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Samia: Bring more women into decision making seats

The event also sought to come up with plans to support women in endeavours to access leadership positions in various institutions

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has urged public and private institutions to increase efforts to ensure that more women have an opportunity to be in various decision

making bodies.

She was gracing an opening ceremony for the launch of the Tanzania Women in Financial Sector Association (TAWiFA) at Kizimkazi Township in Unguja South Region, organised

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Samson Ching'ang'a (L), an ophthalmologist (eye specialist) with Dar es Salaam's CCBRT Hospital, attends to one of the people who turned up yesterday at a free eye disease screening and treatment camp in the city. Those targeted include long-distance bus drivers and conductors as well as small traders, various other service providers and residents of surrounding areas. The hospital has collaborated with Police and the Ubungo Municipal Council in running simultaneous services at the Kilwa Road Police Hospital and the Magufuli Main Bus Terminal in the Mbezi Luis suburb. It's all in marking this year's edition of World Glaucoma Week (March 10 through 16), whose theme is 'Uniting for a Glaucoma-Free World'. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

SPORTS

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Taifa Stars skipper Mbwana Samatta's omission explained

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Atletico triumph on penalties to reach Champions League quarters

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From promising prospect to uncertain future: The challenges facing Kelvin John

Emission hazards: PM unveils plans

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has come up with special plans to stem the likelihood of disasters resulting from chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear materials.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa made this affirmation at the launch of a work format for disaster control and management in Dar es Salaam yesterday, asking public institutions to work in synergy in executing the plan.

To ensure that the country is equipped to fight radiological and nuclear emergencies, the plan seeks to put the country in a safe environment, where it is ready to respond early to specific hazards.

If not well controlled, chemical, biological, radiological along with nuclear materials and agents can harm the society when improperly disseminated, he said.

"Ministries and institutions should work together to ensure that there is steady monitoring and evaluations of preparedness to ensure that we have sustainable capacity to overcome hazards," the premier explained.

Experts in various institutions

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CTI: Local steel meeting international standards

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

WITH products manufactured by some steel industries in the country meeting all international standards there is no reason for the government to import foreign products in implementing infrastructure projects, a stakeholder says.

Manoj Gopi, Steel Lodhia Industries chief executive officer, made this appeal in the company of Leodegar Tenga, Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI) executive director who led a CTI delegation to view activities at Steel Lodhia Industries in Mkuranga District, Coast Region.

In discussions with the delegation seek-

ing to witness production progress at the firm, he asked the government to put in place an ambitious strategy to protect local industries as some neighbouring countries are doing, purchasing large quantities of products from local factories for major projects.

The CTI leader said that apart from creating jobs for Tanzanians, purchasing products of local firms helps to protect foreign exchange reserves.

The factory has been selling steel for the construction of the Kigongo-Busisi Bridge, the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) and various road projects, he stated.

"Our Kenyan colleagues have set very strict laws to protect their industries and Uganda has done the same now," he said, noting that Tanzania also needs to see the importance of protecting industries by avoiding importation of products such as steel and plastic products especially in public sector projects.

Lodhia Industries is investing \$60m in the construction of a galvanizing factory in the area set to start production in the next two months, providing jobs to more than 500 individuals.

The company has invested \$45m in the steel and plastic industries, creating more

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Commission charts cyber security gender openings

For Tanzania to explore more opportunities aligned in cyber security space, women empowerment is essential

By Francis Kajubi

THE Information and Communication Technologies Commission (ICT Commission) is seeking to boost opportunities for women by empowering many of them to

access skills and opportunities to fully participate in the digital economy.

Dr Nkundwe Mwasaga, the commission's director general, said at a press conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the commission is set to push for gender-based in-

clusiveness in digital transformation.

The upcoming Cyber Security Tanzania Forum set for Arusha city on April 4 and 5, the third such annual meeting, is themed 'Charting shared and inclusive future in the cyber space.'

It is expected to bring together over 300 domestic and foreign experts, researchers, investors and innovators in the ICT cyber safety sub-sector to map out a common view forward to guarantee cyber security and inclusion, he said.

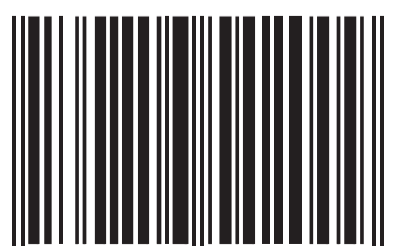
In accelerating gender equality, the ICT Commission is covering the two-day forum expenses for 100 young women from different parts of the country seeking to learn new experiences from established entrepreneurs in the cyber security space.

The 100 young women were selected from higher learning institutions, young ICT entrepreneurs and start-ups directly engaged as experts or investors in the cyber security field, he said.

For Tanzania to explore more opportunities aligned in cyber security space, women empowerment is essential, he said, noting that as of today nearly 800 social service providers offer digitised services contributing over \$1m a year to national income;

The Global Connectivity Report for

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Samia: Bring more women into decision making seats

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by TAWIFA in collaboration with the Tanzania Insurance Regulatory Authority (TIRA) and the Mwanamke Initiatives Foundation (MIF).

The one-day event brought on board participants from both sides of the union, where apart from the launch of the association, the event gave a platform to extensively discuss how to overcome the challenges they face.

Participants sought to chart ways and build the capacity of women in financial matters. While chronicles differ on the president's birth place, as either Makunduchi or Kizimkazi, one such chronicler online says Samia was born in Kizimkazi, a historic fishing village on the southern coast of Unga.

In her speech, the president said that women participation in decision making bodies was inclusive and sustainable so it should be taken as among beneficial roles, not restricted to the government alone or taken up as a militant issue.

The key intention is to ensure that issues concerning women are explained by women as some decision makers may not have a wide enough understanding of the is-

sues, thus leaving them aside.

Apart from increasing women participation in decision making levels, there is a need to invest heavily in lifting women economically, she said, similarly urging women to prepare to work hard in pursuing their goals.

While Tanzania is an example of the implementation of the United Nations resolution on the participation of women in various levels of decision-making, more efforts are needed to bring more women into these bodies, she stated.

Through the well-attended event, women in the financial sector put to use this opportunity to share experiences on how to better utilise financial opportunities to grow business activities.

The launch of the association was an extension of events to mark this year's International Women's Day, evaluating and sharing methods that enable women to move forward and overcome poverty, officials noted.

The event also sought to come up with plans to support women in endeavours to access leadership positions in various institutions, they added.

Project targets girls with rights, awareness on HIV

By Guardian Reporter

KINONDONI Municipal Council (KMC) in Dar es Salaam yesterday launched a project to help teenage girls in risky environments understand their rights and protect themselves against HIV/Aids as well as the correct use of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs.

Speaking soon after the launch, KMC health planning coordinator Dr Ezra Ngereza said that the project came to the municipality at the right time due to the fact that many girls are unaware of their rights.

He said that the current situation without efforts to provide education impede efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 3.3 of achieving zero HIV infections by 2030.

The project implemented in collaboration with Children's Dignity Forum (CDF) will be executed in four wards namely Mwenge, Makumbusho, Magomeni and Tandale and the target are girls who are in a risky environment.

He asked CDF to expand the scope of many girls in the municipality to get education.

"Let's not stop at these four wards but look at the possibility of going to other remaining wards," he said.

CDF executive director Koshuma Mtengeti (pictured) said the project is aimed at seeing girls aged between 15 and 24 have an understanding of their basic rights as well as HIV/Aids and best ways to protect themselves against the disease and correct use of ARVs.

"This project comes from a lack of understanding of HIV/Aids issues and many of the girls are not aware of their rights," he said, noting that the project will be executed for nine months.

"We came up with this idea after realising that understanding of girls' rights is very low and most of them are not aware of protecting themselves against HIV," said Mtengeti.

Through the project, 20 peer educators will be trained and thereafter sent to reach 200 teenage girls across the four wards.



Call for caution as crocodiles infest Simiyu River in Maswa

By Guardian Correspondent, Simiyu

SOME residents of Maswa District in Simiyu Region have raised concern over the increase in the number of crocodiles in Simiyu River and its tributaries.

Speaking on the situation yesterday, Ipililo Village Executive Officer Innocent Kavela said that in the past two months, incidents of crocodiles attacking people who use the river have increased something which poses threat to the lives of people in the area.

"Crocodile attack incidents have continued to rise where from January to March this year, some villagers have been attacked and injured," he said.

"Late last year, crocodiles injured a child and killed two goats. This year, attacks have increased, causing death of a nine-year-old child who was swimming in the river."

Meckidadi Ruyingo, Bushashi Secondary School headmaster said that crocodile increase in the river poses a big threat to some school children who have to cross the river every day.

According to him, to ensure that the children remain safe from the crocodiles, they have been educating pupils on how to safely cross the river in groups.

Lusato Masinde, a wildlife officer with the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA)-Lake Zone acknowledged the

increase of the animals which is triggered by the ongoing rains.

Masinde said that incidents of crocodiles injuring and killing people are due to the dispersion of water in many areas including the Simiyu River, which leads to the increase of the animals in the streams that feed the river.

"Residents need to take precaution because crocodiles have increased in search for catfish that are their food but since crocodiles are carnivorous animals, they can endanger the lives of people and livestock," he said.

He wanted the residents to know the behaviour of crocodiles and their danger and make efforts to avoid them and ignore the false but popular beliefs that the animals are sent by people to cause damage and death.

He said that authorities work hard to come up with a permanent solution to the dangerous animals.

"Parents should not leave their children to go to play or send livestock to the river because when seeking for food, crocodiles are so tolerant and can stay in one place for over eight hours and can run a distance of 34 kilometres in the water," he said.

He added that when running, crocodiles submerge their bodies and retain their eyes and nose.

"They have between 28 and 64 teeth, so they are very dangerous animals," he warned.



Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba (L) holds virtual talks from Dodoma city yesterday with the African Development Bank's Country Representative in Tanzania, Patricia Laverley. He is with Finance ministry permanent secretary Dr Natu El-Maamry Mwamba. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

CTI: Local steel meets international standards

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than 2,000 direct jobs, the company CEO noted, pleading that this investment is very big, so the government needs to put in place strategies to protect the firm, by making it a priority to buy its products.

The CTI executive requested that government institutions like the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) and the Free Competition Commis-

sion (FCC) to work closely with the industries to ensure there is a competitive business environment with foreign products.

Products manufactured by the factory, including iron and plastic products, are vital for development as the construction of infrastructure depends on easy availability of such products.

"When you build roads, classrooms, bridges and all infrastruc-

ture, you need a lot of steel, now we feel very proud to see that our member Lodhia Industries has invested on a large scale as you can see," Tenga said, asking Tanzanians to support local producers by buying their products as they have international quality, sometimes exceeding the quality of some foreign products.

Samuel Nyantahe, the CTI retired vice chairman, said that investment

made by Lodhia Industries is huge, so it is important for the government to protect it by making sure it buys its products.

"Through our local content policy, it is time to give priority to these products when purchasing products and there is no reason to import products like these. Sometimes you find that these products are better than what we import," he added.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday presenting to Education, Science and Technology minister Prof Adolf Mkenda (L) a copy of the National Plan for Combating Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Threats and that of the National Plan for Preparedness and Response to Nuclear and Biological Emergencies. It was at the closure of training on preparedness against chemical and radiological emergencies. Photo: PMO

Commission charts new cyber security gender 'openings'

FROM PAGE 1

2022 issued by the International Telecommunication Unit (ITU) ranks Tanzania as second in the continent after Mauritius in aligning with cyber security protocols, the director noted.

The Network Readiness Index issued for November 2023 credits Tanzania as among few African countries having the best laws and institutions for regulating cyber security, he stated.

The forum will focus on

strengthening cyber security in the various sectors, defending the digitised world in the wake of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and big data threats, he further indicated.

Participants will seek to draw up recommendations on how to enable the digitised world to be even safer, sustainable, inclusive, and discuss ways to contain elements embodying the threat of internet and on-line platform users to indulge in cyber criminality, he added.

Emission hazards: PM unveils plans

FROM PAGE 1

need to develop a disaster response centre to coordinate the breadth of chemical, radiological and chemical threats, he specified, directing departments involved in the transportation of cargo to be on the lookout.

This includes overseeing major bus stations and airports to ensure that they carry out comprehensive inspection of cargo to avoid occurrence of preventable disasters, he further noted.

Christine Grau, ambassador of the European Union to Tanzania and the East African Community, reiterated the commitment of the EU to cooperate with the government to forestall the threat of chemical disasters.

Prof Adolf Mkenda, the Education, Science and Technology minister, had earlier said that the initiative is financed by the EU, providing laboratory equipment and rescue tools costing

6bn/-.

In Africa, 28 countries were implementing the project, with Tanzania doing well in the East African region where a wide ranging number of technicians were trained on preventive measures and control of hazards emerging at any time.

Prof Lazaro Busagala, the Tanzania Atomic Energy Commission (TAEC) director general, said that the project has provided the agency with laboratory tools to detect and control hazardous threats.

So far 68 staff from ministerial departments and agencies have been trained on how to detect such threats and prevent outbreaks, he specified.

The training has enabled the country to have a team to detect threats and face them at initial stages, identify, take samples and clean the hazard area to further prevent harm, he added.



Prof Kitila Mkumbo (2nd-R), Minister of State in the President's Office (Planning and Investment), has a first-hand account yesterday of activities at the Kivule (suburban Dar es Salaam) premises of Lodhia Industries. The firm produces round steel bars and a range of plastic items. Third right is the firm's managing director, Sumathy Gopi, and left is general manager Harminder Singh Bhachu. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Poachers change tact, use machetes to hunt at night

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame

TWO illegal hunters armed with a pair of machetes can annihilate over 50 antelopes within just one night, it has been disclosed.

The Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA) say that poachers have now turned to machetes as they embark on night speers of illegal hunting escapades.

Tryphone Kanoni, Conservation Officer at TAWA's investigation section, said recently that poachers have stopped using guns because firearms make a lot of noise that attract rangers and other patrolling squads to the scenes of crime.

"But with machetes everything is accomplished in silence," he

said while making a presentation on the role of TAWA in combating wildlife crime during the second tailor-made media training classes organized through Journalist' Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET) in association with USAID Tuhifadhi Maliasili activity.

The investigator said that new age poachers usually work during the night under the cover of darkness.

"They first beam very bright flashlights to unsettle wildlife that become stupefied in the process, then the poachers move in to chop off the hind legs of mostly ungulates using machetes to immobilize the animals," he said.

"Guns, in addition to being noisy, are also expensive and cumbersome

to own and carry around, unlike machetes that can be bought at any shop and taken everywhere without arousing suspicion."

Afterwards, the poachers then attack the animals using the same machetes, chopping them into pieces before speeding off with the carcasses on motorcycles.

He said machetes annihilate more wildlife at night than firearms can possibly do.

Other than machetes, traps are also reported to be doing horrid jobs in the torturous killing of wildlife species.

"These types of wildlife crimes usually occur in protected areas that are mapped within plains or flat landscapes where poachers can

easily get away using the available means of transport such as bicycles and motorcycles," he said.

"These styles of poaching cases are notorious in places like Maswa, Serengeti, Grumeti and Ikorongo."

Abdallah Katunzi, facilitator from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Dar es Salaam, said the media has an important role to play in combating wildlife crime in Tanzania though agenda-setting.

"The media in Tanzania is currently not in the frontline in advocating for people and human rights, wildlife and natural resources conservation or even putting the government to task," he said.

Zanzibar lifts fresh banana ban after some two decades

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR government has lifted a ban on fresh bananas from Tanzania Mainland after confirming that the produce is free of diseases.

It's nearly 20 years since authorities here banned the crop from entering the island due to banana diseases concerns in 2006. Zanzibar government banned importation of banana products, including fresh bananas, leaves and trunks to prevent the islands from being invaded by Fusarium wilt that was prevalent in the Lake Zone, especially in Kagera and Mara regions.

But yesterday, Shamata Shaame Khamis, Zanzibar Minister for Agriculture, Irrigation, Natural Resources and Livestock officially announced the lifting of the ban at a press briefing.

Khamis urged collaboration by all parties involved to continue with control measures to ensure no diseases get into the islands.

"I would like to tell you that the ban led to a severe shortage of the produce in the market for about 18 years, which has caused challenges for crop inspectors, traders, and other stakeholders in the implementation of the ban," he said.

He added that in compliance with Plant and Crop Quarantine Law Number 9 of 1997, the government permits the crop to be imported with special processes as long as continuous safety measures are taken to lessen the risk.

"We request all traders who are allowed to trade in bananas to be registered in the office of permanent secretary of this ministry so that they get special permits for the import of banana in parallel with sending the produce to the inspectors at the quarantine unit and produce inspection report

before importing the produce," he said.

Ali Khamis Juma, Permanent Secretary in the ministry urged everyone involved in the import of crops into the isles to abide by the rules established by the authorities and to educate themselves on the real circumstances so that they can work together to prevent the spread of diseases.

Some residents commended the move, saying that it will help down banana prices, particularly during the current month Ramadan when there is a big demand for the produce.

Fatma Juma, Unguja resident, said that banana prices in the market are prohibitive for those with large families and poor incomes because nine bananas cost 5,000/-.

Haji Khamis said that he previously encountered numerous difficulties following the ban, particularly while visiting Tanzania Mainland because it was impossible to come back with a gift of bananas and whenever he did so, the gift would be impounded by authorities at the port.

"Our fellow Tanzanians on the mainland have plenty of bananas. Traders will henceforth have the freedom to import bananas which is a very popular food here, especially during Ramadan," he said.

"We request all traders who are allowed to trade in bananas to be registered in the office of permanent secretary of this ministry so that they get special permits for the import of banana in parallel with sending the produce to the inspectors at the quarantine unit and produce inspection report before importing the produce"



RE – ADVERTISED: REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR THE PROVISION OF PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO DOCUMENTATION SERVICES FOR EACOP LTD IN TANZANIA REFERENCE NO. 00000437

East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) LTD ("EACOP LTD") invites experienced and reputable companies to express their interest in provision of Photography & Video documentation services to the EACOP project in Tanzania.

The EACOP Project involves the construction and operation of an underground and cross-border pipeline to transport crude oil for export to international markets. The pipeline will run from Kabaale, Hoima District in Uganda to the Chongoleani peninsula near Tanga in Tanzania. The length of the pipeline is 1,443 km, of which 296km will be in Uganda and 1,147 km in Tanzania.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOPE OF THE SERVICES:

East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) Ltd, invites experienced and reputable service providers to express their interest in providing the following Photography & Video documentation Services in Tanzania.

- Provide professional photography services tailored to the company's needs.
- Deliver cinematic videography services, including filming and editing.
- Incorporate the company's messaging and branding into video content.
- Collaborate on concept development and creative ideas aligned with the company's brand.
- Arrange necessary permits and permissions for on-location shoots.
- Offer coverage for company events, conferences, and workshops.
- Capture key moments and deliver a mix of candid and posed shots, upon request.
- Provide professional corporate headshots and team photos.
- Perform thorough post-production work, including color correction and editing.
- Organize and securely store digital files for easy access by the company.
- Provide access to an online platform for viewing and downloading files.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

Companies and/or organizations expressing their interest are invited to document their request with:

- Brief description of experience, expertise, and capacity to deliver the required scope of services.
- Organization profile detailing services provided, proof of performance, with reference letters from three previous clients.
- Business License.
- Certificate of Incorporation and BRELA search (attach copy).
- Proof of registration with the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) and Tax Clearance Certificate for the latest year available.
- Proof of Registration with the EWURA Local Supplier Service Provider (LSSP) database or an approved application at the time of submission of the response to this expression of interest is strongly recommended.
- Compliance with Local Content Regulations, 2017 and Local Company definition.
- Profile of key personnel to be involved in the project including personal certifications as necessary and level of qualifications, experience, and capacity to deliver the required services.
- Financial capacity to deliver the services required including submission of financial accounts for the past three years.
- Evidence of a QHSE Management system, organization, and process in compliance with applicable Local and Industry standards for similar works.
- Proof of Anti-corruption, Anti-bribery, Compliance, and Human Rights policies.

Companies which have the ability, capacity, and resources to implement the activities listed above should express their interest by sending together with the documents stated in the above section through an email to procurement.tz@EACOP.com, (max. email size 20Mb) on or before 17:00 hours East African Time (EAT) on or before 29th March 2024. Email object shall be: 00000437 Provision of Photography & Video documentation Services. Statements of EOI should be no more than ten (10) to twenty (20) pages long.

All Expression of Interests should be submitted in English Language.

Note: EACOP LTD will review and assess the documents provided by companies that have expressed interest in accordance with this EOI and conduct evaluations based on internal criteria to determine which companies will be included in the list of pre-qualified companies. Only the pre-qualified companies will receive, by signing a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), an invitation to bid as a continuation of the call for tender process. EACOP LTD reserves the right at its sole discretion to make the decision to select or reject a company and maintain its decision without having to give reasons to the company concerned.

Fighting Hunger Worldwide



World Food Programme

Programme Alimentaire Mondial

Programa Mundial de Alimentos

برنامج الأغذية العالمي

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) No. TZA24E01003 : Pre-Qualification of Suppliers for supply of efficient firewood cookstoves, Provision of carbon project registration and management services in Tanzania

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide. Each year, on average, WFP feeds more than 90 million people and it is present in 81 countries. WFP Tanzania procures various goods and services for its operations.

WFP hereby invites qualified and competent suppliers duly registered in Tanzania with the relevant authorities and have legal authorization to provide such goods and services to express their interest not later than **22 March 2024** by emailing to Tanzania.VendorManagement@wfp.org, Subject: **EOI- TZA24E01003: Pre-Qualification of suppliers for Supply of efficient firewood cookstoves, Provision of carbon project registration and management services in Tanzania.**

WFP shall send to all applicants who express their interest an Expression of interest letter that details the i) purpose of the EOI; ii) how to prepare and submit your EOI and iii) the EOI Form. In order to participate in the prequalification exercise, interested applicants must complete and return to the email address: Tanzania.VendorManagement@wfp.org all duly completed forms and supporting documents by 27 March 2024, 10hours East Africa time.

All requests for clarifications and questions strictly relating to this invitation should be sent via e-mail to: Tanzania.VendorManagement@wfp.org

Please note that this is not an Invitation To Tender. Rates/prices are not required at this stage, and this invitation does not bind World Food Programme to issue any tenders or contracts to the companies expressing their interest.

