799,361 new shares at a price of 12.51 pence.

Marula will also make a GBP250, 000 payment to NyoriGreen Mining through the issue of 2.0 million shares at the same price.

An application has been made for the new shares to be admitted to trading on

the Aquis Stock Exchange Growth Market, expected to occur by Thursday next week.

Chief executive officer Jason Brewere said: "With the milestone of initial exploration work completed at the Nyorinyori and NyoriGreen graphite projects, our belief in its high-grade graphite mineralisation po-

tential, and our plan to develop the projects as a medium-scale graphite project, has been confirmed. As such, we are now commencing with our plans for Phase 2 exploration work." Shares in Marula were down 2.5 percent at 8.85 pence each on the Aquis exchange on Friday.



Some members of the Shinyanga Municipality staff and their counterparts from the Kolandoto College of Health Sciences pictured standing as domestic tourists by visiting a hot spring in the municipality. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

ZBS to put up five modern laboratories at 6.5 billion/-

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Bureau of Standards (ZBS) is set to start construction of five new modern laboratories in various areas to bring services closer to people and increase quality control efficiency.

The new laboratories will heighten safety of goods as various products will be tested for quality standards before being granted certification to enter the markets.

ZBS director general Yussuph Majid Nassor said this yesterday when opening a meeting with journalists which was organised by Zanzibar Press Club (ZPC) at its headquarters Maruhubi in Unguja Urban District.

He said the step is aimed at increasing efficiency in regulation of standards of goods which are manufactured locally and those imported.

He said the move will also address challenges of transporting samples from Pemba to Unguja for standard testing, adding that the project will cost 6.5bn/-.

"Tenders for the project have already been floated and we expect the project to complete within 24 months," he said.

Speaking on strengthening the performance of the institution, Majid said the government has been working on constructing a laboratory for inspection of vehicles.

He said the vehicle inspection laboratory will cost 2.5bn/- and that already some operations have started at the workshop.

Vice chairperson of ZPC Tabia Makame Mohamed said it was encouraging to see how the institution was collaborating with the media.

She said the media is a bridge which links the public and the private sector for them to work together.

She commended ZBS for making progress, including being independent financially hence relieving the government of the burden of supporting it.

EU inaugurates new initiatives to boost youth skills in Africa

BRUSSELS

THE European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen on Thursday launched new regional programmes to boost youth mobility and skills in Africa.

The new initiatives were unveiled at the Global Gateway High-Level Event on Education in Brussels, Belgium.

The Team Europe Initiative on Opportunity-driven Skills and Vocational Education and Training, the Africa-Europe Youth Academy and 15 new projects under the flagship Youth Mobility for Africa highlight

the EU's commitment to empowering African youth with education.

Commissioner Urpilainen said: "The European Union's Global Gateway investments in education are focused on enhancing access to quality education and skills training for all in an equitable way. Education and skills are key to combating inequalities and to creating jobs and prosperity."

"It is urgent to allow young people to build their green and digital skills, in particular skills that match the opportunities present in the labour market. I am proud to launch today the regional Team Europe Initiative

Opportunity-driven Skills and Vocational Education and Training in Africa, co-financed by the European Union with €75 million."

"As a part of the Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package, the regional Youth Mobility for Africa flagship showcases the width and breadth of the European Union's support to international cooperation in higher education and learning mobility. I am pleased to launch these new initiatives during the African Year of Education, in particular the Africa-Europe Youth Academy - a flagship initiative of the first-ever EU Youth Action Plan."

As a key initiative of the Youth Action Plan in EU external relations, the Africa-Europe Youth Academy launched by Commissioner Urpilainen will provide opportunities for formal and informal learning and exchanges to young people looking to improve their leadership skills and create networks between Africa and Europe. The first set of actions is supported with €15 million from the EU. The initiative is part of the flagship Youth Mobility for Africa.

Commissioner Urpilainen also launched 15 Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme projects, funded with €27

million by the EU.

The projects will provide learning mobility opportunities for students, trainees and staff across the continent to boost high-level green and digital skills. The 15 selected projects cover 22 African countries. The Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme is also part of the flagship Youth Mobility for Africa.

Youth Mobility for Africa brings under one umbrella existing and new EU-funded programmes to promote learning mobility opportunities within Africa and between Africa and the EU.

It supports cooperation in higher

education and skills development and promotes Africa as a study destination, contributing to youth empowerment for sustainable employability and active citizenship.

The regional Team Europe Initiative Opportunity-driven Skills and Vocational Education and Training in Africa launched today aims to enhance the match between skills training and concrete employment opportunities, particularly those created by Global Gateway investments in Sub-Saharan Africa. It supports a paradigm shift in how the training offer is designed - tailoring it to the available opportunities.



Motorists have a hard and tricky time moving along a muddy stretch of a road in Dar es Salaam's Kitunda Kati suburb on Thursday. Sources blamed the situation chiefly on the ongoing heavy rains in the city. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Tarura promises to fix 85pct of all bad roads in two years

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

TANZANIA Rural and Urban Roads Agency (Tarura) has promised to fix 85 percent of all bad roads in the country measuring 144, 429, 077 kilometres in the next two years.

Victor Seff, Tarura chief executive officer, made the pledge in Morogoro Region recently during Tarura Workers' Council meeting which evaluated its budget for 2024/2025 financial year to be tabled in the National Assembly by Minister for Works Innocent Bashungwa next month.

Seff said that the main goal of the strategy is to make sure that roads are passable at all times to stimulate economic development and facilitate access to social services easily.

He said that the 144, 429, 077 kilometres of roads are unpaved and users face challenges particularly in rainy seasons, sometimes causing the whole country to halt its economic activities.

He said that 44 percent of roads have a good network, including over 3,200km that are paved and over 41,000km of gravel roads.

Seff said that organising such a worker council is a step towards involving employees so that they can significantly contribute to the budget.

"The main goal of this council meeting is to involve employees in the operations of the institution to improve their interests in order to expedite the achievement of our objectives," he said.

Tanzania Mines and Construction Workers Union (TAMICO) secretary general Paternus Rwechungura urged Tarura, specifically engineers and construction professionals, not to hesitate to cooperate with builders' association to collaborate with their counterparts, including Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS), in exchanging experience in the construction sector.

Rwechungura advised the agency to monitor and repair rural and urban roads to ensure provision of transportation services are efficient and reliable at all seasons.

Firm raises \$12 million to expand solar irrigation solutions

By Special Correspondent

SUNCULTURE, a Kenyan climate tech startup has raised \$12 million to enhance its solar irrigation solution in sub-Saharan Africa and provide hundreds of thousands of smallholder farmers' access to Internet-of-Things (IoT)-enabled solar-powered irrigation by 2030.

The strategic equity investment is the fruit of the landmark partnership between

InfraCo Africa, a subsidiary of the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) and Savant Group Ltd.

Other investors in this Series B round include Acumen Funds, Reed Hastings, co-founder of Netflix, and Eric Schmidt, former CEO and Chairman of Google, who participate through his foundation.

The new capital injection, facilitated through InfraCo Africa's dedicated investment

arm, is part of the climate startup's Series B fundraising effort totalling \$27.5 million.

The Series B round, a mix of equity, debt, grants and carbon financing, brings the climate tech company's total investment to \$65 million since its launch. It also advances its goal of raising \$219 million to install 274,000 solar irrigation systems throughout Kenya. Samir Ibrahim, SunCulture CEO, said, "We are excited to collaborate with our

investors as we work towards our shared goals."

Nigerian Cleantech startup Arnergy raises \$3 million to accelerate adoption

SunCulture focuses on helping farmers improve production capacity. In most sub-Saharan Africa, irrigation sources for several farmers are rainfed agriculture or carbon-emitting diesel and petrol pumps.

To prevent heavy reliance on seasonal rainfall and cut

down on expensive, environmentally polluting fuel-based pumps, SunCulture offers farmers a sustainable alternative.

The solar company supplies small-scale farmers with small solar-powered water pumps, which are subsidised by the sale of carbon credits up to half the total cost of ownership compared to fuel-based pumps. Designed for smallholdings of between 1-3 acres, the pumps can expel

up to 1,200 litres of water per hour. With operations in Kenya, Uganda and Ivory Coast and distribution agreements in Ethiopia, Zambia and Togo, SunCulture runs on a "Pay-As-You-Grow" model.

Cleantech startup, Qotto, raises \$8 million Series A to expand to Ivory Coast

Out of the 700 million Africans dependent on small-scale farms, only about 4 percent have means of irrigation,

suggesting a massive blow to production capacities and an over-reliance on the weather.

"Irrigation is just like old, very unsexy technology, but it could increase your yields by up to five times," Ibrahim said.

So far, SunCulture has sold 47,000 irrigation units powered by solar panels. SunCulture is also looking to expand its offerings to include other farming services like soil tests and insurance.



Theresia Dennis (L), head of the Dar es Salaam City Council's Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Division; the city's Kivukoni ward councillor, Sharik Choughule (C); and another official from the ward, Elias Waitara, take part in a tree planting campaign at Dengu Beach earlier this week. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

US senators introduce bill to renew Africa trade pact

WASHINGTON

A BIPARTISAN group of senators has introduced a bill to renew the US trade pact with sub-Saharan Africa ahead of its expiration next year, an aide to one of the senators said on Thursday.

The bill was introduced by senators Chris Coons, a Democrat and James Risch, top Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. A cross-party group of senators - Dick Durbin, Michael Bennet, Chris van Hollen, Todd Young and Mike Rounds - co-sponsored the bill.

An aide to Coons said it was a high priority to reauthorize the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) this year.

The bill, which was seen exclusively by Reuters, would renew the African Growth and Opportunity Act for 16 years, through 2041, and help countries implement strategies to take advantage of the program.

It would also maintain benefits for countries as they grow richer, enabling them to remain in the program if they are determined to be high-income for five years rather than removing them if they reach that threshold for a single year.

Under the bill, countries would be reviewed for eligibility every other year instead of annually as under the current statute. But the US president and certain congressional leaders could review countries' eligibility out of cycle anytime.

If countries were found ineligible for the program, the president would have a menu of

options for enforcement ranging from full termination of benefits to taking no action. Current statute requires the president to terminate AGOA benefits if a country does not meet eligibility.

A draft of the bill introduced by Coons last November mandated an immediate out-of-cycle review for South Africa, one of the biggest beneficiaries of the program, but it is not included in this version of the bill.

An aide to Coons said it was viewed as unnecessary to single out a particular country since the bill already allows for out-of-cycle reviews, but senators remain concerned about South Africa's activities.

A Democratic aide to the Senate Finance Committee said Ron Wyden, chairman of the panel, "supports renewing AGOA and looks forward to working with the committees of jurisdiction and other interested members to develop a bipartisan, bicameral bill."

President Joe Biden has said, opens new tab he supports reauthorization of the pact initially enacted in 2000. More than \$10 billion worth of African exports entered the U.S. duty-free under the program in 2022, according to the U.S. Trade Representative's office.

American business groups have said they need certainty about AGOA in order for African countries to take advantage of global efforts to lower dependence on Chinese manufacturing.

An aide to Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

African economies projected to grow by 3.4pc in 2024

By Guardian Reporter

INCREASED private consumption and declining inflation support an economic rebound in Sub-Saharan Africa, shows new report.

However, the recovery remains fragile due to uncertain global economic conditions, growing debt service obligations, frequent natural disasters and escalating conflict and violence, according to the World Bank's latest Africa's Pulse report.

Transformative policies are needed to address deep-rooted inequality to sustain long-term growth and effectively reduce poverty.

The report projects that growth will rebound in 2024, rising from a low of 2.6 percent in 2023 to 3.4 percent in 2024, and 3.8 percent in 2025. However, this recovery remains tenuous. While inflation is cooling across most economies, falling from a median of 7.1 to 5.1 percent in 2024, it remains high compared to pre-Covid-19 pandemic levels.

Additionally, while growth of public debt is slowing, more than half of African governments grapple with external liquidity problems, and face unsustainable debt burdens.

Overall, the report underscores that despite the projected boost in growth, the pace of economic expansion in the region remains be-

low the growth rate of the previous decade (2000-2014) and is insufficient to have a significant effect on poverty reduction. Moreover, due to multiple factors including structural inequality, economic growth reduces poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa less than in other regions.

"Per capita GDP growth of 1 percent is associated with a reduction in the extreme poverty rate of only about 1 percent in the region, compared to 2.5 percent on average in the rest of the world," said Andrew Dabalen, World Bank Chief Economist for Africa. "In a context of constrained government budgets, faster poverty reduction will not be achieved through fiscal policy alone.

It needs to be supported by policies that expand the productive capacity of the private sector to create more and better jobs for all segments of society."

The report highlights that external resources to meet gross financing needs of African governments are shrinking and those available are costlier than they were prior to the pandemic. Political instability and geopolitical tensions weigh on economic activity and may constrain access to food for an estimated 105 million people at risk of food insecurity due to conflict and climate shocks. African governments' fiscal positions remain vulnerable to global economic disruptions, necessitat-

ing policy actions to build buffers to prevent or cope with future shocks.

What's more, inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa remains one of the highest in the world, second only to the Latin America and Caribbean region, as measured by the region's average Gini coefficient. Access to basic services, such as schooling or healthcare, remains highly unequal despite recent improvements. Disparities also exist in access to markets and income-generating activities, irrespective of people's skills. Taxes and poorly targeted subsidies may also have an outsized impact on the poor.

"Inequality in Africa is largely due to the circumstances in which a

child is born and accentuated later in life by obstacles to participating productively in markets and regressive fiscal policies," said Gabriela Inchauste co-author of a forthcoming World Bank report on tackling inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa. "Identifying and better addressing these structural constraints across the economy offers a road map for a more prosperous future."

Africa's Pulse calls for several policy actions to foster stronger and more equitable growth. These include restoring macro-economic stability, promoting inter-generational mobility, supporting market access, and ensuring that fiscal policies do not overburden the poor.

Pan-African green hydrogen hub is inaugurated in Kenya

NAIROBI

A PAN-African green hydrogen hub was launched on Thursday at a private university in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi to foster the research, innovation, and funding needed to accelerate the continent's transition to clean energy and tackle the climate crisis.

The Africa Green Hydrogen Hub, to be housed at Strathmore University, one of Kenya's oldest private universities, is a collaborative venture between academic, public, and private sector institutions. Isaac Kiva, secretary for renewable energy at the Kenyan Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, said that by leveraging its vast green hydrogen potential, Africa is poised to accelerate the transition to a just, inclusive, and resilient future.

"We must ensure that a just energy transition is attainable to boost Africa's development. Green hydrogen and other sustainable energy systems will help connect over 600 million people in Africa who lack access to electricity," Kiva said.

Kenyan President William Ruto launched the Green Hydrogen Strategy and Roadmap in September 2023 on the sidelines of the Africa Climate Summit, vowing to implement it fully by 2032 to

boost emissions reduction and create green jobs.

"The green hydrogen strategy prioritizes economic expansion, the generation of job opportunities, and the promotion of environmental stewardship," Ruto said, adding that green hydrogen will boost food security and clean mobility in Kenya.

According to Kiva, large-scale production of green hydrogen in Africa will tackle energy poverty while enhancing the continent's capacity to decarbonize its manufacturing, aviation, and agriculture sectors.

He added that Kenya aims to become a hub for green hydrogen production on the continent by leveraging public-private sector investments, collaborative research, training, and enactment of supportive policies.

Vincent Ogutu, the vice-chancellor of Strathmore University, said the launch of the Africa Green Hydrogen Hub is a game changer in the continent's quest to attain energy security and net-zero targets.

He called for enhanced partnerships among African universities to facilitate research, the deployment of innovations, and peer learning, which are required to boost the uptake of green hydrogen.



Iramba district commissioner Suleiman Mwenda (L) presents cash to Old Kiomboi ward education officer Daudi Mjunga yesterday after the ward emerged top in the district in the national Standard Seven exams. Teachers and students found to have been outstanding were similarly rewarded. Photo: Correspondent Thobias Mwanakatwe

SA election body asks top court to resolve Zuma candidacy

PRETORIA

SOUTH Africa's electoral commission has appealed to the country's highest court to rule on whether former President Jacob Zuma can stand as a candidate in general elections in May.

The commission said in a statement yesterday that it had lodged an "urgent and direct" appeal to the Constitutional Court to provide "certainty" on the proper in-

terpretation of the constitutional article relating to candidacies of people who have been convicted.

"Such clarity is important in the present matter because of a live issue but also for future elections," it said.

The appeal is the latest twist in a legal wrangle over the eligibility of the 81-year-old politician, after an electoral court ruled this week that Zuma could run for office, overturning an earlier

decision that had barred him from contesting.

Zuma hopes to run for president on the uMkhonto weSizwe Party (MK) ticket, which he joined last year after denouncing the governing African National Congress (ANC) that he once led.

On May 29, South Africans will head to the polls to elect 400 members of the General Assembly. A month later, lawmakers in the new parliament will choose the next presi-

dent. Banking on the popularity of Zuma, MK hopes to win enough votes that would ensure them parliament seats, while also cutting into the vote share of the ANC.

The ANC could see its vote share drop below 50 percent for the first time since 1994. Short of a parliamentary majority, it would be forced to seek coalition partners to remain in power, turning Zuma into a possible kingmaker, analysts say.

Some opinion polls suggested MK at above 10 percent nationwide, a share that would make it the third or fourth political force behind the ANC and the liberal Democratic Alliance.

The party is projected to make a particularly strong showing in the battleground region of KwaZulu-Natal - Zuma's home province.

It largely relies on the considerable political clout still wielded by Zuma, who de-

spite scandals and corruption allegations, is popular, particularly among the country's more than 10 million Zulus.

The electoral commission had disqualified Zuma, saying the constitution bars anyone sentenced to more than 12 months' imprisonment.

Zuma was sentenced to 15 months in jail in June 2021 after refusing to testify to a panel investigating financial corruption and cronyism during his presidency.

His lawyers argued the sentence did not disqualify him as it followed civil rather than criminal proceedings and it had been shortened by a remission.

Zuma was freed on medical parole just two months into his jail term.

The commission stressed that the appeal "is not intended to involve itself in the political field of play" rather to ensure a "free and fair" electoral process.



Mobhahre Matinyi, Director of Information Services in the Information, Communications and Information Technology ministry doubling as Chief Government Spokesman, briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on various issues. Among other things, he touched on the impact of the ongoing rains, progress in the implementation of the Msimbazi Basin redevelopment project, the Julius Nyerere Hydro Power Project and the upcoming 60th anniversary of the April 26 Tanzanian Union. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

VP Mpango to grace symposium on Mwalimu Nyerere's birthday

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

VICE President Dr Philip Mpango is today expected to grace a symposium to commemorate 102 years of the birth of the founding president, the late Julius Nyerere in Dodoma.

The event's major goal is to inspire youth to uphold and preserve peace in his honour.

Speaking to journalists here yesterday, Dodoma Regional Commissioner Rosemary Senyamule said the symposium is organized by Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Institute.

"The symposium's goal is to instill in youth a sense of gratitude for the Father of the Nation's efforts to establish and uphold peace, his involvement in the nation's natural resource preservation, environmental conservation and freedom of Southern African nations," she said.

According to her, the institute has arranged a debate on the value of preserving national harmony and peace, with the overarching topic being 'Maintaining peace is our right and responsibility for the sustainable development of our nation'.

The RC added that the institute

would also honour President Samia Suluhu Hassan for her three years of leadership and upholding harmony, peace and unity.

"We will extend our gratitude to the president since under her catchphrase, 'Kazi Iendelee', we have seen her carry out numerous initiatives that the Father of the Nation likewise initiated," she said.

She called on the public to attend the symposium in honour of Mwalimu Nyerere, who insisted on building the country with love, peace and patriotism.

Peter Mavunde, vice chairman of the institute, said that in the three years since the institute's founding, it has held various symposia and celebrations in honour of Mwalimu Nyerere, with a strategic plan to pass on to the next generation all that the founding president accomplished.

"This year's main theme is the importance of maintaining peace for the development of the nation. We will honour the nation's founding father by doing this since he believed that the environment and the nation's natural resources needed to be protected," he said.

Climate-smart seeds cultivate hope for Kenya's agricultural future

By Special Correspondent

IN a pioneering collaboration, scientists from the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) and the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT have embarked on a special initiative aimed to popularize a new bean variety tailored for Kenya's diverse climatic conditions.

Dubbed "Nyota", meaning "star" in Kiswahili, these climate-smart beans signify more than just agricultural resilience; they symbolize a beacon of hope for a sustainable future amidst the challenges posed by

climate change.

David Karanja, a bean breeder and National Coordinator for Grains and Legumes at KALRO, sheds light on the meticulous process behind developing these resilient varieties.

"When doing climate smart bean varieties, you start with parents of known characteristics, like drought tolerance, heat and dry. One of the varieties we have is KAT Bean 1 is parent, then we have varieties like GLP 2 that grows in a lot of areas. Then we also combine with varieties that have high levels of iron and zinc. You do the crosses in the screen house where you take the parents and keep on crossing

and backcrossing until you get the variety you require before you take them for multi-location trials," he says. Kenya's agricultural landscape presents a spectrum of challenges, from arid lowlands to cold, dry highlands, each with its unique climatic demands.

