



National Pg 3 Ilala authorities ready to collaborate with TRA



National Pg 4 Spatial data central for digital economy



National Pg 6 686.24m trees planted nationwide in four years



CCM banks on youth to win polls, flourish

By Guardian Reporters, Dodoma

THE ruling party intends to strengthen its youth wing (UVCCM) to ensure it remains a political force for the future, focusing on ideological training and engagement in national politics.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan, the party's national chairperson, made this declaration at the 48th anniversary of its proclamation, where a major focus was party strategies in the next five years.

CCM plans to identify emerging challenges and tackle them proactively, where in line with the party's focus on the youth, the party leadership shall seek to deliver on its promises, she stated.

The chairperson was persuaded that the party would remain at the helm of the country's affairs through the 2025 general elections, given its track record for 48 years.

She expressed confidence that voters would entrust the party with the country's leadership in all levels of election, while acknowledging the challenges facing the party.

The president warned against complacency, pointing at members' tendency of underestimating opposition parties, demanding that they stay vigilant and maintain the party's strength.

Selecting candidates for parliamentary and local government elections will be fair and



CCM national chairperson President Samia Suluhu Hassan, Secretary General Dr Emmanuel Nchimbi (R), Vice Chairman (Zanzibar) and Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, former president Jakaya Kikwete and Vice President Dr Philip Mpango wave to the crowds during celebrations to mark the party's 48th anniversary held at Jamhuri Stadium in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: State House

Amend 1928 witchcraft legislation, court says

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

TANZANIA has been advised to revise the country's witchcraft laws in order to draw a clear line between traditional healers and witch doctors.

Lady Justice Stella Isibhakhomen Anukam from Nigeria issued this appeal when delivering judgment on case number 019/2018 at the African Court on Human and People's Rights, reminding the court that attacks on people with albinism in Tanzania are usually associated with witchcraft beliefs.

The case was pitting the Centre for Human Rights and others versus the United Republic of Tanzania regarding the issue of attacks of people with albinism in the country, submitted by the Centre for Human Rights, the Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa along with the Legal and Human Rights Centre.

The parties alleged that violations of the rights of persons with albinism (PWAs), including their persecution and humiliation, in particular through attacks, killings and mutilations, in the territory of the United Republic of Tanzania and the state was doing little to protect them or go after their assailants.

Under non-pecuniary reparations, the

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The government is introducing programmes to improve the business environment, attract local and foreign investments and promote self-employment

transparent with the party fielding candidates widely accepted among the public, she stated.

Dr Emmanuel Nchimbi, the party secretary general and running mate to the president, emphasised the need to accelerate development initiatives.

Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, Zanzibar president and presidential candidate, called on party members to uphold unity and solidarity, as well as to encourage voter registration to secure the party's success in the general election.

The two speakers extolled CCM achievements in delivering on its 2020 election manifesto, likely to retain public trust in the party.

The party leadership reiterated CCM commitment to a stable, prosperous and united country, citing remarks by founding chairman Mwalimu Julius Nyerere that a strong CCM is essential for the stability in the country.

The ruling party unveiled its presidential candidates and outlined strategies focused on tackling youth unemployment, with the party chairperson noting that youth unemployment is a global issue.

The CCM government is already addressing

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Tanesco customer centre riles DPM

By Guardian Reporter

PERSISTENTLY poor services are causing customer complaints on the Tanzania Electric Supply Co. (TANESCO) especially its customer service center, the portfolio minister has declared.

Dr Doto Biteko, the deputy premier and Energy minister, made this observation when addressing the third performance review meeting for institutions under the ministry for the October-December 2024 period.

This review is part of a procedure initiated to evaluate progress every three months, with intent to improve ministerial institutions' performance, where he acknowledged that good work was being done, customer service remains a weak point.

"I visited this centre recently and told them I am not satisfied with its performance. I am aware of the challenges it faces, not by guesswork, but from feedback from citizens and leaders who oversee me.

"We've made great strides in power supply, building power lines, but one person whose role is to listen to customers and provide accurate responses is undermining all our efforts. This makes us appear incompetent. The answers are there, but

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Lawmakers raise concern over awfully potent drugs

Strengthening the control of drug importation in the country needs modern systems in transportation and cargo offloading areas

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

ILLICIT drugs in use at the present show substances containing precursor chemicals with alcohol content levels up to 50 to 100 times higher than other drugs, MPs say.

Dr Joseph Mhagama (Madaba), chairman of the Governance, Constitution, and Legal Affairs standing committee of the National Assembly, made this observation when presenting the committee's annual report on its activities yesterday.

A variant of new psychoactive substance

(NPS) is especially noticeable, he said, to which the committee has proposed that the Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA) collaborate with other institutions to control the sale of precursor chemicals used to prepare such drugs.

Pointing at the Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Authority (TMDA), the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) and the Medical Stores Department (MSD), he said the DCEA succeeded in preventing the importation of 157,738.55 kilograms of precursor chemicals and seized 22,682 liters

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Lawmakers raise concern over awfully potent drugs

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of such chemicals in the January to September period last year.

The challenge of increased use of NPS is that it has a much higher drug content level compared to internationally controlled drugs, leading to severe health issues and various diseases, he said.

Such diseases include addiction, mental health problems, heart disease, depression, seizures and sudden deaths among users, he said.

He further appealed to the government to ensure education is provided regarding the existence of NPS and harmful effects of these chemicals.

Government agencies like TBS, TMDA and MSD need to cooperate in controlling the diversion of chemicals and medicines being used contrary to intended purposes, he said.

There is also a need to increase the budget for the regulatory authorities to set up treatment centers and psychological support

services for drug addicts at the regional level, he further noted.

Strengthening the control of drug importation in the country needs modern systems in transportation and cargo offloading areas, he said.

He urged that the presidential legal aid campaign supported by civil society organizations (CSOs) reach out to all citizens, particularly those in rural areas.

The government similarly needs to enable the Law Reform Commission by allocating development funds to carry out research on laws before they are drafted and tabled in the legislature, he said.

On a different note, he said that the government should coordinate the creation of a unified tax payment system (e-taxation) for investors and traders in the country.

There should be a single business licensing system in the country for local and foreign investors coordinated by the Tanzania Investment Center, he added.



A Prisons warden escorts back to custody Ukrainian national Orga Kryshstopa (L), who has a pending economic sabotage case at the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam, shortly after the ongoing hearing of the case yesterday. The charges include being found in illegal possession of 166 tortoises worth 18,935,840/-. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

CCM banks on youth to win polls, flourish

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the matter by educational reforms that focus on building skills for the youth, to enable them to take advantage of employment opportunities.

The government is introducing programmes to improve the business environment, attract local and

foreign investments and promote self-employment, she stated.

Investments in sectors like sports, arts, entertainment, and tourism are expected to contribute significantly to job creation, with efforts to build a robust tourism industry and bolster the blue economy, she further noted.

Amend 1928 witchcraft legislation, court says

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court ordered the respondent state to amend existing laws in order to criminalize and punish acts of violence that target people with albinism (PWA), treating such acts as having been committed under aggravated circumstances.

Fulgence Massawe, advocate for the applicants, stated later that the Witchcraft Act 'was formulated during colonial days and specifically targeted to persecute Africans.'

The continental court therefore asked the state to amend the Witchcraft Act of 1928, Chapter 18 of the Laws of Tanzania, in order to clarify ambiguities in relation to witchcraft and traditional health practices.

Tanzania was also required to finalise, promulgate and implement its national plan of action on the promotion and protection of the rights of People with Albinism (PWA) in conformity with the African Union plan of action to end attacks and other atrocities.

Three witnesses, all being persons with albinism and victims of violations presented testimonies before a panel of nine judges, with Justice Sacko Modibo from Mali presiding.

The court considered the applicants' prayers for reparations, ordering the government to initiate a compensation fund and pay 10m/- for the moral prejudice suf-

fered by PWAs. The 10m/- would form seed money to set up a compensation fund, he said.

The government also needs to take all necessary measures towards the full realization of the right to education, reinstate the right to the best attainable standard of health and raise awareness of the myths regarding albinism.

This can be done by conducting far-reaching campaigns sustained for at least two years, the judge affirmed, similarly demanding that the government formulate and execute strategies that will ensure the full realization of the rights and welfare of children with albinism.

"This will, inter alia, as per the court's order, include initiatives on their security, psychosocial, medical and other assistance critical to their survival and development," the judgement intoned.

The government, in cooperation with the applicants, ought to facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated effort to reduce overcrowding in PWAs shelters, reunite families and ensure that children with albinism in these shelters have access to basic services, it directed.

The government was also required to publish the judgment within a period of three months on the websites of two relevant ministries, one with the Prime Minister's Office and the other handling judicial affairs.

TanESCO customer centre riles DPM

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the experts act like bullies toward customers. This is unacceptable," the minister declared.

He shared an example of a citizen's complaint about calling TANESCO, receiving a complaint ticket, only for it to be cancelled later, falsely claiming the issue had been resolved.

"When the customers inquired why the ticket was cancelled, they were met with rudeness," he said, directing the firm's managing director to take action against the involved employee.

If no action is taken by this Friday, the DPM will step in, he affirmed, stressing that respect for citizens must be upheld, so custom-

er service staff should provide appropriate, respectful answers and contribute to solving public needs.

He demanded that the ministry's institutions prioritize the energy compact agreement, signed at the African Heads of State energy summit on January 28, where the goal of providing electricity to 8.3m Tanzanians by 2030 is enshrined.

"Each of you, in your respective roles, should plan how to implement this energy compact. The funds announced are from development partners like the World Bank and the African Development Bank, and these funds cover the entire African continent, not just Tanzania.

"We must strategize on how to

access these funds to execute our projects," he stated, underlining that this would complement the president for leading the successful adoption of this vital energy plan.

He also demanded that the Rural Energy Agency (REA) align clean cooking energy distribution in rural areas with assessments of people transitioning to clean energy, implicitly to avoid handing subsidised gas cylinders to those who don't need them.

At the meeting, the minister presented awards to high-performing institutions like the Petroleum Upstream Regulatory Authority (PURA) ranked first, the Rural Energy Agency (REA) second, and the Energy and Water Utilities Regula-

tory Authority (EWURA), third.

Awards were also given to high-performing TANESCO regions cited as Kilimanjaro (1st), South Kinondoni (2nd) and North Kinondoni (3rd).

Judith Kapanga, the deputy minister, noted that the performance review meetings have led to positive results, improving the ministry's overall performance.

Ministry officials present included Felchesmi Mramba, the permanent secretary, Dr Khatibu Kazungu - the deputy permanent secretary for electricity and renewable energy, Dr James Mataragio, the deputy permanent secretary for petroleum and gas, among others.



Specialists from India's Madras Institute of Orthopaedics and Traumatology, known in short as the MIOT International Hospital, pictured at Zanzibar's Mnazi Mmoja Hospital yesterday attending to patients at a three-day medical camp organised at the initiative of Zanzibar's Health ministry. The hospital is a specialty medical facility in joint replacement surgeries, interventional cardiology, orthopaedics and trauma. The camp has already seen more than 100 people attended to while, based on the severity of their cases, ten have been earmarked for further attention at MIOT. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Ethiopia, Kenya in joint operation to combat terror acts along border

ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIAN and Kenyan intelligence agencies have launched a joint military operation aimed at dismantling a militant group along their common border areas, Ethiopia's National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) said in a statement on Tuesday.

The primary objective of the joint operation is to dismantle "Shene," also known as the Oromo Liberation Army, a militant group designated

as a terrorist organization by the Ethiopian government, thereby enhancing regional stability along the border, the statement said.

Specifically, the operation aims to counter activities related to terrorism, contraband trade and the trafficking of people and arms.

The statement further noted that the operation seeks to implement security agreements focused on combating threats that jeopardise the national interests of both nations.

NISS said joint security forces from Ethiopia and Kenya are actively conducting operations in designated camps of the group within their respective border territories to neutralise its influence and promote peace in the Horn of Africa region.

Kenya National Police Service said the operations target criminals engaged in illegal activities such as arms, drug and human trafficking, illegal mining, instigating tribal conflicts, and kidnapping for ransom along the two nations' border.

UN mission in Libya forms committee to facilitate polls

TRIPOLI

THE United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) announced on Tuesday the formation of an advisory committee to resolve issues hindering holding of general election in the country.

"The United Nations Support Mission in Libya is pleased to announce the establishment of the Advisory Committee," UNSMIL said in a statement.

According to the statement, the committee, composed of 20 Libyans based on UNSMIL's assessment of their experience and capabilities, will develop "technically sound and politically viable" proposals for resolving outstanding contentious issues to enable the holding of elections.

The proposals formulated by the committee will be submitted to UNSMIL for consideration for the subsequent phase of the political process.

The establishment of the advisory

committee is "an integral part of UN efforts to support Libya in overcoming the protracted political deadlock and fragmentation in order to make progress towards national elections as the means to renew the legitimacy of Libya's divided institutions," the statement noted.

Libya failed to hold general elections in December 2021 as previously scheduled, due to disagreements among the Libyan parties over election laws.



Abeida Rashid Abdallah (C), Permanent Secretary in Zanzibar's Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children ministry, presents to Timotheo Mgonja, a gender officer from the Union's government's Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups ministry, a document on the national action plan for implementing the women's peace and security agenda as aligned with the United Nations Security Council resolution. It was shortly after the signing of the document in Zanzibar earlier this week. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Abide by laws when updating voters records, officers urged

By Guardian Reporter

THE Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has urged officers responsible for updating the Permanent Voters' Register to adhere to the constitution, election laws, and regulations in carrying out their duties.

A member of the commission, Judge Asina Omari, made the remarks on Tuesday in Kibaha, Coast Region when wrapping up a two-day training for registration officers, assistant registration officers at the constituency level, election officers and ICT officers.

Omari urged the officials to continue using their spare time to study and review all the instructions they have been given, in order to increase their understanding of their duties and responsibilities in the process of updating the Permanent Voters' Register.

"It is the commission's expectation that after this process is complete, those who have been issued cards will be legitimate voters to elect the president, Members of Parliament, and Councillors," she said.

While closing similar training in Tanga Region, which involved par-

ticipants from Tanga City Council, Handeni and Korogwe municipal councils, and Kilindi, Lushoto and Muheza district councils, commission member Magdalena Rwebangira urged the officials to encourage eligible citizens to register.

Rwebangira stated that the responsibility of mobilising the public falls directly on the officials, in collaboration with other stakeholders in their areas using the resources available to them.

"Banners and leaflets provided by the commission should be distributed early in all the wards in the three regions of Unguja. Your main task is to oversee and conduct all the activities for updating the register in all the wards," she said.

The updating of the Permanent Voters' Register in Tanga and Coast regions is scheduled to take place from February 13 to 19 this year, with registration centres opening at 8am and closing at 6pm.

Banners and leaflets provided by the commission should be distributed early in all the wards in the three regions of Unguja...

TRA, Ilala authorities decide on how to utilise Kariakoo Market

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) and authorities in Ilala District, Dar es Salaam Region have met and expressed readiness to collaborate and fully utilise opportunities presented by the newly-built Kariakoo International Market.

Ilala District Commissioner, Edward Mpogolo, made the remarks yesterday at meeting in Dar es Salaam with local government leaders, TRA commissioner general Yusuph Mwenda and Kariakoo business community.

He discussed strategies developed by Kariakoo traders, including hawkers popularly known as 'machinga' to create a more business-friendly environment that benefits taxpayers.

Mpogolo emphasised that when traders operate in a conducive environment, they are more likely to pay taxes as opposed to the current

cramped street conditions.

He also expressed gratitude to the government for allocating 28bn/- for the construction of the new Kariakoo International Market after the previous one was destroyed by fire.

Additional thanks were given to the government for providing funds for the new Jangwani Market, designed to accommodate small traders. Mpogolo urged trade officers in his office to collect data on the current traders at Kariakoo to ensure they are prioritised in the new market and avoid complaints about space shortages.

He assured Mwenda that his office is ready to cooperate with Kariakoo traders in particular and other Dar es Salaam traders in general, recognising their contribution to job creation and tax revenue.

Mpogolo encouraged traders who are not in unions to join, so they can receive assistance to challenges they are facing through their lead-

ers and gain formal recognition.

Mwenda highlighted the significant role Kariakoo traders play in generating major, medium, and small taxpayers, the contribution TRA takes pride in.

He outlined three key plans to strengthen Kariakoo market and traders, including fostering the growth of local billionaires instead of foreign billionaires through the market.

Kariakoo traders expressed their willingness to pay taxes and conduct business peacefully, while TRA confirmed its readiness to fund the process of gathering data to officially recognise the traders.

He also expressed gratitude to the government for allocating 28bn/- for the construction of the new Kariakoo International Market after the previous one was destroyed by fire.

By Guardian Reporter

THE Medical Stores Department (MSD) has been commended for strengthening supply chains in Kagera Region, reducing complaints about shortages of supplies in the region.

The praise was given yesterday by Kagera Regional Administrative Secretary, Stephen Ndaki, during a meeting with a delegation from MSD, led by MSD Board Chairperson, Rosemary Silaa. The visit was part of MSD's 30th anniversary celebrations.

Ndaki noted that improvements in MSD services have helped eliminate frequent complaints from clients about the shortage of medicines in health facilities, leading to better healthcare delivery in the region.

He added that, in addition to improving service delivery, there is now greater understanding of MSD's role and operations among leaders, which had helped eliminate the blame game between MSD and its clients regarding the procurement of health products. This is be-

MSD gets kudos for increasing supply chains in Kagera Region

cause all leaders within the region have been educated on MSD's operations.

"In the past, there were frequent complaints from health facilities that they had visited. However, in recent times, we do not hear of complaints. It is simply because of the understanding of health product supply chains among leaders. Therefore, we should commend them for the improvements," he said.

Silaa discussed how MSD had evolved over time, focusing on strengthening its services delivery to reduce or eliminate the challenges faced in the health product supply chains.

She added that MSD had continued to improve its contracts with manufacturers and suppliers, hire various personnel to meet the needs of MSD clients, enhance operational systems, and improve communication with clients to address the re-

maining challenges in the availability of health products in the country.

"Over the 30 years of MSD's operations, the quality of service delivery and availability of health products in the country has greatly improved, with stock outs continuing to decrease. We are proud to have reached 30 years, and we promise to continue seeking solutions to the remaining challenges in the health product supply chains in the country," said Silaa.

Kagera Regional Medical Officer, Dr Samuel Laizer, praised MSD for reaching its 30th anniversary, noting that statistics show significant changes in the availability of health products and MSD services compared to previous years.

The MSD delegation was on a tour visiting clients in Kagera and Geita regions who are served by MSD Kagera Zone to gather feedback on MSD services as part of the 30th anniversary celebrations.

WHO appoints Nigerian as its acting Africa regional director

GENEVA

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) has appointed Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu as the acting regional director for Africa.

The announcement follows the conclusion of Dr Matshidiso Moeti's decade-long tenure, during which she made substantial progress in strengthening healthcare systems across the continent.

Dr Ihekweazu's appointment comes after the untimely passing of the designated WHO regional director for Africa, Dr Faustine Ndugulile, on November 27, 2024, in India, where he had been receiving medical treatment.

Dr Ndugulile was set to assume the position in March 2025, making history as the first Tanzanian and East African Community member to hold this prestigious role.

Dr Ihekweazu, a Nigerian epidemiologist with more than 25 years of experience, is currently serving as the WHO's assistant director-general for health emergency intelligence and surveillance systems.

He has played a key role in the WHO hub for pandemic and epidemic intelligence in Berlin, where he leads efforts to improve global disease preparedness through data-driven decision-making.

His leadership has garnered international recognition, especially for his role in the Nigerian response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr Ihekweazu has held numerous influential positions, including director-general of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) from 2016 to 2021, where he was instrumental in transforming the organisation into a global public health leader.

He has also worked with esteemed institutions such as the national institute for communicable diseases in South Africa, the UK's Health Protection Agency and Germany's Robert Koch Institute.

Dr Ihekweazu's appointment as acting regional director comes at a pivotal time as WHO prepares for the election of a new regional director for Africa in May 2025.

His extensive expertise in epidemiology and health security will play a crucial role in continuing the WHO's mission to improve healthcare systems across Africa.

Dr Moeti, who steps down after a decade of service, expressed deep gratitude in her farewell address at the WHO executive board meeting in Geneva.

She highlighted the progress made in expanding healthcare access and strengthening systems across Africa during her leadership.

"It has been an immense privilege to lead WHO in the African region," she said.

As the continent prepares for the upcoming election,

Dr Ihekweazu's interim leadership ensures continuity in the WHO's operations while maintaining its focus on addressing health challenges across Africa.

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New Month, New You: Simple Steps to Healthier Living in 2025

By Shaban Salehe, Chief Operating Officer, Jubilee Health Insurance

The start of a new year brings optimism and the chance for a fresh start. However, many resolutions fade by February. A common mistake is setting overly ambitious goals, such as losing 20 kilos by March. Instead, start with small, actionable steps that build lasting habits.

Make your goals specific. Vague aspirations like "I'll eat healthier" lack direction. Use the SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound to create clear, manageable goals.

Remember, progress isn't always linear. Life's challenges can derail plans, but setbacks shouldn't halt your journey. Reassess and adjust your goals as needed.

To keep your routine enjoyable, choose activities that excite you, like dance classes or outdoor adventures.

Technology can also help; apps like Maisha Fiti by Jubilee Health Insurance offer challenges and community support to make your health journey engaging.

Celebrate every milestone, no matter how small. Recognizing progress—whether it's a week of workouts or feeling more energetic—reinforces your commitment.

As you embrace February, set realistic health goals with self-compassion. Even small efforts can lead to significant changes by December. Here's to a healthier, happier you in 2025!

To Learn more about our wellness programs and Maisha Fiti App, reach us on www.jubileetanzania.co.tz or 0748500877.



Shaban Salehe, Chief Operating Officer, Jubilee Health Insurance

Over 20,000 youth with casual skills recognized

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has formalised the skills for 20,234 youth and provided them with opportunities to attend various colleges to further their education to create self-employment and income generation in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 fiscal years.

Patrobas Katambi, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth, Employment, and Persons with Disability), said this yesterday in the National Assembly when responding to a question from Special Seats MP, Latifa Juakali, who asked what plans the government has to recognise youth with unrecognised skills to support socio-economic development.

He said the government has continued to recognise youth with unrecognised skills by improving policy to enable them participate in development activities and become self-reliant in line with National Youth Development Policy (2007) 2024 edition and National Employment Policy of 2008.

He added that 20,234 youth had their skills formalised through training in various fields, including tailoring, sewing, construction, and technical skills and have been employed in various government projects.

"Even in the construction of large projects like the Mwalimu Nyerere Dam and the SGR, the youth had education, but they learnt through the construction process. Now we are formalising their skills and sending them to various colleges to further enhance their skills and we will use them for infrastructure repairs," he said.