"WFP encourages that suppliers are inclusive of persons with disabilities. A disability-inclusive supplier is a supplier which makes a dedicated, consistent, and measurable effort to implement disability-inclusive practices. Suppliers can show that they are disability-inclusive through a variety of means such as, for instance, having an organizational policy on disability inclusion, recruiting and hiring people with disabilities, offering reasonable accommodation to candidates and personnel with disabilities, providing accessible premises, or ensuring that their supply chains are disability-inclusive."

WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE

WFP DOES NOT CHARGE ANY FEES FOR REGISTRATION.

WFP Tanzania

UN: Estimate of children dying before five years drops to 4.9m

By Guardian Correspondent

THE number of children dying before their fifth birthday has reached a historic low, dropping to 4.9m in 2022, on the basis of recent estimates by the United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME).

More children are surviving today than ever before, with the global under-five mortality rate declining by 51 per cent since 2000, it said, noting that several low- and lower-middle-income countries have outpaced this decline.

They show that progress is possible when resources are sufficiently allocated to primary health care, including child health and well-being, the report noted, citing examples of Cambodia, Malawi, Mongolia and Rwanda as having reduced under-five mortality by over 75 per cent since 2000.

But the findings also show that despite this progress, there is still a long road ahead to end all preventable child and youth deaths. In addition to the 4.9m lives lost before the age of five - nearly half of which were newborns - the lives of another 2.1m children and youth aged 5-24 were also cut short. Most of these deaths were concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the agency stated.

This tragic loss of life is primarily due to preventable or treatable causes, such as preterm birth, complications around the time of birth, pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria. Many lives could have been saved with better access to quality primary health care, including essential, low-cost interventions such as vaccinations, it said.

Availability of skilled health personnel at birth, infant vaccinations, support for early and maintained breastfeeding, plus diagnosis and treatment of childhood illnesses are other factors propelling infant deaths, it stated.

Improving access to quality health services and saving children's lives from preventable deaths requires investment in education, jobs and

decent working conditions for health workers to deliver primary health care, including community health workers, it further noted.

Studies show that child deaths in the highest-risk countries could drop substantially if community-based child survival interventions could reach those in need, it said.

This package of interventions alone would save millions of children and would deliver care closer to home. Integrated management of childhood illnesses - especially the leading causes of post-neonatal death namely acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea and malaria - is needed to improve child health and survival, it emphasised.

The report also notes large gaps in data, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where the mortality burden is high. Data and statistical systems must be improved to better track and monitor child survival and health, including indicators on mortality and health via household surveys, birth, and death registration through Health Management Information Systems (HMIS), and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS), the report added.



Studies show that child deaths in the highest-risk countries could drop substantially if community-based child survival interventions could reach those in need

Tea farmers raise voices over four-month payment delays

By Guardian Correspondent, Tukuyu

SOME tea farmers in Rungwe District, Mbeya Region say they face economic hardships because a factory they supplied has not paid them for four months.

Complained about the Katumba Tea Factory for delaying their payment for more than four months, a situation they say affects them economically.

In separate interviews, the farmers said that Katumba Tea Factory took their tea leaves since December last year and has not paid them despite several appeals.

Febister Kijombe, Mwakaleli-based tea farmer said that they have invested enough energy and money in farming which they rely on but the factory was making life difficult for them.

"We have families to take care of; we have children who go to school, so delaying the payment affects us a lot because we find ourselves sometimes lacking money to buy basic needs, including food," he said.

"The last time when we held a meeting in Mbeya city, they assured us that they would pay us before March 20 but there is no hope that we will be paid and life has become so difficult for us."

Therezia Mahenge said due to the challenge that the farmers face, some have decided to neglect tea farming, opting for other crops.

Mahenge said that currently, there are no tea labourers due to

the fact that farmers do not have money to pay them, claiming that labourers demand payment upfront.

Jeremiah Ngusa said that when they started cultivating the tea crop, they formed a union under the name of Small Tea Farmers Union which had resulted in good productivity for them, unlike the current system that they do not understand.

Ngusa said, currently they use a cooperative system which he blames for the many problems farmers face.

Ambilikile Mwasameta, chairperson of a sub-committee that monitors payments said that there are over 13,000 farmers who are yet to be paid by the factory as per the amount of tea which they harvested.

Mwasameta said that they wrote to the District commissioner, Member of Parliament for Rungwe constituency and the factory owner, but they have not received any response.

Leby Gabriel, Katumba Tea Factories chief executive officer, admitted that they owe money to the farmers and that they have been paying them in instalments.

He said by December last year, the factory had paid a total of 779 m/- to farmers.

The CEO said that the delay in paying the farmers was caused by market instability of the crop but he promised to work hard and ensure that all farmers are paid.



Zanzibar Second Vice President Hemed Suleiman Abdallah (C) pictured in Zanzibar yesterday receiving a Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce trophy on behalf of Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi from Zanzibar's Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister, Riziki Pembe Juma. According to TWCC, the award was in appreciation of Dr Mwinyi's recognition of women's contribution to Tanzania's development. Right is TWCC chairperson Mercy Silla. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

'Women empowerment goes with qualification'

By Carlos Banda

WOMEN have been advised to be ready to effectively utilise available opportunities for their socioeconomic development instead of misinterpreting the agenda of empowerment as a path to favouritism.

The call was made in Dar es Salaam yesterday by Peter Malika, Head of United Nations Capital Development Fund in Tanzania (UNCDF Tanzania) at a learning session themed 'Celebrating the success of women entrepreneurs & managers in the CookFund portfolio 2024', an event hosted by UNCDF to empower women in support of the government's endeavour to

intensify efforts through the private sector to contribute to the transition to the use of clean sources for cooking.

"Investors are not interested in impact only. When you attract funding, an investor may show interest in investing but they will want to see returns from the money they disbursed and the impact," he said.

"Therefore, you cannot say that because of being a woman, you should be favoured. If that happens, it will take a long time for women to advance if the attitude is based on women being favoured."

Malika said that it is important for women to display their preparedness and initiatives to take

on opportunities that grant them both moral and material support, adding that unpreparedness can cause funds to be taken back to donors.

"The government and stakeholder institutions had campaigned earlier to seek funds to invest in women. A lot of money was set aside for helping women, however, after five years it was discovered that no woman had shown up to take the opportunity. The reason behind this was that the targeted women were unprepared. It is also unfair if women are empowered without considering their qualifications. That is why you cannot hire a woman just because she is a woman but you employ her because she

suits the position and has all the qualifications," he said.

Chanja Mwombela, Investment Impact Officer at UNCDF said that individuals should step up efforts for growth when they are ready, adding that one woman's effort can inspire and motivate other women to see and grab opportunities to change their socioeconomic situations.

Albina Meena, manager at the Sustainable Energy Services Company (SESCOM), hailed the CookFund programme, saying that it has curved a path for women's economic empowerment and creation of job opportunities that make them less dependent.

"We are working with agents to supply our electric clean cooking solutions and more than 90 percent of them are women. This is an opportunity for women to ensure that their homes are safe and they have money which prevents them from being exposed to financial oppression," she said.



Peter Malika, Head of United Nations Capital Development Fund in Tanzania, pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday sensitising women entrepreneurs attending a CookFund programme on the need to be prepared for gainful engagement as investors. UNCDF's chipped into the initiative chiefly in the spirit of ensuring the private complements the government's efforts to empower women economically and socially through the use of clean fuel for cooking. Photo: Carlos Banda

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE government has issued a 14-day ultimatum to the mining office in Dodoma Region, Dodoma City Council and National Environment Management Council to assess environmental damage caused by quarry mining in the capital city "contrary to the environmental law."

Dr Selemani Jafo, Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) issued the ultimatum here yesterday shortly after inspecting quarry mining in Iyumbu and Njedengwa areas in the city.

He tasked the responsible

Authorities are given 14 days to assess impact of city quarrying

authorities to hand him the assessment report so that he can make decisions to curb environmental damage that takes place on the city's hills.

"What is going on here is contrary to the environmental law as mining is not allowed to be done within the city. This is wrong," he said.

According to him, the move by the mining office in Dodoma Region to issue mining licences

is a mistake, adding that mining should be banned in those areas to protect the environment.

"We must protect all hills which are within Dodoma city and the only way to do so is by stopping mining in those areas," he said.

"We have been praising other countries for taking care of their natural environment but here we are destroying our own. We need to protect all these areas for the current and next generations."

Dr Vedastus Milinga, Dodoma City Council natural resources and environmental officer, said that they will work on the minister's directive and present the report to him as soon as possible.

George Kaseza, resident mining officer in Dodoma Region said that those areas before Dodoma became a city had licences that were issued by his office to people who are still carrying out quarrying activities to date.

Turkey firm to spend 33bn/- on real estate project in Zanzibar

By Correspondent Emmanuel Onyango

A TURKISH firm is this month set to start implementing a real estate project worth \$13 million (over 33bn/-) in the leafy coastal suburb of Fumba in Zanzibar.

The company, 2410 Global, is to construct 40 housing units within one year from this month until March next year. Registered by Zanzibar Investment Promotion Authority (ZIPA), the project has been dubbed '2410 Life' and is being carried out within a free economic zone in Fumba town which is amongst rapidly developing areas in Zanzibar.

The town is a sustainably master planned community sprawling across 150 acres of coastal savannah and 1.5 kilometers of Indian Ocean coastline.

Tanzanian-registered construction firm based in Dar es Salaam, Advent Construction Limited, has been assigned to take over the construction activities at the project site and abide by all

rules, ethical standards as well as regulations set for construction industry.

Dhruv Jog, the firm's managing director told this paper in an interview yesterday that 2410 Life project is specially designed for Zanzibar with a unique loft concept based on perfect harmony.

According to him, the 40 structures are to be constructed as world-class steel villas designed with the embrace of innovation and style with nature where creativity has no limit.

"The designs offer a unique living experience by highlighting durability and aesthetics with the special loft concept," he said.

He said 2410 Life concept combines modern luxury amidst tropical nature, with its beachfront location, unique atmosphere, social living spaces, special concierge services, private beach, infinity pool, and social areas.

"This is the first and the only project with a unique concept that preserves the present and brings future of the island so as to add comfort and aesthetics to life with

every project it brings to life" he said.

"2410 Life offers a unique private life by protecting the island's original structure and corals with its nature-friendly design and material selection. By adopting the principle of environmental sustainability, it creates a respectful living space for the environment without disturbing the unique nature of the island."

Early this month, Zanzibar government inaugurated the project at a ceremony which was held at Park Hyatt Hotel graced by Minister of Trade and Industrial Development Omar Said Shaaban.

In his speech, the minister affirmed to the people of Zanzibar that the Turkish firm 2410 Global was determined to make more investments in Zanzibar, focusing on the real estate and tourism.

The company collaborates with the Zanzibar government to explore additional investment and development opportunities through public-private partnerships and direct foreign investments.



Khamis Hamza Khamis (L), Deputy Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and the Environment), welcomes newly appointed Deputy Permanent Secretary in the VP's Office (Environment), Christina Mndeme (R), shortly after she was sworn in at State House in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. Second left is Permanent Secretary in the VP's Office, Mary Maganga. Photo: Correspondent Ismail Ngayonga

Maths stakeholders express joy over multiple choice questions

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

MATHEMATICS stakeholders have commended the decision made by the National Examinations Council of Tanzania to remove multiple choice questions for the subject in Primary School Leaving Examinations.

They spoke yesterday at the climax of the World Mathematics Day which was held at a national level in Morogoro Region under the theme 'Play Smart with Mathematics'.

Dr Sylvester Rugeihyamu, Head of Mathematics Department at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) who also heads the Mathematics Association of Tanzania (MAT) said such kind of questions did not prepare pupils to show their abilities to understand the subject.

He said that MAT was at the forefront of opposing the practice, saying they pushed for the removal of multiple choice questions from national exams.

He said last year's Mathematics performance rate rose to 25 percent, a level that is still low and needs concerted efforts to push up.

"We want pupils to learn more in practice and understand the

subject. Another initiative should be reviewing the curriculum. Teachers must first be trained to master the subject" he said.

Dr Jabir Bakari, Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) Director General who is one of the three sponsors who gave gifts to six students from Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar who did well in Mathematics, said the subject is the umbrella for the development of information and communication technology and the digital economy.

"Children can be well trained on life skills from a better foundation of Mathematics. That's why TCRA has decided to participate in building this foundation," he said.

Dr Franklin Rwezimula, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Education) said that despite the importance of Mathematics, there are still many challenges that cause learners to post poor performance.

He said that the commemoration helps boost motivation in the learning and teaching of the subject.

"Mathematics is a simple subject. It opens doors to other subjects. So, it is important that it continues to be given first priority. Stakeholders

should continue to cooperate with the government to resolve the challenges related to this subject," he said.

(MAT) Chairperson Dr Said Sima suggested that Mathematics should be mandatory as there are many pupils who don't put enough effort in passing the subject.

Dr Sima said that last year's Form Four results show that performance in Mathematics rose from 20.08 percent to 25.42 percent, the performance that took more than 15 years since 2008.

Georgia Mutagahywa, Barrick Gold Corporation Communications Manager said the company has been motivating girls to enjoy the world of science and technology by passing Mathematics examinations through organized competitions.

She said that doing so will help girls to get jobs in various sectors including mining.

Stellah Maurice, one of the pupils who did well in Mathematics competition from Marian Girls Secondary School encouraged pupils to study hard to do well not only in Mathematics but all subjects.

"The only secret is not to be afraid of this subject and practise it regularly. There is no difficulty at all in Mathematics," she said.



REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF ZANZIBAR MINISTRY OF HEALTH

6 Barabara ya Health Office
Mnazi Mmoja P. O. Box 236,
70467 Mjini Magharibi, Zanzibar

Website: www.mohz.go.tz
Email: info@mohz.go.tz

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (JOB ANNOUNCEMENT) FOR PROJECT SECRETARY

- The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania obtained a loan from BADEA, Kuwait Fund and Saudi Fund for Rehabilitation and Expansion of Mnazi Mmoja Hospital Project – Zanzibar. The Ministry of Health-Zanzibar representing the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania intends to apply parts of this loan to finance the management of the Project through the establishment of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) for rehabilitation and expansion of Mnazi Mmoja Hospital in Zanzibar. The duration of the implementation phase is three years and Operation & Management phase is one year, the project is expected to be completed by the end of 2026. The following staff will be recruited in order to facilitate the Project.

I. SECRETARY – ONE POST

Main Tasks and Responsibilities

- Front desk management both for visitors and handling telephone communications.
- Prepare and manage correspondence, reports, and documents.
- Maintain updated address and phone lists of Government officials and stake holders.
- Organize and coordinate program meetings, meetings for visiting missions/delegations, conference, and travel arrangements.
- Implement and maintain office systems.
- Filing and safekeeping of project documentation and database to ensure timely and correct flow of information to all relevant stakeholders.
- Maintain a proper record of all incoming and outgoing documents to and from the project which includes management of file, letter and memo scroll, hardcopy and softcopy storage of all documents etc.
- Communicate verbally and in writing to answer inquiries and provide information.
- Coordinate flow of information both internally and externally.
- Filing and safe keeping of project documentations and database to ensure timely and correct flow of information to all relevant stakeholders.

Requirement and Qualifications – 55% marks

- Intermediate degree in Management, business administration, law, education and its equivalents (Bachelor's degree preferred).
- Good command in basic computer skills.

Experience – 40% marks.

- At least 5 years of experience in secretarial services.
Experience in financial management and has worked in donor funded projects.

Language 5% marks

- Excellent knowledge of English and Swahili languages.

Working conditions

The Secretary will be stationed at the premises of the Mnazi Mmoja Hospital.

Period of Performance and remunerations

The Secretary will be a full-time position within the Project. He/she will be offered a 2 year contract with six months' probation period. Remuneration will be monthly.

Reporting

The Secretary of the PIU will report monthly to the Project Manager.

- All application letters addressed to the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Health-Zanzibar, must be submitted by hand to the Procurement and Disposal Management Unit, P.O. Box 236, Ministry of Health-Zanzibar, **between 9:00am in the morning and 3:30pm in the afternoon, no later than March 29, 2024.** Late applications will not be considered. This application is only for Tanzanian citizens.
- A detailed Curriculum Vitae must be provided on how the requirements specified in this document match the capability, experience, and knowledge.
- The Application must be submitted on one original and one copy and envelop must be marked "Original" and "Copy" as appropriate. If there are any discrepancies between the original and the copy the original governs. The outer envelope shall be labeled with the submission address, reference number and title of the Post.
- The Application must be submitted in the English language, all required information must be provided, responding clearly and concisely to all the points set out.
- The Application document should comprise of the following:
 - Covering Letter.
 - An application letter duly signed on all pages by applicant.
 - Applications shall be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:
 - Comply with required qualifications.
 - Comply with Experience
 - Comply with Language English and Kiswahili

Needed: Joint efforts to protect children

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

SAVE the Children Tanzania has called for more coordinated efforts from stakeholders to consolidate and heighten systems that promote children's rights.

Innocent Estomih, child protection and child right governance officer at Save the Children made the call in Dar es Salaam recently at a special walk that involved over 1,000 pupils from Kawe and Tumaini primary schools in Kinondoni District.

Estomih said that despite efforts taken by the government and stakeholders to protect children from various forms of abuse, a good number of them are still locked in dangerous environments where their rights are violated.

The pupils' procession was organized by Save the Children Tanzania in collaboration with the two schools to amplify voices to communities around the schools on children's rights.

The pupils raised their voices against people in the community who abuse children.

He said that parents, guardians and communities have a duty to ensure children are safe from all forms of abuse.

Suleiman Ally, Tumaini Primary School head teacher, said that in order to end child violence and child abuse, the school has been providing awareness to pupils on their rights and how they can protect themselves from acts of abuse.

He cautioned pupils not to stay in dangerous environments. Further, he told them to report immediately to their teachers, parents or guardians whenever they see elements of child abuse against them.

"We have been holding regular meetings with their parents/guardians on how to keep children safe and protect them from abuse and violence," he said.

Jacqueline Kawogo, Kawe ward

community development officer, called for close collaboration with police by ensuring that culprits of child abuse and violence are sent behind bars.

Jerry Mbano, a grandparent, suggested that in order to eradicate violence against children, teachers, parents and local leaders need to join forces and come up with more innovative measures.

He said that parents need to closely collaborate with teachers because their children leave home early in the morning and they spend the entire day at school.

He also urged local leaders to ensure there is security in their respective areas which also involve taking stern measures against pupils who dodge school.

Subira Kessy, Mzimuni Mtaa executive officer, said that a child's upbringing requires joint efforts from parents, guardians, teachers and the entire community.



...despite efforts taken by the government and stakeholders to protect children from various forms of abuse, a good number of them are still locked in dangerous environments where their rights are violated



Save the Children projects manager Victor Mkiza conducts training in Shinyanga municipality earlier this week to ward executive officers and various other civil servants in Shinyanga Region whose briefs include dealing directly with children's growth and wellbeing. Part of the focus of the training is emphasis on the need to involve children in the planning of development plans and programmes to ensure that the children's own interests and priorities are taken into account during implementation. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

HOME Affairs Minister Hamad Yusuf Masauni has said efforts are underway to encourage more Tanzanians to shift from the use of firewood and charcoal to clean energy sources.

"There are many benefits of using gas for cooking; people use charcoal believing that they save money, but in reality they spend more money as price of charcoal is higher than some clean energy sources," he said on Wednesday when speaking at Mnazi Mmoja grounds in Zanzibar shortly after receiving 700 gas cylinders from Oryx Gas Tanzania Limited (OGTL).

The donated gas cylinders were distributed to food vendors in Kikwajuni constituency in Unga,

Food vendors land free gas cylinders for clean cooking

Zanzibar. "There are no reasons for anyone to continue using charcoal and firewood due to its negative impacts on health and the environment," he said.

He commended the company for extending such support to Kikwajuni residents, saying the move is crucial in the country's clean energy transition endeavours.

"We believe that those who got gas cylinders will be good ambassadors by encouraging more people to use gas in cooking. My desire is to see all the 24,000 people in Kikwajuni

shifting from dirty to clean energy," he said.

Earlier, OGTL managing director Benoit Araman said that cooking with gas protects the environment by eradicating deforestation caused by cutting down trees to make charcoal and firewood.

"Gas preserves the health of women who are affected by the fumes and smoke from charcoal and firewood. By using gas, women will be able to have more time to practice other activities and avoid arguments with their partners due

to late dinner. Men will also score more points with the women if they give them cylinders as gifts," he said.

"Using gas also gives children more time for studies instead of going to look for firewood. We believe that using gas to cook brings a lot of development to our society."

Araman said the firm has since July 2021, through these initiatives supported government efforts to eradicate the use of dirty energy which is not only bad for people's health but also dangerous to the environment.

Women need to be creative to succeed, says gender activist

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

TANZANIAN women have been advised to stop working habitually but instead be creative so that they can improve their livelihoods and contribute to economic development.

Lilian Liundi, executive director of Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) gave the advice in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday when speaking to the women at the Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT).

The meeting was special for capacity building on gender equality and leadership as part of celebrating the just-ended International Women's Day.

"It's important for women to work hard and be creative because leadership positions are highly dependent on creativity and doing something different in society," she said.

"I have seen here that there is a leader with a big position who is a woman; she did not get this position by favour but she worked hard and was seen that she was capable. So, you should emulate this example of hard work," she said.

Liundi said that women have a great ability to bring about change in society and the only thing required is for them to believe in themselves and commit themselves whenever they are given an opportunity to lead.

She said this year's theme 'Invest in women: Accelerate development' aims to empower women economically and take positive action to achieve gender equality efforts.

She said at the meeting, women were given education about entrepreneurship, how to be a good leader and the importance of gender equality in the workplace, adding that the aim was to remind women of their role in the development of

communities and the country as a whole.

Ramadhani Mungula, DIT head of entrepreneurship studies unit asked women at the institute to engage in various activities to improve themselves economically instead of relying on the jobs they have.

"It is good to have another economic activity that generates income instead of waiting until you are retired at 60 years old and then you start looking for an economic activity to engage in. I assure you that at that age you will not be able to do any business unless you start now," he said.