One focus with these beans is to make sure drought doesn't kill them off before they've had time to flourish. "We are in the lowlands, there's heat and lack of adequate rainfall. So when we are trying to make the varieties drought tolerant, we work towards breeding varieties that will escape the terminal drought. That means the variety has to grow within a very

short period so that it can escape the drought. So basically most of them, like the bean varieties that we work with, they flower within 30 days and mature within 70 days. Within that period, the early cessation of rainfall, then that bean will have matured and be harvested," says Karanja.

But there are still challenges, including disease pressures and soaring demand for seeds outpacing the current supply. Josephine Syanda, a research scientist at KALRO, underscores the market-driven approach to breeding, emphasizing the importance of considering consumer preferences and cooking times.

"When we are breeding, we normally take into account the aspect of the market. Because the cooking time will give us varieties that cook faster and when they cook faster, they reduce the cost of fuel, like for example gas and firewood, which probably will reduce the cost of living for the farmers," Syanda remarks. The introduction of Nyota beans holds immense promise for Kenya's agricultural sector.

By enlisting farmers to cultivate these resilient varieties, the initiative aims to bolster national bean production, which currently falls short of meeting the annual consumption demand. Benson Gitonga, a farmer,

has adopted Nyota beans and has witnessed remarkable increases in yields and profitability.

"I can harvest 9 to 12 bags from an acre of land, unlike other varieties where I would only get 5 to 7 bags. The difference upon comparison is substantial. When I bring beans to the market, they consistently fetch a good price, selling for Kenya Shillings 200 per kilogram, while other varieties often go for Kenya Shillings 100. Customers purchasing for home use particularly appreciate its qualities, as it boasts low flatulence levels, making it an appealing choice for many," he says.

Ugandan female MPs ask for beauty salon at parliament

KAMPALA

UGANDAN female members of parliament have asked for an in-house salon to be opened at parliament to boost their participation.

Recently, the parliament got its own gym, but female MPs say vigorous exercise leaves their hair disorganised, leaving few MPs willing to use the facility.

State Minister for Water and Environment Beatrice Anywar said on Thursday that having a beauty parlour would help facilitate female MPs needs before house sessions, according to local media.

In a morning session chaired by Speaker Anita Among, Minister Anywar - an ex-officio - thanked Parliament for setting up a gym but was quick to add that few ladies feel comfortable getting involved in it.

She said gyms are associated with vigorous exercise routines that "disorganise" the hair.

"One of them is myself; my hair and nails and whatever are part of the woman," Anywar said.

"What I am really saying is that we ladies can come early, spend more time in the salon and then the house."

Anywar once gained a fond moniker of 'Mama Mabira' for her fight to save Uganda's once largest natural rainforest that covers an area of 306 square kilometres in Bulikwe District between Lugazi and Jinja.

At the time, the government was giving away swathes of the rainforest to sugarcane millers.

But now Anywar appears to have launched another war, that of setting in Parliament a tidy place where hairdressers and beauticians can attend to the looks of legislators.

The demand will not shock many. Parliament has made big headlines over the last two years for one bizarre demand after another, including once clamouring for a flyover to be erected connecting Bowman House to Parliament.

Bowman House on Parliament Avenue is office for several MPs and they argued at the time that they needed to



Some members of the opposition Chadema's General Assembly in Iringa Region exchange views just outside the venue of a meeting in Iringa municipality on Thursday. It was shortly after the election of the party's officials at regional level. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

Energy minister optimistic about clean cooking energy target

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

MINISTRY of Energy has stated that it has put in place strategies to ensure that 80 percent of Tanzanians use clean energy for cooking by 2033.

This was said in Dodoma yesterday by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister

for Energy Dr Doto Biteko when speaking about preparations for the energy sector exhibition.

The energy exhibition is expected to start on Monday next week and will be held for five days at Parliament grounds in Dodoma.

"Our ministry has sincerely decided to carry the agenda of clean energy for cooking

as a special agenda to enable Tanzanians to get rid of the use of unclean energy and move to the use of clean energy," he said.

He said that due to the economic crisis in the world in recent years, the price of oil has continued to rise and necessitated the use of a significant amount of foreign currency to import fuel.

He said that the ministry has ambitious strategies to reduce dependence on petroleum, saying the intention is to encourage the use of natural gas to run vehicles and machinery used in industries.

Dr Biteko said that the exhibition offers an opportunity to show the direction of the energy sector, adding

that this year's exhibition's main agenda is clean energy for cooking.

He said it is also an opportunity for parliamentarians and other Tanzanians to understand implementation of the energy policy for the year 2024/2025 and the direction of the sector in developing the country's economy.

"Energy week will start on Monday, I would like to invite all MPs and Tanzanians to come and listen to us and see what we are doing. This is a very important week for our energy sector," he said.

He said that the ministry, which has been given the responsibility of managing issues of electricity, oil, gas and gas exploration in vari-

ous parts of the country, has a plan of holding such exhibitions every year.

In December last year, President Samia Suluhu Hassan launched a clean cooking energy drive meant to help women in Africa at a meeting held in Dubai on the sidelines of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP28).



Muheza district administrative secretary Mohamed Mfaki (L) has a motivational word with young people who were marking their birthday on Thursday. The event was held at the district's office of the Tanzania Forestry Services Agency in tandem with the launch of a tree planting campaign with the theme: "Plant a Tree on your Birthday, Cut a Cake, Plant a Tree". Photo: Correspondent Steven William

PCCB warns college students against 'rampant' drug abuse

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) has cautioned college students in Singida Region to refrain from drug abuse and corruption which are said to be rampant among youth in the region.

Sipha Mwanjala, head of PCCB in Singida Region, issued the caution while speaking to students from Water Institute-Singida campus, Singida College of Health Sciences and Technology, and Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA)-Singida campus during a PCCB-organized symposium on drug addiction and corruption. She said the symposium aimed at increasing youth awareness on the concerns because the two issues affect the region mostly.

Mwanjala said youth were selected to the symposium due to their importance as a treasure to the country, adding that if youth receive proper awareness on corruption and drug abuse, they will contribute to the prevention of the same.

She said empowering youth with such knowledge will empower generations and the country as a whole as they are future leaders.

"There is no peace where there is corruption; youth who currently attend college will be government officials tomorrow. Therefore, it is important to train them and by doing so we will have trained the whole country," he said.

Frederick Ndahani, Singida Regional Youth Development Officer, urged youth to be patriotic and work hard to ensure they perform better in their studies.

The Bahamas to host 31st Afreximbank annual meetings

By Guardian Correspondent

THE government of The Bahamas and African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) have signed agreement for the former to host 31st Afreximbank Annual Meetings (AAM) and the third edition of the AfriCaribbean Trade and Investment Forum (ACTIF).

Prof Benedict Oramah, President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Afreximbank, said in a statement yesterday that the AAM will be held in Nassau, The Bahamas capital, from 12 to 14 June, 2024.

"Afreximbank's historic decision to hold the 31st Afreximbank Annual

Meetings in The Bahamas will be the first time it has been held in the Caribbean. There is a hugely positive outlook for many African and CARICOM countries - as demonstrated by the IMF's forecast that seven African countries and one CARICOM country will be in the top 10 fastest growing economies globally - so cementing closer links between the two regions is of clear mutual benefit to accelerate growth and prosperity," he said.

"We are in an era where some major global economies are reacting to geopolitical tensions by restricting international trade to prioritise

their domestic industries. This partial move away from the rules-based trading system, where international trade is conducted according to agreed-upon transparent, non-discriminatory, and impartial rules, threatens the longstanding reliance of African economies on global support for shared growth and prosperity."

Themed 'Owing Our Destiny: Economic Prosperity on the Platform of Global Africa,' the 31st AAM and the 3rd ACTIF reflect focus on broadening the discourse to determine solutions to the challenges that affect African Caribbean economies, the

policy issues required to promote growth, development and prosperity across Africa and the Caribbean, and to accelerate intra-African trade and investment flows, including with the diaspora.

At the signing ceremony, which was live streamed to reach a global audience, Philip Davis, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, commented: "Hosting both the AAM and ACTIF demonstrates the determination and commitment of The Bahamas to leverage on the shared history, identities, and cultures of AfriCaribbean nations to forge significantly greater trade,

investment, and direct transport linkages. Doing so will stimulate economic growth and development, which will feed through to immensely beneficial societal impact. It is also vital that we enhance our global influence by speaking with a unified voice on matters such as securing global action to meaningfully address climate change."

The holding of the 31st Annual Meetings in the Caribbean, and alongside the ACTIF, emphasises and accelerates the global opportunities for the AfriCaribbean regions.

The impact of the three-day event will be heightened by the opening cer-

emony, the Presidential plenary and high-level panel sessions.

The focus will be on the emerging neo-protectionism from advanced economies and the need for Africans to pursue self-determination in the context of a global Africa that includes the Caribbean and the diaspora generally.

Seminars will continue on the second day, while 14 June will be dedicated to the AfriCaribbean Trade and Investment Forum (ACTIF) and will be marked by colourful events to celebrate shared AfriCaribbean culture, as well as elevating the essence of the two regions shared socio-economic aspirations.

Farmers from retail group integrate drone technology

JOHANNESBURG

RETAIL group Woolworths has unveiled some of its suppliers' groundbreaking use of drones to revolutionise farming practices worldwide.

The company has since launched 'Farming for the Future' campaign, embracing the power of technology to drive agricultural innovation.

Central to the campaign's mission is the integration of drone technology to identify plants under stress, empowering farmers to make data-driven decisions and conserve water resources.

By utilising drones equipped with advanced sensors, farmers can precisely monitor the health of crops and detect signs of strain, allowing for targeted irrigation and resource management.

"Some of our farmers use drones to check for trees that are compromised," said Latiefa Behardien, Chief Food Technology and Sustainability Officer at Woolworths' Farming for the Future. Instead of watering all the trees all the time, a farmer can water only those that are thirsty and manage this precious resource better.

"This is just one example of how

technology is transforming agriculture and paving the way for a more sustainable future," Behardien said.

Using drone technology, Farming for the Future empowers farmers to optimise water usage, reduce waste and mitigate the impacts of climate change on agricultural productivity.

By leveraging data-driven insights, farmers can enhance crop resilience, improve yield, and contribute to a more sustainable food system.

In addition to drone technology, Farming for the Future harnesses the power of science to protect and conserve water resources.

As part of the campaign launch, Woolworths has meanwhile introduced an immersive digital experience designed to showcase the transformative potential of technology in agriculture.

Through an interactive online platform, visitors can explore the innovative use of drones, learn about water-saving techniques, and engage with relevant information to deepen their understanding of sustainable farming practices. "We believe that technology has the power to unlock new possibilities in agriculture and drive positive change for our collective future," Behardien emphasised.



Some houses in Dar es Salaam's Malamba Mawili suburb risk collapsing as soil erosion in the surrounding areas grows increasingly worse, what with the ongoing heavy rains. Roving correspondent Sabato Kasika captured the scene yesterday.

Tanzania embraces Denmark's new international cooperation policy

By Guardian Reporter

FINANCE Minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba has assured Denmark of Tanzania's readiness to work with the country through its new international cooperation strategy which involves incorporating the private sector into its development goals.

Dr Nchemba made the remarks in Dodoma late last week during a meeting with Dan Jørgensen, Danish minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy, who was visiting the country.

He said that Tanzania offers excellent investment opportunities across a range of industries and urged Danish businesses, associations and institutions to work with Tanzania's private sector to jointly invest in technology for mutual benefit.

According to him, the government places a strong emphasis on making sure the private sector drives the nation's economy. To this end, the government has improved the investment climate in the nation through significant policy and legal reforms.

Dr Nchemba mentioned several sectors that require private sector participation, including agriculture, energy and the operation of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR).

He said Tanzania is prepared to collaborate with Denmark under its new cooperation programmes since it has postponed the decision to close its embassy and intends to allocate funds to sectors that boost economic growth such as energy, tax laws, agriculture, health, education, and private sector.

Dr Nchemba hailed Denmark for upholding their 60-year ties, during which the two nations have been working on initiatives for which Tanzania received funds from Denmark totaling almost 2 billion Danish Krone (646 bn/-).

He said that Denmark has contributed over 103bn/- through the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) from its CRDB Bank dividends, which have been utilized to support the health sector through the Health Fund.

The minister, furthermore, asked Den-

mark, through its Danish Export Credit Agency, to take part in constructing the remaining SGR segments due to its significance for boosting business, welfare of people who will use the railway and the country's income.

Jørgensen commended President Samia Suluhu Hassan for the significant economic progress the nation has made in spite of the numerous difficulties the world faces, saying he believes Tanzania will rank among the world's most prosperous nations in years to come.

World Travel Market Africa 2024 kicks off in South Africa

CAPE TOWN

WORLD Travel Market (WTM) Africa 2024 has kicked off in Cape Town, South Africa, bringing together prominent global figures in the travel and tourism industry for pioneering discussions and business opportunities in the sector.

The 10th edition of the leading travel and tourism exposition in Africa, which is being held from Wednesday to Friday at the Cape Town International Conference Centre, highlights the region's tourism offerings through a series of shows, conferences, and awards ceremonies.

With more than 9,500 pre-scheduled meetings and exceeding 7,000 delegates from over 100 countries, WTM Africa gathers tourism industry professionals, including exhibitors, buyers, and media, for three days of trade, networking, and deal-making.

As part of the Africa Travel Week 2024, running from April 7 to 12 in Cape Town, the event has a content program designed to promote industry knowledge, foster connections, and promote business growth, according to the organizers. It also provides airlines,

cruise companies, hotels, and travel agents with an opportunity to showcase their high-end offerings to a global audience.

Megan De Jager, portfolio director for travel, tourism and marketing at RX Africa, which is one of the event's organizers, said WTM Africa also stands as a platform where attendees can generate sales leads, launch new products, and raise brand awareness.

"WTM Africa is the place where the B2B tourism companies' journey takes them into markets to conduct industry research and size up their competition while forging new relationships and maintaining current ones," De Jager said. Since 2014, WTM Africa has hosted more than 18,000 exhibitors and created over 17,000 jobs, according to the official website of the City of Cape Town.

Alderman JP Smith, the City of Cape Town's mayoral committee member for safety and security, said WTM Africa is a highlight on the event calendar for Cape Town. He noted that WTM Africa has shown year-on-year growth in the number of visitors to the city for these events and their impact on the economy.



Salim Kassim Juma (3rd-R), a senior official with the Zanzibar Bureau of Standards, pictured yesterday briefing visiting journalists on facilities set to be installed in the bureau's laboratory. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

Somalia bans fishing trawlers from its waters

MOGADISHU

SOMALIA has banned fishing trawlers from fetching fish in its territorial waters, part of a new effort to stop overexploitation of fishes in the Indian Ocean.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy in a circular dated April 6 said vessels will no longer be permitted to pull trawlers, a deep-sea indiscriminate fishing instrument that some critics say nets even the unwanted species and hence deplete the maritime wildlife.

"The Ministry notifies all fishing companies and vessels in Somali

waters a crucial regulation outlined in the Somali Federal Fishery law, specifically in article 31... trawling activities within the Somali Federal territorial waters are strictly prohibited," the circular says.

"Any violations of this regulation may result in fines, imprisonment, confiscation of fish products acquired, and confiscation of equipment for trawling."

The notification comes after Somalia, in March, released 33 Iranian fishermen and sailors imprisoned in the country for practising illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing within Somali

waters.

Last year, Somalia's Office of the Attorney General charged 36 foreign nationals for illegal fishing activities, indicating tougher approach to protection of Somalia's marine resources.

With the longest coastline in mainland Africa, Somalia's fishes have often been fetched illegally, owing to collapsed institutions after the civil war in 1991, and the fact that Somalia lacked critical laws to try suspects.

Omar Abdulle Hayle, a fishery expert in Mogadishu, told Kenya's Daily Nation that IUU is very rampant in the Somalia wa-

ters, a coastline that extends over 3000 km. So far, the foreign fishing fleets reportedly involved in IUU include Iranians, Pakistanis, Thais, Yemenis, Chinese and Spaniards that are blamed to act harmfully to the water resources including use of merciless fishing methods, according to a dispatch from the Somali government.

Hayle said, "Use of trawl fishing is destructive in nature, especially the bottom trawling that causes damage to coral reefs and other marine environs," he added, unless it is designed or used for mid-water or surface-water fishing.

Somalia has lately been worried

of overfishing and damages to the marine environment, after studies indicated some richer countries were also dumping waste in the nearby ocean.

Abdi Ali-Yare, a fishery technologist in Mogadishu, told Nation that Somalia's fishery portfolio employs MCS that is the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance.

"MCS is a section that operate inside the ministry of fisheries and used to control via satellite, the position of the fishing vessels licensed by the Somali government," said Ali-Yare

"The system can readily spot also unlicensed fishing vessels, but

Somalia can do little about their suspected crimes against its marine resources," he added.

Both Hayle and Ali-Yare agree that Somalia has a nascent coast guard force, limiting its ability to confront IUU, including that just banned trawl fishing.

On top of that, many vessels are known to possess licenses from regional authorities.

"The breakaway Somaliland administration and the semi-autonomous authority of Puntland (one of the Somalia's federal member states) are known to issue licenses independently from the central government," said Hayle.



Dar es Salaam residents busy picking clothes to buy along the bustling Congo Street in the city's sprawling Kariakoo Market zone earlier this week. Eid el-Fitr was just around the corner. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Military junta in Mali now suspends political parties

BAMAKO

THE political crisis in Mali has taken a new twist after the transitional military government suspended political parties and associations.

Human rights groups have denounced the move, arguing it violates both Malian law and the rights to freedom of expression, association as well as assembly under international human rights law.

The suspension is "until further notice." The communications regulatory body (Haute autorité de la communication) directed all media to stop "broadcasting and publishing the activities" of political parties and associations.

The action appeared to be in response to the March 31 call by more than 80 political parties and associations for a return to constitutional order by holding presidential elections as soon as possible.

The military junta, which seized power in a coup in May 2021, had announced in September that the elections scheduled for March 26 would be delayed indefinitely for technical reasons.

"The Malian authorities apparently suspended all political parties and associations because they didn't like their call to hold democratic elections," said Ilaria Allegrozzi, senior Sahel researcher at Human Rights Watch.

"Mali's junta, like all governments, needs to respect human rights, and should immediately lift the suspension."

Meanwhile, following months of renewed hostilities between separatist armed groups and Malian forces in the northern part of the country, Col. Assimi Goita, Mali's military president, announced on December 31, 2023, the establishment of an "inter-Malian dialogue for peace and reconciliation."

This was aimed at eliminating "the roots of community and intercommunity conflicts" by prioritizing "national ownership of the peace process."

Russian military instructors arrive in Niger to train army

NIAEMEY

RUSSIAN military instructors have arrived in Niger to train the national army, as Moscow continues to bolster its influence in the troubled Sahel region of West Africa.

The military specialists, who arrived in Niger's capital, Niamey

on Wednesday, were seen unloading gear from a cargo plane.

"We are here to train the Nigerien army and develop military cooperation between Russia and Niger," one of the instructors told Niger state TV RTN.

The military instructors are also bringing an air defence

system, according to the broadcaster.

Their arrival followed a recent agreement between Niger's junta and Russia to boost security cooperation.

The West African country has pivoted towards Moscow since the junta seized power in a coup last year.

It has broken off long-standing military and diplomatic ties with France and, like neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso, is turning to Russia for support in beating back a jihadist insurgency.

Niger and its neighbors Mali and Burkina Faso have witnessed several military coups

in the past few years. The juntas of these countries have ended long-established military deals with former colonial power France, and formed the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

Russia has ramped up efforts to build stronger relations with African nations, positioning itself as a military power without

a colonial past.

Prior to the military coup last July, Niger and the US, France and some other European countries were cooperating to fight against Islamist militias in the Sahel region.

Violence has grown in the region since the coups, with a 38 percent rise reported in the

central Sahel region in 2023, said the US-based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED).

The International Organization of Migration said on Monday that 3 million people have been displaced, as a humanitarian crisis ensues in the region.

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The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

MANAGING EDITOR: WALLACE MAUGGO
CIRCULATION MANAGER: DENNIS NTAITA
feedback@guardian.co.tz

Newsdesk

General Line: 0745 700710
News Editor: LUSEKELO PHILEMON
0757 154767
E-mail: guardian@guardian.co.tz

Advertising

Cel: + 0677 020701 E-mails: Advertise@guardian.co.tz
Website: lppmedia.com, epaper.ippmedia.com

Msimbazi Basin redevelopment scheme could serve as model for shanty suburbs

DAR ES SALAAM city authorities have been gearing up to start the demolition of 2,155 houses in the Msimbazi basin.

Going by the timetable issued earlier, the move ought to have taken off, but not one that will bring tears to the residents concerned.

Whatever was everyone's take-home, sharing out 52.61bn/- among two thousand individuals or rather families will likely be considered decent compensation.

