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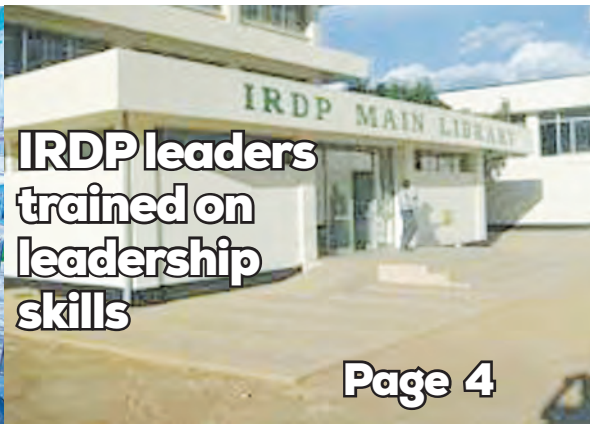
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TANZANIA

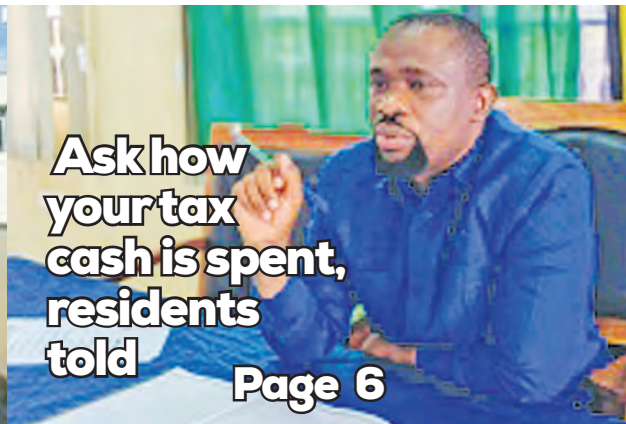
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Tanzania readying for Africa energy summit

By Getrude Mbago

TANZANIA is set to host the African energy summit later this month in Dar es Salaam, bringing together heads of government from across the continent and over 1500 executives from multilateral agencies, diplomats and the private sector.

Gerson Msigwa, the Information, Culture, Arts and Sports permanent secretary and chief government spokesman, said at a media workshop held in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the summit is slated for January 27-28.

It is expected to provide a platform for ground-breaking agreements aimed at revolutionizing energy access for 300m people across Africa by 2030, he stated.

Delegates are expected to adopt the Africa energy compact, a strategic framework for advancing sustainable and equitable access to energy, a roadmap for clean and inclusive energy development, he said.

Additionally, the summit will witness endorsement of the first phase of national energy compacts for 2025-2030, where 14 countries, including Tanzania, Nigeria, Zambia, Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo, will unveil comprehensive plans to enhance energy access, reliability, and affordability.

The summit will also examine and approve what is billed as the Dar es Salaam Declaration, a statement embodying Africa's collective vision for sustainable energy, he stated.

The declaration will serve as a guide for boosting renewable energy adoption, improving infrastructure and achieving energy equity, he elaborated.

"We are honoured to be at the center of these vital discussions, as this summit marks an important step towards ensuring access to electricity for 300m Africans by 2030," he said, pointing at collaborative efforts with international partners like the



President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, together with the Chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam, Former President Dr. Jakaya Kikwete, unveiled the plaque to lay the foundation stone for the construction of the Academic and Administration Building of the Institute of Marine Sciences of the University of Dar es Salaam. The building is being constructed at Buyu, West "B" District, Unguja, as part of the celebrations marking the 61st Anniversary of the Zanzibar Revolution. Photo: State House

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Israeli woman dies in safari outing disaster

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

AN Israeli woman was killed when a safari truck rolled over and crashed inside the Ngorongoro Conservation Area on Saturday.

The deceased, a 30-year-old lady, was among seven people traveling in the tourist vehicle, a Toyota Landcruiser T-450 APB operated by Wakali Safaris Co. of Arusha.

Official correspondence from Tel Aviv say the woman's body will be flown to Israel for burial in the course of this week.

Hamis Dambaya, the NCAA communications officer, said in a briefing that the accident occurred along a section of the road between Loduare entrance gate to Ngorongoro and the Conservation Area viewpoint.

The vehicle was coming from the crater, six Israelis and one Tanzanian, the safari truck driver. Five people were badly injured and were rushed to the Karatu Lutheran Hospital and FAME Medical Center both located near Ngorongoro, the NCAA statement noted.

The management blames reckless driving, while a view emerged that the vehicle was not in very good condition either.

A statement from the Israeli Foreign Ministry

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NFRA starts sugar imports by March

● Arranges storage facilities in Dar, Mwanza

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

THE National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) will in two months start importing sugar.

Dr Andrew Komba, the NFRA chief executive officer, shared

this update in an interview over the weekend, stating that the Sugar Board of Tanzania (SBT) has directed the agency to begin sugar imports within two months.

The agency has arranged for suitable storage facilities in Dar

es Salaam and Mwanza, he said, noting that the country's sugar supply is stable, at present but buffer stocks will be needed more or less rapidly.

"SBT has instructed us to prepare for imports starting in March," he said, noting that

Dar es Salaam and Mwanza were picked for storage facilities due to their large populations.

They are more likely to be affected in case of a sugar shortage, he said, stressing that the agency is ready and equipped for sugar imports. The board has prom-

ised to issue an import permit by March, he stated.

NFRA will import sugar under the supervision of the relevant authorities, with the target of

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Parents and their children select school uniforms as part of preparations for the 2025 as seen at the One Way area in Dodoma city over the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Lack of filling stations upset CNG transition

By Guardian Reporter & Agencies

LOW private sector initiative in building compressed natural gas (CNG) filling stations or converting existing fuel station chambers to offer alternative fuel is holding back transition to natural gas use for vehicles in the city of Dar es Salaam.

Analysts say that only one organisation, a direct stakeholder in the fuel industry, is noticeably involved, with limited capacity to put up compressed gas fuel stations.

The situation is comparable to Nigeria and other African nations, where Tanzania is increasingly embracing CNG due to its environmental benefits and affordability but faces considerable setbacks as fillings stations are not being primed to convert existing fuel chambers to CNG use and obtain licences.

CNG is considered cleaner than petrol

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NFRA starts sugar imports by March

FROM PAGE 1

purchasing at least 92,000 tonnes as a buffer against potential price hikes and to address emergencies.

Additionally, sugar will be sourced from various domestic suppliers, with intent to provide reserves when stocks run low, thus prior imports obviate the recurrence of sugar supply emergencies and price hikes.

The NFRA has also begun purchasing other crops, including peas, beans, lentils, maize, rice and sorghum, with the government having allocated over 202bn/- to the agency for sugar imports.

The decision to mandate the NFRA with sugar imports and storage followed misconduct by sugar planters to import sugar and repackaging it as their own and selling at inflated prices.

Efforts to control the situation in the 2024/2025 budget discussions had the Finance minister, Dr. Mwigulu Nchemba demanding that sugar producers "be required to disclose production costs and publish regional distributors." The minister intimated that NFRA will phase out monopoly distribution with only five agents countrywide, a series of measures coming eight years after sugar imports were stopped and prices rose from 2,000/- to even 7,000/- per kilo in far off upcountry regions. To expand its other crop storage capacity, NFRA has been leased 19 warehouses by the Tanzania Initiative for Preventing Aflatoxin Contamination

(TANIPAC), chiefly to meet growing cereal demand in neighboring countries.

The agency is also working on a project to build modern silos in various regions, with maize production having increased since President Samia Suluhu Hassan directed a significant price increase for farmers.

Currently, it holds 739,000 tonnes of cereals in storage, he said, affirming that 3m tonnes will be gathered in NFRA warehouses by 2030.

NFRA obtained 35bn/- last year to enable expanding storage capacity to 0.7m tonnes, with new warehouses built and the renovation of cereal storage facilities at various NFRA centers, he explained. The agency will resume halted projects to build modern silos in Ruvuma, Songea, Songwe, Shinyanga, Dodoma and Makambako, he said.

At present NFRA operates 72 purchasing points across eight regions, listed as Dodoma, Kipawa (Dar es Salaam), Makambako, Njombe Region, Songwe, Sumbawanga in Rukwa Region, Babati (Manyara Region), Shinyanga, and Songea.

NFRA intends to purchase grains in quantities of 2,000 tonnes or more from large-scale traders, while also buying from cooperative societies where farmers channel their produce, he added.



Works Minister Abdallah Ulega (2nd L) speaks with Pangani residents who turned up at Pangani bridge construction site across Pangani river-Indian Ocean estuary as part of the EAC road map through the coastal areas corridor. Right is Tanga Regional Commissioner Dr. Batilda Burian and left is Water Minister and Pangani legislator, Jumaa Aweso. Photo: Correspondent Cheji Bakari

Few filling stations frustrate transition to vehicle gas use

FROM PAGE 1

and diesel, and its relatively low cost has attracted around 5,000 early adopters, especially among commercial drivers, casual surveys indicate.

As a result vehicle fuel CNG usage is still minimal, with long projections for near-total adoption by mid-century, given abundant natural gas reserves offshore.

CNG in Tanzania costs less than half of petrol prices, making it an appealing option for commuter driving in particular and even for personal vehicles, as well as vastly reducing costs of the use of government vehicles on a routine basis, observers say.

Samuel Irube, a taxi operator, spent 1.5m/- (\$620) to convert his three-wheeled vehicle, a bajaj make, to CNG. However, the lack of filling

stations means that he often spends more time waiting to refuel than actually working.

In Dar es Salaam, there are only four CNG filling stations mostly run by the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC) forcing motorists like Irube to wait hours in long queues.

At the Ubungo CNG station, the situation is no better, as motorists patiently line up while the frustration is evident. Medadi Ngoma, waiting for over two hours, recalls when queues were shorter and faster, in which case increasing demand for CNG has outpaced infrastructure expansion.

Another CNG user, Sadiki Mkumbuka, also complains about the long wait times at the busiest station near the airport, which he believes should have more stations to accommodate the growing

demand.

Despite inconveniences, many motorists are opting for CNG, aiming at significant cost savings, with a driver fills his 11kg gas tank for 15,000/- (\$6), covering about 180km - less than half the price of petrol for the same distance.

The push for CNG adoption began over a decade ago, gaining momentum in 2018, with the relevant authorities admitting they were unprepared for the rapid rise in demand, while not looking for a viable private sector inclusion in the transition.

Aristides Kato, the CNG project manager at TPDC, is aware of the lack of infrastructure to support the increasing number of gas-powered vehicles.

Given the low push for private sector inclusion in critical spheres of economy, the formulation is that despite

these challenges, the government remains committed to promoting CNG as a cleaner alternative to petrol and diesel.

"The use of locally available natural gas should help keep costs low and reduce air pollution, making it a win-win for both the environment and motorists," the project chief noted, pointing out that the initial cost of converting a vehicle and the lower mileage of a CNG tank compared to petrol or diesel may deter some potential adopters.

While the situation is frustrating for the pioneers of transition to CNG fuel use, the country's growing demand is seen as a positive sign.

Amr Aboushady, country manager of Taqa Arabia, which operates a CNG station near the airport, views the demand as an opportunity to expand the industry.

The company plans to build more stations and hopes to replicate Egypt's success with CNG, where half a million vehicles have switched to dual-fuel systems since the 1990s, he said.

While workshops have been tasked to convert vehicles to use natural gas, expanding CNG infrastructure is closely under wraps, analysts believe.

TPDC started building what is described as a central "mother station" in Dar es Salaam to supply smaller stations nationwide, while acquiring five mobile CNG units for use in Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, and Morogoro.

Some analysts assert that these initiatives should eventually reduce waiting times, but for now, the shortage of filling stations remains a major obstacle for Tanzania's CNG pioneers.



Zanzibar President Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi looks at Tumbatu Secondary School students Hussein Aboud and Nassra Ali using computers in education shortly after inaugurating the school as part of 61st anniversary of Zanzibar Revolution on Saturday. Photo: State House

Israeli woman dies in safari outing disaster

FROM PAGE 1

acknowledged obtaining information on the incident via the Israeli Consulate in Nairobi.

Authorities in Tel Aviv are working to assist the

family and the medical team that went to the scene, the statement noted, highlighting that the Israeli tourists were covered by the Harel Insurance Co.

The company said in a statement that the family had been evacuated by helicopter to a local hospital with a range of injuries and that an Israeli doctor was flown

out to assist with their medical treatment.

"Following the unfortunate road accident in Tanzania, we at Harel decided to immediately send an Israeli doctor to

provide a quick and optimal medical response to the policyholders," it stated.

"We are in continuous and direct contact with the families and are

making sure to update them and assist with whatever is needed, as well as being in contact with the Foreign Ministry," the statement added.

Tanzania readying for Africa energy summit

FROM PAGE 1

World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB) in the African Union framework. Summit delegates are expected to take a keen look at the development of renewable energy sources, expansion of electricity access across rural and urban areas, and the promotion of clean cooking energy to safeguard public health and protect the environment, the spokesman affirmed. He stressed the significance of leadership in the matter by President Samia Suluhu Hassan, positioning Tanzania as a champion of clean cooking energy in Africa.

"President Samia's diplomatic efforts have placed Tanzania at the forefront of Africa's energy dialogue," he said, underlining Tanzania's remarkable progress in rural electrification. The quasi totality of villages are now connected to the grid and out of them, more than 32,000 hamlets are electrified. Such advancements have significantly improved health, education and economic outcomes, he stated.

Through the national clean cooking energy strategy, Tan-

zania is also committed to ensuring 80 percent of households have access to clean cooking solutions by 2034.

He appealed for media outlets to disseminate accurate information about the summit, stressing public awareness in achieving the summit's objectives.

Innocent Luoga, the ministerial commissioner for electricity and renewable energy, said that Mission 300 Initiative is crucial to reducing Africa's electricity access gap by expanding infrastructure in underserved areas.

"Mission 300 is a transformative project that will be signed by 14 countries at the summit, a milestone in cross-border energy collaboration," Luoga said.

Ambassador Noel Kaganda, the Foreign Affairs director of multilateral cooperation, highlighted Tanzania's achievements in the energy sector.

By December 2024, the country's electricity generation capacity had reached 3,169.20 megawatts, while access to electricity has surged from 14 percent in 2011 to 78.4 percent late 2020, driven by the Rural Energy Agency (REA) connecting nearly all villages to the national grid.

"The summit presents an opportunity to showcase Tanzania's progress in energy development and strengthen its global standing," he asserted.

Kikwete congratulates private sector involvement in development projects

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

FORMER President Jakaya Kikwete has commended collaboration between private sector stakeholders and the government in advancing various development projects, particularly in the health sector. He noted that such partnerships are vital for accelerating progress in the country.

Kikwete made the remarks at the official inauguration of the modern Kizimkazi Health Centre in Unguja South District, Zanzibar. The health centre valued at 4.4bn/- was built through partnership between the government of Zanzibar and stakeholders, including the Samia Foundation and Ahmed Al Falas Foundation.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by several prominent figures in the health sector, including

Zanzibar Minister of Health, Nasser Ahmed Mazrui, Permanent Secretary Dr Mngereza Mzee Miraji and senior officials from both private and public sectors. Leaders from the partner organisations were also present, including Fatma Kara, chairperson of the Samia Foundation.

"Collaboration between the government and various stakeholders, including private institutions, is the most effective means of accelerating development for the benefit of the people. The partnership between the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, the Samia Foundation and Ahmed Al Falas Foundation in completing this project is an exemplary model. Congratulations to all involved," he remarked.

After inspecting various sections of the facility, Kikwete urged government

leaders and health center management to ensure high-quality services for the community while maintaining the center's infrastructure to ensure continued excellence in service delivery.

"With the inauguration of this modern facility, we expect many patients from the area and surrounding regions to access health services without the need to travel far. It is crucial to ensure all necessary professionals are available to fulfill the good intentions of President Samia Suluhu Hassan and President Hussein Mwinyi," he said.

Minister Mazrui and Permanent Secretary Dr Miraji stated that the inauguration coincided with the 61st anniversary of the Zanzibar Revolution. They added that the health centre would serve approximately 13,000 residents of Kizim-

kazi Mkunguni, Kibuteni, Kizimkazi Dimbani and nearby areas.

"This facility sets a quality benchmark that will guide construction of more centers in Zanzibar," Mazrui said.

Wanu Hafidh Ameir, Member of Parliament (Special Seats) representing Unguja South Region and chairperson of Mwanamke Initiatives Foundation, emphasised that the centre would significantly improve healthcare access for local residents, particularly women. Many women had been reluctant to get pregnant due to the distance to healthcare facilities, she said.

"With the establishment of this center, I believe women in the area will increase their birth rates as fewer children have been born here compared to other regions," she said.



Majengo Sokoni residents in Dodoma City remove solid waste from stormwater drains yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

Many road crashes involved rental vehicles in December, says LATRA

By Getrude Mbago

THE Land Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA) has reported very big number of accidents involving rental vehicles compared to regular buses during December's festive season.

According to Salum Pazy, LATRA's head of public relations and communications, out of six

accidents recorded during the month, five involved small buses, such as Coasters and rental vehicles, while only one involved a passenger bus.

"Our analysis revealed that most accidents involved rental vehicles, largely due to safety violations," Pazy said in a statement yesterday.

He noted that overall transportation during the holiday season was

smooth, with passengers reaching their destinations without major challenges.

He attributed the success to contributions from the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC), particularly its Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) and other train services, which eased transportation demand.

However, the two days before Christmas saw a

surge in passenger numbers, leading LATRA to issue temporary permits for special hire vehicles to address the increased demand. "No passengers were left stranded, but the temporary arrangements highlighted the need for stricter oversight of rental vehicles," Pazy said.

LATRA's assessment uncovered several issues with rental vehicles, including violations of oper-

ational rules and tampering with safety systems. "Some rental vehicles were illegally operating as regular buses, picking up passengers along the way instead of adhering to their hire-only terms," Pazy said.

In addition, many of the vehicles lacked mandatory safety systems, such as the Vehicle Tracking System (VTS) and driver monitoring devices

like the i-Button. LATRA found instances of tampering with the systems, compromising passenger safety.

Pazy said to address these concerns, LATRA has launched a campaign to improve compliance with safety standards. The initiative involves mandatory installation of VTS and i-Button devices on all passenger vehicles.

LATRA has also initiated

special operations, with officers and traffic police conducting roadside inspections to identify and penalize non-compliant vehicles.

"We take immediate action against violators, including imposing fines and ensuring that safety measures are in place," Pazy emphasised.

The authority has reiterated its commitment to passenger safety and

maintaining high standards in the transport sector. "We aim to prevent accidents and ensure a safe environment for all road users through strict enforcement and stakeholder collaboration," Pazy said.

The authority further urged transport operators to comply with regulations and avoid shortcuts that put passengers' lives at risk.



Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Supply of the following "High Voltage and 241.1 Trailing Cable to "AUMS Geofields (T) Limited operations at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

- 70MM; 3C; 11KV; XLPE; IND SCREEN; SWA; RED SHEATH; NEXAN
- CABLE; 50MM; TRAILING; TYPE 241.1; BLUE SHEATH; NEXAN
- CABLE; 6MM; TRAILING; TYPE 241.1; BLACK SHEATH; NEXAN

AUMS Geofields (T) Limited invites eligible, qualified and experienced Tanzanian companies to express their interest in the supply of "High Voltage and 241.1 Trailing Cable" at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

1. Schedule and deadline for submission

The contract (FPA) is to be awarded through a competitive tender process. If your company wishes to be considered for pre-qualification, please submit an EOI by email to ContractsTanzania@aumsg.com by not later than 16:00HRS Local Time on 11th January 2025 quoting "EOI Supply of "High Voltage and 241.1 Trailing Cable" in the subject line of your email.

Please submit an EOI on your company letterhead with the following mandatory information:

- Company Profile, Shareholders IDs, directors list, organogram, number of employees with a foreign to national ratio indicated
- Valid tax Compliance, VAT registration & TIN certificates
- Certificate of Incorporation, Valid Business Permit/Licenses
- Industry regulatory compliance licenses. Details of manufacturing point of origin or Tanzanian manufacturing facility to produce "High Voltage and 241.1 Trailing Cable". Compliance to Nexans standards and other relevant industry documentation.
- Summary of Court proceedings (pending and completed), court judgments and/or insolvency/bankruptcy proceedings if any, against your company and or any of your shareholders, directors and/or senior leadership/management team over the last 3 years.
- Occupational, Health, Safety and Environmental Requirements
- Trade references, sample purchase orders and contracts, completion certificates for "High Voltage and 241.1 Trailing Cable".
- Key Employees CV & Certificates
- Distribution points in Tanzania or list of satellite offices if applicable
- Compliance to Tanzania's Mining Local Content Requirements as per the Mining Local Content Regulations 2018.

Any response received beyond 16:00HRS Local Time on 11th January 2025 shall not be considered.

2. Assessment criteria

The mandatory information requested at paragraph 1 will be evaluated and scored to shortlist pre-qualified companies.

The pre-qualification of any company submitting an EOI shall be at the sole discretion of AUMS Geofields (T) Limited.

The bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the companies EOI. AUMS Geofields (T) Limited shall not be responsible or liable for any costs incurred regardless of the conduct or outcome of the bidding process

For more information on African Underground Mining Services and its operations please refer to the following website www.aumsg.com.

AN AUMS & GEOFIELDS JV

AUMS IS PART OF PERENTI LIMITED



Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Supply of "High Voltage Cable XLPE/PVC SWA 2C+E Circular Orange 500mtr 95mm/50mm/35mm" to AUMS Geofields (T) Limited operations at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

AUMS Geofields (T) Limited invites eligible, qualified and experienced Tanzanian companies to express their interest in the supply of "High Voltage Cable XLPE/PVC SWA 2C+E Circular Orange in 500 metre rolls. In the sizes of 95mm/50mm/35mm" at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

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Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Supply of "BF Goodrich 265/70/R16 10PR Light Vehicle Tyres" to AUMS Geofields (T) Limited operations at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

AUMS Geofields (T) Limited invites eligible, qualified and experienced Tanzanian companies to express their interest in the supply of "BF Goodrich 265/70/R16 10PR Light Vehicle Tyres" at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

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Manyara residents decry high cost of school items

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

RESIDENTS of Manyara Region have expressed concern over the rising cost of school outfits for primary and secondary schools.

In separate interviews yesterday, the residents reported that traders had raised the prices of school uniforms and shoes.

A resident of Mirerani township in Simanjiro District, Maulid Juma, stated that some traders are taking advantage of the back-to-school season to boost their profits.

Juma said that last year, he bought shoes for 10,000/-, but now the price

ranges from 15,000/- to 20,000/-.

Another resident, Enoti Philipo, mentioned that traders' greed is driving up the prices of the goods, causing inconveniences among the public.

He said that traders should understand that raising the prices of school uniforms and shoes is not a good practice.

A resident from Babati town, Nur-din Salmin, noted that the cost of school supplies had increased significantly compared to last year.

"School bags are now priced from 30,000/-, and also school uniforms for both primary and secondary

students, along with notebooks, have become more expensive," Salmin said.

A uniform trader from Mirerani township in Simanjiro District, Elias Jacob, explained that the prices have not increased significantly, as they are selling secondary school trousers for 20,000/- and shorts for 10,000/-.

"The price of secondary school shirts is 10,000/-, and for primary schools, it's also 10,000/-. Shoes sell at 15,000/-," Jacob said.

He clarified that this year the prices are similar to last year, with only a slight increase, if any.

IRDP executive leaders trained about advanced leadership skills

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

THE Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) has conducted a special training to impart the executive leaders of the Institute of Rural Development Planning (IRDP) with professional leadership skills.

Held for three consecutive days, the timely training climaxed over the weekend focused to advance the leadership skills among the executive officials at the state-owned institute.

Speaking to this publication at the climax of the training, the IRDP Rector, Prof Hozen Mayaya said the received training was key to help propelling needed professionalism among the varsity's leaders.

"During the training we got opportunity to learn a number of key areas targeting to improve our daily performance, especially on leadership management as well as our engagement and working relations with other institutions," he explained.

Going into specific details, he unveiled some among the key topics emerged during the training session.

"The topics were integrity and leadership, discipline, communication at work places, as well as protocol and civilisation," he said.

Prof Mayaya added that the other areas was emotional intelligence, the vital skill which according to him need to be embraced by leaders and staff of any institution.

"This training was facilitated by the high-profile leaders from TPSC and from different ministries and public institutions in the country,"

"For instance, the Chief Executive Office at the Chief Court Administrator of the Judiciary of Tanzania, Prof. Elisante Ole Gabriel was there to train us on emotional intelligence," he informed.