He mentioned that efforts were being carried out through special programme - recognition of prior learning, and over 616 youth had their skills formalised and received certificates through the BBT programme. Additionally, 500 youth were awarded certificates to recognise their skills after receiving further training, and 234 youth had their livestock management skills recognised through the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries.

He also mentioned that the government formalises and recognises youth skills obtained outside the formal education system, designing and implementing special programmes through sectors that create significant employment, such as agriculture through the Jenga Kesho (BBT) programme, entrepreneurship and mining through the Mining for a Better Tomorrow (MBT) programme.

The government is also strengthening practical training for students pursuing diplomas and programmes related to the Education and Training Policy of 2014, edition 2023.

He further pointed out that the government is drafting strategic infrastructure that drives the economy, which enhances skills and contributes to job creation, citing the construction of the Mwalimu Nyerere Hydroelectric Dam and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) roads.

The government is also designing and implementing skill development programmes aimed at improving the workforce skills such as additional training for current employees and entrepreneurs, and emphasising the use of ICT to create many job opportunities for the youth.



James Mkwega (foreground, gesturing), Chairman of the Mkalama District Council in Singida Region, pictured earlier this week leading members of the council's Planning, Finance and Administration Committee on an inspection tour of progress in the construction of Kidarafa Secondary School in Mwangi ward. Photo: Correspondent Tobias Mwanakatwe

Two ministries join forces to lift women's safety, security

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

THE Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special groups and Zanzibar's Ministry of Community Development, Gender Elderly, and Children have signed national programme to implement women, peace and security agenda in line with UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325.

Resolution 1325 is a landmark resolution that was passed in 2000. It's also known as the "women's resolution".

The signing ceremony took place yesterday in Zanzibar and overseen by the ministry's Permanent Secretary in the isles Abeida Rashid Abdallah.

Abdallah said that the programme is an honour to Tanzania as it reflects the UN Resolution's commitment to ensuring women live in peace and security at all times.

"The resolution, passed on October 31, 2000, emphasises the importance of women's roles in conflict prevention and resolution, ensuring protection, peace, and equal participation in promoting

global peace and security," she said.

The two ministries, in collaboration with development stakeholders and private sectors, have worked together to prepare the programme for effective implementation.

"We are the main coordinators of this programme, but other sectors focused on women's issues have provided their input," she added.

Timothy Mgonja, director of gender at the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Children and Elderly, said the programme preparation began

in 2020 and was in final stages. Its launch is expected later this year.

Siti Abbas Ali, Director of the Department of Community Development, Gender and Children in Zanzibar, explained that the programme will strengthen advocacy for women's rights, ensuring their safety as they seek livelihoods.

"The programme also focuses on maintaining peace and offering solutions during conflicts, as women who lack peace cannot engage in activities that promote their development," she said.

Spatial data central for digital economy

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has said the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) is key component of Tanzania's strategic vision for digital economy 2024-2034.

The establishment of NSDI was a strategic move for the country's development, according to Lucy Kabyemera, deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development.

She said this in Dodoma yesterday during the launch of a technical workshop to prepare action plan for establishing the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI).

"In short, NSDI is the foundation for achieving Tanzania's development goals, including the ongoing Vision 2050," she said.

According to Kabyemera, NSDI system will enable the country to comprehensively assess the effectiveness and development plans, all national resources, the impact of climate change, economic challenges, and improve access to vital information to strengthen the country's security and economy.

Kabyemera stated that the National Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy of 2023 emphasises the importance of using technology for community and economic development. Therefore, the system aligns perfectly with the policy by providing the geographic data infrastructure needed by the

e-Government Authority as a critical enabler in planning and establishing the NSDI, she added.

Discussing the digital vision, Kabyemera pointed out that the vision aims to make Tanzania the leader in digital communication, and the NSDI is an essential element of the vision as it will enable the integration of geographic data into various digital services.

"The system to be established will enable and ensure the efficient use of geographic information to make decisions on planning across all sectors of our country's economic development," she said.

"It is a collective effort to ensure that geographic information is easily accessible and used correctly within government institutions, public organisations, the private sector and educational and research institutions," she added.

NSDI system is a vital resource for making accurate decisions in various fields such as urban planning, disaster management, agriculture, and environmental conservation.

According to her, the establishment of the system will improve the accuracy and efficiency of land management, support the sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection, and facilitate foundational planning and investments in economic sectors.

The workshop for preparing the action plan for establishing NSDI started on Monday and ends on Friday.



Rachel Njau (2nd-R), Secretary of the Mirerani branch of the Manyara Region Miners Association, addresses journalists at Mirerani township earlier this week mainly on the need for tanzanite miners to hold regular auctions of the precious stones they end up with. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

KAMPALA

UGANDA has launched a trial of a vaccine against the Sudan strain of Ebola virus following an outbreak in the country that has killed one person and infected two others.

The first patient, a 32-year-old male nurse, died last week.

On Monday, the initial participant in the trial, who is currently in isolation, received a dose of the vaccine, which was developed by the International Aids Vaccine Initiative, a global non-profit organisation.

There is currently no approved vaccine for the Sudan strain of Ebola. One does exist, however, for the Zaire strain, which has been prevalent in the past in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Symptoms of Ebola infection include fever, fatigue, muscle pain, headache, and sore throat,

Uganda starts Ebola vaccine campaign after new outbreak

followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, and internal and external bleeding.

It is transmitted through contact with infected bodily fluids and tissues.

Ebola basics: What you need to know

The Sudan Ebola virus is severe, killing at least 40 percent of those infected, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Uganda is currently experiencing its sixth outbreak of the disease.

Forty contacts of the first victim of this outbreak will be vaccinated in this phase of the roll-out jointly conducted with the Ugandan authorities and the WHO, the UN

agency said in a statement on Monday.

Uganda's health ministry has confirmed 234 contacts as listed for monitoring.

The WHO is collaborating with Uganda's ministry of health, the Uganda Virus Research Institute, and the Makerere University Lung Institute to conduct the trial.

"This marks a major milestone in public health emergency response and demonstrates the power of collaboration for global health security," said WHO director for Africa Matshidiso Moeti.

"If proven effective, the vaccine will further strengthen measures to protect communities from

future outbreaks."

The previous outbreak of the Sudan strain in Uganda was confirmed in September 2022 and resulted in more than 70 deaths. It was declared over in January 2023.

Although Uganda had access to the same candidate vaccine at the time, trials could not be conducted before the outbreak ended.

Over the weekend, the first 2,160 doses of the trial vaccine and treatments arrived in the capital, Kampala.

Health authorities and research teams worked swiftly to prepare for the trial, including briefing researchers, arranging logistics and developing study protocols.



A view captured yesterday of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station at the Old Post Office section of Sokoine Road in downtown Dar es Salaam city, with implementation of the ambitious project ongoing. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

Beekeeping helps reduce deforestation in Sikonge

By Guardian Correspondent, Sikonge

Beekeeping in Sikonge District, Tabora Region, plays a crucial role in reducing deforestation and preserving the region's ecological balance, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Tanzania said on Tuesday.

In a statement, WWF—the world's largest conservation organization dedicated to protecting natural resources—highlighted that beekeeping promotes forest conservation, as bees rely on diverse floral sources for nectar.

The organization noted that thousands of residents in Sikonge have transitioned from charcoal production, which had caused severe deforestation and environmental degradation, to beekeeping.

erosion, degraded water sources, disrupted rainfall patterns, and loss of biodiversity.

Beekeeping in Tanzania is largely a forest-based activity, with most beekeepers operating in protected areas and general lands. It plays a significant role in socio-economic development and environmental conservation, generating approximately \$1.7 million annually from the sale of honey and beeswax.

Recognizing its potential, the government is actively encouraging investment in beekeeping within forest and bee reserves to harness the untapped resources in the sector.

The success of Sikonge's beekeeping initiative serves as a model for other regions looking to balance economic growth with environmental sustainability.

"Things started to change when the community began embracing beekeeping as a sustainable and lucrative alternative," the statement read.

WWF emphasized that the transition is more than just a change in livelihood—it represents a new hope for economic stability and environmental conservation. Beekeeping has not only provided new income opportunities but has also contributed to improving local livelihoods while protecting forests.

Charcoal production in Tanzania has long had a detrimental impact on the environment, primarily due to widespread tree-cutting, which leads to deforestation, soil

“ Things started to change when the community began embracing beekeeping as a sustainable and lucrative alternative ”

Namibia fights to attain water security amid climate change

WINDHOEK

NAMIBIA is working to strengthen water security as climate change and industrial projects increase pressure on the country's limited resources, Minister for Agriculture, Water and Land Reform Calle Schlettwein said on Tuesday.

Speaking at the second Namibia regional water symposium, Schlettwein said Namibia's dry climate and reliance on groundwater require careful management to ensure long-term sustainability.

"Namibia, as we all know, is the driest country in southern Africa, where water is both a precious and scarce resource," he said. "Our reliance on groundwater, coupled with the unpredictable impacts of climate change, places us in a constant battle to ensure sustainable water supply for all."

The symposium, held in Keetmanshoop, the capital of the Karas Region in southern Namibia, focuses on water security, economic development, and sustainable resource management.


Schlettwein highlighted the impact of major industrial projects, including green hydrogen production and mining expansion in the Hardap and Omaheke regions. "We must work together to ensure that these projects align with our broader sustainability goals and that water remains available and safe for all."

According to Schlettwein, Namibia is enforcing the Water Resource Management Act II of 2013, effective from August 2023, which would provide a structured approach to


water management and serve as a guide for all water users.

He emphasized the need for cooperation among government agencies, businesses, and communities to address water challenges. "Water security cannot be achieved by a single entity. It requires collaboration, innovation, and commitment from all of us."

The three-day symposium brings together policymakers, industry leaders, and local communities to discuss water governance and future strategies.



**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
TANZANIA FERTILIZER REGULATORY AUTHORITY**



PUBLIC NOTICE

PRE-QUALIFICATION No. TFRA/2024-2025/F/01 FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF BULK FERTILIZER


INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF BULK FERTILIZER FOR THE PERIOD OF MARCH, 2025 TO JUNE, 2026

- Tanzania Fertilizer Regulatory Authority (TFRA) established by Fertilizer Act; 2009 Cap 378 is mandated to coordinate importation of fertilizer through the bulk procurement system as provided for under the Fertilizer (Bulk Procurement) Regulations GN. 49 of 2017.
- TFRA now intends to Pre-qualify fertilizer dealers (Suppliers/Producers) for importation of fertilizer for the cropping seasons 2024/2025 to 2025/2026 under the Bulk Procurement System (BPS)
- Tenders shall be invited on product basis and the estimated import quantity per annum is 837,574 MT. The products include DAP, UREA, CAN, SA and NPKs.
- Pre-qualification will be conducted through Competitive Bidding (CB procedures specified in the Fertilizer (Bulk Procurement) Regulations, GN. No.49 of 2017 and Fertilizer Bulk Procurement System Guidelines and is open to all interested applicants.
- A complete set of pre-qualification documents in English language can be collected by interested companies at TFRA offices or sent by mail after applying and receiving a control number to make online payment of a non-refundable fee of Five hundred United States Dollar (USD 500) only to the TFRA account. Please consider all your transfer charges so that the amount to be received in the TFRA account is NOT less than USD 500 otherwise your payment will be rejected by the system.
- Applications Application for pre-qualification should be submitted by hand in sealed envelope, delivered to the address below or Electronically by EMAIL (pdf) using info@tfra.go.tz at or before **10:00 A.M. Local Time on Friday 7th March, 2025** clearly marked "Pre-qualification No. TFRA/PQ/2024-2025/F/01 for Fertilizer Bulk Procurement".
- Applications sent by email WILL BE ACCEPTED but TFRA will not be responsible for electronic document not delivered, lost or opened prematurely. For all Electronic submission, the applicant must send the original documents by hand or courier for record and reference.
- Applications will be evaluated and results be announced before Friday 21st March, 2025 for pre-qualified importers to participate in the tenders from 22nd March, 2025 to 30th March, 2026.
- Late applications, portion of applications and applications not accompanied with confirmation of payment for the pre-qualification documents shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstances
- Applications should be addressed to;

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TANZANIA FERTILIZER REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(TFRA)**

**PLOT NO. 15471, 1 KILIMO STREET,
KILIMO I COMPLEX,
TEL. +255 222 861 939;
E-MAIL: info@tfra.go.tz
DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA**

Office hours Monday- Friday 0800- 15:30 hrs



TAARIFA KWA UMMA

ZOEZI LA UHAKIKI WA WASTAAFU NA WATEGEMEZI

Mfuko wa Taifa wa Hifadhi ya Jamii (NSSF) unawatangazia wastaafu na wategemezi wote wanaolipwa pensheni ya kila mwezi kuwa, kutakuwa na zoezi la uhakiki litakaloanza tarehe **3 Februari, 2025** hadi **30 Aprili, 2025**. Zoezi hili litafanyika Jumatatu hadi Ijumaa kuanzia saa 2:30 asubuhi hadi saa 10:30 jioni kwenye ofisi zote za NSSF. Kwa wastaafu waliopo Unguja na Pemba, uhakiki wao utafanyika ofisi za ZSSF. Aidha kwa wastaafu waliopo Dar es Salaam, uhakiki wao utafanyika katika ofisi za mikoa ambazo ni **ILALA, TEMEKE, KINONDONI, UBUNGO, MBEZI BEACH NA KIGAMBONI**

Mstaafu ambaye atatembelea ofisi za NSSF anatakiwa kufika na nyaraka zifuatazo:

- Kitambulisho cha NSSF au kuponi ya pensheni,
- Kitambulisho cha Taifa au namba ya NIDA,
- Picha moja ndogo ya sasa (passport size) kwa wale ambao hawakufanya uhakiki kwa mwaka 2024,
- Kwa wategemezi (Watoto) tafadhali fika na cheti cha kuzaliwa na kitambulisho cha shule
- Kwa wastaafu wagonjwa au wazee wasiojiweza taarifa itolewe kupitia barua pepe customer@nssf.go.tz au kwa kupiga simu ya bure **0800116773** au kuwasilisha taarifa husika kwenye ofisi ya NSSF iliyo karibu

Kwa wastaafu ambao wameshawasilisha namba za NIDA katika Mfuko wanaweza kujihakiki wenyewe kupitia simu zao za kiganjani

ANGALIZO:

Malipo ya pensheni ya mwezi **Julai 2025** yatafanyika kwa wastaafu na wategemezi ambao wamehakiki tu

ATAKAYESIKIA TANGAZO HILI AMTAARIFU NA MWENZAKE

**Imetolewa na:
Kitengo cha Uhusiano na Elimu kwa Umma**

PENSHENI YA
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686.24m trees planted nationwide in four years, says deputy minister

By Guardian Reporter

DEPUTY Minister in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment), Khamis Hamza Khamis, has announced that 686.24 million trees planted nationwide have successfully grown. This figure represents 82.3 percent of the 866.7 million trees planted between 2020/2021 and 2023/2024.

Speaking in the National Assembly in Dodoma yesterday, Khamis was responding to a question from Special Seats MP Tunza Malapo, who inquired whether the government had assessed how many planted trees had been nurtured and successfully grown as part of climate change mitigation efforts.

In his response, the deputy minister explained that the government, through the Vice President's Office, in collaboration with the President's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), conducts annual assessments of tree-planting initiatives. These assessments aim to combat land degradation, desertification, drought, and climate change.

He further noted that during the 2024/2025 planting season, the government will continue to evaluate the number of trees planted and those that have successfully grown across the country.

Khamis emphasized the government's ongoing efforts to encourage citizens and the private sector to plant trees to combat climate change and protect

the environment. He urged all Tanzanians to take advantage of the current rainy season by planting trees in various areas to aid climate change mitigation.

In response to a follow-up question from MP Tunza regarding strategies for maintaining planted trees, the deputy minister stated that the Vice President's Office collaborates with officers in all mainland regions responsible for monitoring tree-planting activities. Additionally, the government works closely with the President's Office - TAMISEMI to ensure proper management of trees planted along roadways.

He highlighted the government's various tree-planting campaigns, particularly in water catchment areas and schools, as well as initiatives promoting clean cooking energy to reduce reliance on firewood and charcoal.

Responding to a question from Pangani MP Maryam Omar Said about government support for coastal tree-planting groups, Khamis noted that ongoing efforts include raising public awareness about the importance of mangrove restoration along coastal areas.

He emphasized that the Vice President's Office, through environmental projects, actively supports tree-planting efforts, particularly mangrove restoration, to help mitigate the effects of climate change.

The government has set an annual target of planting 1.5 million trees across all councils in the country and continues to oversee its implementation.

Philanthropist, spiritual leader Aga Khan IV passes away at 88

By Guardian Reporter

PRINCE Karim Al-Hussaini, widely known as Aga Khan IV, has passed away at the age of 88. A revered spiritual leader of millions of Ismaili Muslims and a distinguished philanthropist, he leaves behind a profound legacy in global development and humanitarian efforts.

A statement released yesterday by the Diwan of the Ismaili Imam confirmed that the 49th Imam of the Ismaili Muslims and founder-chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), passed away peacefully on February 4 in Lisbon, Portugal, surrounded by his family.

"A direct descendant of Prophet Muhammad through his daughter, Hazrat Bibi Fatima, and son-in-law, Hazrat Ali—the fourth Rightly Guided Caliph and first Shia Imam—Prince Karim Aga Khan inherited the Imamate from his grandfather, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan III, in 1957 at the age of 20," reads the statement.

"For 67 years, he provided spiritual guidance to over 15 million Ismailis across more than 25 countries while championing global humanitarian causes. A visionary leader, he promoted Islam as a faith of reason, compassion, and dignity, advocating for peace, pluralism, and human development."

As the founder and chairman of AKDN, Aga Khan IV established one of the world's largest private international development organizations, dedicated to healthcare, education, cultural preservation, and economic development in vulnerable regions. His efforts extended beyond the Ismaili community, benefiting people of all backgrounds and faiths.

Aga Khan IV's contributions to Tanzania date back over a century, beginning with the establishment of the first Aga Khan Girls' School in Zanzibar by his grandfather, Aga Khan III.

In 1991, the government of Tanzania and AKDN formalized their partnership through an agreement of cooperation, strengthening socioeconomic development initiatives. Under Aga Khan IV's leadership, AKDN significantly expanded its impact in Tanzania, with key projects in healthcare, education, cultural preservation, and economic

development.

AKDN has operated hospitals and clinics in Tanzania for over 50 years. In 2019, the Aga Khan Hospital in Dar es Salaam underwent a major expansion, dramatically improving access to specialized medical services. Additionally, the Aga Khan University has trained 750 nurses, strengthening the country's healthcare workforce.

In education, the network has supported initiatives from early childhood programs to higher learning. The Madrasa Early Childhood Programme in Zanzibar has benefited over 10,000 children, while Aga Khan Schools have provided quality education for decades.

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture has played a pivotal role in preserving Tanzania's cultural heritage. It has restored 11 historic buildings in Zanzibar's Stone Town, including Forodhani Park, the Old Dispensary, and the Old Customs House, safeguarding the country's rich history and promoting tourism.

Aga Khan IV's vision for economic development included investments in financial services, tourism, media, and manufacturing, creating employment opportunities and contributing to Tanzania's economic growth.

The 50th hereditary Imam has been designated and will be announced following the reading of His Highness's will in the coming days. Funeral arrangements will be communicated shortly.

Aga Khan IV's passing marks the end of an era of extraordinary leadership and service. His enduring legacy of humanitarianism and development will continue to inspire generations.



...A visionary leader, he promoted Islam as a faith of reason, compassion, and dignity, advocating for peace, pluralism, and human development



Jane Mwambule (L), CCM's Ideology, Publicity and Training secretary for Msasani ward in Dar es Salaam, presents sanitary pads to a representative of pupils of the city's Msasani B Primary School pupils earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Mary Kadoke

CCM at 48: UWT gives pads, hospital supplies

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

CCM women's wing (UWT) at Msasani Ward in Dar es Salaam Region has donated sanitary pads to pupils and hospital supplies as part of events to celebrate the party's 48th anniversary yesterday.

Institutions that received sanitary towels for female pupils are Msasani Primary School and Msasani Secondary School. The provisions were meant to enable beneficiaries study during the entire school calendar.

On the other hand, Mikoroshini

Dispensary received essential supplies, including mosquito repellents, baby diapers and other necessities.

Speaking to reporter in Dar es Salaam at the weekend after distributing the items, Msasani Ward UWT secretary, Mwajuma Bwaru, highlighted the importance of community support initiatives, emphasising that they help address preventable challenges.

"UWT The goal is to complement the government's initiatives," she said.

Neema Poneka, a representative

from Msasani B Primary School, expressed gratitude to UWT for the donations, noting that the supplies were crucial and would help reduce absenteeism among female pupils.

CCM celebrated the 48th anniversary of the party with week-long ongoing activities, showcasing significant strides in fostering development across the country.

Speaking during UWT symposium in Dodoma on Tuesday, CCM Vice-Chairman (Mainland) Stephen Wasira

reaffirmed the party's ongoing commitment to improving the lives of Tanzanians through broader range of development projects.

"These initiatives span various sectors, including education, health, agriculture, infrastructure and industrialisation, all aimed at enhancing welfare of the people and fostering economic growth," he said.

The party was formed on February 5, 1977 under the leadership of Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the founding father of Tanzania.



Garbage lies abandoned at the Kitunda Kivule Auction Market site in suburban Dar es Salaam, causing inconvenience to residents at the area, as captured yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Partner, RUWASA launch pilot project to address water scarcity

By Guardian Reporter, Hanang'

WATERAID UK, in collaboration with the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) in Manyara Region, has launched a pilot project in Hanang' District to address water scarcity, inadequate sanitation, and environmental challenges.

The initiative aims to provide safe drinking water and proper sanitation facilities to 96 villages in the district, benefiting a population of 368,000.

Speaking to reporters here yesterday, WaterAid Tanzania Project Manager, Beda Levira, shared details about the initiative, stating that it is expected to be completed by August this year.

"WaterAid's pilot project in Hanang' will tackle challenges related to clean water, sanitation,

and environmental cleanliness, directly benefiting residents in 33 wards across the district," said Levira. "Our goal is to ensure the community fully benefits from the project, ultimately eliminating waterborne diseases caused by poor sanitation and contaminated water sources."

According to the 2022 Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS-MIS) and the Malaria Indicator Survey, 18.1 percent of households in Tanzania lack adequate sanitation facilities, with 9.7 percent of the population still practicing open defecation.

Barnabas Taligunga, Water Engineer at RUWASA's, emphasized that the project will strengthen water infrastructure from its sources to end-users, reducing the spread of waterborne diseases.