However, the scenario will change for the city centre when a vast park is created, making the surrounding land costlier in Africa and elsewhere in the so-called developing world is that they are concomitant with depressed areas, as there is no systematic and continuous land purchasing for redevelopment.

The reason for this is that land purchase works well when one is dealing with individuals, not clans or state authorities.

In that case, areas already intensely populated require a sort of Msimbazi Valley scheme for a redevelopment plan by state authorities, at least to make land purchasable. Other low-lying areas could similarly be converted into parks, hotels.

This particular redevelopment operation comes from a World Bank design and, by definition, it is not possible to repeat it across the city's other depressed valleys forming a picturesque scenario for game parks and other luxury facilities.

It is easy to see that compensation money would be recovered within a decade on the basis of investments made on such land, as habitats for businesspersons closer to the centre aren't a housing aspect likely to be less in demand anytime soon. So long as levels of crime do not rise, the city centre is supremely marketable as a residential zone, even as upper-class housing has spread out into the outer circle.

It was announced sometime last year that citizens in diaspora who have another nationality already will get special consideration to pur-

chase houses, a point the Finance minister even added in his Government Budget remarks. However, little has been seen to that effect over the past year.

It is possible that the government can change tack and instead of leaving it to individuals to look for such space or houses to buy, where they will have a headache attracting the relevant sort of infrastructure they need if the area is densely populated, opt to use 'Msimbazi model'.

There is the idea of obtaining a World Bank loan or some alternative arrangement, as the World Bank mixed its financing with bond holders from the private sector or team up with other lenders.

The current format could be applied to get into place two or three more parks, making the city more inhabitable and the youth more pre-occupied as athletic enthusiasts in a palatable environment.

Tanzanians in diaspora could then buy plots or even put up facilities for residence, shopping or other use, depending on the design and marketing expectations. No more depressed areas would be remaining. Otherwise, just a few local traders buy dilapidated houses to put up residential facilities usually with shopping annexes on the ground floor.

Changing the face of the city will remain slow, while these depressed areas produce all sorts of social misfits.

Drug abuse and other forms of crime would likely proceed from there as there would likely be little relaxation for youths with nothing in the pocket. Compensation of this sort is not far from TASAF and other empowerment initiatives, but on condition of vacating the house.

Were it that decision makers in the World Bank grasped the matter this way, they could adopt 'quantitative easing' for that sort of credit, as it would not really be excessively ambitious to lead to the 'empty skyscrapers' chaos the likes of China are battling.

Hunters' body right on elephants' 'nationality'

THERE has been some furore between a Kenyan county governor and the Tanzania Hunting Operators Association (TAHOA) this week.

The body dismissed claims by the Kenyan administrator, governor of a county bordering Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions, over hunting elephants close to the Kenyan border.

There were technical issues over trophy hunting, especially on whether three elephants hunted recently were 'based' on Kenyan soil. That demands an explanation, as to how far the beasts were monitored - right from birth to being hunted.

All the same, that would not have been enough as there would have to be prior exchange of information on animal movements.

There would also have to be prior accords on tourism hunting that hunters will not just crop a quota of animals within an area, but have to countercheck their birth places.

Even without being familiar with cross-border trophy hunting regulations, not many would expect such rules to apply. In cross-border trade, we are familiar with nationalities of people - not of wild animals.

A top organiser at TAHOA said that conservation efforts by the government in collaboration with stakeholders, including TAHOA members, had resulted in the increased population of elephants and enhanced intermingling of elephant herds in the Kilimanjaro-Amboseli ecosystem.

That was the context in which the Kenyan county governor demanded in a statement last week that Tan-

zania restrict trophy hunters in the area, lamenting that three 'Kenyan' elephants had been across the border in recent months.

The governor was told that stray elephants also hurt people and wreak havoc on farms, meaning that they also need to prevent the straying.

The Kenyan senior administrator appeared to be unaware of trophy hunting regulations and how the three elephants come into the mix, and it was disappointing seeing the same person passing criticism on the policy of a neighbouring country.

Another item raised was that the elephant habitat in Kenya's Amboseli National Park is nearly depleted, apparently after finding itself carrying too many elephants than it had capacity to cater for.

It was argued that 'starving' elephants subsequently crossed over to the Kilimanjaro National Park and surrounding hunting grounds.

What provided a bit of relief to those hearing the story was that trophy hunting is applicable to elephants. This should concomitantly imply that it was equally applicable to lions.

It was not clear, though, if hyenas are part of trophy hunting, or just hunting. They are a vermin commonly scaring many villagers, all wishing that the particular beasts were far fewer.

It is unlikely that managing the population of elephants or any other beasts later becomes part of regional cooperation.



Waste pickers: Towards dignity and a sustainable way of life for unsung, unseen heroes of recycling

By Michelle Banda

SINCE 2017, Kabelo Mothoemte (34), from Orange Farm Extension 1, and seven others have braved harsh weather conditions in Federation Park in Parktown, Johannesburg, just along the M1 highway, using it as their informal reclaimer camp and also a place of residence.

When Daily Maverick visited the informal camp on Wednesday, 10 April 2024, we observed that there were no ablution facilities or standing forms of shelter - just mountains of recyclables on the ground or collected in 300kg bags.

According to Mothoemte, who has been a waste picker for about a decade, they moved on to the land as it was unoccupied. It is a dumping ground within the neighbourhood and is located near recycling centres and sources where they can collect recyclables.

Mothoemte said he used to live in Orange Farm, but realised that commuting to work every day was costly and sometimes he could not afford the taxi fares, so he opted to stay at Federation Park, despite not having a shelter or services at the site.

Every month or fortnight he goes home to check on his family and give them money. For him, living at Federation Park is normal and he refers to it as his other "home".

"We live here normally, whether it rains or it's hot or cold. We just have to make it work."

Mothoemte said his most urgent need was finding reliable transport to assist with collecting recyclables and taking them to the recycling centres.

Currently, the waste pickers at the site have to push their trolleys long distances. But the trolleys are not big enough for all the recyclables and they often have to make many trips to fill one 300kg bag, which translates into an income of about R1,500 to R2,000 a month.

'Win-win-win'

Now, to support the Federation Park informal reclaimers, Urban Surfer, an organisation offering informal recycling solutions and providing waste reclaimers with equipment, is partnering with Hollard Insurance and plastics recycling NPO Polyco to help formalise the informal reclaimer camp.

"An informal camp has existed close to our head office in Parktown for some time. As part of a larger project to create meaningful social and environmental impact in our immediate surroundings, we recognised a need to find a way to support the camp, which has become an important source of income and safety for the recyclers



Informal waste picker Kabelo Mothoemte leads the Federation Park waste pickers. (Photo: Michelle Banda)

who operate from there," said Kyle McWilliam, head of group shared services for Hollard Insurance.

"We engaged with Urban Surfer, who do great work in supporting waste reclaimer projects, and agreed to partner with them to create a formal camp, subject to the relevant approvals and with input from neighbouring residents.

"The camp will provide upgraded security and additional equipment to enable the recyclers to earn a sustainable living. We are also exploring further partnerships in the recycling value chain in our attempts to secure a win-win-win, whereby Hollard and the surrounding neighbourhood win, the recyclers win and the environment wins."

Polyco CEO Patricia Pillay emphasised to Daily Maverick the importance of giving dignity to reclaimers. She said supporting this initiative was just one of the ways the organisation was contributing to reclaimer organisations.

"This is something close to our heart. We are closely involved in working with waste reclaimers, collaborating with members and organisations and investing in recycling and collection businesses throughout South Africa. The waste reclaimers are the unsung heroes within the waste collection and recycling industry, doing a great service for the country," Pillay said.

The partnership will rehabilitate the site, which will include building a formalised and contained recycling camp. It will also

introduce first-mile GPS tracking and documentation of recyclable collection.

It will help with on-site baling of recyclables by supplying a solar-powered baling machine to increase the reclaimers' income by 30% and assist the reclaimers in getting the best value for their recyclables through off-take agreements and fully documenting the type, volume and value of recycling operations. In addition, the partnership will provide education or skills development beyond recycling.

Sifiso Gumbi, a former informal waste picker and now recycler relations officer at Urban Surfer, told Daily Maverick: "Waste pickers are the primary volume drivers of the recycling industry and therefore they need to be supported as an essential part of recycling."

"What Urban Surfer is doing with its partners is undertaking a project that will support just that. With this site, we are hoping to use it as a blueprint that showcases the results of supporting reclaimers with essential resources that a waste reclaimer should have access to, such as infrastructure, equipment such as trolleys and PPE.

"An important aspect of the recycling environment is that it is very analogue. It's cash-based and we are trying to usher in a little bit of digitalisation and teach them how to save, invest and properly handle hazardous materials, be ambassadors of social skills ... A little bit more support could go a long way in helping the reclaimers

do their work."

Dignity

Another waste picker, who did not want to be named, spoke to Daily Maverick about his work and sleeping in the street. For him, formalising the site is a step closer to formalising their work and giving dignity to the work and the people who do it.

"This is no sophisticated job. Most of the time we are digging inside dirt and it requires you to have a conversation with yourself and think of the positives.

"Recycling is a big industry and does need to be formalised as that can help some challenges we face in the informal waste economy: from being prevented from accessing landfills in some municipalities [or] sources, to being treated inhumanely. Formalising means a bit of dignity in the work and us as people and not just appreciating the end product," he said.

Liteboho Makhele, programme manager at the South African Cities Network, said formalising informal waste pickers involves crucial steps towards integrating them into the waste management value chain.

She authored a report emphasising the need for clear policies and laws to introduce legal recognition for waste pickers, improved working conditions and better collaboration among stakeholders.

Makhele said that by harnessing the potential of waste pickers and integrating them into formal waste management processes, municipalities can derive environmental, social and economic benefits.

She said integration required cooperation among national, provincial and local governments, waste management utilities and communities to ensure the successful implementation of policies and guidelines.

However, several challenges need to be addressed. These include registering undocumented non-South Africans, addressing the limited success of cooperatives, accommodating waste pickers who prefer to remain independent and developing legislation to recognise and protect their rights.

Navigating these challenges is essential for building a more equitable and sustainable future for waste pickers and ensuring they are no longer caught in the duality of being both visible and invisible members of society.

By Telesphor Magobe

What happens to the guarantor once principal debtor defaults?

LAST week, we briefly looked at a true story about what happens if the principal debtor defaults on loan repayment. It's the responsibility of the guarantor should the principal debtor disappear, refuse or fail to repay his or her loan.

Today, I invite you to briefly look at the Court of Appeal of Tanzania's judgement on principal debtor defaults on loan repayment. This was an appeal from the High Court of Tanzania before Chief Justice (CJ) Juma and two Justices of Appeal Mugasha and Mwambegele.

The appellant was CRDB Bank Ltd against Isaack Mwamasika and two other respondents. Mwamasika (the 1st respondent) was the chairperson of the Registered Trustees of Dar es Salaam International School Trust Fund (the 2nd respondent) and Managing Director of EDBP & GD Construction Company Ltd (the 3rd respondent).

He applied on January 8, 2003 for a Sh350 million loan for the 2nd respondent to develop an international girls' secondary school in Mbeya. The bank approved an overdraft facility of Sh50 million and a term loan of Sh300 million subject to a personal loan security clause which involved a legal mortgage over existing and future school buildings in Mbeya in the name of Mwamasika, a legal mortgage over landed property in Dar es Salaam in the name of Mwamasika, a personal guarantee signed by Mwamasika and a personal



guarantee signed by Mwamasika and four board trustees. On February 5, 2009, the bank advanced to the 2nd respondent two more overdraft facilities of Sh235 million to Mwamasika trading as the 2nd respondent and another to the same Mwamasika trading as D.I.S.T.F. Boko Quarry. Although the first overdraft loan was fully settled, the 2nd respondent did not press for the immediate return of deposited security documents because of a Sh235 million loan related to the Dar es Salaam International School Trust Fund Boko Quarry which was still outstanding until November 11, 2011 when it was finally cleared.

Believing that the 2nd respondent was free from any further personal bank loan obligations, on December 2, 2011 Mwamasika asked for the return of security documents from the bank which the 2nd respondent had surrendered to secure loans cleared by November 11, 2011.

But the bank didn't heed the request, saying there was still an outstanding loan which the 3rd respondent owed the bank, but the 3rd respondent was defaulting in its repay-

ment. It related to Mwamasika that since he was one of the personal guarantors of the 3rd respondent's loan, the bank would go after his personal assets as a guarantor should the principal debtor continue defaulting.

Mwamasika did not accept reasons to justify the bank's refusal to discharge the securities to the 2nd respondent. He said the default of the 3rd respondent had nothing to do with the securities which the 2nd respondent was demanding after clearing its own loan obligations. He also testified how the 3rd respondent had lost business opportunities as a result of the bank's act.

He explained that the bank's refusal to return the securities to the 2nd respondent occasioned a loss of business opportunities. In that regard the trial court said it was unlawful to retain the securities claimed by the 1st and 2nd plaintiffs. Aggrieved by the trial court's decision the bank appealed to the appellate court, advancing 15 grounds.

Dissatisfied with some aspects of the trial court's de-

cision, the respondents filed a cross-appeal, contending that the 3rd respondent deserved more award than the trial court had awarded them. They prayed to the appellate court to raise it to at least \$205,603,528 from \$154,202,646 they had prayed for as compensation for the business opportunity cost the 3rd respondent had suffered.

But the appellate court said Mwamasika couldn't escape legal consequences awaiting loan guarantors when principal debtors failed to honour their loan repayment obligations. "The personal guarantee and indemnity which Mwamasika and his other co-directors executed to enable the 3rd respondent to secure the loan facility from the appellant was in law a binding contractual agreement which left it open to the appellant to enforce the terms of that guarantee in case the 3rd respondent (as the principal debtor) fails to liquidate its debt."

The guarantee clause reads: "In consideration of the bank granting the loan to the principal debtor, the guarantors irrevocably and unconditionally, jointly and severally, undertake the obligations and liabilities assumed by the principal debtor under the loan agreement heretofore mentioned and under this guarantee if the principal debtor should fail, refuse or neglect to pay the loan, on the due dates in terms of the loan agreement."

The CJ said the trial court had failed to consider the evidential burden Mwamasika and his co-directors bore as the guarantors of the principal debtor (the 3rd respondent). He said the three guarantors would retain their burden as guarantors until the 3rd respondent repaid the loan.

The CJ concluded that the bank was justified to retain the title documents. "The conclusion is sufficient to allow this appeal. Thus, for the reasons outlined above the appeal is allowed and the judgment of the trial High Court is set aside."

Today's proverb: "He who likes borrowing dislikes paying."
 • The author is a Dar es Salaam-based lawyer. He can be reached at t22magobe@gmail.com

The Law and You



Forodhani food bazaar is Zanzibar's top-notch culinary spot

By Correspondent Peter Muthamia

FOR anyone visiting Zanzibar for the first time, the Forodhani Food Bazaar is the place to be. It is an ideal rendezvous for lovers and for anyone who longs to spoil their taste buds with an assortment of authentic sea food, Swahili pastry, and food reflective of the lifestyles, traditions, history, and culture of the Zanzibari people.

Located at the picturesque Indian Ocean seafront and open to the locals and tourists from 3.30 p.m. to 10 p.m., perhaps hundreds of revellers and their families partake of great morsels, non-alcoholic beverages, and exotic foods served by smiley food vendors clad in white coats and caps. It is indeed a place to capture the East African vibe, be it historical or modern.

A mixture of mouthwatering morsels only fit for the kings and inviting colours of food are so inviting that one cannot wait to get his hands on it. But more inviting is the presentation, which leaves nothing to chance.

My wife and I had a very memorable culinary experience at Forodhani Gardens, but if truth be told, one is spoilt for choice as there is so many foods from which to choose. If you love seafood, you have it; if tickling your taste buds is inclined towards French fries and shawerma or deep-fried chicken, the choice is yours.

We wanted to spoil ourselves with something rare—something that truly depicts the culture and dispositions of the people of Zanzibar. We got what we wanted. Something that was far from ugali and wali (rice) which are staples of Dar es Salaam's staple.

Zanzibari cuisine is a cacophony of spices, seafood, vegetables, and well-articulated cooking that is a reflection of Zanzibar's unhurried lifestyle and goodwill (Zanzibaris are very trusting people). It offers choices more diverse than any eatery can offer, making it a perfect spot for not only curious tourists but also locals seeking to enjoy ready-made foods. The smells wafting from the different food stands are so enticing that you will want to go back.

To get there from the town centre, you will have to follow a maze of thin alleyways passing between settlements that have historical significance, known as the old town. The place is all lit up with ample parking space, graced by all makes of automobiles. Many eaters will be seen sitting on the concrete embankments and formal seats, munching away on their

The ambience occasioned by the soft wind blowing from the ocean creates the right mood for casual bites and serious meals. This creates the need to sample all foods presented, but then the list is so big that it would take days for one to sample all foods.

The foods served at Forodhani are versatile and are served in many ways to make tasty, affordable meals. Zanzibaris boast of variations. Lined on the tables are all sorts of mouth-watering meats, including skewered beef, duck, the famous Zanzibar pizza, and chicken tandoori masala.

Sugarcane juice and fruit puddings are some of my favourites. Blazing Shawerma stands beckoning at

you as you enter the open-air eatery, and if you are going to enjoy the meals, you have eaten too much of one type of food, or else you will have filled your stomach even before having sampled the food presented before you.

But if you happen to be a seafood lover, there

are assortments of fish that include lobsters, tiger prawns, baby sharks, octopus, and snappers, all fried, braised, or boiled depending on your taste.

Forodhani started as just a nondescript eatery for seafood. It was started by a few old men who sold urojo (a popular Zanzibar mix) and seafood. Later,

the park was renovated, attracting more food lovers. Today, Forodhani gardens not only attract locals but are also an attraction for tourists seeking to enjoy the various foods in the area. Next time you find yourself in Zanzibar, Forodhani Gardens is a good bet if you are a foodie seeking a unique culinary experience.



The Forodhani garden in Zanzibar's Stone Town is home to a fantastic open-air food market.

Illegal mining in the Pan Amazon: An ecological disaster for floodplains and local communities

By Timothy Killeen

FLOODPLAINS are extraordinarily productive because they are the interface between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. They are remarkably diverse because they integrate a mosaic of lakes, marshes, palm swamps and inundated forests, which create the complex food webs that support fish populations.

Floodplain habitats are socially and economically vital because tens of thousands of families depend upon their natural resources for their livelihoods. The impacts from placer mining are catastrophic to floodplains because miners overturn the top layer of soils to expose the gold-bearing placer sediments, leaving behind a desolate moonscape.

A placer mine typically occupies a floodplain in its entirety, extending from terrace to terrace and expanding upstream and downstream over dozens of kilometers. A common variant consists of a dredge mounted on a barge that exploits the channel bed of larger rivers that drain wildcat mining landscapes. The combination of placer mines in the headwaters and dredge-barges working downstream can convert a clear-water riparian ecosystem into a silt-laden and polluted river.

At least 350,000 hectares (about 864,800 acres) of forest and wetland habitat have been lost in the Pan Amazon due to placer mining activities. This value, which is derived from satellite images, underestimates the true area, however, because the historical archive does not have images of sufficient spatial resolution to capture very small-scale mining camps (e.g., Roraima), nor monitor the impact from the hundreds of barges that ply the region's rivers.

Remote sensing technology does, however, capture the trend in the level of disturbance, which has increased in recent years due to market demand for gold and the relaxation of environmental enforcement in Brazil. The historical archive also exposes the permanence of placer mining impacts: Floodplains destroyed in the mid-1980s remain devoid of vegetation in 2020.

Mercury: slow motion suicide

The impact from wildcat mining on floodplain habitats is visually obvious. In contrast, the effects of mercury poisoning are silent and, for a time, invisible. Eventually, however, the toxicity will manifest in the health of the miners, their families and nearby communities.

Artisanal miners use mercury at the final stage of their processing system when they see bits of gold in sediment. Mercury is added to the earthen mixture because it absorbs gold to form a physical amalgam; gold is recovered by vaporizing the mercury, usually over an open flame.

Mercury can be inhaled, ingested or absorbed through the skin, but there are technologies that do not depend upon mercury and others to keep it from escaping into the environment. Unfortunately, artisanal miners do not have access to these technologies and large amounts of mercury pollute Amazonian rivers each year.

Elemental mercury is noxious, but under anaerobic conditions microbes transform mercury into an organic compound, methylmercury, that is far more dangerous to humans. Methylmercury is a stable molecule that is a hundred times more likely to be absorbed by an organism; once ingested, it is incorporated into living tissues rather than eliminated as waste.

This leads to the phenomenon known as 'biomagnification', an eco-physiological process that causes mercury to accumulate in organisms over time and become concentrated in long-lived carnivores situated near the top of food webs.

In humans, mercury is transported freely throughout the body and can cross the placenta where it will impact the development of a foetus. In adults, it causes neurological disorders, including clumsiness, difficulties in speaking, hearing impairment, blindness and death.



Mercury poisoning is endemic to communities on the rivers located within or downstream from placer mining landscapes. In a review of 33 studies conducted in the Tapajós watershed, the elevated presence of mercury was ubiquitous.