The professor expressed high optimism that the training will give the leaders of the Dodoma-based collect a fresh impetus to handle their daily roles more professional.

"With the training we're also going to expand and cement of en-

agement and working ties with other colleges within and outside the country, but also with the diverse institutions that we're working with in our daily executions," he said.

The Institute of Rural Development Planning (IRDP) is a corporate body established by the Parliamentary Act No. 8 of 1980.

This Act provides a legal framework for the Institute to be established as an important national centre for provision of training, research and consultancy services in the field of rural development planning and management with main objective of alleviating qualitative and quantitative shortage of skilled manpower within the framework of sustainable capacity building directed towards reducing poverty and attaining sustainable development.

Since its establishment, IRDP has been shaping destinies in planning and research methodologies focusing on the future prosperity of its students.



TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR) FOR BASELINE SURVEY

Assignment:	Conducting A Baseline Survey
Contract Duration:	30 days
Delivery/Product:	Baseline Report
Project Title:	Empowering citizenry agencies for strengthened public financial governance and sustainable growth in Tanzania
Deadline for Bid Submission	10 th January 2025

WAJIBU – Institute of Public Accountability in collaboration with Policy Forum, is looking for a qualified individual or institution to conduct a Baseline Survey under a 30-month, European Union-funded action titled "Empowering Citizenry Agencies for Strengthened Public Financial Governance and Sustainable Growth in Tanzania". The project aims to improve systems and state actors' transparency and accountability and increase inclusive citizens' participation in public financial accountability that will be implemented in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar. The baseline study aims to assess the current status of key indicators to better understand prevailing conditions and perceptions of the programs' populations in the implementation areas and serve as a point of comparison for continuous monitoring and evaluation, and future final evaluations. Results will also be used to refine program targets, and where possible, to understand the relationship between variables to inform program design. The output of the baseline survey will be used as a benchmark to gauge project achievements during the implementation and at the end of the project.

The specific objectives of the baseline survey are;

- To assess the level of transparency and access to information related to public financial governance at the national and local level specifically at project targeted areas,
- To determine the capacities of citizenry agencies and domestic accountability actors including media on public financial governance and what role they play in promoting accountability and transparency to service delivery,
- To assess the existing platforms and opportunities for state and non-state actors to engage and debate on public finance, domestic resource mobilization and anti-corruption efforts.
- Measuring the level of public participation in public financial accountability processes including in their participation in the budget preparation and execution monitoring processes.

For further information on how to apply, Terms of Reference (ToR), and the deadline for application, kindly visit the website www.wajibu.or.tz.



CHADEMA opposition party women's wing (BAWACHA) secretary general Catherine Ruge (C) is accompanied by members when she went to submit her nomination forms for the women's wing position at the offices in Coastal Region, Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

Chinese minister to visit Namibia, the Republic of Congo, Chad and Nigeria

BEIJING

FOREIGN Minister Wang Yi will visit Namibia, the Republic of the Congo, Chad and Nigeria from January 5 to January 11, continuing the tradition of a Chinese foreign minister visiting Africa on the first overseas trip at the start of the year for 35 consecutive years, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning announced Friday.

The visit by Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, is aimed at promoting the implementation of the outcomes of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Summit, deepening practical cooperation in various fields, and promoting the sustained and in-depth development of China-Africa relations,

Mao said at a news briefing.

At the FOCAC Beijing Summit last year, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed that bilateral relations between China and all African countries having diplomatic ties with China be elevated to the level of strategic relations, and that the overall characterization of China-Africa relations be elevated to an all-weather China-Africa community with a shared future for the new era.

President Xi also proposed that China and Africa should jointly advance modernization characterized by six features, and pledged that China will work with Africa to take the ten partnership actions for modernization, which have received warm response from the African side, Mao added

Police pounce on over 170 people over diverse crimes

By Guardian Correspondent, Kibaha

POLICE in Coast Region have arrested 173 suspects for various offences, including trafficking government trophies, possession of illegal drugs, illicit alcohol and livestock theft.

Coast Regional Police Commander Salim Morcase confirmed that the suspects were apprehended during an opera-

tion carried out in December 2024, aimed at identifying, preventing and combating crime in the region.

Speaking to the media at his office at the weekend, Commander Morcase stated that the operation also led to the seizure of 3,687 kgs of copper wire, 3,547 L of diesel, 80 L of transformer oil, 86 L of illicit alcohol, 3 kg of bhang, 120.5 grams of miraa (khat), and six goats.

Regarding the copper wire,

Commander Morcase revealed that six suspects had been arrested, while four others remained in custody in connection with the 80 L of transformer oil seized during the operation.

He explained that there is a belief that transformer oil is heavy and when used for frying chips or fish, it does not burn off quickly, which has contributed to the ongoing theft of the oil.

"This oil is believed to be

used for frying chips or fish because it does not burn off quickly, which is why the theft continues. We promise to put an end to this practice, and it will no longer continue in our region," he said.

Concerning government trophies, Commander Morcase disclosed that four suspects were arrested with eight elephant tusks, estimated to weigh 67 kg, five heads, 53 legs of a wild animal known as a tohe, and eight

pieces of gazelle meat weighing 32 kg. Additionally, Morcase reported that in December, 125 cases were brought to court, with 47 successful outcomes. Two out of five cases of gender-based violence also resulted in convictions.

In one gender-based violence case, a suspect found guilty was sentenced to life imprisonment for rape and sodomy, while another received a 20-year prison sentence for sexual harassment.

High Commission of India
Dar es Salaam

TENDER NOTICE

The High Commission of India, Dar es Salaam invites bids from eligible firms for Purchase of Books for High Commission of India in Tanzania.

The relevant details and list of Books to be supplied are available on the Mission's Website: www.hcindiatz.gov.in

Interested firms may submit their bids up to 27th Jan, 2025, 1700 hrs.



Expression of Interest (EOI) for the "Provision of Lubricant Management and the Supply of Oils and Greases" to AUMS Geofields (T) Limited operations at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

AUMS Geofields (T) Limited invites eligible, qualified and experienced Tanzanian companies to express their interest in the "Provision of Lubricant Management and the Supply of Oils and Greases" at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

1. Schedule and deadline for submission

The contract (FPA) is to be awarded through a competitive tender process. If your company wishes to be considered for pre-qualification, please submit an EOI by email to ContractsTanzania@aumsg.com by not later than 16:00HRS Local Time on 11th January 2025 quoting "EOI Supply of "Provision of Lubricant Management and the Supply of Oils and Greases" in the subject line of your email.

Please submit an EOI on your company letterhead with the following mandatory information:

- Company Profile, Shareholders IDs, directors list, organogram, number of employees with a foreign to national ratio indicated
- Valid tax Compliance, VAT registration & TIN certificates
- Certificate of Incorporation, Valid Business Permit/Licenses
- Summary of Court proceedings (pending and completed), court judgments and/or insolvency/bankruptcy proceedings if any, against your company and or any of your shareholders, directors and/or senior leadership/management team over the last 3 years.
- Occupational, Health, Safety and Environmental Requirements
- Trade references, demonstrated examples of lubricant management services in Tanzania, sample purchase orders and current relevant contracts, completion certificates for "The Provision of Lubricant Management and Supply of Oils and Greases".
- Key Employees CV & Certificates
- Distribution points in Tanzania or list of satellite offices if applicable
- Compliance to Tanzania's Mining Local Content Requirements as per the Mining Local Content Regulations 2018.

Any response received beyond 16:00HRS Local Time on 11th January 2025 shall not be considered.

2. Assessment criteria

The mandatory information requested at paragraph 1 will be evaluated and scored to shortlist pre-qualified companies.

The pre-qualification of any company submitting an EOI shall be at the sole discretion of AUMS Geofields (T) Limited.

The bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the companies EOI. AUMS (T) Ltd shall not be responsible or liable for any costs incurred regardless of the conduct or outcome of the bidding process

For more information on African Underground Mining Services and its operations please refer to the following website www.aumsg.com.

AN AUMS & GEOFIELDS JV

AUMS IS PART OF PERENTI LIMITED



Expression of Interest (EOI) for the "Supply of Industrial Hardware and Mining Consumables" in the following material categories to AUMS Geofields (T) Limited operations at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

AUMS Geofields (T) Limited invites eligible, qualified and experienced Tanzanian companies to express their interest in the "Supply of Industrial Hardware and Mining Consumables" at Geita Gold Mine in Tanzania.

1. Schedule and deadline for submission

The contract (FPA) is to be awarded through a competitive tender process. If your company wishes to be considered for pre-qualification, please submit an EOI by email to ContractsTanzania@aumsg.com by not later than 16:00HRS Local Time on 11th January 2025 quoting "EOI Supply of "Supply of Industrial Hardware and Mining Consumables" in the subject line of your email.

Please submit an EOI on your company letterhead with the following mandatory information:

- Company Profile, Shareholders IDs, directors list, organogram, number of employees with a foreign to national ratio indicated
- Valid tax Compliance, VAT registration & TIN certificates
- Certificate of Incorporation, Valid Business Permit/Licenses
- Summary of Court proceedings (pending and completed), court judgments and/or insolvency/bankruptcy proceedings if any, against your company and or any of your shareholders, directors and/or senior leadership/management team over the last 3 years.
- Occupational, Health, Safety and Environmental Requirements
- Trade references, sample purchase orders and current relevant contracts, completion certificates for "The Supply of Industrial Hardware and Mining Consumables".
- Key Employees CV & Certificates
- Distribution points in Mwanza or Geita, satellite offices if applicable
- Compliance to Tanzania's Mining Local Content Requirements as per the Mining Local Content Regulations 2018.

Any response received beyond 16:00HRS Local Time on 11th January 2025 shall not be considered.

2. Assessment criteria

The mandatory information requested at paragraph 1 will be evaluated and scored to shortlist pre-qualified companies.

AUMS Geofields (T) Limited reserve the right not to sole source all the tendered materials but to allocate according to criteria to the relevant successful tendering companies.

The pre-qualification of any company submitting an EOI shall be at the sole discretion of AUMS Geofields (T) Limited.

The bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the companies EOI. AUMS (T) Limited shall not be responsible or liable for any costs incurred regardless of the conduct or outcome of the bidding process.

For more information on African Underground Mining Services and its operations please refer to the following website www.aumsg.com.

AN AUMS & GEOFIELDS JV

AUMS IS PART OF PERENTI LIMITED

Ask how your tax cash is spent, residents told

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

MALINYI District Council Executive Director, Khamis Katimba, has encouraged area residents to inquire how funds collected by authorities are spent within the council without fear.

Speaking at a meeting with development stakeholders at the weekend, Katimba emphasized that every penny collected and spent must have a clear explanation.

Katimba made the statement after Malinyi District Commissioner, Sebastian Waryuba, who was the guest of honour at the meeting, advised that funds collected should be disclosed to the public.

Waryuba began by commending the director for increasing council revenues, having collected 82 percent of local income target within just six months (July - December 2025).

"I am pleased to see this swift revenue collection without any con-

flicts. These changes indicate that we are on the right path," he said, adding, "DED, this momentum should not slow down. You have earned our trust with your strategies. Stand firm and our collections will continue to rise but ensure transparency in how they are used."

Responding to Waryuba's statement, Katimba assured residents that if they see how their money is being used, it will encourage them to pay taxes voluntarily.

"I promise you that your role is to pay taxes and then come and hold me accountable for how your money is spent. I encourage you to continue paying taxes and hold me accountable," he said. "My office is open to all, and I welcome everyone, even individually. Come and ask me how much we've collected and how much we've spent—I'll tell you. The office belongs to all citizens; we are simply here to serve."

Chairman of Malinyi

District Council, Pius Mwelase, praised the council's achievements, noting that it had never before collected 82 percent of local revenue in just six months.

"This has never happened before. The innovative strategies introduced by our director have brought significant improvements. We are proud of this progress and believe we still have ample time to collect more funds," he said.

Council Planning Officer Richard Sanga reported that by the end of the financial year 2023/24, the council aimed to collect 22.3bn/- but had collected 20.4bn/- . For the financial year 2024/25, the council set a target of 26.7bn/-, with 4.3bn/- expected from internal revenue. After six months, 3.56bn/- in local revenue has been collected.

During the discussion of the council's Draft Development Plan and Budget for the 2025/2026 period, stakeholders raised several areas that require attention.



Mwanza city resident collects catfish to prepare for sale yesterday after harvesting, thanks to modern cage farming method employed in Lake Victoria Zone. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Tanga to honour literary genius Shaaban Robert via competition

By Guardian Correspondent, Tanga

AUTHORITIES in Tanga Region are set to honour the late literary icon Shaaban Robert by initiating the Shaaban Robert Competition for primary and secondary school pupils in the region.

Tanga Regional Com-

missioner Dr. Batilda Burian unveiled the plan here at weekend when speaking during a memorial festival celebrating the birth of the legend held at Tanga Regional Commissioner's Office. She stated that the initiative aims to honour his contributions to Kiswahili literature.

The conference includ-

ed elders who shared stories of Shaaban Robert's life and philosophy, public servants, entrepreneurs and pupils from Pongwe Secondary School who performed various poems related to the themes of the conference.

The RC explained that awards given to winners of writing competition

to encourage writing, reading and understanding the philosophy of Shaaban Robert.

"This will take place every year, seeking and preserving copies of books and poems with themes similar to the goals of this conference in the regional library," she said.

Earlier, language re-

searcher Bakari Nauma, who read profile of Shaaban Robert, highlighted his upbringing, education and work in various fields such as Customs Department in Pangani District where he showcased his writing talent as well as his work in Wildlife Department in Mpwapa and Tanga

Regional Commissioner's Office.

Pongwe Primary School's teacher Mussa Mayombe said that many pupils with different talents, including poetry, participate in various activities, adding that there is need to identify and nurture talents.

Kiswahili teacher at the school Omari Kombo em-

phasized the importance of living by Shaaban Robert's philosophy, noting that his ideas remain relevant today. He cited Robert's book Kusadikika in which Robert describes a wonderful country where people do not lie, women give birth to twins and no mother is accused of any wrongdoing—an ideal world that

Robert envisioned. "We have many leaders currently but Shaaban Robert once said that untrained talent can bring disaster. Many people have talents but misuse them because they were not guided by parents or teachers. Therefore, the nation must be led by people with talent who are well trained," he said.



Government Spokesperson and Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports Permanent Secretary Gerson Msigwa addresses editors and journalists about preparations for the African Heads of State Energy Conference to be held in Dar es Salaam later this month. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

TASAF highlights opportunities in clean cooking energy options

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Korogwe

TANZANIA Social Action Fund (TASAF) in Korogwe Town Council, Tanga Region, has urged beneficiaries of the Productive Social Safety Net (PSSN) to explore various opportunities in clean cooking energy solutions.

Grace Kweka, TASAF Facilitator for Korogwe Town Council, highlighted several key opportunities during a workshop for beneficiaries at Lwengera-Darajani.

The opportunities include development of household-level clean cooking energy projects such as producing charcoal from waste (briquettes), generating electricity from biogas and creating improved stoves

to reduce reliance on charcoal and firewood.

Kweka also encouraged participants to consider becoming agents for selling gas cylinders and stoves to promote clean energy. The initiative not only boosts household income but also provides more time for economic activities.

"Beneficiaries can get involved in projects like planting fruit trees and timber trees which serve as a source of income while improving air quality and protecting the environment," Kweka said.

She further emphasized that those who attend basic economic skills training should be at the forefront of developing projects that promote clean cooking energy.

Additionally, Kweka urged beneficiaries to spread awareness about the benefits of clean cooking energy within their communities. She recommended that they prepare production plans related to clean cooking energy to qualify for production subsidies.

In a separate address to beneficiaries at Mahenge area in Kwamndolwa Ward, Elizabeth Mwanyala, TASAF's Monitoring Officer for Korogwe District and Town Council, emphasized the importance of sustainability within saving and investment groups.

Mwanyala stressed that the groups should not be dissolved even when profits are made. Instead, profits should be shared and the groups should continue saving.

"At the end of the year, you can share part

of the savings but don't dissolve the group. The goal is for the group to continue growing so that one day you'll have millions instead of starting from zero every year," she said.

"These are not Village Community Banks (VICOBAs); they are saving and investment groups designed to grow household economies."

Rehema Letara, TASAF Coordinator for Korogwe Town Council, reported that for September and October 2024 payments, 1,076 households received a total of 33,466,000/- . Of this amount, 23,206,000/- was paid electronically to 743 households while 10,260,000/- was distributed in cash to 333 households.

Over 9m children out of school in Ethiopia due to disasters-UNICEF

ADDIS ABABA

MORE than nine million children are out of school across Ethiopia due to man-made and natural disasters, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has disclosed.

In its latest Ethiopia Humanitarian Situation Report released late Thursday, UNICEF said that more than 6,000 schools have been closed across the East African country due to climate shocks and conflicts.

The report further noted that over 10,000 schools, representing 18 percent of schools across the country, have been damaged by conflicts and climate shocks, further reducing the availability of safe and functional learning spaces for children.

Highlighting the ongoing conflict situations in different parts of Ethiopia, particularly in the country's Amhara and Oromia regions, UNICEF said the education sector has been "devastated." Over nine million children are currently out of school due to conflicts, natural disasters, and displacement.

The Ethiopian government often blamed "extremist groups" for obstructing vital services, such as education and development initiatives, in areas where armed groups are present.

Meanwhile, UNICEF warned that funding shortfall is hampering its humanitarian response in Ethiopia as the country encounters mounting humanitarian needs.

"UNICEF continues to appeal for support to ensure that children and their caregivers receive lifesaving support in 2024 and beyond," it said.



Residents of Muoji Village in Musoma Rural Constituency, Mara Region, work to improve the environment of a new secondary school in the area yesterday. The institution is scheduled to officially open this month. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

Recurring earthquakes concern Ethiopians as experts want calm

ADDIS ABABA

RECURRING earthquakes around parts of Ethiopia have sparked concern among the public as experts and authorities called for calm and vigilance.

Latest data from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) showed that at least 10 earthquakes have occurred in central Ethiopia over the past two days, with the majority impacting areas around Awash Fentale and Metehara towns.

A series of earthquakes struck near Awash town during the past day alone. One such tremor, with a magnitude of 5 that jolted 63 km NNE of the town at 21:18:26 GMT on Thursday, was among the most significant seismic activities recorded during the past weeks. The epicentre, with a depth of 10 km, was initially determined to be at 9.53 degrees north latitude and

40.35 degrees east longitude, according to the USGS.

Video clips shared online by citizens show asphalt roads cracking due to the recurring tremors, with fissures widening over time.

As frequent earthquakes of varying magnitudes continue to impact the Awash Fentale mountain area since late September 2024, the public is being urged to follow safety protocols, given the unusual nature of such events in the East African country.

The majority of the successive earthquakes in the area were of moderate intensity with a few reaching magnitudes of 5 or higher. The quakes caused repeated tremors that were felt as far as the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, approximately 150 km to the west, and surrounding areas. This unusual sequence of events has sparked concern among residents both in the city and beyond.

Following the frequent incidents, experts and authorities advised citizens to stay calm and vigilant, especially in areas known for seismic activity, since the region is located within the tectonically active East African Rift system.

Speaking to the national broadcaster Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Elias Lewi, director of Geophysics and Space Science at Addis Ababa University, confirmed that the Awash Fentale area has experienced recurrent seismic activities over the past weeks.

The expert highlighted that these recurring earthquakes are mostly driven by continuous tectonic activity in the region, particularly movements within basaltic rock formations. He also stated that these geological processes would likely sustain the frequency of seismic events in the area.

Ethiopia generates \$216m from horticulture exports

ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIA has earned more than \$216 million from exports of horticultural commodities during the first five months of the current fiscal year, the country's Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration has disclosed.

The East African country exported 39,225 tonnes of flowers to the international market, earning over \$186 million during the first five months of the current Ethiopian 2024/2025 fiscal year, which started on July 8. Flower exports secured the largest share of the total revenue generated from the export of horticultural commodities during the reported period, the ministry disclosed in a statement issued Friday.

The country also exported 71,305 tonnes of fruits and vegetables to the international market, generating more than \$30 million.

The ministry said the

Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, and the United Kingdom represent the top three destinations of Ethiopia's flower exports, while the top three vegetable export destinations are Somalia, Djibouti, and the Netherlands.

According to recent data from the ministry, Ethiopia has generated some \$2.63 billion in export revenue during the first five months of the current fiscal year amid strong performance in major agricultural export commodities.

Export horticulture is booming and the country is now the second largest supplier and exporter of highest quality flowers from Africa. Currently, close to 130.

The main sources of horticultural raw materials for the processing plants are the state farms. Assorted vegetables, cut-flowers, fruits and triple concentrate tomato paste are the main exportable horticultural commodities.

China's development great opportunity for Africa, says former Nigerian president

By Olatunji Saliu, Abuja

CHINA'S remarkable transformation over recent decades is "a source of inspiration and opportunity for Nigeria and Africa," former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo has said, emphasizing the potential for strategic collaboration to accelerate mutual growth and development.

In a recent interview, Obasanjo expressed great admiration for China's development while reflecting on his recent visit to the country in October 2024.

"China changes every time you go there," he said, underscoring the country's "capacity for innovation and adaptation," which he believes Nigeria can learn from.

"If it has been done in China, it can be done elsewhere," the former president said.

Obasanjo said there are many lessons Nigeria can take from China's development, highlighting China's unique role in fostering global peace, shared prosperity, strategic partnerships, and poverty alleviation.

He added that these achievements demonstrate China's ability to transform its society and its potential to contribute to global development.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

APPROVED BY THE CAPITAL MARKETS AND SECURITIES AUTHORITY (CMSA)

AZANIA MEDIUM TERM NOTE PROGRAMME: TRANCHE 1: ISSUANCE PUBLIC OFFER RESULTS AND ALLOCATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Azania Bank PLC ("Issuer") hereby announces that the Capital Markets and Securities Authority ("CMSA"), in exercising its mandate under the Capital Markets and Securities Act (Chapter 79 of the Laws of Tanzania) on 26th September 2024 approved the issuance of Azania Bond ("Bondi Yangu") worth TZS 30 billion (with a green shoe option of up to TZS 15,000,000,000) being the 1st tranche of Azania Bank Plc Medium Term Note (MTN) Programme worth Tanzanian Shillings One Hundred Billion (TZS 100,000,000,000).

STATUS OF THE PUBLIC OFFER
Azania Bondi Yangu Initial Public Offer was opened on 04th November 2024 and closed on 6th December 2024. Following the closing date, Azania is pleased to announce that it received applications for Notes worth Tanzanian Shillings 63,267,980,000, compared to the plan of Tanzanian Shillings 30,000,000,000, representing a success rate of 210.9 percent.

APPROVAL TO INCREASE THE GREENSHOE OPTION AMOUNT
Azania Bank Plc received approval from CMSA to increase size of the green shoe option from Tanzania Shillings 15,000,000,000 to Tanzania Shillings 33,267,980,000. Following approval from CMSA, the Bank has accepted all bids received for Bondi Yangu worth Tanzanian Shillings 63,267,980,000. This represents a subscription level of 210.9%.

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC OFFER
A summary of the key result statistics of the offer (the "Offer") are set out below:

Issuer	Azania Bank PLC
Description	Bondi Yangu
Tenor	4 years
Status	Senior, unsecured
Tranche Number	01
Series Number	01
Bond Code	AZANIA/FXD01/2024/01
Issue Date	06 January 2025
Total Amount Offered (TZS)	30,000,000,000 (with a Green shoe Option of 15,000,000,000)
Total Bids Received (TZS)	63,267,980,000
Performance rate (%)	210.9%
The total amount accepted (TZS)	63,267,980,000
Interest rate	12.5% per annum payable quarterly in arrears
Issue price	Par
Minimum denomination	TZS 500,000 (with integral multiples of TZS 10,000)
Use of proceeds	The net proceeds from the Notes shall be used by the issuer to: 1. Finance Eligible Loans in line with Azania's strategic corporate purposes to productive economic sectors particularly group lending to women, youth and SMEs. 2. Other purposes as may be specified in the pricing supplement.

ALLOCATION POLICY
Given the subscription level of 210.9% the Bank has:
i. Decided to exercise the Green shoe option, and;
ii. Accepted all valid applications received making the amount available for allocation sum up to TZS 63,267,980,000. Applicants will therefore receive 100% allocation.

CLARIFICATIONS
In need of any further clarifications, applicants are advised to consult their stockbroker or Azania-Bank (email: info@azaniabank.co.tz or +255 784 701818 or 0800 110210) regarding your application.