"This pilot project is currently

being implemented in Hanang' and other districts will have the opportunity to learn from its success," he said.

Dr Andrew Method, Manyara Regional Medical Officer, urged leaders in Hanang' to fully support the project to ensure its successful implementation and serve as a model for other districts.

Amaka Godfrey, Director of International Programmes and Partnerships at WaterAid, commended community leaders for their commitment to the initiative and expressed the organization's dedication to ensuring its success.

"The leaders' proactive approach in engaging the entire community is crucial," said Amaka. "It will help ensure the project delivers timely and lasting benefits to as many people as possible."

Dr Cyril Komba, Dean of Faculty of Co-operatives and Community Development at Moshi Co-operative University (MoCU), highlighted the often-overlooked importance of sanitation and clean water services in economic development.

"Poor sanitation means people resort to defecating in informal areas such as bushes and farms, leading to significant health risks," Dr Komba explained. "This contributes to the spread of waterborne diseases such as diarrhea, intestinal worms, and skin infections," he said.

The project represents a significant step in improving public health, environmental sustainability, and economic development in Hanang' District, with the potential to be replicated in other regions across the country.

Humanitarians concerned over escalating hostilities in Sudan

UNITED NATIONS

ESCALATING hostilities in Sudan's North Darfur and South Kordofan states are increasing civilian casualties and displacements, causing extreme concern, UN humanitarians said Tuesday.

According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), over the past 10 months, more than 600,000 people fled El Fasher and other localities in North Darfur to seek safety.

"In recent weeks, attacks have been reported across much of El Fasher and surrounding areas, including the Abu Shouk displacement camp, the Saudi hospital and the western areas of the town," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said. "Famine

conditions were confirmed in Abu Shouk camp in December and are expected to persist through May of this year."

The office is also alarmed by escalating hostilities in South Kordofan amid fighting between the Sudanese army and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North.

OCHA said that in the South Kordofan capital, Kadugli, more than 50 people were reportedly killed on Monday, primarily women and children, following a series of airstrikes. More than two dozen others were injured.

"As hostilities continue across the country, civilians there also face the threat of explosive remnants of war"



The UN resident humanitarian coordinator in Sudan, Clementine Nkweta-Salami, condemned the relentless and intensifying shelling and air and drone strikes against civilians in conflict-affected areas, describing the violence as not warfare but a "ruthless assault on human life."

"As hostilities continue across the country, civilians there also face the threat of explosive remnants of war," OCHA said. Last week, two children were killed by unexploded ordnance in Gereida, in South Darfur State. "That is what local humanitarian colleagues are telling us."

The office said that more than 13 million people in Sudan need support to address the threats of explosive hazards, but funding for response remains limited.



William Mwinuka, a lecturer with the UK's University of Warwick, pictured at Mpanda Girls' Secondary School yesterday conducting training on the use of English in teaching and learning for Science and Mathematics teachers from the Songwe, Rukwa and Katavi regions. The participants are undergoing sustainable professional development training through the Secondary Education Quality Improvement Programme (SEQIP). Photo: Correspondent Grace Mwakalinga

REQUEST FOR TENDER

North Mara Gold Mine, a fully owned subsidiary of Twiga Minerals Corporation, which is ultimately owned by Barrick Gold Corporation and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania requests the submission of Tenders from reputable, experienced, certified, and qualified parties to provide the following service:

Supply & Installation of Dallmeier Surveillance at GSS Control Room and Process Plant

Pre-qualification Criteria

No.	Reference no.	Description of work	Pre-qualification Criteria
1	NM001/2025	GSS Control Room Upgrade	i. Applicants to submit company profile with proven experience in Dallmeier and Autec Babylon System. ii. All Material should be supplied from registered Dallmeier and Autec business channel partner from Manufactures/OEM with warranty period. iii. Contractor should share certified or acknowledged letter from Dallmeier and Autec Babylon Business partner. iv. At least two Technician must be certified on installation on Dallmeier and Autec Babylon system. v. One Technician or Technical personnel must show experience on installation and termination of EATON 30KVA UPS. vi. Company must have experience on supplying Dallmeier Surveillance equipment system and Autec Babylon system. vii. Applicant must have at least 1-3 years mining experience. viii. Applicant must show ability to provide onsite 24 hours technical service if needed by client. ix. Information required to include a list of relevant projects undertaken in last 3 years. For each project provide: description and relevance to the tendered project; project cost; and duration of project. x. Completion certificates of similar previous projects with reference list of clients, applicant agrees - without reservation-upon the submission of EOI, that the company has the full right to contact any of the references provided. xi. Applicant to submit list and specifications of Equipment, including proof of facilities equipment. xii. Applicant to submit organizational structure, list of experienced personnel. xiii. Local content and CRB compliance. xiv. Applicant should provide proof to its statements as necessary regarding its financial stability, engineering capabilities, documents complying with Tanzanian laws and regulations.

Expression of Interest (EOI)
 If your company meets the pre-qualification criteria and would like to be considered to receive the invitation to tender (ITT), an expression of interest (EOI) including your company profile and evidence of compliance with pre-qualification criteria may be submitted to nm.proposal@barrick.com

Applicants must quote the tender description(s) and the respective reference no.(s) in the subject line of the email.



NB: The Company reserves the right to invite any other supplier(s) who did not submit an EOI through this advertisement.
 Pre-qualification of any company submitting an "Expression of Interest" shall be at the sole discretion of NMGM.

If you do not hear from us in 21 days after the deadline date, please consider your submission unsuccessful.

Key Dates

- Last date to submit EOI **12 February 2025**

North Mara Gold Mine Limited

Advertisement

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

BUL-RFQ-25-01-03 – SUPPLY OF MANITOU TELEHANDLER MHT-X 790

Bulyanhulu Gold Mine ("the Company"), a fully owned subsidiary of Twiga Minerals Corporation, which is ultimately owned by Barrick Gold Corporation and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania requests the submission of Quotes from reputable, experienced, certified, and qualified parties to provide the following:

1X MHT-X 790 145Y MINING ST3A S1
 Strong capacity telescopic trolley - Yanmar 145 CV engine 3A Stage - Hydrostatic transmission - Number of speeds (front / rear) 2/2 - Load Sensing hydraulic pump - Max lifting height: 6.8m - Max lifting capacity: 9000 kg at 600 mm from Gravity

Telehandler type and specifications

Specification	Value	Specification	Value
Nominal load at COG	9 t	Standard tyres	445/65 R22.5
Max. Reach horizontal	3.72 m	Capacity at full forward reach	3.5 t
Lifting height	6.84 m	Capacity at full lift height	6 t
Weight	13.16 t	Transport length	5.27 m
Transport width	2.47 m	Transport height	2.47 m
Travel speed	30 km/h	Engine manuf.	John Deere
Engine type	4045PWX	Engine power	102 kW
Displacement	4.5 l	Revolutions at max torque	1500 rpm
Max. torque	545 Nm	No. of cylinders	4
Emission level	Tier 4 f	Batteries	(12V) 1x12v - 180Ah - 1200a

Special Requirements:

- Fuel tank locking cap
- Daily brake test system
- 2 External emergencies stop
- 1 Internal emergency stop (in the cab)
- Pack of 3 cameras + Monitor 7"
- Reinforced wiring harness and fuse box
- Lockable battery isolator
- Emergency exit on operator cabin
- Turbo to have heat shielding
- Flammable liquid hoses to be separated from electric wiring
- Parts Manual and Service and Repair Manual come in English
- 2 x fire extinguishers mounted on Manitou
- Braided fuel line
- Signaling: Orange LED flashes - External Fire Kit Safety System (Yellow, Red, Green) LED - Complete LED Road Lighting (front / rear) - Sound warning on reversal - Reversing light - Protective grid on Work and road fires - Reflective bands - Safety and information stickers - Maintenance and access points in yellow
- Arrow: Bac returns pipe - Hydraulic circuit for accessory with quick couples - Shock absorb - amortor End of race outing and back on the arrow
- Safety: Charging controller - Limitation of the work zones - Limitation of the movement speed - Right and left rear mirrors - Multitidal oil bathing service brake on front and rear bridge - Automatic Park brake - ROPS cabin homologation - FOPS (Level 2)
- Negative type braking on rear and front bridge (SAHR) - Start -up sound warning - Guardian Angel level 1 - Bi -Axial Level indicator front and lateral slope - angular sector and ABC marking On arrow - Accessories recognition system (E -RECO) - 2 extinguisher supports 9kg - 2 external emergency stops - steering lights - 2 wheel holds - 4 LED position lights - Botter cut - Damper -starter - JUMP -Start - Radiator safety cap - Visual wheel indicators
- Other elements: bar hanging Ø 30 mm, manual hitch screed, pre-lecture control pliers tire and cylinder in the cabin + radio pre-deposition nacelle, emergency steering pump, catalyst and purifier on exhaust, pre-Self-cleaning metal filter, manual fuel cut, toolbox

Key documents:

- Clear and detailed Quotation.
- Company registration documents i.e. Certificate of incorporation, business license, TIN, VRN, Tax Clearance Certificate etc.
- BRELA detailed search document indicating Tanzanian ownership percentage to determine classification as an Indigenous Tanzanian Company as per the Local Content Regulation, 2018.
- Applicable certification, accreditation, affiliated registrations, and letter of dealership as required.
- Approved Local Content Plan or acknowledgement of submission from the Mining Commissioner.

Submission of Quotes:
 Please submit your quotes via email to bulytender@barrick.com.

The reference **"BUL-RFQ-25-01-03 – SUPPLY OF MANITOU TELEHANDLER MHT-X 790"** must be quoted in the subject line of the email.

If you do not hear from us in 21days after the deadline date, please consider your bid/quote unsuccessful.

Key Dates:

- Last date to submit quotes: **13th February 2025**

Bulyanhulu Gold Mine Limited

THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY, 2025

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

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Budgeting for HIV/Aids drugs locally is plausible

A SECTION of legislators have recently appealed to the government to move faster and more emphatically in implementing its sustainability plan for the country's HIV and AIDS response to reduce reliance on donor assistance.

The math wasn't provided in detail when the chairman of the legislative body's Health and HIV/AIDS standing committee made this suggestion when presenting the committee's annual report for 2024. Yet there is a respite in the sense of urgency that pushed MPs to the view.

It was generally noted that the idea was a result of moves by the new authorities in the United States to pause its funding for numerous foreign aid programmes, at that time thought to include essential HIV services.

An order was issued on January 20 for a pause in aid deliveries so that foreign aid contributions could be reviewed to see if they align with the policies of the current (Donald Trump) administration.

While on a visit to some Latin American countries, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio explained that there is a waiver for emergency food aid or life-saving medicine and similar needs. He talked about programmes that enhance the stature and national interests of the United States.

The Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy (within the US State Department) had earlier issued a memo clarifying that the President's Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR) was covered by the specific exceptions to the clampdown, spelling out what activities would be financed.

It thus remains to be seen if any of the PEPFAR components will be identified as life-saving HIV care. It is not clear yet if it will include the breadth of treatment services, including testing and counselling,

prevention and treatment of infections like TB, lab services and mother-to-child transmission care.

Some of the data being aired in the wake of this notice sort of indicated that more than 20 million people living with HIV, two-thirds of those receiving treatment globally, are directly supported by PEPFAR.

This is the sort of issue that is being raised by conservatives in the US administration and other quarters, if over two-thirds of the world's AIDS patients can only be treated with urgent US funding.

That is why there is no surprise in our legislators' view that something can be done on the fact that a preponderant portion of HIV and AIDS intervention efforts in our country relies on external donations.

It is true that when the funding reaches its limit it could severely hinder the country's ability to maintain its HIV/AIDS pandemic action, in which case mitigation measures will be needed.

An answer may already have been provided in the form of the cost-sharing format in place earlier and now being reinstated.

The parliamentary committee seemed to be persuaded that the government can take up HIV/AIDS bills within much ado, as if reliance on PEPFAR was accidental - or incidental.

There are two ways in which local financing of extensive health needs can be brought up, one being ensuring a vast change in governance habits by altering expectations of public servants and the wider public sector.

As that can't be done in a consensual manner, it would alternatively demand deliberate structural reforms to sink into the government vast amounts of money, absorbing its foreign debt servicing bills. But that would clearly be quite a tall order.

Tech devices to enhance learner engagement can work for many

A variety of methods have kept being devised for teaching science and mathematics, given the wish that more pupils study the subjects, as there is a glaring deficiency in capacities in that direction.

The results of the national Form IV exams for last year showed that passing in math from grade A to C stood at 25 per cent.

That meant that fields needing good mathematics grades have to align with a fairly limited supply base, while math is a prerequisite for most of post-secondary science pursuits, or partly in economics, statistics, etc.

That is why efforts by the relevant ministry and a range of stakeholders asking teachers in particular regions to use tablets and smartphones to enhance classroom engagement with learners are worth consideration.

There is a problem with smartphones as pupils are not supposed to keep them, or their 'torch' variant which also have a scatter of game-set applications that can assist in learning. Smartphones will be in the hands of teachers, so it is the tablets pupils could use.

As part of frequent training stints, one region was hosting teacher training at girls' secondary school, where a demonstration was held on how the devices help pupils to better grasp concepts by using videos, images and other illustrations.

That doubtless eases ability to grasp measurable relations 'hidden' in mathematical expressions, which escapes many pupils when the teachers use traditional methods.

Were such interest to be sustained in the course of learning, it is evident that the scare that mathematics

raises in pupils softens up.

There is another dimension to those demonstrations in that the technology enables teachers to use computer applications and programmes for practical exercises and online scientific experiments.

It means that learning is not just eased for learners in a particular classroom but the fun can be stretched far and wide so that even pupils thinking about sports could start developing interest.

There is a traditional school of thought that the best way to teach science in school is to make it fun, and there is an element of it there.

As a total of 675 teachers from three regions attended sessions on science, mathematics and ICT, it is evident that the effort will have an impact in the particular zone.

A training coordinator noted that the training was meant to arm teachers with skills to meet 21st-century educational demands, focusing on innovation and practical teaching techniques.

Just how far the new methods can motivate pupils to excel in science and mathematics as the official noted points to a different consideration.

There were teachers whose subjects have a certain amount of 'fun' on their own before any devices are put to use - for instance, chemistry and biology.

The former has more excitement than fun while the latter can be absorbing even for an arts-minded pupil, and their Form IV scores are usually higher than math as such.

There is thus plenty of reason for others to be as optimistic on the training impact and use of the devices as those who actually attended the training and found occasion to evaluate it.



By Kester Kenn Klomegh

WITH heightening geopolitical interest in building a new Global South architecture, Ghana's administration is considering joining the 'partner states category' of BRICS+, an association of five major emerging economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

The National Democratic Party (NDC) and the elected President John Mahama, while crafting future pathways and renewing commitments over democracy and governance, designing a new economic recovery programme as top priority, could initiate discussions to put Ghana on higher stage by ascending into the BRICS+ platform.

Certainly, ascending onto BRICS+ platform would become a historical landmark for Ghana which has attained prestigious status in multilateral institutions and organizations such as the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), the United Nations and also, from Jan. 2025, the head of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Unlike South Africa, which has acquired a full-fledged membership status in 2011, and Ethiopia, Nigeria and Uganda were taken into the 'partner states' category, Ghana has all the fundamental requirements to become part of BRICS+ alliance.

It is necessary to understand the basic definition and meaning of BRICS+ in the context of the geopolitical changing world. The BRICS alliance operates on the basis of non-interference. As an anti-Western association, it stays open to mutual cooperation from countries with 'like-minded' political philosophy.

BRICS members have the freedom to engage their bilateral relations any external country of their choice. In addition to that, BRICS+ strategic partnership has explicitly showed that it is not a confrontation association, but rather that of cooperation designed to address global challenges, and is based on respect for the right of each country to determine its own future.

South Africa and other African countries associated with BRICS+

South Africa is strongly committed to its engagement in the BRICS+. It has, so far, hosted two of its summits. In future, Egypt and Ethiopia would have the chance to host BRICS+ summit. Egypt and Ethiopia have excellent relations with members, and simultaneously transact business and trade with other non-BRICS+, external countries.

The New Development Bank (BRICS) was established in 2015,

Ghana: A contender for BRICS alliance

has financed more than 100 projects, with total loans reaching approximately \$35 billion, and it is great that the branch of this bank operates from Johannesburg in South Africa. Understandably, South Africa can be an investment gateway to the rest of Africa. In 2021, Bangladesh, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay joined the NDB.

The BRICS bank works independently without any political strings, and has further pledged financial support for development initiatives in non-BRICS+ countries in the Global South. Its tasks include investing in the economy through concessional loans, alleviating poverty and working towards sustainable economic growth.

According to President of the BRICS New Development Bank, Dilma Rousseff, "The bank should play a major role in the development of a multipolar, polycentric world."

Ethiopia and Egypt are the latest addition to BRICS+ association from January 2024. South Africa and Egypt being the economic power houses, while Ethiopia ranks 8th position in the continent. In terms of demography, Nigeria is the populous, with an estimated 220 million people while Uganda has a population of 46 million.

South Africa, Ethiopia and Egypt are full members, Algeria, Nigeria and Uganda were offered 'partner states' category, but have the chance to pursue multi-dimensional cooperation with external countries. BRICS+ has absolutely no restrictions with whom to strike bilateral relationship.

From the above premise, Ghana's new administration, within the framework of BRICS+, could work out a strategic plan to establish full coordination with and request support from African members, including South Africa, Egypt and Ethiopia. Worth noting that membership benefits cannot be underestimated in this era of shifting economic architecture and geopolitical situation.

Queuing for BRICS+ Membership Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger which historically share the cross-border region of West Africa, are in the queue to ascend into the BRICS+ association. The trio formed their own regional economic and defense pact, the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) in Sept. 2023, and aspiring for leveraging unto BRICS+, most likely to address their development and security questions.

Brazil, as BRICS 2025

chairmanship, has set its priority on expansion of BRICS+, the enlargement wave began by Russia. More than 30 countries are the line join, hoping for equitable participation in bloc's unique activities uniting the Global South.

Perhaps, the most crucial moment for Ghana which shares border with Burkina Faso. Its military leader, Capt. Ibrahim Traoré was heartily applauded for attending the inauguration of the new President John Dramani Mahama on January 7th.

Burkina Faso, without International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, is transforming its agricultural sector to ensure food security, building educational and health facilities and sports complex which turns a new chapter in its political history.

In early January 2025, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) took over political power from the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Historically, the political transition has been quite smooth and admirable down the years. Ghana was ranked seventh in Africa out of 53 countries in the Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

The Ibrahim Index is a comprehensive measure of African governments, and methods of power transfer based on constitutional principles, rules and regulations.

Ghana produces high-quality cocoa. It has huge mineral deposits including gold, diamonds and bauxites. It has approx. 10 billion barrels of petroleum in reserves, the fifth-largest in Africa. President John Dramani Mahama, has reiterated to unlock the potentials, creating a resilient and inclusive economic model that would empower citizens and ultimately attracts foreign investments.

Ghana reduced the size of government, a required condition to secure funds from the IMF for development and resuscitating the economy. Ghana's involvement in BRICS+ will steadily enhance the dynamics of its traditional governance in multipolar world.

Outlining Ghana's potential benefits

Currently, Ghana has myriads of economic tasks to implement, aims at recovering from the previous gross mismanagement. It could take advantage of BRICS+ diverse partnership opportunities. Closing related to this, Ghana's headquarter of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) further offers

an appropriate collaboration in boosting further both intra-BRICS trade and intra-Africa trade.

With Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda, South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana, these put together paints an African geographical representation in BRICS+, and presents their collective African voice on the international stage.

After studying the report titled "Ghana Should Consider Joining the BRICS Organization" (Source: <http://infobrics.org>), the author Natogmah Issahaku, explained, in the first place, that Ghana's relations with other external nations, particularly, those in the West, will not, and should not be affected by its BRICS membership.

According to the expert, Ghana needs infrastructural development and sustainable economic growth in order to raise the living standard of Ghanaians to middle-income status, which could be achieved through participation in BRICS+. In return, Ghana can offer BRICS+ members export of finished and semi-finished industrial and agricultural products as well as minerals in a win-win partnership framework.

As an Applied Economist at the University of Lincoln, United Kingdom, Natogmah Issahaku emphasized the importance of the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB), that could play roles by financing Ghana's development agenda. BRICS development cooperation model is based on equality and fairness, Ghana can leverage its relations to optimize potential benefits.

Given the colossal scale of economic problems confronting the country, President Mahama should take strategic steps to lead Ghana into the BRICS+ without hesitation.

Notwithstanding world-wide criticisms, BRICS+ countries have advanced manufacturing and vast markets as well as technological advantages. As often argued, BRICS+ is another avenue to explore for long-term investment possibilities and work closely with its stakeholders.

These above-mentioned arguable factors are attractive for advancing Ghana in the Global South. Based on this, it is time to grab the emerging opportunity to drive increasingly high-quality cooperation, focus on hope rather than despair and step up broadly for a more constructive parameters in building beneficial relations into the future.

The role of age in determining effective teaching approaches

EFFECTIVE teaching practices should take into account the age of learners, as cognitive development and the ability to engage with learning materials vary significantly with age.

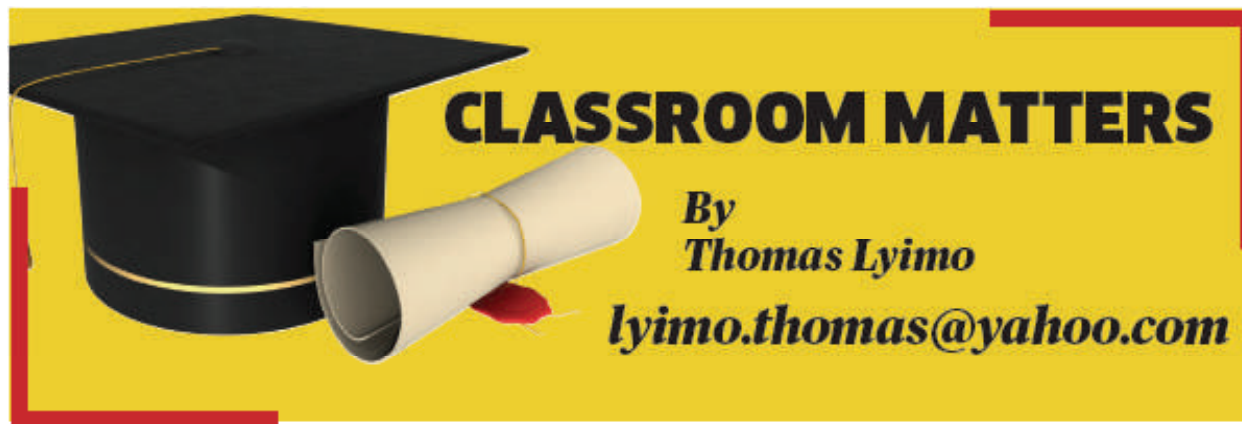
Young learners, unlike mature students, have limited life experience and require structured guidance from teachers. This reality underscores the need for educators to adopt age-appropriate teaching methodologies that cater to the developmental needs of their students.