The highest levels were documented in individuals directly involved in gold mining, but it also impacted non-miners who rely on fish as a food source. In the preferred fish-food species, methylmercury was consistently above the maximum level recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Elevated levels of mercury have been documented in migratory fish populations far removed from mining areas and even in urban populations. One recent study revealed that 75 percent of the population of Santarém had elevated levels of mercury with some residents having four times the limit established by the WHO.

Mercury contamination is a long-term threat, which has actually increased over the last decade due to the increase in gold prices and the subsequent boom in wildcat mining. One study estimated that ~200 tonnes of mineral mercury are released each year, but, as more data becomes available and the activity increases, that figure may surpass 500 tonnes.

If true, the amount released into the environment over four decades would sum to approximately 8,000 tonnes. Of this total, about 40 percent has been dumped into the Amazon River Basin, while another 40 percent has been expelled into rivers of Coastal Guianas, with the remainder into the Caroni River in Venezuela.

Social impacts of wildcat mining

Efforts to improve environmental compliance would almost immediately improve the health and social welfare of wildcat miners and their families. This includes children who work as employees or as participating members of a family enterprise.

The list of activities pursued by children is long and depressing; it includes working as peons in underground mines, as underwater divers operating suction hoses on river dredges and as operators of the processing equipment used to separate the mineral gold from the crushed rock, as well as manipulating the mercury that threatens their development.

The exact number of under-age children working in illegal mines is not known with any kind of precision, but estimates run as high as 20 percent of the workforce in

Peru and Brazil.

Because they are often organized as family enterprises, women participate in mining ventures and, not infrequently, assume managerial responsibilities. Their participation provides a pathway for introducing better practices, particularly if they are made aware of the risk to their family's health. Other, well-known, social impacts include forced labor and sexual trafficking, crimes that often assume a high-profile aspect of the law-and-order initiatives that are periodically organized in Brazil and Peru.

The most salient impact, at least in international forums, is the encroachment of wildcat miners on the Indigenous and traditional communities that occupied these landscapes prior to the discovery of gold. In the 1980s, most Indigenous communities were overwhelmed, and some leaders negotiated access agreements to their traditional lands and, in the process, captured a portion of the revenues. These arrangements were routinely ignored, however, and Indigenous groups quickly soured on them. Native communities are now the most vocal opponents of mining, although they continue to be overwhelmed by miners willing to resort to violence.

Mitigation and remediation

Placer mining was widely practiced during the gold rushes of the nineteenth and early twentieth century in North America, and created a massive environmental liability similar to now that being generated across the Pan Amazon. In North America, the cost of remediation was assumed by the federal and state governments, estimated at hundreds of billions of dollars. Placer mining is still used by small-scale miners in Alaska and the Yukon, who are obligated to restore a functional wetland after they have exploited the resource.

Remediation is planned before operations so that landscape can be reconfigured at a reasonable cost; compliance is guaranteed with a bond held by the state. In some jurisdictions, placer miners go beyond remediation and seek to restore quasi-natural habitats by accessing incentives from civil society that typically also open high-value markets. The social and economic differences between Alaska and the Amazon are obvious, but solutions will be based on broadly similar strategies.

Confronting the illegality that pervades wildcat-mining landscapes is daunting. The state is either partially or totally absent. Imposing an unpopular policy is com-

plicated by the number of individuals that directly or indirectly depend on the wildcat-mining economy. In jurisdictions heavily dependent on wildcat gold mining, residents don't view it as illegal, but as one of many informal activities.

Initiatives that target specific communities or subsectors, such as women or Indigenous miners, have generated positive results but have not changed the structural elements that define the sector. Law-and-order campaigns organized in Brazil and Peru have made headlines - and have decreased illegal activity for a period of time - but they have not changed the economic and cultural dynamic that motivates individuals to defy the law.

Governments have been more successful in registering individual miners, or their associations, in national mining databases. Miners participate because they desire a legal document validating their claim and, presumably, are aware that it provides authorities with information that will facilitate the collection of royalty taxes. Royalty receipts have increased across the region, although it is widely assumed miners are underreporting their production.

Registration and tax collection are the first steps in reforming mining practices. Guyana has succeeded in registering most of its small-scale miners and is using that information to engage them in educational and technical programmes to improve their productivity and, in the process, eliminate the use of mercury.

There have been several research projects that seek to identify practices for remediating the environmental impacts of placer mining. Although they have demonstrated it to be technically feasible, they have also shown that it is socially and technically challenging. A study in Madre de Dios, Peru, found that a barren floodplain, nineteen years after the cessation of mining operations, required investments in soil reclamation and tree planting of between \$2,000-3,500 per hectare.

Other studies that track reforestation efforts over multiple years report costs twice that amount. Considering there are more than 75,000 hectares (cca 185,300 acres) of abandoned placer mines in the Madre de Dios, it would require at least \$250 to \$500 million to restore them to a semblance of a functioning natural ecosystem. A large sum, perhaps, but less than 2 percent of the value of the gold extracted from the Madre de Dios over the last 30 years.

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 KADOGO 11:00-13:00HRS BONGO HITS 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS ZAIDI YA UMJUAVYO 16:00-18:00HRS ALIYEVUMA 18:00-21:00HRS BUZUKI TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	07:00-09:00HRS HABARI NA MATUKIO YA WIKI 09:00-11:00HRS THE SUNDAY 11:00-13:00HRS TOP 20 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CAPITAL MICHEZONI 16:00-18:00HRS UKURASA WA MBELE 18:00-21:00HRS JIACHIE 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-01:00HRS LADHA LAINI 01:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



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New compendium now identifies 100 promising forgotten foods for Africa

ROME

AFRICA is paradoxically reliant on imported food and home to a disproportionate share of the world's hungry while at the same time boasts the potential to be a global breadbasket and food superpower. Part of realizing that potential depends on tapping the continent's vast array of food crops, which too often have been pushed off stage by global commodity foods produced elsewhere.

These include traditional local mainstays such as Bambara groundnut and pigeons peas, superfoods such as fonio or baobab fruit, and naturalized vitamin-rich crops such as amaranth or taro.

The new Compendium of forgotten foods in Africa aims to move the needle by identifying so-called orphan foods that very often are "locally adapted and less fastidious than exotic cultivars" such as maize, rice or wheat. Produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in partnership with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the compendium presents

100 examples of neglected local foods that have the potential to sustainably provide the much-needed dietary nutrients to various communities across Africa.

The compendium is a scoping study and a first step in what will be "an exhaustive identification and characterization of forgotten foods in Africa," said Abebe Haile-Gabriel Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa and FARA Executive Director Aggrey Agumya. Both leaders made it clear that while the current list may be expanded over time, the key litmus test is to generate increased attention and funding by researchers and agricultural development practitioners able to shepherd pioneering investments into sustainable agrifood transformation.

The 100 examples collated in the Compendium, with imagery, agro-ecological suitability, agronomic requirements, and nutritional qualities, were selected after an initial canvassing of experts around Africa, whose specialties range from value-chain development to genetic improvement.

The project, begun as an initia-



tive between FAO and the African Union, also dovetails nicely into The Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS), a newer project spearheaded by FAO and the State Department of the United States of America which is strongly geared to leveraging Africa's indigenous agricultural products and techniques.

"These projects are moving together and will work together," especially as VACS is quite focused on improving seeds and developing hardy and higher-yielding varieties of the orphan crops, said Mphumuzi Sukati, Senior Food and Nutrition Officer at FAO's Regional Office for Africa and a leading author of the publication.

Crafting the Compendium, published alongside a companion tome explaining the initiative, has generated lively arguments over criteria and terminologies. In fact, nine main descriptors ended up being used:

traditional, forgotten, minor, neglected, underutilized, orphan, underdeveloped, cheat-hunger and poor people.

Other ideas from various experts are to call these crops "opportunity crops" given their potential to transform African agrifood systems to be MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind, in line with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031.

No selection can be perfect from the start and the list will be steadily updated, with forest products likely to figure more prominently over time as the initiative gathers steam.

Sometimes the foods are relatively forgotten due to progressive loss of cultural image in the face of more exotic imported foods, and sometimes they are not

forgotten or neglected at all but - like cassava or bush mango - remain traditional crops used in local markets and not used in longer-distance trade. A common attribute, however, is that they have received little or no policy and research attention until now.

They are what Haile-Gabriel and Agumya call "backbench" foods and should be targeted for promotion due to their adaptability to Africa's production domains, cultural and socioeconomic structures and nutritious needs.

Brightest-ever cosmic explosion solved but new mysteries sparked

By Pallab Ghosh

RESEARCHERS have discovered the cause of the brightest burst of light ever recorded.

But in doing so they have run up against two bigger mysteries, including one that casts doubt on where our heavy elements - like gold - come from.

The burst of light, spotted in 2022, is now known to have had an exploding star at its heart, researchers say.

But that explosion, by itself, would not have been sufficient to have shone so brightly.

And our current theory says that such exploding stars, known as supernovas, also produce all the heavy elements in the universe such as gold and platinum.

But the team found none of these elements, raising new questions about how precious metals are produced.

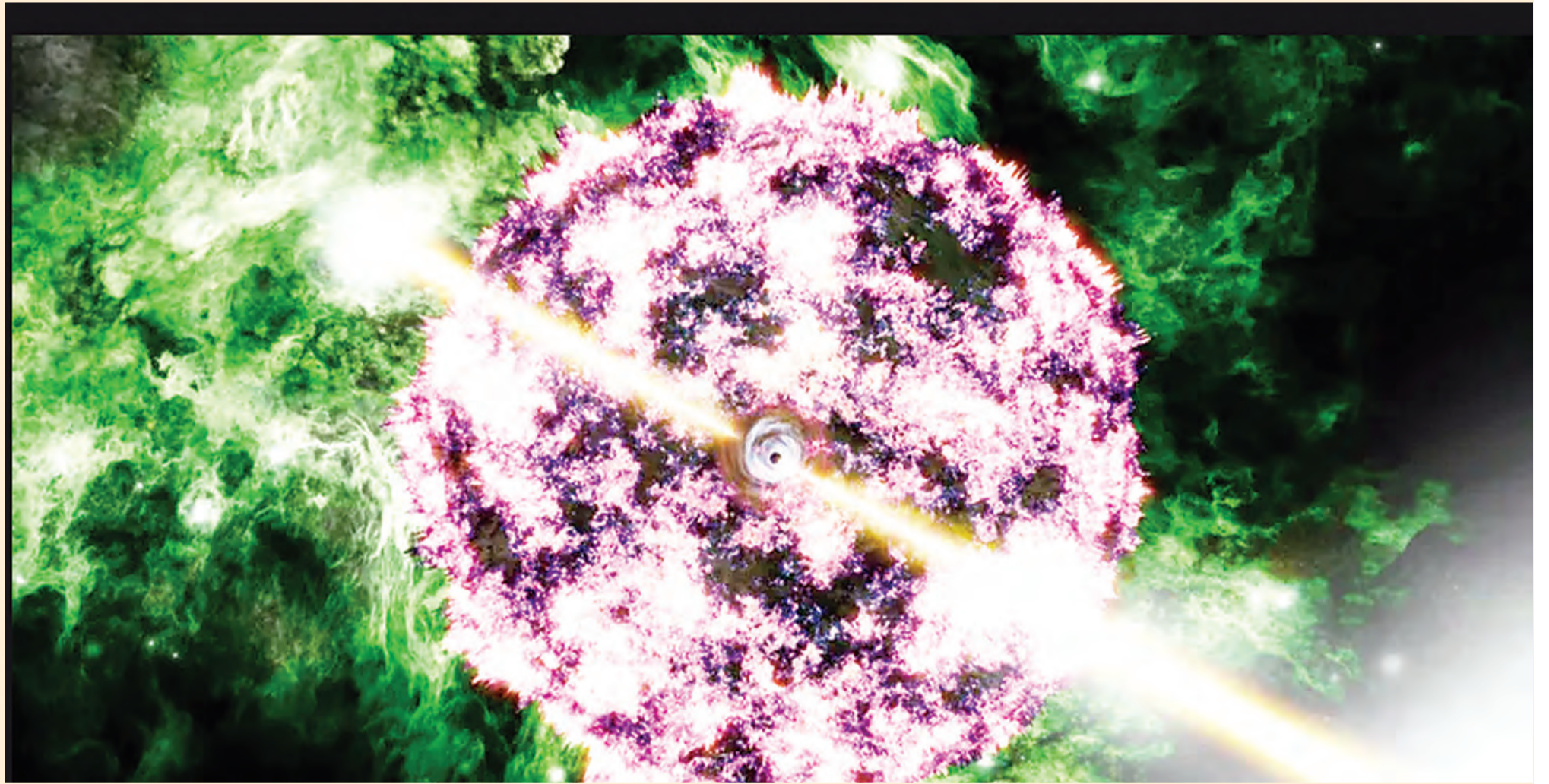
Prof Catherine Heymans of Edinburgh University and Scotland's Astronomer Royal, who is independent of the research team, said that results like these help to drive science forward.

"The Universe is an amazing, wonderful and surprising place, and I love the way that it throws these conundrums at us!

"The fact that it is not giving us the answers we want is great, because we can go back to the drawing board and think again and come up with better theories," she said.

The explosion was detected by telescopes in October 2022. It came from a distant galaxy 2.4 billion light-years away, emitting light across all frequencies. But it was especially intense in its gamma rays, which are a more penetrating form of X-rays.

The gamma ray burst lasted seven minutes and was so powerful that it was off the scale, overwhelming the instruments that detected them.



Subsequent readings showed that the burst was 100 times brighter than anything that had ever been recorded before, earning it the nickname among astronomers of the Brightest Of All Time or B.O.A.T.

Gamma ray bursts are associated with exploding supernovas, but this was so bright that it could not be easily explained. If it were a supernova, it would have had to have been absolutely enormous, according to the current theory.

The burst was so bright that it initially dazzled the instruments on Nasa's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST). The telescope had only re-

cently become operational, and this was an incredible stroke of luck for astronomers wanting to study the phenomenon because such powerful explosions are calculated to occur once every 10,000 years.

As the light dimmed, one of JWST's instruments was able to see there had indeed been a supernova explosion. But it had not been nearly as powerful as they expected. So why then had the burst of gamma rays been off the scale?

Anthony Bradshaw Gold coins and bars Anthony Bradshaw

All the gold on Earth was produced in cataclysmic explosions in outer

space

Dr Peter Blanchard, who co-lead the research team, doesn't know. But he wants to find out. He plans to book more time on JWST to investigate other supernova remnants.

"It could be that these gamma ray bursts and supernova explosions are not necessarily directly linked to each other and they could be separate processes going on," he told BBC News.

Dr Tammy Laskar, from the University of Utah and co-leader of the study, said that the B.O.A.T.'s power might be explained by the way in which jets of material were being sprayed out, as normally occurs dur-

ing supernovas. But if these jets are narrow, they produce a more focused and so brighter beam of light.

"It's like focusing a flashlight's beam into a narrow column, as opposed to a broad beam that washes across a whole wall," he said. "In fact, this was one of the narrowest jets seen for a gamma ray burst so far, which gives us a hint as to why the afterglow appeared as bright as it did."

The current theory that is taught to all astronomers at university is that one of the ways heavy elements - such as gold, platinum, lead and uranium - are produced is during the extreme conditions that are created during su-

pernovas. These are spread across the galaxy and are used in the formation of planets, which is how, the theory goes, the metals found on Earth arose.

But the researchers found no evidence of heavy elements around the exploded star. So, is the theory wrong and heavy elements are produced some other way, or are they only produced in supernovas under certain conditions?

"Theorists need to go back and look at why an event like the B.O.A.T is not producing heavy elements when theories and simulations predict that they should," says Dr Blanchard.

FDA head calls on Congress to pass mandatory testing for lead in food

WASHINGTON

THE head of the Food and Drug Administration urged Congress on Thursday to pass legislation mandating that food manufacturers test for lead in products imported to the United States.

Dr Robert Califf's comment was in response to a question from Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., the ranking member of the House Committee on Oversight

and Accountability, during a hearing that touched on the FDA's response to issues including lead-contaminated cinnamon applesauce pouches, which have sickened hundreds of children.

The applesauce pouches, from Florida-based Company WanaBana, were recalled in the fall after they were found to have high lead levels. The pouches were imported from Ecuador.

Califf said the FDA oversees products from about 275,000 registered manufacturing facilities across the U.S. and abroad. Due to budget limitations, the agency often has to rely on the food manufacturers themselves to do their own testing.

Most times they do a good job, ensuring the products are tested, he said; sometimes they don't.

"In the case of cinnamon applesauce, if there had been mandatory testing, when it got imported into the U.S. from Ecuador, the stores that were selling it probably would have picked it up at that point," Califf said, noting that there is no federal requirement for testing for lead in foods.

Arizona's 1864 abortion ban was mostly a result of power struggles, historians say

"It's the way the drug system works," he added. "The manufacturers of drugs have to test every batch" for possible contamination.

Complicating matters is that the FDA doesn't currently set limits on heavy metals in most foods. Only a handful, including chocolate candy and sugar-based candy, have specific lead limits. In

2022, the agency introduced draft guidelines for lead limits in juice.

Califf's comments come two days after an investigation from Consumer Reports, an advocacy group, found high levels lead in certain Lunchables products.

The group is now calling on the federal government to remove Lunchables from the national free and reduced-price school lunch programme.

The FDA would need Congress to enact legislation to give the agency the authority to impose mandatory testing, Califf said.

"At FDA, we're referees," he added. "You all in Congress actually write the rule books."

By Bruno Bugingo

Rwanda's generational shift and the quest for a sustainable future

WHILE speaking during the 30th Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, President Paul Kagame emphasised that the youth are the guardians of the future and the foundation for the unity of Rwanda. His statement is justifiably right on several multifaceted grounds.

From the ashes of tragedy, Rwanda has risen, and now the torch is being passed to the new generation. As youth, what role are we supposed to play and what do we need as a way forward?

Thirty years in social science means a lot because 30 years represent a social cohort or a generation. This means that Rwanda is undergoing a transition both in terms of the people in charge and the country's focus.

Unlike 30 years ago, when the country was focused on security problems, uniting Rwandans, extreme poverty, and other issues expected from a country emerging from a massacre like the Genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda is now focused on more advanced goals such as becoming a middle-income country in the next 11 years.

It is reducing its emissions by 38 per cent, and providing refuge for people in danger from both the region and around the world, such as evacuated asylum-seekers and refugees who were trapped in detention in Libya and maybe also the soon-to-come asylum seekers from the UK under the "UK-Rwanda Treaty".

The key potential problems faced by societies transitioning between generations include the fail-



President Paul Kagame addresses youth from across the continent and beyond during the YouthConnekt 2022 Africa Summit held in Kigali on October 13, 2022.

ure to sustain previous progress due to the introduction of new people and new focuses, which can lead to neglect of historical and social issues, leaving gaps for those who wish ill upon the nation.

However, this is unlikely to be a problem for Rwanda because the foundation laid by President Kagame's leadership and strategies have centred on empowering youth and this is evident through high-profile positions, including top cabinet posts occupied by youthful personnel.

This is also coupled with keeping the memories alive through the annual commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi – our history plays a significant role in shaping our identity. On the other hand, transitioning generations can bring economic challenges, such as the entry of younger generations into the job market in large numbers, leading to increased competition. It's important not to overlook the value of experience and skills in handling jobs. This is where preparation becomes crucial.

Rwanda has put in place deliberate policies for youth employment and empowerment which contributes a lot in the legacy transition.

To build upon the existing foundation and the work done over the last 30 years, various approaches and policies are already in place, and the status quo is promising. However,

speaking from the perspective of a young person, there is more that can be done. I would like to emphasise the approach of increasing youth involvement and representation, both in leadership positions and the private sector.

The 'triple bottom line' approach is one way Rwandans could ensure this transition. In Rwanda, where economic development involves the private sector, it's essential to involve every sector in catalysing this shift by creating policies that incentivise and applaud businesses and civil societies implementing policies that prioritise the new generation.

This involves ensuring that youth are heard and given more responsibility by establishing quotas for youth representation in various leadership positions, especially in the private sector. By mandating a minimum percentage of youth representation on corporate boards, in the private sector, in government bodies, and within organisations, we can ensure that the perspectives and priorities of young Rwandans are integrated into strategic decision-making processes, easing the transition. Policies like these would not only promote intergenerational equity but also foster diversity of thought and innovation, driving sustainable progress and sustainable prosperity. Moreover, by providing young people with opportunities to assume leadership roles and contribute meaningfully to shaping Rwanda's future, the torch can be passed on successfully.

Sustainability is all needed for Rwanda's progress going forward. While the current progress is commendable, it can only be improved if the next generations are better prepared and enabled to take over.

Tragic hyena attacks spur urgent calls for child protection policies

By Adonis Byemelwa

IN a gut-wrenching twist of fate, tragedy struck in the dead of night as five-year-old Shamimu Tumaini Jumaissa, of Ibanza village in the Mwamala Ward of Shinyanga District, became prey to a savage hyena attack. The harrowing incident, unfolding on 8th April 2024 at the stroke of midnight, has plunged the community into a vortex of disbelief, anguish, and sorrow.