SALIENT DATES
Please see below the salient dates following the offer close:

Description	Date
Notification Date (via email/telephone)	5.00 pm on Day 06 January 2025
Issue Date	Monday 06 January 2025
Maturity Date	Monday 06 January 2029
Interest Payment Dates	06 April, 06 July, 06 October and 06 January
Listing date	Wednesday 15 January 2025

Issued by:
Managing Director
Azania Bank PLC,
Sam Nujoma Road,
P.O Box 32089,
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Uwekezaji Wenye Tija

DATE: 06 January 2025
This announcement has been issued with the approval of the Capital Markets and Securities Authority pursuant to the Capital Markets and Securities (Advertisements) Regulations, G.N. No. 15 of 1997.

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MONDAY 6 JANUARY 2025

**Taking A New Look
At The News
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Dollar price decline not all rosy for importers, look at street quotations

ANYONE keen on rules of market economy would definitely have been aware that banning the use of dollar in local transactions to lower its value would provide at best a temporary respite. Central bank officials were effusive with assurances that things will now be well, and at midweek that seemed to be precisely the case when fuel price caps for January were quoted lower than December. Regulators were quick to credit the slide to lower price of the dollar in the local market.

Now the other side of the coin is starting to emerge, as business-people, especially those involved in imports, express concern about persistent difficulty in accessing US dollars. There is clearly felt appreciation of the depreciation of the dollar against the local currency, but the clincher is the relative disappearance of the US currency in forex shops. Depending on the forex trader interviewed, there are huge variations in what a bank may sell from one day to another, unreliably.

Minimal investigations show that for some traders, buying dollars from private individuals remains the most reliable option, although it comes at a higher cost. A local bank employee said that dollar availability had slightly improved, with sales of up to \$5,000 per day compared to just \$1,000 six months ago. Yet, many importers don't appear to appreciate the change, and banks have others to blame, for instance, citing the habits of big businesspeople in the tourism sector. They suspect that such folks hoard US dollars instead

of depositing the same in banks as should be the case.

What the banker did not say was that this was to be expected, that when a vital commercial item is put beyond routine use for market needs, a black market is likely to arise, where people purchase large amounts of a supposedly depreciating dollar; when it is not available, it is evident the price will rise, if not at banks at least in the streets as it is the case now. Covertly the dollar costs less but banks sell too few dollars at official rates, so one finds a seller, holding a beer and dollars.

The issue is how this can be sorted out by the central bank, how the dollar can come down for everyone rather than come down in a sporadic way, then importers have to purchase from the back door. This way, all imports not backed by government agencies like fuel in bulk risk shooting up, leading to what is known as 'imported inflation.' It can at times be used to click to life the localization of industry, for instance assembling cars in Kibaha rather than importing them from Japan, etc. It is a work just starting.

The issue is whether what the central bank is doing is part of a wider inward looking economic strategy where open markets as such are limited to things we don't produce, and dollar scarcity leads to local manufacturing to blossom. As these measures are often decided behind closed doors, not arising from an electoral platform where objectives are clear and deeply analysed in public, the strategic design and likely result of the current monetary stance, short or long term, is guesswork

Renewing ties between Ethiopia, Somalia relief for EAC member states, economies

REPORTS have it that Ethiopia and Somalia have agreed to work together on a multinational force battling insurgents, indicating a further reduction of diplomatic tensions between the two countries. The development is another shift in chain of events in the region and neighbouring countries, as Türkiye for instance has played a high profile facilitating role in the recent rapprochement between the two Horn of Africa states. It was partially in the wake of its successes in virtually coordinating the march on Damascus to end civil war there since 2011.

It is hard to say who made the greater bargain but there is reason to believe that the Turkish authorities did a commendable job obtaining a rethinking by Mogadishu on what are its principal strategic needs at the moment. The rulers there have picked a quarrel with Ethiopia on the latter's accord with the de facto authorities in Somaliland, a renegade province of Somalia, on building a port access facility. The need arises from the loss of the coastal zone of Eritrea, forcibly joined into Ethiopia in 1962 by the then Emperor Haile Selassie, touching off a 30 odd years of civil war until it finally let go in 1991. Other regions sought autonomy as well, destabilizing the state fighting civil wars.

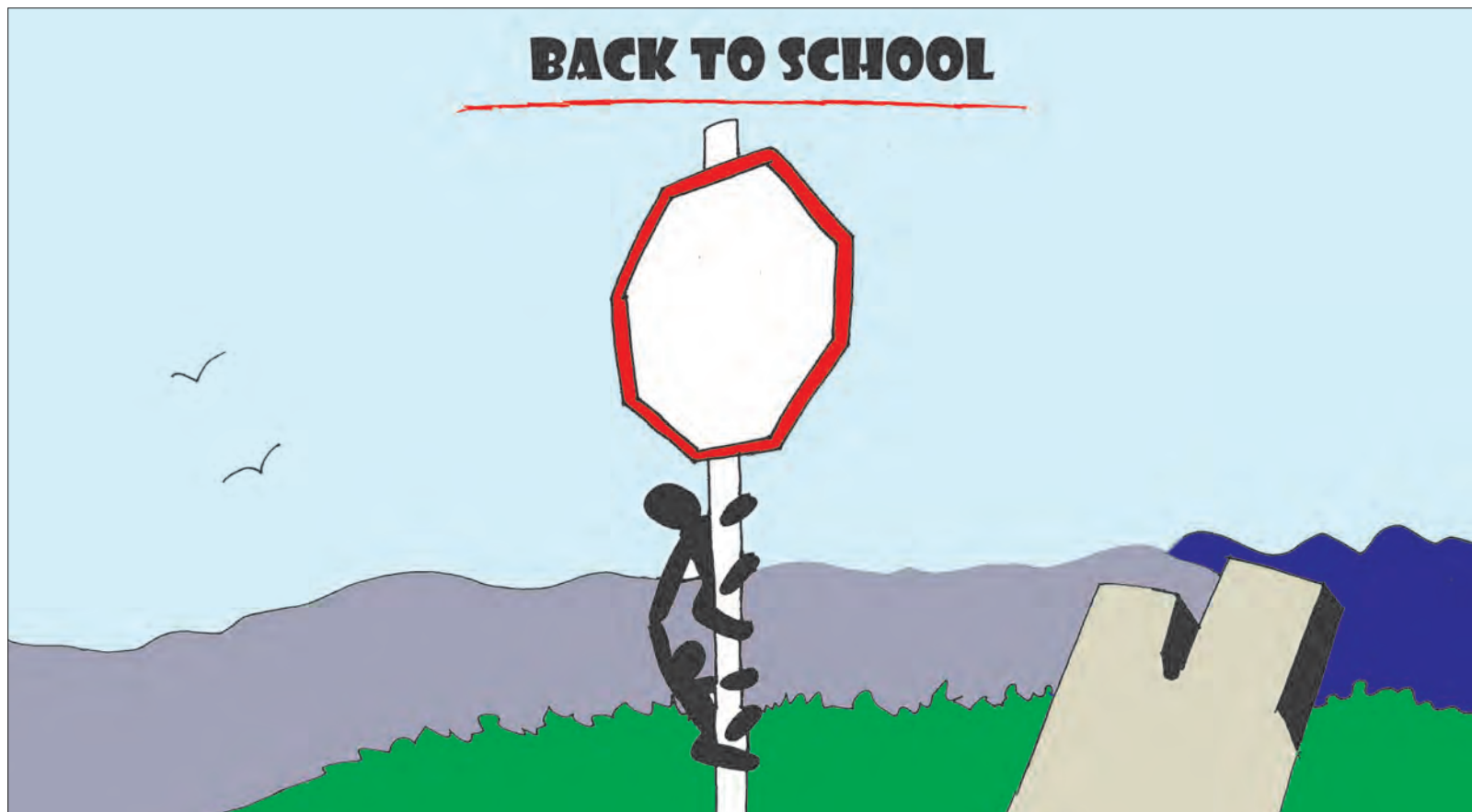
In that case there is plenty that Somalia can understand when Turkish diplomacy as well as Ethiopian leaders insist that it should focus on eliminating internal threats seeking to destabilize the state. As a matter of fact, once Somalia itself gets rid of civil war, it is easy to reach economic union and a modicum of autonomy rather than statehood as such, which is basically what Somalia was objecting to see visualized. That means they postpone the final

settlement' issues and focus on co-operation with Ethiopia, which implicitly means they take up the port pact as Somalia's initiative, with the quid pro quo of helping to check insurgents. It must indeed be said that many in Africa were somewhat surprised by the rapidity with which the two countries reached those accords, after a diplomatic shuttle of sorts by Turkish diplomats between the two capitals. For members of the East African Community, this is more than a welcome gesture, as renewed conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia was lingering danger on the doorsteps of EAC cohesion.

This development similarly uplifts chances of greater consensus and integration efforts of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) where Ethiopia is vital participant. And by extension, reaching accords between Ethiopia and Somalia by prioritizing what is essential indirectly suggests that differences between Egypt and Ethiopia on the use of Nile water after Ethiopia moved to build a major hydropower dam can be resolved as well. The sky is the limit when each country focuses on what is essential and recognizes the legitimate needs of other states.

Interestingly enough, these negotiations have been carried out by and large within the vicinity of the United Nations Security Council, where Somalia has lately joined as non-permanent member, a rotating function. As many as 7,000 Ethiopian troops were deployed in Somalia under a bilateral accord, apart from an African Union contingent there.

Ditching this kind of support while insurgents at times keep striking the capital was a pain in the neck, thus the port agreement need not be allowed to stand in the way of stabilizing Somalia. As William Shakespeare once put it, all's well that ends well.



Remembering Jimmy Carter : A UN perspective

By Kul Chandra Gautam

JIMMY Carter, whose visit to Liberia and Nigeria in 1978 was the first trip to Sub-Saharan Africa by any US president, was the longest-living leader in American history. He served one term in the White House - between 1977 and 1981 - and continued his activism on the international stage and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

He and his wife Rosalynn Carter established a major hub for diplomacy and conflict resolution in the form of The Carter Center - which advocates for democracy and human rights around the world.

A major focus during his presidency was ending white rule in Rhodesia and helping to bring about Zimbabwe independence. "I spent more effort and worry on Rhodesia than I did on the Middle East," Carter told Nancy Mitchell, as recounted in her 2023 article for The Conversation. After leaving office, "Carter focused more on sub-Saharan Africa than on any other region of the world" including a campaign by The Carter Center's that led to "almost total eradication of Guinea worm and saved an estimated 80 million Africans from this devastating disease", as well as election monitoring and conflict resolution initiatives across the continent.

The former American President Jimmy Carter was a man of peace and principles. He presided over a tumultuous period in American history from 1977 to 1981, working hard to restore trust in government after the Watergate scandal and the divisive era of the Vietnam War. He brokered a landmark peace deal between Israel and Egypt and negotiated a historic treaty to hand over the Panama Canal to Panama.

Carter, a champion of human rights both in the US and around the world, passed away at 100 on December 29, 2024.

More than any recent American president, Carter pressed gently but firmly on autocratic regimes worldwide to respect human rights and the rule of law. When he led the country



Former US President Jimmy Carter and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter in Nasarawa North, Nigeria, measure a little girl's height to gauge the accurate medication needed to prevent schistosomiasis, a silent and destructive parasitic infection that leads to poor growth and impaired learning in children.

with immense moral authority, it encouraged many human rights advocates, while dictators worried about the US sanctions.

At home, Carter got many progressive legislations passed in areas of consumer protection, welfare reforms and the appointment of women and minorities in America's judiciary. However, he had difficulties managing the US economy, the Iran hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. And in the 1980 Presidential election, when he lost his bid to Ronald Reagan, his active political career came to an end.

But he didn't retire to a comfortable life, rather, he embarked on a noble mission as one of the world's highly respected elder statesmen, deeply committed to promoting democracy and human rights. He founded the Carter Center with a motto of "Waging Peace, Fighting Disease and Building Hope".

With his team, he worked tirelessly to help resolve conflicts, monitor elections and improve human health through campaigns to eliminate several neglected diseases afflicting the poorest people worldwide, particularly in Africa.

"For his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights and to promote economic and social development," Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

Links with UNICEF and Nepal

Carter greatly admired UNICEF Executive Director

James Grant and strongly supported the UNICEF-led global child survival and development campaign. Further, the organisation was a key partner in the Carter-led global campaign to eradicate a debilitating disease called dracunculiasis or Guinea-worm disease.

My first substantive meeting with Carter took place on August 3, 1995, at an event in Washington, DC, organised jointly by the Carter Center, USAID, WHO and UNICEF to mark the 95 percent reduction in Guinea worm cases worldwide and to recommit to its total eradication. I had a long and fruitful discussion with Carter on strengthening our collaboration in the global campaign to eradicate Guinea-worm disease.

In February 2004, I joined President Carter and WHO Director-General JW Lee on a 3-day field visit to observe and advocate for Guinea-worm eradication in Ghana. I learned about Carter's humble personality, deep commitment to many worthy causes and impressive advocacy skills.

In our informal interactions, we often talked about Nepal.

Carter's involvement in Nepal

Carter visited Nepal twice to observe Nepal's Constituent Assembly Elections. He advised Nepali leaders, including the Election Commission, based on his worldwide experience and credibility in observing elections and conflict resolution. Over the years, the Carter Center produced several reports on Nepal dealing with issues related

to the peace process, challenges in drafting Nepal's Constitution and other important issues of social justice and equity.

I instinctively supported Carter's noble efforts to promote peace, democracy and development. However, like everybody else, Carter was human and fallible, and some aspects of the Carter Center's reports on Nepal were flawed.

In particular, Carter's hasty verdict that Nepal's first Constituent Assembly election was free, fair and peaceful ignored the fact that there was an unusually high degree of intimidation in many rural constituencies. The non-Maoist parties' candidates were prevented from campaigning, and voters were threatened with physical violence for weeks preceding the actual voting.

There were well-intentioned but inaccurate analyses of Nepal's socio-political dynamics by the Carter Center, the International Crisis Group, and even the United Nations. In their effort to appear "balanced and even-handed", they gave the undue benefit of the doubt to the progressive-sounding rhetoric of the Maoists, ignoring their violent and corrupt practices.

Carter witnessed the insincerity and duplicity of the Maoists when they initially welcomed the 2013 election for the second Constituent Assembly but then denounced it as rigged and unfair when the results showed that they had suffered a humiliating loss.

Unlike during the first

CA election, Carter took the necessary time to analyse the second CA election better. He left somewhat sobered by a deeper understanding of the Maoists' opportunistic and undemocratic nature.

A man of faith and integrity

Jimmy Carter was a deeply religious and spiritual man who often turned to his faith during his political career. But as a progressive man and defender of human rights and gender equality, he found himself at odds with his Southern Baptist Church when it opposed gender equality, citing a few selected verses from the Bible that women must be "subservient" to their husbands and must not be allowed to serve as priests.

Carter protested and took a painful decision to sever ties with his Baptist Church, saying that parts of its rigid doctrine violated the basic premises of his Christian faith. He wrote to his fellow Baptists and published an op-ed article "Losing my religion for equality".

Carter had a philosophical and spiritual perspective on death. As he suffered from multiple bouts of cancer treatment, he remarked, "I didn't ask God to let me live, but I just asked God to give me a proper attitude toward death. I found that I was absolutely and completely at ease with death".

May Carter's noble soul rest in eternal peace.

Source: Kathmandu Post, NepalKul Chandra Gautam is a distinguished diplomat, development professional, and a former senior official of the United Nations. Currently, he serves on the Boards of several international and national organizations, charitable foundations and public-private partnerships. Previously, he served in senior managerial and leadership positions with the UN in several countries and continents in a career spanning over three decades. As a former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, he has extensive experience in international diplomacy, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

Three decades of progress: Reflecting Tanzania's journey since adoption of the Beijing Declaration

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

AS Tanzania and the global community gear up to celebrate 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) is reflecting on the nation's achievements in advancing the rights of girls and women.

This milestone offers an opportunity to assess the progress made and challenges ahead in the pursuit of gender equality.

The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing marked a turning point for gender equality, laying out 12 critical areas for global action. In Tanzania, this framework was complemented by the country's Vision 2025, a strategic development plan that has been instrumental in implementing many of the commitments outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action.

A roadmap for change

The Beijing Conference identified key areas requiring urgent attention, including poverty, education and training, health, violence against women, armed conflict, economic participation, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for women's advancement, human rights, media representation, environmental issues, and the girl-child.

These priorities have guided Tanzania's efforts to improve the status of women and girls over the past three decades.

Lilian Liundi, TGNP's Executive Director had recently highlighted the significance of the Beijing Conference during a journalist orientation session in Dar es Salaam Region.

"During the Beijing Conference, African delegates played a pivotal role in shaping the global agenda for the girl child," she said adding: "They brought unique challenges faced by girls in Africa into sharp focus, highlighting critical issues



Lilian Liundi, Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) Executive Director (standing) addresses journalists on this year's celebration of three decades since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Photo: Correspondent Mary Kadoke.

such as limited access to education, the prevalence of early and forced marriages, and the impact of poverty on young girls."

She emphasized that African leaders successfully pushed for the inclusion of the girl child as a priority in the Beijing Platform for Action, recognizing that addressing the barriers faced by girls was essential to achieving broader gender equality.

Gertrude Mongella, who was the Secretary-General of the Beijing Conference, described her participation as one of the most defining moments of her life.

She stressed the importance of viewing women's issues through a developmental lens rather than dividing them into categories based on geography or economic status.

"The women's agenda must transcend distinctions and focus on addressing shared challenges as part of global development," said Mongella.

She highlighted the contrasts in domestic labour between developed and developing nations. While technology like dishwashers simplifies chores in some regions, others struggle with basic necessities like accessing water.

She argued that these dis-

parities should not overshadow the shared responsibility of addressing gender-based inequalities.

Champions of women's rights

Mary Rusimbi, a key figure in the preparations for the Beijing Conference, played a crucial role in securing funding for women's rights organizations, working closely with the Netherlands Embassy.

Her efforts ensured robust participation from Tanzania, marking a significant chapter in the nation's advocacy for gender equality.

Similarly, Ave Maria Semaka-

fu, formerly a member of the Institute of Development Studies Women in Study Groups, spearheaded coalition-building efforts. As the organizing secretary for the Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO), she coordinated activities at national, regional, and continental levels, focusing particularly on peace and security issues affecting women.

Efforts by these and other African delegates were closely tied to the 'Bringing Beijing Back Home' agenda, a framework designed to localize the commitments made in Beijing and ensure their implementa-

tion within African nations.

Leticia Mukurasi, an international gender specialist, noted significant progress in Tanzania's Vision 2050 compared to Vision 2025. "In Vision 2050, reference to gender equality appears from the first page, whereas in Vision 2025, it was introduced much later," she explained. "This shift shows a growing recognition of the need to address gender disparities as a priority."

She also pointed to tangible achievements, such as a reduction in maternal mortality rates from 602 to 104 per 100,000 live births and increased school attendance among girls. However, challenges remain, particularly in eradicating early marriages and ensuring equal access to opportunities.

Global framework for action

Before the Beijing Conference, three major global women's conferences laid the groundwork for advancing gender equality. The 1975 World Conference on Women in Mexico City produced the "Declaration of Mexico" and a global action plan.

The 1980 conference in Copenhagen emphasized women's participation in development, while the 1985 Nairobi conference resulted in the "Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies," setting clear targets for women's rights.

These efforts culminated in the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a landmark framework endorsed by 189 countries. As the world celebrates three decades of this transformative agenda, the focus remains on translating commitments into actionable change for women and girls worldwide.

TGNP's reflections ahead of the Beijing+30 celebrations underscore the need to maintain momentum in the fight for gender equality. By addressing persistent challenges and building on past achievements, Tanzania can continue to serve as a model for progress and commitment to the empowerment of women and girls.

By Telesphor Magobe

TANZANIA is endowed with a variety of insect species present in our neighbourhood and everywhere we go. But because insects are small, we tend to underestimate their nutritional value and health benefits while they are comparable with animal source-foodstuffs.

It is also the case with pelagic fish (dagaa), thinking because they are small in size they are for feeding poultry and only people who cannot afford a decent meal can eat them. Although often underestimated, studies show dagaa has high protein and lipid content and is rich in iron (8.18-10.91mg/100g), zinc (4.07-10.25mg/100g) and calcium (1556.4-1866.5 mg/100g), according to a study conducted by Kabahenda et al (2011). So, both insects and dagaa, small as they are, shouldn't be underestimated.

Another researcher, Lilian Ibengwe (2010), who conducted a study in Lake Victoria, says dagaa "is rich in essential nutrients, in high quality protein with high digestibility and made of 10 essential amino acids in desirable quantities for human consumption, essential omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins A, B, D and a variety of minerals such as calcium, potassium, phosphorus, iron, copper and iodine required for supplementing both infant and adult diets." So, the size of animal-source food doesn't matter, but the nutritional value and health benefits the food has matter most.

Thus, edible insects have high nutritional value and health benefits comparable with animal-source foodstuffs. In some countries edible insects like caterpillars have the status of a special meal for family visitors. "Insects are rich in micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) and are cheap to produce. Farming them is more environmentally friendly than farming other animal-source foods," according to Mainland Tanzania



Edible insects have high nutritional value and health benefits comparable with animal-source foodstuffs.

Nutritional value, health benefits of edible insects

Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for a Healthy Population (TB-DGs, 2023)

These guidelines were developed by the Ministry of Health, through Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC) and Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). They are instrumental in supporting food and nutrition information and educational activities in the country.

According to TB-DGs, fish, poultry, and insects are "the healthiest options among animal

source foods due to their healthy fatty acids and oils. They are associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular diseases and stroke." The guidelines suggest that edible insects are among the animal food-source foods rich in proteins, have a complete profile of amino acids, thus providing the body with higher quality protein than the plant-based proteins found in pulses, nuts, and seeds. Therefore, where malnutrition is a problem edible insects can serve as an animal-source food.

Edible insects are also a good source of iron, zinc, and vitamins A and B, which are essential for human growth and development. Not only that, edible insects "help build the framework (collagen) of bones and teeth, tendons and ligaments, and blood vessels."

Citing studies conducted by Hlongwane, Slotow and Munyai (2020) and Oibiokpa et al. (2018), TB-DGs say that "insects are good sources of complete protein and high levels of vitamin B12, iron, zinc, fibre, essential amino acids,

omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, and antioxidants. By weight, insects contain higher amounts of protein than traditional sources of protein such as meat, dairy products and seeds."

Furthermore, TB-DGs say edible insects contain between 12 grams and 77 grams of protein per 100 grams, while fish, chicken and beef contain between 13 grams and 31 grams of protein. Their protein digestibility ranges from 76-98 per cent.

Citing a study conducted by Rumpold and Schluter (2013), TB-DGs suggest that in insects such as crickets, grasshoppers and mealworms, micronutrients like copper, zinc, manganese, magnesium and calcium are more readily available for absorption than the same nutrients found in beef. "Some

Help build the framework (collagen) of bones and teeth, tendons and ligaments, and blood vessels.

insects, like crickets, contain more omega-6 and omega-3 than beef. Insects also contain comparatively high amounts of iron, zinc, manganese, selenium and phosphorus."

Other studies conducted by Hlongwane, Slotow and Munyai (2020) and Bukkens (1997) suggest that grasshoppers provide 12-73 grams of protein per 100 grams, while winged termites (kumbikumbi) provide 32-37 grams per 100 grams.

Shah et al. (2022) in their paper titled "Nutritional composition of various insects and potential uses as alternative protein sources in animal diets" suggest that so far about 2,000 species of edible insects have been recognised. They say that the edible insects' protein content ranges from 350 to 700 g/kg of [dry matter], and their protein quality is "considered outstanding, as shown by rich [amino acid] profiles and digestive properties." Dry matter is the solid part of food that remains after water is removed (the part of food which is not water).

Van Huis et al. (2021) in their paper titled "Nutritional Qualities and Enhancement of Edible Insects" suggest that the protein content of edible insects amounts to between 35.3 per cent dry matter for winged termites, and 61.3 per cent dry matter for crickets, grasshoppers, and locusts.

It suffices to say that edible insects, although not used by many people, can contribute to food security, especially in areas in which there is food scarcity. Their nutritional value and health benefits shouldn't be underestimated. Thus, public awareness is needed to ensure people know which insects are recommended for consumption to improve public diet and health.

By Stewart Prest

UNITED States President-elect Donald Trump has reiterated his apparent desire to make Canada a 51st American state, sharing a recent social media post about Canadian entrepreneur Kevin O'Leary's support of the idea.