A teacher's primary goal should be to facilitate knowledge acquisition by selecting teaching methods that align with learners' cognitive abilities. While some methodologies can be applied across age groups, others are more effective for specific developmental stages.

For instance, group discussions are generally ineffective for young learners but highly beneficial for mature students. This is because group discussions require a high level of critical thinking, which, according to Jean Piaget, typically begins to develop around the age of 12. At this stage, they develop the ability to think abstractly, reason logically, and engage in critical discussions.

Expecting children younger than this to engage in meaningful discussions may be unproductive and could lead to frustration. Before reaching 12 years, children are typically in the preoperational age (2-7) or concrete operational age (7-11), where their thinking is more concrete and egocentric. Young learners are more likely to benefit from structured learning, storytelling, and question-and-answer sessions.

It is important to recognize that treating young learners as though they pos-



sess the same cognitive abilities as older students may be counterproductive. Demanding beyond their capability can create frustration and make learning less engaging. Teachers must be mindful of their instructional strategies to ensure they align with the cognitive readiness of their students.

Creating an engaging learning environment

For young learners, teachers need to focus on maintaining an organized and engaging classroom environment. Managing distractions, such as noise, is essential. Lessons should be designed to captivate learners' interest, reducing the need for disciplinary interventions and allowing students to concentrate naturally.

Participatory teaching approaches can be introduced gradually as young learners develop. However, the most

practical method for engaging them initially is the question-and-answer technique, which encourages interaction without overwhelming them. Additionally, teacher-centered approaches remain critical for foundational skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, which require structured guidance rather than open-ended exploration.

Several teaching practices support the need for differentiated instruction based on learners' ages:

Young learners are more emotional and respond better to visual, tactile, and auditory stimuli. Teaching aids such as pictures, videos, and interactive tools help maintain their attention and enhance comprehension. In contrast, mature learners can grasp abstract concepts and engage in self-directed learning without relying heavily on teaching aids.

Most young learners attend school because of parental encouragement rather than intrinsic motivation. Therefore, teachers must create engaging and interactive lessons to ensure effective learning.

There is a clear distinction in the effectiveness of teacher-centered versus learner-centered approaches based on age. Young learners benefit more from teacher-centered instruction because they require foundational knowledge and skills that demand structured teaching.

Skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic are best learned through demonstration and repetition rather than discussion-based methods. Conversely, mature learners thrive in learner-centered approaches, including group discussions, problem-solving exercises, and critical thinking activities, as they have already

acquired foundational skills. Reinforcement strategies also differ based on age. Young learners respond well to tangible rewards and consequences, as they are more motivated by immediate and observable outcomes.

Encouragement, visual demonstrations, and physical rewards reinforce learning effectively. For mature learners, verbal reinforcement, such as praise or constructive feedback, is often sufficient to motivate and correct behavior.

Teaching should always be assessed for its impact on student progress. Since parents and educational stakeholders focus on measurable learning outcomes, teachers must use methods that effectively support academic achievement at different developmental stages.

Considering the learner's age—and by extension, their cognitive development—is crucial in lesson planning. Teaching should not merely be an energy-consuming task but a purposeful activity with clear objectives and strategies tailored to student needs.

Engaging in teaching without aligning methodologies with students' developmental levels can lead to inefficiency and lost learning opportunities.

Aligning teaching methodologies with students' developmental levels is crucial

because it supports cognitive development. Different age groups have varying cognitive abilities. Young learners are still developing critical thinking skills, so they require more structured, teacher-led instruction.

When teaching methods match students' developmental levels, they are more likely to stay engaged and motivated. Young learners need interactive activities, visual aids and storytelling, while older learners can handle debates, research projects, and collaborative tasks. Using methods beyond a student's capability can lead to confusion and frustration, while methods that are too basic can cause boredom and disengagement. Ensuring a proper match helps maintain the right level of challenge for students.

Successful teaching requires educators to recognize that young learners and mature students have distinct educational needs. Teachers must be realistic, goal-oriented, and strategic in their instructional approaches.

By tailoring teaching methods to the age and cognitive development of learners, educators can enhance engagement, improve learning outcomes, and foster a more effective and rewarding educational experience for all students.

By Adonis Byemelwa

THE legal profession, once a beacon of hope for young graduates, is fast becoming a cruel maze of frustration and dead ends. Boniface Mwabukusi, President of the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS), is calling on the government to rethink its tax policies on fresh-faced lawyers, warning that the current system is crippling their future before it even begins.

Speaking to members of the legal fraternity during the Law Day celebrations in Dodoma on Monday, February 3, 2025, he emphasized that young lawyers deserve fair treatment, not unnecessary hurdles.

He stressed that they are not just professionals but entrepreneurs in their own right—individuals striving to build their futures while safeguarding justice for the community. Instead of being burdened with policies that stifle their growth, they should be empowered to thrive, ensuring that the fight against injustice remains strong for generations to come.

"A young lawyer can spend over five years without making any meaningful gain from their profession," he laments. "They hustle under the scorching sun, clutching envelopes, chasing opportunities that never come. Many haven't even touched a major case, yet the government burdens them with heavy taxes—from rental fees to professional charges. How can they grow? How can they thrive when the law itself is scaring them away from practice?"

With too many young lawyers left wandering the streets, their potential untapped, Mwabukusi is clear: something must change, or Tanzania risks losing an entire generation of legal minds before they even get a chance to make their mark.

Again, in a world often clouded by division and skepticism, there remains a rare and noble pursuit: service to others. Mwabukusi embodies this spirit, unwavering in his mission to ensure justice reaches the people who need it most.

His conviction is clear—cooperating with the government is not a matter of personal gain but a responsibility to the citizens of Tanzania.

This stance, however, is not without controversy. In an era where public trust is fragile, any sign of collaboration between independent institutions and the state can ignite suspicion.

The decision by TLS to work with the government on the Samia Legal Aid initiative has sparked debate, with critics quick to assume compromise.

But Mwabukusi remains unfazed. For him, justice should not be a battleground for political posturing—it is a fundamental right that demands coop-

TLS: Defending justice, protecting future, challenging the status quo



Attorney General Hamza Johar (left) and Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) President Boniface Mwabukusi at the National Law Day celebrations held at Chinangali Grounds in Dodoma on February 3, 2025.

eration, not confrontation.

Mwabukusi dismissed claims that TLS's collaboration with the government, particularly through the Samia Legal Aid initiative, signified favoritism or self-interest. Instead, he championed the need for unity in serving the nation, stating that constructive engagement builds rather than erodes justice.

"When we work with the government, it is not about personal benefit. TLS is a legal body with a duty to serve," he declared, his voice steady with conviction.

Recent debates on social media have raised eyebrows over the organization's decision to accept a vehicle from the Ministry of Constitution and Legal Affairs. Some critics suggested it was a sign of undue allegiance, but Mwabukusi brushed off such concerns. The vehicle, he explained, is a tool to help TLS reach those who would otherwise be denied access to justice.

"We will accept any assistance that enables us to fulfill our duty. Our organisation lacks the financial resources to serve every citizen adequately,

so we welcome the support that helps us bridge that gap," he explained.

He went further to challenge perceptions about his leadership style. Once known for his outspoken nature, some have suggested he has mellowed since taking office. But for Mwabukusi, leadership is not about noise—it is about action.

"People ask why I don't speak as I used to. Leadership is not about endless talking. It is about doing," he said with quiet confidence.

Beyond these debates, he highlighted deeper struggles within the legal profession, particularly the harsh reality of defending those accused of serious crimes. With legal fees ranging from a meagre 100,000 to 300,000 Tanzanian shillings—barely enough to cover essential case preparation—many lawyers find themselves in moral dilemmas, torn between professional ethics and financial sustainability.

Furthermore, he lamented public misconceptions about their work, with many failing to grasp that legal defence is a fundamental right, not a moral endorsement of a client's ac-

tions.

"Even if an entire village despises someone, if I am their lawyer, they have a right to my representation. But too often, lawyers are unfairly judged alongside their clients," he observed, recalling instances where advocates have been detained merely for defending unpopular cases.

Despite these challenges, Mwabukusi remains resolute, and steadfast in his belief that justice must be both served and seen to be served. For him, the pursuit of fairness is not about optics or politics—it is about duty, about standing firm in the service of those who might otherwise be left without a voice.

The TLS boss has called for a critical review of laws governing natural resources, arguing that some of them leave the nation at a disadvantage. He stressed that Tanzania's wealth—bestowed by nature—should primarily benefit its own people rather than external interests.

"It is time for Parliament to re-examine these laws. Some are simply unfriendly to the very citizens whose God-given resources should uplift

them. We cannot afford to be spectators while our nation's wealth slips through our fingers," he asserted.

TLS has long been vocal about safeguarding national assets. In 2023, the society stood firm against the controversial DP World contract, challenging the government's decision to grant the Emirati firm control over Tanzanian port operations.

Their opposition was rooted in concerns over sovereignty, economic fairness, and the long-term impact on local interests. For Mwabukusi and TLS, the fight for justice is not just about courtrooms—it is about ensuring that future generations inherit a country whose resources work for them, not against them.

It is time for Parliament to re-examine these laws. Some are simply unfriendly to the very citizens whose God-given resources should uplift them. We cannot afford to be spectators while our nation's wealth slips through our fingers," Mwabukusi asserted.

For years, the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) has stood as a guardian of national interests, challenging decisions that threaten Tanzania's economic autonomy. It reminds leaders that true governance is not about short-term gains but long-term responsibility, ensuring the nation's resources benefit its people first.

Their role in opposing the 2023 DP World contract was a testament to this unwavering commitment. By resisting the agreement that would have granted an Emirati firm significant control over Tanzania's ports, TLS underscored the need for transparency, fairness, and national self-determination.

This kind of legal resistance is not unique to Tanzania. Around the world, strong democracies are built on the back of institutions that dare to speak truth to power. In the United States, legal bodies and civil rights groups have repeatedly taken the government to court over policies that threaten constitutional rights.

In the United Kingdom, legal professionals have challenged decisions that undermine public interest, ensuring that economic agreements benefit the people, not just a privileged few. These examples highlight a crucial reality: a strong legal community is the backbone of a nation's democratic health.

For TLS, the fight is not just about ports, contracts, or policies—it is about the legacy left behind for future generations. Mwabukusi and his peers understand that justice does not begin and end in the courtroom. It is woven into the very fabric of governance, economic policies, and the way a nation values its people. If Tanzanians do not defend what is theirs today, what will be left for their children tomorrow?

By Deepak Adhikari

How a Nepali border village learned to live with migratory wild elephants

THE heavy thud against the glass window sent Krishna Bahadur Rasaili's heart racing. Stepping outside, he saw his granary lay in ruins, and an elephant was feasting on his hard-earned paddy harvest.

For years, this has been a terrifying reality in Bahundangi, a village along Nepal's eastern border with India along the Mechi River. Wild Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*), following their ancient migratory routes, frequently storm farms, devour crops and even ransack granaries.

Desperate, villagers, including Rasaili, were accustomed to banging their tin drums and waving flaming torches in a futile attempt to drive them away. On the evening of Dec. 8, 2021, Rasaili even contemplated resorting to the old methods. But his family members remembered what local campaigners had told them about elephants and did something different.

Instead of shouting or fighting back, they quietly stayed indoors. With half of its body inside their home, the elephant devoured the rice and then moved on.

"We no longer fear elephants nor are we angry at them," Rasaili says. "When they come, we stay inside. If we don't disturb them, they walk their path. If we shout, they create trouble."

Once a hotspot for human-elephant conflict, this village has transformed itself into a model of peaceful human-wildlife coexistence through a combination of innovative strategies, conservationists say. The communities in the last decade adopted crops that are unappealing to elephants and have changed their attitudes toward the animal, thanks to the effective implementation of government support.

"Bahundangi has demonstrated that coexistence with wild elephants is possible. It shows that simply raising awareness is not enough; we need to actively change people's attitudes toward wildlife," Narendra Man Babu Pradhan, an elephant researcher and a former warden at Chitwan National Park, said.

The elephants once roamed the entire east-west corridor of Nepal's southern plains, traversing more than 900 kilometers (559 miles). Though their population at the time remains unknown due to lack of records, the rich flood plains of the Koshi, Gandaki and Karnali rivers provided enough food and lack of human settlement due to malaria, meaning they could move freely. But as time went by, the migration rush to the terai, development of roads and infrastructure hindered their free movement. This meant that two separate populations formed in the east and west due to lack of connectivity.

From conflict to coexistence

A decade ago, Bahundangi, now a settlement comprising 23,000 people, most of them migrants from the hills, was at the epicenter of human-elephant conflict in Nepal. Every year, during the dry season (between September and November), migratory wild elephants would cross the border from India, trampling fields, tearing down houses and occasionally killing villagers. Similarly, around 20 elephants died between 2012 and 2022, according to the district forest office in Jhapa.

"These elephants are naturally itinerant, walking several kilometers each day. As long as their dietary needs were met within forests, they rarely ventured into human settlements," Pradhan says. "However, due to shrinking forests and dwindling food sources, they are now forced to enter farms and homes in search of food."



Two wild elephants interact in the jungle in southern Nepal.

Whenever they came, the economic losses were staggering. The elephants devoured crops like paddy and maize – staples that local farmers depended on for survival. In 2010 alone, nearly 100 homes and granaries were destroyed, and at least three villagers lost their lives during an elephant crossing.

Faced with mounting losses, the federal government, with support from the World Bank, built an 18-km (11-mi) electric fence in 2015, hoping to create a barrier between their homes and farm fields and the elephants.

But elephants, incredibly intelligent creatures, quickly adapted.

"They used their tusks to knock down the top wires, rendering the fence useless in many areas," says Shankar Luitel, a local conservationist.

Despite its limitations, the fence significantly reduced crop damage. A 2018 study found a 93% decrease in crop losses and a 96% drop in property damage. Yet, elephants continued to find their way in, forcing villagers to rethink their approach.

In 2009, Nepal's government introduced the Wildlife Damage Relief Guidelines, a policy

that compensated villagers for losses caused by wildlife. The guideline was revised and updated several times following complaints of being lengthy and not providing adequate compensation to the victims.

"Before, when an elephant killed someone or destroyed crops, people were left to suffer alone," says Arjun Karki, a local official. "Now, families received financial support, which helped ease some of the resentment."

Still, policy alone couldn't change attitudes. That's where Luitel, the local conservationist, stepped in.

Luitel ensured that compensation was accessible to everyone, including illiterate farmers. He created simplified claim templates, making it easier for victims to navigate the process. To receive compensation, applicants must first obtain a recommendation from the local ward office and police. If the claim involves a death caused by a tusker attack, it is submitted to the district forest office; for crop loss, it goes to the district agriculture office.

The turning point Since 2015, Luitel has voluntarily assisted families with paperwork. "I have carried up

to 80 files in a year," he said. Farmer Rasaili, one of the many he has helped, says, "It's reassuring to have someone like him in our midst because we know we will receive compensation."

But elephants continued to breach the village. Farmers were still losing crops. It took months for the compensation to arrive. Fatal encounters persisted. It became clear that barriers alone wouldn't work. Farmers needed a way to protect their livelihoods without fighting the elephants.

That's when elephant-resistant farming emerged as a game changer. Farmers began shifting from maize and paddy to crops that elephants don't eat – such as tea, bay leaves and lemons.

Arjun Karki led the initiative to encourage farmers to switch to crops other than maize and rice. He says that, at first, the farmers – who traditionally grew Nepal's staple crop, rice – were skeptical.

"After two years, the first tea leaves were ready for harvest. We sold our first 35 kilograms [77 pounds] of tea leaves, carrying them across the border on a bicycle because there was no market here," he recalls. By selling tea, they were able to

buy their staple rice.

"After a few years, we switched from bicycles to bullock carts for transportation. Eventually, we started using tractors," he adds.

At first, Diwakar Neupane, a 65-year-old farmer, was skeptical about replacing his maize and rice fields with tea. But after a few years, he saw the benefits. "It was hard at first," he says. "But now I have a stable income, and I no longer worry about elephants eating my crops."

The shift was also influenced by water shortages and labor scarcity for paddy farming. As more farmers switched, Bahundangi's farmland became less attractive to elephants.

Changes in crop selection Today, the village sells tea worth 22 million Nepali rupees (\$158,700) annually, according to Karki. Farmers have also embraced bay leaves and lemons, further diversifying their income.

The experience of Bahundangi resonates deeply with research by researcher Ashok Ram and his team. His 2021 study found that most elephant attack victims were men (87.86%) with low education levels. A quarter of attacks happened while people were chasing elephants, often involving solitary bulls or groups of young males. Incidents were more frequent outside protected areas, with higher fatality risks for those who were drunk or using firecrackers. In contrast, chasing elephants using fire was negatively associated with fatalities. Attacks were concentrated near forests, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities.

"Elephants generally do not retaliate unless provoked. If they are left undisturbed, they continue on their path peacefully. However, when people chase or harm them, elephants remember and may act defensively," Pradhan says.

In 2022, Karki campaigned for the chair of Mechinagar Municipality-4, which covers Bahundangi, winning on the promise to make the village free from the tusker attacks. A year ago, he invited Kedar Karki, the chief minister of Koshi province, to walk through the area to raise awareness about human-elephant conflict.

As more farmers transitioned to elephant-resistant crops, the motivation for conflict decreased.

In recent years, farmers of Bahundangi have also started beekeeping because bees naturally deter elephants. "We are encouraging farmers to cultivate mustard, which attracts bees and supports beekeeping

initiatives," says Karki. This approach not only helps protect crops but also provides an additional source of income for farmers.

Meanwhile, the community has mobilized volunteers into a rapid response team (RRT) to guide elephants away from residential areas and ensure safe passage through migratory corridors.

"Some people roam the streets at night after drinking alcohol. They are vulnerable to attacks," says Sadesh Paudel, a 26-year-old elephant monitor. "When elephants arrive, only RRT volunteers patrol the area."

The RRT, trained by Ujjalo Nepal, an NGO, and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, a Kathmandu-based intergovernmental body, consists of insured volunteers who intervene safely when elephants enter the village, particularly during harvest seasons.

The real transformation began a decade ago, when these solutions started to yield results. The last fatal elephant attack in Bahundangi was in 2015, when Manahari Dhungel, 65, was killed while collecting fodder in the forest.

"Police were chasing the elephant, making loud noises to warn people," recalls Tika Maya Dhungel, his widow. "My husband had covered his head with a cloth cap to protect from the cold. He couldn't hear the screams. The elephant trampled him."

Since then, thanks to coexistence strategies, no further fatalities have been reported.

Four years after the terrifying night when an elephant raided his granary, Krishna Bahadur Rasaili and his family have fully embraced coexistence. "We stayed inside and applied for compensation later." Assured of the compensation, the Barailis still grow maize and paddy on small patches of land to meet their staple needs even though many farmers have switched crops.

Conflict moves west While Bahundangi has transformed itself from a place plagued by human-elephant conflict to the one living in harmony with the animal, the villagers west of it are now grappling with the challenges.

In January alone, three villagers were killed following an encounter with a wild elephant in Sundar Haraicha, roughly 85 km (53 mi) west of Bahundangi. Pradhan says Bahundangi could serve as a model for Sundar Haraicha and villages to its west so that the elephants get to move on their traditional routes.

"Rather than providing food for the elephants, our priority should be creating corridors that allow them to move freely," says Pradhan, the elephant researcher. "While fencing can offer a temporary solution to protect farms, we must ensure safe passages to prevent them from entering human settlements."



Diwakar Neupane, a farmer who switched from rice farming to growing tea in his fields to prevent elephants from crop-raiding, at his home in Bahundangi, a village along Nepal's eastern border with India.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Ghana wants more for its cashews, but it's a tough nut to crack

ACCRA

THE Accra street vendor looks at me, bemused.

I'm trying to establish how the rather flimsy 30g bag of roasted cashew nuts she's selling, beside a sweltering highway in Ghana's capital, costs me the equivalent of about 75 cents (60p).

That's obviously not a lot of money for me, a visitor from the UK, but I'm amazed at the mark up.

The price is at least 4,000 percent higher than the cost of buying the same weight of raw, unshelled cashews from a Ghanaian farmer.

"It's incredible," I protest. Yet she doesn't understand my English, or my reasoning.

The price of the nuts was, after all, printed on the packet. And explaining why I thought it was beyond the pale was never going to be easy.

Ghana is the world's third-biggest exporter of unprocessed cashew nuts, behind Ivory Coast in first place, and Cambodia in second.

To produce the crop, around 300,000 Ghanaians make at least part of their living growing cashews.

Nashiru Seydou, whose family have a farm in the country's north-east, some 500 miles (800km) from Accra, is one of them.

He says the work is hard, and unreliable supply chains and volatile wholesale prices make survival difficult.

"We are struggling. We can use the sunlight, the fertile land, to create more jobs," he says. "I'd be happy if the government comes to our aid and helps support our industry."

He tells me that he currently gets around \$50 for a large 100kg sack of unshelled cashews.

Ghanaian cashew nut farmer Nashiru Seydou says it is a tough way to make a living

"It's amazing," says Bright Simons, an entrepreneur and economic commentator in Accra, who has studied the numbers. "Roasters and retailers buy the nuts from farmers for \$500 a tonne, and sell to customers [both at home and abroad] for amounts between \$20,000 and \$40,000 a tonne."

As a whole, Ghana grows about 180,000 tonnes of cashews annually. More than 80 percent is exported, and in raw, unshelled form. This generates some \$300m in export revenues, but means



that Ghana misses out on the significantly higher returns you get from roasted, ready-to-eat cashews.

Mildred Akotia is one person trying to increase the amount of cashews that are shelled and roasted in Ghana. She is the founder and CEO of Akwaaba Fine Foods, which currently processes just 25 tonnes a year.

Akotia denies any suggestion that she and others like her are price-gouging. The packaging and roasting machinery a western business would automatically use in this industry, she says, is out of reach for her because of the high cost of credit in Ghana.

"If you go to a local bank, it will cost you 30 percent interest to get a loan," she complains. "As a manufacturer you tell me how large your margins are that you can af-

ford that kind of interest? We've had to rely on what we can get: soft loans from relatives and grants from donor agencies."

She says that this situation is why less than 20 percent of Ghana's cashews are processed locally. The bulk are scooped up and exported to big factories in countries like India, Thailand and Vietnam.