Mungula said gender equality in society depends on opportunities, responsibilities, rights and resources and that in order for everyone to be able to achieve equality, the society must consider these issues carefully.



I have seen here that there is a leader with a big position who is a woman; she did not get this position by favour but she worked hard and was seen that she was capable. So, you should emulate this example of hard work



Halotel Tanzania workers pictured in Dar es Salaam earlier this week presenting an International Women's Day assortment of home use and other items to Kinondoni District's Malaika Orphanage. Photo: Correspondent Zuwena Shame

Insurer feted for promoting gender equality

By Guardian Reporter

JUBILEE Life Insurance has won The Citizen Rising Woman 2024 award in recognition of its commitment to promoting gender equality within its organizational framework.

The Citizen Rising Woman award seeks to honour organizations with structures in place to promote gender equality at the workplace. The initiative also recognizes companies that

have women representation in management and decision-making positions.

Gender equality at the workplace has emerged as a prominent global issue, underscored by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, which advocates for the attainment of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

This agenda transcends geographical boundaries, resonating with organizations,

governments and societies worldwide. The pursuit of gender equality at the workplace encompasses various facets such as representation in leadership roles, elimination of discrimination as well as promotion of inclusive policies and practices.

Commenting about the award recently, Jubilee Life Insurance CEO Helena Mzena said that winning the award during women's month was an immense honour and a validation of the progress

being made in advancing the gender agenda at the workplace.

"I am honoured to accept the Rising Woman Award, a testament to our company's unwavering dedication to diversity and inclusivity. This recognition is particularly meaningful as it marks the second time our company has been honoured with this prestigious award. We will continue to foster an environment where every individual's talent is valued and celebrated," she said.

End natural resource-backed loans, AfDB chief tells African leaders

ABIDJAN

AFRICAN Development Bank (AfDB) President Dr Akinwumi Adesina has urged African countries to put an end to natural resource-backed loans.

Dr Adesina called the deals bad and pointed to a bank initiative that helps countries renegotiate them.

"The risk that one has with natural resource-backed loans, as far as I'm concerned, is that they are just bad, bad, and bad. First and foremost, because you can't price the asset properly. If you have minerals, oil, metals, and gas under the ground, it's not actually being marketed, so how you actually come up with a price of that for a long-term contract? It's a challenge," he said.

"Second, is that the negotiation is very asymmetric. Most countries that want to do asset-natural resource-backed loans are probably dealing with bigger countries, bigger commercial banks that want to give them a loan and say, 'Well, look, it's urgent, we need it. But this is what you have to sign.' But it is those that actually want to give the loan that have the upper power, not the person who wants or the country that wants to receive the loan."

Linking future revenue from natural resource exports to loan pay downs is often touted as a way for recipients to get financing for infrastructure projects and for lenders to reduce the risk of not getting their money back.

The shift to renewable energy and electric vehicles has caused a spike in the demand for critical minerals, driving these kind of loans.

Adesina, whose Abidjan, Ivory Coast-based institution helps finance development in African countries, said these arrangements come with a litany of problems.

He highlighted the uneven nature of the negotiations, with lenders typically holding the upper hand and dictating terms to cash-strapped African nations.

This power imbalance, coupled with a lack of transparency and the potential for corruption, creates fertile ground for exploitation, Adesina said.

"These are the reasons I say Africa should put an end to natural resource-backed loans," he said as he proceeded to point to a bank initiative that helps "countries renegotiate those loans that are asymmetric, not transparent and wrongly priced."

The former Nigerian minister for Agriculture said loans secured with natural resources pose a challenge for development banks like his and the International Monetary Fund, which promote sustainable debt management.

Countries may struggle to get or repay loans from these institutions because they have to use the income from their natural resources – typically crucial to their economies – to pay off resource-tied debts, he said.

After Chad, Angola and the Republic of Congo approached the IMF for support, the multilateral lender insisted on the renegotiation of their natural resource-backed loans.

At least 11 African countries have taken dozens of loans worth billions of dollars secured with their natural resources since the 2000s, and China is by far the top source of funding through policy banks and state-linked companies.



These are the reasons I say Africa should put an end to natural resource-backed loans

UK to pay asylum seekers £3,000 to move to Rwanda

LONDON

MIGRANTS whose asylum claims are rejected by the United Kingdom will be given £3,000 (\$3,800) to move to Rwanda.

The UK already has a plan in place which pays failed asylum seekers to return to their home countries.

But the new measure targets those who cannot return to their countries of origin, local press reported on Tuesday.

The cash in exchange for moving to Rwanda is just another scheme in Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's ambitious plan to stop irregular migration. It does not replace the plan to deport illegal arrivals to Rwanda, which has been blocked by courts over concerns about the east African country's safety.

To sidestep the court's concerns, the government introduced a bill

which seeks to label Rwanda a safe country.

Last week, the proposed legislation suffered a major setback after the House of Lords passed five amendments, which if ratified, would make it harder for the House of Commons to declare Rwanda "safe" and would require the government to comply with domestic and international law.

The bill compels judges to regard Rwanda as a safe country and gives ministers the power to disregard parts of the Human Rights Act.

For accepting to receive deportees, Kigali has so far pocketed \$300 million from London.

After numerous court cases and international outcry, no deportation flights have taken off under the deal struck in April 2022.

Prime Minister Sunak has vowed to press ahead with the plan.

Uganda sets aside \$800m for teaching of Kiswahili

By Special Correspondent, Kampala

UGANDAN government has allocated \$800m (£625m) to promote and teach Kiswahili in the country, as part of efforts to foster regional integration.

Civil servants including doctors, nurses and border workers will be given priority in the yet to be unveiled Kiswahili training programme, Uganda's Minister for East African Affairs Rebecca Kadaga said.

The minister did not give further details on when and how the training programme will be unveiled.

As part of the efforts to popularise the language in the country, Kadaga said all senior government officials, including cabinet ministers and judges, were taking compulsory weekly lessons.

In July 2022, Uganda government

approved the adoption of Kiswahili as an official language and directed that it be made a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools.

But the language is currently taught in a few secondary schools in the country.

About 200 million people speak Kiswahili in the world and in 2021, the language received its biggest boost when the UN designated 7 July as World Kiswahili Language Day.

It is also the official language of the East African regional bloc, the EAC.

In 2019, Kiswahili became the only African language to be recognised by the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

There are also efforts to introduce it in classrooms across South Africa and Botswana.



Adam Salehe Rashid (2nd-R) shows ignition keys to a three-wheeler (Bajaj) which CRDB head of customer banking Stephen Adili (2nd-L) presented to him at Chanika in suburban Dar es Salaam yesterday for emerging winner in the bank's Simbanking draw. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

HARARE

ZIMBABWE is set to open a new frontier for cooperation with China in the financial and capital market sector, the nation's top envoy to China has said, highlighting the immense potential between the two nations in further deepening their pragmatic cooperation.

"We should send the message to financial institutions and fund managers in China that there are more investment opportunities in Zimbabwe that are beckoning," Zimbabwean Ambassador to China Martin Chedondo told a

Zimbabwe seeks deeper business ties with China

gathering of business leaders in Beijing on Tuesday.

Chedondo said cooperation between the two countries "has been growing in leaps and bounds", highlighting the presence of Chinese companies in sectors such as mining, manufacturing, agriculture and construction.

Trade between the two nations reached a total volume of \$3.1 billion in 2023, up by 29.9 percent year-on-year, according to China's General Administration of Customs.

The Zimbabwean envoy stressed the strong political relations between both nations, saying that both sides have always supported

each other's core interests.

Zimbabwe has remained steadfast in adhering to the one-China principle, and will continue to support the major initiatives proposed by China, including the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, he said.



Yams, cassava and sweet potatoes, which are especially popular for iftar and currently in plentiful supply, on sale at Dar es Salaam's Buguruni mixed-goods market. Correspondent Jumanne Juma captured the scene yesterday.

Liberia sacks port officials in corruption crackdown

MONROVIA

TEN senior officials have been dismissed by Liberia's National Port Authority (NPA) after being accused of corruption.

Sekou Hussein Dukuly, managing director of NPA, said the individuals were involved in "financial improprieties." He said the

individuals were found liable "after an internal investigation."

Dukuly said the case has been sent to the police for prosecution.

But some of the accused individuals plan to take legal action against the NPA.

"I just received a dismissal letter from the management, but my lawyers have said I shouldn't

comment on the details and allegations" Pevu Flomoku, one of the accused, told the BBC.

The former port manager of Buchanan, Civicus Barsi-Giah termed the decision as political and said he didn't receive an official termination letter.

Barsi-Giah said he was not made aware of an internal investigation.

The NPA also reported seven seaport officers for allegedly conspiring to steal three 20 footed trucks of rice from the port facilities last week.

NPA's crackdown coincides with President Joseph Boakai's announcement where he said he was setting up a taskforce to fight corruption in the country.

Loans backed by natural resources: AfDB call is good food for thought

THE African Development Bank (AfDB) has lately underscored the need for African countries to wean themselves off, if you will, foreign loans or development financing backed by natural resource.

How far that practice obtains where the appeal is meant to land is unclear; nor indeed is the specificity of the concept of resources.

This is in part considering that, while the most visible implication is natural resources, experience show that physical resources and fixed assets like ports or buildings are included.

The issue, though, is whether African countries avoid all such collateral or at least some of it.

Using resources - in the wider context meaning commercially attachable property of any kind - is a sort of barter option for a government in an event of failure to keep up with loan repayments or servicing.

There comes a moment of defaulting where goods on the high seas can be impounded by a debtor holding a court attachment order and a tug to tow a ship to port and unload the cargo, or a plane in a foreign airport being restrained from flying.

It is more than an embarrassment for a country, in like manner as an auction firm gets a family out of a house to sell it for an unpaid debt. The problem is less the use of collateral than debt as such.

Arguments by the AfDB president were largely intended for the "converted", and it is unclear if refusing the use of such collateral would solve the problem, as short of that kind of collateral there is default. While describing such deals as bad and thus having come up with an AfDB initiative that helps countries renegotiate them, the implication remains hazy.

The AfDB can hardly take on the role of adviser in such transactions unless it simultaneously puts money on the table - that is, it becomes part of the

fallback structure or rescue framework in case a particular country fails live up to its commitments.

That isn't entirely out of question, of course, and the varied shareholding of the continental institution could have already positively considered the matter. The way the bank's president explained risk commonly tied up with such loans was, on the contrary surprising, as it was unclear if it works in the interests of the lender or the borrower.

He said that the risk with loans backed by natural resources was that they are just bad, bad and bad in that, first and foremost, the assets involved can't be priced properly.

In his words: "If you have minerals, oil, metals and gas under the ground, it's not actually being marketed, so how do you actually come up with a price of that for a long-term contract? It's a challenge." Indeed, but not impossible.

The AfDB president cited another factor as negotiation being overly asymmetric, as most countries seeking loans of the kind in question are probably dealing with bigger countries or bigger commercial banks that may want to extend loans to them.

He recommended that the countries or companies dictate terms as they have 'the upper power', but this is factually inaccurate.

With the days of gunboat diplomacy long gone, it is presumed that countries enter into contracts or loans knowingly and willingly.

The most firms can do is to engage "foul play" and not to set terms, as there would be other countries or companies interested in the same resource or range of resources to be used as fall-back guarantees.

The point is that if African countries do not want to privatise, they might find themselves compelled to resort to such recourse, hopefully finding that it is just a matter of cleaning up bribe-induced bad loans.

Treasury ought to be keen on privatised firms and even keener on state-run ones

REMINDERS of an explicitly patriotic attitude have lately been made by highly placed Treasury and other government officials to CEOs and members of the boards of directors of major companies where the government has minority shares.

Stepped-up emphasis has been laid on the need to exercising patriotism and play proactive roles, with a view to boosting non-tax revenues.

This has come to light most recently at a meeting held at Kibaha in Coast Region meant to evaluate partnerships and other forms of cooperation between the government and private investors, where the issue of what to expect from firms in which the government has minority shares was described as vital.

There was reference to government's need to increase non-tax revenue from the current five per cent to 10 per cent of revenue within the Vision 2025 closure.

The CEOs and board members were implored to prioritise the national interest in the course of their duties, making it a principle that has to do with uplift the present generation and posterity. This view or strategic dimension was being made as an addition to their formal functions.

That is where there is a complicated set of assertions, the key issue being whether top executive of public firms need to think beyond the circle of the boardroom in order to exercise linkage and connectivity of the sectors concerned with real government objectives.

This need arises from the imperative of contributing to the wellbeing of the larger population, but as an extraneous parameter from the roles the top officials are already expected to play.

It would appear that their presence there and what they are doing, that is, in the interests of the specific companies,

doesn't really coincide with the public interest as such.

This particular formulation, as relates to companies in which it is minority shares that are held by the government, appears to presume that it is in this sphere where the divergence between national interests and CEO functions or board membership is explicit. But the reality is fundamentally the contrary, and one would wish that Treasury rethought its course of action on this particular issue, given these realities.

Firms in which the government has minority shares operate in a competitive environment and are premised on efficiency and customer care, not rude monopoly.

Then there is the aspect of non-tax revenues that the Treasury wishes to maximise. The reality is that it would obtain much more tax revenue and more substantial non-tax revenues if the government, as a matter of policy, altered its majority or total share ownership in the more than 300 existing public firms to retain, say, 30 per cent minority shareholding.

That way, the government would hopefully liquidate much of our foreign debt, which would be converted into equity for the investor, bring large amounts of money into circulation and widen credit.

Also unclear are the actions being expected in seeking to foster an extra dose of patriotism among CEOs and board members in firms where the government has minority shares.

It is when the firms land high profits that the government also obtains a handsome dividend, even if the Treasury may not be targeting higher profits for those firms but only a 'win-win' situation for both parties.

Ordinarily it suggests that they share out the profits, even though their shareholding is not equivalent, but this might be a qualified view.

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By Jacob L. Nelson, Zeve Sanderson,

Seth C Lewis

IF you are reading this, you are probably a news and politics junkie. Someone who reads multiple news sites a day, follows several news organisations on social media, and receives a few email newsletters.

Most people aren't like this. A 2020 study found that news represents just 14 per cent of Americans' media consumption.

Attention does pick up, however, during an election year. While roughly one-third of Americans closely follow the news in non-election years, 39 to 43 per cent do so when there is a presidential election, according to Gallup.

However, new research - and recent reporting about how artificial intelligence is changing the online information environment - suggests that even as people start tuning into the election, they could end up more misinformed, not less.

The reason: People have greater faith in their own abilities to "fact-check" the news than they have in the news itself. In the past year, we have published two academic studies that suggest this faith is misplaced, and that it actually leaves people more likely to believe misinformation.

There is a growing disconnect between how journalists see themselves and how people see journalists. Instead of perceiving journalists as watchdogs acting in the public's best interest, people increasingly see journalists as elites who are acting in their own interests.

Indeed, there's been an explosion of research focused on news distrust over the past decade, and the consistent findings are that people increasingly feel compelled to discount the journalism they encounter because they believe it to be politically biased, economically compromised, or simply produced by out-of-touch elites.

People believe that journalists knowingly attempt to sensationalise the news to make more money or misrepresent the news to suit either a liberal or conservative perspective.

To be sure, this research is hardly consistent - trust in news is higher in some countries than in others, for example. In fact, some scholars have even questioned the legitimacy of a so-called "trust crisis" in journalism altogether.

Yet, even as scholars and journalism stakeholders debate the scale of the problem, many have devoted a great deal of resources to understanding its origins and implications, as well as finding solutions.

Last year, two of us (Nelson and Lewis) published a peer-reviewed study in *New Media & Society* drawing on interviews with a diverse sample of US adults to understand the reasons behind people's distrust of news and the ways in which that

People trust themselves more than they trust the news. They shouldn't.

distrust impacts their interactions with news.

Our subjects were indeed extremely cynical when it came to the news they consumed. One interviewee said: "It's all slanted." Another similarly explained that, when it comes to journalism, "I'm always skeptical."

Yet, this skepticism did not appear to lead our respondents to avoid the news. Instead of decreasing people's time spent with news, this distrust simply increased their sense that consuming the news was just a first step in determining what was actually going on in the world around them.

People described the importance of "doing their own research" to corroborate what they came across in the news they consumed so that they wouldn't be deceived by journalists who either unintentionally or deliberately aspired to deceive them.

How did this fact-checking unfold? In the absence of faith in journalists to report the news honestly and accurately, our interviewees turned to digital platforms to help them in their own attempts at improvised fact-checking.

One, for example, described turning to Google to "fact-check" the news he was watching on television in real time. "You shouldn't take the article as gospel," another said, adding: "You should still do some research and determine if what they're saying is correct."

Unfortunately, not everyone has the skills to engage in this sort of informal fact-checking in a way that will actually lead closer to the truth, rather than further from it.

People's own limitations are further compounded by the shortcomings of the platforms themselves. There is growing evidence that Google, for example, has become "rife with fraudulent search results" and has been "taken over by low-quality SEO (search engine optimisation) spam." The rise of generative artificial intelligence seems to be making the problem even worse.

In the light of these circumstances, we should not be surprised by the recent research, published in a peer-reviewed study earlier this year in *Nature*, revealing that people's attempts to "fact-check" the news actually leaves them more likely to believe misinformation, rather than less.

In the paper, on which one of us (Sanderson) is a co-author, participants were recruited online for a series of five experiments in which they were asked to evaluate the veracity or accuracy of popular news articles - some true and some false.

In the first experiment, some users were randomly assigned to use any online search engine to

evaluate news articles that had been published in the past 48 hours.

The next three experiments varied the timing of the treatment and the sample of the articles. To explore the mechanism of the search effect, the final experiment combined survey and web-tracking data to identify how the quality of news sources included in search results may affect users' belief in the misinformation being evaluated.

Across all five studies, we found that the act of searching online to evaluate news - whether it was shortly after the publication of misinformation or months later - led to a statistically significant increase in belief in misinformation.

Moreover, the effect was concentrated in people whose searches returned links to low-quality sources. This points to the existence (and danger) of "data voids", a theory suggesting that there are topics for which search engines return little credible information.

These data voids will likely arise when people search about recent stories from low-quality publishers that aren't covered by mainstream outlets.

Why do people fall into data voids? It turns out that when participants used ineffective search strategies to evaluate misinformation, such as copying the headline of an article or the URL, they were more likely to encounter other low-quality information. This in turn leads them to higher levels of belief in that misinformation.

Inadequate fact-checking, combined with the skepticism explained in the first study, further compounds people's distrust in news. And the search engine environment is at a crossroads, with traditional link-based search results being replaced by generative AI search that summarises (either correctly or not) other sources. The impact this will have on people's trust in the news - as well as their ability to navigate the information environment - remains unknown.

What can individuals, technology companies, and journalists do to address the problem? Skepticism, especially in the current environment, is understandable.

People shouldn't necessarily lose their skepticism, but they should instead equip themselves with a better "toolkit" for navigating the online environment.

This could include developing richer online reasoning strategies, using tools that help people quickly identify source quality, and inoculating themselves against the techniques that misinformation producers use.

Companies can similarly address this issue by further investing in

strategies to ensure that credibility is emphasized.

Finally, journalists have an opportunity to do more to persuade the public that news, by and large, does not need to be "fact-checked" in the first place.

Indeed, one reason people appear to distrust journalism so much is that they see journalists as "elites" who are attempting to manipulate the public for political or monetary gain.

Journalists might consider pushing back against this characterisation by more forcefully (and perhaps more creatively) embracing transparency in their work.

To be sure, the evidence surrounding the efficacy of transparency in journalism is mixed, to say the least. However, these findings might say less about the effectiveness of transparency than they do about the kinds of transparency that journalists can and should pursue.

For example, rather than simply describing how specific newsroom decisions unfold, publications might consider sharing information about the business side of the newsroom.

I could perhaps mean sharing the average employee salary, the organisation's approach to revenue, and the ways in which the newsroom enforces its "firewall" between its editorial and business interests.

Alternatively, newsrooms might emulate the BBC, which recently launched an initiative to accompany its article with "content credentials" - so audiences can trust that when they see a piece of BBC content it does in fact come from the BBC.

In another recently published study that two of us co-authored, we found that although people distrust journalism and healthcare, they trust their own doctors.

As a result, the "doing your own research" trend we observed in journalism was reversed in medicine: Instead of using the internet to corroborate what their doctor said, people went to their doctor to corroborate what they read online. In other words, doctors do the fact-checking, but journalists get fact-checked.

The upside from this study: It's indeed possible (and arguably beneficial) for people to distrust a profession and trust a professional. We see it in medicine - we just need to figure out how to get there in journalism.

*** A dispatch by the Tow Centre for Digital Journalism at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, a partner of the Columbia Journalism Review (CJR). The Tow Centre is a research centre exploring the ways in which technology is changing journalism, its practice and its consumption.**

Tanzania population explosion: World Bank urges bold reforms for economic resilience

By Adonis Byemelwa

IN a startling revelation, the World Bank's latest annual update on Tanzania unveiled on March 12, 2024, issues a dire warning: the nation's population is hurtling towards a doubling spree every 23 years, projected to reach a staggering 140 million by 2050, fueled by persistently high fertility rates.

While the report underscores the urgent need for strategic policy upheavals to safeguard sustainable economic growth, social media has erupted with varied reactions. Many argue that the West's interest in Africa's resources drives the push for a lower population, while others view the burgeoning populace as a treasure trove of market potential and human resources.

The gravity of the situation is accentuated by the fact that over 80 percent of Tanzania's impoverished population resides in rural areas, actively engaged in agriculture. Shockingly, only 33 percent of arable land is cultivated, starkly contrasting to countries like Malawi and Rwanda, which surpass the 95 percent mark.

Surprisingly, Tanzanian farmers experience comparatively limited land pressure, maintaining an average plot size of around 2.5 hectares between 2013 and 2018. This stands in stark contrast to Uganda, where demographic pressures have led to a 40 percent reduction in average landholding.

Amidst the vast expanse of available land in Tanzania, a staggering revelation emerges: approximately 10 percent of the country's fertile farmland lies dormant, held captive by a confluence of technological constraints and a dearth of human and financial capacity.

A comprehensive study conducted by the esteemed Prof. Damian Gabagambi of Sokoine University of Agriculture in 2008 unveils a disheartening reality - a mere 18.6 percent of farms harnessed the power of oxen, a mere 3.1 percent embraced the efficiency of tractors, and a mere 1.5 percent ventured into the realm of modernization with threshers.