Trump was roundly mocked for his latest trolling of Canada, but his apparent fixation is dangerous at a time when the country's Liberal government, long weakened, is in disarray following the shock resignation of Chrystia Freeland as finance minister and deputy prime minister.

In fact, in her December resignation letter, Freeland placed the country's response to Trump at the heart of her critique of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Among the many broadsides delivered to her former boss, the fact that Canada is ill-prepared to face the dire new threat of Trump's second term was a recurring theme.

Trump wasted no time inserting himself into Canada's internal affairs, calling Freeland "toxic" and continuing his running gag of referring to Trudeau as the governor of an American state rather than the leader of a sovereign nation.

The attacks are becoming routine, with Trump suggesting in another post that Canadians would "save massively on taxes and military protection" as the 51st state.

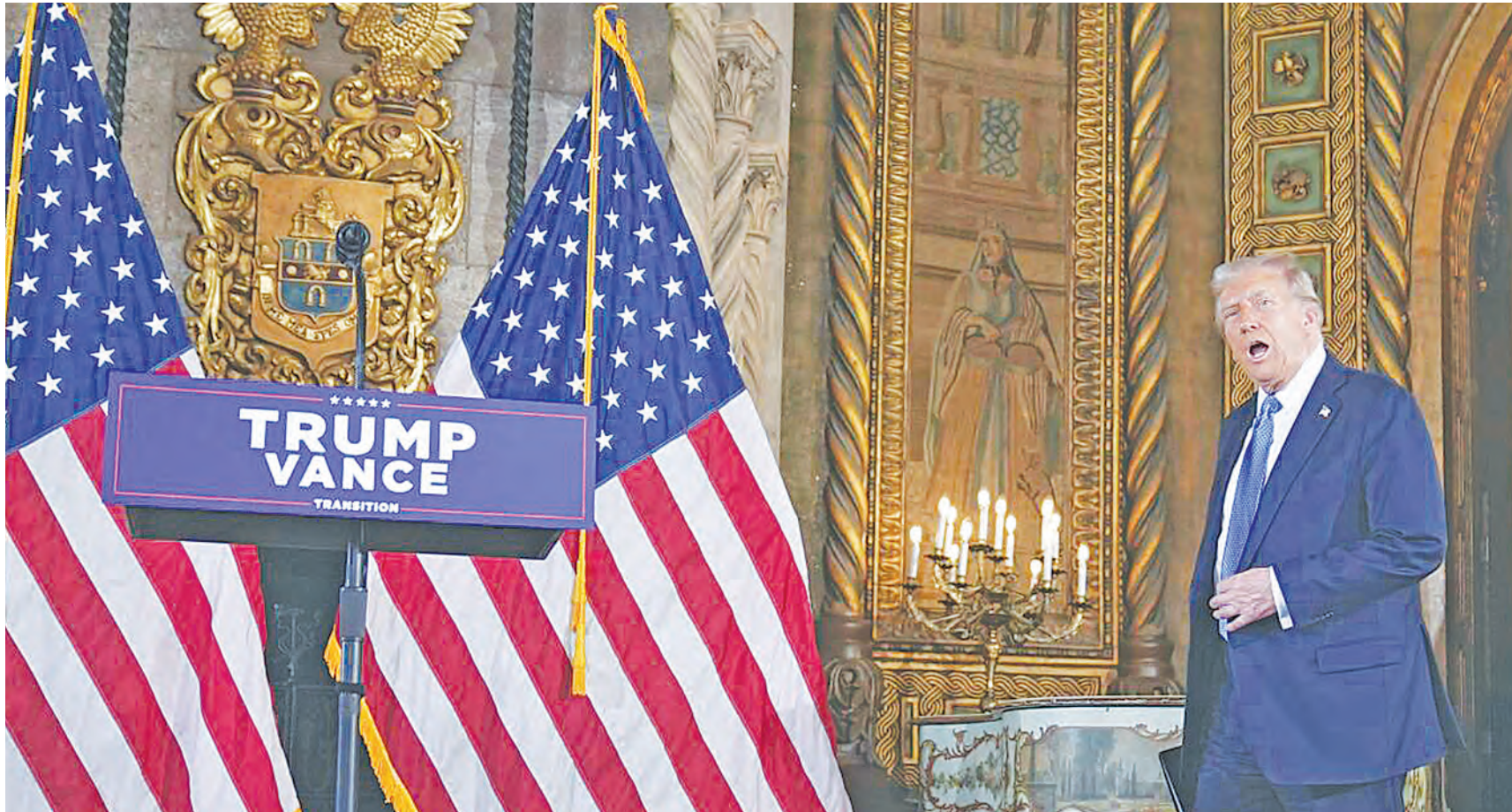
Economic and democratic decline

Whoever becomes prime minister in the weeks or months to come will have to figure out how to deal with Trump – and the existential threat he poses to Canada – in a much more effective manner than the Liberals have under Trudeau.

Trump is flagrantly disrespecting Canadian independence and, along with it, Canadian identity. He's openly challenging the very idea of Canadian sovereignty. Canada must respond accordingly.

It can be hard to fully understand the nature and the extent of threats posed by someone so willing to flaunt respected political and diplomatic conventions. His annexation threats create a constant set of multifaceted challenges to Canada's economic prosperity, democratic norms and sovereignty.

The economic dimension of his threat to Canada is now well-known.



President-elect Donald Trump arrives for a news conference at his Mar-a-Lago estate, in December 2024, in Palm Beach, Fla.

Canada's fight with Trump isn't just economic, it's existential

Trump's proposed 25 per cent tariffs on all Canadian exports to the U.S. are going to be incredibly costly to both countries, given the integration of their economies. But given the size disparity between the two countries, the impact will be bigger in Canada.

The democratic threat is also clear. Trump has shown he regards democracy not as a crucial set of rules and norms, but as a set of obstacles to overcome.

He's unable to admit defeat or even graciously accept victory. His revenge tour has begun, with lawsuits against media outlets and even against a pollster whose data suggested Democrat Kamala Harris was pulling ahead during the late days of the U.S. election campaign.

Once back in the White House, Trump has promised to use public institutions to punish opponents. A partisan U.S. Supreme Court deci-

sion last year ensures that even if his own actions are criminal, he will remain immune from prosecution.

Trump's disrespect of democratic institutions is corrosive and contagious. During his first term, experts sounded alarm bells about how he was linked to democratic decline around the world. If the U.S. president can openly challenge democratic norms, after all, what's to stop other would-be demagogues from doing the same?

A second Trump administration is likely to continue such trends, and his willingness to intervene in Canadian politics is already causing shock waves north of the border.

A threat to Canadian sovereignty

Trump's actions have repeatedly suggested he has no respect for those he views as powerless – and right now Canada fits the bill. He's

made it a running joke that Canada is not a real country, but just another American state. Nervously laughing off this threat doesn't cut it as a response.

Canada has so far acted in a manner that makes it seem as though Trump has a point. Rather than pushing back by defending Canada's strong record in managing its part of the border relationship, the government immediately promised more than \$1 billion in new border spending. Canada's leaders have failed to call out Trump's threats as the bluster of a bully.

In the face of Trump's tariff threats, Trudeau made a surprise trip to Florida to pay his respects to the president-elect and plead Canada's case, rather than observing the normal protocol and waiting for a formal post-inauguration state visit. This made Trudeau appear more like a supplicant than a visiting head

of government.

It's helpful in this situation to think of Trump as a schoolyard bully demanding someone else do his homework – in this case, defend America's borders. Such bullying doesn't end when you give in to the bully, but only when it becomes clear you won't.

Border protection is a core function of any state, and a responsibility of any American president. Trump's demand that others do it for him is both a sign of weakness and an attempt to create a scapegoat should his efforts fail.

As with any bully, if you promise to do the work for him, you'll just encourage additional torment. So when Trudeau promised to do more in exchange for an end to the bullying, he got a kick in the pants for his efforts as Trump began to taunt him about being the governor of the 51st American state.

The world is watching how Canada responds to the bully. If Canada hopes to enjoy the respect of its peers, it must show a willingness to fight for itself, its prosperity and its values. It must defend its sovereignty from those who refuse to respect it, and act assertively to maintain Canadian prosperity. That could mean a trade war.

Power imbalance

For more than a century, Canada and the U.S. have found ways to co-operate and prosper side by side despite the fact that the U.S. is a much more powerful nation. They've built alliances and agreements founded on shared norms, values and customs as part of a deep and multifaceted relationship.

None of that history seems to matter to Trump, and now American power seemingly matters more than Canadian sovereignty. This power imbalance is all the more acute given Canada's dependence on the American economy and American military might.

But Canada is not powerless. Dependency works both ways, and the deep integration of the two countries' economies makes the U.S. vulnerable as well. Shutting off power exports, as Ontario Premier Doug Ford suggests, is one course of action that would have an immediate and significant detrimental effect on the American economy. Ditto for petroleum. Energy is power in more ways than one.

The U.S. consumes millions of barrels of Canadian petroleum every day, and a tax on that fuel would be inflationary and ultimately unpopular with American voters.

Other countries stand to lose if the U.S. gets away with disrespecting Canadian sovereignty as well. If Trump refuses to respect Canadian sovereignty, no country is safe. Panama and Denmark can already attest to that.

Finding ways to creatively push back against such demands should be an imperative for any country that values its independence, and Canada needs to work with such allies.

Trump will soon be U.S. president again. But he is not and should not be treated as the president of Canada. Whoever leads Canada in the months to come has tools at their disposal to defend Canadian sovereignty, and they must be prepared to use them.

Bangladesh adopts new technology to fight wildlife crimes

By Sadiqur Rahman

THE Bangladeshi government's forest department recently added surveillance drones to their arsenal of conservation tools. Wildlife inspectors started using this technology to prepare a dragnet around a poaching hotspot with an aerial view.

In mid-November, Abdullah As Sadeque, a wildlife inspector of the forest department's Wildlife Crime Control Unit (WCCU) who is assigned to catch bird poachers, used a drone camera to a bird sanctuary in Gopalganj district in southern Bangladesh to sharpen his drone-operating skills.

One afternoon, he flew the drone over a beel – an expansive swamp comprising many shallow depressions – at the Kotalipara sub-district of Gopalganj and noticed many of bird traps in remote waterbodies.

Thin nylon threads making hundreds of looped knots were strung up in rows across several parts of the beel. Meanwhile, solar-powered loudspeakers played artificial bird calls to deceive migratory birds flying overhead. The arrangement was to trick them into landing in the waterbody. When the birds approach the nooses, it's the end for them. Sadeque said he saw their necks get caught in the loops, where they became trapped.

Sadeque recalled the day. The bed of the waterbody was uneven and the only mode of transportation could be a small-capacity country boat. "If we had tried to patrol the vast waterbody, it would have taken an entire day. We completed the task using a drone and traced the traps in about 15 minutes," Sadeque said.

During the operation, illegal



A chestnut-tailed starling in Bangladesh.

bird traps were seized, several birds were rescued, and two poachers were jailed.

Recently, the WCCU received a set of equipment from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes to combat wildlife poaching and trafficking.

Besides the drone, the equipment included wireless walkie-talkie sets, GPS trackers, high resolution DSLR

cameras, GPS-enabled action cameras, ID microchip implants for animals, ID chip readers, borescope cameras, night-vision binoculars, forensic tools and tranquilizing gear.

Countries surrounding Bangladesh have been using technology to combat wildlife crime for more than a decade now. Nepal added unmanned aerial vehicles, remote-

controlled drones equipped with cameras and GPS in 2012. The next year, India followed suit.

Wildlife deaths in Bangladesh

In November, the forest department discovered a dead elephant in Madhutila Eco Park in Sherpur district. Locals believe the elephant, separated from its herd, was electrocuted after descending from the hills towards the villages in search of food.

In February, forest department officials found a dead leopard in the Nagar River in Panchagarh district. Locals said the stray leopard died of poisoning after eating a cow carcass treated with poison by a farmer, who thought jackals had attacked his cow. Wildlife inspectors believe they could have prevented both deaths if they had modern technology earlier.

"If we had the drone earlier, we could have monitored the stray animals and taken necessary steps to rescue them," Sadeque said.

Technology: a crucial instrument to protect wildlife

Many wildlife-rich countries grappling with poaching threats regularly use technologies such as drones, acoustic traps, satellite tracking, radio frequency identification, radio collars and camera traps.

Furthermore, AI-based tools like the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) and Hostile Activity Watch Kernel (HAWK) have been effectively deployed.

Wildlife conservationists and lawyers agree that technology plays a vital role in monitoring regulation procedures, tracking wildlife movement, analyzing crime data and criminal activity, and patrol zones.

Jennifer Noll, a U.S.-based law enforcement and investigation expert, said, "It is essential for investiga-

tive purposes to allow officers to enhance their visual and auditory input. This can be accomplished through the use of night vision, scopes and listening devices."

In May 2024, Noll trained Bangladeshi wildlife inspectors to look for and capture suspects, patrol, investigate, and combat wildlife crimes using technology.

She said that the use of technology allows wildlife custodians to collect critical information to pinpoint hotspots, guide patrols, observe migration patterns that may be prime areas for poaching, and map the trafficking routes. The data accumulated by technology proves worthy of detection and wildlife crime investigation efforts.

During the COVID-19 lockdowns, illegal wildlife market operations moved online in many parts of the world, while protected areas reduced law enforcement. This increased workload for teams combating wildlife crime.

In this context, the use of technology such as camera traps and perimeter intrusion detection systems helped to deploy limited resources to address incursions and poaching activities more effectively, a policy brief says.

Bangladesh's wildlife crime control so far

Since establishing the WCCU in 2012, Bangladesh's wildlife crime controllers have rescued around 35,000 birds, more than 10,000 reptiles and around 13,000 mammals and seized around 14,500 wildlife parts.

During this period, the unit also detected more than 26,000 offenses and arrested 219 criminals for alleged poaching and trafficking wildlife.

Most of these offenses were de-

tected due to tip-offs from volunteers, including local conservation groups and law enforcement intelligence.

Sadeque said that the WCCU is connected with around 150 biodiversity conservation groups comprising more than 10,000 volunteers. The volunteers convey information to the unit via phone calls and social media, including Facebook and WhatsApp.

Whenever the volunteers spot poaching, trafficking or a wild animal in distress, they inform the WCCU. Then they are connected over phone calls with the local authorities for further action.

WCCU director Sanaullah Patwary said that telecommunication often eases the work of the understaffed WCCU. The crime control unit of the forest department also lacks vehicles to reach the hotspots quickly.

"Even a layman plays a crucial role, using a smartphone. Shared photographs of a distressed wildlife species, geolocation and information about criminal activities and criminals often help the vital investigation," Patwary said.

Since 2020, the WCCU has been added as one of the responders to the phone calls of the National Emergency Service number 999. The unit has four hotlines too.

Several YouTubers and video promoters have also joined hands with wildlife inspectors in awareness-building against wildlife crimes.

The WCCU recently added i2 software to its arsenal. This software provides communicative and meaningful infographics, incorporating input data on all the latest information related to wildlife crimes, patterns, criminal groups, and their extensive networks and hotspots.

By Guardian Reporter

EACOP becomes beacon of opportunity for Tanzania's indigenous communities

THE East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), stretching 1,443 kilometers from Hoima District, Uganda, to the Chongoleani peninsula in Tanga, Tanzania, is seen by many in Tanzania as a beacon of opportunity for the indigenous communities in the areas it traverses. However, EACOP is still striving to meet the expectations of both the two governments and the ethnic groups affected by the project.

In today's world, when such large-scale projects are implemented, both governments and investors must be extremely careful. They must listen to people, particularly the concerns of indigenous groups, who are deeply connected to their ancestral lands, farms, and grazing areas.

When people, whether indigenous or not, feel unheard, problems in project implementation arise. In some countries, project assets have been destroyed, and workers have faced fatal attacks. Rather than being a blessing, such projects can turn into a curse.

The governments of Tanzania and Uganda, along with EACOP stakeholders, have learned from these experiences. They are doing their best to avoid the unpleasant incidents seen in other countries due to arrogance and mistreatment of vulnerable communities. In response, EACOP is implementing a special program designed to empower ethnic groups to play an active role in shaping their future as the project progresses.

EACOP officials argue that as the pipeline cuts through diverse landscapes and communities, it not only promises economic growth but also offers an opportunity for marginalized ethnic groups to actively shape their futures. They claim the project has already brought substantial opportunities aimed at improving the livelihoods of these communities.

One of the most notable initiatives is the agriculture and livestock awareness program, which provides indigenous groups with valuable skills and resources to improve their economic development. This program, alongside compensation packages for Project Affected Persons (PAPs), is specifically aimed at fostering long-term prosperity.

Fatuma Msumi, EACOP's social lead manager for Tanzania, emphasised the project's commitment to enhancing the lives of indigenous communities through agricultural and livestock education.

"We are committed to empowering these communities by providing them with entrepreneurial skills and access to modern farm-



The Advisor for Indigenous Communities from the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) Project, Dr. Elifuraha (centre, wearing a suit), taking to national leaders of indigenous communities during the fourth quarterly meeting held in Arusha, which aimed at educating the leaders about the progress of the project.



I want to become an ambassador in the future and learn more about Chinese language and culture.

ing techniques. This is not just about compensation; it's about improving livelihoods for generations to come," says Msumi.

The programme includes distributing quality livestock breeds and agricultural inputs, as well as providing expert guidance on soil health, crop selection, and land preparation. This initiative follows the compensation of people impacted by the project's implementation.

EACOP is also bound by international standards and respects human rights protocols. "After compensating PAPs, we are now enhancing their lives by providing entrepreneurial skills with the help of extension officers," Msumi explains. The compensation package also includes the construction of new houses for PAPs.

However, winning the support of ethnic groups requires robust consultation evidence. EACOP engages with and listens to ethnic group leaders in quarterly meetings. One such meeting was held in Arusha, marking the fourth and final quarterly meeting of 2024.

During this meeting, Yona Shing'adeda Gidabukushida, a traditional leader of the Wata-toga community from Hanang

in Manyara Region, reported that individuals in their community had already benefited from the empowerment program. Experts sent by EACOP have helped change their farming methods, leading to better harvests.

He also noted that while farmers had attempted to introduce improved livestock breeds, this initiative did not yield the expected success. He proposed that EACOP should assist them in securing semen stored in vials for use with their herds.

Shukuru Tuke Lemoringata, a livestock officer and secretary of the Maasai traditional leaders in Kiteto District, Manyara Region, expressed that substantial success might still be years away. "Most of us are pastoralists, and we take pride in having large herds, but this tradition is an impediment. We need to embrace modern livestock farming practices. Keeping large herds hinders productivity. We must change this mindset," he argued.

Lemoringata also pointed out that livestock keepers do not always follow vaccination protocols, leading to preventable diseases. "We still have work to do," he added.

Nonetheless, Lemoringata expressed gratitude to EACOP for its continuous support in various social aspects. He praised the quarterly meetings, noting that they allow communities to receive progress updates and provide a forum for discussing challenges and opportunities.

Monica Kilandi, a cultural leader from the Maasai tribe, praised EACOP for providing a platform that allows Maasai women to voice their concerns and participate in decision-making processes.

"The project has empowered our women. Traditionally, they had limited opportunities to speak openly. Now, we are able to discuss issues that affect us, which has brought a sense of pride and inclusion," she said.

The Wa-akie community expressed appreciation for EACOP's respect for their worship sites.

"We requested the project to help us obtain a traditional land ownership title for our worship site, and they have already completed the survey. Our cultural sites are something we truly value," reported Naseliani Lembulisi Remama, a leader of the Wa-akie community.

The Wataturu community ini-

tially feared that the EACOP project would disturb their graves. "We were alarmed by the news of the upcoming EACOP project. We thought our graves would be disrespected. We discussed various scenarios," recalled Elder Shingalila Kishaida Mniri. However, after informing the EACOP team of their cultural practices, the pipeline route was adjusted to avoid disturbing their burial sites. "The graves are intact," he said. The community is grateful to EACOP.

Petro Mayomba, a leader from the Barbaing community, passionately urged delegates to unite in preserving the project's assets. "As indigenous people, we are among the beneficiaries of this project. It is essential for us to protect these assets, both for our benefit and for the nation," he explained.

This call reflects a shared recognition of the economic opportunities and a collective responsibility to ensure the sustainability of the EACOP project.

Dr. Elifuraha Laltaika, the EACOP project advisor for indigenous communities, expressed satisfaction with the project's commitment to maintaining ongoing relationships with ethnic

groups. The reason for meeting quarterly is to ensure continued dialogue and cooperation.

"For the project to succeed, it requires the active involvement of surrounding communities. The ongoing dialogue through quarterly meetings is essential to identify areas of cooperation and address any challenges or opportunities that arise," Laltaika said.

In Tanzania, the pipeline covers 1,147 kilometers, passing through eight regions and 24 districts. These regions and their respective districts are Kagera (Bukoba Rural, Muleba, and Biharamulo), Geita (Chato, Geita, Bukombe, and Mbogwe), Shinyanga (Kahama Urban), Tabora (Nzega Rural, Nzega Urban, and Igunga), Singida (Iramba, Mkalama, and Singida Urban), Dodoma (Kondoa and Chemba), Manyara (Hanang and Kiteto), and Tanga (Kilindi, Handeni Rural, Korogwe, Muheza, and Tanga Town).

The shareholders are TotalEnergies, which holds 62 per cent, while the oil development companies (TPDC - Tanzania and UPDC - Uganda) each own 15 per cent, and China's CNOOC holds 8 per cent of the project.

Relief as two villages in Tanga receive clean and safe water

By Correspondent Mohamed Hammie

KWAMSISI and Kwakombo, villages in Tanga Region long were now accessing to clean and safe water, says Dr. Rafik Hirji, senior water resources specialist at the World Bank. This is part of the remarks on President Samia Suluhu Hassan's directive to establish a piped water supply system in Kwamsisi village.

Dr. Hirji explained that both Kwamsisi and Kwakombo have faced critical water challenges for decades. Located 6-7.5 kilometers from Korogwe along the Segera road, the villages have depended on aging groundwater wells from the 1980s. Many of the wells are now either dysfunctional or yield saline water, leaving residents with a scarce and unreliable water supply.

Intrigued by Dr. Hirji's extensive contributions to Tanzania's water sector, I reached out to learn more. This article is the first in a series exploring his work in water resource management in Tanzania and beyond.

Born in Lindi Region, Dr. Hirji is a globally recognised authority on water resources, environmental management, and climate-related issues. His journey began with pivotal roles in designing water systems in



Tanzania, including for Mto wa Mbu, Mwanga, and Aru-

sha municipalities, while addressing the region's high

fluoride levels that posed severe health risks.

Dr. Hirji holds an MSc in Environmental Engineering

and a PhD. in water resources planning from Stanford University.

Following his studies, he worked on water planning and flood control in California before joining the World Bank in 1993.

Over his 24-year tenure there, he spearheaded numerous water and environmental initiatives across the globe, including two decades of impactful work in Tanzania.

A severe drought in the early 1990s exposed the fragility of Tanzania's water systems, leading to conflicts between agriculture and hydropower and prolonged power shortages. Dr. Hirji, as part of the World Bank and DANIDA team, guided a comprehensive study—Rapid Water Resources Assessment (RWRA)—to address the challenges.

The RWRA highlighted a lack of policies and institutional capacity to manage water resources, prioritizing four key basins: Pangani, Rufiji, Wami Ruvu, and Lake Victoria. This work laid the groundwork for the 2002 National Water Policy (NAWAP), which adopted Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as a guiding framework for sustainable water use in Tanzania.

Dr. Hirji and his wife, Debo-

rah, have long advocated for Kwakombo and Kwamsisi. Deborah, who conducted anthropological research in Kwakombo in the 1980s, witnessed the villagers' struggles with salty, poorly maintained boreholes. Over the years, they supported community initiatives, raised funds, and advocated for infrastructure improvements.

The government efforts have since brought relief to these villages. In 2016, Kwakombo received a borehole water system, and in 2024, a pipeline was extended to Kwamsisi.

Dr. Hirji and fellow alumni from Muhimbili Primary and Tambaza Secondary schools have also supported rural water projects through the Al-Firdaus Charitable Foundation, which has funded 935 wells, including two recently completed in Kondoa, Kilosa District.

"President Samia's directive to improve Kwamsisi's water system is a beacon of hope. It demonstrates progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation," noted Dr. Hirji.

With continued government efforts and collaboration from partners like Dr. Hirji, Tanzania is steadily advancing toward universal access to clean water and sustainable management of its vital resources.