Remarkably, some of those packaged nuts are then exported back to Ghana, where they are sold for the same price as domestically roasted cashews. This is despite the 20,000-mile sea freight round trip, and import costs.

It is a similar picture for rice, which is exported to Ghana from Asia and sold at low prices, despite Ghana also growing the crop itself.

A bag of Ghanaian cashews that were roasted locally

Domestically processed and roasted cashew nuts are available in Ghana, but imported brands are the same price

Back in 2016 the Ghanaian government experimented with an export ban on raw cashews in order to encourage home grown processing. However the policy had to be abandoned within a couple of weeks after uproar from farmers and traders.

Without available cheap loans, it wasn't possible for sufficient new Ghanaian roasters to enter the market. So the price of raw nuts crashed, and many started rotting for want of a buyer.

More recently there has been talk of increased tariffs on raw cashew exports and bans on exporters purchasing cashews directly from farms.

But all these policy inter-

ventions miss a key point, according to Simons. A big challenge for local producers, he says, is to work harder on the basics of doing business, and growing their companies.

"In order to be efficient at this, you need scale," he says, adding that firms need to promote eating cashews to make it more widespread in the country. "You need a lot of a Ghanaians consuming the nuts, not just a small middle class."

Prof Daron Acemoglu, a Turkish-American economist, agrees that building a strong local market is important for Ghana's cashew industry. He was one of last year's winners of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, for his work on the struggles facing low-income economies, and in particular their home-grown busi-

nesses.

Yet he says that the first priority should be improving access to international markets for processed Ghanaian cashews.

"These firms are dealing with workforces that aren't properly skilled, they have infrastructures that aren't working, they are constantly in fear of corrupt officials, or rule changes, and also it's very difficult to reach foreign markets, he says. "They need the foreign market because the domestic market is small, and their own government has very little capacity [to boost it]."

He also wants to see the Ghanaian government improve the network of roads and railways to ease the cost of transportation.

But, Simons reckons the onus should now be on Ghanaian businesses themselves, to do the basics to enhance the branding and marketing of cashews. As it is, he says, many of the country's most enterprising business people are just leaving Ghana for better paid opportunities abroad because of the red tape and cronyism in Ghana are so prohibitive.

"There's a massive brain drain," he says. "My theory of why Africa's economic development has been slow is because we focus too much on the supply side, but the real beauty is in demand, creating a consuming class of cashew-eating enthusiasts, and you don't have an entrepreneurial class that can create demand transformation."

He says the same argument applies to Ghana's other bigger exports, like gold and chocolate, neither of which gets much value-addition within Ghana before getting exported to the West.

Mildred Akotia hopes she might be one of those entrepreneurs to buck the trend. She now wants to build her own logistics arm, to be able to process the cashews direct from the farm gate.

"I have a lot of calls from the UAE, from Canada and America. Currently we can't meet demand. We can't get enough kernels to roast."

"There's a ready market both locally and internationally. My branding is good, my marketing is good. My dream is to give a facelift to Ghanaian processed foods."



Kenya's biodiversity threatened by climate change, land fragmentation, says report

NAIROBI

CLIMATE change, subdivision of land and ongoing infrastructure development are threatening Kenya's biodiversity, said a report that was launched Monday in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital.

Kenya's Key Biodiversity Areas Status and Trends 2023 report compiled by Nature Kenya, a conservation lobby, assesses the country's biodiversity hotspots.

Paul Gacheru, sites and species program manager at Nature Kenya, said that key biodiversity areas in Kenya are under threat due to pressures from drought, infrastructure development, land use chang-

es, and deforestation.

"There is a growing trend of degazetting critical biodiversity hotspots, poor management plans of forests, and lack of enforcement of policies to protect these sites," Gacheru said.

Of the 56 sites assessed in 2023, only three -- Lake Bogoria National Reserve, Mau Forest Complex, and Mrima Hill Forest -- were ranked as "favorable," a decline from the five sites ranked under a similar category in 2022.

"Of the three sites, only Lake Bogoria National Reserve retained the favorable score. Forty-seven sites had 'unfavorable' state score while six had 'very unfavorable' state score," the report notes.

It reveals that the conver-

sion of grasslands to croplands in Kinangop highland grassland in central Kenya has resulted in the loss of habitat for an endangered bird known as Sharpe's Longclaw, which is only found in Kenya, while Lake Ol' Bolossat in central Kenya has experienced poaching of grey crowned crane chicks and eggs.

The report also raises concern about the collision and electrocution of birds by energy infrastructure, as well as continued water pollution trends at important biodiversity sites such as Lake Nakuru and Lake Naivasha in the Rift Valley.

Salt manufacturing factories have been identified in the report as part of the cause of the

degradation of many key biodiversity areas in the coastal region. It states that these factories dispose of highly concentrated waste, which ends up affecting mangrove forests by killing trees due to an increase in water salinity.

The report warns that unregulated livestock numbers are increasing pressure on pasture and competition with wildlife, threatening the ecological health of world-famous wildlife sanctuaries including Amboseli, Maasai Mara, and Samburu-Laikipia landscapes.

According to the report, there are more than 16,400 key biodiversity areas globally, with Kenya accounting for 109, which includes 68 sites identified on the basis of birds.

Trump orders target several UN bodies

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has stopped US engagement with the UN Human Rights Council, extended a halt to funding for the Palestinian relief agency UNRWA and ordered a review of the UN cultural agency UNESCO.

"It's got great potential and based on the potential we'll continue to go along with it, but they got to get their act together," Trump told reporters. "It's not being well run, to be honest and they're not doing the job."

"A lot of these conflicts that we're working on should be settled, or at least we should have some help in settling them. We never seem to get help. That should be the primary purpose of the United Nations," the US president said.

UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said, "From day one, U.S. support for the United Nations has saved countless lives and advanced global security."

"The secretary-general looks forward to continuing his productive relationship with President Trump and the US government to strengthen that relationship in today's turbulent world."

Trump said that he was not looking to take away money from the 193-member world body, though he complained that Washington had to pay a disproportionate amount.

Washington is the UN's largest contributor - followed by China - accounting for 22 percent of the core U.N. budget and 27 percent of the peacekeeping budget. The U.N. has said the U.S. currently owes a total of \$2.8 billion, of which \$1.5 billion is for the regular budget. These payments are not voluntary.

Trump's order on Tuesday was largely symbolic and mirrored moves he made during his first term in office, from 2017-2021.

Since taking office for a second term on Jan. 20, Trump has ordered the U.S. to withdraw from the World Health Organisation and from the Paris climate agreement - also steps he took during his first term in office.

The US was UNRWA's biggest donor - providing \$300 million-\$400 million a year - but former President Joe Biden paused funding in January 2024 after Israel accused about a dozen UNRWA staff of taking part in the deadly Oct. 7, 2023, attack by Palestinian militants Hamas that triggered the war in Gaza.

The US Congress then formally suspended contributions to UNRWA until at least March 2025. UNRWA provides aid, health and education services to millions of Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

The United Nations has said that nine UNRWA staff may have been involved in the Oct. 7, 2023, attack and

were fired. A Hamas commander in Lebanon - killed in September by Israel - was also found to have had a UNRWA job. The U.N. has vowed to investigate all accusations made and repeatedly asked Israel for evidence, which it says has not been provided.

The first Trump administration also quit the 47-member Human Rights Council halfway through a three-year term over what it called chronic bias against Israel and a lack of reform. The US is not currently a member of the Geneva-based body. Under Biden, the US was re-elected and served a 2022-2024 term.

A council working group is due to review the US human rights record later this year, a process all countries undergo every few years. While the council has no legally binding power, its debates carry political weight and criticism can raise global pressure on governments to change course.

Trump's executive order on Tuesday also asks Secretary of State Marco Rubio to review and report back to him on international organisations, conventions, or treaties that "promote radical or anti-American sentiment."

He specified that the UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) should be reviewed first because Washington had previously accused it of anti-Israel bias.



Thursday 6 February, 2025

By Wendy Weng

Half of the world's top 10 banks by net profit are based in China

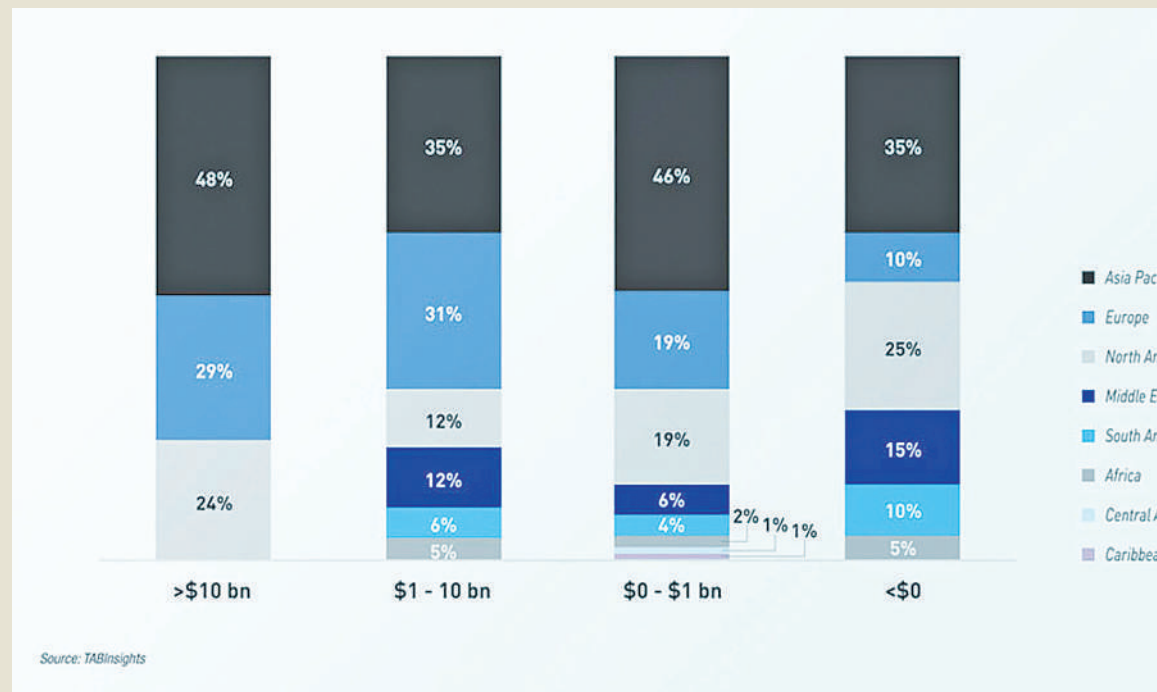
Chinese banks dominate the world's top 10 banks by net profit, but their profit growth lagged behind US and UK banks, mainly due to rate cuts, narrowing profit margins.

Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) remained the bank with the largest net profit in the financial year (FY) 2023, while JPMorgan Chase of the United States (US) surpassed China Construction Bank (CCB) and Agricultural Bank of China (ABC) to claim the runner-up spot of banks with the largest net profits, according to the TAB Global 1000 World's Largest Banks Ranking 2024.

The top 10 banks by net profit in FY2023 comprise five Chinese banks, three American banks and one each from Switzerland and the United Kingdom (UK). ICBC leads with a net profit of \$52 billion, followed by JPMorgan Chase at \$50 billion and CCB at \$47 billion.

UBS Group entered the top 10 with a net profit of \$28 billion, following its acquisition of Credit Suisse. Bank of America and HSBC Holdings also made the top 10, with net profits of \$27 billion and \$25 billion, respectively. Citigroup and Industrial Bank, which saw profit decline 37 percent and 16 percent, respectively in FY2023, have fallen out of the top 10.

Asia Pacific banks lead in net profit



Among the world's 1,000 largest banks, 21 reported net profit exceeding \$10 billion in FY2023, including 10 banks from Asia Pacific, six from Europe, and five from North America. Notably, eight of the 10 Asia Pacific banks in this group are from China, highlighting the dominance of Chinese banks in the global banking sector.

Additionally, 197 banks posted

net profit between \$1 billion and \$10 billion, with 35 percent from Asia Pacific, 31 percent from Europe and 12 from North America.

In the Middle East, the banks with the largest net profits are Emirates NBD Bank at \$5.9 billion, Saudi National Bank at \$5.4 billion, and First Abu Dhabi Bank at \$4.5 billion.

United Arab Emirates (UAE) banks saw strong profit growth in FY2023, with Emirates NBD Bank and First

Abu Dhabi Bank overtaking Al Rajhi Bank and Qatar National Bank to enter the top three banks by net profit in the region. In Latin and South America, the leading banks are Itaú Unibanco with \$6.8 billion and Banco do Brasil with \$6.6 billion. In Africa, Standard Bank Group reported the largest net profit of \$2.7 billion.

Chinese banks retained the highest net profits despite subdued growth

US and UK banks showed mixed results

Among the world's top 10 banks by net profit, JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo reported notable profit growth in FY2023, reversing decline from the previous year. JPMorgan Chase achieved a 32% increase in net profit, driven by higher margins, the strategic acquisition of First Republic Bank and its diversified operation, which offset weaker segments like investment banking. Wells Fargo reported a 42% profit growth, reaching \$19 billion, primarily due to higher net interest income and lower operating expenses, resulting from operational streamlining and cost-cutting initiatives.

HSBC also posted significant profit growth, with a 51% rise in net profit. This increase was supported by higher net interest income across its global businesses, amid the rising interest rate environment, as well as gains from the sale of its retail banking operations in France and the acquisition of Silicon Valley Bank UK.

Bank of America was the only top 10 bank to report a decline in net profit in 2023, which fell by 4%. The bank faced challenges due to its significant exposure to fixed-income securities, which saw valuation decline as interest rates rose.

Sluggish loan demand and narrowing margins in certain sectors further limited its ability to fully capitalise on higher interest rates. Additionally, increased operating expenses and higher credit loss provisions weighed on performance. However, when adjusted for special charges, net profit rose by 7% compared to 2022.

Half of the world's top 10 banks by net profit are based in China, including ICBC, CCB, ABC, Bank of China (BOC) and China Merchants Bank (CMB). However, Chinese banks saw subdued profit growth, facing challenges from weak loan demand and reductions in the five-year loan prime rate, amid a slowing economy and an ongoing property sector crisis.

The rate cuts, part of policy efforts to support strategic sectors with cheaper financing, and the repricing of existing mortgages resulted in a decline in the average net interest margin (NIM) for Chinese banks, from 1.91 percent in 2022 to 1.69 percent in 2023. ICBC reported a 6% drop in pre-impairment operating profit for FY2023, although its net profit grew by 0.8 percent due to lower loan loss provisions. CCB, ABC and BOC posted modest net profit increases of 2.3 percent, 4.2 percent and 4.1 percent, respectively. The large banks were more significantly affected due to their larger exposure to mortgages and infrastructure loans.

In FY2024, Chinese banks continued to face challenges with narrowing NIMs and declining profitability. The big four banks remained under pressure, as Beijing works to support the struggling property sector and stimulate economic growth.



Norway pledges US\$15m in support of agriculture

By Guardian Reporter

The government of Norway has pledged \$15 million as a commitment to supporting Tanzania's agricultural sector through new strategic partnerships.

This comes after Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE), the Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO), and AGRA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance agricultural development in the country.

This agreement aims to support ATO in implementing Flagship 7 (Agricultural Masters Plan), which focuses on creating an enabling environment for replicating the SAGCOT model in three additional Agricultural Growth Corridors, namely Mtwara, Central and Northern Corridors.

During the ceremony, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, David Silinde, officially launched RNE's support to the SAGCOT Centre, the institution mandated by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to lead the replication of SAGCOT's lessons

to other agricultural corridors across Tanzania.

The funding from RNE will enable the SAGCOT Centre to deepen its interventions within the SAGCOT Corridor while also advancing the Agricultural Growth Corridors of Tanzania (AGCOT) initiative.

This initiative is aligned with President Samia Suluhu Hassan's 2023 directive to the SAGCOT Centre CEO, emphasizing the importance of expanding the SAGCOT model nationwide.

The President issued the directive to the SAGCOT CEO as a member of Tanzania's Presidential Advisory Council for Food and Agriculture.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, David Silinde commended the collaboration, highlighting Tanzania's achievement of 128 percent food self-sufficiency in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

However, he emphasized that further efforts are needed to strengthen the sector.

The newly launched initiatives will focus on removing regulatory barriers, attracting

private investment, and scaling up the AGCOT model to drive sustainable agricultural transformation in Tanzania.

"Tanzania is committed to transforming agriculture to ensure food security, reduce poverty, and drive economic growth," said Silinde.

"With Norway's support, these projects will play a key role in achieving our goals."

The deputy minister added that the partnership drives food security, poverty reduction, and inclusive growth.

"Together, we're unlocking agriculture's potential to create jobs and uplift communities," said Tone Tinnes, Norwegian Ambassador to Tanzania.

"Our geographical position can make Tanzania a gateway into Africa and open us up to one of the dynamic growth areas of the world," said Geoffrey Kirenga, Chief Executive Officer, SAGCOT.

The Program for the Development of Agriculture in the Southern Region of Tanzania ("SAGCOT") is a Partnership Program between the Government and the private sector that was launched during the World Economic Forum - Africa (World Economic Forum - Africa) held in Dar-es-Salaam in 2010.

Its implementation takes a period of 20 years until 2030 with the main goal is to increase production productivity in agriculture, strengthen food security, reduce poverty and ensure sustainable conservation of the environment through commercial formalization for small farmers.

Its vision is to transform Tanzania's agriculture sector in a manner that agro-industries are inclusive of small and medium.



Tone Tinnes, Norwegian Ambassador to Tanzania

World's central banks start year with policy adjustments

ISTANBUL

The world's central banks started the new year with policy adjustments as the global fight against inflation continues.

Global economies are changing policies to adapt to new conditions while recession risks persist.

President Donald Trump's protectionist trade policies and tariff threats lead major central banks to be more cautious.

The Fed kept its rate unchanged at 4.25 percent to 4.50 percent, within estimates, citing mostly stabilizing unemployment, continuing strong economic activity, and strong labor market conditions.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell said there is no rush to adjust the bank's policy, and despite inflation still remaining somewhat high, it is closer to the long-term 2 percent

target.

The European Central Bank (ECB) cut its deposit interest rate to 2.75 percent, the refinancing rate to 2.90 percent, and the marginal borrowing rate to 3.15 percent, thereby cutting its three key policy rates by 25 basis points each.

The refinancing and marginal funding rates were cut for the fifth time since March 2016 and the deposit rate for the fifth time since September 2019.

The bank's decision came after slowing economic growth across the eurozone while inflation reached 2.4 percent in December last year, close to the bank's 2 percent target. ECB President Christine Lagarde said that the eurozone economy remains weak and has been stagnant in the fourth quarter of last year.

Türkiye's Central Bank cut its policy rate by 250 basis

points to 45 percent at its January meeting, noting that inflation declined the previous month and leading data last month showed increase within estimates, mainly driven by services.

The bank said core goods inflation remained low and indicators for last quarter showed domestic demand supported disinflation.

The Turkish Central Bank will announce a total of eight rate decisions this year.

Meanwhile, the Bank of Canada (BoC) cut its policy rate by 25 basis points to 3%, easing its policy for the sixth consecutive meeting. The bank stated it will gradually resume asset purchases in early March and the balance sheet will stabilize in line with economic growth.

BoC Governor Tiff Macklem stated that the US tariffs on Canadian imports could be very detrimental to Canada's economy.

At the same time, Sweden's Central Bank (Riksbank) announced that it cut its policy rate by 25 basis points to 2.25 percent due to weakening economic activity after facing high inflation, while the Danish Central Bank cut its interest rate by 25 basis points to 2.35 percent.

The Bank of Japan, on the other hand, raised its policy rate from 0.25 percent to 0.5 percent, the highest level since the 2008 global financial crisis, noting that while wages continued to rise, core inflation gradually rose towards 2 percent.

The bank stated that Japan's inflation will be around 2.5 percent in fiscal 2025 due to the depreciation of the Japanese yen and rising import prices, while global financial and capital markets are stable, yet not without uncertainties.

African banks must fix governance gaps to leverage intra-African trade

By Dr. Uche Igwe

African banks are currently facing considerable pressure. Most currencies in the region have weakened against the US dollar, leading to higher import prices and inflationary pressures.

For Nigeria's naira, exchange rate harmonisation has led to a depreciation of 215 per cent against the dollar in one year. In Nigeria and Kenya, regulatory requirements in the banking sector have been tightened in response to external and domestic shocks.

At least twenty-four banks in Kenya risk collapse due to proposed legislation that seeks to raise core capital for financial institutions. Twelve Nigerian banks have recently suffered rating downgrades.

Nigeria is currently experiencing the aftermath of the shock therapy administered to its economy by the new administration. This has led to severe headwinds and uncertainty for entities doing business in the country.

Specifically, the operations of Ecobank Nigeria have become a point of concern. The

Nigerian affiliate contributed a paltry 2 per cent out of the £260 million profit before tax declared by Ecobank group in the second quarter of 2024.

This has been attributed to falling net revenue and rising operating expenses. This has implications for the group's overall growth ambitions as they contemplate pulling out of some African countries amidst the reality of declining profits.

However, in a recent twist, Deutsche Bank AG conferred an award for outstanding performance on Ecobank Nigeria, despite these numbers.

Growing potential for intra-African trade under AfCFTA

Trade within Africa has enormous potential and the financial sector has a huge role in facilitating trade by enabling cross-border payments. However, barriers that raise transaction costs need to be removed in order to realise the potential.

The World Bank estimates that intra-African trade costs are the highest in the developing world and 50 per cent higher than in East Asia. Data



from the Africa Import and Export Bank indicate that trade within African nations grew at 7.2 per cent, reaching £154 billion in 2023.

Ecobank Transnational Incorporated (ETI) is positioning itself to work with other entities to raise it to £240 billion, leveraging the single market created by the African Continental Free Trade

Agreement.

As a pan-African Bank, Ecobank wants to position itself as a preferred bank for intra-African trade and investment.

In doing so, it seeks to utilise payment platforms like the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System to enable payments across its extensive network across thirty-five countries to boost trade with

in the continent further.

Poor ethics are costly barriers

Poor ethical practices stand between the bank and its aspiration as a champion of African finance. The ETI group may be facing a legal showdown as a result of the bank's untidy response to an alleged fraud involving two prominent Indian businessmen known as Prem Garg, Devashish Garg and Anit Garg.

These individuals were pre-existing bank customers who entered into a rice importation transaction between 2014 and 2015 through entities known as Agrico Agbe and Little Rose Trading Company, and lost about £133 million.

The case became the subject of litigation in Dubai as Ecobank sought to bring these individuals to justice and recover their losses. When these attempts were unsuccessful, Ecobank targeted Marcus Warde, a trade finance professional and Chairman of Wilben Trade, who Ecobank instructed to assist the Gargs in sourcing financing through discounting letters of credit to facilitate the trade.

