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Z'bar wants to uplift technology training

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR authorities have pledged to improve the Karume Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), as part of efforts to improve education delivery as a whole.

Second Vice President Hemed Suleiman Abdulla (pictured) made this affirmation at the 8th KIST graduation ceremony at the weekend, standing in for President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, attributing the speech he made to the president.

It affirmed that the government values contributions of the institute in elevating science and technology in the islands, on the basis of ongoing projects backed by the World Bank in particular.

The facility has been producing a good number of graduates who contribute to development efforts and there is a need to enhance the quality of expertise of the output at KIST, the remarks underlined.

The government was designing projects geared to improve the quality of output at the institute, with expansion plans underway, including the construction of classrooms and hostels, the president noted.

The government is determined to improve engineering training as well as other spheres of science and technology development, with an ongoing project targeting preparing the youth for a competitive job market and the blue economy.

Key areas targeted for training include the diploma level in marine engineering, mechanical engineering and the management of seafood, fruits and vegetables, he said, expressing gratitude for support from various stakeholders, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

It has lined up sponsored training in the management of marine products along with fruits and vegetables, he pointed out, while Lela Muhamed Mussa, the Education and Vocational Training minister, said the institute was pursuing innovative action in adding courses targeting expertise on the blue economy.

This is intended to keep pace with the

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Clerics raise alarm over teenage binge drinking

By Guardian Reporters

EPISCOPAL authorities yesterday raised concern over the rising tendency of teenagers engaging in excessive consumption of alcohol, asserting that this was a risk for health and eroding the country's workforce.

In various homilies for Christmas, bishops of the various denominations said there has been a rapid increase in young people falling into uninged use of alcohol, a social failing that needs to be addressed.

In countrywide sermons, episcopal leaders warned the youth to stop this behavior as it also reduces lifespan prospects, with Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) head, Bishop Dr Fredrick Shoo saying the situation is alarming.

"Our teenagers are falling into the trap; many of them are within 25 years of age and feel comfortable with it, seeing taking strong alcoholic drinks as fashion," he said, telling the youth to be mindful that this is very dangerous.

In his homily at the Moshi ELCT cathedral, Rev. Dr Shoo said adolescents and those just ahead of them have to make responsible decisions, including controlling the impulse for binge drinking.

Archbishop Dr Isaac Amani of the Arusha Catholic archdiocese urged Tanzanians to fight the rising tendency of domestic violence like rape and defiling of children, which he said are evil acts ruining the lives of children.

In his Christmas Eve homily at St. Therese of the Child Jesus church, Archbishop Amani said defilement was on the rise, taking the church and all well-meaning people to condemn the vice.

He said this behaviour was worse than beastly way of life, as even hyenas and other wild animals do not behave like this, underlining that society is bringing a curse to itself.

"Let us have the fear of God and as Jesus is born, let him stay with us and change the bad behaviours," the cleric appealed.

Violent acts are mostly conducted by people close to the children whom the families trust, urging that families need to be careful as to whom they welcome to their homes.

"They should not sleep with your children, we need to protect our children with all

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Vice President Dr Philip Mpango in prayer at the grotto during the Christmas service at Christ the King Parish at Veyula suburb in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: VPO

Regional UWT annual event, panel hail Samia

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

PARTICIPANTS at this year's general meeting of the CCM women's wing in Mbeya Region held a symposium to congratulate President Samia Suluhu Hassan for her vision and initiatives

in taking the development agenda forward.

Dr Tulia Ackson, the speaker of the National Assembly, led the regional grouping efforts in saluting the president for her efforts to execute strategic development projects

nationwide and within the region.

The symposium held at the weekend involved more than 490 UWT cadres for its regional general meeting, as well as well-placed government and parliamentarians, first holding a

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Ecologists worried as herders try whisking beasts from water spots

By Guardian Reporter, Arusha

A LOCAL herder was crushed by elephants nearly two weeks ago, a case that is now being discussed by wildlife experts in the sensitive Lake Manyara ecosystem.

Augustino Ngimilanga, an officer responsible for management of the ecology systems at Mto wa Mbu River, Longido Mountain and Lake Natron, said here at the weekend that the Maasai herder lived at Tingatinga village, Longido District of Arusha Region, meeting

with the incident on Sunday, December 11.

Reports reaching the conservation authorities said that the herder was preventing elephants from drinking water from the dam, he said, noting that this ill-fated gesture was an illustration of human-wildlife conflicts now besieging the area, with the ecosystem being increasingly under pressure.

Population pressure is threatening the well-being of ecosystems and tourism activities at Mto wa Mbu River and Lake Natron in particular, Arusha Region, an expert has declared.

"Villagers seek to prevent elephants from drinking from the same water source that herders use for their livestock. What the wild animals do is to fight for the precious liquid, thus resulting in deaths," he said.

Residents have been preventing wild animals from drinking water at the Kiseriani Dam on the approaches of Lake Natron, along with Kimokoa wetland on the lower

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Bishop Dr Dickson Chilongani of the Anglican Diocese of Dodoma enters to conduct the Christmas service at the Holy Spirit Cathedral in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ubrahim Joseph



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Zanzibar First Vice President Othman Masoud Othman (R) exchanges greetings with leaders of Madrasat Hayaatul Atfaal of Baghani Wete Pemba moments after arriving to attend the 5th annual general meeting held at Magharib B in Unguja yesterday. Photo: FVPO

Regional UWT annual event, panel hail Samia

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demonstration coloured by songs chanting the president's praises.