Unrest in Maputo sparks violence and threatening regional stability

By Adonis Byemelwa

MOZAMBIQUE stands at a dangerous crossroads, a nation grappling with fiery street protests, mounting distrust in leadership, and a fractured society.

What began as an electoral dispute has escalated into one of the gravest crises the country has faced since the end of its brutal civil war 32 years ago.

For many Mozambicans, this moment is not just about a contested presidential election—it's about years of disillusionment boiling over into rage. Since December 23, when Mozambique's top court upheld the contentious victory of Frelimo candidate Daniel Chapo, violence has spread like wildfire.

Protesters claim the election was stolen, and opposition leader Venâncio Mondlane has declared himself the true victor. At least 125 lives have been lost in just over a week of demonstrations, pushing the death toll to 252 since October's elections.

As the flames of rebellion engulf cities and villages, international observers and neighboring countries watch with alarm, fearing Mozambique's instability could ripple across the southern African region.

"This is not a typical protest—it's a cry of desperation," said Tanzanian opposition leader Zitto Kabwe during a recent interview on UTV. "Mozambique is now a litmus test for democracy in Africa. The region must intervene before it's too late."

To understand the current crisis, one must look beyond the December court ruling. For decades, Frelimo, Mozambique's ruling party since independence in 1975, has been plagued by allegations of corruption, electoral fraud, and authoritarian tendencies.

Public anger reached a breaking point following revelations of a \$2 billion debt scandal that nearly collapsed the economy and defrauded international investors.

This, combined with growing poverty, unemployment, and a perception that Frelimo elites were enriching themselves at the expense of ordinary citizens, created fertile ground for unrest.

"People feel betrayed," said Ibra-



At least 125 people have died in over a week of demonstrations, pushing the death toll to 252 since October's elections.

him Rahbi, a Tanzanian political analyst, during a UTV panel discussion. "Mozambique's democracy was already on shaky ground, but this election pushed it over the edge. The public no longer trusts the process or the institutions behind it."

Frelimo's candidate, Daniel Chapo, was declared the winner with 65% of the vote, a result met with widespread skepticism.

Independent election observers reported significant irregularities, including voter suppression, ballot tampering, and intimidation.

Mondlane, who finished second with 24%, galvanized the nation's youth by presenting himself as the face of change. His rejection of the results and fiery rhetoric have fueled the unrest, though some analysts warn that his uncompromising stance could worsen the situation.

"Electoral fraud might have been the spark, but years of systemic issues are the real fuel," said Mussa Lugete, a commentator from Tanzania's Unio sub-urb. "This is about a generation that feels robbed of its future."

The fallout has been catastrophic. Across Mozambique, protesters have set up burning barricades, looted buildings, and clashed violently with police and military forces.

Entire neighborhoods in Maputo, Beira, and other cities resemble war zones, with plumes of smoke rising from makeshift roadblocks.

In some areas, mobs have erected pay-to-pass checkpoints, forcing drivers to cough up cash to move through streets under their control.

Adding to the chaos, hundreds of prisoners escaped from detention centers amid the unrest. The growing lawlessness has led some observers to describe the situation as a "social revolt" rather than a political protest.

"It's as if the entire system is breaking down," said a human rights activist in Maputo. "People feel they have nothing to lose."

The violence has taken a heavy toll on civilians, with reports of indiscriminate shootings by security forces. Mondlane's supporters accuse the government of using excessive

force to suppress dissent, while the authorities argue they are trying to restore order.

The situation remains volatile, with fears that the violence will intensify as Chapo's January 15 inauguration date approaches.

Mondlane, who has fled Mozambique citing threats to his life, has refused to recognize Chapo's victory.

He has laid out a series of demands, including overhauling the country's electoral commission, penalizing those involved in election fraud, and instituting reforms to reduce political interference in state institutions.

However, his refusal to participate in dialogue without guarantees of safety has stalled efforts to resolve the crisis.

Mondlane's stance has garnered both praise and criticism. While many see him as a symbol of resistance against Frelimo's dominance, others worry that his hardline approach could deepen divisions.

Two of his aides were fatally shot after the election, further fueling fears for his safety and adding to the tension.

"Dialogue is the only way

forward," said Kabwe. "Mozambique has to return to the negotiating table, just as it did after the civil war. But this time, the talks must address the root causes of the crisis, not just the symptoms."

The international community has been slow to respond, leaving many Mozambicans deeply frustrated. Analysts argue that regional bodies such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) should play a central role in mediating talks between the opposing factions. However, SADC's inconsistent and often ineffective handling of political crises in member states has drawn sharp criticism.

Hannah Danzinger da Silva, Mozambique director for Search for Common Ground, warned that ignoring the crisis could have devastating regional implications. "This isn't just about Mozambique. It's about preventing a domino effect that destabilizes southern Africa as a whole," she said.

Mozambique's neighbors, particularly South Africa and Tanzania, are under increasing pressure to act. "This instability

doesn't recognize borders," noted Danzinger da Silva. "It's about trade, security, migration, and human lives. Regional leaders cannot afford to stay on the sidelines any longer."

The consequences of Mozambique's turmoil stretch far beyond its borders. As a key gateway linking southern Africa to global markets, the country's strategic importance cannot be overstated. Its offshore natural gas reserves—among the largest in the world—have drawn billions of dollars in foreign investment, but the escalating violence threatens to unravel years of economic progress.

Moreover, the country's battle against an Islamic State-linked insurgency in its northern Cabo Delgado province remains a pressing concern. The unrest risks providing terrorist groups with the chaos they need to expand their foothold, alarming Western powers that have invested in containing extremism in the region.

Teodoro Waty, a member of Frelimo's top decision-making body, emphasized the urgency of reconciliation. "We need immediate reforms, starting with making electoral institutions transparent and credible," Waty said. "The people of Mozambique need to know their voices matter, or this cycle of distrust will never end."

While some have floated the idea of a unity government that would include opposition figures, such proposals have met stiff resistance from Frelimo loyalists. Others argue that significant electoral reforms and an independent investigation into the election are essential to restoring public trust.

But time is running out. As the January 15 inauguration date for Daniel Chapo approaches, the tension in Mozambique's streets is palpable. Protesters have vowed to intensify their demonstrations, and fears of even deadlier clashes loom large.

"This is about more than the presidency," said Danzinger da Silva. "It's about rebuilding a nation's soul after years of disillusionment."

Waty agreed, underscoring the fragility of the current moment. "Without reconciliation, Mozambique risks tearing itself apart. We need to rise above party lines and power struggles to save our country."

As the world watches, Mozambique teeters on the edge, its cries for justice growing louder by the day. Whether its leaders can prioritize reconciliation over division—and whether the international community will step in to support peace—remains to be seen. For now, the streets remain volatile, and the future hangs precariously in the balance.

By Correspondent Joshua Kagoro

Uganda, a nation known for its breathtaking landscapes and rich biodiversity, is at a critical crossroads.

The natural beauty of the Virunga Mountains, the serene shores of Lake Victoria, and the lush forests that once thrived have been integral to the country's identity. However, as Uganda pursues its ambitious Vision 2040 goal to become a middle-income country, it faces a silent crisis.

Economic expansion is coming at the cost of the very ecosystems that sustain its future.

The absence of a cohesive biodiversity plan is undermining the country's natural heritage, with devastating consequences for both the environment and the economy.

Economic Expansion without Ecological Safeguards

Uganda's Vision 2040 focuses heavily on economic growth, particularly in agriculture, infrastructure, and energy. However, this rapid development is often occurring at the expense of critical ecosystems.

Roads are cutting through previously untouched forests, vast areas of land are being cleared for cash crops like oil palm and tea, and natural resources such as oil, minerals, and timber are being exploited without regard for long-term sustainability.

Dr Florence Kasande, an environmental policy expert, warns, "While we're focused on GDP growth and industrialization, the cost is the ecosystem decline, which will ultimately affect agriculture, tourism, and our health."

The Cost to Uganda's Rich Biodiversity

Uganda is home to some of the most biodiverse ecosystems in Africa,



Economic growth at the expense of nature: The perils of missing biodiversity plan

including habitats for iconic species like mountain gorillas and African elephants.

However, this biodiversity is under threat due to unchecked human activity.

In 2022, Uganda lost over 1,000 hectares of forest cover to illegal logging, driven by the demand for timber and charcoal.

Meanwhile, in Lake Victoria, overfishing and pollution

are depleting fish stocks, and urban sprawl is swallowing up wetlands that serve as natural water filtration systems.

Charles Kagoro, a conservationist, describes the situation, "Without careful planning, Uganda risks losing what makes it unique. Infrastructure projects are blocking migration routes for elephants, and without intact habitats, these species are disappear-

ing." The consequences of habitat loss extend beyond wildlife. Wetlands, which act as natural sponges and regulate rainfall, and forests that stabilize local climates, are rapidly being destroyed.

This loss of biodiversity is making Uganda more vulnerable to extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and soil erosion.

Economic Implications of Biodiversity Loss

The consequences of biodiversity loss are not limited to the environment—they extend to Uganda's economy.

Tourism, a major contributor to the country's GDP, depends heavily on the country's natural assets.

Mountain gorillas alone generate millions of dollars

through eco-tourism, yet habitat destruction threatens this vital revenue stream.

In Kisoro, near Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, local guide Jude Munyambazi says, "We rely on tourists who come to see the gorillas, but as people destroy the area, the gorillas vanish. Without a healthy ecosystem, tourists will stop coming. The government must take action."

The Absence of a Biodiversity Strategy

Despite its signatories to global biodiversity agreements like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Uganda lacks a coherent national biodiversity strategy.

While the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has some guidelines in place, the country's efforts are hampered by underfunding and limited institutional capacity.

Experts agree that the time has come for Uganda to integrate biodiversity conservation into its national economic planning.

This means ensuring that all sectors, from agriculture to urban development, incorporate sustainable practices, such as land-use management, pollution control, and habitat restoration.

Rodney Akongel Mukula, environmental expert and founder of Asante Waste Management Limited, emphasizes the need for sustainability: "The government's economic plan, though focused on growth, lacks a biodiversity strategy.

Without it, Uganda risks further land degradation and loss of vital resources."

Uganda's Biodiversity in Focus

The state of Uganda's biodiversity is alarming. Forest cover has decreased from 24% in 1990 to just 9.5% in 2015.

Wetlands, which once covered 15.6% of the country, now account for only 8.9%.

These statistics underscore the urgent need for a national biodiversity strategy.

In August 2023, NEMA engaged stakeholders to review and align the Second National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAPII) with the Global Biodiversity Fund (GBF). While this is a step forward, much more needs to be done.

Aldon Walukamba, Communications Manager at the National Forestry Authority, remarks, "Mushrooming investors are pressuring communities and forests, leading to deforestation. The government has not done enough to regulate these investors."

Uganda's future—both economically and environmentally—depends on a balanced approach. A well-funded and comprehensive biodiversity plan is not a luxury; it is a necessity.

By integrating biodiversity conservation into its economic policies, Uganda can safeguard its natural heritage, sustain its economy, and ensure a better future for all. Without it, the country risks losing the very resources that are critical to its prosperity.

BUSINESS

Concerns grow over federal, states' 2025 budgets draft

Why Biden, Trump oppose Japan's takeover of US steel

NEW YORK

US President Joe Biden has vetoed Nippon Steel's \$14.9-billion takeover bid for its American rival, US Steel. Amid bipartisan opposition to the merger, DW asks why US politicians and regulators are concerned.

After months of opposition, US President Joe Biden on Friday blocked the proposed buyout of the United States Steel Corporation, or US Steel, by Japan's Nippon Steel.

The second-largest US steelmaker had previously approved the \$14.9-billion (£14.5-billion) takeover bid, saying it would help protect the ailing firm from intense competition from abroad, including China.

Nippon Steel had hoped the acquisition would help hike its global steel output by nearly a third, to 85 million tons.

However, the merger became a significant issue for Democrats and Republicans in November's US presidential election, as Pennsylvania, where US Steel is headquartered, was a critical swing state.

In an attempt to protect American jobs, the United Steelworkers union fiercely opposed the transaction.

Biden has cited national security concerns and risks to key supply chains as his main reasons for vetoing the purchase.

"This acquisition would place one of America's largest steel producers under foreign control and create risk for our national security and our critical supply chains," Biden said in a statement. "That is why I am taking action to block this deal."

The president previously said that critical industries, like the steel sector, must remain under the control of domestic players.

In December, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) – which reviews mergers and acquisitions of US firms by foreign entities – failed to reach a consensus on whether to approve the deal and referred the decision to Biden, who leaves office on January 20.

The panel, led by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, warned the buyout could lead to a cut in US steel output, which would cause supply shortages, affecting the transport and energy sectors the most.

CFIUS warned the deal could scupper Washington's attempt to

quash the dumping of cheap steel from China, where heavy industries receive massive subsidies from the Beijing government.

According to US newspaper The Washington Post, the committee was also concerned Nippon Steel could shift production to its sites in Brazil, Mexico and India after gaining control of US Steel.

Senior White House advisers had reportedly tried to persuade Biden to proceed with the purchase, as it would represent a sizable investment in an ailing US company. They also thought a veto could hurt ties with Japan, one of Washington's closest allies in the Indo-Pacific.

Both Biden and former President Donald Trump implemented protectionist policies in recent years to safeguard the US steel sector against a global oversupply, which has driven down prices. The measures included 25% tariffs on imported steel, while China was singled out for unfair trade practices.

Biden's veto is unlikely to be overturned by President-elect Trump, who campaigned on reviving US heavy industry, and last month wrote on his Truth Social social messaging platform that he was "totally against the once great and powerful US Steel being bought by a foreign company."

Trump has promised to use a mix of more tariffs and tax incentives to protect the US steel sector.

In a last-ditch attempt to get the deal approved, Nippon Steel proposed giving Washington a say in any potential production cuts at US Steel, Reuters news agency reported earlier this week, citing a source familiar with the deal.

In December, Nippon Steel defended the merger, promising "significant" investments in US Steel's facilities and employees to "ensure a vibrant future for American steelmaking." The firm said it remained "confident that the acquisition will protect and grow US Steel, creating the best steelmaker with world-leading capabilities for the benefit of American workers and customers."

Nippon Steel has pledged over \$2.7 billion in capital investment for US Steel's facilities in Pennsylvania and Gary, Indiana, and offered to move its US headquarters to Pittsburgh, where US Steel is based. It has also promised to honor existing agreements with unions.



LAGOS

CONCERNS are mounting over Nigeria's 2025 budgets at both federal and state levels, with analysts expressing concerns that the proposed figures may be insufficient to meet the nation's pressing humanitarian and infrastructural needs.

President Bola Tinubu had proposed a substantial budget of N49.7 trillion for this year, termed the "Budget of Restoration: Securing Peace, Rebuilding Prosperity."

This proposal marked a significant increase from the N28.77 trillion budget of 2024. However, critics argue that despite the increased allocation, the budget may not effectively address the challenges faced by ordinary Nigerians.

Concerns have been raised about the allocation of funds, with substantial portions directed towards recurrent expenditure and debt servicing, potentially leaving limited resources for direct welfare improvements.

The Federal Government is faced with a daunting fiscal challenge as debt servicing takes a huge chunk of its proposed N49.7 trillion 2025 budget.

With N15.8 trillion or 45 percent of its projected N34.82 trillion revenue earmarked for debt repayment, there is growing concern about the country's fiscal sustainability and economic resilience.

For context, this debt servicing estimate surpasses the combined N14.97 trillion earmarked for critical sectors such as security, infrastructure, education, and health.

To further ease the country's debt burden, civil society organisations have asked the National Assembly to reduce the proposed

N344.85bn allocation in the 2025 budget for lawmakers and cut down non-essential spending of the executive including, N9.4bn on travels, refreshment/meals, and foodstuff/catering materials for the presidency.

"The proposed huge spending is neither necessary nor in the public interest, especially in the face of the country's dire economic situation and the level of proposed borrowing to fund the 2025 budget," the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) said in a letter dated December 21, and addressed to the lawmakers.

An analysis of the budgets from 13 Nigerian states including Lagos, Oyo, Osun, Bayelsa, Bauchi, Anambra, Gombe, Ekiti, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Plateau, and Katsina reveals a combined proposed expenditure of N9.07 trillion for 2025. Of this, approximately N3.87 trillion is allocated for recurrent expenditure, covering administrative costs such as salaries and overheads.

This allocation suggests a significant portion of state budgets is dedicated to maintaining government operations, potentially at the expense of capital projects aimed at infrastructure development.

This pattern raises questions about the states' commitment to infrastructural development and people-centred projects, especially considering that millions of Nigerians have fallen below the poverty line in recent times. The World Bank recently projected that over 129 million Nigerians now live below the poverty line.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has criticised the Federal Government's allocation of 7% (N3.52 trillion) of the 2025 budget to education. ASUU argued that this falls short of the 15-20% benchmark recommended by

UNESCO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for developing countries.

The union warned that such underfunding could perpetuate existing challenges in the education sector, including inadequate infrastructure and poor welfare conditions for educators, potentially deterring qualified individuals from pursuing teaching careers.

Analysts caution that without a strategic shift in spending patterns and policy reforms, the 2025 budget may struggle to deliver meaningful improvements in living standards for the Nigerian populace.

Olu Fasan, a popular columnist, contended that previous budgets with similar optimistic titles have failed to alleviate the hardships faced by ordinary Nigerians, citing persistent issues such as widespread hunger and insecurity.

"Well, now, Tinubu has proposed a budget of N47.9 trillion for 2025. He calls it 'Budget of Restoration: Securing Peace, Rebuilding Prosperity.' But would this staggering sum make an iota of difference to the lives of ordinary Nigerians? The answer, sadly, is no. For truth be told, it's yet another false hope!" Fasan said in an article published on BusinessDay last week.

While the proposed 2025 budgets at both federal and state levels reflect an increase in allocations, concerns persist regarding their adequacy in addressing Nigeria's developmental needs.

The emphasis on recurrent expenditures, coupled with concerns over insufficient funding for critical sectors like education, health and the burden of debt servicing, underscores the need for a comprehensive review of budgetary priorities to ensure impactful and sustainable

the lives of our people and accelerate economic output," he said.

On human capital development, Tinubu said his administration is making 'record investments' in education, healthcare, and social services.

"In the 2025 Budget, we have made provision for \$26.90 billion naira for infrastructure development in the educational sector. This provision also includes those for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) and the nine new higher educational institutions," he said.

He said his government is convinced that the Universal Health Coverage initiatives will strengthen primary healthcare systems across Nigeria, noting that it has allocated N402 billion to infrastructure investments in the health sector in the 2025 budget and another N282.65 billion for the Basic Health Care Fund. "Our hospitals will be revitalised with medication and better resources, ensuring quality care for all Nigerians. This is consistent with the Federal Government's planned procurement of essential drugs for distribution to public health-care facilities nationwide, improving healthcare access and reducing medical import dependency."

Tinubu's administration allocated N826.5 billion to agriculture to boost food security and generate agro-based employment in the coming year.

The allocation represents a 127.8 percent increase from N362.94 billion allotted to the sector in 2024. Capital allocations also rose by 130 percent compared to last year.

"Food security is non-negotiable. In this regard, we are taking bold steps to ensure that every Nigerian can feed conveniently, and none of our citizens will have to go to bed hungry," Tinubu assured in his budget speech.

With a population surpassing 220 million and an annual growth rate of 2.4 percent to 2.6 percent, Nigeria is under increasing pressure to enhance its food production to feed its people.

"To ensure food sufficiency and reduce reliance on imports, N826.5 billion has been allocated to agricultural mechanisation, irrigation projects, and value-chain development," Tanimu Yakubu, director-general, Budget Office of the Federation, noted.

"This will not only boost food production but also support economic diversification and rural development."



Five things to watch through 2025 US economy

WASHINGTON

THE economy is in good shape heading into 2025. Inflation is coming down, growth is brisk, and the job market has remained surprisingly resilient.

Now economists are focused on the next big question: How long can this last?

The answer, they say, hinges on just how quickly and dramatically President-elect Donald Trump implements a

raft of new policies. Many looming uncertainties, especially related to tariffs and immigration, could disrupt the economy in unpredictable ways.

"There are definitely some storms coming our way," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics. "I suspect the luster on the economy is going to come off in 2025."

Although economists are not forecasting a recession next year, they

say the coming weeks will be instrumental in determining the course ahead. They are keeping a close eye on Trump's transition into the White House and monitoring the job market, inflation and consumer spending habits for clues on how things might change.

Trump's plans to impose sweeping tariffs will probably be one of the biggest threats to the economy, experts say.

The president-elect has

vowed to penalize the country's largest trading partners by levying tariffs – an extra 10 percent on Chinese goods and 25 percent on imports from Mexico and Canada – that economists say could quickly raise prices. The necessities that could soon be getting costlier range from big-ticket items such as cars and appliances to everyday basics such as groceries and gas. During his campaign, Trump also discussed

sweeping tariffs on all imports, not just from those countries, which would affect even more goods if implemented.

"Tariffs make things more expensive," Alex Durante, an economist at the Tax Foundation, a right-leaning think tank, told The Washington Post. "They shrink the economy, and they make people poorer."

New tariffs could cost the average household nearly \$3,000 next year,

amounting to about 3 percent of their after-tax income, according to estimates from the Tax Policy Center, a nonpartisan think tank.

Members of Trump's transition team have pushed back against the idea that tariffs could spark widespread inflation. But economists say they're bracing for an across-the-board hit that could dent economic growth, raise prices and spur job losses.



LONDON

PASSENGERS at British airports have faced travel chaos on multiple occasions over the last few weeks, from heavy winds to fog.

Now, the Met Office has issued an amber warning for snow and ice in the Midlands, north of England and Wales, which says that delays and cancellations to air travel are "expected".

It can seem a mystery to many frustrated flyers that a brief spell of bad weather can upend schedules, especially since British weather isn't exactly famed for being the best. So why, with all the technological advancements of planes and airports in recent years, do flights get affected so badly?

While planes are designed to deal with the likes of snow and ice, fog and high winds, air traffic control often imposes strict safety limits in these situations.

As a result, "airports go into a kind of slow motion" with the spacing between arriving and departing aircraft increased, says travel expert Simon Calder.

If the conditions "require air-traffic controllers to increase the spacing between aircraft by 50%, capacity is immediately reduced by one third - and cancellations begin," he adds.

There's little slack in the system, as when things are running smoothly, schedules at London Heathrow - Europe's busiest airport - are based on landing aircraft as close as 80 seconds apart. And London Gatwick, the UK's second busiest airport, can facilitate a take-off or landing every 65 seconds.



Britain face flight chaos owing bad weather rise

The spacing between arriving and departing aircraft was increased at London Gatwick last weekend during the fog, which Mr Calder estimates led to about 75,000 passengers being affected.

Among them were James and Madison King, whose flight from Stockholm to London took a lengthy diversion because of the fog-related spacing limits.

They were within touching distance of home when the pilot announced they did not have enough fuel for a 50-minute holding pattern at Gatwick, so the plane diverted

to Dublin to refuel. Flight crew shift limits then meant all the passengers had to fly back to where they started in the Swedish capital.

James says he still hasn't been reimbursed for the £200 he spent on a hotel and dinner during this impromptu additional overnight stay in Stockholm.

Heathrow also saw delays and cancellations during high winds before Christmas.

Despite some airports trialling artificial intelligence to help planes land in low visibility, controllers in on-the-ground towers still need to

clearly see an aircraft arriving before issuing a landing clearance, aviation expert Scott Bateman MBE wrote on X.

He says the majority of modern aircraft can automatically land in the worst fog, but that in practice visibility limits are imposed so pilots can see sufficiently to taxi off the runway.

Elif Arjin Celik's flight from London Gatwick to Istanbul was delayed for hours because of poor visibility in the fog on 28 December 2024.

She saw thousands of people waiting in the terminal with nowhere to sit, and says it was "grim" having to wait

20 minutes to use the toilet because of the "extreme overcrowding".

Calder advises passengers to brace for more disruption to their flights because of spacing limits and runway closures.

"The UK has seen some shocking snow closures, where big airports have simply not been able to cope," he says, citing an incident in 2010 where hundreds of thousands of passengers saw cancellations at Heathrow because of snow.

Snow also caused Manchester Airport to close both its

runways in December 2022 and again in January 2023, with flights diverted as far away as Dublin and Paris.

Although the extreme cost of disruption on this scale has led to British airports investing more in hardware and training to clear snow quicker, don't expect us to cope like airports in places such as Iceland and Greenland.

Mr Calder says we might never be as good as other countries at keeping an efficient schedule in unusual weather.