According to Ibanza village Chairman, Hassan Issa Barabara, the chilling attack occurred when Shamimu and her companion ventured out to gather firewood. Amidst the darkness, a hyena emerged and viciously attacked Shamimu, dragging her into the nearby bushes. Despite efforts from villagers to track the blood trail, Shamimu was found lifeless, bearing severe injuries to her face and head.

The circumstances surrounding the attack have stirred fear and speculation within the community, with some attributing the tragedy to more than just a mere predator-prey encounter. In Shinyanga, where superstitions and beliefs in witchcraft are deeply rooted, such incidents often invite speculation about mystical forces at play.

Chairman Hassan recounted the harrowing account of the attack, where Shamimu's nine-year-old companion narrowly escaped the hyena's clutches. A neighboring mother's timely intervention, upon hearing Shamimu's cries, prevented further tragedy. However, the absence of many men, who were away on Sungusungu duties, delayed the rescue efforts.

Felista Elias, a witness to the incident, echoed the sentiment of a community grappling with shock and helplessness. She described the heart-wrenching moment when she saw the hyena dragging Shamimu away, with limited help available due to the absence of men occupied with Sungusungu duties.

In response to the tragedy, Ibanza Village Executive Officer, Tausi Kabadi, affirmed that the village government promptly reported the incident to the authorities. Efforts to address the issue include liaising with law enforcement, wildlife, and conservation officers, as well as mobilizing Sungusungu to track down the elusive hyena.

In light of the tragic loss of Shamimu from Ibanza village and the unsettling circumstances surrounding her death, there emerges a pressing need for robust child

protection policies in villages susceptible to encounters with marauding animals. Particularly during this rainy season, when adverse weather conditions compel wild animals to seek refuge in residential areas, the vulnerability of rural communities like Ibanza is heightened.

It is imperative for local authorities, in collaboration with wildlife conservation agencies and community leaders, to devise comprehensive strategies aimed at mitigating the risks posed by human-wildlife conflicts. Such measures should encompass not only immediate responses to animal attacks but also proactive initiatives to prevent future tragedies.

In addressing these challenges, emphasis must be placed on education and awareness campaigns to dispel superstitions and misconceptions that may exacerbate the risks faced by children and vulnerable members of the community. By fostering a deeper understanding of wildlife behavior and promoting responsible coexistence with natural habitats, villages can better safeguard their residents against potential dangers.

Moreover, the implementation of child protection policies should prioritize the establishment of safe



zones and designated play areas, coupled with stringent measures to monitor and manage wildlife movement in residential vicinity. This holistic approach, grounded in community engagement and evidence-based interventions, is essential for fostering a culture of safety and resilience in villages grappling with the complex dynamics of human-wildlife interactions.

As Ibanza Village and the entire Shinyanga Region mourn the loss of Shamimu and reflect on the broader implications of her tragic passing, let us heed the call for collective action to uphold the rights and well-being of children in rural areas. By advocating for stronger child protection policies and investing in initiatives that promote coexistence with wildlife, we can honour Shamimu's memory and strive towards a future where every child can thrive in safety and security.

Similarly, in October 2021, residents of Kitangiri Ward in Shinyanga Municipality pleaded with leaders

at all levels to take immediate action to address incidents of hyenas attacking and killing children. They made this plea during the morning of the death of two years and ten months old Albert Shija, who was killed by a hyena on Saturday, October 16, 2021, in the Imalilo area of Kitangiri Ward, Shinyanga Municipality.

The residents stated that incidents of children being killed by hyenas have escalated, causing fear and panic among the residents. These incidents have also been associated with superstitions and negligence of the relevant authorities in controlling the spread of hyenas in the streets.

The death of Albert Shija occurred just a few days after another child, Raphael Juma Dotto, aged three, died after being attacked by a hyena while playing near his neighbour's house with other children in the Majengo Mapya area of Kitangiri Ward, Shinyanga Municipality, on Saturday, September 25, 2021.

RATIBA YA VIPINDI

JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya Radio One

Radio One

BUSINESS

Spurring the future: Uniting for clean energy innovation and IP protection

By Margreth Somme

WITH Tanzania's vast wealth of renewable energy resources, the nation stands as an ideal crucible for the evolution of clean energy initiatives. Thus, fostering synergistic partnerships among innovators, scholars, and enterprises becomes not just pivotal but imperative in propelling forward the frontiers of clean energy technologies.

In fact, the country possesses abundant renewable energy resources, including solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal potential, making it well-suited for clean energy development. With ample sunshine and strong wind resources, solar and wind energy hold significant promise for the country's energy future.

Currently, hydropower dominates Tanzania's energy mix, with major projects contributing to grid stability. Solar energy offers a decentralized electrification solution,

particularly in rural areas, while wind energy development can diversify energy sources and reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels.

Additionally, Tanzania's geothermal potential, particularly in the Rift Valley region, presents opportunities for base-load power generation and grid stability, complementing intermittent renewable sources. Overall, leveraging these clean energy resources can enhance energy access, and contribute to climate mitigation efforts in Tanzania.

Clean energy and intellectual property (IP) are intricately related, as innovation and technological advancements play a crucial role in the development and deployment of clean energy solutions. In the dynamic landscape of the clean energy industry, collaboration and partnerships are pivotal drivers of innovation and progress.

At Rive & Co., we recognize the critical role that

IP rights play as enablers of collaboration, facilitating joint ventures, public-private partnerships, and collaborative research initiatives. As practitioners of intellectual property law, we provide strategic guidance and legal expertise to navigate the complexities of IP management in the clean energy sector.

IP as an enabler of collaboration

In the pursuit of advancing clean energy technologies, collaboration is essential. Intellectual property rights serve as catalysts for collaboration by incentivizing innovation and providing legal protections for inventors, researchers, and businesses. Whether through joint ventures, technology licensing agreements, or research partnerships, clear delineation and protection of intellectual property rights are fundamental to fostering a collaborative ecosystem.

Collaborative endeavors in the clean energy industry often involve complex negotiations over intellectual property own-



Statista shares new data, charting the rise of renewable energy in Africa. Photo: Ludovic Marin/Reuters

ership, licensing terms, and royalty arrangements. Our team specializes in guiding clients through these negotiations, ensuring that their intellectual property rights are safeguarded while facilitating mutually beneficial collaborations. With our expertise in drafting clear and comprehensive agreements, we mitigate risks and promote a conducive environment for innova-

tion and partnership. Protecting your intellectual property

Our firm understands the importance of protecting our clients' intellectual property assets. Whether through patents, trademarks, copyrights, or trade secrets, we employ a multi-faceted approach to safeguarding intellectual property rights. Our team works tirelessly to develop tailored strategies that

align with our clients' business objectives, ensuring that their innovations are protected against infringement and misappropriation.

Clear agreements for IP management

Clear agreements and frameworks for IP management are indispensable for navigating the complexities of collaborative innovation in the clean energy sector. We

specializes in drafting customized agreements that address the unique needs and circumstances of each collaboration. From IP ownership provisions to licensing terms and royalty arrangements, we ensure that our clients' interests are protected while fostering an environment conducive to innovation and knowledge sharing.

Maximizing societal benefits

By fostering collaborative innovation and protecting intellectual property rights, we are dedicated to maximizing the societal benefits of clean energy technologies. Through strategic legal counsel and innovative solutions, we empower our clients to drive positive change, advance sustainable development, and create a brighter future for generations to come.

Therefore, it's important to understand that in the protection landscape of the clean energy industry, collaboration and intellectual property protection are essential for driving innovation and progress.

Margreth Somme, is an Intellectual Property & Technology Expert from Rive & Co, an innovating law firm this article is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. It is recommended to consult with a qualified legal professional for advice specific to your situation.

By Fabio Natalucci, Mahvash Qureshi, and Felix Suntheim

Rising cyber threats pose serious concerns for financial stability

CYBERATTACKS have more than doubled since the pandemic. While companies have historically suffered relatively modest direct losses from cyberattacks, some have experienced a much heavier toll. US credit reporting agency Equifax, for example, paid more than \$1 billion in penalties after a major data breach in 2017 that affected about 150 million consumers.

As we show in a chapter of the April 2024 Global Financial Stability Report, the risk of extreme losses from cyber incidents is increasing. Such losses could potentially cause funding problems for companies and even jeopardize their solvency. The size of these extreme losses has more than quadrupled since 2017 to \$2.5 billion. And indirect losses like reputational damage or security upgrades are substantially higher.

The financial sector is uniquely exposed to cyber risk. Financial firms—given the large amounts of sensitive data and transactions they handle—are often targeted by criminals seeking to steal money or disrupt

economic activity. Attacks on financial firms account for nearly one-fifth of the total, of which banks are the most exposed.

Chart showcasing the increase in risks of suffering from a cyberattack and experiencing loss over time

Incidents in the financial sector could threaten financial and economic stability if they erode confidence in the financial system, disrupt critical services, or cause spillovers to other institutions.

For example, a severe incident at a financial institution could undermine trust and, in extreme cases, lead to market selloffs or runs on banks. Although no significant "cyber runs" have occurred thus far, our analysis suggests modest and somewhat persistent deposit outflows have occurred at smaller US banks after a cyberattack.

Cyber incidents that disrupt critical services like payment networks could also severely affect economic activity. For example, a December attack at the Central Bank of Lesotho disrupted the national payment system,

Attractive target

The financial sector has suffered more than 20,000 cyberattacks, causing \$12 billion in losses, over the past 20 years.

Financial sector cyber incidents (number, 2004-23)



Source: Advisen cyber loss data and IMF staff calculations.

Financial sector losses (billions of US dollars, 2004-23)



IMF

preventing transactions by domestic banks.

Chart of cyber incidents and losses the financial sector has suffered over

the past 20 years

Another consideration is that financial firms increasingly rely on third-party IT service providers,

and may do so even more with the emerging role of artificial intelligence. Such external providers can improve operational

resilience, but also expose the financial industry to systemwide shocks. For example, a 2023 ransomware attack on a cloud IT service provider caused simultaneous outages at 60 US credit unions.

With the global financial system facing significant and growing cyber risks from increasing digitalization and geopolitical tensions, as shown in the chapter, policies and governance frameworks at firms must keep pace.

Because private incentives may be insufficient to address cyber risks—for example, firms may not fully account for the systemwide effects of incidents—public intervention may be necessary.

However, according to an IMF survey of central banks and supervisory authorities, cybersecurity policy frameworks, especially in emerging market and developing economies, often remain insufficient. For example, only about half of countries surveyed had a national, financial sector-focused cybersecurity strategy or dedicated cybersecurity

regulations. To strengthen resilience in the financial sector, authorities should develop an adequate national cybersecurity strategy accompanied by effective regulation and supervisory capacity that should encompass:

Periodically assessing the cybersecurity landscape and identifying potential systemic risks from interconnectedness and concentrations, including from third-party service providers.

Encouraging cyber "maturity" among financial sector firms, including board-level access to cybersecurity expertise, as supported by the chapter's analysis which suggests that better cyber-related governance may reduce cyber risk.

Improving cyber hygiene of firms—that is, their online security and system health (such as anti-malware and multifactor authentication)—and training and awareness.

Prioritizing data reporting and collection of cyber incidents, and sharing information among financial sector participants to

enhance their collective preparedness.

As attacks often emanate from outside a financial firm's home country and proceeds can be routed across borders, international cooperation is imperative to address cyber risk successfully.

While cyber incidents will occur, the financial sector needs the capacity to deliver critical business services during these disruptions. To this end, financial firms should develop, and test, response and recovery procedures and national authorities should have effective response protocols and crisis management frameworks in place.

The IMF actively helps member countries strengthen their cybersecurity frameworks through policy advice, for example as part of the Financial Sector Assessment Program, and through capacity-building activities.

Fabio Natalucci, Mahvash Qureshi, and Felix Suntheim works for IMF, and the article is based on Chapter 3 of the April 2024 Global Financial Stability Report, "Cyber Risk: A Growing Concern for Macroeconomic Stability."

New steam turbines, generators to transform Kenya's energy network



A Steam driven turbine in power station with supervisor. Photo: Courtesy of Mira Image

By Guardian Reporter

KENYA'S geothermal power sector is set for a major boost with the imminent arrival of new steam turbines and generators, paving the way for a notable enhancement in the country's energy infrastructure.

The equipment renovation is targeted towards improving the performance of the old 45MW Olkaria I geothermal power plant at unit 1-3, marking a major step towards enhancing renewable energy production in the region.

Olkaria I geothermal power plant is the oldest geothermal power plant in Kenya and has been in commercial operation by the Kenya Electricity Generating Company PLC (hereinafter "KenGen") since 1981.

A statement obtained by this paper yesterday revealed that units 1 through 3 of the plant, are in need of renovation due to their aging infrastructure. It was announced that Toshiba ESS's steam turbines and generators have been chosen for the upcoming renovation project.

This will increase the power output of Units 1 through 3 from the current 15mw to 21mw each, enabling them to achieve a higher output with less steam. These points were highly evaluated by KenGen and led to the adoption of the contract.

Kenya's economic growth has led to an increased demand for power, prompting the government to implement a comprehensive development plan known as Vision 2030.

This initiative includes measures to enhance Kenya's electricity generating capacity through renewable sources and aims to achieve a complete transition to 100 percent green energy by the year 2030.

Many new geothermal power plants are planned to tap into the 9GW geothermal potential in Kenya's Great Rift Valley region.

Toshiba ESS and KenGen have solidified their partnership through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to collaborate on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) services in 2022.

By combining their expertise and networks, they aim to provide O&M services for geothermal power plants in developing countries, particularly in East Africa.

Toshiba ESS has a strong

history of successfully delivering geothermal power generation systems in Kenya and other East African countries. Their expertise in this field makes them an invaluable partner for KenGen in offering Operations & Maintenance (O&M) services for geothermal power plants.

Furthermore, Toshiba ESS has actively promoted geothermal power generation by signing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) on geothermal power plant business with various partners in East African nations. Their dedication to advancing sustainable energy solutions in the region is evident through their partnerships and successful project completions.

Shinya Fujitsuka, Director and Vice President of the Power Systems Division at

Toshiba ESS, expressed his satisfaction in being able to contribute to energy stability in Kenya through the provision of equipment and services.

He emphasized that Toshiba ESS will continue to offer optimal products and solutions to meet the needs of customers, including a range of geothermal steam turbines and generators with power outputs from 1 MW to 200 MW.

Furthermore, he reiterated their commitment to clean energy and the realization of a sustainable society, stating that Toshiba ESS will play a role in achieving a carbon-neutral society by providing geothermal power plant services both domestically and internationally.

Emerging markets gaining more global influence amidst competitive landscape

By Guardian Reporters

The global economy is increasingly influenced by the Group of Twenty's large emerging markets. Over the past two decades, these economies have become much more integrated with global markets and are generating larger economic "spillovers" to the rest of the world.

At a time when growth prospects are weakening in China and several other large emerging markets, it is critical for policymakers—both in G20 emerging markets and those countries that could be impacted—to understand the channels through which a slowdown could propagate through the global economy.

Growth spillovers from domestic shocks in G20 emerging markets have increased over the past two decades and are now comparable to those from advanced economies, as we detail in an analytical chapter of the April 2024 World Economic Outlook. We also examine how such shocks spread through trade to companies and industries in other countries.

Spillovers are largest from China and they now explain just as much of the variation in emerging-market output as those from the United States. But other G20 emerging markets—such as India, Brazil, Russia, and Mexico—also play an important role in the economic performance of their neighbors.

A chart on the impact of spillovers on global GDP by G20 emerging markets

Our simulations—using a multi-country multi-sector trade model—suggest that a decline in productivity in G20 emerging markets can lower global output three times more than would have been the case in 2000.

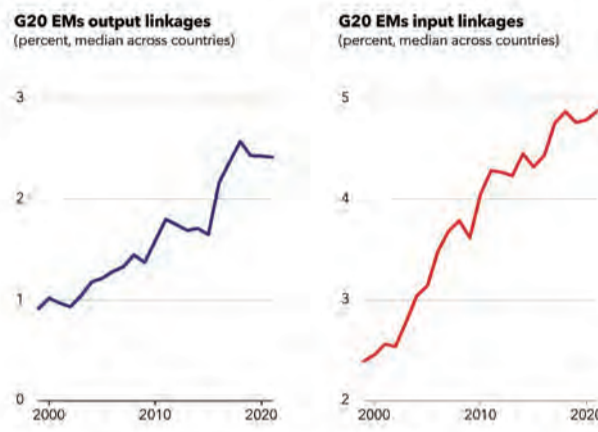
Industry spillovers

Since China's accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001, G20 emerging markets have doubled their share of world trade and foreign direct investment and now account for one third of global GDP. They have become large importers of manufactured products as well as large exporters of intermediate goods, notably in manufacturing and mining.

Chart of G20 emerging mar-

Supply chain integration

G20 emerging markets have increased their participation in global value chains both as producers and consumers.



ket output and input linkages

And, as they have become increasingly integrated into global value chains, developments in G20 emerging markets can have a greater impact on businesses abroad.

Positive growth surprises can boost the revenue growth of foreign firms in sectors such as electrical equipment, machinery, and metal products that are more dependent on demand from G20 emerging markets. Faster growth in

emerging markets—such as Indonesia and Türkiye—can also help foreign firms in sectors that are more reliant on cheaper inputs.

But faster growth among emerging markets can also mean that they expand their productive capacity downstream to make and export new goods that compete directly with those goods made by firms overseas. This import-competition effect from lower-wage countries, such as China

and Mexico, appears to dominate in sectors that are highly dependent on foreign suppliers—for example, textiles and chemicals.

Chart of the change in firm revenue growth after a domestic growth surprise in G20 EMs

It is therefore not surprising that shocks in G20 emerging markets can also trigger sizable reallocations of economic activity across countries and sectors.

Our modeling analysis finds that most sectors will shrink in response to a broad-based decline in productivity, especially in Asia. But spillovers are not uniform, particularly if the decline is concentrated in sectors that are integrated in global value chains. In that case, most manufacturing sectors in the rest of the world will eventually expand—particularly textiles, metals, and electronics—as firms take advantage of the decreased supply coming from G20 emerging markets.

Employment in countries hit by spillovers also adjusts. A positive productivity shock in G20 emerging markets can lead to job losses within the same sectors because of increased competition, whereas spillovers

that propagate through sectors connected through global value chains tend to generate complementarities and more job opportunities.

Greater responsibility

G20 emerging markets—especially, but not only, China—have continued to make their presence felt as an important source of global and regional spillovers.

Negative spillovers from a G20 emerging market growth slowdown, especially following supply-side shocks, could put at risk the downward path in inflation for advanced economies. And in other emerging market and developing economies, spillovers can be larger, putting growth and income convergence at risk.

A slowdown in China could be especially costly given its role as a manufacturing powerhouse and its high integration. Yet the growing role of all G20 emerging markets means that others can help support the world economy. A plausible growth acceleration in these countries could generate positive global spillovers and boost world growth by half a percentage point.

The reallocation in activity and jobs across firms and sectors due to spillovers from G20 emerging markets can be costly, but it also creates new opportunities. Structural reforms, especially in labor markets and business regulation, can help sectors that stand to benefit most from reallocation. But policymakers should also deploy inclusive policies—including targeted fiscal support—that facilitate efficient reallocation of labor across sectors and mitigate any harmful distributional impact of the spillovers.

As global economic power continues to shift, effective multilateral cooperation and international policy coordination to manage spillovers and minimize fragmentation risks—including by strengthening the global financial safety net—remains a priority.

This article is written by Nicolas Fernandez-Arias, Alberto Musso, Carolina Osorio-Buitron, Adina Popescu from IMF, and it is based on chapter 4 of the April 2024 World Economic Outlook, "Trading Places: Real Spillovers From G20 Emerging Markets."

War fears cause the stock market to drop, driving a flight to safety

New York

THE global financial world was roiled by a flare-up in geopolitical risks that sent stocks sliding – while spurring a flight to the safest corners of the market from bonds to gold and the dollar. Oil rallied.

Equities got hit at the end of a wild week on a news report that Israel is bracing for a direct and unprecedented attack by Iran on government targets as soon as Saturday. Treasuries climbed across the US curve and the greenback hit the highest in 2024. Friday's economic data did little to alter the dimmed risk appetite – with consumer sentiment down as inflation expectations rose.

To Matt Maley at Miller Tabak, investors have been much too complacent about about geopolitical issues.

"Since gold and oil markets have been pricing in a meaningful impact on the marketplace from this crisis, it's not out of the question that the stock market will follow," Maley noted. "In other words, investors will want to remain nimble in the coming days and weeks."

The S&P 500 fell to around 5,150, while the Nasdaq 100 dropped 1%, led by losses in chipmakers. Treasury 10-year yields declined eight basis points to 4.51%. Brent crude

jumped to its highest since October. Gold hit another record. Haven currencies like the Japanese yen and the Swiss franc outperformed.

A direct confrontation between Israel and Iran would mean a significant escalation of the Middle East conflict and would lead to a significant rise in oil prices, Commerzbank analysts including Carsten Fritsch said.