Notably, Tanzania boasts a notable presence of medium to large farms, with about 20 percent of farm households owning more than 5 hectares of land - a stark contrast to India (3 percent) and Uganda (4 percent). As the nation grapples with these challenges, the call for innovative solutions to harness its agricultural potential has never been more urgent.

The implications are profound, with an impending surge in demand for social services and employment oppor-



tunities. To counter this demographic challenge, the World Bank proposes a set of crucial policy shifts. These include ensuring girls complete secondary education, promoting family planning services, empowering women economically, and initiating a national dialogue on the demographic agenda.

Nathan Belete, the Country Director of the World Bank, emphasized the necessity of multisectoral coordination, bringing together key ministries, religious and traditional leaders, civil societies, parliamentarians, and policymakers. This collaborative approach is crucial for implementing effective and sustainable solutions to the demographic challenges facing the nation.

Despite a marginal decline in the national poverty rate, which reached 26.5 percent in 2023, the report highlights persistent challenges in the economic sector. The COVID-19 pandemic and global crises have driven more people into low-level agricultural production, contributing to an increase in the number of people living in poverty to 15 million in 2022.

The economic growth, primarily driven by the service sector, faces setbacks in agriculture due to floods and droughts.

Kitila Mkumbo, the Minister of the Office of the President for Planning and Investment, emphasized the government's focus on education and family planning programs. Given that 76 percent of the population is under 35, these initiatives are critical to addressing the high fertility rate.

However, a significant concern emerges - the potential increase in unskilled labor due to population growth. In developing countries like Tanzania, an overabundance of unskilled labor can hinder economic progress, leading to higher unemployment rates. This situation may result in a workforce with limited skills, negatively impacting overall productivity and global competitiveness.

In stark contrast to the success stories of nations like Singapore, Tanzania is grappling with the consequences of rapid population growth and insufficient infrastructure. The recent World Bank report serves as a wake-up call for the Tanzanian government to prioritize education and skill development, drawing lessons from Singapore's strategic control of population growth.

Back in 1963, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew foresaw the potential pitfalls of unchecked population growth,

leading the nation to implement policies like the "Stop at Two" initiative. Fast forward to 2020, Singapore has become a global leader in the Human Capital Index, boasting a population of 6 million and attracting major global companies due to its skilled and educated workforce.

On the contrary, Tanzania, which had a population of 6.5 million at independence in 1961, now faces a population of 62 million after 60 years. The country's rapid population growth has outpaced its ability to provide essential services, resulting in overwhelmed infrastructure in health, education, and safety nets.

Tanzania's education sector is particularly affected, with challenges ranging from inadequate school facilities to a significant number of graduates lacking basic skills. The country currently ranks 152nd out of 174 globally in poorly managed human resources, further exacerbating the issue.

Despite these challenges, Tanzania seems to continue a trajectory of high birth rates without addressing the fundamental flaws in its policies. With nearly half of its 60 million population unsure of having enough to eat, the government is urged to take immediate action. The

question remains whether Tanzania's struggle is an issue of strategic location or flawed policies, as it grapples with the consequences of its demographic choices.

Tanzania finds itself at a pivotal moment, as the 2022 census projects a staggering population of 150 million by 2050. The nation stands at a crossroads, faced with the critical choice of proactively addressing demographic challenges or risking overwhelming social services, exacerbating poverty, and hindering economic progress.

The World Bank's recommendations serve as a guiding light, offering a roadmap for Tanzania to break free from flawed policies. The choice is stark: either implement strategic reforms today or gamble with the nation's future. Other countries diligently work to develop their economies, and Tanzania must not succumb to complacency.

The economic landscape reflects a mix of challenges and opportunities. Real GDP growth, impacted by global events like the Russia-Ukraine conflict, requires careful navigation. While inflation and fiscal deficits pose concerns, stable exchange rates and sustainable public debt offer a silver lining. The current account deficit and reduced international reserves signal the need for cautious economic management.

The rise in the poverty rate and increasing inequality are due to the vulnerability of the economy.

However, projections for 2023 and 2024 indicate a potential uptick in GDP growth, driven by tourism recovery and stability in supply chains. The fiscal deficit is set to widen due to infrastructure spending, contributing to a continuous increase in national debt.

Tanzania grapples with a persistent unemployment rate of approximately 8.70 percent in 2024, underscoring the need for a comprehensive strategy aligned with upcoming demographic challenges. The nation's future rests on decisive action, with the transformative potential lying in the implementation of World Bank recommendations and significant investments in education and skill development.

By choosing this path, the country can convert demographic hurdles into catalysts for sustainable economic growth, showcasing resilience and adaptability in the face of global and domestic uncertainties.

Africans can solve the disease that haunts us – here's how

By Khisimuzi Mdluli

I was born in Brakpan, Johannesburg, South Africa, and grew up in eSwatini (known then as Swaziland). People in these two countries share one predominant fear: unemployment. Other worries in these countries and others in the region include unwanted pregnancies, low income and food safety. The diseases that are dreaded the most are cancer and diabetes. Feared infectious diseases include HIV/AIDS, COVID and cholera.

Even though South Africa and eSwatini are among the more than two dozen African countries with a high burden of either tuberculosis (TB), drug-resistant TB or HIV/TB co-infections, TB is not feared in the same way, even though it is the disease that haunts my people the most.

So many are affected on the African continent by TB, which hits the young and vibrant the hardest in our region and in the world. eSwatini joins the seven most populous sub-Saharan African countries - Ethiopia, DR Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania - where TB hits the 25-34 and 35-44 age brackets especially hard.

It is not just the years of life that this disease takes away from us, but also the future leadership and economic productivity of our countries. I see this even within my own family, with one niece currently being treated for TB and another niece having survived drug-resistant TB a few years back.

World TB Day is March 24, a day when we will hear about ending TB by 2030 - even though it is a disease that has been with us forever. With only six years left, that goal seems too distant.



To achieve this goal, we need better awareness, yes. But we also need Africans to be fully engaged with the rest of the world, which includes conducting drug discovery and development research for TB in Africa.

Most of the current TB drugs, like the drugs for most diseases that affect Africans, are developed by companies in high-income countries. We saw what that meant in the delayed rate at which lifesaving COVID vaccines reached African countries; the high-income countries that helped develop the vaccines received them much faster.

This is why, for the Gates Medical Research Institute's trials testing investigational treatments or vaccine candidates, the relationships that we establish with the trial sites in Africa and

elsewhere are meant to support those facilities when they eventually take the lead on future trials.

It is critical that African scientists tackle African problems, and the reasons extend beyond access. Local scientists have a better understanding of the social fabric and context threatened by diseases like TB; they understand which solutions could be adopted and embraced and which will remain on the shelf.

In September 2023, the United Nations held a high-level meeting where member states agreed to boost the amount of funding for TB research by a fivefold increase by 2027 - but no guidelines on geography were placed on this pledge. More than 90% of current funding for TB R&D currently

comes from North America and Europe, and most of those funds stay in the high-income countries when we need to train and develop and indeed employ scientists in the high-income countries. Of the high-burden countries, only India has an investment in the field large enough to be noted - at 1.9% of the total global funding.

Funding specifically earmarked for TB (and antimicrobial resistance) research in Africa would ensure that more of it takes place on African soil. Funding is needed to build appropriately equipped research and production infrastructure, much like the new mRNA vaccine facility being built in Rwanda. Such facilities would be staffed with African scientists, who would get opportunities to expand

their basic and applied research skills. The H3D Research Centre at the University of Cape Town, led by Dr. Kelly Chibale, is one example of how successful African ingenuity can be, with four patents already filed.

Together with the much-needed funding from Africa's better-resourced foreign partners in high-income countries, African governments should incentivize African businesses, African foundations and charities, and high-net-worth Africans to build African Research Institutes to train, develop and employ African scientists. Developing medicines for diseases like TB that are killing African youth and stunting Africa's economic growth should be everyone's priority, in Africa and the world.

It is critically important that such efforts are not tied to immediate profits, as this leads to disappointment and ends with dwindling funds for research. Drug discovery is a "long and winding road" that begins with building talent and infrastructure and expanding the critical mass of well-trained drug developers. Investment in biomedical research should be for the sake of expanding biomedical knowledge and training young scientists; the discoveries and the profits will follow.

The timing couldn't be more appropriate than now as new futuristic technologies - including artificial intelligence, machine learning and high-speed connectivity - are entering the drug development arena. We can now see a point when the health profile and the life expectancy of people in Africa could be comparable to the rest of the world. Africa and the world should be guided by the belief that all lives have equal value and that health equity is ensured for everyone, on all continents.

Khisimuzi Mdluli, PhD, is a TB Drug Scientist and a Discovery Project Leader at the Bill & Melinda Gates Medical Research Institute (Gates MRI).

Cuba's economic crisis falls heavily on the retired

By Luis Brizuela

“IF it's hard to get along on a salary, imagine living off a pension,” says Clara Velasco. Like most retirees in Cuba, she faces additional barriers to accessing food, medicine, and services on her minuscule monthly income.

Velasco is 70 and worked as a mid-level accountant. She says: “There's not a lot you can do with 1,628 pesos a month,” the amount she receives “after nearly 40 years working for the State.”

In Cuba, the minimum retirement pension is 1,528 pesos, equivalent to US \$12.70 according to the official exchange rate of 120 Cuban pesos to a dollar. However, its estimated value shrinks to less than five US dollars if you go by the informal market - the reference point for a large part of the products, goods and services people must recur to for their basic needs.

In 2022, former Minister of the Economy Jose Luis Rodriguez stated that over half of the 1.6 million retirees in Cuba were receiving the minimum pension.

After paying the electric, gas and water bills, Velasco emphasized: “there's barely enough left to get the errands done.” “Errands” is the term used for purchasing the individual quota of limited rationed food and personal hygiene products the government sells each month to the eleven million residents of Cuba.

“It's well known that the quota of rationed products doesn't last the month. Currently, it doesn't even come complete at the beginning of the month, like it did before. Food must be purchased on the street, at ever higher prices. No one who's living only on their pension can eat well,” Velasco confesses. She herself lives alone and buys and sells different products on the illicit market to obtain additional income.

Although the quantity and variety of rationed products has diminished since the system began in 1962, this distribution channel is considered a needed support for food, especially for people of low income. In this way, they have access, when available, to small quantities of rice, sugar, beans, eggs, coffee, cooking oil, bread, and meat products.

Over 59,000 low-income older adults, along with those with disabilities and social problems, receive lunch made daily in food kitchens establishments in the country, through the so-called System for Family Attention, founded in 1998.

One of the effects of the deepening economic crisis and the shortage of foreign exchange in Cuba has been the frequent irregularities in the sale of the rationed items at subsidized prices. Assuring a consistent supply of these requires some US 1.6 billion dollars annually, government authorities maintain. In recent times that money has not existed, thus the shortages.

Further, the scarce harvests, along with structural problems in farm poli-



A street vendor serves a client in Havana. In Cuba, retired people, with lower incomes and without access to foreign currency, encounter barriers to accessing a wide variety of foods at affordable prices, which increases their situation of vulnerability. Image: IPS

cies, mean that the demand for different products remains unsatisfied.

Vulnerabilities

After the rationed products, the rest of Cubans' nutritional needs, including fruits, vegetables, and hygiene products, must be acquired in the State stores, which only accept hard currency deposited abroad, which Cubans do not receive for their salaries or pensions. The alternatives are poorly stocked agricultural markets and private businesses all at greatly elevated prices in Cuban pesos.

Low-income people and families who don't have access to USD or Euros have great difficulty accessing these markets, which in turn increases their vulnerable situation.

At the beginning of 2021, the government decreed a nominal raise in salaries and pensions, as part of the process known as Ordenamiento Putting in Order. The process included the elimination of the CUCs a Cuban currency equivalent to one dollar, an end to a whole range of subsidies, and increased prices for most services.

The buying power of the salary and pension raises evaporated rapidly in the face of the dizzying rise in prices, the

deficient supply of food and goods, and a partial dollarization of the economy. Some social scientists estimate that at least a third of the island's population face unsatisfied basic needs.

Large families, single parent families and women heads of households without stable employment, and pensioners comprise that low-income category, along with older adults who live alone without family support as well as people with disabilities.

Ramon Tellez assures that he needs to seek a new work contract, “because after 37 years as a university professor with a Master's degree, I retired on a pension of 2,230 pesos [less than seven dollars on the street], which is like saying nothing.”

Tellez, 73, reminded IPS that where he lives in the Cuban capital, a pound of rice on the open market costs approximately US \$0.68 cents - close to 10% of his monthly pension. A carton of 30 eggs sells for US \$8.00; a liter of cooking oil for US \$2.00; and a pound of raw sugar for US \$0.91 cents.

“My wife, also retired, has health problems like myself. We both need to take diuretics and high blood pressure medications, as well as insulin and digestive aids and

these must be bought on the illicit market, because none of them have been available in the pharmacies for months,” Tellez lamented.

Aging and a lack of medicines

For the aging with health problems, the persistent lack of medicines and other medical supplies in pharmacies and hospitals, and the need to resort to the informal market to access a large part of these, are among the main concerns for a number of Cubans consulted by IPS.

Resolving such issues is an essential task for a country with an increasingly aging population and an increase in non-contagious illnesses.

At the close of 2022, 22.3% of the Cuban population were 60 or over, according to official statistics.

Further, it's estimated that some 221,000 older people on the island live alone. The majority of them are women, whose life expectancy is over 80, while men have an average lifespan of 77 years.

Among the current senior population, with an average age of 71, over 82% rely only on their salaries or retirement pensions. That means they're without access to hard currency, in a context of

growing dollarization of the economy. These were some of the revelations from the 2017 National Census of the Aging Population whose data was published in 2020.

With respect to this population, those whose only source of income was their retirement or other pension affirmed that this income wasn't enough. Seventy percent said they faced privations and shortfalls.

Moreover, the survey revealed that 6.5% of those 60 or older who lived alone stated they had special needs that required the assistance of another person to realize their daily activities - 1.8% were in need of round-the-clock care.

According to the Cuban Public Health Ministry's 2020 Annual Report, nine out of ten of the major causes of death in Cuba are related to non-contagious conditions, such as heart disease, malignancies, cerebrovascular diseases, blood vessel problems, diabetes, cirrhosis, and other chronic liver disease, among others.

Care and support needed

The National Census of the Aging Population additionally revealed that some 31% of caregivers in Cuba are themselves over 59, which they

identify as a form of participation, but also a vulnerability due to the physical and psychological wear and tear of that often unpaid work, especially in the current context of growing economic privation.

Several studies insist that, despite the government's actions, the services and support systems offering care for families are insufficient, especially for the elderly. Likewise, the reality is that in recent years the situation has only gotten worse.

The studies recommend the establishment of a comprehensive care system that - in addition to an increase in care homes for the elderly - prioritizes the training of more nursing, medical and specialized aide personnel in the geriatric field to confront the challenges of dementia and disability. They also recommend additional health and psychological attention for caregivers, to maintain their quality of life.

Researchers also advocate for promoting further investigation into systems of attention to care providers, including personal training, social conditions, and services for protecting their own health and well-being while offering care.

“Just as we have a comprehensive Strategy against gender violence, a similar plan is needed to serve retired people who are a significant part of the population as the birth rate decreases, aging accelerates and emigration grows,” Ofelia Martínez, a 64-year-old former librarian living in Havana, said.

Martínez insisted that the possible strategy should: “include urgent and specific actions that can be measured in the short, medium and long term.”

In addition to the large volume of the population needing services, another challenge lies in the need to overlap the transversal policies related to demographic aging, care, and emigration, among others.

Another factor lies in the impossibility of offering significant pension increases, given the structural crisis of the Cuban economy, which projects a GDP deficit of 18.5% in 2024. This crisis, in the opinion of economists, will prevent the government from adequately tackling inflation and will negatively impact the population's standard of living.

During a television interview in November 2023, President Miguel Díaz-Canel maintained that his government is studying a methodology for subsidizing people and not products, “so that no one is left helpless.” What such a strategy might look like remains unspecified.

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

By Mario Osava, Rio De Janeiro

Brazil's biofuel potential set to expand thanks to sustainability of aviation fuel

BRAZIL is counting on biofuels to assert itself as an energy powerhouse in the near future, as a decisive supplier of low-carbon jet fuel, a requirement of the climate crisis.

The electrification of automobiles has tended to curb the strong ethanol and biodiesel agribusiness developed in the country since the 1970s. But demand for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) now offers the possibility of significant new expansion for many decades to come.

Electrically powered airplanes are not viable with current technology, and will not be for a long time. "Batteries are very heavy and store little energy," said Arnaldo Walter, a mechanical engineer and professor at the University of Campinas.

"Brazil has favorable conditions for biofuels, such as available land, good climate and rainfall, although they are now more uncertain than before," said Walter.

Nor is green hydrogen, the fashionable ecological fuel, an alternative for aviation, because of the difficulty of storage and the need for temperatures of more than 250 degrees Celsius below zero to keep it in a usable liquid form. In addition, the entire design of aircraft would have to be changed, a process that could only be achieved in the long term.

Brazil has everything it needs to become a major producer of green hydrogen, which is generated by electrolysis of water, but requires abundant electricity from renewable sources. That is the case in this country, especially in the Northeast region, which has huge potential in wind and solar energy, in addition to ports closer to Europe than those of other competitors.

The solution is biomass-derived fuel, which does not require altering the format of aircraft or their turbines, by naturally replacing aviation kerosene, the use of which generates two percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

"Not just any biofuel will do, it has to meet the requirements for environmental, social and economic sustainability certification," Walter told IPS by telephone from the southern city of Campinas, with a population of 1.1 million people located 90 kilometers from São Paulo.

Deforestation, for example, is one of Brazil's Achilles' heels, given the reports of forests being cleared to grow soybeans, whose oil will probably be one of the main raw materials for SAF. It is not enough to decarbonize the fuel, but also the whole process of its production.

The goal is to meet the target set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

"SAF is the only economically viable and available alternative, despite its sustainability challenges," argued Amanda Ohara, a chemical engineer and fuel specialist with the non-governmental Climate and Society Institute.

Brazil is the world's largest soybean producer, with an output of 154 million tons in 2023, about half of which was exported to China. Its oil is the main raw material for biodiesel, which is blended with fossil diesel in this country at a current proportion of 14 percent. Congress is discussing the possibility of raising it to 25 percent in the future.

In addition to its thriving agriculture, based largely on oilseeds and sugarcane, which can supply SAF plants, the country has ample potential for expansion.

"Brazil has favorable conditions for biofuels, such as available land, good climate and rainfall, although they are now more uncertain than before," said Wal-



ter. Tens of millions of hectares of land degraded by extensive cattle ranching in the past can be used to recover production.

In Latin America's largest country, with 850 million hectares of territory, only 61 million hectares were dedicated to agriculture and 164 million to cattle pastures in 2022, according to MapBiomass, a monitoring platform of a network of organizations focused on climate change.

The government set a goal of recovering 40 million hectares of degraded land in 10 years, almost the same as the area planted with soybeans today: 44.6 million hectares.

Soy already has a well-established market and consumers. Dedicating part of its oil to SAF competes with these uses and will require a large expansion of its cultivation, that is to say, new lands and the risk of deforestation, which together with changes in land use constitute the great source of greenhouse gases in the country.

They represent economic and environmental costs that drive the search for alternatives.

The macauba, a tropical palm tree whose scientific name is *Acrocomia aculeata*, is attractive because of its high oil productivity and its presence in almost all of Brazil, as well as in other Latin American countries under various names, such as coyol, corajo, gru-

gru or macaw palm.

It has not yet been commercially produced, nor has it been domesticated, making it a long-term, risky bet.

But Acelen, a company controlled by the Mubadala Investment Company of the United Arab Emirates, is promoting a project to grow macauba palm trees on 200,000 hectares of land in northeastern Brazil to produce SAF as of 2026.

To this end, it has an oil refinery in Mataripe, 70 kilometers from Salvador, capital of the northeastern state of Bahia, acquired in 2019 from the state-owned oil company Petrobras.

Ethanol is another alternative raw material, which, like soybean oil, has the advantage of large-scale production, but competes with other uses. In Brazil, sugarcane is the main source of ethanol, whose consumption as a fuel is almost as high as that of gasoline.

In its anhydrous form, it currently accounts for 27 percent of gasoline sold, a mix that is expected to rise to 30 percent or even 35 percent. But ethanol is also used alone, in its hydrated form. In Brazil today, almost all cars have flexible engines, powered by gasoline or ethanol, or by a mixture of any proportion.

Ethanol lags behind vegetable oils in the production of SAF, but will benefit from a production boom expected in the coming years. It will be able to

triple its annual production, which totaled 31 billion liters in 2023, without the need to greatly expand the cultivated area, according to industry leaders.

Brazil is already the country that grows the most sugarcane in the world, which allows it to lead the sugar market and occupy second place in ethanol, surpassed only by the United States, where corn is the main source.

Raizen, a joint venture between the British oil transnational Shell and Brazil's Cosan, is studying the new biofuel, also in partnership with universities, while expanding its ethanol production, of which it is the national leader.

It is a pioneer in second-generation ethanol, extracted from sugarcane bagasse and other cellulose-based waste. This ensures up to 50 percent more ethanol, without the need for more crops. The company has already started up eight plants of this type and expects to have 20 in operation by 2030, despite the fact that they are more expensive than conventional plants.

Sugarcane productivity should also increase in the coming years, according to agronomic researchers, who expect to see production rise twofold mainly due to the planting of new varieties with genetic improvements.

In addition, second-crop corn, generally planted after soybeans in the same area, has allowed an increasing production of ethanol, especially in

the midwest region of Brazil. It already represents 17 percent of the national total.

There are other alternatives, such as fossil derivatives but with reduced greenhouse gas emissions, wood from trees that grow faster in tropical countries such as Brazil, animal oils, and even cooking oil.

Each one requires different technologies, with their own costs, maturation times and environmental effects, said Walter. Logistical conditions, dispersion or facilities for collecting raw materials can also determine the most promising alternatives.