"Historically the UK has had a benign climate," he says. "Spending millions preparing for an unlikely event has been hard to justify."

There's not great news on the horizon because in the future, we can expect more disruption from weather related to climate change, says Dr Ella Gilbert, a climate expert from the British Antarctic Survey.

"Aviation tends to be most impacted by extreme precipitation and stormy weather that makes flying unsafe - two weather types that are enhanced by higher temperatures," she says.

She adds that climate heating increases the frequency and intensity of rain and snow-fall events, making storms "stronger and more frequent" and increasing the frequency of aircraft turbulence.

Nats, the national air traffic service, is allowed to take action to reduce the amount of planes in the sky and space them apart more during adverse weather under the Transport Act 2000.

Given this is part of Nats' obligation to prioritise safety over all other factors, it doesn't have to compensate airlines for these restrictions - which in turn means airlines

don't need to compensate passengers for the resulting delays either.

The organisation told the BBC that it recognises there's a tough balancing act.

"Flow regulations are only ever employed when absolutely necessary and have to be expertly timed," a Nats spokesperson said.

"Unexpected additional or delayed air traffic can increase the pressure on controllers, particularly when the weather clears.

"If restrictions are lifted too early, they can risk an overpopulated airspace, while on the flip side, restrictions remaining in place longer than they need to can lead to unnecessary delays, which no one wants."

This is brought into sharp focus during storms, Nats explained.

"Fundamentally, pilots don't want to fly through storms," it told the BBC.

"Although aircraft are robust, storms can still affect aircraft systems and excessive winds within unstable storm clouds make it much more difficult for aircraft to maintain their levels. It also increases turbulence, which negatively impacts passenger comfort."

This leads to planes being in unexpected parts of the sky at different times, and all these new routes needing to be recalibrated to avoid any collisions.

Nats says it does have measures to mitigate disruption, including specialist Met Office weather equipment which can help foresee the need for safety limits to be imposed, while pilots also have more tech on board to help them fly around bad weather patches and inform air traffic controllers of potential issues.

BEIJING

China is now a country where a high-school handyman has a master's degree in physics; a cleaner is qualified in environmental planning; a delivery driver studied philosophy, and a PhD graduate from the prestigious Tsinghua University ends up applying to work as an auxiliary police officer.

These are real cases in a struggling economy - and it is not hard to find more like them.

"My dream job was to work in investment banking," says Sun Zhan as he prepares to start his shift as a waiter in a hot pot restaurant in the southern city of Nanjing.

The 25-year-old recently graduated with a master's degree in finance. He was hoping to "make a lot of money" in a high-paying role but adds, "I looked for such a job, with no good results".

China is churning out millions of university graduates every year but, in some fields, there just aren't enough jobs for them.

The economy has been struggling and stalling in major sectors, including real estate and manufacturing.

Youth unemployment had been nudging 20% before the way of measuring the figures was altered to make the situation look better. In August 2024, it was still 18.8%. The latest figure for November has come down to 16.1%.

Many university graduates who've found it hard to get work in their area of selected study are now doing jobs well below what they're qualified for, leading to criticism from family and friends. When Sun Zhan became a waiter, this was met with displeasure by his parents.

"My family's opinions are a big concern for me. After all, I studied for many years and went to a pretty good school," he says.

He says his family is embarrassed by his job choice and would prefer he tried to become a public servant or official, but, he adds, "this is my choice".

Yet he has a secret plan. He's going to use his time working as a waiter to learn the restaurant business so he can eventually open his own place.

He thinks if he ends up running a successful business, the critics in his family will have to change their tune. "The job situation is really, really challenging in mainland China, so I think a lot of young people have to



China's overqualified youth take jobs as drivers, film extras shocks

really readjust their expectations," says Professor Zhang Jun from the City University of Hong Kong.

She says many students are seeking higher degrees in order to have better prospects, but then the reality of the employment environment hits them.

"The job market has been really tough," says 29-year-old Wu Dan, who is currently a trainee in a sports injury massage clinic in Shanghai.

"For many of my master's degree classmates, it's their first time hunting for a job and very few of them have ended up landing one."

She also didn't think this was where she would end up with a finance degree from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

Prior to this, she worked at a futures trading company in Shanghai, where she was specialising in agricultural products. When she returned to the mainland after finishing her studies in Hong Kong, she wanted to work in a private equity firm and did get some offers but was not happy with the conditions.

That she didn't accept any of

them and instead started training in sports medicine was not welcomed by her family.

"They thought I had such a good job before, and my educational background is quite competitive. They didn't understand why I chose a low-barrier job that requires me to do physical work for little money."

She admits that she couldn't survive in Shanghai on her current salary, if not for the fact that her partner owns their home.

At first, she didn't know anyone who supported her current career path, but her mother has been coming around after she recently treated her for her bad back, significantly reducing the pain she had been experiencing.

Now the one-time finance student says she feels that a life working in the investment world actually doesn't suit her after all.

She says she is interested in sports injuries, like the job and, one day, wants to open her own clinic.

Chinese graduates are being forced to change their perceptions regarding what might be considered "a good position",

Prof Zhang says.

In what might be seen as "a warning sign" for young people, "many companies in China, including many tech companies, have laid off quite a lot of staff", she adds.

She also says that significant areas of the economy, which had once been big employers of graduates, are offering sub-standard conditions, and decent opportunities in these fields are disappearing altogether.

While they work out what to do in the future, unemployed graduates have also been turning to the film and television industry.

Big budget movies need lots of extras to fill out their scenes and, in China's famous film production town of Hengdian, south-west of Shanghai, there are plenty of young people looking for acting work.

"I mainly stand beside the protagonist as eye candy. I am seen next to the lead actors but I have no lines," says Wu Xinghai, who studied electronic information engineering, and was playing a bodyguard in a drama.

The 26-year old laughs that his good looks have helped him become employed as an extra.

New York becomes first US city with congestion charge

NEW YORK

THE first congestion charge scheme for vehicles in the US has come into effect in New York.

Car drivers will pay up to \$9 (£7) a day, with varying rates for other vehicles.

The congestion zone covers an area south of central park, taking in well known sites such as the Empire State Building, Times Square and the financial district around Wall Street

The scheme aims to ease New York's notorious traffic problems and raise billions for the public transport network, but has faced resistance, including from famous New Yorker and President-elect Donald Trump.

A congestion charge was first promoted by New York state Governor Kathy Hochul two years ago, but it was delayed and revised following complaints from some commuters and businesses.

The new plan revives one scheme that she paused in June, saying there were "too many unintended consequences for New Yorkers".

Most drivers will be charged \$9 once per day to enter the congestion zone at peak hours, and \$2.25 at other times.

Small trucks and non-commuter

buses will pay \$14.40 to enter Manhattan at peak times, while larger trucks and tourist buses will pay a \$21.60 fee.

The charge has been met with plenty of opposition, including from taxi drivers' associations.

But its most high-profile opposition has come from Trump, a native New Yorker who has vowed to kill the scheme when he returns to office this month.

Local Republicans have already asked him to intervene.

Congressman Mike Lawler, who represents a suburban district just north of New York City, asked Trump in November to commit to "ending this absurd congestion pricing cash grab once and for all".

A judge denied an eleventh-hour effort Friday by neighbouring New Jersey state officials to block the scheme on grounds of its environmental impact on adjoining areas.

Last year, New York City was named the world's most-congested urban area for the second year in a row, according to INRIX, a traffic-data analysis firm.

Vehicles in downtown Manhattan drove at a speed of 11 mph/h (17 km/h) during peak morning periods in the first quarter of last year, the report said.



LAGOS

Pay-as-you-go' package of food worsening purchasing power

As the economy continues to bite harder, producers are continually devising means of meeting consumers halfway by offering different sizes of food products that could be affordable by people according to their pockets.

'Pay-as-you-go' is a term colloquially referred to as 'Sachetisation' in product packaging strategy that involves selling products in smaller, more affordable packages, or sachets, to consumers with limited financial means.

The term 'sachetisation' is not new to the average Nigerian consumer, especially the young mobile, and up and going consumers. However, the strategy is far moving away from a business into a survival strategy for both businesses and consumers in Nigeria.

Sometime last year, yam sellers began to cut tubers of yams into smaller sizes that could be affordable to certain categories of buyers. That was when a tuber of yam went up to N10,000.

Today, the Nigerian markets are filled with all manner of small packages of various food items, ranging from rice, beans, garri, semovita, to several others.

For many businesses, especially the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), 'Pay-as-you-go' packaging is now more of a strategy to stay in business rather than meeting consumers halfway. For the consumers on the other hand, 'Pay-as-you-go' offers the opportunity to afford certain branded goods amid dwindling resources.

"While this strategy allows households to manage their limited resources and still access essential goods, it carries significant implications for both consumers and the economy at large," Godwin Ayebe, convener, Consumers Assembly, told BusinessDaySunday.

According to him, the initiative

provides low-income consumers an immediate solution to rising costs, ensuring they can still purchase necessities like food, toiletries, and beverages. However, he disclosed that the long-term cost of these smaller units is often higher per gram or liter compared to larger packaging, which further increases the financial burden over time.

"With limited purchasing power, consumers may opt for smaller quantities, potentially leading to under-consumption or rationing of essential products. This could adversely affect nutrition, hygiene, and overall well-being," Ayebe said.

Speaking further on the overall impact on the ecosystem, he said that smaller packaging typically results in higher amounts of plastic and other waste materials.

"In a country like Nigeria, where waste management systems are underdeveloped, this trend exacerbates environmental challenges," he said.

In a stark reflection of Nigeria's worsening economic reality, 'Pay-as-you-go' packages of food items, highlights the dwindling purchasing power of Nigerians, who are struggling to make ends meet amidst rising food prices and stagnant incomes.

On the back of a dwindling purchasing power is the rising food price that has contributed to the country's food inflation. Nigeria is currently faced with a severe food inflation crisis, with prices of staple food items skyrocketing in the recent past.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria's food inflation rate rose to 23.12% in Octo-



ber 2024, up from 17.38% in the same period last year. This has resulted in a significant decline in the purchasing power of Nigerians, who are finding it increasingly difficult to afford basic food items.

The situation is further exacerbated by stagnant incomes of many consumers, which have not kept pace with rising food prices. Many Nigerians are struggling to survive on meager salaries, which have been eroded by inflation, even while the government is yet to fulfill its promise on the new N70,000 minimum wage.

In response to this dire situation, some food retailers have introduced 'pay-as-you-go' packages, which allow customers to buy small quanti-

ties of food items. These packages, which typically range from N50 to N500 (approximately \$0.12 to \$1.25 USD), are designed to cater to the needs of low-income households, who can no longer afford to buy food items in bulk.

"The rise of 'pay-as-you-go' packaging is a symptom of declining real income among Nigerians. It reflects an economy where inflation and unemployment make it difficult for families to afford bulk purchases.

"While this strategy may boost short-term sales, it could strain profit margins for companies due to higher packaging costs and lower economies of scale," Ayebe said.

According to him, the need for

smaller packaging underscores the widening gap between the affluent and low-income segments of society, highlighting the urgency for economic policies that uplift the purchasing power of the average consumer.

The rise of these small packages has significant implications for Nigeria's food retail sector. On the one hand, it highlights the innovative spirit of food retailers, who are adapting to the changing economic realities. On the other hand, it underscores the dire situation faced by many Nigerians, who are struggling to afford basic food items.

"While 'pay-as-you-go' packaging may not directly indicate famine, it is a clear marker of economic dis-

stress. Famine typically involves a lack of food availability, whereas this trend reflects affordability issues. However, the underlying causes high inflation, unemployment, and poor agricultural productivity could evolve into food insecurity if left unchecked," he said.

Speaking further, Ayebe said that Consumers Assembly and other advocacy groups must educate consumers on the true costs of 'pay-as-you-go' packaging and promote strategies to optimise spending on essentials.

According to him, policymakers should prioritise measures to control inflation, boost agricultural output, and increase disposable income through job creation and social safety nets. "FMCGs should be encouraged to adopt eco-friendly packaging solutions, reducing the environmental impact of smaller units," Ayebe said.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State has called on food processing companies to prioritise biodegradable and compostable packaging materials to reduce food waste and protect the environment. This initiative aims to tackle food waste and promote environmental sustainability.

He made the call at the 11th edition of the PROPAK West Africa 2024: Smart Packaging Conference, in Lagos.

Speaking on the theme, "Unlocking Nigeria food security: Implementation of smart packaging to reduce waste", the governor, represented by Folashade Ambrose-Medebem, the state commissioner for commerce, cooperatives, trade, and investment, underscored the role of food packaging and processing industries in driving economic growth. He urged stakeholders to embrace eco-friendly packaging technologies. He emphasised the need for collaboration across sectors to manage plastic waste responsibly and develop innovations that protect the environment.

Beibu Gulf Port retains double-digit growth

GUANGXI

BEIBU Gulf Port in South China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region handled more than 9 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in 2024, marking a significant milestone.

The port has maintained double-digit growth for eight consecutive years, ranking among the top major coastal ports in China. This achievement marks a new chapter in the development of Beibu Gulf Port as an international gateway and hub, laying a solid foundation for its journey to become a world-class port with a handling capacity of tens of millions of TEUs.

"In 2024, we focused on market demand and resource development, implementing tailored strategies to increase the development of specialized cargo sources," said Xiang Zheng, executive vice-president of Guangxi Beibu Gulf International Port Group Co Ltd.

"We continuously promoted the transportation of goods from Guangxi through Beibu Gulf Port. The container throughput of key customers within Guangxi is expected to have increased by 28 percent year-on-year in 2024."

The port also strengthened its efforts in organizing and developing new sea-rail intermodal transport sources, such as photovoltaic glass. The sea-rail intermodal transport volume is expected to have grown by 5.6 percent year-on-year in 2024.

To enhance efficiency, the

port has taken steps to improve container ship turnaround time, which is expected to have increased by 6 percent year-on-year in 2024.

The port has also actively addressed issues relating to container production and operations, as well as feeder barge transportation.

Furthermore, Beibu Gulf Port has continuously optimized its shipping network layout, particularly in Southeast Asia, and a direct shipping route between Beibu Gulf Port and Haiphong, Vietnam, was recently launched. As of now, the port boasts a total of 80 shipping routes, including 49 foreign trade routes, covering major domestic ports and key ports in Southeast and Northeast Asia.

Beibu Gulf Port has also made significant progress in sea-rail intermodal transportation with support from the General Administration of Customs and China State Railway Group. Collaborative efforts have led to the establishment of a comprehensive transportation network that efficiently connects the inland regions via the Pinglu Canal.

In terms of smart port construction, the port group has made advancements in information technology systems for customer service.

The implementation of the railway container intelligent operation system at Fangchenggang Port has significantly improved the efficiency of integrated loading and unloading operations.



Qinzhou section of Beibu Gulf Port in South China's Guangxi Zhuang

CAPITAL TV	ITV	TUESDAY 7 Jan
Mon 06 Jan	MONDAY 6 Jan	5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
06:00 Al Jazeera	5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
09:00 Kumekucha Michezo rpt	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt	6:00 HABARI	6:40 Kumekucha
11:30 Business edition	6:40 Kumekucha	7:30 HABARI
12:00 Out and About	7:30 HABARI	8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
12:30 Our earth Rpt	8:00 Kumekucha Michezo	8:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Telenovela rpt: In Love With Ramon	8:55 Habari za saa	9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
14:00 Ripoti maalum	9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo	9:30 Soap: Laws of love
14:45 Sports Gazette	9:30 Soap: Laws of love rpt	9:55 Habari za saa
15:15 Culinary delight rpt	9:55 Habari za saa	10:00 Watoto wetu
16:00 Tomorrow Today	10:00 Watoto wetu	10:25 Jagina
16:30 Eco@Africa	10:55 Habari za saa	10:55 Habari za saa
17:00 Dw News Africa rpt	11:00 ITV Top Ten rpt	11:00 Hawavumi lakini wamo rpt
17:30 Meza huru	11:55 Habari za saa	12:00 Al Jazeera
19:00 The Décor rpt	12:00 Al Jazeera	12:30 Afya ya jamii
19:30 Special Pgm : Culinary Tourism rpt	12:30 Jungu Kuu	12:55 Habari za saa
20:00 Innovation Rpt	12:55 Habari za saa	13:00 Igizo: Bongo DSM rpt
20:45 The Monday Agenda	13:00 Mjue Zaidi	13:20 Shikabamba
21:30 Capital Prime News	13:40 Art and Lifestyle	13:50 Usafiri wako
22:00 Kipima Joto	13:55 Habari za saa	13:55 Usafiri wako
00:00 Al Jazeera	14:00 Art and Lifestyle	14:00 Usafiri wako
	14:10 Maji Kilimanjaro	14:20 Igizo rpt: Haikufuma
	14:20 Soap rpt: Haikufuma	14:55 Habari za saa
	14:55 Habari za saa	15:00 Meza Huru
	15:00 Meza huru	16:30 Watoto wetu
	16:30 Watoto Wetu	17:00 Music: The Base
	17:00 Music: The Base	18:00 Hapa na Pale
	18:00 Hapa na Pale	18:15 Mapishi
	18:15 Doc rpt: Beyond Narrative	18:30 Sema na Mahakama
	18:30 DW: Afrimaxx	19:30 Soap: Laws of love
	19:00 Afya ya Jamii	20:00 Habari
	19:30 Soap: Laws of love	21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Maisha ni Nyumba
	20:00 Habari	21:35 Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot
	21:05 Dakika 45	21:50 Chetu ni chetu
	22:00 Mapishi	22:30 Soap: Uzalo
	22:30 Soap: Uzalo	23:00 Jiji letu
	22:50 Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot	23:30 Music: The Base
	23:00 Jiji letu	00:30 Al Jazeera
	23:30 Music: The Base	02:00 DWTV
	00:30 Al Jazeera	
	02:00 DWTV	

WORLD

Blinken admits US sent arms to Ukraine ahead of conflict

WASHINGTON

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken admitted Saturday that the United States had “quietly sent a lot of weapons to Ukraine” five months ahead of the conflict.

“We saw it coming,” Blinken said in an interview with The New York Times, noting the United States made sure that “Ukraine was prepared” by sending it billions of dollars and weapons since September 2021.

“What we’ve had to look at each and every time is not only should we give this to

the Ukrainians but do they know how to use it? Can they maintain it?” he added.

When asked whether it is time to end the conflict, Blinken said a cease-fire would likely give Russia a break, and that any cease-fire must ensure Ukraine can “deter further aggression,” which, he noted, could be achieved through NATO membership.

“Russia has been talking about this for many years,” said Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova on Saturday in response to Blinken’s remarks, noting that they underscored “the rationale behind Russia’s objective on the



In this photo provided by Ukraine’s 65th Mechanised Brigade press service, a Ukrainian soldier smokes in a trench on the frontline in Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine, Dec 31, 2024, AP

demilitarization of Ukraine.”

“We voiced concerns over the United States and Britain pouring arms into Ukraine, the endless NATO exercises in the Black Sea that violate Russian borders, and the dangerous proximity of Western military aircraft to civilian airliners in our airspace,” she added.

The Kremlin has repeatedly criticized Western arms shipments to Ukraine, claiming they escalate the conflict, obstruct peace efforts, and

drag NATO members into direct involvement.

According to the US Department of State, as of Monday, the United States has provided Ukraine with \$61.4 billion in military assistance since the conflict.

And it has “approved” its NATO allies to deliver 12,000 anti-armor systems of all types, over 1,550 anti-air missiles, radars, night vision devices, machine guns, rifles and ammunition, and body armor.

Moscow demands UNESCO to respond to murder of Russian journalists – MFA

MOSCOW

MOSCOW demands that the murder of Russian journalists by the Ukrainian armed forces receive an appropriate response from UNESCO head Audrey Azoulay, Russian Foreign Ministry Maria Zakharova (pictured) said in connection with the death of Russian war correspondent Alexander Martemyanov in the Donetsk People’s Republic.



“We demand that yet another brutal murder of a Russian war correspondent receive an appropriate response from Audrey Azoulay, as prescribed by her mandate. We expect the same decisive condemnation of this atrocity from all other human rights organizations and structures,” the diplomat said.

“Attempts to hide behind empty excuses and general phrases cannot be considered an adequate response from the authorities authorized to do so. International officials who advocate for human rights will have to directly point to the perpetrators of these murders,” she stressed.

Zakharova recalled that on January 4, as a result of a targeted drone attack by militants of the Kiev regime, Izvestia freelance correspondent Alexander Martemyanov was killed, and at least four employees of Russian media outlets were injured to varying degrees of severity.

“Without a doubt, media representatives were deliberately chosen as targets for a deadly attack. This is also evidenced by the testimonies of those who survived the attack,” the commentary says.

“We express our deep condolences to the family, relatives and friends of Alexander Martemyanov, the editorial staff of the Izvestia international information center and all his colleagues who are currently performing their professional duty in the special military operation zone. We wish a speedy recovery to those injured in this inhuman terrorist attack,” the ministry’s comment says.

As Zakharova also stressed, the death of the Russian war correspondent is a consequence of the deliberate ignoring of the atrocities of the Zelensky regime by relevant international structures.

“The deliberate murder of Russian journalists is yet another brutal crime in a series of bloody atrocities committed by the Zelensky regime, which openly resorts to terrorist methods to eliminate its ideological opponents,” Zakharova pointed out.

“The Kiev clique is responsible for countless lives of innocent citizens, people of civilian professions, including journalists and war correspondents, who became victims of deliberate attacks as part of the terror campaign unleashed by Bandera’s unhumans against the civilian population of Russia and their own country,” she said.

“Perception of their complete impunity and permissiveness, the Bandera murderers of unarmed correspondents revel in, is a direct consequence of the deliberate ignoring of any crimes of the Kiev regime by specialized international structures, such as the UN OHCHR, UNESCO and the OSCE,” the diplomat noted.

Perpetrators will be punished

Zakharova recalled that the recent draft report of the Director-General of UNESCO on the safety of journalists and the problem of impunity for crimes against them does not mention any single employee of the Russian media who died at the hands of Ukrainian militants.

“Although the approval of such a “report” replete with political distortions and statistical manipulations was prevented, so far the leadership of UNESCO and its head personally have not taken a single step that would indicate a radical revision of this deeply flawed and vicious practice.

Thereby, the head of the universal organization becomes a direct accomplice and instigator of terrorist attacks,” the commentary says.

“All those guilty of the crime against Russian journalists will be identified and will be brought to condign and inevitable punishment,” the Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman stressed.

Agencies

With 1.2 bn subscribers India’s telecom sector is delving into AI and 6G advancements

NEW DELHI

WITH a subscriber base of 1.2 billion, the Indian telecom sector is now delving into Artificial Intelligence (AI) and pioneering 6G advancements. The sector has been on an extraordinary growth trajectory with average monthly wireless data usage soaring to 21.30 GB per user by October 2024.

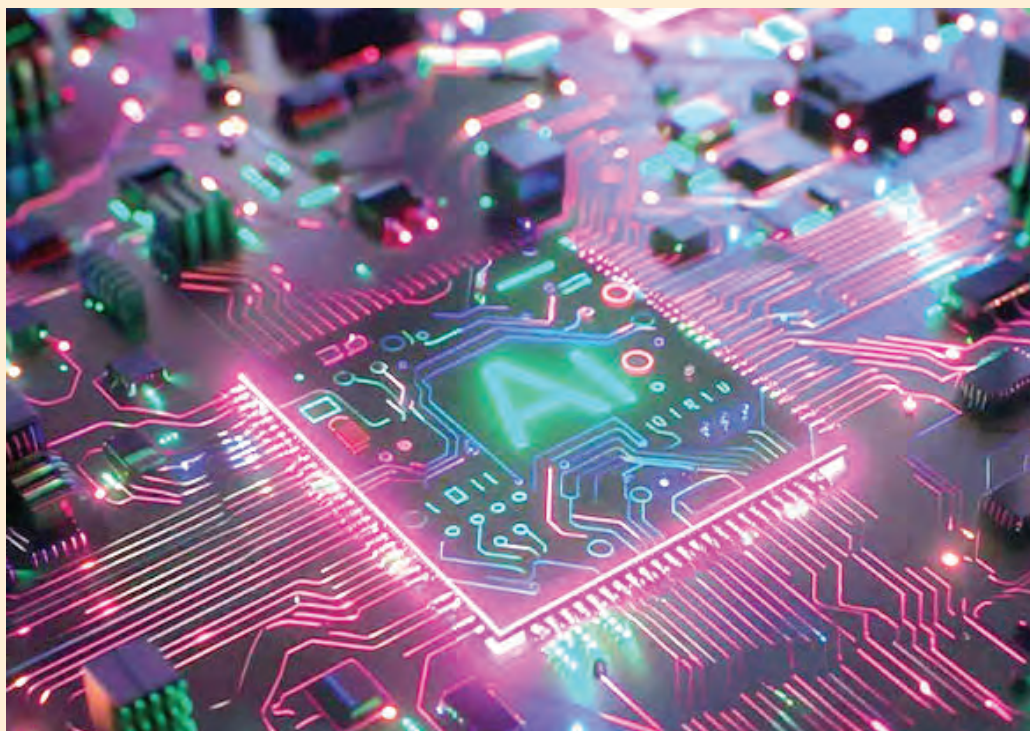
According Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), the deployment of over 4,60,592 5G BTS sites has propelled 5G user numbers past 125 million, with projections estimating a rise to 350 million by 2026.