Ecobank parties working through ETI Specialized Resolutions Company (ETISRC), headed by one Oladele Alabi, a former Executive Director, hatched an alleged extortion scheme and instigated criminal proceedings alongside a hostile media campaign against Mr Warde.

However, Ecobank had initially cleared Mr Warde and his company of any wrongdoing in the transaction because evidence exists that the Garg entities received the said monies. Media reports indicate that a recent litigation has been filed in the United Arab Emirates on the matter. Ecobank was approached for comments on the case, but they declined citing likely barriers due to ongoing legal proceedings while acknowledging the case.

As one of Africa's top 25 banks in 2024, ETI's corporate governance initiatives are key to the group's future success and growth trajectory. The reluctance of Nigeria's Central Bank to probe an alleged heist of such magnitude and associated allegations of extortion remains a source of anxiety to keen observers.

New leadership is turning a blind eye

Last March, Jeremy Awori, a Kenyan national with extensive experience in the continent's banking landscape, took over leadership of the Ecobank group, promising to deliver systemic change, consolidate growth and improve the transformation of the bank.

However, efforts must be made, as the CEO himself admits, to match risks with appetite in line with the principles that have been laid down. He has yet to walk the walk on this issue. The alleged extortion attempt has reportedly been brought to Awori's attention repeatedly. He has yet to show any visible appetite to resolve it, although the special resolutions company is said to be under his direct supervision.

How he deals with this may turn out to be one of the biggest tests of whether he is able to match his governance rhetoric with commensurate action. Governance deficiencies and poor oversight impact the resilience of financial institutions that wish to remain relevant in Africa and elsewhere.

Dr Uche Igwe (pictured) is a Senior Political Economy Analyst and Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics (LSE) Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa. He may be reached at: u.igwe@lse.ac.uk

UK needs to eliminate barriers on green investment

By Emma McCarthy & Yara Aziz

The UK is racing to build a greener future and take the lead in driving sustainable finance. Bold policies like the Labour Party's Green Prosperity Plan and the National Wealth Fund have been launched with the aim to drive investment in sustainable infrastructure. But turning ambition into action isn't easy. The real challenge lies in unlocking capital at scale, creating a stable investment climate and bridging the gap between government policy and private sector needs.

An OMFIF roundtable in January brought together experts from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the City of London and the National Wealth Fund to examine how best to scale capital for green infrastructure. The discussion underscored the critical role of public-private collaboration, innovative financing mechanisms and targeted policy interventions in achieving the UK's climate and economic objectives.

Achieving net-zero targets will require substantial investment in clean energy, green infrastructure and nature-based solutions. Conclusive government policies that align with private sector investment needs are essential to attract the necessary capital and overcome existing barriers.

Fuelling green growth and policy alignment

The National Wealth Fund has been designed to catalyse green investment, improve private sector participation and de-risk projects, while balancing financial sustainability with environmental and societal benefits. However, regulatory uncertainty, lengthy approval processes and a shortage of skilled workers continue to create hurdles by delaying projects and increasing costs



for investors.

At the same time, fragmentation across sectors is slowing progress. Disjointed energy, manufacturing and resource management policies make it harder for investors to navigate the green finance landscape effectively. Without better coordination across government departments, capital deployment will remain inefficient. Speakers at the discussion emphasised the need for centralised frameworks that bring together policies, financing strategies and infrastructure development plans to remove barriers to investment.

The UK remains a global leader in sustainable finance, with established strengths in carbon markets, insurance and regulatory frameworks. However, transition finance, which supports industries in decarbonising, remains underdeveloped. Regulatory fragmentation and a lack of clear, principles-based guidelines have slowed progress. Greater trust and transparency will be needed to unlock further investment opportunities.

Breaking barriers to transition finance and adaptation

Complex regulatory frameworks and slow project approvals continue to restrict the flow of private capital into green projects. Investors frequently cite uncertain policy landscapes and in-

consistent regulations as major barriers to increasing their exposure to sustainable investments. A more agile regulatory environment - one that reduces administrative hurdles while maintaining accountability - will be crucial.

To combat this, public-private partnerships could help de-risk large-scale green investments, particularly in early-stage projects where private capital is often reluctant to engage. Adopting principles-based regulation would also create greater flexibility, allowing investors to respond to emerging technologies and sustainability opportunities without being constrained by outdated frameworks.

Beyond decarbonisation, investment in climate adaptation and nature-based solutions remains underdeveloped. Adaptation projects, such as sustainable agriculture, flood prevention and biodiversity restoration, offer long-term resilience benefits but often struggle to attract private capital due to unclear return profiles and data limitations.

The roundtable discussion highlighted the need for government-backed financial mechanisms to reduce investor risk in these projects. Aligning public incentives with private sector expectations could create new pathways for capital to flow into adaptation finance.

Building a workforce

for the green economy

The UK is facing critical shortages in engineering, clean energy and resource management. Yet, effectively delivering the energy transition requires a skilled workforce. Without targeted investment in workforce development, green infrastructure projects could face delays and rising costs.

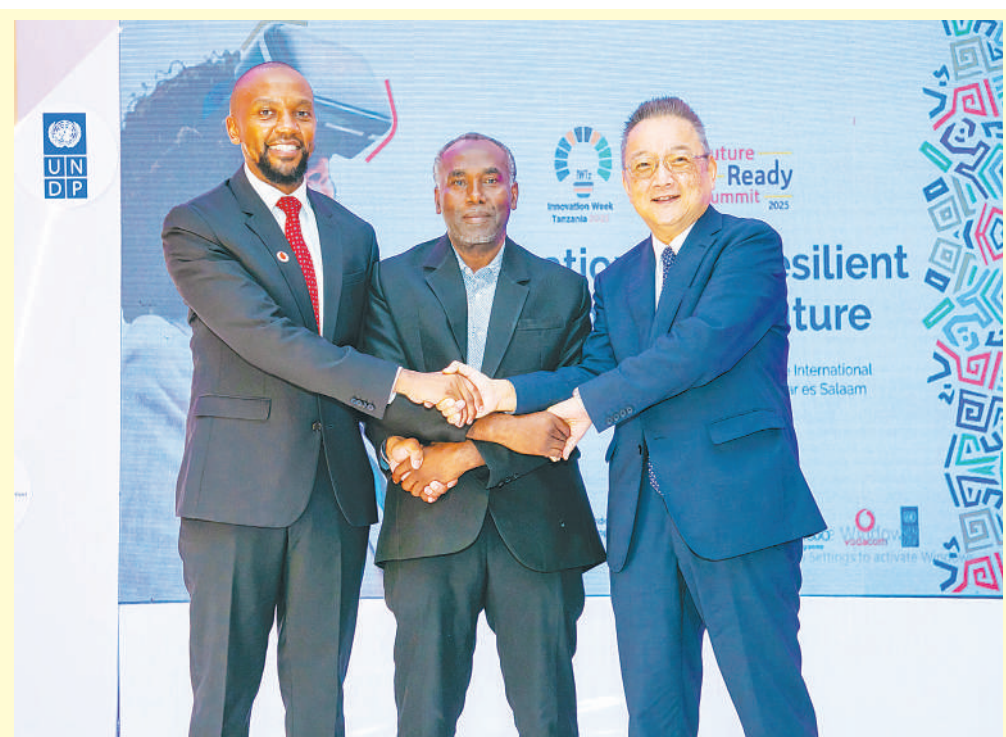
Collaboration between industry, academia and government must serve to ensure that educational initiatives align with market needs. Expanding apprenticeship programmes, vocational training and research partnerships will be essential in developing a workforce capable of supporting a low-carbon economy.

The path forward

Attracting long-term green investment in the UK requires a critical three-pronged approach of regulatory reform, public-private collaboration and better workforce development. Simplifying regulatory frameworks will remove barriers, while stronger coordination across government can tackle systemic challenges. Institutional capital, including pension funds, must also be mobilised to finance sustainable projects at scale.

At the same time, innovation in clean energy and resource efficiency must be supported to help startups and emerging technologies scale effectively. Strengthening investment in climate adaptation and nature-based solutions will also be key to building resilience in the face of climate change.

By addressing these challenges head-on and aligning policy with investment needs, the UK can reinforce its position as a global leader in sustainable finance. The transition to net zero is not just an environmental necessity, it is an economic imperative.



UNDP Tanzania Resident Representative, Shigeki Komatsubara (R) Vodacom CEO, Phillip Besimire (L) and Director of the Centre for Development and Transfer of Technology, Dr. Athman Mgunia (C) who represented the Director General of COSTECH, come together during the official announcement of the partnership on groundbreaking innovations and equipping individuals with the skills needed to thrive in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

New partnership seeking to drive Tanzania's digital transformation

By Guardian Reporter

In a spirit of collaboration and shared commitment to strengthening innovation and driving digital transformation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Tanzania through its FUNGUO Innovation Programme, Vodacom Tanzania, and the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) have announced a partnership to jointly host Innovation Week Tanzania 2025 (IWTz2025).

The flagship event will take place from 12-16 May 2025 at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre in Dar es Salaam, with nationwide satellite activities.

This year's theme, "Innovation for a Resilient and Inclusive Future," reflects a shared commitment to shaping the smart, sustainable, and inclusive urban futures, addressing youth jobs in the digital era, and accelerating the commercialization of research and innovation.

UNDP Resident Representative in Tanzania, Shigeki Komatsubara, reiterated UNDP's role in nurturing an inclusive

and resilient innovation ecosystem.

"At UNDP, we believe that innovation is central to tackling the challenges of sustainable development and creating inclusive growth opportunities, that's why UNDP has set up the FUNGUO Innovation Programme, with invaluable support from the European Union and FCDO," he said.

"Through this partnership, we aim to unlock the potential of Tanzanians, particularly youth and women, to become drivers of transformative change. IWTz2025 will showcase Tanzania's innovative spirit on a global stage, drawing inspiration and partnerships from successful ecosystems around the world."

Key focus areas include "Shaping Smart, Sustainable, and Inclusive Urban Futures", "Youth Empowerment in the Digital Era" and Research & Innovation Commercialization.

Speaking on behalf of the government, Dr Athman Mgunia, Director Center for Development and Transfer of Technology Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH), highlighted the

pivotal role of collaboration in fostering innovation.

"COSTECH is dedicated to connecting stakeholders across the ecosystem to accelerate Research, Technology, and Innovation that aligns with Tanzania's development priorities and Vision 2050," he said.

Phillip Besimire, Managing Director of Vodacom Tanzania, emphasized that "the partnership marks a pivotal moment in redefining Tanzania's innovation landscape, transcending national borders to unite global thought leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs from Africa and beyond."

"By bringing international perspectives and expertise into these discussions, we aim to establish Tanzania as a vibrant hub for digital transformation, and a youth-led and youth-driven innovation ecosystem in the region. We are committed to harnessing technology to improve lives forms the foundation of this partnership, driven by a shared vision to empower Tanzanians to thrive in an inclusive and sustainable digital economy," he said.

Medium, small truck owners ask for improved business environment

By Francis Kajubi

THE Tanzania Medium and Small Truck Owners Association (TAMSTOA) has extended five requests to the government to improve business environment for cargo transportation in the country.

TAMSTOA Chairperson, Chuki Shaban presented the requests to the government yesterday through the annual general meeting (AGM) of 2024 held yesterday in Dar es Salaam.

He asked the government through TANROADS to widen the Morogoro highway from the port of Dar es Salaam to Chalinze district in the Coast region so that there is a special route for trucks to help save time spent in traffic jams.

"Another road that

needs expansion is from Mbozi to Tunduma. We are asking for the disparity of weight machines to be resolved, especially in Mpemba, Makambako and Iringa Wenda stations," said Shaban.

He asked that the seizure of trucks should not be done for the purpose of bullying because it affects their performance and that the government should consider reducing the tax on the importation of new trucks in the country.

The AGM was themed 'Protecting and safeguarding the interests of members. Desire to leverage the owners of small and medium trucks to mainstream status. Collaborate with the government to solve the challenges of the transportation sector.'

"TAMSTOA has continued to grow until now it



Road Safety and Environment Manager of the Land Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA), Geoffrey Silanda (C) speaks during the 5th general meeting of the TAMSTOA held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. He is with TAMSTOA chairperson, Chuki Shaban (R), and Inspector of Police Dumu Mwalukenge. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

has more than 900 active members who own more than 26,000 trucks and employ more than 52,000 Tanzanians, mostly driv-

ers and their assistants," said Shaban.

He said that TAMSTOA has a great contribution to the economy, so

far according to LATRA's documents, there are 192,996 trucks transporting goods, of which more than 26,000 are owned

by the association members.

"The trucks use more than 62.4 million liters collectively, which costs more than 187mn/- per day, which is more than 2trn/- per year," he said.

Representing the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Transport, Prof Godius Kahyarara, Geoffrey Silanda, Manager, Road Safety and Environment at the Land Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA), said that the Ministry recognizes the efforts of TAMSTOA in defending the interests of its members and improving the environment for the implementation of its duties in collaboration with the government.

"The government has been working on the demands of businessmen to ensure that it provides relief to them so that they

can participate effectively in accelerating the national income," he said.

He said that the government has continued to set a conducive environment in the importation of cargo and execute transit cargo on time to enable truck owners to observe their duties accordingly.

According to Silanda, the government's strategies and goals are to see the contribution of the transportation sector to the national income growing.

In order to create a friendly transportation environment, the government has made efforts to issue permits for the establishment of sufficient interland container depots (ICDs) to enable the release of boxes and containers with cargo.

"The construction of the Kwala dry port is progressing successfully

with the aim of having adequate places to store cargo. The extension of the Morogoro road from Dar es Salaam to Chalinze is within the PPP plan," he said.

Silanda asserted that the expansion of the road from Mbozi to Tunduma is in the plan to give it the capacity to serve trucks.

In collaboration with the Tanzania Revenue Authority, the ministry is determined to eliminate the problem of truck drivers being arbitrarily arrested when they are traveling to the Mikumi Morogoro area.

"Truck importation tax is another challenge that the ministry is trying to deal with in collaboration with TRA. The government has good intentions to solve all the challenges facing the transportation sector so that it becomes more stable," he said.

A LETTER TO MY BROTHERS:

FINDING STRENGTH IN YOUR VULNERABILITY

By Godwin Jaha Semunyu

Dear Brothers,
Happy New Year! I returned home for the holidays, eager to reconnect with my roots. I expected to find thriving communities but was met with something deeply unsettling—our young men drowning in quiet despair. Vijana, many now riding bodaboda, who once brimmed with ambitions, now numb their secret pain with alcohol and other substances, silently grappling with defeat.

Sadly, this isn't just a rural issue. Across urban centers, young men are similarly trapped in cycles of depression. Cheap liquor has become an easy escape, but it's eroding productivity, breaking trust, and tearing families apart. Our boys are perishing right before our eyes.

When you listen closely, the cause becomes painfully clear: unmet expectations. Society demands that men succeed at all costs—to earn, to provide, to lead, and to embody strength. But when a man stumbles, society judges harshly, and forgiveness is rare.

We've heard countless tragic stories of how the pressure and expectations turn young men into drunkards, commens, fraudsters, and criminals. Make no mistake about it, I condone none of these misdeeds. But at times, we ought to take a step back and reflect.

We all heard of a young man whose wedding in December 2024 turned into a nightmare. Pressured by



society's standards, he borrowed heavily to host the "perfect" wedding. Days later, creditors had him thrown into custody. His fall became a national joke. But if you ask me, I saw a brother struggling to meet expectations that were never his to begin with—a product of our own environment.

The costly burden of silence

Men are taught to suppress their emotions. Traditions like jando and the Maasai warrior code teach fearlessness. My late father, a proud Zigua man, often said, "Wee mwanaume bwana!" or "Jikaze Mgesi!" whenever life hit me hard. So, I would dust myself off and soldier on. Zero emotion entertained.

Those lessons followed me into adulthood, and I passed it on to my son and nephews. We teach what we know. The mantra of "man up" has become both a shield and a prison for men.

We fight emotional battles in isolation, masking our pain with a façade of invincibility. When the burden

becomes too heavy, many turn to alcohol or worse—some take their own lives. The world offers no space for men to be vulnerable. As Antwone Fisher once recited, "Who will cry for the little boy?"

Globally, men are twice as likely to die by suicide as women. In Africa, it's worse—18 deaths per 100,000 people. Behind the mask of strength lies untold suffering.

The lie we've been told
My brother, the idea that you are baba mwenye nyumba—destined to conquer and succeed without fail—is a lie. Life will knock you down. You'll face failure, heartbreak, betrayal, and financial struggles.

What matters is how you rise after each fall. David Deida, the author of the best seller, "The Way of the Superior Man," writes, "A man's depth is revealed in how he handles failure, not in how he avoids it."

The silence that accompanies hitting rock bottom is outdated. Take defeats humbly and share your

burdens. Yes, you may have lost that business or job. So what? Go again. Fail again. Learn. Seek help when it is too much of a burden to carry alone. And if asking for help makes you a "mama's boy" or "weak," then so be it. Better safe than sorry.

The world won't stop spinning

One of my mother Odilia's favorite sayings was, "Godwin, the world will not stop revolving to wait for you to sober up." She reminded me of this whenever I wallowed in self-pity.

Brothers, there's no time to feel sorry for ourselves. Alcohol, drugs, and thoughts of suicide (God forbid) are not the answer. No one is coming to save you. The bills won't pause. Your responsibilities won't vanish. Some friends will dodge your calls. Others will leave. And yes—she might leave too. So what?

The buck stops with you. Only you can turn it around. If you're overwhelmed, reach out. Talk to a friend, a family member, or a faith leader. Open up. You'll be surprised to find that others have it worse.

Seeking help isn't weakness; it's resilience. If therapy feels out of reach, lean on your community—on the people you love you. Fall. Rise. Repeat.

Yes, it's exhausting, my brother. But, it's a man's world, right? Get back up.

Your big brother,

Godwin Semunyu (pictured) is an independent contributor and can be reached at: godwingodizo@gmail.com

BANKING & FINANCE

PBZ joins top ten banks 'club' as its total assets hit 2.5trn/-

ZANZIBAR.

The People's Bank of Zanzibar (PBZ) has seen a remarkable rise in its asset size by 500bn/- within the past year, propelling it to become the seventh largest lender in Tanzania, according to the bank's unaudited financial statements for the quarter ended in December 2024.

The lender posted a 27.77 percent increase in net profit, reaching 65.53bn/- in 2024, while boosting its assets to a total of 2.5trn/- from the 2trn/- reported at the end of December 2023.

An analysis of PBZ's asset base was largely driven by significant improvements in loans, advances, overdrafts, other assets, and interbank loans.

Last year, the bank enjoyed stellar performance across a range of financial metrics, particularly showing impressive growth in both funded and non-funded income streams.

Funded income rose by 18 percent, reaching 118.56bn/-, compared to 100.52bn/- the previous year, while non-funded income saw a 35 percent surge, totalling 51.72bn/-, up from 38.33bn/- in 2023.

PBZ's Managing Director, Arafat Ally Haji, credited the bank's strong performance to a combination of factors, including digital transformation, business-friendly policies, financial inclusion, expansion, product diversification and a strong internal culture.

"The successful launch of an enhanced mobile



PBZ's Managing Director, Arafat Ally Haji

banking app, along with improvements in internet banking and alternative service channels, has significantly increased accessibility," said Haji.

"These innovations have enabled smoother transactions, boosting customer engagement and driving deposit mobilisation."

PBZ has focused on expanding its reach, particularly to underserved areas, offering conventional and sharia compliant financial services to Tanzanians.

The bank, which has established a strong presence across Zanzibar, has now shifted its focus to mainland Tanzania, opening new branches in Morogoro, Mbeya, Mwanza, and Kinyasini in Unga.

This expansion has been further bolstered by an increase in agency banking platforms, now standing at 2,565, which have allowed PBZ to serve customers in areas beyond the scope of traditional bank branches.

PBZ has also maintained a robust loan book,

with Non-Performing Loans (NPLs) accounting for just 2.03 percent of total gross loans, reflecting effective credit risk management.

The bank's diversified portfolio, which now includes bancassurance, insurance premium financing, and tailored financial products, has further strengthened its position, attracting new customers while complementing existing credit services.

"These new services not only add value to our customers but also enhance our revenue streams," Haji noted. He also praised the leadership of President Samia Suluhu Hassan and Zanzibar's President Hussein Ally Mwinzi for their efforts in creating a stable economic environment that supports the growth of the financial sector.

"Their visionary leadership and commitment to strengthening the financial sector have been pivotal in creating a conducive environment for PBZ's continued growth," he concluded.

Savings, lending groups urged to adopt sustainable business models

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Korogwe

THE saving and lending groups empowered by the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) in the Korogwe Municipal Council have been urged to adopt sustainable business models, as these groups are not meant to be short-term initiatives like VICOBA (Village Community

Banks), but rather long-term companies.

Elizabeth Mwantyala, the TASAF Monitoring Officer (TMO) for the Korogwe District and Municipal Council, made these remarks on yesterday while addressing beneficiaries of the TASAF Fund at Mtonga Ward, in Korogwe.

She emphasized that these groups should not

be seen as temporary or seasonal ventures, stating, "Our groups are not for dissolution every year."

"They are companies, a company is not dissolved every year. Think about someone who is prominent business tycoon in the country. If he had to start fresh every year, would he have accumulated all his wealth? Of course not.

You can't go far with such a mindset. The structure of these groups is different from the typical VICOBA model," she emphasized.

Mwantyala further explained that the objective is to help individuals start with small amounts of capital, such as 50,000/-, and build up to larger sums over time.

This incremental approach

allows them to borrow more significant amounts, like 150,000/-, and invest in small businesses like selling vegetables, tomatoes, onions, and other daily essentials.

She also highlighted that such saving and lending groups could potentially help members to invest in larger assets, such as buses.

During TASAF's second phase, funds were provided

to support special groups, including widows, and some beneficiaries even went on to own buses.

"Having capital opens up many opportunities. Korogwe town has many markets and shops. Even if you don't have milk, you can make porridge and sell it at the market. Or you can fry and sell mandazi (doughnuts). Even if others owe you money, accept the

debt because when they repay, you can add a little extra to the cost. They will stop borrowing and start paying cash," Mwantyala advised.

For his side, Mohamed Muna, a TASAF facilitator in the Korogwe Municipal Council, also conducted a workshop for beneficiaries in Mtonga Ward, urging them to explore opportunities in the clean cooking energy sector.

WORLD

US withdraws from UN Human Rights Council

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday signed an executive order withdrawing the United States from the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

The executive order also stops funding for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and requires the US State Department to reevaluate the UN Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Trump made his announcement on the same day he met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose country has consistently criticized both the human rights body and UNRWA for alleged bias against Israel.