"There is no single solution, no silver bullet. We will have to combine various alternatives, depending on the intended or possible scale," Ohara said. The choice is no longer purely economic, but also responds to the climate emergency, because "gas emissions must be reduced as a matter of urgency," she added.

The expansion of monocultures will be inevitable in a country like Brazil, which aims to ensure a sustainable supply, but the damage can be mitigated with agroforestry systems, combining oilseeds with other crops, which diversify the vegetation and conserve the soil, proposed the chemist and environmentalist who worked for six years with biofuels in the state-owned Petrobras consortium.

UK to honour African tech startups

By Oluwakemi Abimbola

THE United Kingdom's Department for Business and Trade has announced the official opening of its Unicorn Kingdom: Pathfinder Awards targeted at start-up companies specialising in Artificial Intelligence, Connected & Automated Mobility Technology, Cyber Security and Digital Trade Solutions from across Africa.

Ndidiama Eze, UKDBT's Senior Press & Public Affairs Officer/ Communication Lead, Prosperity and Economic Development said that it was on the hunt to unearth the most promising tech start-up companies across the world through the awards.

UK Investment Minister, Dominic Johnson, said, "These awards are a fantastic opportunity for tech scale-up com-

panies to join the UK's thriving \$1tn tech sector.

"The awards are part of our commitment across government to help more businesses scale up and benefit from our highly skilled workforce and supportive regulatory system. The UK already has more unicorns than France and Germany combined, and our country continues to be a place where tech businesses from across the world come to thrive."

UK Trade Commissioner for Africa, John Humphrey, speaking on the awards said, "The African startup landscape is now front and centre as the world focusses on African know-how and innovation."

From bustling tech hubs across the continent from North to South and East to West, young businesses are changing the game by providing innovative solutions to African and global problems,

while creating jobs and empowering their communities in the process.

"The launch of the Unicorn Kingdom: Pathfinder Awards across Africa, which offers tech start-ups from across this vibrant continent the opportunity to showcase their innovation and potential on a global scale, while opening up fascinating opportunities for the UK's already vibrant tech ecosystem, is an exciting journey of growth and success."

The Unicorn Kingdom: Pathfinder Awards were first announced by the UK's Secretary of State for Business and Trade Kemi Badenoch during her keynote speech at London Tech Week 2023.

According to the statement, companies can only apply for one category, with one regional winner per category and one overarching category winner and applications opened on March 1 and will close on April 30.



REPORTS FORECAST STABLE GROWTH IN CONSTRUCTION

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA construction industry is expected to record an annual growth rate of between five to seven percent in the next five years, driven by both public and private sector projects, ranging from residential and commercial real estate, roads, railways, bridges, water systems, telecommunications, and air transport networks.

This has been highlighted in various reports by various global market research and advisory firms including Mordor Intelligence, Fitch Solutions, Research and Markets and Construct Africa.

According to Mordor Intelligence, the India based market intelligence and advisory firm, Tanzania construction market size is estimated to annually grow at the rate of 4.67 percent during the forecast period (2024-2029).

However, the growth rate will be lower than the period between 2012 and 2021, when the sector recorded an impressive compound annual growth rate of 11.5 percent.

It is estimated that, the total market value of construction activities in 2023 will be valued at more than 22.8trn/- at 2015, constant market price.

Recent analysis on the Tanzanian construction industry projects significant expansion within key sectors, fueled by enhanced infrastructure development, energy initiatives and government efforts to improve the business climate.

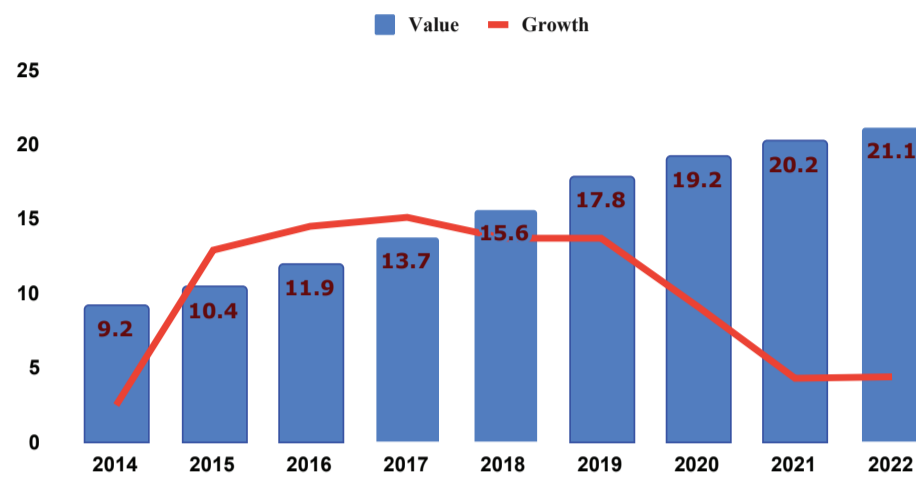
"Prospects for development between 2023 and 2027 appear robust, particularly with numerous large-scale projects in the pipeline," the report highlights.

Anchoring the anticipated growth is a series of investments aiming to reinforce the country's transportation, energy, and manufacturing capacity include chemical and pharmaceutical plants, manufacturing plants, metal and material production and processing plants, as well as waste processing plants.

Additionally, the government's focus on improving its business environment and attracting FDI is likely to support the industry's growth over the coming years, the report states.

Other reports highlight that the infusion of 35.1trn/- through the Tanzania Water Investment Programme is expected to strengthen infrastructure associated with clean drinking water and visionary projects such as the Julius Nyerere Hydropower

Construction activity value in TZS Tril and growth rate 2014-2022



Source: NBS

Plant, testify the government's commitment to advancing its 5.7GW power capacity goal by 2025.

Another major project is the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) infrastructure to improve the country's transportation and connecting communities.

The SGR project, part of a bigger 1,219-kilometer railway networks, is expected to increase Tanzania's trade with its neighbors.

The Barrick Gold Corporation also pledged to invest US\$6 for each ounce of gold sold by its two mines in the nation to enhance access to

drinkable water, education, and healthcare in the people nearby.

At the same time, it has committed up to US\$70 million for investment in value-adding national initiatives, such as road infrastructure, training programs for those working in the mining industry, and facilities for scientific research at Tanzanian universities.

In September 2023, the government proposed the construction of a new cashew nuts industrial park on an area of 1,500ha in Nanyamba, Mtwara Region.

The project involves an in-

vestment of 267.8bln/- (US\$116 million) to build processing plants with a total processing capacity of 300,000 metric tonnes of cashew nuts annually by 2027.

The reports also say during the 2023-2024 financial year, the Tanzanian government also allocated 3trn/- (\$563 million) for the construction and rehabilitation of road networks, and 1.2trn/- (\$19.7 million) for the construction of roads and bridges to pave the way for more connected and accessible infrastructures.

On the side of private sector, reports say the Tanzania

construction market is fragmented with domestic and international businesses.

Advent Construction Ltd, Estim Construction, Becco Limited, Salem Construction Limited, and Mohammedi Builders Ltd are the key competitors in the sector implementing various construction projects.

The construction industry in Tanzania is also characterized by a huge number of micro-entrepreneurs, most of whom work in the country's informal economy.

The country's formal construction business comprises indigenous and indigenized corporations and several big foreign civil engineering and construction firms.

Tanzania is also working to finalize negotiations for constructing a US\$30 billion Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal, which is expected to boost the growth of construction sector.

According to the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC), 362 projects worth 9.9trn/- (\$4.3 billion) were registered in the first three quarters of 2023, marking a year-on-year (YoY) growth of 54 percent for the same period of 2022, when 235 projects were registered.

Out of all the projects registered, the domestic invest-

ments in the country accounted for 62 percent and foreign investments accounted for 38 percent.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) economic highlights of the third quarter of 2023, at 2015 constant prices, the value of construction sector more than doubled to 21.1trn/- in 2022 from 9.1trn/- recorded in 2014.

During the first three quarters of last year, the value of the sector reached 16.3trn/-.

The sector grew at a rate of 2.5 percent during the third quarter of last year from 5.2 percent and 2.3 percent recorded during the first and second quarter.

In 2022, the growth rate was 4.4 percent.

At current market price, the NBS highlights show the value of construction sector reached 23.9trn/- in 2022 from 8.9trn/- in 2014.

During the first three quarters of last year, the value of the sector amounted to 19trn/- Since 2014 to 2022, the NBS report shows the sector was growing at an annual rate of between 10.8 percent and 14.1 percent and during the first three quarters of last year, the sector grew between 12.4 percent and 14.7 percent quarterly.

Kenyan firm's sale of Uganda-based Hima cement poised to spark investor excitement, drive growth

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

IN a bold and calculated strategic maneuver, Bamburi Cement PLC, a prominent figure in Kenya's construction sector, has achieved a significant milestone by successfully concluding the sale of its subsidiary, Hima Cement, in Uganda, for a substantial sum of US\$84 million.

This historic transaction, which successfully navigated through the rigorous approval processes of regulatory bodies and garnered overwhelming support from shareholders, reached its culmination in early March 2024, as detailed in an exclusive report by the Business Daily Africa.

With foresight and determination, Bamburi Cement made the pivotal decision back in November 2023 to divest from Hima Cement.

This strategic move has now led to a pivotal shift in ownership, with Holcim and Cementia Holding relinquishing their respective stakes to a consortium spearheaded by Sarrai Group and Rwimi Holding, marking a significant turning point for the future of Hima Cement, which is one

of the leading cement producers in Uganda.

The reported transfer of ownership heralds a fresh dawn for Hima Cement, ushering in a new era under the guidance of its new proprietors, marking a historic transition that promises to bring transformative changes and innovative strategies to reshape the company's trajectory and solidify its position in the market.

With the sale finalized to great acclaim, as reported, investors are now eagerly poised for the potential announcement of a special dividend from Hima Cement, a development that is anticipated to not only reward stakeholders but also signify the beginning of a promising new chapter for the company, aligning with its vision for sustainable growth and enhanced shareholder value.

As the financial windfall from the sale enriches Bamburi's balance sheet, the company is in contemplation of bestowing its steadfast shareholders with a special dividend, subject to ratification as a pivotal component of its strategic capital allocation plan.

Shareholders have been assured that the board and management will meticulously review the company's dividend plans, with Bamburi stating, "The influx of proceeds from this transaction empowers us to potentially issue a special dividend to our valued shareholders, contingent upon adherence to Bamburi's robust dividend strategy and attainment of requisite approvals."

The prospect of a special dividend has ignited a fervor among investors, propelling Bamburi's share price to approximately KSh42.5, approaching its peak of KSh43.4 over the past year.

Financial analysts are of the view that the prospect of a potential payout is a beacon of hope for Bamburi investors, particularly in the wake of a substantial dividend cut last year following a downturn in net profit. This promising development signifies a potential turnaround in fortunes for shareholders.

The divestment from Hima cement not only promises a profitable return on investment for Bamburi but also unlocks the opportunity for the company to redirect its resources and in-

vestments towards nurturing its core operations in Kenya, reinforcing its commitment to growth and success.

The Business Daily Africa has highlighted that as Bamburi strategically divests from Hima Cement, it not only secures a profitable return on investment but also strategically realigns its focus and resources to bolster its core operations in Kenya.

This strategic decision underscores Bamburi's commitment to fostering sustainable growth and prosperity, demonstrating its proactive stance in optimizing its business portfolio for long-term success and sustainability amidst a constantly evolving market environment.

Hima Cement was established in 1994 following the privatization of Uganda Cement Industries by the government. In 1999, it was acquired by Lafarge as a subsidiary of the Bamburi Cement Group in Kenya.

With operations at two plants in Uganda - the Hima Plant in Kasese and the Tororo Grinding Station in Tororo, Hima Cement boasts a total annual cement production capacity of 1.7 million tons.

Health centre set to be constructed at a mass transit hub

New Jersey

A new Hackensack Meridian Health center is set to be built at a mass transit hub in Woodbridge, New Jersey, the new facility will span 60,000 square feet and is located at one of the busiest terminals along the Northeast Corridor rail system.

The facility is part of a larger redevelopment of Metropark Station led by the governor, Phil Murphy. Furthermore, he has brought

forth the modernization of transportation hubs in the state that would make them multi-use locations for residential, office, retail, and restaurants.

The US\$200 million facility will offer services including primary care, medical specialties, surgical specialties, a sports and spine center of excellence. Additionally, advanced imaging, phlebotomy, rehabilitation services, a retail pharmacy, occupational health services and an urgent

care.

The complex qualifies for the multi-use platform under the New Jersey Economic Development Authority's ASPIRE program.

The program supports transformative development projects that incorporate community benefits. Such benefits have been featured in this project including connecting people to healthcare more efficiently. Moreover, stimulating mass transit use; and providing at least 20 per-

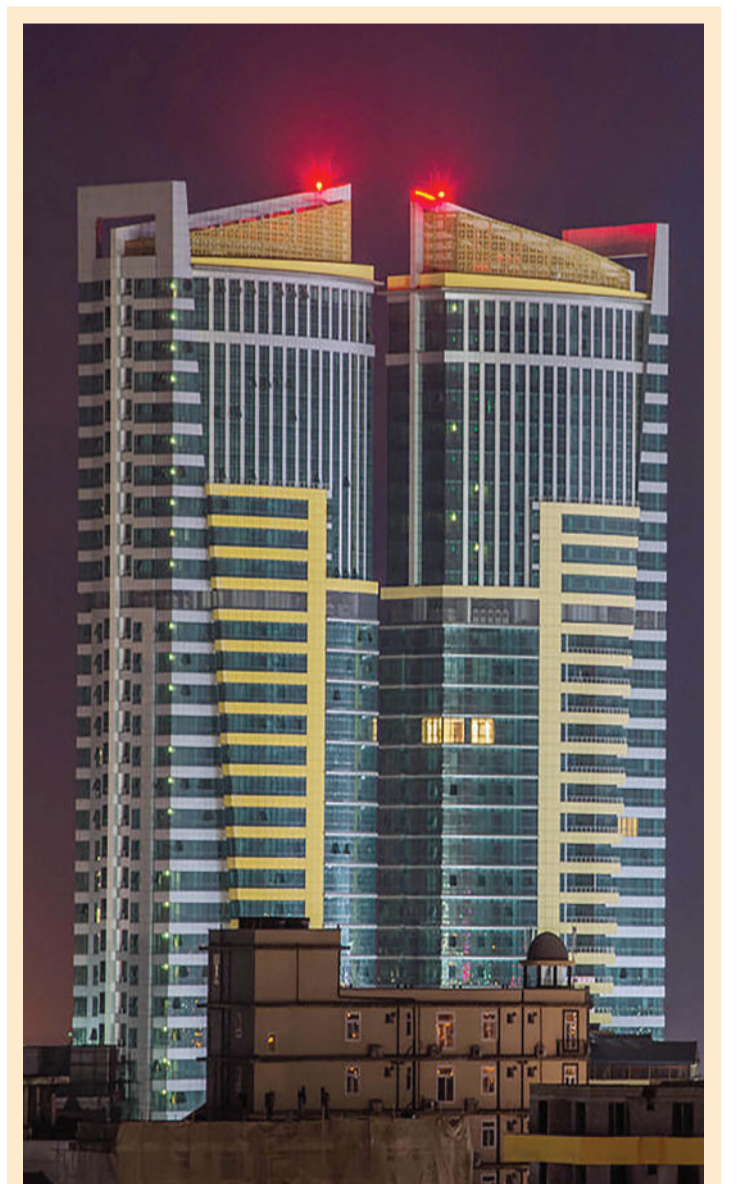
cent low income housing.

"Once again, New Jersey is pioneering a new model for supporting our families and communities as we break ground on the first ever comprehensive health care facility located at a major transit hub. This new Hackensack Meridian Health facility marks a major milestone both for the larger redevelopment of Metropark Station," said Governor Phil Murphy.

"Additionally, it realizes our Administration's broader

vision for the future of transportation and community health. I am pleased to join Hackensack Meridian Health today and applaud their continued work to provide vital health care to the people of New Jersey," he added.

Hackensack Meridian is addressing a critical gap in healthcare access for suburban residents. Their new facility eliminates the need for personal vehicles to reach care, as it's located directly at a transit hub.



Property of the week

Standing proudly in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, the PSPF Twin Towers are hailed as Africa's tallest twin towers reaching a remarkable height of 153 meters. Crafted by the skilled hands from Ardhi University, Tower A offers prestigious office spaces while Tower B provides luxurious residential areas. The construction journey commenced in 2011 and reached its pinnacle in 2014, unveiling the towers for official

business in 2015.

Embodying a postmodernist architectural style, these towers symbolize Tanzania's progressive outlook towards towering edifices, once a hallmark of South Africa. Meticulously crafted by Al Hatmy Engineering, the towers' vibrant yellow and turquoise hues make them a captivating sight and an iconic landmark of the bustling city of Dar es Salaam.

EA BENT ON EMERGING AS TOP LPG HUB

By Dotto Charles

The Invest in African Energy (IAE) forum is poised to focus on exploring financing and development opportunities in Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) storage and distribution across East Africa, aligning with the region's objective of increasing access to clean cooking as a crucial element of its development agenda.

Scheduled to be held in Paris in May this year, the event will highlight opportunities for boosting LPG utilization in the region. Key discussions will focus on expanding the existing distribution network, especially in rural areas, and introducing innovative financing options to alleviate the initial costs linked to LPG equipment.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan is scheduled to address the forum, signaling Tanzania's significant role in regional LPG distribution. The country's strategic location along the Indian Ocean, together with the operation of the Kigamboni LPG terminal, enables the importation of LPG from the Middle East and its efficient distribution throughout the region via a fleet of trucks.

A statement released yesterday by Energy Capital & Power highlighted Tanzania's achievements, notably the successful launch of a compressed natural gas (CNG) filling station and conversion center in Dar es Salaam.

Conversely, Kenya is recognized as a key market for demand growth and is currently focusing on revitalizing its LPG sector through government reforms aimed at eliminating taxes on domestically manufactured cylinders and LPG products to boost the sector. Efforts are also underway to enhance pipeline infrastructure for seamless distribution of cooking gas to households.

For instance, in December of last year, Taifa Gas, a prominent LPG distributor in Tanzania, embarked on constructing a \$130 million,



A Liquefied Petroleum Gas offloading facility. Photo: File

30,000-metric-tonne LPG storage facility at the Dongo Kundu Special Economic Zone in Mombasa.

Energy analysts suggest that as Kenya's import capacity is expected to exceed domestic consumption, the country has the potential to become a regional import hub by diversifying LPG supplies and enhancing storage capacity to meet growing demand.

In a bid to reduce dependency on expensive imports, Uganda's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development aims to start domestic production of LPG by 2025. Efforts are underway to establish an LPG facility in the Bulisa district to convert associated gas from anticipated oil production into LPG.

On the other hand, Uganda's Tilenga and Kingfisher oil fields, currently under development, are projected to yield 80 metric tonnes and 20 metric tonnes of LPG, respectively. This production capacity significantly surpasses the country's annual consumption of approximately 20 metric tonnes.

As a result, Uganda is looking to venture into LPG exports within the East African region, as evidenced by the granting of a five-year license to the China National Offshore Oil Corporation to establish an LPG facility adjacent to the Lake Albert development project.

As further advancements unfold, such as the commencement of construction for LPG storage facilities in Kigali, it is

clear that the East African region is steadfast in pursuing its LPG expansion objectives.

The statement underlines the significant unmet demand for clean cooking solutions, presenting a critical opportunity for international investors and partners to contribute to enhancing distribution, transportation, and storage infrastructure in the region.

Additionally, Taifa Gas and Zambia's Delta Marimba are collaborating on constructing a \$100-million LPG facility in northern Zambia to produce clean cooking gas and supply 100 MW to Zambia's grids.

With over 900 million Africans relying on biomass fuel and kerosene for cook-

ing, LPG has emerged as a compelling and practical clean cooking alternative. Despite being a fossil fuel, LPG offers a more efficient and environmentally friendly option compared to wood, charcoal, or kerosene, emitting fewer carbon emissions. Its ease of storage and transport, coupled with its ability to consistently meet Africa's clean cooking requirements on a larger scale, make it a reliable solution.

East Africa stands out as a region actively embracing this eco-friendly solution, with multiple governments implementing policy measures to promote the widespread adoption of LPG, making it more accessible and affordable.

KLM presents AI system on lessen food waste of flights

By Guardian Correspondent

THE Dutch airline KLM has introduced a system that uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to minimize food waste by accurately estimating meal quantities for each flight, considering the 3-5 percent of passengers who either don't show up or arrive late.

TRAYS, the KLM's new AI model are tailored for catering, forecasting passenger numbers based on historical data.

The Meals On Board System (MOBS) uses these predictions to provide separate forecasts for the Business, Premium Comfort, and Economy classes passengers.

The prediction using the AI model starts 17 days before departure and continues until 20 minutes before the flight departs.

This means that the most accurate possible number of passengers is predicted for the entire catering process from purchasing to loading, thus preventing a surplus of meals.

The TRAYS model was launched at the end of last year by Kickstart AI, assembling talent from leading companies, including KLM, bol, Ahold Delhaize, NS and ING.

"We are pleased that we have been able to make a valuable contribution to this important project for KLM. Our goal with Kickstart AI is to accelerate the adoption of AI in the Dutch business community and we look forward to working closely with Dutch companies to make this happen," said Sander Stomph, the CEO and co-founder of Kickstart AI.

Sander said recently that a three month analysis shows that using TRAYS, 63 percent less food is wasted compared to catering for every booked passenger.

"The largest improvements were seen on intercontinental KLM flights from Schiphol, where 2.5 fewer meals (equal to 1.3 kg) needed to be thrown away per flight. On an annual basis, this amounts to a saving of 111,000 kg in meals across all KLM flights that are catered from Schiphol," said Sander.

He added that, KLM will continue to use AI across various business areas, including smarter aircraft maintenance and predicting bad weather for optimal scheduling. This is in addition to sending out personalized travel tips for customers post-booking.

NEW YORK

In recent weeks, the Biden administration has found itself facing a serious dilemma as to how to balance its commitment to Israel's national security along with the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinians in Gaza.

Whereas the United States provides military aid to Israel, including bombs and other defense systems, as a part of the US strategic alliance, this support has always been rooted in their shared democratic values, mutual security interests, and historical ties.

It is also influenced by domestic political factors within the United States, including strong support for Israel among the American people and American lawmakers.