Fixed Wireless Access (FWA), a key 5G use case, also saw rapid adoption, reaching nearly 3 million connections within a year. The telecom sector, contributing significantly to India’s GDP and providing employment to over 4 million people, is now delving into Artificial Intelligence (AI) and pioneering 6G advancements.

Over 55 per cent of TMT (Technology, Media, and Telecommunications) companies in India have fully integrated AI, with another 37 per cent in the scaling phase, per KPMG India.

Through the Bharat 6G Vision initiative, the government aims to secure 10 per cent of global 6G patents and is actively fostering research via funding for advanced testbeds and evaluating proposals to accelerate ecosystem development.

As per COAI, despite these milestones,



the telecom industry faces significant hurdles. Large Traffic Generators (LTGs) burden networks, forcing Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) to invest Rs10,000 crore in 2023. The lack of LTG contributions has cost the Indian exchequer Rs800 crore in AGR dues and taxes.

The Industry body has also complained about the unregulated OTT communication platforms. COAI says it creates disparities, as TSPs adhere to

strict security norms. Enforcing traceability and privacy rules for OTT services is imperative to ensure fairness.

The 6 GHz spectrum band, crucial for 5G, requires immediate allocation to mobile networks, while concerns over unauthorized Wi-Fi 6E routers sold online also demand resolution.

Infrastructure constraints, RoW challenges, and spectrum interference hinder network

rollouts, with the newly proposed QoS norms viewed as impractical by TSPs.

While TSPs comply with TRAI’s directives to curb spam, extending UCC regulations to OTT services is critical to address the root cause of pesky calls and messages.

COAI urges transparent spectrum auctions to integrate D2M with telecom networks, opposing the creation of standalone broadcasting networks.

Government initiatives such as abolishing the Wireless Operating License (WOL) and waving bank guarantee requirements for deferred spectrum payments since 2012 have alleviated financial burdens. However, the Supreme Court’s ruling on tax credits for telecom tower components also provided significant relief.

Agencies

US state funeral services for Jimmy Carter unfold in his hometown

HOUSTON

AMERICA’S final salute for former US President Jimmy Carter started on Saturday with a tribute to him outside his family’s farm as the old farm bell rang 39 times in his honour.

His six-day state funeral began in Americus at the Phoebe Sumter Medical Center, where current and former Secret Service agents who protected the former president loaded his remains into a black hearse and walked alongside as it rolled off the campus toward Plains, CBS News reported.

Carter passed away at the age of 100 on December 29. He served in the US for seven years before working on the family farm and running for office in Georgia, winning the governorship in 1970. He became the US President in 1976 and served a single term in office. In his post-presidency life, he followed his passion for humanitarian work and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

Mourners lined the main street in Plains, where Carter was born and lived most of his life. The motorcade paused for a brief time in front of the farm where he grew up and the National Park Service

rang a bell 39 times in his honour, in recognition of his status as the US’ 39th president, according to CBS News report.

The motorcade visited the state capitol in Atlanta, where a moment of silence was led by Governor Brian Kemp, Lt Governor Burt Jones, Mayor of Atlanta Andre Dickens, members of the Georgia Legislature and Georgia State Patrol Troopers.

In a service at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum in Atlanta, Jason Carter paid tribute to his grandfather, Jimmy Carter, and people who worked with him to push his message of service and help to others beyond US

borders.

He said, “This building is full of his life... His spirit fills this place.” Jason Carter said, “The reason his spirit fills this place is because of the people in this room.” He further said, “You continue the vibrant living legacy of what is my grandfather’s life’s work.”

Jimmy Carter’s son, James “Chip” Carter, paid tribute to his father and mother, Rosalynn Carter, who died in 2023. He said, “The two of them together changed the world.” He added, “It was an amazing thing to watch from so close.”

ANI

Bold initiatives needed to revive US-China relationship, says expert

NEW YORK

BOLD, forward-thinking initiatives are needed to revive U.S.-China ties, said a renowned international relations expert, describing the relationship as “the most consequential” in the world.

“China and America together are about 43 percent of the world’s economy ... The stakes are simply too high for us to continue down this path of confrontation,” Sarwar Kashmeri, host of Polaris-Live.com, a well-known Internet channel devoted to improving U.S.-China relations, told Xinhua in a recent interview.

The interview coincided with the release of Kashmeri’s Telegram IV on U.S.-China relations, a special

edition of his annual series compiling actionable recommendations for improving bilateral ties, based on his conversations with global experts on his Polaris-Live platform.

Kashmeri, a fellow at the New York City-based Foreign Policy Association, emphasized the significance of the U.S.-China relationship. “I would urge both America and China to think big, think boldly, think differently. That’s the way forward,” said Kashmeri, adding that he hopes his latest report will “stir the waters a bit and maybe do some good.”

He said he believes that with the right high-level initiatives and communication channels, China and the United States can shift the nar-



Protesters gather during the anti-war demonstration in Washington, D.C., the United States, March 18, 2023. Xinhua

rative from confrontation to cooperation.

“It’s going to take some patience and

bold thinking, but I’m confident that ultimately, sensible people on both sides will come to sensible conclusions,” he

said. One of Kashmeri’s key suggestions for reviving the relationship is increasing people-to-people exchanges, which he compared to then-US President Richard Nixon’s historic 1972 visit to China.

Kashmeri welcomed Chinese President Xi Jinping’s announcement to invite 50,000 young Americans to China for exchange and study programs in a five-year span, and urged the United States to reciprocate by welcoming more Chinese students and scholars.

“We need to get more Americans studying in China and more Chinese students coming to the U.S.,” Kashmeri said. “The more we can foster mutual understanding and personal connections, the better.” Additionally, Kashmeri highlighted the success of projects within the framework of the Belt and

Road Initiative (BRI), noting that while large multinational projects often face challenges, China and its BRI partners have successfully navigated obstacles, which he dubbed a major achievement.

The BRI, proposed by Xi in 2013, has now seen more than 150 countries and 30 international organizations sign cooperation agreements, spanning Eurasia, Africa, and Latin America.

“I intend to try and visit some of the big BRI projects, including the Chancay Port in Peru, that have been eminently successful ... What interests me is that any big multinational project can run into trouble, but China and the BRI partners, so far, have been able to work out their problems. And I think that’s a huge plus,” said Kashmeri.

Republicans reelect Mike Johnson US House Speaker despite dissent

WASHINGTON

US House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson was reelected to the chamber's top job on Friday by a razor-thin margin that highlighted potential fissures among President-elect Donald Trump's Republicans on Capitol Hill.

Johnson appeared to initially fall short of the majority he needed to retain his job in a roll-call vote that lasted nearly two hours, but two Republican opponents switched their votes to support him after lengthy negotiations, with at least one reporting receiving a call from Trump himself.

Johnson won reelection with 218 votes - the minimum number needed. Republicans control the chamber by a razor-thin 219-215 majority.

Following the vote, Johnson vowed to extend Trump's 2017 tax cuts, which are due to expire this year and roll back regulations.

"We're going to drastically cut back the size and scope of government," he said.

Other big challenges will loom, including addressing the nation's more than \$36 trillion in debt, which Congress will need to act on later this year.

Friday's vote was an early test of Republicans' ability to hang together as they advance Trump's agenda of tax cuts and border enforcement. It also tested Trump's clout on Capitol Hill, where a handful of Republicans have shown a willingness to defy him.

House Republicans have been racked by internal divisions over the last two years. Johnson was elevated to speaker after the party ousted his predecessor Kevin McCarthy in the middle of his term.

Members of Congress milled around the chamber for more than half an hour after voting had concluded, where Johnson and his lieutenants could be seen trying to persuade the holdouts.

Representative Keith Self, one of three Republicans to initially vote against Johnson, said he had a "lively" discussion with Trump after



House Speaker Mike Johnson closes the gavel after he and members of the House took the oath of office as the House of Representatives met to elect a speaker and convene the new 119th Congress at the Capitol in Washington, Jan 3, 2025. (PHOTO / AP)

doing so. He said he secured a promise that members from the party's right wing would be included in efforts to shape high-profile tax and immigration bills.

"We needed more input from members like myself - not a chairman, not a leadership position - and I think that's what we have done," he told reporters.

Along with Representative Ralph Norman, Self returned to the House floor to vote for Johnson. A lawmaker close to Johnson, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the speaker promised to run the House in a "constructive" way but did not agree to any specific rules changes to win their support.

Representative Thomas Massie, a vocal opponent of Johnson who has long been a thorn in the side of his party's

leadership, was the lone Republican to vote against him.

Another six Republicans had initially declined to vote at all before casting ballots for Johnson.

Trump congratulated Johnson following the vote. "Mike will be a Great Speaker, and our Country will be the beneficiary," he wrote on social media.

Launched out of turmoil

The mild-mannered Louisiana representative, 52, was vaulted from obscurity into one of Washington's most powerful jobs during three weeks of turmoil in October 2023, when Republicans forced out McCarthy and struggled to agree on a successor. The conservative Christian lawyer emerged as a consensus pick but has since struggled to keep his party unified.

In a role that is second in

line to the presidency after the vice president, Johnson will have a big job ahead. In addition to taking on Trump's sweeping legislative agenda, Congress will need to address the nation's debt ceiling later this year.

Johnson's 219-215 Republican majority is likely to narrow even further, at least temporarily, if the Senate confirms two Republican lawmakers to positions in Trump's administration, which begins Jan 20.

Trump has nominated Elise Stefanik to serve as ambassador to the United Nations and Mike Waltz to serve as his national security adviser. Another seat is vacant, as Republican Matt Gaetz resigned from Congress when he was nominated to serve as Trump's attorney general. Gaetz withdrew from that position as well in the face of allegations of sexual misconduct.

All three seats, which represent solidly Republican districts, are due to be filled in special elections later this year.

Republicans were also sworn into their new 53-47 Senate majority on Friday with Senator John Thune as their new leader.

Johnson over the past year angered some conservatives by repeatedly turning to Democrats to provide the votes to pass critical legislation, like bills to keep government agencies operating. He also faced a last-minute challenge late last month when Trump told House Republicans to scrap a government funding deal, demanding it also raise the nation's debt ceiling.

A revised version of that bill - not including Trump's debt-ceiling demand - passed the House only a few hours before the government would have shut down, and it received more support from Democrats than Republicans.

Putin's contacts with Russia's friends, including Vucic, promptly coordinated, says Kremlin

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin's contacts with friends and partners are coordinated as soon as possible, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told TASS, commenting on Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic's statement about plans for a conversation with the Russian leader.



Vucic said earlier at a meeting of the Serbian government that the US will soon prepare sanctions against NIS (Naftna Industrija Srbije), a company in which Gazprom has a stake. The Serbian leader said that he plans to send a request for a conversation with Putin for January 25-27.

"Talks with our friends and partners at the highest and other levels will be coordinated as soon as possible," the Kremlin spokesman told TASS when asked about the readiness to immediately organize a conversation between Putin and Vucic.

Vucic said that the US will officially announce the sanctions by January 15. Belgrade will then have 30 days until February 15 to take measures. During this period, Serbia expects to conclude an agreement on gas supplies and resolve the situation with the oil and gas company.

NIS is one of the most important energy companies in southeast Europe. Its main production facilities are located in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. The majority shareholders are Gazprom (56.15% of the shares) and the Serbian state (29.87%). **Agencies**

China's unyielding fight against corruption

BEIJING

CHINA'S top disciplinary agency is set to convene a pivotal plenary session from Jan. 6 to 8, where it will outline key priorities in the fight against corruption for the year ahead.

In a recent meeting, Chinese leadership assessed the country's current anti-corruption landscape, emphasizing the need for "exceptional" clarity of purpose and resolve in the fight against graft, with zero tolerance for complacency or leniency.

Over the past decade, China has maintained an unprecedented anti-corruption campaign, marked by the investigation of a record number of high-ranking officials and its broad impact across various sectors.

Today, this relentless crackdown has become the norm. People now understand that the leadership's pledge that "anti-corruption is an ongoing endeavor without end" is not mere rhetoric, but a steadfast commitment to action.

China's anti-corruption battle continues to roar. In 2024, it made waves in sectors such as finance, energy, healthcare and sports, while dismantling sophisticated forms of graft that sought to conceal themselves as legitimate market practices.

According to the country's top anti-corruption watchdog, 58 high-ranking officials under the supervision of the Communist Party of China Central Committee were probed last year.

The crackdown on corruption has also intensified in areas impacting the daily lives of ordinary people. A campaign launched in April 2024 saw 433,000 low-ranking officials disciplined, with 14,000 referred for prosecution.

In its ongoing efforts to track down corrupt fugitives, China has secured the return of 1,306 individuals who had fled abroad and also recovered illicit assets totaling 15.4 billion yuan (about 2.1 billion U.S. dollars) between January and November 2024.

KEY SECTORS PRONE TO CORRUPTION

China has broadened its fight against corruption in key sectors vulnerable to malpractice, including finance, energy, tobacco, pharmaceuticals, sports and infrastructure projects.

Among them, the pharmaceutical sector stands out, with 52,000 cases filed and 2,634 individuals referred to prosecutors. These individuals were allegedly implicated in corrupt practices, including accepting kickbacks, defrauding medical insurance funds, and manipulating appointment slots for profit, according to a report by the National Supervisory Commission.

The crackdown on misconduct in this sector has delivered tangible results, with medical insurance departments recovering 24.2 billion yuan in misappropriated funds. In 2024, compared to 2022, average discharge costs in public hospitals dropped by 5.7 percent, while medication costs fell by 12.1 percent.

Sports is another key focus of the anti-corruption drive. In May 2024, Gou Zhongwen, former head of the General Administration of Sport (GAS), was placed under investigation. Gou was subsequently arrested in December last year on charges of bribery and abuse of power.

Several high-ranking sports officials stood trial in 2024, including Du Zhaocai, former deputy head of the GAS, who was sentenced to 14 years in prison, and Li Tie, former head coach of the national men's football team and a renowned former player, who received a 20-year sentence.

Xinhua

Chinese enterprises embrace new opportunities in ice and snow economy

HANGZHOU

IN a bustling workshop of a sports-wear company, workers were racing to fulfill an urgent order of 50,000 pairs of ski goggles, a popular item in the trolleys of megacity shoppers, around late December.

"Our production lines have been running at full tilt," said Pan Xinru, the workshop director of Zhejiang Vista Sports Goods Co., Ltd.

Located in a small coastal county-level city Wenling in Zhejiang Province, a manufacturing hub in eastern China, the company has been producing ski goggles since 2007, primarily for the European and American markets.

After China successfully hosted the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, the company sensed a shift in the market and swiftly adjusted its strategy by increasing investment in the domestic market.

Wang Keli, deputy head of the company's administration department, noted that the sales volume in the domestic market at present accounts for about one-third of the total.

In recent years, enthusiasm for ice and snow sports in China has surged,

leading to a year-on-year growth in Vista's order book.

To efficiently handle the influx of orders, the company invested over 17 million yuan (about 2.4 million U.S. dollars) in 2024 to expand its capacity, now operating five state-of-the-art ski goggles production lines with an annual output value of 600 million yuan.

Beyond ski goggles, Vista has expanded its product lines to include snowboards. In 2023, the company secured orders for more than 10,000 snowboards, which generated a production value exceeding 20 million yuan. Their snowboards are particularly sought-after in markets across Beijing, Jilin, Heilongjiang and Xinjiang, all of which are home to several famous ski resorts.

Liu Wen, from Ninghai Xingda Leisure Products Co., Ltd., noted that while their snow sports equipment was initially aimed at international customers, the surge in winter sports enthusiasm - particularly following events like the Beijing Winter Olympics - has sparked a significant rise in domestic interest. "We used to get an occasional order from a merchant or a

consumer, but now we're seeing more bulk orders," Liu said.

Liu added that as demand for ice and snow tourism becomes increasingly diversified and quality-driven, the demand for in-depth, personalized travel services is expected to grow explosively, which will undoubtedly benefit the ice and snow equipment industry.

"In-depth travel goes beyond simply admiring ice sculptures, snow landscapes, or enjoying basic skiing. It involves a deeper engagement with ice and snow activities and cultural experiences, which will further unlock the market's potential," Liu said.

Ninghai's ice and snow equipment sector, predominantly specializing in sports poles, has reached an annual production value exceeding 920 million yuan, capturing over 75 percent of the national market share in terms of output value.

In Yiwu, a Chinese city dubbed "the world's supermarket," business owners are also experiencing the growing surge of the ice and snow economy.

Since September 2024, Chen Jing has been swamped with orders. The latest hit is a new model of ice skates

that can be converted into inline skates by removing the blades, appealing to customers of all ages, Chen said, adding that sales of snow goggles, skiing protective gear, and related products have surged nearly 50 percent year on year.

Zhuji, renowned for its high-quality socks, has also benefited from the booming wave of ice and snow tourism. "We roughly estimate that our annual sales exceeded 600,000 pairs in 2024," said Xu Zhongfu, head of Zhuji Yuanjin Textile Co., Ltd. Leveraging the rapid growth of the ice and snow economy in recent years, winter sports socks - particularly ski socks - have become increasingly popular with consumers.

Zhejiang, situated in the subtropical zone, lacks extensive ice and snow resources, yet the thriving ice and snow tourism and sports have injected new vitality into the local manufacturing sector and have also fueled local enthusiasm for related activities. According to figures from Zhejiang's sports bureau, there are now 29 ice and snow sports venues in the province, of which 19 are ski resorts.

S. Korea's presidential security chief defies Yoon arrest bid

SEOUL

THE chief of security for South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol said yesterday he could not cooperate with efforts to arrest the impeached leader, in remarks that could push the political crisis towards another high-stakes confrontation.

With a warrant for Yoon's arrest on grounds of insurrection set to expire at midnight (1500 GMT) on Monday, the official, Park Chong-jun, cited the legal debate surrounding the warrant as the reason for the lack of cooperation.

"Please refrain from insulting remarks that the presidential security service has been reduced to a private army," he said in a statement, adding that it had provided security to all presidents for 60 years, regardless of political affiliation.

The comments came after a Seoul court rejected a complaint from Yoon's lawyers that the arrest warrant was illegal and invalid, the Yonhap news agency said. Telephone calls to the court to seek comment went unanswered.

"Judging the legitimacy of any legal interpretation and execution is difficult," Seok Dong-hyeon, a lawyer advising Yoon, said on Facebook.

"If there is an error in the legality of law enforcement against the incumbent president, it will be a big problem."

Yoon became the first incumbent South Korean president to face arrest for his botched attempt to declare martial law on Dec 3, which triggered political chaos in Asia's fourth-largest economy.

The conservative president was impeached by parliament and is suspended from official duties while the Constitutional Court decides whether to reinstate or remove him.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was set to arrive in Seoul on Sunday for talks with senior officials.

On Friday, Yoon's presidential security service and military troops had blocked criminal investigators from arresting him in a six-hour standoff.

In Sunday's statement, Park dismissed as "preposterous" an accusa-



Supporters of impeached South Korea president Yoon Suk-yeol take part in a rally near his residence as snow falls in Seoul yesterday. AFP

tion by the main opposition Democratic Party that he had ordered presidential security officers to use live ammunition if they got "caught short" in Friday's standoff.

Yoon's lawyers have said the warrant was unconstitutional because the anti-graft force leading his criminal investigation has no authority

under South Korean law to investigate any case involving insurrection accusations.

In a statement on Sunday, the lawyers threatened to report to prosecutors Oh Dong-woon, the chief of the Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials (CIO) and the investigators for what they

called an illegal effort to execute the warrant, in the absence of authority to do so.

The CIO did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Rallies in heavy snow

The dispute over the warrant came against the backdrop of demonstrations by thousands of protesters near Yoon's official residence amid heavy snow in the capital, Seoul, with some rallies demanding his arrest, and others opposing it.

"We have to re-establish the foundation of our society by punishing the president who has denied the constitution," said Yang Kyung-soo, leader of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), a major labour group that joined the protests. "We must bring down the criminal Yoon Suk-yeol and arrest and detain him as soon as possible."

Security officials installed barbed wire inside the compound and set up barricades with buses on Saturday, Yonhap said.

Nearby, Yoon supporters held

placards reading "We will fight for President Yoon Suk-yeol" and "Stop the Steal", a phrase popularized by US President-elect Donald Trump's supporters after he lost the 2020 election.

Some protesters had gathered overnight in downtown Seoul, where temperatures fell below minus 5 degrees Celsius (23 degrees Fahrenheit). More than 6 cm (2.4 inches) of snow has piled up in some areas, prompting a warning.

Similar rallies on Saturday saw police detain two protesters accused of assaulting police officers, Yonhap said.

That day, the CIO again asked acting President Choi Sang-mok, the finance minister, to order the security service to comply with the arrest warrant.

A finance ministry spokesperson declined to comment. In a statement yesterday the ministry said Choi urged authorities to make sure no one was hurt by efforts to enforce the law.

Agencies



Cricketers making the senior national men's squad are pictured celebrating a wicket taken by their teammate when the squad took part in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B in Kampala last year. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

Tz Blue hammers Tz Green in TCA 50 Overs Trials tourney

By Correspondent
Japheth Kazenga

THE Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) 50 Overs Trials Tournament has gathered pace, with Tz Blue cricketers picking a comprehensive six-wicket victory over Tz Green in a clash which took place in Dar es Salaam recently.

The showdown, featuring squads made up of selected senior national cricketers, gears towards gauging their skills before taking part in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B in Hong Kong next month.

The Kassim Nassor-led Tz Green began to bat in the tie and wound up their batting time with 153/10 in 38.4 overs.

Top-order cricketer Alishah Bukhari's 55 runs, Nassor's 21 runs and Mohamed Yunus' 31 runs were significant batting displays when the squad took the crease.

Tz Green successfully

dealt with an early blow of top-order batsman Athuman Siwa's exit for duck, given Yunus and Nassor showcased their batting virtuosity.

The two batsmen complemented Bukhari's solid showing with impressive figures in their respective turns at the crease later on.

Youthful cricketer Darpan Jobanputra, deployed in the top order, once again substantiated his intent on nailing his spot in the senior national squad after ending with 17 runs for Tz Green.

Jobanputra was one of the best performers for the national U-19 team, which excelled in last year's ICC Men's U-19 Cricket World Cup Africa Qualifier Division 2 in Dar es Salaam.

Sivaraj Selvaraj, too, finished with two digits for Tz Green, scoring 10 runs whilst blasting one boundary.

Tz Blue's pacer Ally Mpeka had his outfit solidly restricting Tz Green's figure to a manageable to-

tal, thanks to his ferocious showing.

Mpeka ended with the best bowling figure given the pacer took 5-21 and notched a 2.42 economy rate.

He was ably assisted by youthful skipper Dhruvit Mehta (2-31 and a 4.43 economy rate) and Karim Athuman (2-17 and a 4.25 economy rate) to repel Tz Green's batting attack.

Needing 154 runs to secure victory, the Mehta-led Tz Blue solidly got down to a successful chase, grabbing 159/4 in 26.5 overs.

Opener Ivan Ismail ended during Tz Blue's chase, notching 57 runs.

His fellow opener Mehta was too merciless with the bat given the performer garnered 56-ball 35.

Other promising cricketers, Salmini Yusuph (16 runs not out) and Augustine Mwamele kept the game beyond Tz Green's reach with two-digit figures. Mwamele scored 11 runs.

Mpeka ended with the

bat in hand after garnering six runs not out, which included a six.

The batting team's quest for the win was notably boosted by 27 extras leaked by the below-par Tz Green bowling unit.

The extras were made up of 13 byes, 10 wides, and four leg byes.

Selvaraj and Nassor were the bowlers who vainly battled to turn around Tz Green's fortunes, finishing with 2-28 and 2-58 respectively.