During Trump's first term, the United States withdrew from the UNHRC in June 2018. In February 2021, then Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement that the Joe Biden administration would reengage with the council as an observer.

Since 1950, UNRWA has been assisting Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.



US President Donald Trump speaks to the press as he signs executive orders in the Oval Office of the White House on Tuesday in Washington, DC. (PHOTO AFP)

Greenland calls March 11 elections as Arctic island fields US interest

NUUK

GREENLAND'S prime minister announced on Tuesday that the semi-autonomous Danish territory will hold a general election on March 11 amid interest by US President Donald Trump in acquiring the Arctic island.

The top issues in the election campaign are expected to be Greenland's independence aspirations and relations with Denmark and the United States as well as the fragile economy which depends on fishing and Danish grants.

Reviving an idea he floated during his first term in 2019, Trump last month expressed a desire to "get" the strategically significant island, leaving open the possibility of using military or economic force to achieve this.

Greenland, which has vast untapped mineral resources, has said it is open for business but does not wish to be part of the United States.

In response to Trump's interest and fears of foreign intervention, legislators on Tuesday moved to ban foreign and anonymous political party donations.

US interest also prompted lawmakers to tighten regulations on foreign real estate and property investments this week.

"We are in the midst of a serious time. A time that we have never experienced in our country. This is not the time for internal division." Prime Minister Mute Egede said in a social media post that did not mention Trump.

A movement towards full independence from former colonial ruler Denmark has gathered momentum in recent years.

Egede, who turns 38 on the day of the election, supports independence but has not proposed a plan to achieve this. He heads a government coalition of his own



Greenland's Prime Minister Mute B. Egede meets the media at Christiansborg in Copenhagen on Jan 10, 2025. AP

left-wing Inuit Ataqatigiit party and the social-democratic Siumut party.

While all five parliamentary parties support independence, they differ on how and when this should be achieved. Only the opposition party Naleraq, which currently holds five seats in the 31-seat parliament, wants to sever ties with Denmark

immediately.

"The most important part of our election campaign will be to start the process of independence from Denmark," Naleraq party leader Pele Broberg told Reuters.

A majority of Greenlanders would vote for independence if such a referendum were held now, according to a recent

survey by pollster Verian, commissioned by the Danish newspaper Berlingske and Greenlandic daily Sermitsiaq.

However, the poll also showed that 45 percent would oppose independence if it negatively affected living standards, indicating that the path towards independence remains uncertain.

UN humanitarianists concerned over escalating hostilities in Sudan

UNITED NATIONS

ESCALATING hostilities in Sudan's North Darfur and South Kordofan states are increasing civilian casualties and displacements, causing extreme concern, UN humanitarianists said on Tuesday.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), over the past 10 months, more than 600,000 people fled El Fasher and other localities in North Darfur to seek safety.

"In recent weeks, attacks have been re-

ported across much of El Fasher and surrounding areas, including the Abu Shouk displacement camp, the Saudi hospital and the western areas of the town," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said. "Famine conditions were confirmed in Abu Shouk camp in December and are expected to persist through May of this year."

The office is also alarmed by escalating hostilities in South Kordofan amid fighting between the Sudanese army and the Sudan People's Liberation Move-

ment-North. OCHA said that in the South Kordofan capital, Kadugli, more than 50 people were reportedly killed on Monday, primarily women and children, following a series of airstrikes. More than two dozen others were injured.

The UN resident humanitarian coordinator in Sudan, Clementine Nkweta-Salami, condemned the relentless and intensifying shelling and air and drone strikes against civilians in conflict-affected areas, describing the violence as not warfare but a "ruthless assault on hu-

man life."

"As hostilities continue across the country, civilians there also face the threat of explosive remnants of war," OCHA said. Last week, two children were killed by unexploded ordnance in Gereida, in South Darfur State.

"That is what local humanitarian colleagues are telling us." The office said that more than 13 million people in Sudan need support to address the threats of explosive hazards, but funding for response remains limited.

Zelensky's calls to provide Ukraine with nuclear arms 'approach madness' - Kremlin

MOSCOW

UKRAINIAN President Vladimir Zelensky's recent remarks about the provision of his country with nuclear arms that would be sufficient to defend against Russia are "approaching madness," Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday.

"On the whole, such statements as well as all similar statements are approaching madness. There is a nuclear non-proliferation regime and so on," Peskov told journalists.

The Ukrainian president stated on Tuesday that the West should provide Ukraine with nuclear weapons and also deploy its troops on the country's territory if it was not yet ready to grant NATO membership to Kiev.

Kiev has repeatedly stated its desire to become a full-fledged NATO member state. In September, 2022, Ukraine officially requested fast-tracked membership in the alliance. On January 16, Zelensky complained that Hungary, Germany, Slovakia and the United States currently oppose Ukraine's NATO membership.

The Budapest Memorandum was signed by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States on December 5, 1994. Under it, Ukraine disposed of its nuclear arsenal, while Russia, the US and the UK issued security guarantees to Kiev, to be later joined by France and China.

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in February 2022, Zelensky speculated that Kiev may reconsider its obligations under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, which stipulates that Ukraine rejects nuclear weapons in exchange for guarantees of security.

Later, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the emergence of even tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine would pose a strategic threat for Russia.

Egypt's president, Bahrain's king discuss Gaza ceasefire over phone

CAIRO

EGYPTIAN President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi and King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa discussed on Tuesday the implementation of the Gaza ceasefire agreement over the phone, the Egyptian presidency said in a statement.

Sisi highlighted the efforts that have been exerted to ensure the full implementation of the agreement, including the exchange of hostages and detainees, and the delivery of humanitarian aid and relief to Gaza to alleviate people's suffering, according to the statement.

The Egyptian president also underscored "the crucial importance of rebuilding Gaza and the imperative for a unified Arab stance to reinforce the achievement of lasting peace and stability in the Middle East."

For his part, the Bahraini king commended Egypt's role in mediating the ceasefire while affirming "the necessity of fully implementing the agreement and the inevitability of starting a political process conducive to a permanent peace agreement realizing the desired stability in the region."

Israel and Hamas reached a three-stage ceasefire deal in January, mediated by Egypt, Qatar, and the United States, after more than 15 months of fighting in Gaza.

The initial stage effective Jan. 19 lasts for six weeks and includes a limited exchange of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, increased aid into Gaza, and a partial withdrawal of Israeli troops from the enclave.

The two leaders also discussed the broader regional situation, including the developments in Syria, Lebanon, Libya, and Sudan, stressing the need to work towards stability and prevent further conflicts, said the statement.



The Egyptian president also underscored "the crucial importance of rebuilding Gaza and the imperative for a unified Arab stance to reinforce the achievement of lasting peace and

China remains key market for British carmakers, says auto industry leader

LONDON

DESPITE export dips in 2024, China remained a pivotal market for British carmakers, particularly premium brands, a British auto industry leader told Xinhua in a recent interview.

"The overall export markets went down, but China, the biggest automotive market on the planet, is a very important market for production in the UK (United Kingdom). We want to see those exports grow because what we are seeing is increasing trade between the two countries," said Mike Hawes, chief

executive officer (CEO) of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), a leading British automotive trade body.

According to the SMMT, Britain's vehicle production fell by 11.8 percent in 2024, totaling 905,233 units. Exports, accounting for roughly 80 percent of total output, dropped by 15.5 percent to 603,565 units last year.

The European Union (EU), the United States, and China remained the top three markets for British carmakers. Shipments to the EU and China were down 24.3 percent and 21.8 percent respectively, but

those to the United States rose 38.5 percent.

Hawes attributed the decline in exports to China mainly to model redesigns and temporary production pauses during the transition to electrification, a trend seen across many markets.

Britain's luxury automotive brands, including Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Aston Martin, and McLaren, continue to perform "very strongly" in China, said Hawes, adding that luxury vehicles cater to high-net-worth individuals, a segment that is still expanding in China, making the country an important market for

these brands.

Meanwhile, Chinese automakers are steadily increasing their presence on the British market, with brands like BYD and MG gaining market share alongside new entrants in recent years.

"The UK has always been a very open market. British consumers are very open to new technology, and sometimes new brands as well," Hawes said, while acknowledging fierce competition, particularly in the electric vehicle (EV) segment.

"Chinese EVs initially had a head start, but their market share has slightly declined due to increased

competition from European, Japanese, and Korean manufacturers rather than any major shift in sentiment," he explained.

British auto industry is currently undergoing a major transformation from internal combustion engines to EVs right now. Under the country's Zero Emission Vehicle mandate, 80 percent of new cars and 70 percent of new vans sold in Britain must be zero-emission by 2030, rising to 100 percent by 2035.

Hawes stressed the importance of a strong domestic market to drive demand in line with the country's net-zero goals. "Last year, we had to

hit 22 percent EV sales but ended up at 19.6 percent. This year, the target is 28 percent. It's a massive uplift requiring nearly a 50 percent increase in pure battery EV sales," he pointed out.

Meeting these targets will require stronger consumer incentives, especially for private buyers, as well as greener and lower-cost energy, and improved charging infrastructure, said Hawes.

The automotive sector also called on the government to fast-track industrial and trade strategies for the industry.

Xinhua

USAID evolves into criminal network operating in over 100 countries, says Duma speaker

MOSCOW

THE United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has turned into a criminal network operating in more than 100 countries and managing an annual budget of \$50 billion to \$60 billion, State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said.

"In line with its charter, USAID should support the economy, healthcare, and education as well as offer humanitarian responses. In fact, the agency has become a criminal network that operates in more than 100 countries and controls an annual budget of \$50 billion to \$60 billion," the senior Russian legislator wrote on his Telegram channel.

"Today, the USAID headquarters in Washington has shut down, and USAID is about to be dismantled. Now it is important that those guilty of its crimes be punished and that there is no recurrence of this," he emphasized.

Among other things, the agency has played a role in preparing coups worldwide, and its so-called "democracy promotion" programs have harmed Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, and a number of other countries, Volodin argued. In the past decade, USAID has spent more than \$2 billion on former Soviet republics, of which "52% was allocated to



Ukraine," he revealed.

Also, USAID took part in funding research on biological weapons. A Duma-led parliamentary probe into the Pentagon's projects to set up and run

biolabs in Ukraine three years ago revealed that "the United States and personally [former US President Joe] Biden and his son [Hunter] are behind projects to develop and distribute

weapons of mass destruction globally," Volodin recalled. According to him, Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky and Biden have turned Ukrainian citizens into test subjects.

Belgian PM unveils economic, security overhaul

BRUSSELS

BELGIUM'S new Prime Minister Bart De Wever outlined his government's priorities in parliament on Tuesday, pledging austerity measures, stricter migration controls, and a security overhaul, including increased defense spending and police reforms.

De Wever (pictured) emphasized that reducing Belgium's debt, which exceeds 100 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), is a key priority. The government plans to cap unemployment benefits at two years and introduce pension reforms, imposing a two percent annual penalty for early retirement starting in 2026, rising to five percent by 2040, while rewarding those who work beyond the legal retirement age.

"Those who retire early must accept the financial consequences," he told lawmakers.

The government also aims to boost employment by gradually raising the minimum wage and



cutting employer taxes by 1.5 billion euros (\$1.56 billion). Workers will receive 500 euros more per month than those on unemployment, reinforcing incentives to remain in the workforce.

On migration, social benefits will

be restricted for newcomers until they have lived in Belgium for five years. Family reunification rules will tighten, and asylum seekers will receive reduced financial aid, covering their own expenses once granted residency.

"A stricter system is needed to ensure an orderly and sustainable migration policy," De Wever said.

To enhance public security, the government will merge Brussels' police zones to improve coordination in crime response. De Wever vowed zero tolerance for violence against law enforcement and pledged stronger policing measures.

Defense spending will rise to two percent of GDP in line with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) commitments, with plans to modernize military equipment.

The debate on the general policy statement will take place on Wednesday, with the vote of confidence expected on Thursday afternoon.

After eight months of negotiations, Belgium's new government, a five-party coalition known as "Arizona," was sworn in on Feb 3, 2025.

Agencies

Middle East not geopolitical playground, Lavrov tells West

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has warned the West against treating the Middle East like a geopolitical playground.

"The West is used to wreaking havoc, creating crises, and then seeing what happens. The Americans, in particular, like to do

this, and then watch how things unfold with great interest from across the ocean. But the Middle East is not a playground, and it shouldn't be treated as such," he said at the 14th Middle East Conference of the Valdai Discussion Club.

"Today, Western diplomats, including in the Middle Eastern



countries, blame Russia for the futility of efforts to establish a national dialogue in Libya as Russia has its force resources there," he noted. "This, according to Western diplomats, is the root of problems in present-day Libya and they are seeking to impose this point of view on everyone they are speaking with."

Swedish police warn of online misinformation after mass school shooting

WASHINGTON

OREBRO, Sweden - Swedish police said on Wednesday there was no evidence of "ideological motives" behind a mass shooting at an adult education centre on Tuesday, and warned of misinformation spread on social media about the Nordic country's deadliest gun attack.

At least 11 people died and many others were wounded in the shooting at the Risbergska school in Orebro, a town of over 100,000 people, where large numbers of police continued to cordon off the centre and several schools located on its campus complex.

A vigil with candles and flowers had been set up nearby.

"We want to be clear that based on investigative and intelligence information at present, there is no information pointing to the culprit acting on ideological motives," police said in a brief statement on its website.

Police have said the motive for the crime was not immediately known, and that they believed the suspected perpetrator, who was among the dead and was not known previously to the police, acted alone.

Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson on Tuesday said the attack was the worst mass shooting in Swedish history, calling it a "painful day", while King Carl XVI Gustav conveyed his condolences.

Flags at official buildings in Orebro, some 200 km (125 miles) west of Stockholm, as well as at the Swedish parliament and the royal palace in the capital, were flying at half-mast as a sign of respect and mourning.

"Our task is to take care of those attending the affected school, those who work there as well as inhabitants of Orebro who are worried and sad," Orebro Municipal Director Peter Larsson said in a statement.

Many students in Sweden's adult school system are immigrants seeking to improve their basic education and gain degrees to help them find jobs in the Nordic country while also learning Swedish.

Police said in a statement it did not see any general threat against schools or pre-schools in the country, nor against adult education schools, including Swedish classes for immigrants.

"We also at present don't see any danger to the public, even if we understand that the incident raises concerns and many questions," it said.

Sweden has been struggling with a wave of shootings and bombings caused by an endemic gang crime problem that has seen the country of 10 million people record by far the highest per capita rate of gun violence in the EU in recent years.

However, fatal attacks at schools are rare.

Ten people were killed in seven incidents of deadly violence at schools between 2010 and 2022, according to the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention.

EU ready for tough trade talks with US, says von der Leyen

BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Tuesday that the European Union (EU) is prepared for tough negotiations with the United States (US) to safeguard its economic interests.

Her remarks came after US President Donald Trump announced plans to impose tariffs on imports from the EU.

Speaking on transatlantic trade relations, von der Leyen underscored the deep economic ties between the two sides, noting that millions of jobs depend on the partnership.

"European companies in the US employ 3.5 million Americans, and another million American jobs depend directly on trade with Europe. The whole trade volume between us is \$1.5 trillion," she told a conference of EU ambassadors.

She stressed that both sides have much at stake. "There are jobs, businesses, and industries here and in the US that rely on the transatlantic partnership. So we want to make it work," she said.

While advocating cooperation, von der Leyen made it clear that the EU is prepared for tough negotiations when necessary. "We will be ready for tough negotiations where needed and to find solutions where possible to work out any grievances and to set the foundations for a stronger partnership," she said. She reiterated that the EU remains open and pragmatic in achieving its objectives but will resolutely defend its economic interests.

"We will always protect our own interests, however and whenever that is needed. This will always be the European way," she said.



Get to know suppressed rights of North Korean women

NORTH Korea is one of the most closed and centrally controlled societies in the world, where women face severe discrimination and oppression.

While Kim Jong-un's authoritarian regime rhetorically praises women as "proud owners responsible for one of the wheels of the nationalistic revolutionary cart," in reality, serious human rights abuses and discrimination against women are rampant.

Women in North Korea are viewed merely as "social labor force," with their freedoms and rights strictly limited.

Social, political, and economic oppression

North Korea operates under an extreme centralization of power, with all political authority concentrated in the hands of its supreme leader, Kim Jong-un. Women are expected to focus on domestic responsibilities and childcare in accordance with traditional values, leaving them with little to no opportunities for political participation.

Their roles are confined to

motherhood, and their social status and economic independence are barely recognized. Women are excluded from political freedoms and are mobilized solely to support Kim Jong-un's authoritarian ideology.

North Korea's planned economy, controlled entirely by the regime, relegates women primarily to domestic labor or low-wage factory work. Their labor is undervalued compared to men's, and their earnings are significantly lower. The occupations available to women are predominantly physical labor or service-related jobs.

The economic hardship that began in the mid-1990s, marked by the collapse of the planned economy and the rise of informal markets (jangmadang), has further intensified women's suffering. Women continue to struggle for economic independence and survival outside the official economic system, risking crackdowns and punishment by the authorities.

Women's education between



the home and marketplace

North Korean women bear dual responsibilities of economic activity and domestic roles. After completing transactions in the jangmadang, they immediately return home to manage household chores and care for children. North Korean society emphasizes traditional gender roles, forcing women to focus primarily on their domestic duties.

Women striving for economic independence in the jangmadang endure immense hardship as they balance these responsibilities. North Korean education and culture remain deeply gender-biased, with women primarily receiving education geared towards household management and childcare.

They are denied access to specialized technical training for economic independence, unlike men, who are educated to rise as officials in institutions or the military.

These discriminatory norms and educational structures pose significant barriers to women pursuing their dreams.

Prevalent sexual violence

North Korean women face constant threats of sexual violence and exploitation, particularly within the military or public institutions. Sexual violence is one of the most pressing human rights issues in North Korea, yet the regime shows no intention of addressing it.

Naturally, no systematic response is in place, and the suffering caused by structural sexism and sexual violence shows no signs of abating.

Victims of sexual violence are socially stigmatized and often subjected to retaliation due to the male-dominated and perpetrator-centric societal mindset.

It is nearly impossible for victims to report incidents or seek help through official channels.

With little hope for internal reform, external forces are the only glimmer of hope. The international community must unite and continue exerting pressure on North Korea to protect and promote the freedom and rights of its women.

SOURCE: Daily parliament Times



Simba gearing up for a tough second half of the season

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SIMBA SC are bracing for a challenging second half of the Premier League season, despite holding a strong lead at the top of the table.

Media and Information Manager Ahmed Ally (pictured) emphasized that the ambitions of rival teams will make the title race even more competitive.

Currently leading the league with 43 points, Simba boast a formidable attack, having scored 34 goals, second only to Young Africans' 36. Defensively, they have been the best in the league, conceding just five goals so far.

Their recent 3-0 victory over Tabora United - a side that had previously stunned both Young Africans and Azam FC - further solidified their dominance. This win also completed a season double over Tabora, following a 4-0 first-round triumph.

Simba remain unbeaten in away league matches this season, with their only two away goals conceded coming in a 5-2 victory against Kagera Sugar on December 21. At home, they conceded twice against Coastal Union (2-2 draw) and suffered a 1-0 defeat to Young Africans.

Despite the difficulties ahead, Ally expressed confidence in Simba's ability to overcome any opponent, especially given their improved performances in the CAF Champions League.

Simba topped their group with 13 points, edging out CS Constantine (12 points) to advance. They now await the March draw to determine their CAF Confederation Cup semi-final opponent - Al Masry SC, Stellenbosch FC, or ASEC Mimosas - with the first leg set to be played away.

Domestically, Simba have lost just once and drawn once in the first round of the season. Ally believes this proves their capability to challenge for the Premier League title, the CAF Confed-

eration Cup, and the Federation Cup (where they have reached the round of 32).

"The second round of the league will be highly competitive, especially with new signings made by other teams. We signed just one player, but we are happy with his immediate impact," Ally stated.

"Technically, our second-round campaign began with the match against Tabora United, a historically tough opponent. We recognize the challenges ahead and understand that competition will only intensify.

"Simba have the squad depth to compete across all fronts - Premier League, CAF Confederation Cup, and Federation Cup. We trust in our players and technical staff, and that gives us confidence," he said.

Simba face a demanding February schedule, with five crucial league matches that could significantly impact their title aspirations.

Today Simba will travel to Manyara to face Fountain Gate FC at Kwaraa Stadium. Simba have been camping in Dodoma for two days to prepare due to inadequate training facilities in Manyara.

After their match against Fountain Gate, Simba will then return to Dar es Salaam for two back-to-back home matches against Tanzania Prisons on February 11 and Dodoma Jiji on February 15, both at the KMC Complex.

On February 19, Simba will travel to Ruangwa for a clash against Namungo FC before wrapping up the month with a high-profile fixture against Azam FC at home on February 24.

Out of these five matches, two will be played away, while the other three will take place at the KMC Complex in Dar es Salaam.

With the competition heating up, Simba will need to maintain their form and consistency to stay ahead in the title race.

Aces A cricketers bounce back in 2025 TCA DC Super League

By Correspondent Japheth Kazenga

ALISHIHAB Bukhari put on a stellar show with the bat as Aces A bounced back in the 2025 Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) DC Super League with a 42-run defeat of Lions A in Dar es Salaam recently.

The Arun Yadav-led Aces A raced to a mammoth 310/6 once they had won the toss and opted to bat in the 50-over game.

Opener Bukhari's 122 runs were instrumental in Aces A's successful innings - seeing to it the cricketers wind up with an imposing total.

Fellow top-order batsmen were equally in great form, playing a pivotal role in the team's dominance at the batting crease.

Kashif Anwar crossed the half-century mark to wind up with 55 runs, whereas Bukhari's opening batting partner Yadav garnered 47 runs.

Aisah Chibanda had Aces A garnering more runs with his solid shots, making his way back with 37 runs.

Mohamed Simba and seasoned performer Azim Thakur, placed in the middle-order, made their way back with bats in hand, making certain of their club's plan to control the batting time.

Simba scored 20 runs not out whereas Thakur notched two runs not out.

Medium pacer Goodluck Andrew was the only bowler with a standout showing when Lions A fielded, with the rest struggling to wade off Aces A's batting attack.

Andrew ended his bowling turn with 2-53 and a 6.62 economy rate.

Lions A battled zealously when they took the crease but fell short as the squad ended up garnering 268/10 in 49 overs.

Promising cricketer Umar Shaikh garnered 55 off 53 as the performer vainly fought for his club's successful chase.

There were further inspirational contributions from



Aces A's Alishahab Bukhari (L) gets the Player of the Match prize from a cricket official, Abdulsamad Ahmed, once the former's club locked horns with Lions A in the 2025 TCA DC Super League encounter in Dar es Salaam last week. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

Suraj Pala (40 runs), Mohamed Hamza (38 runs), Nassib Kelvin (31 runs), and Karim Kiseto (41 runs).