At the same time, the US is facing tremendous pressure to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians in Gaza, including food, water, medicine, and fuel.

Having failed to persuade Israel to increase these supplies to the Palestinians recently, the United States decided to drop this aid from the air and now is also considering building a floating pier to provide such support from the sea, aiming at alleviating the humanitarian crisis.

This could lessen, to some extent, the dire shortages of these essential supplies, but they are no substitute for direct deliveries from Israel in terms of

Biden in a balancing act: Israel's national security vs Palestinians' humanitarian crisis

quantities and speed.

This dual approach of supporting Israel's security needs while also providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians is part of the US' broader diplomatic effort to balance its interests in the region.

However, the United States' effort to promote regional security by supporting Israel's right to defend itself while advocating for the Palestinians' humanitarian needs and acting on them presents a dilemma for President Biden. The Biden administration may well have to resort to direct measures to force Netanyahu to change his policy.

There are significant policy differences between Netanyahu and Biden that go back years before the Israel-Gaza war. They include policy differences related to the expansion of the settlements in the West Bank, the Iran nuclear deal, and President Biden's efforts to renegotiate a new deal in the wake of Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA.

In addition, and perhaps most importantly, they differ dramatically regarding the overall approach in the search for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where the United States supports a two-state solution to which Netanyahu vehemently objects.

There is also significant disagreement on two other major issues: The Biden administration would like the Palestinian Authority to take charge of the Strip following the end of the war.

Conversely, Netanyahu completely opposes the return of the PA to Gaza, primarily be-

cause he wants to maintain security control over most of the Palestinian territories and prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.

As he stated in January, "I will not compromise on full Israeli security control over the entire area in the west of Jordan - and this is contrary to a Palestinian state."

In addition, whereas President Biden wants to see a clear exit strategy from the war, Netanyahu is insisting on maintaining indefinite security control over Gaza, which, from the United States' perspective, will result simply in the expansion of the Israeli occupation and creeping annexation of Palestinian territories, with no resolution in sight.

It should be noted that the upcoming US presidential elections in November are playing a role in Netanyahu's strategy. If there are only two people in the world who want Trump to win the election this fall, the first is Trump himself, and the second is Netanyahu. The Israeli prime minister will do everything in his power to undermine President Biden's reelection.

He is cheering the fact that President Biden is intensely criticized by some Congressional Democrats as well as a multitude of young voters who oppose his unwavering support of Israel while tens of thousands of Palestinians have died and counting.

He will prolong the war as long as it serves his personal interest and weakens Biden politically as he is embarking on his reelection campaign.

President Biden should not

allow Netanyahu to set the agenda. He must now take definitive measures to alert the Israeli public that, although the US commitment to Israel's national security is unshakable, the US administration differentiates between the state of Israel and the current Netanyahu government with which he has fundamental disagreements.

To that end, there are five different measures that will not affect the US commitment to Israel's national security but will send a clear message to Netanyahu that the US must draw the line and will not allow him to drag the US into the morass of his own creation.

Although some of these measures are sensitive and may raise some objections from Congress, nevertheless, the Biden administration has no choice but to act to alleviate the massive humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

First, as one of Israel's largest financial supporters, the US could use its economic aid as leverage. Adjusting such aid levels and stipulating specific conditions related to its use could pressure Netanyahu, at least in part, to reconsider his policies, albeit as indicated, this particular approach is sensitive and would need to be carefully balanced to prevent unintended consequences.

Second, since the United States provides significant military aid to Israel, the administration should assess the kind of weapons it is providing to Israel that indiscriminately kill many innocent Palestinians, such as bombs.

This may well force Netanyahu to follow the US' advice to

resort to a surgical approach to weed out Hamas fighters and potentially capture or kill some of Hamas' leaders. This, too, would send a clear message that the United States cannot sit idly by while the carnage in Gaza continues, however inadvertently that might be.

Third, on a political level, the United States can introduce a resolution or vote in favor of a resolution in the United Nations Security Council that calls on Israel to agree on a ceasefire for six to eight weeks and allow the flow of aid to the Palestinians while negotiating the release of the hostages.

Fourth, since President Biden has been advocating a two-state solution, he should act by taking interim measures to demonstrate his commitment to that objective. To start, Biden should allow the reopening of the United States mission in East Jerusalem to serve the Palestinians.

In addition, Biden should invite the Palestinian Authority to reestablish its mission in Washington, DC, to restore ties between the United States and the Palestinians. These two measures will demonstrate to the Palestinians that Biden means what he says and, community, congressional Democrats, and many of the EU and Arab states.

Fifth and most importantly, President Biden himself should make a public statement to the effect that while the United States is and will remain committed to Israel's national security, it has clear disagreements with the Netanyahu government.

CONSTRUCTION

WORLD'S TALLEST RESIDENTIAL CLOCK TOWER SET FOR COMPLETION IN 2027

Dubai

THE construction of the Franck Muller Aeternitas Tower, set to become the World's tallest residential clock tower, is progressing smoothly and is anticipated to be finished by 2027, according to a Construction Review.

In the previous years, Dubai has been deemed as a global destination for the real estate market and it represents the economic growth and strength for the vision of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that entails a future that is promising in the real estate market sector.

Just recently, a ready apartment unit was revealed to the media by Eman Taha of the tallest residential building in the world which is also the tallest residential tower in the world; the Franck Muller Aeternitas.

Tower that is located in Dubai.

As for now, the progress of the project is going on the right track and during its launch that was done just two weeks ago, 65 per cent of the apartment units were sold to buyers and it is set to be completed in the year 2027.



A computer-generated depiction of the future World's tallest residential clock tower. Photo: CR courtesy

Height of the Franck Muller Aeternitas tower

The Franck Muller Aeternitas Tower in Dubai has a height of 450 meters and also contains a total of 106 floors with all the residential units and facilities having been incorporated with innovative construction techniques.

The chief executive officer of London Gate, Eman Taha, said, "Dubai is currently a global destination in the real estate market sector and is a symbol of both economic strength and growth for the vision of the United Arab Emirates that unveils a future that is quite promising."

Adding that: "It is our pride to unveil our newest project, which indicates a

one-of-a-kind combination of architectural luxury, luxury and also quality. For the first time ever, the building bears the Franck Muller logo name. This is a clear reflection of the good partnership between London Gate and Franck Muller."

Cost of the building project

This building was developed at an estimated cost of AED 928 million. Additionally, other two projects will soon be announced, adding on to the projects that were presented to the distinguished customers and whose apartment units were completely sold out in the company's projects.

The said projects include Maya Project V and the Nadine Projects I and II which reflect the continued rise in demand for the company's unique offerings of luxurious residential projects in the region.

This Franck Muller Aeternitas Tower is foreseen to offer an exceptional residential experience and will once again be a proof of excellence and prowess in the sector of luxury real estate development of the company.

According to Tom Hill, who is the Media Relation of London Gate, "We assure

our customers the quality and one is able to witness here that this is our latest set up center of experience with the exact copy of our apartments to our esteemed customers."

Adding: "Indeed, Dubai is a massive potential of luxurious residential units with the constant rise in demand as people seek to invest in the regions real estate market. At the Franck Muller Aeternitas Tower assure our potential customers of safety with the branded luxury apartment and finishing our project as scheduled as we see a lot of people coming to Dubai with big investment."

Current state of affairs in the Dubai real estate market

Currently, the investment in the real estate market in Dubai is indeed one solid investment. The local real estate market especially is on the right track as people have started showing keen interest in the major luxury projects.

This is promoted by quite a number of factors like the rise in population in the region, security, and most importantly the policies of the government to participate in major developments.

Legends Tower is set to claim title of tallest in US upon completion

Oklahoma

THE \$1.5 billion Legends Tower Funding Secured may foresee the construction works kick off in the month of September of this year.

Construction Review (CR) report that the Legends Tower located in Oklahoma city, is planned to become the tallest building in the United States of America, as revealed by its developer Scot Matteson just recently.

The Tower was designed by the Californian architecture studio AO. This upcoming super tall skyscraper in the United States of America is now fully funded as of the beginning of the month of March.

CR indicated that the information was brought to light by a local news outlet, The Oklahoman.

According to Matteson, they had secured a total of \$1.5 billion that is needed to fully fund the construc-

tion of the upcoming skyscraper and also the three smaller towers surrounding it; which will be collectively be referred to as the Boardwalk at Bricktown.

Matteson announced that construction preparations on the site could begin as early as June, thanks to the successful funding of the Legends Tower project. "Our first step will be obtaining a grading and infrastructure permit," Matteson explained, noting his recent partnerships with several local construction consultants for the endeavor.

Upon completion, the Legends Tower skyscraper will have a height of 1,907 feet which is equivalent to 581 meters thereby making it the tallest building in the United States of America and the fifth in ranking globally.

Initially, the Legends Tower, was set to have 1,750 feet i.e. 533 meters height, but just a few weeks



after the initial announcement was made, Matteson and his company revealed that there would be an extension made to the spire of the building structure.

It is noted that this upcoming mega skyscraper shall contain hotels, a number of residential units, and commercial spaces for conducting activities.

The Oklahoman featured quite a number of comments from many experts in the construction industry like local engineer Norb Delatte, most of which questioned the decision reached of establishing the such in an area that has low density, as compared to the urban centers such as the city of New York. Others referred

the upcoming tower project as "fanciful"

Despite the detractions that arose regarding the upcoming skyscraper project, Matteson pointed out the project as being one that is very realistic for the city of Oklahoma.

"Currently, Oklahoma city itself is promoting all the things that I am seeing now-job creation and jobs, among the fastest growing cities in the United States of America, having a lot of migration moving towards it. This is indeed a positive environment for business activities," said Matteson, "The downtown part of the city is now ready for urban development. It is indeed the right place just at the right time."

Progress on track for Scotland's sizeable renewable energy hub

Scotland

THE ongoing construction of Scotland's largest renewable energy hub is reportedly well on course approximately 10 months since the project broke ground.

According to reports, the initial phase of piling is fully complete. This phase comprised the installation of a total of 140 tubular piles with a length of up to 32 meters and a diameter of 1.2 meters. The construction of the combi wall, which is a part of phase 2 of the project, is also fully complete.

Works are currently ongoing on the installation of dolphin piles. A dolphin pile, just in case you are wondering, is a man-made berthing or mooring structure that extends above water level. It is not connected to the shore or any other structure for that matter. Only six of these piles are yet to be installed. They are all set to be in place by March 2024.

The installation of steel capping plates is also ongoing. 92 of these plates, which are fixed on top of the dolphin piles, are already complete. The plates provide a surface on which the concrete precast units will be installed. Work has already begun to position the concrete units on top of the piles. Thus far 56 units out of the required 112 have been put in place.

In early March 2024, steel reinforcement works started in preparation for the first deck pours. The latter, each of which requires approximately 500m³ of concrete, is scheduled to commence the week of March 18th. A total of eight pours are set to be carried out.

Other ongoing works include cathodic protection and the installation of a total of 12 fender jackets half of which have already been installed. Six skid frame assemblies, each of which comprises a total of 5 sacrificial aluminium anodes, have been installed on the completed section of rock armour and connections made to the piles.

The purpose of the anodes according to the project contractor is to prevent corrosion of the piles. The remaining assemblies are to be installed before the end of March 2024.

The US\$ 56.7M development is coming up on a 175-acre site located at the Port of Leith, north of Edinburgh. It includes the construction of a bespoke, riverside marine berth capable of accommodating the world's largest offshore wind installation vessels in a bid to support the ongoing expansion of offshore renewable energy installations in the North Sea.

The facility will feature a heavy lift capacity of up to 100 tonnes per square meter (t/m²), backed up by 35 acres of adjacent land for logistics and marshalling. A 140-acre cargo handling site will be upgraded to supplement the logistics and marshalling site by accommodating lay down, assembly, supply chain and manufacturing activities.

The project is developed by Forth Ports Limited, one of the largest, leading port operators in the UK owned by the Public Sector Pension Investment Board. GRAHAM, a privately-owned company specialising in building, civil engineering, interior fit-out, facilities management and investments is the project civil engineering contractor.

CR

Saudi Arabia to construct the world's largest airport by passenger capacity

Riyadh

PLANS are underway for the construction of a 185 million passenger capacity airport in Saudi Arabia. The airport will reportedly be one of the largest, if not the world's largest in terms of annual passenger capacity.

Dubbed King Salman, the international airport will be built on over 57 square kilometres of land in Riyadh, the capital and largest city of Saudi Arabia. It boasts a total of six massive parallel runways, and it shall subsume existing terminals belonging to Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport.

Additionally, the King Salman International Airport shall have approximately 12 square kilometres of airport support facilities, residential and recreational facili-



ties, retail outlets and other logistics real estate. Its construction is expected to be completed and opened for operation by 2030.

In its opening year, the airport will have the capacity to accommodate up to 120 million passengers per annum. By 2050, its annual passenger capacity will be increased to 185 million and its cargo capacity to 3.5 mil-

lion tonnes over the same period.

King Salman International Airport project team thus far So far, a couple of companies have been appointed to actualize the project. Mace Group Ltd, commonly known as Mace, was recently selected to serve as the delivery partner for the world's largest in terms of annual passenger capacity.

Mace is a global consultancy and construction firm headquartered in London, United Kingdom. The firm was selected following an international tender announced back in 2023. Multiple international firms competed for the contract which comprises project and design management, cost consulting and procurement information.

The London-based company was selected owing to its considerable experience in airport construction and maintenance. One of the company's notable projects includes the largest airport in Europe, London's Heathrow Airport. Last year, Mace was appointed as the delivery partner for three major improvement projects at Heathrow. Another company appointed for the development of the King Salman International Airport project is Foster + Partners. The latter is a global studio for architecture, engineering, and urban and landscape design, headquartered in London as well. The company will carry out the master plan for the world's largest airports by passenger capacity and design the airport's buildings. CR

WORLD

Global chocolate crisis: African cocoa plants run out of beans

LONDON / ACCRA

MAJOR African cocoa plants in Ivory Coast and Ghana have stopped or cut processing because they cannot afford to buy beans, four trading sources said, meaning chocolate prices around the world are likely to soar.

Chocolate-makers have already increased prices to consumers, after three years of poor cocoa harvests, with a fourth expected, in the two countries that produce nearly 60 percent of the world's cocoa.

Cocoa prices have more than doubled over the last year, scaling numerous all-time highs.

"We need massive demand destruction to catch up with the supply destruction," Tropical Research Services' Steve Wateridge, a world expert on cocoa, said.

Chocolate-makers cannot produce chocolate using raw cocoa and rely on processors to turn beans into butter and liquor that can be made into chocolate.

But the processors say they cannot afford to buy the beans.

State-controlled Ivorian bean processor Transcao, one of the country's nine major plants, said it had stopped buying beans because of their price.

It said it was still processing from stock, but did not say what capacity it was running at. Two industry sources said the plant was almost idle.

They asked not to be named because

they were not authorized to speak publicly on the issue.

One of the two sources said more major state-run plants could shut soon in top grower Ivory Coast, which produces nearly half the world's cocoa.

The same two sources said even global trader Cargill struggled to source beans for its major processing plant in Ivory Coast, halting operations for about a week last month. Cargill did not respond to a request for comment.

In No. 2 cocoa grower Ghana, most of its eight plants, including state-owned Cocoa Processing Company, have repeatedly suspended work for weeks since the season started in October, two separate industry sources said.

Cocoa Processing Company said it is operating at about 20 percent of capacity because of the shortage of beans.

Disruption at the farm gate

The price rally has derailed a long-established mechanism for global cocoa trade, through which farmers sell beans to local dealers who sell them on to processing plants or global traders.

Those traders then sell beans or cocoa products - butter, powder and cocoa liquor - to global chocolate giants such as Nestle, Hershey and Mondelez.

In normal times, the market is heavily regulated - traders and processors purchase beans from local dealers up to a year in advance at pre-agreed prices. Local



Workers bag cocoa beans at a warehouse inside the conservation zone of the Omo Forest Reserve in Nigeria, Oct 23, 2023. AP

regulators then set lower farmgate prices that farmers can charge for beans.

However, in times of shortage like this year, the system breaks down - local dealers often pay farmers a premium to the farmgate price to secure beans.

The dealers then sell the beans on the spot market at higher prices instead of delivering them at pre-agreed prices.

As global traders rush to purchase those beans at any price to meet their obligations with the chocolate firms, local processors are often left short of beans.

Ivorian and Ghanaian authorities normally try to protect local plants by issuing them with cheap loans or by limiting volumes of beans that global traders can purchase.

This year, however, plants are not getting the cocoa they pre-ordered and cannot afford to buy at higher spot prices.

Already, chocolate-makers have raised prices. US retail stores charged 11.6 percent more for chocolate products last year compared with 2022, data from market

research firm Circana shows.

The International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) expects global cocoa production will fall by 10.9 percent to 4.45 million metric tons this season.

Grindings - a measure of demand - will fall by 4.8 percent to 4.78 million as processors struggle to buy beans, and supply less butter at a higher price to chocolate-makers, which in turn raise prices.

The supply-demand mismatch will leave the market with a deficit of 374,000 tons this season, up from 74,000 tons last season, according to the ICCO.

This means processors and chocolate firms will have to draw on cocoa stocks to fully cover their needs. The ICCO expects global cocoa stocks to fall to their lowest in 45 years by the season end.

Wateridge of Tropical Research said the cocoa market could post another deficit next season based on the severity of bean disease in West Africa.

The market has not seen four successive years of deficit since the late 1960s, ICCO data shows.

Putin calls on Russians to take part in presidential election

PETROPAVLOVSK-KAMCHATSKY,

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin has called on Russians to take part in presidential election on March 15-17.

"We need to confirm our consolidation, our determination to go forward together. Each vote counts. That is why I am calling on you to realize your right to vote in the coming three days," Putin said in a video address ahead of the voting.

"Dear friends! All of us, the multiethnic people of Russia, are a big family. We are worried about our country, take care of it, we want it to be wealthy, strong, free and prosperous, we want living standards and the quality of life to improve. So be it," he stressed.

"We will do everything the way we want. So, I am asking you to take part in the voting and express you civil and patriotic position, cast your vote for your candidate, a candidate you have chosen, for the successful future of our beloved Russia," he added.

"Only you, Russian citizens, can decide about the future of the homeland," he said. "I would like to stress that the only source of power in our country is the people. This is the key legal provision enshrined in the Russian constitution."

He noted that people "will not only cast their votes but will declare their will and endeavors, their personal involvement in Russia's further development because the election is a step to the future."

Putin addressed the nation ahead of federal elections eight times: in 2000, 2004, 2016, 2018 (twice before the presidential election and after announcing their results), in 2021, and in 2020 before the nationwide referendum on constitutional amendments.

About the election

The Russian Federation Council, or upper house of parliament, officially designated March 17, 2024 as the day of the presidential election. The Russian Central Election Commission (CEC) then announced that voting will take place over three days on March 15-17.

Four candidates will vie for the top office, namely New People party nominee Vladislav Davankov; self-nominated candidate and incumbent President Vladimir Putin; Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) nominee Leonid Slutsky; and Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) nominee Nikolay Kharitonov.

Pilot's seat movement focus of LATAM Boeing flight probe

BARASAT

THE movement of a flight deck seat is a key focus of the probe into a sudden mid-air dive by a LATAM Airlines Boeing 787 plane that left more than 50 people injured, aviation industry publication the Air Current reported on Wednesday.

The plane, which was heading from Sydney to Auckland on Monday, dropped abruptly before stabilizing, causing those on board to be thrown about the cabin.

Based on the available information it was understood the seat movement was "pilot induced, not intentionally," the report said, citing a senior airline safety official.

"The seat movement caused the nose down" angle of the aircraft, the publication said, citing another anonymous source who added the possibility of an electrical short was also under review.

Boeing is expected to release a message to 787 operators regarding the incident, the Air Current reported, in a sign a fleet-wide issue could be involved though it said the specific topic was not known to the publication.

Boeing declined to comment on the report, instead referring Reuters to the investigating agencies.

Chile's aviation regulator, which is leading the probe given it involves a Chilean airline flying in international airspace, said the investigation "just got underway" and its investigators had arrived in New Zealand.

LATAM said it "continues to work in coordination with the authorities to support the investigation" and said it was not appropriate to comment on speculation that has circulated.

LATAM is based in Chile and the flight, which had 263 passengers and nine crew members, was due to continue on to Santiago after stopping in Auckland.

The cause of the flight's apparent sudden change in trajectory has not yet been explained. Safety experts say most airplane accidents are caused by a cocktail of factors that need to be thoroughly investigated.

Israel to evacuate population out of Rafah ahead of attack

JERUSALEM

ISRAELI officials said on Wednesday that the country is resolved to attack Rafah, the Gaza Strip's southernmost city sheltering some 1.4 million internally displaced Palestinians by the Israeli strikes elsewhere, and will evacuate most of the residents ahead of the attack.

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Spokesman Daniel Hagari stated in a press briefing that the military intends to guide the population of Rafah towards "humanitarian islands" that Israel planned to create with the international community in central Gaza before launching the offensive.

He said that basic needs, including housing, food and water, would be provided in these designated areas. Hagari did not mention a date for the beginning of Rafah's evacuation or the commencement of the planned offensive.

The international community and various humanitarian organizations have expressed deep concerns about Israel's plan to carry out a ground operation in Rafah, a small city densely populated by displaced people, which also serves as Gaza's primary gateway for crucial aid supplies from Egypt.

They have warned that any military operation in Rafah would result in a humanitarian



catastrophe.

In the morning, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant visited the Gaza Strip and held an operational situation assessment, said his office in a statement.

During the visit, he "observed the work carried out in

preparation for the maritime corridor," which is expected to be used for aid shipments from Cyprus to the war-ravaged enclave.

Regarding the military plans to conduct a ground operation in Rafah, Gallant said: "Even those who think we are delayed will soon see that we will reach every location necessary."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly said the army will expand the offensive into Rafah, where Israel believes some Hamas militants are hiding in underground tunnels.

More than five months of Israel's relentless attacks in Gaza have left much of the Palestin-

ian territory devastated, exacerbating a deepening humanitarian crisis.

According to warnings issued by the United Nations, approximately one in every four of Gaza's 2.3 million population is at risk of starvation.