"Gold prices are up again this morning, as more investors view it as a better hedge against geopolitical risk than government bonds due to US inflation concerns," Mohamed El-Erian, the president of Queens' College, Cambridge and a Bloomberg Opinion columnist, wrote in a post on X.

Big banks' results offered the latest window into how the US economy is faring amid an interest-rate trajectory muddied by persistent inflation. Wells Fargo & Co. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. missed estimates for net interest income. Citigroup Inc.'s profit topped analysts' estimates as corporations tapped markets for financing and consumers leaned on credit cards – signs that a prolonged period of elevated interest rates will benefit big banks.

"Many economic indicators continue to be favorable. However, looking ahead, we remain alert to a number of significant uncertain



Theories suggest that uncertainty can lead to stock drop. Photo: Courtesy of Getty Image

forces," Chief Executive Officer Jamie Dimon said in the statement. He cited the wars, growing geopolitical tensions, persistent inflationary pressures and the effects of quantitative tightening.

Escalating geopolitical tensions – most recently in the Middle East but also including attacks on Russian energy infrastructure by Ukraine – have spurred bullish activity in the oil options market. There's been elevated buying of call options – which profit when prices rise – in recent days, as implied volatility climbs. The options on Brent are still trading at a premium over bearish puts.

Treasuries rallied sharply Friday, pulling yields from near year-to-date highs. Yields on two- to 10-year notes tumbled as much as 10 basis points at one stage – amid gains for government bonds globally.

The rally comes on the heels of the Treasury market's worst two days since February, a sell-off driven by inflation readings that savaged expectations for Federal Reserve interest-rate

cuts this year.

Pacific Investment Management Co. warned that the Federal Reserve could pivot back toward interest rate hikes if US inflation moves higher, with the asset manager preferring to buy bonds in other markets.

"If inflation starts to re-emerge then there's a possibility that the Fed hikes instead of delivering any cuts," Mohit Mittal, chief investment officer for core strategies at Pimco, said in an interview on Bloomberg Television.

Fed Bank of Boston President Susan Collins reiterated she sees no urgency to cut interest rates in the near term, given elevated inflation and the resilience of the labor market.

Inflation figures this week were on the "high end" of what was expected, Collins said. She anticipates inflation will continue to ease, but it will likely take longer than previously thought.

While shifting expectations around the timing and pace of the first cuts are likely to create further yield volatility

in the near term, UBS's Chief Investment Office thinks the more important point is that the US central bank remains set to start easing this year. With a low probability of the Fed needing to hike rates further, CIO maintains their positive outlook on quality bonds.

"We continue to favor quality bonds in our global portfolios and recommend investors lock in attractive yields before rates fall this year," said Solita Marcelli at UBS Global Wealth Management. "We like those with 1-10-year duration, as well as sustainable bonds. We also think investors should consider an active exposure to fixed income to improve diversification."

Equity markets have remained resilient in recent weeks despite a hawkish turn from Fed officials. Bond markets are now pricing two rate cuts by the end of the year, compared with six just three months ago, yet both the S&P 500 and the Nasdaq 100 are still hovering near record highs.

Bloomberg

US firm ready to unlock Africa's energy potential

By Guardian Reporter

AFRICA'S vast hydrocarbon reserves, totaling approximately 125.3 billion barrels of crude oil and 620 trillion cubic feet of proven gas, offer enticing investment opportunities for global E&P players.

A statement released by the African Energy Chamber yesterday, which was made available to this journalist, emphasized the importance of collaboration between financial resources and technical expertise.

"African nations must collaborate with global E&P firms possessing both financial resources and technical expertise to maximize the development and utilization of these reserves," the statement reads in part.

Keeping this objective in focus, Kosmos Energy has stepped up as a diamond sponsor for this year's African Energy Week (AEW), reaffirming its dedication to propelling sustainable investment in the African energy sector.

At this year's AEW, the US-based company will build on past discussions, reinforcing its dedication to boosting investments across the continent. As a leading energy investor in Africa, it continues to drive stability and growth in African energy markets and economies.

In Senegal and Mauritania, Kosmos Energy has emerged as an investment champion, advancing these nations closer to first gas production through the development of the Greater Tortue Ahmeyim liquefied natural gas (LNG) project, slated to commence gas production this year.

The company also assumed operatorship of the Yakaar-Teranga project in Senegal in November 2023, underscoring its commitment to driving investments towards unlocking Senegal's full energy potential.

In Ghana, Kosmos Energy's investments are pivotal in shaping the stability of the oil and gas industry, with the firm expanding its production in-country through the successful launch of the Jubilee South East Project in 2023.

The firm is also investing in oil and gas decarbonization solutions at the Jubilee and TEN fields in Ghana, with a target to eliminate routine gas flaring by 2026, highlighting its commitment to balancing industrialization and environmental sustainability.

Additionally, the company continues to support the development of Ghana's next-generation workforce through initiatives like the Kosmos Innovation Center, which helps young entrepreneurs turn their ideas into viable businesses and works alongside promising small businesses to help them reach their full potential.

In Equatorial Guinea, Kosmos Energy continues to make significant strides with investments in optimizing production at the Ceiba and Okume fields, as well as exploration with the Akeng Deep prospect.

"With Africa's pursuit of sustainable development hinging on the full exploitation of energy resources, investments from companies like Kosmos Energy will be essential in unlocking new opportunities across the energy sector and related industries," NJ Ayuk, the Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber stated.

Reuters

US Supreme Court overturns job dispute arbitration ruling

Washington, DC

The US Supreme Court on Friday gave a boost to a delivery truck driver's bid to expand the universe of employees in interstate commerce who are exempted from mandatory arbitration of legal disputes beyond workers at transportation companies.

The justices, in a 9-0 ruling, threw out a lower court's dis-

missal of proposed class action litigation by Neal Bissonette, a delivery driver for LePage Bakeries Park Street, a unit of Wonder Bread maker Flowers Foods. Bissonette has said Flowers Foods deprives drivers of wages by treating them as independent contractors rather than employees. Many companies require workers to sign arbitration agreements and claim individual arbitration is quicker and more

efficient than resolving disputes in court. Critics of the practice have said it prevents companies from being held accountable for legal violations that affect large numbers of workers.

The Federal Arbitration Act (FAA), dating to 1925, requires arbitration agreements to be employed according to their terms but exempts employment contracts "of seamen, railroad employees, and any other class of

workers engaged in foreign or interstate commerce."

The Supreme Court in a 2001 ruling said the exemption applied only to transportation workers. Since then, appeals courts have split over whether that means any worker who transports goods or only those employed by companies that provide transportation services.

The New York-based 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals in 2022

decided that the exemption did not apply to LePage's case because the company's customers were purchasing bread and not transportation services.

Bissonette accused LePage of misclassifying drivers who delivered baked goods to retailers as independent contractors and depriving them of minimum wage, overtime pay and other legal protections.

WORLD

Argentine court blames Iran and Hezbollah for deadly 1994 Jewish center bombing

BUENOS AIRES,

ARGENTINA'S highest criminal court reported a new development Thursday in the elusive quest for justice in the deadliest attack in the country's history – the 1994 bombing of a Jewish community center headquarters – concluding Iran had planned the attack and Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group had executed the plans.

In a ruling obtained by The Associated Press, Argentina's Court of Cassation deemed Iran and its Lebanese proxy, Hezbollah, responsible for the bombing in Buenos Aires that leveled the community center, killing 85 people, wounding 300 and devastating Latin America's biggest Jewish community. The court said the attack came in retaliation for Argentina reneging on a nuclear cooperation deal with Tehran.

Alleging Iran's "political and strategic" role in the bombing, the Argentine court paved the way for victims' families to bring lawsuits against the Islamic Republic. In the past three decades, Iran has not turned over citizens convicted in Argentina. Interpol arrest warrants have led nowhere.

"The significance of these grave human rights violations for the international community as a whole invokes

a state's duty to provide judicial protection," the ruling said, declaring the bombing of the Argentine Jewish Mutual Aid Association community center a "crime against humanity."

The court decision came as no shock. Argentina's judiciary has long maintained Iran was behind the attack, chilling relations between the countries – particularly after the collapse of a joint investigation. Iran has denied involvement. A spokesperson for Hezbollah, Israel's archenemy on its northern border, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

What some said they found shocking, rather, was the court's failure to provide concrete evidence of Iran's direct involvement or shed new light on the case after 30 years of setbacks and scandals.

"I would never rule Iran out, it's certainly on the list of suspects, but let's do something specific to rule it in," said Joe Goldman, who co-authored a book about the winding investigations into the Jewish community center attack as well as bombing of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires that killed more than 20 people in 1992. "That would be a serious investigation that we haven't seen."

The court singled out top Iranian of-



In this file photo, a man walks over the rubble left after a bomb exploded at the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires on July 18, 1994. AFP

ficials and paramilitary Revolutionary Guard commanders in its determination that Iran carried out the bombings in response to Argentina scrapping three contracts that would have provided Tehran with nuclear technology in the mid-1980s. Its conclusions were based on confidential intelligence reports.

In light of the court ruling, Israel asked Argentina to declare the Revolutionary Guard a terrorist organization. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said in a statement Friday that he reached out to his counterpart in Argentina, Diana Mondino, to deliver the request. The two spoke late Thursday, Katz said.

Past inquiries into the bombings have turned up indictments, not just against Iranian officials but also two former Argentine presidents.

In 2015, the chief prosecutor in the case was mysteriously found dead in his bathroom the day before he was to go public with claims that top Argentine officials had conspired with Iran to cover up responsibility for the bombing. Over the years, witnesses have been threatened and bribed.

On Thursday, the Court of Cassation reduced by two years the six-year sentence of an Argentine

judge accused of paying a witness \$400,000, and upheld other sentences against former prosecutors.

Thursday's ruling comes just months ahead of the event's 30th anniversary. Even as the case has stalled for years, Argentine authorities have timed big announcements to coincide with anniversaries of the bloody attack. When marking 25 years since the attack, Argentina designated Hezbollah a terrorist organization and froze the group's financial assets.

Representatives from Argentina's Jewish community, home to some 230,000 Jews, praised Thursday's court ruling as "historic, unique in Argentina." "It's politically opportune," added Jorge Knoblovits, the president of Argentina's umbrella Jewish organization, pointing to renewed scrutiny of Iran's support for militant groups following Hamas' devastating Oct. 7 attack on Israel.

But for the relatives of those killed in the bombings, the ruling was just a grim reminder of their anguish as the case remains open.

"We hope one day complete justice and truth will come," said Memoria Activa, an association of families of victims of the attack. "And that these judges will stop profiting from our dead."

NATO's meddling in Asia-Pacific threatens regional peace

HONG KONG

THE North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), now in its 75th year of existence, has outlived its mandate and is clinging to life by fanning flames beyond its scope.

On April 4, 1949, led by the United States, 10 European countries plus Canada signed the North Atlantic Treaty in response to the so-called "threat posed by the Soviet Union."

After the Soviet Union disintegrated in the 1990s, however, the military bloc did not dissolve and in reverse, extended its sinister grasp beyond its treaty-defined geographical scope eastwards voraciously, expanding its membership to 32 today.

In recent years, the Asia-Pacific region has been its new prey. Analysts warned that in its attempt to interfere in the Asia-Pacific, NATO is exporting "malicious poison to Asia," posing a threat to regional security and stability, and hindering the region's development.

ENCROACHING ASIA-PACIFIC

The U.S. government plans to invite Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to the July NATO summit in Washington this year, reported Japanese daily Sankei Shimbun. It would mark Kishida's third consecutive year attending NATO summits.

In June 2022, leaders from four Asia-Pacific countries – Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand – attended the NATO summit for the first time in Madrid, Spain.

In July 2023, during the NATO summit in Lithuania's capital of Vilnius, NATO member leaders met with leaders from the four countries, showcasing their closer relationship. As early as 2006, then U.S. Ambassador to NATO Victoria Nuland proposed the concept of "global partnership," aiming to expand NATO's global influence by establishing contact mechanisms with



Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

From 2012 to 2014, NATO signed an Individual Partnership Cooperation Program with the four countries respectively. In 2014,

NATO proposed the Partnership Interoperability Initiative to allow other countries to participate in NATO-led military operations. The four Asia-Pacific states all joined the platform.

NATO also tried to establish a liaison office in Tokyo as its first operational unit in the Asia-Pacific region but had to shelve the plan due to opposition from France.

Additionally, some NATO subordinate agencies have actively absorbed Asia-Pacific countries. South Korea and Japan joined the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Center of Excellence in 2022. Australia and India have also joined this mechanism.

Meanwhile, NATO members have increased their military activities in the Asia-Pacific region in recent years. In 2021, Britain dispatched the HMS Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier strike group to the Asia-Pacific, which included vessels from the United States and the Netherlands.

A U.S. Naval Institute's commentary said that the involvement of Dutch warships gives the fleet a "true NATO character." The same year, Germany dispatched its frigate "Bavaria" to the Asia-Pacific. Canadian warships have also been active in the Western Pacific region in recent years.

SERVING U.S. HEGEMONY

The United States is the behind-the-scenes instigator of NATO's outreach into the Asia-Pacific. Washington manipulates the bloc to advance its "Indo-Pacific strategy" and hegemonic strategies of selling security anxieties for its self-interest, heightening regional tensions. NATO has used similar tricks in its recent Asia-Pacific engagement to those in its eastwards expansion.

It first hyped up a "hypothetical enemy," inciting anxiety and fear among regional countries and compelling them to align with the United States for a false

sense of security.

In the Asia-Pacific, the U.S.-led NATO frames China as a "systemic challenge."

In recent years, the United States, in its efforts to maintain global hegemony, has become increasingly overt about its intentions to contain China.

And NATO's framing of China has also been exacerbated in line with U.S. policies. NATO viewed China as a major subject of concern for the first time at its London Summit in 2019 when the summit communique stated that China presented "both opportunities and challenges."

In 2021, NATO further depicted China as a "systemic challenge" to the "rules-based international order" and to areas relevant to NATO security.

At the Madrid summit in 2022, NATO accused China of "endangering NATO security" and constituting a "systemic challenge."

Analysts have pointed out that NATO's distortion and vilification of China are largely fueled by the United States. Joshua Shiffrin, an associate professor at the University of Maryland, said that the United States wants further NATO involvement in Asia because American defense planners increasingly focus on China.

Xinhua

Peace solution, strikes and 'Russian threat': remarks by Putin and Lukashenko

MOSCOW

RUSSIA has never rejected a peace solution to the Ukrainian conflict, but views the Ukrainian-themed conference, to be held in Switzerland without Russia's participation, as a "freak show," Russian President Vladimir Putin told his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko during talks in Moscow.

The Belarusian leader, in turn, spoke about West's growing military presence on his country's borders and thanked Russia for its economic assistance.

TASS gathered key remarks made by the two leaders.

Peaceful solution to Ukrainian conflict

"We have never refused to resolve disputes peacefully. Moreover, this is exactly what we were inclined to do," the Russian president said, adding that these efforts led to major negotiations that culminated in Istanbul.

Moscow heeded calls that "Ukraine should not sign it [those agreements] 'at a gunpoint,'" and withdrew its troops from Kiev, but "then, under the pressure from the West, the Ukrainian side walked out of these agreements." "Immediately after we did this, our agreements were thrown into a trash bin," Putin added. Ukraine has realized that it won't defeat Russia on the battlefield, Putin said. "They refused to negotiate. And now they are in a rather difficult situation."

Putin said he would seek Lukashenko's mediation, should the need for new talks arise. The Belarusian leader replied that he supported Russia's stance on the issue.

Swiss conference on Ukraine

The conference in Switzerland "is some kind of a freak show now," Putin said. "We have not been invited. And they say that we have rejected it." "They believe that we don't belong there. And at the same time, they say that it is impossible to resolve anything without us," the Russian president continued. "It would have been funny, if it were not so sad."

Lukashenko replied that in the absence of Russia, participants of the Ukrainian-themed conference in Switzerland can only agree on further escalation.

Strikes on energy facilities

Russia is repelling attacks on its energy facilities and has to retaliate. Moreover, its troops "did not carry out any strikes" during the winter due to humanitarian considerations.

"We did not want to leave social institutions, hospitals and so on without power supply. But after a series of strikes on our energy facilities, we were forced to respond," Putin stated.

Strikes on energy facilities in Ukraine are a part of the demilitarization process, because they directly affect the country's defense industry, the Russian president continued. "First of all, we assume that this is how we affect the defense industry of Ukraine, and affect it directly," Putin said.

At the same time, Moscow is ready to negotiate for a peaceful solution to all issues. Lukashenko replied that Kiev is provoking Moscow into delivering such strikes.

Hopes for common sense

In response to Lukashenko's remarks that Ukrainians will soon come to their senses, Putin replied: "Let them decide for themselves."

Situation on the border

Putin also announced a conversation "on security issues along western borders of both Russia and Belarus." Lukashenko replied that the situation is difficult, and Minsk is forced to "deploy its forces" amid growing Western military presence.

'Russian threat' to West

Claims that Russia may attack Western countries are nonsense, disseminated by governments "to explain and justify their expenditures on the war in Ukraine."

Lukashenko agreed that Russia and Belarus "have got enough own problems," so Minsk and Moscow have never discussed any plans to capture Europe.

Space exploration

Putin noted a major bilateral event - the return to the Earth of Marina Vasilevskaya, the first Belarusian woman to be launched into space.

"Also, a good event took place today. Our new rocket flew into space from a new cosmodrome. It was a heavy [rocket]. It was a yet another stage in the development of Russia's space industry," the Russian leader added.

Economic relations

The two states' economic relations "develop successfully," the Russian president said.

"Our growth in the first months of the current year was even faster than last year. There is greater diversification, increasing cooperation and complementarity - in general, everything is on the rise."

RECENTLY, China issued a document on further optimizing payment services and enhancing payment convenience, with an aim to better meet the diverse payment needs of senior citizens and foreign travelers.

How do foreigners in China feel about their current payment experiences? Let's find the answer with David Van de Kamp, a Serbian fashion designer.

[15:00, March 27, Checking in at hotel]

Van de Kamp came to China this time to attend the third China Chaoshan International Textile and Garment Exhibition held in Shantou, south China's Guangdong province from March 28 to 30.

On March 27, he arrived at

A Serbian fashion designer's day with mobile payment in China

the hotel in Shantou he had booked. The check-in took him just a few minutes.

"I don't speak much Chinese, but the check-in went smoothly. I handed over my passport at the front desk, and the staff handled it very efficiently," Van de Kamp said.

According to him, it was convenient to pay with his Mastercard he obtained in Serbia via foreign bank card POS machines at the front desk.

"Having installed foreign bank card POS machines last July, the hotel now accepts payments from Mastercard and Visa settled at real-time exchange rates," the hotel manager said.

Van de Kamp runs a studio

that designs and manufactures sweaters. He hoped to find higher-quality raw materials at the China Chaoshan International Textile and Garment Exhibition this time. The textile and garment industry has become one of the distinctive and advantageous pillar industries in Shantou. Each year, the city exports over 1.85 billion pieces of products. Within a 40-kilometer radius, there are over 10,000 enterprises engaged in the industry. "I want to hang around to see if I can have some ideas for designing," he said.

[19:30, March 27, Taking public transport]

After having a short rest at the hotel, Van de Kamp went out to the streets. "In Serbia,

the main payment methods are bank cards and cash, while using mobile apps is more convenient in China. I only need to bring my phone when going out," he said.

The man applied for a Chinese SIM card and signed up for a WeChat account with it. "My WeChat account is linked to my Serbian bank card, so I can pay directly. The card binding was easy - just following the instructions to upload a photo of my passport, and completing verification."

Van de Kamp went to a historical and cultural block taking a taxi he hailed on a ride-hailing app. When he got off the taxi, the fare was automatically deducted from the account in

the app.

"I have enabled password-free payment, so I don't need to manually pay the fare on my phone. The deducted amount is recorded on my Chinese bank card," he said.

He had previously used a foreign bank card to withdraw Chinese yuan from an ATM, which incurred service charge. That's why he decided to get a Chinese bank card.

"Although it is convenient to withdraw money with a foreign bank card now, I have rarely paid with cash and hardly needed to specifically withdraw money ever since I started using mobile payment," Van de Kamp told People's Daily.

[20:00, March 27, Shopping]

Van de Kamp walked into a clothing store of a shopping mall in Shantou, and started checking out the designs and materials of the garments.

"Wherever I go, I always visit local clothing stores first to experience the different dressing styles and preferences. I feel the raw materials used for these clothes are very good, mostly pure wool and other natural fibers. The designs also emphasize practicality," Van de Kamp said.

Whenever he saw appetizing food, such as rice noodles, sweet soups, and fried tofu, he would pause and scan to pay with his phone.

He even figured out a pattern: "In shops, the vendors usually

scan my payment QR code; but when buying from street stalls, I usually scan their receiving QR code. Overall, there are many payment options, making life quite convenient in China."

Recently, major banks and payment institutions in China have taken multiple measures to further clear payment obstacles for foreigners in China. On March 14, the People's Bank of China released a payment guide in both Chinese and English, providing foreign travelers to China with instructions on how to access various payment services and the process of using them.