The quartet's spirited game was still not quite convincing as Lions A's efforts to chase Aces A's mammoth score ended in vain.

Yadav's 3-34 and Ally Mpeka's 2-51 came in handy when Aces A successfully contained Lions

A's batting unit.

Aga Khan SC was, until the end of last week, leading the rest of the tournament's Group A contenders after amassing the 2.5786 Net Run Rate from four ties.

The Group A pacesetters have garnered a victory in three outings and a loss in one game.

The in-form Delaware Upan-

ga SC-A is hot on the Group A table-toppers heels, even though the former also has three wins and one defeat.

The second-placed outfit boasts a 2.0774 Net Run Rate, which has brought the difference between the top two teams.

Third-placed Pak Stars A, in its four ties, notched a 1.6141 Net Run Rate having won three fixtures and suffered a loss in one tie.

Patel Brotherhood A comes fourth, amassing the 4.3521 Net Run Rate - with the side having yet to secure victory in three games.

Bottom-placed Dar Indian Titans are equally without a win in three matches, settling for a 4.7511 Net Run Rate.

The uncompromising Caravans were, heading to last weekend, topping Group B with a 4.2967 Net Run Rate, having won all four clashes they have featured in.

Aces A was, as of last weekend, positioned second with two victories and a defeat - which have handed the side the -1.7000 Net Run Rate.

Lions A comes third - collecting the -0.1818 Net Run Rate following a victory in one tie and a loss in two clashes.

Gymkhana is sitting fourth without a victory in two games - posting an inferior Net Run Rate of -2.9319.

Strikers, who are as well yet to taste a victory, have a -12.2935 Net Run Rate from two ties to stay at the bottom of Group B.

The 2024 TCA DC Super League, a TCA officer stated, features the top cricket teams in Tanzania, put into two groups.

Group A teams are Aga Khan SC, Delaware Upanaga SC, A, Patel Brotherhood A, Dar Indian Titans, and Pak Stars A.

Caravans, Strikers, Aces A, Gymkhana, and Lions A have been placed in Group B.

The showdown began on January 4, 2025, marking an exciting start to Tanzania's premier cricket competition.

Simba to learn CAF Confederation Cup quarter-final opponent on February 20

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THE Confederation of African Football (CAF) has announced that the quarter-finals draw for the 2024/25 CAF Champions League and Confederation Cup will take place on February 20 in Doha, Qatar.

Tanzania's Simba SC will be among the teams discovering their quarter-final opponents in the CAF Confederation Cup, keeping the country's hopes alive on the continental stage after Young Africans failed to progress in the Champions League.

The CAF Confederation Cup draw will be held at 14:00 GMT, followed by the CAF Champions League draw at 15:00 GMT.

Quarter-Finals Fixtures & Schedule:

The quarter-final ties for both competitions will be played over two legs:

CAF Champions League: First leg: April 1-2, 2024; Second leg: April 8-9, 2024

CAF Confederation Cup: First leg: April 2, 2024; Second leg: April 9, 2024

Teams Qualified for the Quarter-Finals:

CAF Champions League: Al Ahly SC (Egypt) - Defending Champions, Al Hilal (Sudan), AS FAR (Morocco), Esperance Sportive de Tunis (Tunisia), Mamelodi Sundowns (South Africa), Orlando Pirates (South Africa), Pyramids (Egypt) and MC Alger (Algeria)

CAF Confederation Cup:

Zamalek SC (Egypt) - Defending Champions, ASEC Mimosas (Côte d'Ivoire), Al Masry (Egypt), CS Constantine (Algeria), RS Berkane (Morocco), Simba SC (Tanzania), Stellenbosch FC (South Africa) and USM Alger (Algeria)

All eyes will be on Simba SC, who topped their group with 13 points, ahead of CS Constantine (12 points). As they prepare for the draw, Simba are expected to face one of the following three teams: Al Masry SC (Egypt), Stellenbosch FC (South Africa) and ASEC Mimosas (Côte d'Ivoire)

Simba will begin their quarter-final campaign away before hosting the return leg in Tanza-

nia.

Despite the anticipated difficulty, Simba's Media and Information Manager Ahmed Ally has previously expressed confidence in the team's ability to navigate past any opponent, citing their improved form in recent matches.

"We believe in our squad and our technical team. The quarter-finals will be tough, but we are prepared. Our goal is to go all the way in this tournament," Ally stated.

As the only Tanzanian club still in continental competition, Simba SC carries the nation's hopes and will look to make a deep run in the CAF Confederation Cup.

Arusha Stadium construction reaches 25% completion

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THE construction of Arusha Stadium has reached 25% completion, with the government expressing satisfaction over the progress.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan officially launched the project last year, and this week, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Infor-

mation, Culture, Arts, and Sports, who also serves as the Government Spokesperson, Gerson Msigwa, toured the site to assess the ongoing work.

Speaking during his visit, Msigwa commended the contractor's efficiency and quality of work, expressing confidence that the stadium will be completed before 2027, in time for Tanzania's co-

hosting of AFCON 2027.

"I am pleased with the progress here. The government is not only satisfied with the pace of construction but also the high quality of work. We are optimistic that the project will be completed on time, ahead of AFCON 2027," he said.

Dubbed Samia Stadium, the Arusha-based venue is expected to be a state-of-the-art facility,

capable of hosting major international sporting events, including the prestigious AFCON 2027 tournament. The government also highlighted the economic benefits of the project, as it has created job opportunities for locals, aligning with President Samia Suluhu Hassan's agenda of fostering employment for Tanzanians.

"This project is not just about

sports; it is also part of the government's broader plan to create jobs for Tanzanians," Msigwa emphasized.

Furthermore, he noted that once completed, the stadium will contribute to Tanzania's Sports Tourism agenda, boosting the local economy and attracting international events.

The facility is estimated to cost

286 billion Tanzanian shillings, and is slated for completion within 22 months.

The stadium is being constructed by the China Railway Construction Engineering Group Limited (CRCEG), whose officials, during the contract signing ceremony last year, assured the Tanzanian government of delivering a modern facility.

Premier League says it may introduce semi-automated offside tech before season ends

LONDON

THE Premier League could introduce semi-automated offside technology before the end of the 2024-25 season following "significant" progress in testing, said Chief Football Officer Tony Scholes.

Last year, Premier League clubs unanimously agreed to introduce the technology at a shareholders' meeting. It was expected to be implemented before Christmas but met with problems in testing.

"The progress made over the last four to six weeks has been significant. So, we believe we're going to be adopting the best system and the most accurate system," Scholes told British media on Tuesday.

"The EFL has introduced it into the League Cup this year. We will monitor it... Clearly, if we're not confident until the last two or three match rounds, I think you then arrive at a pragmatic place where you just say, it wouldn't make sense to introduce it now.

"But if we're able to introduce it in advance of that, then it's something that we're actively considering."

Semi-automated offside technology has been in use in major tournaments and helps limit the need for long waits for VAR reviews, where match officials manually check if a player is offside or not, while also reducing the margin for error.

The Premier League currently has VAR officials check offsides but the system has faced criticism for the time taken to come to a decision.

REUTERS



Dortmund have quality to turn season around, says new coach Kovac

DORTMUND, Germany

BORUSSIA Dortmund's three-game run under interim coach Mike Tullberg with two wins and a draw across all competitions showed the team had the quality to turn their season around, new coach Niko Kovac said on Tuesday.

Kovac took over on Sunday, succeeding Nuri Sahin who was sacked on Jan. 22 following a four-game losing run.

Interim coach Tullberg had taken over for three matches with the team earning a draw and a win in the Bundesliga as well as a victory in the Champions League over Shakhtar Donetsk to end their losing streak.

"What has been positive is the last three games. You could see that the team has the necessary quality. For me, the team is really good," Kovac told a press conference.

"There is a lot that has to do with self-confidence. Yes, there was a phase recently where things did not go well but the last three games were great. Mike really did it well and we all thank him for that."

Dortmund, last season's Champions League finalists, are in 11th spot in the Bundesliga and are at risk of missing out on a place in next season's premier European club competition.

After hosting VfB Stuttgart on Saturday, the Ruhr Valley club face Sporting in the Champions League playoff next week for a spot in the last 16.

"The players have seen how sweet it is to win," Kovac said of their matches under Tullberg. "Wins are the ones that lift your confidence. You need that as a player and what was is no longer important. What is and what will be is the most important thing.

"We are in 11th place and we next have a big game at home against Stuttgart. We want to win it to take that next step forward. To bring Dortmund back where they belong, which is the top," he added.

Kovac, who led Bayern Munich to a league and Cup double in 2018-19, has also managed Eintracht Frankfurt and VfL Wolfsburg in the Bundesliga while the Berlin native had a stint with Ligue 1 side AS Monaco.

"Clearly this is not an ideal situation but you cannot always expect to have a summer pre-season preparation or winter preparation," Kovac said.

"We will not invent everything again. The players know a lot of things already. It is about giving them this confidence because every player needs it."

REUTERS

Simeone at the double as Atletico thrash Getafe to reach semis

MADRID

ATLETICO Madrid manager Diego Simeone's son Giuliano scored twice in the first half to help them to a resounding 5-0 home win over Getafe in the Copa del Rey quarter-finals on Tuesday.

Simeone opened the scoring after eight minutes with a close-range header from just outside the six-yard box off a Javi Galan cross, before bagging his second with a first-time effort nine minutes later.

Visiting goalkeeper Jiri Letacek denied Samu Lino's attempt from close range with a great save before the half-hour mark, but the Brazilian managed to make it 3-0



Atletico Madrid's Giuliano Simeone scores their first goal during their Copa del Rey quarter final match against Getafe at Metropolitano, in Madrid, Spain on Tuesday. REUTERS

in the 42nd minute after brilliantly cutting inside a defender in the box.

Giuliano thought he had

scored a hat-trick after the break, but his 49th-minute goal was ruled out for offside before he left the field to a standing

ovation on the hour mark.

"I'm very happy tonight, it's been crazy. I want to thank the team because we've made

a huge effort," the Argentine winger told Teledporte.

"I'm happy for the goals, I think about the things I have to improve day by day, I still have many flaws and details that I want to improve to keep growing."

Substitute Angel Correa then scored with a superb low shot from distance in the 78th minute, before setting up Alexander Sorloth, who also came on in the second half, to seal the rout four minutes from time.

Having secured a spot in the semi-finals for the second consecutive season, Atletico will turn their attention to LaLiga where they face leaders Real Madrid in Saturday's derby.

"Today was a very tough game, so we need to rest, prepare well and go for it all on Saturday," the 22-year-old Simeone added.

REUTERS

Castro's late strike sends Bologna into Coppa Italia semis



Bologna players celebrate after their Coppa Italia quarter final match against Atalanta at Gewiss Stadium, in Bergamo, Italy on Tuesday. REUTERS

BERGAMO, Italy

BOLOGNA substitute Santiago Castro scored two minutes after coming on to secure a late 1-0 win at Atalanta on Tuesday, sending them into the semi-finals of the Coppa Italia for the first time in 26 years.

Bologna, who have not won the competition since 1974, will face the winner of the Feb. 26 quarter-final between Juventus and Empoli in the semis.

"We're getting good results in the league and we had prepared well for today, we were rewarded," Bologna coach Vincenzo Italiano told Mediaset.

Hosts Atalanta started well with Charles De Ketelaere getting off an early shot but Bologna keeper Lukasz Skorupski managed to send it out for a corner.

De Ketelaere found Ederson with a cross from the left just before the half-hour mark but the Brazilian's shot was deflected by defender Charalampos Lykogiannis.

Bologna almost took the lead just before the break when Dan Ndoye ran in from the right to set up Tommaso Pobega, but the AC Milan loanee's shot took a de-

flection off Ederson and went through to keeper Rui Patricio.

A brilliant save by Skorupski prevented Atalanta from taking the lead in the 51st minute, with the keeper's reflex save keeping out Raoul Bellanova's first-time scorching shot from inside the box.

Patricio pulled off an equally good save on the hour mark when Thijs Dallinga found Pobega in the box. As Pobega went for an angled shot, the Portuguese keeper dived to get a touch on it and avert the danger.

Soon after Castro replaced Dallinga, Lykogiannis delivered a perfect free kick into the box for Argentine striker Castro, who fired home with his first touch of the match in the 80th minute, sending the away fans into a frenzy.

"All this is for the family, I miss them a lot," Castro said.

"I'm happy to have helped the team with the goal... the Champions League served to improve, we came back to play even stronger in Italy."

Atalanta, who are third in Serie A, pushed for an equaliser but the Bologna defence held firm to see out the game.

Bologna, seventh in

the league, visit Lecce on Sunday.

AC Milan were to host AS Roma in the second quarter-final later yesterday.

Meanwhile, reaching the semi-finals of Coppa Italia for the first time in 26 years was a historic moment for Bologna, coach Vincenzo Italiano said after his side's 1-0 win at Atalanta on Tuesday.

Bologna struggled in their Champions League campaign, crashing out from the league phase with only one win in eight matches.

But Tuesday's victory over a top-three Serie A side would boost the team's confidence, the coach said.

"We played for history and we succeeded," Italiano told reporters.

"This is a beautiful mo-

ment, it always pushes you to give your best."

Italiano said winning at Atalanta made the result more special.

"I think it gives you self-esteem and awareness, you can see that there is growth. The Champions League gave us a big hand, this is a group that is constantly growing... it's not easy to play in Bergamo," he added.

Bologna will face the winner of the Feb. 26 quarter-final between Juventus and Empoli in the semis.

"The club had this dream of getting as far as possible in Coppa Italia. Right now we have achieved the first goal, now we are waiting for the next opponent," Italiano said.

REUTERS

West Ham director to leave club after Potter brings in his own head of recruitment

LONDON

WEST Ham united technical director Tim Steidten is leaving the London side after new manager Graham Potter brought his own head of recruitment, the Premier League club said on Tuesday.

Potter took charge of West Ham last month when he replaced Julen Lopetegui and the former Chelsea manager brought Kyle Macaulay on board having worked with him since 2012 when they were at Swedish side Ostersund.

Macaulay also worked with Potter at Swansea City as a recruitment analyst before being promoted to head of recruitment. He then worked with Potter at Brighton & Hove Albion and Chelsea as head of scouting.

"Tim has been instrumental in our recruitment efforts. With the arrival of our new head coach Graham Potter, who has brought in his own head of recruitment, it is time for Tim to pursue new opportunities," the club said.

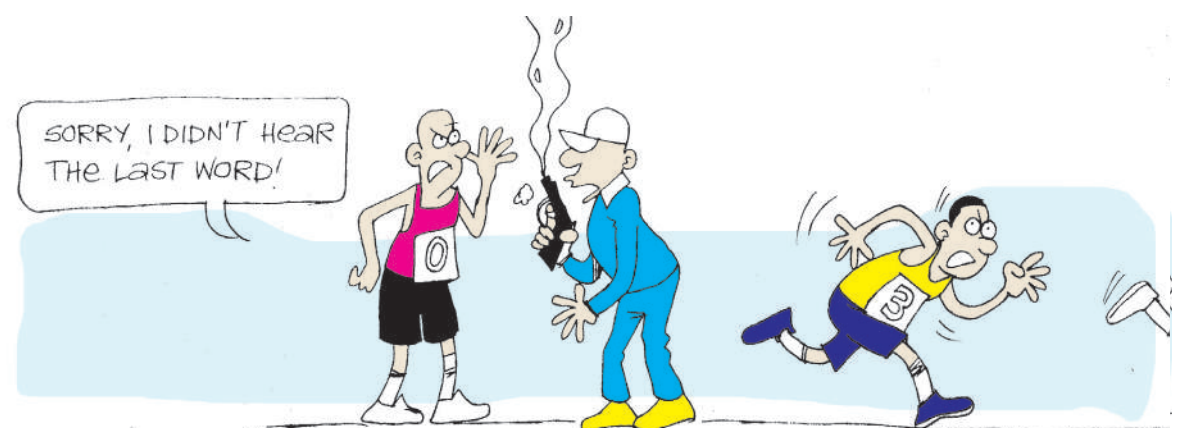
"We would like to thank Tim for his dedication and hard work and wish him all the best in his future endeavours."

Steidten had brought Lopetegui on board to replace David Moyes and oversaw the London club's transfer business as they spent over 120 million pounds on new signings to build a competitive team ahead of the season.

However, Lopetegui struggled to make an impact and the Spaniard was sacked when the club were 14th after 20 matches, suffering heavy losses prior to his departure.

REUTERS

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Simeone at the double as Atletico thrash Getafe to reach semis

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Young Africans return to the summit with a 6-1 thrashing of KenGold



Young Africans striker Clement Mzize scores his side's second goal during their Premier League match against KenGold at KMC Complex in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Courtesy of YASC

By Guardian Correspondent

YOUNG Africans SC reclaimed the top spot in the Premier League following a commanding 6-1 victory over KenGold FC at the KMC Complex yesterday.

The match was effectively over by halftime as Young Africans netted four first-half goals, leaving KenGold with no chance of a comeback.

Prince Dube opened the scoring in the first minute, finishing a precise pass from Stéphane Aziz Ki.

Just five minutes later, Clement Mzize doubled the lead after another assist from Aziz Ki, putting Young Africans firmly in control.

Dube missed an opportunity to extend the lead when he failed to connect with a long pass from Israel Mwenda, but the relentless attacks continued.

In the 38th minute, Pacome Zouzoua scored the third goal,

rounding KenGold goalkeeper Castor Mhagama after a defense-splitting pass from Dube.

Mzize completed his first-half brace in the 42nd minute, capitalizing on a fumble by goalkeeper Mhagama, who failed to handle a cross from the

overlapping left-back Chadrack Boka.

The second half began just as the first ended, with Dube completing his brace in the 46th minute to register Young Africans' fifth goal.

Substitute Duke Abuya added a sixth goal in the

84th minute, finishing a cross from Kenneth Msonda.

KenGold managed a late consolation goal, but in spectacular fashion. Selemani Rashid launched a 50-yard strike from the center circle, catching Young Africans goalkeeper Djigui Di-

arra off guard.

Despite the goal, KenGold remain in deep trouble, rooted to the bottom of the table with just six points from 17 matches.

The win sends Young Africans back to the top with 45 points from 17 games, two ahead of Simba SC (43 points from 16 games).

Simba will have the chance to reclaim top spot when they face Fountain Gate FC in Manyara today.

KenGold's struggles continue, as they remain on track to record the lowest-ever Premier League points total in a 30-game season, a record currently held by Ruvo Shooting.

The newly promoted club faces the real danger of immediate relegation, having suffered six consecutive league defeats.

The match was overseen by technical manager Abdulhamid Moalin, following the abrupt departure of head coach Sead Ramovic.

Ramovic reportedly received an irresistible offer from Algerian side CR Belouizdad, prompting his immediate exit.

In his place, Miloud Hamdi has been appointed as the new Young Africans head coach.

The former Singida Black Stars manager brings title-winning experience, having led USM Alger to the Algerian Premier League championship in the 2015-16 season.



Azam aiming to maintain momentum against KMC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

AZAM will host KMC in the evening, aiming for a victory that will ensure they retain at least third place in the Premier League standings.

With 16 matches played, Rachid Taoussi's side has consistently remained in the top three, with their only two defeats coming against Simba and Tabora United.

Just three points separate them from fourth-placed Singida Black Stars, making a win against KMC crucial in their pursuit of league stability.

Additionally, under Taoussi (pictured), they aim to remain within seven points of league leaders Simba, making this fixture even more significant.

Azam have dominated recent meetings against KMC, winning their last four encounters, including a commanding 4-0 victory in the reverse fixture earlier this season.

Given their strong form, another win looks likely.

Azam are the league's third-highest-scoring team, averaging 1.6 goals per game while boasting a solid defensive record, conceding just 0.5 goals per match.

Key players Feisal Salum, Iddy Nado, and Nasor Saadun lead their attack, each having scored four goals this season.

KMC, currently 10th in the standings, have been a stable mid-table team. However, they are only five points clear of the relegation zone, meaning a significant downturn in form could put them in trouble.

Despite their inconsistencies, KMC's recent form has been steady, with a three-game unbeaten streak, including a crucial away draw against Coastal Union.

Their away form remains a concern, with just one win, two draws, and five losses, contributing to a goal difference of -8.

They average 0.7 goals per game while conceding 1.1 goals per match, highlighting their struggles on both ends of the pitch.

KMC's attack has lacked firepower this season, with Redemtus Mussa and Darueshi Saliboko leading their scoring charts with just two goals each.

This underlines their need for greater efficiency in front of goal if they hope to pose a serious challenge to Azam.

With both teams having plenty at stake, this encounter at Chamazi Complex promises to be an intriguing contest.

Simba eyeing crucial three points against Fountain Gate

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

AS Simba await their CAF Confederation Cup quarter-final opponents, their Premier League title chase remains relentless.

Last weekend's dominant 3-0 victory over Tabora United reaffirmed their credentials, and they now face another test against Fountain Gate in a crucial away fixture in Manyara.

Simba, under head coach Fadlu Davids (pictured), embark on a long journey north for this enticing league contest, armed with an impressive record.

They have won each of their last ten Premier League matches, the longest ongoing streak in the division.

Their defense has been rocking solid, conceding the fewest goals in the league while scoring 34 times in just 16 games - an average of two goals per match.

Additionally, Simba remain one of only two teams yet to taste defeat on the road, having secured victory in all eight away games this season.

Earlier this campaign, Simba dismantled Fountain Gate 4-0 at the KMC Mwenge Complex, underlining their superiority.

The question now is whether they can replicate that dominant performance.

Simba need to win this match because they are neck to neck with defending champions Young Afri-

cans in what is turning out to be a tight two-horse race.

Fountain Gate, on the other hand, started the season impressively, spending the first ten matchdays within the top four after recording five wins, three draws, and two losses.

However, their form has deteriorated drastically, with five defeats in their last six matches. As a result, they now sit 13 points adrift of the top four but still maintain a seven-point cushion above the relegation zone.

A string of three consecutive losses, including a crushing 5-0 defeat at the hands of Young Africans, will undoubtedly have dampened Fountain Gate's morale.

However, they enter this fixture with renewed hope following a squad overhaul that saw ten new signings arrive, along with a change in the technical bench.

Experienced Kenyan coach Robert Matano has taken charge, replacing Mohamed Muya, in a bid to steer the club back to winning ways.

With the departure of top scorer Selemani Mwalimu to Moroccan giants Wydad, the responsibility of leading Fountain Gate's attack now falls on Edgar William.

Whether the team can shake off recent struggles and pose a challenge to the in-form Simba remains to be seen.



Flexibles by David Chikoko