Since Israel began its retaliatory offensive on Oct. 7, 2023, at least 31,272 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, with more than 75 percent of them being civilians, according to an update from the Hamas-run Health Ministry.

Additionally, more than 7,000 people are missing and are believed to be trapped under the rubble of bombarded homes.

Improved digital governance urged to drive social inclusion, sustainable development in Africa

KIGALI

DELEGATES attending the Africa eGovernance Conference in the Rwandan capital of Kigali have called for stronger digital governance to promote social inclusion and sustainable development on the African continent.

Speaking at the conference, Rwandan Minister of ICT and Innovation Paula Ingabire called for better collaboration between governments and the private sector to implement sector-wide digital governance initia-

tives.

She highlighted investments in internet connectivity, mobile technology penetration, and inclusive programs like One Africa Network and Connect Rwanda. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, chief executive officer for the Africa Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD), said: "Our path to inclusive economic transformation is clear. We must bridge the digital divide, invest in digital infrastructure, and champion innovation-led service delivery," she called for

increased efforts to strengthen e-governance in Africa to accelerate service delivery to citizens.

Adeyinka Adeyemi, managing director of InterMarc Consulting, a digital financial services consulting firm, stressed the need to incorporate technology to improve governance and explore how citizens throughout Africa can experience the advantages of social inclusion through innovative government operations.

The Africa eGovernance Conference is an annual platform for African leaders in government and the global

technology industry to connect, learn, share, and collaborate, organizers said. The event focuses on leveraging information and communications technologies to facilitate the advancement of the digital economy for sustainable growth across Africa.

The conference, which runs through Thursday, has attracted industry experts, international non-governmental organizations, development partners, heads of global financial institutions, heads of global technology companies, and academia from across Africa and beyond.

Chinese economy to provide more opportunities for cooperation

THE international community is closely watching China's "two sessions," the annual gatherings of the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee. It is optimistic about China's potential for economic and social development, looking forward to China injecting more positive energy into world economic recovery.

It is widely believed that the GDP growth target of around 5 percent reflects China's confidence in its economy, and the new quality productive forces will contribute to the country's high-quality development and advancing Chinese modernization. With stable economic growth and a

vast market, cooperating with China has become a highly attractive choice.

In 2023, China's economy showed strong resilience and achieved remarkable results. Despite the complex international environment and challenging tasks to stabilize reform and development, China has accomplished its main economic and social development goals for the year.

In 2023, the country's GDP grew 5.2 percent year-on-year to over 126 trillion yuan (\$17.53 trillion), a growth rate that ranks among the top of the world's major economies.

As calculated at comparable prices, China's economic increment last year exceeded 6 trillion yuan, equivalent to the economic aggregate of a me-

dium-sized country. This proves that China's economy remains a crucial engine for global economic growth and possesses immense development potential.

The 2024 growth target of around 5 percent highlights the stability of China's economy, sending a clear and positive signal. The stable growth expectation of China not only helps consolidate consensus on development but also provides valuable certainty for the sluggish global economy.

China has significant institutional advantages, the demand advantage from an ultra-large market, the supply advantage of a well-established industrial system, and the talent advantage of a large number of skilled laborers.

Its technological innovation capabilities continue to improve, while new industries, business models, and growth drivers are rapidly growing. Its endogenous growth momentum is also being generated. The overall trend of recovery and long-term improvement remains unchanged and will not change.

China's economy is becoming "newer" as new growth drivers and advantages for development are constantly forged.

Developing new quality productive forces is an endogenous requirement and a pivot of high-quality development. Accelerating the development of new quality productive forces will undoubtedly provide stronger impe-

tus and support for high-quality development.

The inclusion of "new quality productive forces" in this year's government work report has attracted widespread attention from the international community, with many recognizing the term as the strategic cornerstone for China to empower economic development through innovation and technological progress.

Last year, China's exports of electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and photovoltaic products exceeded 1 trillion yuan, with a nearly 30 percent year-on-year growth.

The digital economy accelerated its development, with over half of the country's population becoming

5G users. The installed capacity of renewable energy historically surpassed that of thermal power, with the annual new installation exceeding half of the global.

Traditional industries underwent rapid transformation and upgrading, while strategic emerging industries flourished.

The future industries were laid out orderly, with advanced manufacturing and modern services deeply integrated.

Several major industrial innovations have reached the international advanced level, marking significant progress in the construction of China's modern industrial system.

People's Daily

Kiev's allies start dividing Ukraine, Russian diplomat says

MOSCOW

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron's remark about the potential deployment of troops to Ukraine makes it clear that Western countries have started dividing Ukraine, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a briefing.

She pointed out that Macron "continues making statements about possibly sending troops to Ukraine." "He did not rule out that French troops might be deployed to Ukraine if the Russian army broke through to Kiev or Odessa," Zakharova noted.

"Clearly, Ukraine's allies have started dividing the country. All the statements that Macron and other political figures from NATO member states are making about the possible deployment of troops or some paramilitary forces to Ukraine have to do with the division of Ukraine as they see it," she added.

The diplomat also said that "this is why they are unwilling to grant full NATO membership to Ukraine."

"It's about constant flirting with the issue and empty promises that are never kept because making Ukraine part of NATO means that all of the bloc's members are ready to recognize its borders but not all NATO members are ready to do that."



They are ready to occupy Ukraine and divide it; this is what political leaders in those countries are openly talking about. Actually, they are beginning to mentally prepare both their own people and Ukrainian citizens for such actions," Zakharova added.

According to her, "this is being done under a false flag, which is typical for NATO members." "This is another staged show of an alleged confrontation with Russia but in fact, they are starting to divide between themselves what's left of Ukraine," the diplomat stressed.

Nigerian president vows no ransom for return of abducted schoolchildren, women

ABUJA

NIGERIAN President Bola Tinubu has taken a firm stance against paying ransom for the release of recently abducted schoolchildren and women, according to an official announcement on Wednesday.

Minister of Information and National Orientation Mohammed Idris relayed the president's directive while speaking to the media in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, emphasizing the need for a unified effort among security agencies to rescue the victims.

The minister underscored the government's commitment to exploring options with international partners while refusing to negotiate with criminal gangs. Gunmen abducted at least 287 students in an assault on schools Thursday in the northwestern state of Kaduna, prompting security forces to launch a search and rescue operation.

This followed an earlier abduction of women in the northeastern state of Borno in late February. Both incidents have sparked nationwide concerns.

Security forces have launched search and rescue operations in response to these assaults, with assurances from Idris that efforts are underway to ensure the safe return of the victims.

The Kaduna incident, which followed an armed intrusion into the state's Kuriga town by a gang of gunmen, is said to be one of the largest mass abductions from a Nigerian school in recent years. While no specific armed group has claimed responsibility for this latest incident, it echoes a similar mass kidnapping that occurred about a decade ago in April 2014. Back then, more than 200 schoolgirls were abducted from their dormitories in the northeastern state of Borno by the Boko Haram terror group.



Lavrov: BRICS is regional integration coordinator

MOSCOW

BRICS' working mechanism helps facilitate integration processes in different regions, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Wednesday.

"BRICS ... acts as a potential coordinator of integration processes that are taking place at the regional level," Lavrov said during a meeting at a Moscow-based think tank.

As integration processes are intensifying both at regional and global levels, BRICS, already a truly global association, can undoubtedly be a driving force behind effective efforts aimed at forming equal and just mechanisms for the regulation of international relations, said Lavrov.

BRICS is the acronym for an emerging-market cooperative mechanism that initially includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. On Jan



1, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Ethiopia joined BRICS, doubling its members from five to 10.

Russia holds the rotating chair of BRICS for 2024.

Pakistan, China march toward shared development, prosperity, progress - PM

SLAMABAD

PAKISTAN and China will carry shared values and march toward shared development, prosperity and progress together, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said.

Chinese President Xi Jinping congratulated Sharif on his election as prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on March 3. In his response, Sharif thanked Xi for his warm congratulations and continued support for Pakistan.

"I deeply value his sentiments not only for the people of Pakistan, for our friendship, but our mutual cooperation," Sharif said during an interview with Xinhua at the Prime Minister's Office in Islamabad, the first exclusive one with foreign media since his inauguration. "For me, it's a very good start."

This year marks the 73rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. Sharif said that over the past 70-plus years, the leaders of Pakistan and China have continuously cultivated and promoted bilateral friendship. The two countries have developed into all-weather strategic cooperative partners with a unique friendship like "iron brothers" that has stood the test of time.

"This friendship now must achieve higher heights," he added.

Sharif, 73, served three terms as chief minister of Pakistan's eastern Punjab province and has extensive experience in regional economic development and governance. When talking about Chinese modernization, Sharif said Pakistan should emulate the model.

"It is a great success model and success story," the prime minister said, recalling how generations of visionary Chinese lead-



Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (R) speaks during an interview with Xinhua at the Prime Minister's Office in Islamabad, Pakistan, March 8, 2024. (Xinhua/Ahmad Kamal)

ers have led their people to create unprecedented development miracles, lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and providing vast rural populations with access to education, healthcare and employment.

Sharif said Chinese modernization has created growth centers and sectors competitive in the global market. "Despite challenges in recent years, China's growth has still gone steadily compared to other countries, which is a remarkable achievement," he added.

The prime minister said Pakistan could learn from the model to alleviate poverty, boost youth employment, and encourage small and medium entrepreneurship in agricultural, industrial, and information technology sectors across urban and rural areas.

Noting that Pakistan is among the first batch of countries joining the Group of Friends of the Global Development Initiative (GDI), Sharif said that Pakistan fully and firmly supports the GDI and Global Security Initiative. He believes such initiatives will strengthen the bond among global communities.

Noting that projects under the Belt and Road Initiative span across continents, Sharif said they contributed to alleviating poverty, reducing hunger, facilitating investment, and promoting education and health.

"There couldn't have been a better model for forging global societies together," Sharif said.

As a prominent project under the Belt and Road

Breaking winds and waves, Chinese economy sails toward brighter future

ON the morning of March 5, the 14th National People's Congress (NPC) opened its second session in Beijing. The Chinese government work report delivered a series of impressive achievements and highlights, boosting people's confidence in the future.

These include a GDP exceeding 126 trillion yuan (\$17.5 trillion), the creation of 12.44 million jobs in urban areas, a grain output of 695.4 million tons, and a 6.1 percent year-on-year increase in the per capita disposable income of residents.

This hard-earned performance bears witness to every effort, as well as the resilience and strength of the Chinese economy amidst challenges. While maintaining a strong momentum of economic growth, new industries, business models, and growth drivers have expanded rapidly, injecting innovation and vitality into the Chinese economy, and providing a solid foundation for high-quality development.

New industries experienced rapid growth. Industries are the foundation of the economy.

In recent years, traditional industries in China have accelerated their transformation and upgrading, while strategic emerging industries have flourished. The future industries are being planned in an orderly manner.

Therefore, time-honored brands have been rejuvenated, new entities are full of vitality, and green industries are developing rapidly. This contributes to a more solid and powerful pace towards high-quality development.

Today, dozens of quantum enterprises have gathered along Yunfei Road in the Hefei National High-Tech Industry Development Zone in east China's Anhui province; in the Optics Valley, or East Lake High-tech Development Zone in Wuhan, central China's Hubei province, a cluster of optoelectronic information industry has reported a total value of over 500 billion yuan.

A group of high-end, intelligent, and green new pillar industries are rapidly emerging, showing China's significant progress made in the development of a modern industrial system and accumulating strong momentum for the country's economic development.

New business models have ignited new vitality. During the just-concluded Spring Festival holiday, Yabuli Ski Resort in northeast China's Heilongjiang province welcomed a daily average of over 130,000 visitors, while the ice and snow park in Zhaosu county, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region was filled with laughter and joy. The new business forms combining winter tourism, cultural tourism and winter sports have become



Hosts sell cherry tomatoes via livestreaming in a greenhouse in Zhihao village, Gaotai county, Zhangye, northwest China's Gansu province. (Wang Jiang /People's Daily Online)

new consumption trends.

In recent years, there has been accelerated development in the integration of urban and rural cultural tourism, as well as the emergence of live-streaming e-commerce, social e-commerce, instant retail, and cross-border e-commerce.

These continuous innovations of new business models, forms, and scenarios have further stimulated the potential of consumption.

Last year, the contribution of final consumption expenditure to China's economic growth reached 82.5 percent, and the added value of the services sector accounted for 54.6 percent of the country's GDP. Consumption played as a robust engine, and the economic structure continued to optimize, which fully demonstrates the high quality of the Chinese economy. New growth drivers have built new advantages. Developing new quality productive forces is an intrinsic requirement and an important focus of promoting high-quality development.

Chinese President Xi Jinping called for focusing on high-quality development as the top priority and developing new quality productive forces according to local conditions when he participated in a deliberation with fellow lawmakers from east China's Jiangsu province during the second session of the 14th NPC.

China has made significant progress in the development of high-end equipment such as aircraft engines, gas turbines, and fourth-generation nuclear power units. Innovation achievements in cutting-edge fields such as artificial intelligence and quantum technology continued to emerge.

China's scientific and technological innovation has achieved new breakthroughs, with fruitful results made in the research and development of core technologies in key fields. The country's ability to drive development through innovation is continuously im-

proving.

Accelerating the development of new quality productive forces will undoubtedly provide strong impetus and support for high-quality development, continuously enhancing the momentum and resilience of economic growth.

To understand the overall trend of the Chinese economy, it is important to consider both the short-term situation and long-term momentum, as well as focus on both the quantity of growth and the quality of development.

China's economic performance in 2023, as reflected by new industries, business models, and growth drivers, not only indicated the growth and quality of the Chinese economy, but also proved that the fundamental trend of the economic recovery and long-term positive outlook has not changed and will never change.

People's Daily

From promising prospect to uncertain future: The challenges facing Kelvin John

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

KELVIN John, the young Tanzanian striker touted as a future star for both club and country, finds himself facing a crucial turning point in his career.

While initially promoted to KRC Genk's first team in the 2021/22 season for the Belgian Pro League, officially known as the Jupiler Pro League, his progress appears to have stagnated, raising concerns about his development.

In the 2021/22 season, John's promotion to KRC Genk's first team sparked excitement among fans and pundits alike.

His debut against KAS Eupen FC offered a glimpse of his potential, igniting hopes for a promising future.

However, as the seasons unfolded, John's progression faltered, raising concerns about his stagnating career.

Even the head coach for Tanzania's senior national team, Taifa Stars, Adel Amrouche encountered challenges with John's consistency and discipline.

Amrouche's remarks before the 2023 AFCON finals underscored the importance of maturity and professionalism in fulfilling one's potential. Initially touted as the



Belgium-based Tanzanian goal-getter, Kelvin John.

his ability to address concerns surrounding his attitude and performance.

Amidst the spotlight of professional football, John finds himself grappling with a series of formidable challenges, each posing a formidable barrier to his growth and progression.

Limited playing time, John's relegation to the reserve team has cast a shadow over his development trajectory.

The sparse opportunities for on-field action not only impede his skill refinement but also diminish his chances of catching the eye of the first-team coaches.

Disciplinary concerns Amrouche's candid remarks regarding John's work ethic and commitment have cast a pall of doubt over his professional demeanor.

In the modern world of football, where discipline and dedication are the bedrock of success, such concerns loom large, threatening to overshadow John's potential and dampen his prospects for advancement.

Having faced stiff competition within Genk's renowned academy, Kelvin found himself immersed in a crucible of talent and ambition.

The club's illustrious history of nurturing prodigious talent has yielded several formidable players, each vying re-

lentlessly for a coveted spot in the first team.

Exploring pathways to revive John's career in response to the current challenges, several potential avenues emerge as viable solutions for the young forward's career revival.

With increased effort and focus, John must exhibit a revitalized dedication to training and discipline. By showcasing unwavering commitment, he can persuade the coaching staff of his renewed resolve and passion for the game.

A loan move to another club presents an enticing opportunity for John to secure regular playing time and rediscover his form.

Immersion in a new environment could provide the fresh perspective and competitive edge needed to reignite his career trajectory.

Seeking a new club If KRC Genk opts not to extend his contract, John may need to embark on a journey to find a new club.

Exploring opportunities elsewhere could offer him the platform to showcase his talent and carve out a new path toward professional success.

Each of these potential solutions presents John with distinct possibilities for revitalizing his career and reaffirming his place in the football world.

Samatta left out of Taifa Stars as coach turns to young gun Mzize

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

MBWANA Samatta has been left out of Tanzania's senior national football squad for the newly introduced FIFA series games.

Interim head coach Hemed Suleiman has instead turned to Young Africans SC's Clement Mzize for one of the forward slots.

There was also no place for Young African SC defender Dickson Job, while Kennedy Juma, Aishi Manula, Aboutwalib Msherry, and Bakari Mwamnyeto are in the squad despite limited playing time for their clubs.

Simon Msuva has kept his place in the national squad after earning a move to the Saudi Arabia second-tier League side Al Najmah FC.

Azam FC midfielder Yahya Zayd has been recalled after almost five years out of the squad.

FIFA is launching a new project called the 'FIFA series'. According to the new project, instead of the official friendly games on the FIFA calendar, a mini-tournament will be organized with the participation of national teams from different confederations.

One of the first such competitions is planned to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan from March 18 to 26.

In addition to tournament hosts Azerbaijan, the mini-tournament will involve Tanzania as the only African team, Bulgaria representing Europe, and Mongolia from the Asian continent.

Tanzania will open their campaign against Bulgaria on March 22 at the Dalga Arena, the same day hosts Azerbaijan face Mongolia.

Taifa Stars will return to action on



Mbwana Samatta

March 25 against Mongolia, while Azerbaijan faces Mongolia.

Taifa Stars full squad:

Goalkeepers: Aishi Manula (Simba) Aboutwalib Mshery (Young Africans SC) Kweisi Kawawa (Syrianska FC, Sweden).

Defenders: Bakari Mwamnyeto, Ibrahim Hamad (Young Africans SC) Lusajo Mwaikenda (Azam FC), Haji Mnoga (Aldershot Town, England), Mohamed Hussein (Simba SC), Novatus Dismas (Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukraine), Kennedy Juma (Simba SC), Miano Danilo (SC Villena CF, Spain).

Midfielders: Feisal Salum (Azam FC), Mudathir Yahya (Young Africans SC), Morice Michael (RFK Novi Sad, Serbia), Himid Mao (Tala'ea El Gaish, Egypt) Yahya Zaydi (Azam FC) Tarryn Allarakhia (Wealdstone, England)

Forwards: Clement Mzize (Young Africans SC), Simon Msuva (Alnajmah FC, Saudi Arabia), Kibu Denis (Simba SC), Abdul Suleiman (Azam FC), Ben Starkie (Ilkeston Town, England) Charles M'mombwa (Macarthur FC, Australia)



Dar es Salaam's Bluefins Swimming Club members in a group picture following the conclusion of the just ended which was held in Mwanza. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Bluefins Swimming Club wins plaudits for shining in Mwanza tournament

By Guardian Correspondent

DAR ES SALAAM's Bluefins Swimming Club management has commended the club's swimmers for their outstanding performance at the just-ended Isamilo Championships held in Mwanza last weekend.

The swimmers collected 39 medals, securing the second position in the event, which also featured clubs from Mainland Tanzania and neighbouring countries.

Bluefins' swimmers won seven gold, 18 silver, and 14 bronze medals at the event, accumulating 1,435.5 points.

The swimmers managed to win 39 medals, securing the second position in the event, which also featured clubs from Mainland Tanzania and neighbouring countries.

Bluefins' swimmers won seven gold, 18 silver, and 14 bronze medals in the championships that saw Mwanza Swimming Club winning the title after collecting 2,223.5 points.

Lake Victoria Sports Club, which posted 1,435 points, was moreover in the top three.

The swimmers who won medals in the exciting event were Zainab Moosajee, who secured five gold medals and three silver, Shuneal Bharwani (two gold, one silver, one bronze), Imaan Kimario (four silver, one bronze), Idris Zavery (three silver, two bronze), Saalih Mbonde (two silver, one bronze), Moiz Kaderbhai (two silver, one bronze), and Burhanuddin Jivajee, who won one silver and two bronze medals.

Others include Ithra Kahemele, who won one silver and one bronze medal.

In the master's age category, Zeinab Jivajee won four bronze medals, and Farhana Karim won one silver and one bronze medal.

The event also saw Zainab Moosajee win the trophy in the overall age category for girls aged between 11 and 12 years, while Shuneal Bharwani won the runner-up trophy for boys aged

13-14, and Zeinab Jivajee won the second runner-up in the ladies masters' category.

The club's head coach and founder, Rahim Alidina, expressed extreme happiness with their team, which, despite missing many senior swimmers, managed to finish in second place.

"This indicates that our young and upcoming swimmers are on the right track, and this gala will be a huge stepping stone in their swimming career," Alidina revealed.

He added that their swimmers also used the gala to obtain qualifying times for the upcoming Tanzania National Club Championship, which will be held next month.

Other clubs that featured in the event were the Torpedoes (Uganda), Dar Swim Club, Braeburn Arusha, Uwceca Arusha Rhinos, Lake Swim Club, FK Blue Marlins, Taliss-IST, Pigec, Geita Gald International School, Braeburn Sharks, and Isamilo International School.

Simba SC and Yanga react to CAF Champions League quarterfinal draw

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE CAF Champions League quarterfinal draw that took place in Cairo on Tuesday afternoon brought excitement and renewed focus for Tanzania's representatives, Simba SC and Young Africans SC.

Both teams knew their opponents, setting the stage for crucial matches in their continental journey.

Simba SC and Young Africans SC have been pitted against formidable opponents- Al Ahly and Mamelodi Sundowns- in the upcoming quarterfinals.

The draw set the stage for intense clashes between African football giants.

For Simba SC, their encounter

with Al Ahly marks a historic moment as it is the two teams' first meeting in the knockout phase of the CAF Champions League.

Similarly, Young Africans SC find themselves in uncharted territory as they prepare to face off against Mamelodi Sundowns for the first time in the last eight phases of the competition.

Simba SC, facing Egyptian giants Al Ahly once again, acknowledged the challenge through their assistant coach, Selemani Matola.

Matola disclosed: "Facing them is inevitable at this stage. We've met them several times before, with mixed results. We recently faced them in the African Football League, but luck wasn't on our side. Now, it's time to play our cards right and fight for victory."