Nowadays, an increasing number of hotels in China accept payments from foreign bank cards, and there are also more and more service centers that cater to foreigners' needs.

Exclusive Interview: Narendra Modi and the unstoppable rise of India

A year after India overtook China to become the world's most populous country, its rapid upward economic trajectory and increasing diplomatic, scientific and military weight make it an emerging superpower of ever-growing importance to the United States and the world.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed Newsweek's written questions and followed up with a 90-minute conversation at his official residence with Newsweek President and CEO Dev Pragad, Global Editor in Chief Nancy Cooper and Editorial Director, Asia, Danish Manzoor Bhat. Subjects covered ranged from the major economic advances made under Modi's leadership to the tension between infrastructure expansion and environmental concerns to India's relationship with China and criticism for allegedly curtailing press freedom and not bringing along the Muslims who represent some one in seven of India's population of 1.4 billion.

Here are Modi's answers, edited for space.

On the upcoming election

We have an excellent track record of fulfilling our promises. It was a big thing for the people, as they were used to promises never being fulfilled.

Our government has worked with the motto of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas," which means "Together, for everyone's growth, with everyone's trust and everyone's efforts."

People have the trust that if someone else has got benefits of our programs, it will also reach them. People have seen that India has raced ahead from 11th largest economy to the fifth largest economy. Now the country's aspiration is that India soon becomes the third largest economy.

By the end of the second term, even the most popular governments start losing support. Discontent toward governments has also increased in the last few years in the world. India stands out as an exception, where popular support for our government is increasing.

On democracy and a free press

We are a democracy, not only because our Constitution says so, but also because it is in our genes.

India is the mother of democracy. Be it Uttaramerur in Tamil Nadu, where you can find inscriptions about India's democratic values from 1100 to 1200 years ago, or speak of our scriptures which give examples of political power being exercised by broad-based consultative bodies. As the largest democracy in the world, over 600 million people voted in the General Elections in 2019. In a few months from now, over 970 million eligible voters will exercise their franchise. More than one million polling stations would be set up across India.

Constantly increasing voter participation is a big certificate for the people's faith in Indian democracy.

A democracy like India is able to move ahead and function only because there is a vibrant feedback mechanism. And our media plays an important role in this regard. We have around 1.5 lakh [150,000] registered media publications and hundreds of news channels.

There are a few people in India and in the West who



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi (C) speaks with Newsweek CEO Dev Pragad, Global Editor in Chief Nancy Cooper and Editorial Director, Asia Danish Manzoor Bhat

have lost [connection with] the people of India—their thought processes, feelings and aspirations. These people also tend to live in their own echo chamber of alternate realities. They conflate their own dissonance with the people with dubious claims of diminishing media freedom.

On infrastructure and the environment

The pace of India's transformation in the last decade has been accelerated by the rapid overhaul of its infrastructure.

In the last 10 years, our National Highways network increased 60 percent, from 91,287 kilometers [56,723 miles] in 2014 to 146,145 kilometers [90,810 miles] in 2023. We have more than doubled our airports, from 74 in 2014 to over 150 in 2024. Supported by our Sagarmala project, we have enhanced [the] capacity of our ports and improved the operational efficiency. We have started the tech-smart "Vande Bharat" trains for the comfort of our citizens and UDAN scheme to allow common people to fly.

Every road laid is a pathway to progress, every new airport opened provides a window to new opportunities, every railway station redeveloped energizes the local economy. We will further harness waterways. We will focus on building more metro lines across our cities to make urban transport more comfortable. We are building dedicated freight corridors for increasing efficiency of goods as well as passenger movement. Our airlines have ordered more than 1,000 planes recently, and this shows how fast our aviation infrastructure will grow.

There is no contradiction between our physical infrastructure building and our commitment to fight climate change. In fact, India offers a credible model of how to enhance physical infrastructure and yet be at the forefront of mitigating climate change: Be it lighting 10 million homes through [the] rooftop solar program or empowering farmers with solar-powered pumps, be it distributing 400 million energy-efficient bulbs and ensuring 13 million efficient streetlights or having one of the fastest adoption of EVs, be it airports or railway stations or bridges, our infrastructure is leveraging renewable energy.

Since 2014, India has massively stepped up invest-

ments in renewable energy with solar energy capacity increasing from just 2,820 MW in 2014 to over 72,000 MW now.

India is also well on its way to meet the 500 GW of renewable energy capacity and the climate commitment made in the Paris conference by 2030.

We have launched a \$2.5 billion dollar National Green hydrogen mission which will contribute toward decarbonization and avert [a] further 50 MMT per annum of CO2 emissions by 2030.

We are launching 10,000 electric buses in 100 cities of India at a cost of almost \$7 billion, giving a major boost to green urban mobility and reducing noise and air pollution.

India's per capita emission is already less than half of the global average. India will achieve net-zero emission by 2070 as announced.

On competing with China

India, as a democratic polity and global economic growth engine, is a natural choice for those looking to diversify their supply chains.

We have undertaken transformative economic reforms: Goods and Service Tax, corporate tax reduction, bankruptcy code, reforms in labor laws, relaxation in FDI norms. As a result, we have made significant improvement in ease of doing business. We are striving to make our regulatory framework, our taxation practices as well as our infrastructure at par with global standards.

We believe that when a country with one sixth of the world's population adopts global standards in these sectors, it will have a big positive impact

on the world.

Our policies that encourage businesses and entrepreneurship, coupled with world-class infrastructure and availability of skilled talent have yielded results. We have major global manufacturing entities setting up shops in India.

We have initiated Production Linked Incentive schemes to strengthen manufacturing capabilities in India. These PLI schemes extend to 14 sectors such as electronics, solar modules, medical devices, automobiles, among others.

Given our strengths, India is now globally considered most suited for manufacturing world-class goods at competitive cost. Apart from producing for the world, the vast Indian domestic market is an added attraction. India is a perfect destination for those who want to set up trusted and resilient supply chains.

On digital payments and UPI, a Venmo-like system

I feel there are three important lessons from the success of UPI. First, technology should be open, interoperable, scalable and secure. Second, there should be democratization of technology. Third, people should be trusted to adapt quickly to technology and evolve.

UPI is a fine example of Indian innovation at its best. I see UPI as a simple tool that broke countless barriers, from financial barriers to geographical barriers. It has opened the world of digital transactions to the person at the last mile.

We have expansive economic ties with the U.S. In addition, we have a large Indian diaspora in the country, significant two-way tourist flows and over 300,000 Indian students pursuing higher education in the U.S. Given this robust connection, it would be mutually beneficial if UPI services are made available in the U.S.

Continues on Monday

BRICS' authority on international stage grows, says Russian Federation Council speaker

MOSCOW

THE recent expansion of BRICS points to the growing authority of the association on the international stage, as it is drawing in states that seek to carry out a sovereign foreign policy course, Russian Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matviyenko said during the meeting with the heads of BRICS parliamentary committees on international affairs.

"This year, new states joined BRICS as fully-fledged members - Egypt, Iran, the UAE and Ethiopia. Undoubtedly, this is an important milestone in the history of our association. Such expansion is the best, in my view, demonstration of the strengthening and growth of BRICS' authority in the international arena, its wide capability to affect global decision-making," the speaker said during the meeting, organized ahead of the BRICS Parliamentary forum, which will kick off in St. Petersburg on July 11.

Matviyenko noted that BRICS already makes up over one third of global GDP and almost a half of the planet's population.

"One can safely say that, in the past 15 years, BRICS has become a paragon, I would say, an example of successful inter-state cooperation. It has developed a firm tradition of equal dialogue, with mutual respect and obligatory consideration of each other's interests playing the key role.

In our association, there is no place for domination, the desire to impose our will on others or ganging up on anyone else. This is the association's principal philosophy. And this is exactly why it has become a center of attraction for many states that seek to carry out a sovereign foreign policy course," she said.

The Federation Council Speaker said that, during Russia's BRICS chairmanship, the lawmakers will do everything in order to contribute to the promotion of cooperation in three key areas: politics and security, economy and finance, cultural and humanitarian relations. According to the speaker, ensuring energy and food security, increasing the BRICS' role in the international monetary and financial system must become a top priority.

"Overall, the Russian presidency aims to take the BRICS partnership to a new, higher level. We believe that the people of our countries must be the main beneficiaries of this cooperation," Matviyenko said.

She underscored that terrorism remains a serious threat that requires collective measures. She thanked BRICS partners for their solidarity, condolences and support, expressed after the Crocus City Hall attack.

Matviyenko also expressed her concern in regards to the practice of imposing sanctions against lawmakers and creating hurdles for the full-fledged participation of parliamentary delegations in the operation of international associations.

"I would like to use this occasion to thank you for your efforts in combating this vicious practice. Sanctions against lawmakers are basically sanctions against their voters, against democracy itself. And I believe that our position that the imposition of sanctions against members of national parliaments is unacceptable should get even stronger and harsher," she said.



China's Xi'an sees increasing trips made by China-Europe freight trains

THE Xi'an Guojigang Railway Station in Xi'an, northwest China's Shaanxi province, is the railway station that sees the most trips made by China-Europe freight trains across China. It is designed to handle 5.4 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) and transport 66 million tons of cargo via railway each year.

At the massive 500-soccer-pitch-sized station, vehicles are always running in ground slots left between neatly stacked containers, while gantry cranes are working busily.

Since the China-Europe freight train (Xi'an) service was launched in 2013, Xi'an has handled over 20,000 China-Europe freight trains, or about a quarter of China's total. It operated more than 5,000 China-Europe freight trains in 2023 alone.

Today, the Xi'an Guojigang Railway Station operates 18 regular international routes westward, which reach Almaty in Kazakhstan, Tashkent in Uzbekistan, and Hamburg in Germany, and traverse the Caspian Sea, covering the entire Eurasian continent and connecting Xi'an to major international trade hubs.

Besides, the station also runs scheduled rail-sea intermodal services eastward to Qingdao, Ningbo, and Lianyungang, and operates freight services to Vietnam and Laos in the south.

Currently, the Xi'an Guojigang Railway Station serves as a distribution hub for cargos from over 20 provinces across China as 21 rail routes to west Europe pass through it.



China-Europe freight train X8155 departs from the Xi'an Guojigang Railway Station for Hamburg, Germany on Nov. 28, 2023, which marks the 10th anniversary of the China-Europe freight train (Xi'an) service. (Photo: Liu Xiang / People's Daily Online)

"Although Xi'an doesn't lie on the border or the coast, you can see the entire world from right here," said Li Pei, a duty manager of the station.

According to Shao Bo'er, general manager of Xi'an International Inland Port Multimodal Transportation Co., Ltd., which operates the China-Europe freight train (Xi'an) service, the company's business volume increased by 1.5 times year-on-year in the first two months of this year.

The company has gained major domestic enterprises like Sany Heavy Industry and LiuGong as new clients, as well as multinational corporations such as Volkswagen, Shao said. Even consigners from Japan and South Korea would take Xi'an as a transfer hub for their goods to Europe, Shao added.

In July 2023, the station upgraded its service to a "2.0 version" - with two outbound and one inbound full-time schedule trains per week.

Full-time schedule trains refer to freight trains operating just like passenger trains, with fixed train numbers, routes, schedules, and travel times, which ensure reliable transportation efficiency.

For example, the cargo service between Xi'an and Duisburg, Germany sees two departures from the Xi'an Guojigang Railway Station at 3:55 am every Wednesday and Saturday. The train arrives in Duisburg about 10 days later after traveling 9,908 kilometers, which is over 30 percent faster than regular freight services. The average carbon emission of the service is only 1/15 of air transportation and 1/7 of road transportation.

"We have installed positioning electronic locks powered by the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System on containers, allowing consigners to track their goods just like express deliveries," said Shao.

Although the full-time schedule freight train service is slightly more expensive than regular services, its quality has attracted an increasing number of manufacturers of high-value products.

The bustling logistics signals a positive trend of continued economic recovery. At a battery factory of LONGI Green Energy Technology Co., Ltd. (LONGI), a leading Chinese enterprise in the solar photovoltaic industry based in Xi'an, one solar panel is manufactured every 0.8 seconds

in a spacious and bright dust-free workshop that covers 17,000 square meters.

"These are the solar panels we're producing for a 1 GW photovoltaic project in Uzbekistan. There are over 2.08 million pieces of them, which will be loaded into about 3,000 containers and transported in batches by China-Europe freight trains to Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan," said She Haifeng, vice president of LONGI.

Photovoltaic modules have become a "new star" on the cargo list of China-Europe freight trains in recent years. While traditional products like clothing, furniture, and home appliances still make up a significant volume, the share of new items, including new energy vehicles, lithium-ion

batteries, and photovoltaic products is rising rapidly.

"High value-added products such as aerospace components, traffic signal equipment, ship structures, and mineral fuels account for around 50 percent of the freight volume," said Shao.

At the same time, traditional products exported via the China-Europe freight service are becoming high-end, intelligent, and green. The added value of products like electronics, machinery parts, textiles, metal ornaments, and plastic goods is getting higher and higher.

"According to statistics, the average value of goods per container of full-time schedule China-Europe freight trains is around 1 million yuan (\$138,238)," Shao said.

The thriving China-Europe freight train service is driving the continuous extension of an "online Silk Road".

Adjacent to the Xi'an Guojigang Railway Station sits the Xi'an Chamba Cross-Border E-Commerce Industrial Park, which has gathered over 300 cross-border e-commerce companies and related businesses.

It is reported that the park hosts over 100 foreign e-commerce live streamers. Connected directly to the railway station, the park enables customs clearance within 1.5 hours.

In 2023, the Xi'an International Trade and Logistic Park operated a total of 525 cross-border e-commerce freight trains, with cross-border e-commerce trade exceeding 10 billion yuan. The combination of China-Europe freight trains and cross-border e-commerce has become a new engine driving regional trade growth. *People's Daily*

Misfiring Simba SC now to blame after shock Federation Cup exit

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi

S AIDI Ntibazonkiza missed a clear-cut chance and the visitors had many other chances to win before ultimately falling to CRDB Federation Cup outsiders, Mashujaa FC, via spot-kicks after settling for a 1-1 draw in normal time of the Round of 16 phase's match.

Simba SC will point to fatigue, having played a tough away CAF Champions League last-eight game four days earlier, for their CRDB Federation Cup exit but in truth, they only have themselves to blame.

Assistant coach Selemani Matola rightly pointed out that they were very wasteful, saying: "I think we were better than them in the 90 minutes, especially in the second half after they went one man down. We created opportunities but failed to use them. I think as I said at the beginning, fatigue has been very cruel for us."

Whether tired or not, Matola knows Simba SC can only look at themselves as to why they are not in the pot for the showdown's quarter-final draw.

They should have had the game dead and buried long before it went to extra time and penalties, with Malian midfielder Sadio Kanoute missing the decisive spot-kick.

"We created chances but our finishers were not clinical. We got more than three chances, Saidi with only the goalkeeper to beat plus the



Simba SC's goal-getter Freddy Michael (R) battles for an aerial ball with Mashujaa FC's center-back Samson Madeleke as the squads took on each other in a CRDB Federation Cup Round of 16 match that took place in Kigoma on Tuesday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBAS SC

substitutes. We were wasteful and at the end of the day we were knocked out," Matola admitted.

Though the home side was the one that caught the eye in the early stages of this standout fixture of the round, and forward Relians Lusajo was in the thick of the action with a goal in the sixth minute for Mashujaa FC, Simba SC still wasted a string of promising po-

sitions.

On another day, Simba SC would have had the tie wrapped up by half-time, with Dennis Kibu and Fabrice Ngoma guilty of squandering scoring opportunities.

With Mashujaa FC reduced to 10 midway through the first half, Simba SC made the most of their numerical advantage to pin the former back to their half.

However, the Msimbazi Street squad's footballers were still missing their shooting boots - especially Ntibazonkiza, who could have netted as many as three himself before his substitution.

Second-half substitute Freddy Koublan was another guilty party when, with only the goalkeeper to beat, he shot wide two minutes after the breather. Chance after chance went begging.

Four minutes later, the Ivorian striker was once again released by Kibu and, this time, he got the shooting right to level matters for the desperate visitors.

Arguably, the best chance of the game fell to Ntibazonkiza in the 61st minute but he failed to tap in a low pass from Kibu.

For the third time, Kibu found Koublan whose effort went wide off the post in the 71st minute and such was Simba SC's dominance in the second half.

For all their dominance and control, Simba SC's footballers were poor where it had mattered most - putting the ball into the opponents' net.

Though Ntibazonkiza got a lot of sticks and was even mentioned by Matola in his post-match press, the veteran Burundian winger

was hardly the only one who did not deliver.

The biggest problem for Simba SC is that now, barring overhauling a seven-point gap with league leaders Young Africans SC, they look set to end yet another season without silverware. They are out of the CAF Champions League and are now out of the CRDB Federation Cup.

A season that started with talk of wrestling away all the titles from long-time rival Young Africans SC has reached a point where only one longshot chance of a trophy remains. They can only blame themselves.

It is so easy to explain. They made a mistake in the first half of the CRDB Federation Cup duel and were punished for that.

However, they created big chances and did not score enough. They were not clinical enough, it is so clear.

The loss was Simba SC's darkest moment of the season. It was deserved and deeply disappointing too.

The same flaws have recurred in most big games Simba SC has played this season. Mashujaa FC's shocking result was just another rude reminder that football punishes wastefulness.

Kadio, Nyenza garner Lina GP Tour's lead

By Guardian Correspondent

DAR ES SALAAM-based professional golfers, Bryson Nyenza and Hassan Kadio, secured a one-stroke lead in the second round of the Lina Professional Golf Tour which teed off at Morogoro Gymkhana Club's course in Morogoro on Thursday.

The two professional golfers returned one-over-par 73 strokes apiece to beat their closest pursuer Nuru Mollel - who grossed 74 strokes - by a shot.

Mollel, who won the first round at TPC Golf Course in Kilimanjaro on sudden death, managed to return two-over-par 74 strokes to end up as the overall runner-up.

Kadio, a Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club player, said the battle is still tough ahead to beat over 20 professional golfers from other clubs. He, however, was adamant anything could happen in the remaining 54 holes.

Mollel, who won the first round on the sudden death play-off after tying with Fadhil Nkya, said he hopes to recover and play better during the second 18-hole showdown slated for yesterday.

Tanzania's only female profession-

al player, Angel Eaton, had a dismal start in the second round of the Lina PG Tour in Morogoro after carding 84 strokes. The golf player said she will work hard in the remaining 54 holes at the climax of the tournament slated for tomorrow.

"The fight is still on, but anything can happen," she said.

Lina GP Tour is a series of professional and elite amateur golfers' showdowns to be staged on five different golf courses countrywide.

Lina Nkya family has established the Lina Nkya Professional Golf Tour in Tanzania to commemorate the life of Lina Said Nkya, a pioneer and trendsetter in the sport who has passed away.

She was among the early batch of female golfers in Tanzania and the pillar head of Tanzania's lady golfers' success in regional and global level tournaments.

As noted by Ayne, a prominent member of the national women's golf team, Lina shouldered the team's success in the All Africa Amateur Golf Championship and The Ladies World Golf Championship in Argentina.

"Golf fraternity owes her a lot," Ayne noted.

Simba official delivers genuine plea to fans

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SIMBA SC Information and Communication Manager Ahmed Ally has called upon the club's fans to rally behind the outfit and turn the season around together.

Ally issued the plea following the presence of mixed emotions and chaotic feelings among Simba SC fans after their team faced two exits in a few days - crashing out of the CAF Champions League quarterfinals and kissing the CRDB Federation Cup Round of 16 goodbye.

The Msimbazi Street squad is moreover placed seven points behind long-time rival Yanga in the ongoing NBC Premier League's log, with the former pinning their hopes on clinching the top-flight title and giving its fans something to feel proud of.

Ally called on the fans to unite and have a strong positive mentality for their team, ignore rivals' words, and focus on notching wins in the remaining league fixtures.

The official disclosed: "Our team is going through a difficult period, but it is different from what is narrated, there is a lot of non-factual information, this is a deliberate plan coordinated by those who do not wish us well. Unfortunately, fans have fallen into the trap of self-deprecation and are insulting themselves."

"With the best (squad at) Simba SC, we were eliminated from the First Preliminary Round of the CAF Champions League by UD Songo, with the best squad, we were defeated by the Green Warriors in the Federation Cup."

"This is normal life in football, every football team goes through difficult times like these, if we go through this path, then it looks like something strange, we may be judged by our size and previous achievements," the official revealed.

He backed his outfit's players, lead-

ers, and investors - saying it is a unit that needs support from the fans so it could find solutions to the outfit's problems while acknowledging that there are still chances for it to win the league.

The official queried: "Today, they will tell you our players do not match our club's pedigree, tomorrow the investor is (seen as) a problem, the next day, the leaders are useless. If we had all these problems, wouldn't we have been relegated?"

"Some come out to slander the leaders and make fun of the players, believing that by doing that shows that either they love Simba SC or they are the ones who are extremely bitter with Simba," Ally noted.