The Tz Blue cricketers, therefore, successfully bounced back after succumbing to a defeat a day back.

Tz Blue had, before taking on Tz Green, lost to Tz Yellow by 82 runs at the Leaders Club venue.

ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League is a cricket competition contested in the List A format, and the bottom level of the three-league Cricket World Cup qualification system, which was introduced in 2019.

Twelve teams partici-

pate in two groups, with the top team of each group advancing to the World Cup Qualifier Play-off, which is a pathway to qualification for the next Cricket World Cup.

The Challenge League replaced Divisions Three, Four and Five from the World Cricket League in determining World Cup qualification. The first edition was in 2019-2022.

The 2024-2026 ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League is the second edition of the ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League and a cricket tournament which forms part of the 2027 Cricket World Cup qualification process.

The league features 12 teams - those finishing second-fourth in their respective league in the 2019-2022 ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League, the top four finishers from the 2024 ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League Play-off, and two teams from the 2023 Cricket World Cup Qualifier Play-off.

What Dayoo, Aslam, and James Clear teach us about making this year 2025 count

By Kilo Mgya

DRIVING back home from church on the 1st of January, the crisp morning air was filled with hope, resolutions, and an unrelenting determination to make this year count.

Then came that song on the radio: Dayoo's *Huu Mwaka*; an anthem that instantly resonates.

Dayoo belts out bold declarations: this year, he will "force" things to happen. He will make money, rise to the top, and we will eventually call him "boss." It's an unapologetically ambitious song, filled with grit and resolve.

Yet even Dayoo, with all his bravado, acknowledges life's unpredictability. If need be, he'll force outcomes by unconventional means, like aligning with a sugar mummy! Say what you will, but his spirit is magnetic, his determination contagious.

As *Huu Mwaka* faded, another song queued up: Aslam's *Tukutane Mwakani*. It struck a different chord. Here was a man admitting that the year didn't go as planned.

Unlike Dayoo's fiery declarations of now, Aslam turns his gaze to the future: "next year will be my year." A quieter hope, tinged with self-reflection and perhaps even a hint of self-doubt, but still optimism nonetheless.

It made me pause. Is it true that Aslam achieved nothing this past year? Not even small wins?

This question brought me back to James Clear's powerful book, *Atomic Habits*. Clear emphasizes the importance of small wins, those seemingly minor victories that lay the foundation for bigger achievements.

Similarly, Seif El Hakim, host of *The Alpha Talks*, passionately explains in one of the podcast episodes how small wins build confidence and momentum toward success.

What do these songs and success strategies have in common? Small wins aren't just incidental, they're critical.

Success, Clear argues, is often the result of compound effort, where incremental progress builds over time.

However, many of us get stuck in what Clear calls the "Valley of Disappointment," that period when our efforts seem to yield little to no visible results.

It's tempting to give up here. Picture a bamboo tree: it spends years growing roots underground before shooting up dramatically.

Dayoo's *Huu Mwaka* spirit helps us push through this valley. His unyielding determination is the grit we need

to stay the course. But just as important perhaps even more so is the ability to recognize and celebrate small victories along the way.

Take entrepreneurs, for instance. Launching a startup often feels like climbing a massive mountain. The ultimate goal might be securing a million-dollar investment or building a globally recognized brand. But before reaching those peaks, there are countless small wins to acknowledge: completing a prototype, securing a first customer, or receiving that first positive review.

Each of these milestones creates a sense of progress, reinforcing the habit loop James Clear describes. Seeing progress becomes a cue that triggers motivation. Motivation fuels more effort. That effort leads to further progress, creating a cycle that propels long-term success.

Whether you are a student, a creative, or a CEO, the principle is universal. A young professional aiming for a promotion might find waiting for the "big moment" draining. Celebrating small wins, like completing a tough project, mastering a new skill, or building a strong network, creates momentum.

For CEOs, Clear's habit loop is a game-changer for fostering organizational growth. Recognizing milestones, like achieving quarterly targets or launching new initiatives, motivates teams and instills a culture of progress.

Dayoo's *Huu Mwaka* reminds us to keep striving, to force things into existence with determination and grit. Aslam's *Tukutane Mwakani*, on the other hand, acknowledges that setbacks are part of the journey, but hope is eternal.

The truth lies somewhere between the two. Ambition fuels action, but patience and celebrating small wins build resilience. Like the bamboo tree, our efforts often grow unseen before we achieve dramatic results.

So, as we drive into this new year, let's take cues from both artists. Let's channel Dayoo's fiery resolve while embracing Aslam's reflective optimism. And above all, let's remember James Clear's wisdom: small wins lead to big victories.

After all, *huu mwaka ni wetu* - this year is ours. Let's celebrate every step along the way.

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Participants pictured during the end-of-year festivities known as 'Yalda Night' for Iranians living in the country held recently in Dar. Photo: Correspondent

Iranians celebrate 'Yalda Night' in Dar with poetry and tradition

By Guardian
Correspondent

THE Iranian Cultural Center in Dar es Salaam has celebrated the end-of-year festivities known as "Yalda Night" for Iranians living in the country, through entertainment and the preservation of their cultural traditions.

The celebrations, held at the end of 2024 at their center, were attended

by Iranians from various parts of the country.

The event featured ancient Persian poetry, including selections from the *Divan of Hafez*, which are an integral part of Yalda Night traditions.

The Director General of the Iranian Center, Dr. Mohsen Mareef, speaking during the festivities, described the event as a powerful reminder of cultural identity and a joyful

occasion to share traditions within a multicultural setting.

He urged all Iranians to use these celebrations as an opportunity to build bridges of understanding, celebrate their shared humanity, and work diligently toward living harmoniously in a world filled with diverse customs and traditions.

"The New Year is an opportunity to embrace

coexistence and mutual understanding among people and nations. The themes of Yalda Night - light over darkness, hope over despair, and unity over division - can be universally applied and teach us the importance of fostering solidarity and goodwill," said Dr. Mareef.

He elaborated further that the cultural celebrations began with the recitation of ancient Persian

poetry, including verses from the *Divan of Hafez*, which are a vital part of Yalda Night traditions.

He added that participants also enjoyed storytelling sessions that highlighted the historical and cultural significance of Yalda.

"A cultural feast, surrounded by pomegranates, pumpkins, and Persian delicacies, created an atmosphere of warmth and solidarity. It was not only a moment to honor Iranian heritage but also an opportunity to foster deeper connections within the community," he emphasized.



Dayoo

Chelsea must be more clinical, says Maresca

By Sam Tobin

LONDON, Jan 4 (Reuters) - Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca said his side must be more clinical after they conceded a late equaliser in a disappointing 1-1 Premier League draw at Crystal Palace on Saturday.

Cole Palmer gave Chelsea a deserved first-half lead, but he and Nicolas Jackson missed good chances as they failed to kill the game off before Jean-Philippe Mateta's late leveller for the hosts.

Chelsea have picked up just two points in a four-game winless run, leaving them nine points adrift of leaders Liverpool who have two games in hand - and looking over their shoulders in a close race for the Champions League spots.

Maresca, who had repeatedly talked down Chelsea's title chances, was relatively pleased with a performance he thought should have earned his side all three points.

"Probably we did enough to win the game today," Maresca told reporters. "Between the first half and second half, I think we created chances enough to win the game."

"But in football you need to be clinical, otherwise the game is always open."

Maresca said he was encouraged by the number of chances Chelsea had created, as they also did in the 2-0 defeat at Ipswich Town on Monday.

"I always said that the important thing is to create chances, because if you create chances it means that you are doing the right things," he said.

"Sometimes you create and you score. Sometimes you create one chance and you score one. And sometimes you need to create 10 to score two."

Maresca was also full of praise for 18-year-old defender Joshua Acheampong, who looked assured on his first Premier League start.

"All the players for me, they were good today. But if I have to decide one, I think for sure Josh was our best player because of (his) age, because it was the first game (starting in the league)."

"Josh, for me, can be a top player for this club. But he needs the right path, the right moment."

"With young players you have to decide in which moment and we decided today because we saw that he is ready. Today I think he showed how good he is."

REUTERS



Guardiola plays down 4-1 win over West Ham, saying squad needs improvement



Manchester City's Erling Haaland scores their third goal during their Premier League match against West Ham United at Etihad Stadium, in Manchester, Britain on January 4, 2025. REUTERS

MANCHESTER, England

WHILE Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola said he would sleep better after Saturday's 4-1 Premier League rout of West Ham United, he brushed off suggestions that his team were back to being the "old Manchester City". Erling Haaland bagged his first double in a league game since September and Savinho set up three goals in City's victory that left them sixth in the table and two points behind fourth-placed Chelsea.

Though City won back-to-back games for the first time since October, Guardiola said it was not a sign that their slump was over.

"No, you judge the results," he told reporters after the crowd-pleasing

win at Etihad Stadium. "We saw in many years our level. We are not at our level."

"Don't misunderstand me. I'm so happy. I will sleep better until the FA Cup (City host Salford City on Jan. 11). But you watched the games for years, we're not at the level, come on. Against Everton we played much better than today. And we draw, big crisis, disaster."

"Of course there are positives. If you ask me the team is playing like the years, of course not."

Often-injured Kevin De Bruyne played the full match, a positive sign just a day after Guardiola said the Belgian's fitness and form would be assessed before the club decides on a contract extension.

De Bruyne's current deal expires in June.

The 33-year-old, who has scored two goals and provided his third assist of the season on Phil Foden's second-half goal on Saturday, shrugged off questions about his contract status after the win.

"I don't care," De Bruyne told the BBC. "I am just trying to get back to my level. I feel every week I am getting better. I can go for 90 minutes now. It has been an uncomfortable couple of months with the injury."

Guardiola gave Savinho a mixed review after he assisted on Haaland's goals and his deflected shot in the 10th minute led to an own goal by Vladimir Coufal. The Brazilian had scored his first goal in a City shirt in their 2-0 win over Leicester City only six days earlier.

"He's clean in his mind. He doesn't think nothing

in his head in the past," the manager said. "Normally many years here, the players think they deserve something special for what they have done. Big mistake."

"(But) Savio has to do everything to win," Guardiola added. "Having a left foot in the left side, old-fashioned vintage football. Has a lot to improve, not aggressive enough without the ball, a little soft in many departments. Right now has something special for the team. I'm so happy for him and he deserves to play."

Meanwhile, in Brighton, Arsenal's costly 1-1 Premier League draw at Brighton & Hove Albion on Saturday was compounded by an injury to 17-year-old goalscorer Ethan Nwaneri as coach Mikel Arteta blamed simple mistakes for his

side dropping points.

Nwaneri did a superb job of replacing the injured Bukayo Saka on the right wing and scored in the 16th minute, but he had to be withdrawn at the interval before the Gunners conceded a penalty to drop two points in the title race.

"Really bad news, because I think we've lost him (Nwaneri). We had to take him off at halftime with some muscular issues," Arteta told the BBC.

Nwaneri's departure coincided with Arsenal losing their way against a Brighton side that struggled to create chances, and the result left the Gunners second in the table, five points adrift of Liverpool who have two games in hand.

"In the second half, we didn't really grab the game

or dominate enough to have certain moments and be more of a threat in their half, but defensively we did not concede much," Arteta said.

"Today was not about fatigue, it was about the simple things that we have to do in ball possession to give chances and dominate the game in the right areas," the Spaniard added.

Arteta described the decision to award a penalty to Brighton for a clash of heads between Joao Pedro and Arsenal defender William Saliba as bizarre.

"We are really disappointed with the decision that leads to the goal, because I have never seen something like this in my life. He (Saliba) touches the ball as well," Arteta said.

REUTERS

Tottenham boss Postecoglou vents anger after another loss

LONDON

TOTTENHAM Hotspur manager Ange Postecoglou came out fighting after another damaging Premier League defeat on Saturday, lauding his injury-hit team's performance and venting his frustration at the injustice of it all.

A 2-1 home loss to Newcastle United was hardly how Postecoglou needed the New Year to begin. With a League Cup semi-final first leg looming against Liverpool on Wednesday and their next Premier League fixture away at Arsenal, things could potentially get worse for the under-pressure Australian.

Tottenham have now taken only five points from their last eight Premier League games and a run of six home league games without a win is their longest such streak

since 2008.

There were mitigating circumstances on Saturday, with injuries and illness decimating the squad.

Third-choice keeper Brandon Austin was given his debut with Fraser Forster confined to his sickbed, while Tottenham's patched up central defence featured Radu Dragusin and youngster Archie Gray - both of whom had been ill in the build-up.

Tottenham were already without the likes of injured keeper Guglielmo Vicario, defenders Cristian Romero, Micky van de Ven and Ben Davies and forward Richarlison, while midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur was suspended on Saturday.

Yet they began the game well, taking the lead in the fourth minute through Dominic Solanke's header, and domi-



Newcastle United's Anthony Gordon scores their first goal past Tottenham Hotspur's Brandon Austin. London, January 4, 2025. REUTERS

nated the second half as they battled to get back on level terms.

Postecoglou has at times cut a gloomy figure during Tottenham's recent struggles, but on Saturday he said his threadbare side had played brilliantly.

He was furious that Newcastle's equaliser, scored by Anthony Gordon, had been allowed to stand despite a handball by Joelinton.

'ANGRIEST I HAVE EVER BEEN'

"I'm hugely proud of the performance and shattered we didn't get the reward the players deserved, it was brilliant, outstanding and we deserved to win," Postecoglou, whose team have 24 points from 20 games, told reporters.

"On any other day, on a fair and even playing ground, we would win that game."

Pushed on Newcastle's

equaliser, Postecoglou added: "I'm just really, really angry, angriest I think I have ever been in my career that they were denied the right rewards for a fantastic performance."

"Don't keep asking me about the decision. If you guys have no opinion about it that's fine. I know you just want me to say something but I'm not going to. I think it's clear. Now whether people agree with me or not whether it wasn't handball or it was accidental, I'm just not interested in any of that discussion."

"What I'm saying is, on any given day with a fair and even playing field and logical thought processes we would have won that game, that's it. You can make what you want of that."

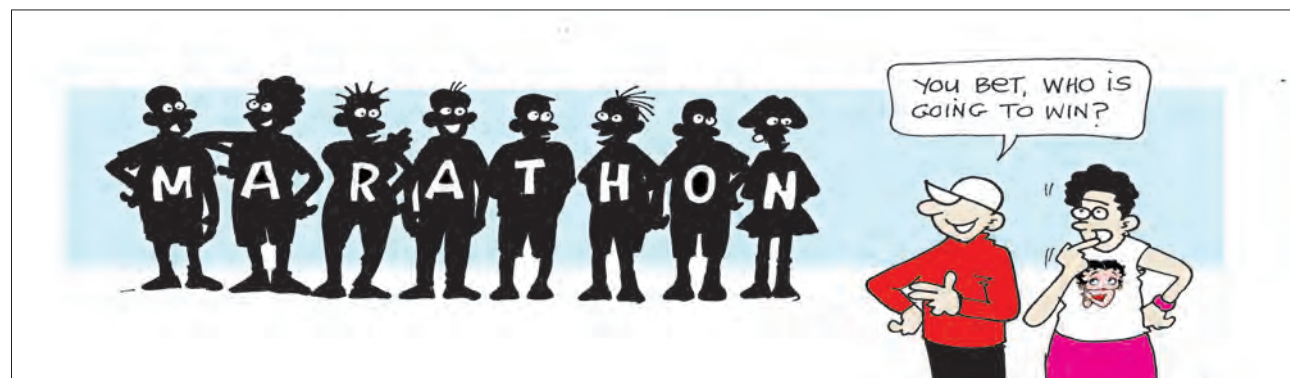
Newcastle manager Eddie Howe had some sympathy, admitting there was a handball but said the rules had been applied correctly. He was keener to talk about his side's fifth successive league win that has put them right in the mix in the battle for a top-four finish.

"On another day maybe we could have led by two at the break and then second half we had to defend really well," he said. "I'm really pleased to get over the line and win the game."

Both sides have a quick turnaround with Newcastle back in north London against Arsenal in their League Cup semi-final on Tuesday, and Tottenham at home to Liverpool on Wednesday.

REUTERS

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

What Dayoo, Aslam, and James Clear teach us about making this year count PAGE 19



Australia end 10-year wait for series win over India

By Nick Mulvenney

AUSTRALIA held their collective nerve to clinch a blockbuster five-test series against India 3-1 yesterday and take custody of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for the first time in a decade.

In keeping with a pulsating series where momentum swung back and forth by the session, the fifth test remained on a knife edge until the final hour when Australia eased to a six-wicket triumph.

Perhaps helped by Jasprit Bumrah's inability to bowl because of a back injury, Travis Head and debutant Beau Webster guided Australia to their victory target of 162 runs with an unbroken fifth-wicket stand of 58.

The win in front of a packed house at a Sydney Cricket Ground bathed in pink for Glenn McGrath's cancer charity also ensured Australia will defend their World Test Championship title against South Africa at Lord's in June.

"It felt like it was kind of seeping throughout the whole series so to finish it 3-1, to hold the trophy, is an amazing feeling," said Australia skipper Pat Cummins.

"I'm immensely proud, I absolutely love playing with these guys and it's been a lot of fun along the way as well."

The match had been played on fast forward over the first two days with 15 wickets falling on Saturday, and Australia removed four more in the first hour on a sunny Sunday morning to dismiss India for 157.

In the absence of Player of the Series Bumrah, his fellow pace bowlers Prasidh Krishna and Mohammed Siraj kept Australian nerves on edge by removing four top-order batters on the spicy wicket.

Krishna sent back opener Sam Konstas for 22, Marnus Labuschagne for six and Steve Smith for four before lunch, while Usman Khawaja was caught behind off Siraj for 41 after the break to leave Australia on 104-4.

It has a market capitalization of €223 million, or just over \$232 million.00:0901:16

Smith was particularly forlorn as he trudged back to the dressing room on 9,999 career runs, having been dismissed one run shy of becoming the fourth Australian to pass the 10,000-run milestone.

Head, who scored 34 not out, and Webster, who was unbeaten on 39, got the job done, however, the latter continuing his nerveless debut by clubbing the winning runs with a straight four.

"It was a little frustrating but sometimes you have to respect your body," said Bumrah, who took 32 wickets over the five matches before the back spasms struck on Saturday.

"It was a great series. The whole series was well fought and we were still in the match today. Our young players will take a lot of learnings for the future."

Australia's victory was all the more impressive for having been achieved despite a 295-run thumping in the series opener in Perth.

What Australia coach Andrew McDonald described as the "generational" bowling talent on both teams ensured that the batters were on the back foot for much of the series with big scores at a premium. Only five centuries were scored, two of them by Head with 140 in Australia's win in the day-night second test in Adelaide and 152 in the drawn third test in Brisbane.

The series felt like the end of an era for India, who had overpowered Australia on their last two tours having finally found a way to win Down Under in 2018-19.

All-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin retired mid-series and out-of-form captain Rohit Sharma was dropped for the fifth test at his own request, while Virat Kohli failed to fire on what was surely his final test tour of Australia.

In Bumrah, though, they had the best player on the field and while he was bowling, their hopes of a third straight triumph in Australia to keep the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for a fifth straight series remained alive.

REUTERS

Ramovic hails Yanga's resilience after thrilling 3-1 win over TP Mazembe



By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

YOUNG Africans head coach Sead Ramovic lauded his players' resilience and determination following their pivotal 3-1 victory over TP Mazembe in a CAF Champions League Group A clash on Saturday at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

The result has rekindled Young Africans' hopes of reaching the quarterfinals for the second consecutive season.

"I think we played against a very, very difficult team," Ramovic (pictured) said during the post-match press conference. "We came into the game knowing we needed three points to stay in the race, and there were nerves. But we also knew our strengths and qualities, and the performance showed that."

The game saw striker Clement Mzize and star midfielder Stephane Aziz Ki rise to the occasion. Mzize struck twice, while Aziz Ki netted the second goal, capping a dominant performance by the Tanzanian champions.

Young Africans fell behind early in the 16th minute after TP Mazembe capitalized on a penalty. Shadrack Boka committed a foul that led to the spot-kick converted by Badara Faty.

However, the setback galvanized Young Africans, who responded with greater intensity.

Mzize levelled the score in the 32nd minute with a spectacular long-range shot after receiving a well-placed pass from Boka. The equalizer shifted momentum firmly in Young Africans' favour as they pushed for more goals.

Just before halftime, Prince Dube and Aziz Ki squandered

two clear chances to give the hosts the lead, leaving the score 1-1 at the break.

Young Africans returned for the second half with renewed energy and intent. Aziz Ki put the hosts ahead in the 56th minute, finishing off a precise pass from Khalid Aucho.

Four minutes later, Mzize sealed the win with his second goal of the match, latching onto a clever assist from

Dube to make it 3-1.

Ramovic praised his team's composure and determination.

"Even when we were down, we didn't give up. We pressed harder and stayed confident," he noted. "The number of chances we created some we missed shows the quality and effort of the team. This speaks to the players' commitment and the hard work of the entire technical staff."

nical staff."

The coach made key substitutions late in the game, bringing on Kennedy Musonda, Duke Abuya, and Salum Abubakar to reinforce the midfield and defense.

Mazembe also made changes but failed to alter the course of the match as the Jangwani-based side maintained their dominance.

Ramovic extended gratitude to his backroom staff and supporters, saying: "The fans were incredible. Their support was crucial to our victory. This win belongs to everyone who works tirelessly behind the scenes."

With this victory, Young Africans climbed to four points in Group A, moving off the bottom and leaving Mazembe with just two points after four matches.

Young Africans now face two crucial group-stage games: an away fixture against group leaders Al Hilal and a home clash with MC Alger.

Ramovic remained optimistic about his team's chances of progressing.

"We have four points and two games in hand. We need to fight hard in the coming matches and secure victories to qualify for the quarterfinals," he said.

The result underscores Young Africans' growing stature in African football as they continue their quest for continental glory. With renewed confidence and tactical discipline, the Wananchi are determined to make their mark in this year's CAF Champions League.

Tabora United poised to sign Gabon's top goalkeeper Jean-Noel Amonome

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

TABORA United are on the brink of completing the high-profile signing of Gabon's first-choice goalkeeper, Jean-Noel Amonome.

The experienced shot-stopper (pictured), who previously played for South Africa's AmaZulu and AS Arta Solar in Djibouti, is expected to bring depth and competition to the club's goalkeeping department.

Amonome's arrival will intensify competition with the club's current number one goalkeeper, Hussein Masalanga, and backup Haroun Mandanda.

The signing comes as Tabora United seek to fortify their squad for the second half of the Premier League season.

A reliable source within the club confirmed that negotiations with Amonome are in their final stages.

"The management is in advanced talks to finalize the deal with Amonome. The

process is progressing well, and we are optimistic about securing his services," the source revealed.

The source further emphasized the importance of the Gabonese international's addition to the team: "His arrival will undoubtedly strengthen our squad. As the first-choice goalkeeper for his national team, he brings a wealth of experience and quality that will solidify our defensive capabilities."

"We need to improve in every area, and Amonome fits perfectly into our vision for success."

The push to sign Amonome aligns with the recommendations of Tabora United's head coach, Anicet Kiazayid, who has called for reinforcements during the current transfer window.

Kiazayid is keen to bolster his squad with one striker, three midfielders, a defender, and a goalkeeper to ensure the team's competitiveness in the second round of the league.

The coach is determined

to avoid a repeat of last season when Tabora United had to endure a nerve-wracking playoff to retain their Premier League status.

The source acknowledged the management's commitment to addressing the coach's concerns: "We are working tirelessly to meet the coach's needs. The goal is to strengthen every department and secure our place in the league next season without relying on playoffs."

Tabora United have had an encouraging first half of the 2024/25 Premier League season, sitting fifth on the table with 25 points from 15 matches.

The team has secured seven wins, four draws, and four losses, including an impressive victory over defending champions Young Africans SC.

The management and technical team are optimistic about building on this momentum as they prepare for the league's second round. However, they rec-

ognize the need to address key weaknesses to maintain their top-five position and push for a strong finish.

After the ongoing Mapinduzi Cup break, Tabora United will resume their Premier League campaign with a challenging set of fixtures. They are set to face Namungo FC, Kagera Sugar FC, and KenGold in their opening matches of the second round.

The management believes that Amonome's addition, along with other potential signings, will provide the team with the necessary edge to navigate these fixtures successfully.

Tabora United's efforts to strengthen their squad reflect their ambition to establish themselves as a stable force in Tanzanian football.

With a solid first-round performance and key reinforcements underway, the club is determined to avoid the relegation dogfight and instead focus on securing a comfortable position in the league standings.



Flexibles by David Chikoko