The tactician highlighted Simba SC's familiarity with Al Ahly, emphasizing: "No player, technical staff member, or even leader on the team is unfamiliar with them."

This experience, coupled with Simba SC's determination, suggests the outfit is approaching the encounter with a strategic mindset.

Young Africans SC, also known as Yanga, drawn against South Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns, expressed a different perspective.

Miguel Gamondi, Yanga's head coach, downplayed having any pressure, stating: "We have no home game pressure. We're preparing diligently to ensure we progress, maintaining our strong showing against familiar opponents."

The Argentine acknowledged the caliber of their opponents, noting: "We're facing the best team in Africa. They have a proven track record, and nobody reaches this stage by chance."

This recognition underscores the respect Yanga holds for Mamelodi Sundowns. Gamondi also addressed the economic disparity between the two teams.

"Mamelodi Sundowns undoubtedly has a larger budget, giving them a seemingly greater chance of winning," he conceded.

He pointed out a recent instance in which Mamelodi Sundowns acquired a player for a substantial sum, contrasting it with Yanga's Joseph Guede and Augustin Okrah free agent signings.

However, Gamondi emphasized

that financial muscle doesn't dictate the outcome on the field. "Once the whistle blows, it's 11 against 11," he declared.

This statement reflects Yanga's determination to overcome any financial disadvantage through sheer talent and tactical prowess.

Both Simba SC and Yanga face formidable opponents in the CAF Champions League quarterfinals.

While Simba SC seeks to overcome a familiar foe, Yanga embraces the challenge of facing a top African team.

The coaches' statements reveal a blend of cautious optimism and unwavering determination.

Simba SC acknowledges the challenge but draws confidence from past encounters. Yanga, recognizing the opponent's strength,

emphasizes their focus and belief in their abilities.

In addition to these thrilling matchups, TP Mazembe is set to battle Petro de Luanda, while Esperance will go head-to-head with ASEC Mimosas in other quarterfinal fixtures.

The anticipation for these clashes is palpable as teams gear up to showcase their prowess on the continental stage.

The first leg fixtures are scheduled to take place between March 29-30, with the second legs set for April 5-6.

Football enthusiasts can expect exhilarating performances and nail-biting moments as these teams vie for a coveted spot in the semi-finals of the CAF Champions League.



Messi and Suarez fire Miami into CONCACAF quarters

MIAMI

LUIS Suarez and Lionel Messi were on target as Inter Miami marched into the last eight of the CONCACAF Champions Cup with a 3-1 (5-3 aggregate) win over Nashville on Wednesday.

Messi set up Suarez for the eighth-minute opener and then the Argentine found the target himself in the 23rd minute.

But the eight-times Ballon d'Or winner was substituted in the 50th minute before his replacement Robert Taylor made sure of the victory with a 63rd-minute header.

Inter Miami coach Gerardo 'Tata' Martino said Messi's withdrawal, when he did not appear to limp or be in discomfort, was due to a concern about his hamstring.

"He has an overload in his right hamstring. So we didn't want to take any risks. We tried to see if he could hold on a bit longer but it was bothering him and we preferred to take him out of the game," he said.

"I imagine that for Saturday's game (at D.C. United) he is not going to be available," said Martino.

Miami, playing in the competition for the first time, will face the winner of Thursday's second-leg between Mexico's Monterrey and MLS's FC Cincinnati in the quarter-finals.

The Liga MX team are at home and lead 1-0 from the first-leg.

The first-leg in Tennessee had seen Nashville take a two-goal lead before goals from Messi and Suarez inspired a comeback for a 2-2 draw.

And it was the former Barcelona pair that proved to be the difference again as Miami took control from the outset.

Messi had an early opportunity when he was brought down on the edge of the box, providing him with a free-kick from a central position but his shot struck the wall.

But minutes later, Messi created the opener, splitting the Nashville defence with a perfect pass to Suarez whose exquisite finish, with the outside of his right foot, matched the precision of the assist.

- Messi on target -

While the veteran quartet of Barcelona players in the Miami team, also including Spaniards Jordi Alba and Sergio Busquets, grab the attention, the young midfield workhouse Diego Gomez has become increasingly influential.

It was the Paraguayan's aggressive running that created the second goal, in the 23rd minute, when Gomez drove aggressively into the box and then smartly slipped inside to Messi who buried the ball, first time, into the corner.

It was Messi's fifth goal in five games in all competitions this season. Suarez has scored four in six games.

Nashville had created little but they offered a wake-up call to Miami keeper Drake Callender when Daniel Lovitz blasted a left-foot volley against the post.

Miami coach Gerardo Martino brought Messi off for Taylor five minutes after the interval, with no visible sign of an injury for the Argentine.

The departure of the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner gave Nashville a lift and they began to attack with real intent and Callender had to pull off a fine save at point blank range to deny Lukas MacNaughton.

But any hint of a Nashville comeback was snuffed out when Suarez turned provider with a delightful chip into the box towards Taylor who angled home his header to make it 3-0.

Nashville's Hany Mukhtar had an effort disallowed for offside before English striker Sam Surridge added a late consolation.

"We got the goals that we needed at the start," said Taylor.

"Then we knew in the second half they would try their all to score and they did put on more pressure. Luckily we got the third and Drake made some amazing saves. It is a great feeling going through and performing like this, every game is like do or die (in the Cup) so it's a great feeling," said the Finnish international.

Earlier Costa Rica's Herediano secured passage to the last eight with a 1-1 draw at Surinam's Robinhood enough to give them a 3-1 aggregate win.

Wednesday's later game is an all-Mexican clash with Club America defending a 3-0 first leg advantage at home to Chivas Guadalajara.

AFP

Atletico triumph on penalties to reach Champions League quarters

MADRID

ATLETICO Madrid bounced back from two goals down on aggregate against Inter Milan to reach the Champions League quarter-finals with a thrilling 3-2 penalty shoot-out triumph on Wednesday.

Trailing by a single goal after last month's first leg, Atletico looked dead and buried when Federico Dimarco pushed home Inter's opener at the Estadio Metropolitan.

But Antoine Griezmann immediately pulled the hosts level on the night and three minutes before the end of the regulation 90 minutes substitute Memphis Depay took the tie to extra time at 2-2 with a fine low finish.

That set up the decisive shoot-out which ended with Inter missing three of their five penalties, star striker Lautaro Martinez handing passage to the last eight to Atletico when he booted his spot-kick way off target.

"I think penalties are a lottery. Today luckily I stopped two," said Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak, who saved from Alexis Sanchez and Davy Klaassen.

"It's not easy to stop a penalty. Sometimes it looks easy from the outside but it's not."

"I'm very, very happy for the team because I think we did a



Jan Oblak was the hero for Atletico in the shoot-out. Agencies

great match," he added. "We played well. Maybe in the last month we've not been in great shape but we showed we can do much more."

The two teams could barely have come into Wednesday's match in more contrasting form as Inter had won 13 matches on the bounce since the start of 2024 while Atletico had won only one of their last five.

However it was an even and exciting contest in the Spanish capital in which Atletico pushed hard for the win and both sides created a clutch of opportunities.

Home advantage turned out to be crucial for Atletico who have won 19 of their 21 fixtures

at the Metropolitan in all competitions.

Atletico are also unbeaten in 17 knockout matches on home turf in the Champions League and in front of a passionate crowd they fought back from an impossible looking position against runaway Serie A leaders Inter.

Depay smashed a powerful effort off the woodwork moments before his strike took the two teams to an additional 30 minutes while Rodrigo Riquelme wasted a glorious chance to snatch the tie for Atletico without the need for extra time.

Inter meanwhile were left ruing two great chances on the break as Atletico pushed

for their second, both Marcus Thuram and Nicolo Barella finishing poorly with chances to seal the tie.

Simone Inzaghi's Inter now turn their attentions back to winning their 20th Serie A title while Atletico await Friday's draw for the last eight in Nyon.

"Once we went ahead we needed to be better, those three-four minutes in order to maintain that advantage Dimarco gave us," said Inzaghi.

"At that moment the match seemed in our hands but instead they got back into the game."

Inter, who wasted a series of opportunities to earn a bigger first-leg advantage, are 16

points clear of AC Milan with 10 league matches remaining.

It was a fast-paced encounter from the off as Atletico pushed immediately to level the tie with aggressive pressing.

Samuel Lino burst down the left flank and tested Yann Sommer in the fifth minute before his counterpart Denzel Dumfries forced a double save from Oblak.

Inter were dangerous on the break and it was with a quick-fire exchange of passes that the away side took the lead, Dimarco confidently netting first time from Barella's neat cut-back.

However Inter's celebrations were almost instantly cut short when Griezmann pounced after Koke's through ball deflected off two Inter defenders, taking his club-record goal tally to 176.

Griezmann forced a decent stop from Sommer shortly after the break as Atleti again tried to pen Inter into their own area.

Thuram blasted over after being perfectly put through by Martinez, leaving Inzaghi raging on the sidelines, before Barella shot weakly at Oblak in similarly good position.

Depay then struck and all the momentum that had been building went definitively in Atletico's direction, eventually leading to a joyous shoot-out win.

AFP

Sancho helps Dortmund past PSV, into Champions League quarters

DORTMUND

A THIRD-MINUTE goal from Jadon Sancho and Marco Reus' late strike sent Borussia Dortmund through to the Champions League last eight with a 2-0 win on Wednesday, sealing a 3-1 aggregate victory.

Level at 1-1 after the last-16 first leg in the Netherlands, Sancho wasted no time in putting Dortmund ahead at the Westfalenstadion with a low shot from outside the area -- his first Champions League goal since November 2021.

Dortmund were shaky despite the early lead and needed a fair share of luck and some poor PSV finishing to progress, with Hirving Lozano's 53rd-minute effort hitting the post.

PSV pushed forwards in stoppage time looking for an equaliser but instead gave away another goal, as Isaac Babadi's unfortunate slip allowed Reus to seal the win.

"It feels very nice," said Dortmund goalkeeper Gregor Kobel. "We didn't let them breathe in the first 30 minutes. I'm now looking forward to facing a very big opponent in the next round."

The 1997 winners did enough against an out-classed PSV but will face stiffer challenges as they return to the quarter-final draw, to be held on Friday, for the first time since 2021.

"We're happy about the first half, a bit frustrated about the second but we're pleased that we're going further in the competition," Dortmund coach Edin Terzic told DAZN.

PSV were left to rue several missed chances, including when Luuk de Jong blazed over a golden opportunity deep



Jadon Sancho has four goals and three assists in his last seven Champions League home games for Borussia Dortmund. Agencies

into injury time.

"(We) had the game in our grip but just couldn't score a goal," said PSV boss Peter Bosz, who endured a disappointing six-month spell in charge of Dortmund in 2017.

"The Champions League is of course the highest level. We were so close. It hurts, but that's how it is."

Dortmund, 20 points behind Xabi Alonso's unbeaten leaders Bayer Leverkusen in the Bundesliga and out of the German Cup, came into the game knowing the Champions League was their only hope of lifting silverware this season.

Despite their poor domestic campaign, Dortmund have impressed in Europe, emerging first from a group featuring Paris Saint-Germain, AC Milan and Newcastle.

PSV are unbeaten in the Eredivisie and cantering towards their first league title since

2018.

Having said on Saturday he "expects more from himself" after scoring his first goal since returning to Germany on loan from Manchester United in January, Sancho opened the scoring before the smoke of the pre-game flares had cleared.

The out-of-favour England winger made

the most of PSV's failure to clear a bouncing ball in the box, collecting Julian Brandt's lay-off and picking out the bottom corner via the inside of the post.

"I just knew from the dressing room talk that we were on," Sancho told TNT Sports.

"From the first whistle to the last, we stuck to

our plan and I'm happy we got the win."

That goal put the wind in the hosts' sails, with Brandt and former PSV winger Donyell Malen denied by a brilliant double save from visiting goalkeeper Walter Benitez.

Malen went close again before the interval, twice firing wide when he should have at least

hit the target.

The visitors were much improved after the break. Lozano, introduced at half-time, hit the post with a long-range effort.

PSV upped the ante but were let down by their wastefulness in front of goal, with De Jong heading over two good chances.

Substituted to applause with what looked like a thigh injury, Sancho was replaced by Reus with 15 minutes remaining.

The Dortmund veteran looked to have laid on the crucial second goal for Niclas Füllkrug two minutes later against the run of play with a sublime cross from a free-kick, but the striker's half-volley was ruled out by VAR for the narrowest of offsides.

PSV's best opportunity to force extra time fell to De Jong in the fourth minute of added time, but the Dutch striker blazed over unmarked from only 10 yards out.

Reus quickly made his pay, racing onto a loose ball and slotting calmly past Benitez to spark wild home celebrations.

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko

HOW DO YOU TAKE THE IDEA OF WORKING FROM HOME?

YOU MEAN - HOME GROUND?



SPORT

Raya is shootout hero as Arsenal reach Champions League quarters

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TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV MONDAY

5 Sports

11:00 DADAZ
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA
13:00 Zote Kuntu
13:30 Kaili Za Wana
13:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
14:00 SKONGA (r)
14:30 Planet Bongo (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Akili & Me
15:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
16:00 Zote Kuntu
16:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 Kaili Za Wana
18:30 #HASHITAG
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 SPORTS
22:00 Zote Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa
23:05 EATV SAA 1 (r)

5Sports

The week's local and international sporting events as well as in-depth analysis of the biggest sporting highlights of the week are covered on 5sports.

eastafrica RADIO

05:00 Supa Breakfast
09:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
19:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Mamelodi Sundowns to dig deep into Yanga during FIFA international break

By Guardian Correspondent

SOUTH Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns head coach Rulani Mokwena has disclosed the coming FIFA international break, set for next week, will be the perfect time for him to dig deep into Tanzania's Young Africans SC and study their strengths and weaknesses.

Young Africans SC, also known as Yanga, will take on Mamelodi Sundowns in the last eight of the CAF Champions League at the end of this month.

The Tanzanian team will come into the tie after finishing second in their CAF Champions League group.

The NBC Premier League champions managed to end their campaign with eight points, finishing ahead of Algeria's CR Belouizdad and Ghana's Medeama SC.

They will have their work cut out against the South African champions, who won four of their six group stage matches and are desperate to emulate their 2016 success when they lifted their first-ever continental title.

Reacting to the draw that was made on Tuesday, Mokwena said though he has watched all CAF Champions League games as a fan he now has to take a close look at his opponents' past matches as an analyst.

"My thoughts on the Champions League draw, I'm not so sure yet. Of course, I watched the draw but I can't tell you my immediate thoughts - because I have got to watch the opponent closely," Mokwena stated.

The gaffer pointed out: "I have watched all the opponents, all the games in the CAF Champions League. But I've watched a coach not as an analyst and now I have to switch."

"Fortunately I have a FIFA break coming up where my focus will just be on Yanga, I will go as far back as I possibly can," he noted.

"They've got a good coach in Miguel Gamondi, he was at Sundowns, a very organized team with a very good structure. So, let's see before I jump to conclusions because now I have got to focus on the next game against Maritzburg, which is a tough one," he concluded.

Yanga will host the first leg which has been slated for March 29-30, with the return tie scheduled for April 5-6 in Tshwane.

CAF is yet to confirm the exact date and kick-off times for the quarterfinal games.

The aggregate winner of this clash will go on to face the victor between Tunisia's Espérance and Ivorian outfit ASEC Mimosas in the semi-finals set for late April.

Taifa Stars skipper Mbwana Samatta's omission from squad explained



Taifa Stars' captain, Mbwana Samatta.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

TANZANIA'S Taifa Stars captain Mbwana Samatta is among the notable absentees from the latest squad that was announced for the newly introduced FIFA series games.

Acting head coach Hemed Suleiman instead turned to Young Africans SC's youngster Clement Mzize for one of the forward slots.

Also missing from the squad, unveiled on Wednesday, is veteran Young Africans SC defender Dickson Job who left out at the expense of his teammate Bakari Mwamnyeto and Simba SC's Kennedy Juma who are both struggling for

game time.

Samatta's absence was initially not explained but the Tanzania Football Federation has now come out to reveal it is due to a personal request from the Greece-based PAOK Thessaloniki striker.

"Taifa Stars captain, Mbwana Samatta has requested not to be included in the squad called for the FIFA Series games. He spoke with the coach before the squad was announced and his re-

quest was accepted," TFF statement read.

The 31-year-old striker has scored three goals and assisted a further three in 32 appearances for PAOK Thessaloniki this season. He did not feature in PAOK's last game.

With 69 caps under his belt, Samatta is one of the longest-serving members of the Taifa Stars.

He made his senior debut 13 years ago in an international friendly against Pal-

estine.

The then Taifa Stars head coach introduced him as a second-half substitute in the 1-0 home victory.

The former TP Mazembe and Simba SC striker will now miss Taifa Stars' two games against Bulgaria and Mongolia in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Tanzania will open their campaign against Bulgaria on March 22 at the Dalga Arena, the same day hosts

Azerbaijan face Mongolia. Taifa Stars will return to action on March 25 against Mongolia, while Azerbaijan faces Mongolia.

Taifa Stars full squad:

Goalkeepers: Aishi Manula (Simba) Aboutwalib Mshery (Yanga) Kwesi Kawawa (Syrianska FC, Sweden).

Defenders: Bakari Mwamnyeto, Ibrahim Hammad (Yanga) Lusajo Mwaikenda (Azam FC), Haji Mnoga (Aldershot Town, England), Mohamed Hussein (Simba SC), Novatus Dismas (Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukraine), Kennedy Juma (Simba SC), Miano Danilo (SC Villena CF, Spain).

Midfielders: Feisal Salum (Azam FC), Mudathir Yahya (Yanga), Morice Michael (RFK Novi Sad, Serbia), Himid Mao (Tala'ea El Gaish, Egypt) Yahya Zaydi (Azam) Tarryn Allarakhia (Wealdstone, England)

Forwards: Clement Mzize (Yanga), Simon Msuva (Alnajmah FC, Saudi Arabia), Kibu Denis (Simba SC), Abdul Suleiman (Azam FC), Ben Starkie (Ilkeston Town, England) Charles M'mombwa (Marcarthur FC, Australia)

Simba SC aims for second spot in NBC Premier League, takes on Mashujaa FC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA SC will aim to enhance its chances of securing CAF Champions League football when the club faces Mashujaa FC at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam this evening, with kick-off scheduled for 8:15 pm.

The Msimbazi Street squad is sitting third in the NBC Premier League table - two points shy of second-placed Azam FC with the advantage of two games in hand.

However, they are seven points behind leaders Young Africans SC, alias Yanga, who appear to be well on course to defend their league title

with 12 games to play.

Mathematically Simba SC is still in the title race though, in reality, it is hard to catch up with Yanga, leaving the second spot the more realistic target bar an unprecedented collapse of form by their long-time rivals.

Simba SC notched a comfortable 3-1 victory over struggling Singida Fountain Gate FC in Dar es Salaam on Monday.

They have now lost just one of their previous 11 NBC Premier League clashes, securing seven wins and three draws to remain in the driving seat for the final CAF Champions League spot. Mashujaa FC made the trip to the

Azam Complex Stadium on the back of a vital 1-0 home win over JKT Tanzania last weekend.

They scored their all-important goal early in the first half through midfielder Mapinduzi Balama and managed to hold onto the lead to seal maximum points. The win over JKT Tanzania was the third victory for Mashujaa FC in seven fixtures in all competitions.

Abdallah Mohamed 'Baresi's men have now avoided defeat in each of their last six NBC Premier League games.

The unbeaten streak has helped them move from second bottom to eleventh place on the log to ease their

relegation fears.

Statistics also show the army side's form on the road has improved.

They have avoided defeat in their last four away games including a crucial 3-1 victory against Geita Gold FC.

In head-to-head stats, Simba SC and Mashujaa FC have met in two competitive matches. Mashujaa FC famously claimed a 1-0 victory to edge out Simba SC in the 2018/19 Azam Sports Federation Cup.

However, when the two teams met in their first-ever top-flight league encounter, Simba SC snatched a hard-fought 1-0 win at Lake Tanganyika Stadium in Kigoma last month.

Dar boxers feature in 2024 All-Africa Games

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA'S two boxers will today be in action in the round of 16 of the ongoing All African Games at Bukom Arena in Accra, Ghana.

The two pugilists are Abdallah Abdallah (Flyweight) who will face Ethiopian Wbshet Bekele and Abdallah Mfaume (Welterweight) who will face Zambian Gerlad Kibinda.

The Boxing Federation (BFT) secretary-general Makore Mashaga said he is confident that today the two boxers will fly their country's flag high.

"The two got a bye in the round of 32, this means that they are the best in their respective weight categories, this gives us confidence that they will

do well in tomorrow's bouts," he said.

Meanwhile, Tanzania is among 11 African countries that have had boxers garnering medals before entering the ring in the All-Africa Games, Tanzania's bronze medal has been won by Mussa Maregesi who has made it to the semi-finals.

Other countries to have won the medals are Tunisia, Zambia, Algeria, Ghana, Egypt, DR Congo, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Morocco.

Eight female boxers have already progressed to the finals of the All-Africa Games without throwing a punch, this came about because their weight categories attracted two boxers.

Male boxers representing the country in the Games are Abdallah

Mohammed (Flyweight), Ezra Paul (Lightweight), Abdallah Mfaume (Welterweight), Yusuf Changelawe (Light Heavyweight), Musa Maregesi (Cruiserweight), and Mhina Magogo (Heavyweight).

Female boxers are Miriam Maligisa (Minimumweight) and Zulfa Macho (Flyweight). They are under coaches Samuel Kapungu and Muhsin Mohamed.

Speaking during the All-Africa Games-bound Tanzania team's send-off, Minister for Culture, Arts and Sports Damas Ndumbaro urged the team to make the country proud by sweeping many medals in the Games.

Ndumbaro said it is high time local athletes performed well in top inter-

national events.

Some of the sporting codes, whose athletes are representing the country in the Games, are athletics, boxing, cycling, swimming, and judo.

Ndumbaro noted: "I'm calling on all the athletes who will represent the country at the coming All Africa Games in Ghana to fight for the nation's flag, the government has provided all necessities for the team."

"The government sponsored a more than one-month camp for all athletes and it is time for them to prove to the nation that they are capable, winning medals is the only way to prove that," he said.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