The Information and Communication Manager remarked: "When Yanga went through their worst days, they came out with a statement saying 'we have loved it unconditionally, let it kill us', this was a very heroic statement and they decided to die with their team."

Ally appealed to the Simba SC fans to rally behind their team in the remaining league fixtures, as the top flight is the only competition that Simba SC is left with to fight for silverware after facing CAF Champions League quarterfinal exit and bowing out of CRDB Federation Cup.

The official added: "Right now, we have to stand with our team so matters don't get worse, we can't change the past but we can create a better future."

"What we are left is the NBC Premier League. Together, let's invest in this showdown. There is a four-point gap. If we stand together, we will get past it and clinch the title."

"This starts with the match against Ihefu SC (Saturday), and - after that - the match (against Yanga) on April 20, if we take six points in these matches we will be right on track in our quest for winning the league title," Ally noted.



Dar es Salaam's junior soccer players nurtured by Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete Youth Park center train at the center's venue recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNEJUMA

Mlungu set to compete in Africa Judo Championships

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA's judo player Andrew Mlungu will, at the end of this month, battle it out in the Africa Judo Championships slated to take place in Egypt.

The continental judo showdown will also serve as African qualifiers for the Paris Olympics.

Judo Association of Tanzania (JATA)'s Secretary-General Innocent Mallya said the judo

performer, now based in France, will compete in the championships which are slated for April 23-27 at Hall 1 of Cairo International Stadium.

He said Mlungu - who will be accompanied by his French coach - is expected in Cairo two days before the championships.

Mlungu is in France under the sponsorship offered Tanzania Olympic Committee (TOC), aiming at helping the local judo

player to qualify for the Paris Olympics.

The JATA official noted: "Mlungu will, at the end of this month, take part in the Africa Judo Championships which will be held in Cairo, Egypt."

"He is based in France under the scholarship offered by the Tanzania Olympic Committee and will be accompanied to the championships by the coach who trains him in France," he said.

Recently, Mlungu com-

peted in the All African Games which were held in Ghana, and served as Paris Olympics Qualifiers. However, the performer failed to qualify for the Olympics.

Last year, Mlungu won a silver medal in the African Open Championships which took place in Dakar, Senegal.

He won the medal in the 73kg category in the Dakar showpiece. He won his first bout against Gambian Pazland Koga

and, after that, outshined Cameroonian Kom Teddy.

The Tanzanian judo player then lost his last bout against United States of America (USA) opponent, Chandler Cole.

Judo is an unarmed modern Japanese martial arts game and it has been an Olympic sport since 1964. It is the most prominent form of Japanese wrestling and is competed internationally.

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

Diouf, Victor form new music troupe

TANZANIA's dance musicians Msafiri Said and Victor Nkambi, now suspended by Twanga Pepeta Band, have formed their troupe known as VDS Chama la Wana.

The two musicians have opted for such a move to continue entertaining dance music lovers.

One of the artists, Said, alias 'Msafiri Diouf', pointed out that they are currently registering the group at the National Arts Council (BASATA) offices so they can continue to entertain the revelers.

"We have planned to form a

band that will be made up of many young musicians, who know music and have the energy to bring a challenge to the genre," the musician revealed.

The artist, also a reputed rapper, added that dance music cur-

rently has a lot of opposition, pointing out that they want to have a troupe that will face such opposition and become successful.

'Msafiri Diouf' confirmed that they started the group a long time

ago, noting they were doing a few shows and now they are free to do more shows after exiting Twanga Pepeta Band.

"I promise our fans that more information about the VDS Chama la Wana will be clear in the next

few days after completing all BASATA procedures," he said.

The musicians are among the performers who have served the Twanga Pepeta Band for many years and have decided to establish a troupe after they were suspended by the popular troupe's management.

Legendary athlete, actor and millionaire: O.J. Simpson's murder trial lost him the American dream

BY KEN RITTER AND LINDA DEUTSCH

FOR a long time, O.J. Simpson was the man who had it all.

He lived the American dream as a sports legend, movie actor, commercial pitchman and millionaire. With his wildly successful career, startling good looks and a gorgeous wife, he became an image of success for Black Americans and was embraced by people of all races. It was safe for everyone to love Simpson, who inhabited a world of glamour and privilege available to few.

"I'm not Black, I'm O.J.," he liked to tell friends.

It all came crashing down in the summer of 1994, when Simpson's ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, was found dead outside her condominium in Los Angeles. Her friend Ronald Goldman, a waiter who had come to her home to return a pair of eyeglasses left behind at a restaurant, was lying a few feet away, stabbed to death.

Simpson, who died Wednesday at 76 of prostate cancer, immediately came under suspicion amid talk of domestic abuse and jealousy.

A criminal-court jury found him not guilty of murder in 1995, but a separate civil trial jury found him liable in 1997 for the deaths and ordered him to pay \$33.5 million to relatives of Brown and Goldman.

The criminal case was a media sensation. Simpson was charged with murder, but before surrendering, he led police on a slow-speed chase across the freeways of Los Angeles. The so-called Bronco Chase, named for the white vehicle he rode in, was televised in prime time and became the first of many TV moments in the bizarre saga that engrossed America.

"I've had a great life, great friends," he said in what many believed was a suicide note written just before he set out in the Bronco. "Please

think of the real O.J. and not this lost person."

His monthslong televised trial, dubbed "the trial of the century," ended up eclipsing his dazzling record as one of the most gifted running backs in football history. The trial touched on fame and wealth, love and hate, the judicial system, the media, domestic violence and racism. It was a Greek tragedy, soap opera and circus sideshow. America couldn't get enough.

In 2011, the suit Simpson wore when he was acquitted was donated and displayed at the Newseum in Washington, a remnant of one of the biggest American news stories of all time.

TV comedians satirized the case. Trial Judge Lance Ito was parodied by a black-robed group of "Dancing Itos." Prosecutor Marcia Clark was wooed by an admirer who flew a plane over the courthouse with a banner asking her to marry him.

At the trial, prosecutors painted a picture of Simpson as a jealous ex-husband and a cold-blooded killer. They pleaded with jurors not to be intimidated by his "dream team" of highly paid defense attorneys, his charisma as an actor or his status as a football star.

Evidence found at the murder scene seemed overwhelmingly against Simpson: Bloody footprints in his size were there, as were blood drops seeming to match his DNA and a glove identical in style to one bought by his slain ex-wife and worn by him at televised football games. Another glove, smeared with his blood and blood of the two victims, was found at his home.

But the science of DNA analysis was in its infancy, and there were mistakes by police and forensic technicians in handling evidence. When Simpson tried on the gloves in court, he couldn't get them onto his large hands, leading to the famous line his attorney Johnnie L. Cochran Jr. later delivered to jurors: "If it

doesn't fit, you must acquit."

Simpson spoke only three words during the trial: "They're too small." Many felt that was enough to make his case.

Defense attorneys were unwavering in professing Simpson's innocence. He was framed, they said, pointing to former Los Angeles police Detective Mark Fuhrman, who denied making anti-Black racial slurs but recanted after a recording was played in court. He later pleaded guilty to perjury.

It was Fuhrman who found the bloody glove at Simpson's home – or planted it, as some claimed – and it was Fuhrman who could not be trusted, defense attorneys said. Jurors apparently agreed, saying Fuhrman's past weighed heavily on their minds.

In his final argument, Cochran played up racism and compared Fuhrman to Adolf Hitler.

The acquittal was viewed by millions on TV and on a Jumbotron in New York's Times Square. President Bill Clinton took a break from meetings to watch.

Simpson's efforts to resume his old life were undermined by Ron Goldman's family. They believed Simpson was guilty and pursued their wrongful death lawsuit relentlessly. In a civil trial, a jury found Simpson liable for the murders and ordered him to pay \$33.5 million in damages to the Goldmans and Nicole Brown Simpson's family.

Hundreds of valuable possessions were seized as part of the award, and Simpson was forced to auction his Heisman Trophy, fetching \$230,000. He never could pay off the \$33.5 million, saying he lived only on his NFL and private pensions.

"The money is not the issue, it never has been," Goldman's father, Fred Goldman, said. "It's making certain that one man, the man who murdered my son and Nicole, is held responsible by a court of law."

In a statement Thursday, Fred Goldman and his daughter Kim noted

that with Simpson's death, "the hope for true accountability has ended."

A decade later, still shadowed by the California wrongful death judgment, Simpson led five men he barely knew into a confrontation with two sports memorabilia dealers in a cramped Las Vegas hotel room. Two men with Simpson had guns. A jury convicted Simpson of armed robbery and other felonies.

Imprisoned at age 61, he served nine years in a remote northern Nevada lockup, including a stint as a gym janitor. Many believed he was being punished for crimes he had been acquitted of, including the Goldmans.

"It's a bittersweet moment," Fred Goldman said. "It was satisfying seeing him in shackles like he belongs."

Simpson was not contrite when released on parole in October 2017. The parole board heard him insist yet again that he was only trying to retrieve memorabilia and heirlooms stolen from him after his criminal trial.

"I've basically spent a conflict-free life, you know," Simpson said.

Simpson lived his final years in Las Vegas, mostly out of the public eye but occasionally taking to social media to opine about sports and his country club lifestyle. He was sometimes seen attending minor league baseball games, and posing for selfies with fans.

Simpson filed a defamation lawsuit in 2017 against a Las Vegas Strip resort accusing it of telling a celebrity news site that he had been banned for being drunk and disruptive. Attorneys for The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas argued that Simpson could not be defamed because his reputation was already tarnished. The case was settled in 2021 on terms that were not disclosed.

Public fascination with Simpson never faded. In 2016, he was the subject of an FX miniseries and a five-part ESPN documentary.



FILE- Defendant O.J. Simpson is surrounded by his defense attorneys, from left, Johnnie L. Cochran Jr., Peter Neufeld, Robert Shapiro, Robert Kardashian, and Robert Blasie, seated at left, at the close of defense arguments in his murder trial, Thursday, Sept. 28, 1995, in Los Angeles. Simpson, the decorated football superstar and Hollywood actor who was acquitted of charges he killed his former wife and her friend but later found liable in a separate civil trial, has died. He was 76. AP

"I don't think most of America believes I did it," Simpson told The New York Times in 1995, a week after a jury determined he did not kill Brown and Goldman. "I've gotten thousands of letters and telegrams from people supporting me."

Twelve years later, after an outpouring of outrage, Rupert Murdoch canceled a planned book by the News Corp.-owned HarperCollins in which Simpson offered his hypothetical account of the killings. It was to be titled "If I Did It."

Goldman's family, still pursuing the multimillion-dollar wrongful death judgment, won control of the manuscript. They retitled the book "If I Did It: Confessions of the Killer."

"It's all blood money, and unfortunately I had to join the jackals," Simpson told The Associated Press at the time. He collected \$880,000 in advance money for the book, paid through a third party.

"It helped me get out of debt and secure my homestead," he said.

Less than two months after losing the rights to the book, Simpson was arrested in Las Vegas.

Simpson played 11 NFL seasons, nine of them with the Buffalo Bills, where he became known as "The Juice." He won four NFL rushing titles, rushed for 11,236 yards in his career, scored 76 touchdowns and played in five Pro Bowls. His best season was 1973, when he ran for 2,003 yards – the first running back to break the 2,000-yard rushing mark.

"I was part of the history of the game," he said years later. "If I did nothing else in my life, I'd made my mark."

Orenthal James Simpson was born July 9, 1947, in San Francisco, where he grew up in government-subsidized

housing. After graduating from high school, he enrolled at City College of San Francisco for a year and a half before transferring to the University of Southern California for the spring 1967 semester.

He married his first wife, Marguerite Whitley, on June 24, 1967, moving her to Los Angeles the next day so he could begin preparing for his first season with USC – which, in large part because of Simpson, won that year's national championship.

Simpson won the Heisman Trophy in 1968. He accepted the statue the same day that his first child, Arnelle, was born.

He had two sons, Jason and Aaren, with his first wife; one of those boys, Aaren, drowned as a toddler in a swimming pool accident in 1979, the same year he and Whitley divorced.

Simpson and Brown were married in 1985. They had two children, Justin and Sydney, and divorced in 1992. Two years later, Nicole Brown Simpson was found murdered.

"We don't need to go back and relive the worst day of our lives," he told the AP 25 years after the double slayings. "The subject of the moment is the subject I will never revisit again. My family and I have moved on to what we call the 'no negative zone.' We focus on the positives."

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AP

Liver need to 'switch back on' after Europa League flop, says Van Dijk

LONDON

LIVERPOOL captain Virgil van Dijk said the Reds must react immediately to a Europa League humbling by Atalanta if they are to keep alive their hopes of winning the Premier League in Jurgen Klopp's final season.

Klopp's men were beaten at Anfield for the first time in 14 months on Thursday as a 3-0 victory put Atalanta on the brink of the Eu-

ropa League semi-finals.

Liverpool are second in a tight three-way battle for the Premier League title, behind leaders Arsenal only on goal difference with seven games to go.

They have less than 72 hours to recover before hosting Crystal Palace on Sunday and can ill afford any slip up against the Eagles.

"It hurts, we didn't lose here for a long time," said Van Dijk. "They punished us for being sloppy in

possession. This will definitely hurt tonight and then from tomorrow we need to switch it back on to get a result."

Gianluca Scamacca scored twice either side of half-time before Mario Pasalic rounded off a famous night for the Italians, who have only ever reached one previous European semi-final.

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Liver need to 'switch back on' after Europa League flop, says Van Dijk

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'Ihefu would not underestimate Simba SC despite recent losses'

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

IN a highly anticipated NBC Premier League match-up this evening, Ihefu FC gears up to host Tanzania's powerhouse Simba SC at the CCM Liti Stadium in Singida.

The encounter's kickoff is set for 4 pm EAT, and both teams have a lot riding on this crucial tie.

The home side, Ihefu SC, is desperate for points to climb away from the relegation zone, while Simba SC seeks to bounce back from a string of losses and maintain their title challenge.

Mecky Mexime, Ihefu SC's head coach, voiced his team's readiness for the challenging encounter, stating: "We are well prepared for this difficult game in the NBC Premier League today. We face Simba SC, the top team in NBC Premier League. Despite Simba SC's recent string of losses, we understand the quality of the opponent we're up against."

Discussing his squad's current aspirations in the league, Mexime added: "Sitting in 11th place in the league standings isn't ideal. Each match we play now is crucial, akin to a final, as we strive to maintain our position in the top tier."

Acknowledging the absence of some players due to injuries, Mexime refrained from naming individuals but expressed confidence in the available squad, affirming: "Although we have some players sidelined, I believe in the abilities of those present to deliver positive results."

He also urged the fans to show their support at the stadium, emphasizing: "I encourage our fans to come out in numbers and cheer us on, as their backing can make a significant difference in our performance."

Morice Chukwu, a player for Ihefu FC, echoed the sentiments of determination ahead of the game, declaring: "We recognize Simba SC as a formidable opponent and intend to perform at our best to secure victory. Given our current position, we must deliver results, especially when playing at home to avoid disappointing our supporters."

Simba SC enters the encounter with a favorable record against Ihefu SC, having triumphed in all their meetings since the 2020/2021 season.

Despite their recent setbacks, Simba SC remains a force to be reckoned with in the NBC Premier League, currently occupying third place.

With ambitions of contending for the silverware, the team strives to maintain momentum, having won four out of their last five matches, with one defeat against Tanzania Prisons on March 6.

Following this fixture, Simba SC gears up for the highly anticipated Dar es Salaam derby against long-time rivals Young Africans SC on April 20, promising a spectacle of intense competition.

In contrast, Ihefu SC finds itself positioned 11th, having won just one out of their last five matches, suffering three defeats and securing one draw.

Post this encounter with Simba SC, Ihefu SC is set to face Singida Fountain Gate FC in their upcoming NBC Premier League fixture.

Simba SC faces Ihefu SC in battle for redemption in Premier League



Simba SC's midfielder, Clatous Chama (R), beats Ihefu SC goalie Fikirini Bakari as the latter's teammate—central defender Vedastus Mwiambi (C)—seeks to keep Chama in check in a 2023/24 NBC Premier League tie held in Dar es Salaam.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

TO DAY'S NBC Premier League encounter between Ihefu SC and Simba SC is more than just another chapter in their rivalry, it is a battle with significant implications for continental qualification.

In a high-octane clash scheduled for a 4 pm kickoff at Liti Stadium in Singida, Ihefu SC plays host to Simba SC. Both teams eye a critical victory to intensify the chase on their counterparts higher up the league table.

Simba SC, currently nestled in third place, finds themselves at a crossroads. After a shocking midweek defeat to Mashujaa FC—a result that knocked them out of the CRDB Federation Cup and left fans reeling—the Msimbazi Street team is hungry to return to winning ways.

Although Simba SC's dreams of securing CRDB Federation Cup glory and enjoying a successful CAF Champions League push have been quashed, their quest for NBC Premier League triumph endures.

And with two games in

hand over title rivals Young Africans SC and Azam FC, the belief is strong.

A victory in the afternoon could narrow the gap with Young Africans SC, also known as Yanga, to four points, ahead of their much-anticipated derby clash next weekend.

A win could propel them

past second-placed Azam FC, setting the stage for a compelling title race.

It is worth remembering, however, that Simba SC have won all but one of their nine away league games this season, settling for a solitary draw with Kinondoni Municipal Council FC along the way.

Hosts Ihefu SC, meanwhile, harbour their continental competitions' participation aspirations, making this clash a high-stakes affair.

They head into this clash on the back of a 3-0 victory over Kinondoni Municipal Council FC that secured them a place in the Federa-

tion Cup quarterfinal.

Still, Mecky Mexime's side have struggled for consistency in the league, recording four wins, two draws, and four losses in their last 10 matches.

Despite recent stumbles, Ihefu SC's aspirations for a spot in next year's CAF Confederation Cup are very much alive, mirroring the inconsistency that seems to be a widespread affliction among contenders.

Ihefu SC remains a formidable force, possessing the guile to dissect Simba SC's leaking defense.

Following Simba SC's recent performance against Mashujaa FC and Al Ahly, a veneer of vulnerability has surfaced, adding intrigue to this encounter.

With Duke Abuya, Maruf Tchakei, and Elvis Rupia, Ihefu SC possesses a formidable trio.

In Rupia, they have one of the league's most in-form strikers. His presence upfront adds a layer of threat, elevating Ihefu SC's attacking prowess.

The trio's role becomes increasingly pivotal as they eye continental qualification, instilling confidence within the squad.

In head-to-head records Simba SC won the reverse fixture 2-1 back in October, meaning they have won each of the past five Premier League meetings between the two sides.

Geita Gold FC, Mtibwa Sugar in 2023/24 NBC PL relegation six-pointer

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe



Mtibwa Sugar right fullback, Abdul Hillary (R), seeks to get the better of Geita Gold FC player when the clubs took on each other in this season's NBC Premier League duel in Morogoro last year. PHOTO: COURTESY OF MTIBWA SUGAR

IN the ever-unpredictable landscape of the NBC Premier League, this afternoon offers a tantalizing encounter between Geita Gold FC and Mtibwa Sugar.

Set against the backdrop of Nyankumbu Stadium in Geita, this match is more than just a game—it is a narrative of survival, a relegation six-pointer.

Geita Gold FC is placed 14th on the log with 21 points from 21 matches. With nine games of the final run-in remaining, the hosts are now only adrift of safety on goal difference, while trailing their visitors by just five points in the fight to avoid the drop.

The statistics show Geita Gold FC has been struggling in recent home league matches. They have won only one of their last 5 league games on home soil. They have claimed 12 points from 11 home matches this season.

When you look at the head-to-head record, Geita Gold FC has failed to win any of the squad's previous five league games against Mtibwa Sugar, suffering three defeats in the process. Mtibwa Sugar won the reverse fixture 3-1 back in October.

However, having now regained confidence with a 2-1 victory over Championship League side Rhino Rangers in the CRDB Federation Cup last week, Geita Gold FC will look to make their recent improvement count in the afternoon and put another win on the board to move out of the drop zone.

Mtibwa Sugar remain at the foot of the NBC Premier League table and are staring down the barrel at demotion to the Championship League as they sit five points adrift of safety, although they do have a game in hand on three of the four teams above them, including today's opponents Geita Gold FC.

They head into their first league outing since early March to further strengthen their survival bid and finally leap out of the relegation zone in the run-in.

Mtibwa Sugar has enjoyed a handful of positive results in recent rounds, losing only one of the squad's previous five league encounters.

Following victories over Singida Fountain Gate FC and Tanzania Prisons in March, Mtibwa Sugar played out a goalless draw with Kagera Sugar in their last league outing three weeks ago, although they lost 3-0 to title contenders Azam FC in the CRDB Federation Cup last week.

Mtibwa Sugar's away form is a cause for concern. They travel to the Lake Zone having accumulated the joint-fewest away points (five) in the Premier League this season as the visitors have managed to win just one of their last ten league outings on the road.

However, tactician Zubeir Katwila and co can be optimistic of success against an out-of-sorts Geita Gold FC, a club the former have defeated in each of their last two meetings by an aggregate score of 6-2.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