They extolled President Samia for capable oversight of major development projects and enhancing political stability and harmony, with Special Seats MP Maryprisca Mahundi asking women around the country to lend support to the president.

The president needs plenty of support in endeavours to ensure the proper execution of strategic projects as they are pillars of the country's development prospects, she stated.

Mahundi who is also Water deputy minister said the president

has been struggling to implement various development projects started during the fifth phase and also sought out new projects that uplift growth prospects.

Mbeya region has benefited from the projects that cost plenty of money, she stated, pointing at health care centers all over the region. The main beneficiaries of these projects are women, the cabinet aide emphasised.

"Right now we are fighting for new projects all over the country. Our president's mission is to ensure that this ambition to lift the bucket on a woman's head is fulfilled," she elaborated, noting that in every district of the region new projects are being implemented.

The parliamentary leader who is also Mbeya Urban MP said that in the city the government has built new classrooms at various primary and secondary schools to improve the learning environment.

The new secondary schools built include Iziwa and Dr Tulia secondary school in Itende area, cutting the distance students cover to go to schools in other wards, she stated.

The government has started building dormitories in some schools to help girls stay in school, solving obstacles to sustained education, including exposure to assault when coming back from school, or early in the morning.

She vowed support from the

breadth of the legislature, in approving the relevant budgetary estimates to implement development projects, citing the fact that the government has started filling the Nyerere hydropower project dam with water showing that the work is in advanced stages.

Juma Homera, the regional commissioner, said the government is widening the Tanzania-Zambia highway (Tanzam) from Uyole to the Songwe International Airport (SIA), to improve transportation of passengers and cargo.

Regional UWT chairperson Edna Mwaigomole lauded the Mariprisca Women Foundation for helping UWT organise the conference.

Clerics raise alarm over teenage binge drinking

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efforts," he emphasised.

Bishop Joseph Ludovick Minde of the Moshi Catholic diocese said parents have a major role to play in ensuring that their children remain safe. These days some parents are too busy and forget to take a close look at their children, he said.

Bishop Dr Dickson Chilongani of the Anglican Diocese of Central Tanganyika, urged public officials to use Christmas to evaluate their conduct in office and change direction in serving the people.

Some top officials have been preventing bad news from reaching President Samia Suluhu Hassan, he stated, while ELCT Muheza Parish priest John Ndimbo urged followers

to ensure that they use Christmas for good deeds.

Bishop Anthony Lugwen of Mbulu Catholic diocese urged the public to take abreast of ongoing climate change challenges to come up with strategies to overcome their effects.

Vice President Dr Phillip Mpango made a few remarks at the Christ the King Anglican Parish in Veyula suburb of Dodoma, urging people to strengthen efforts in child protection.

In Zanzibar, Bishop Augustino Shao of the Catholic Diocese there urged leaders and those with the means to also think of the less fortunate and extend support to the needy.

Ecologists worried as herders try whisking beasts from water spots

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side of Longido Mountain where the expert affirms that there are noticeable effects of climate change.

Local herders rely on these sources to water their animals while using the same water for domestic needs, thus not relishing that wild animals collect in the area, a situation that the expert said repeatedly occurs in the Tingatinga area.

Explaining the effects of climate change on tourism activities, the ecology field officer said that Mto wa Mbu River, Longido Mountain and Lake Natron ecosystems, managed by the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA), are popular for hunting and photo tourism.

There are situations where animals group for drinking while villagers are fetching water and thus seek to chase them away, a risky situation, he said, citing Kiseriani Dam where zebras look for water while villagers go to the same spot, trying to violently disperse the animals.

With the water level at the dams

diminishing, zebras get trapped in the mud and there is often no rescue, so they die on the spot, a situation similar to the Longido Game Controlled Area, he said.

Here, villagers share water with animals and when drought bites they try to prevent wild animals from accessing the water, to preserve it for their livestock, he stated.

"During night, wild animals seek water at Kimokoia Dam in the Longido Game Controlled Area, but some end up drowned or stuck in the mud and die," he further explained.

The controlled area and forest reserves in Longido, Monduli and Ngorongoro districts were established under the Fauna Conservation Ordinance of 1951 maintained in the Wildlife Conservation Act (No. 12 of 1974).

Other pieces of legislation covering the zone are the Wildlife Conservation Act (No. 5 of 2009) and Government Notice, No 269 of 1974 specifying specific boundaries in the areas chopped into seven hunting blocks, he added.

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speed of policy action by the government, she said, asking curriculum experts at the institute to work on new courses for teachers assigned to engineering subjects.

Dr Mahmoud Abdulwahab Alawi, KIST director, said the institute has

succeeded in establishing courses on blue economy in support of government efforts to ensure Zanzibar residents benefit fully from marine resources.

KIST has established an entrepreneurship centre helping young people to attain skills to employ themselves, he added.

Uganda, IMF reach \$240 M agreement in financing

KAMPALA

UGANDA and the International Monetary Fund have reached an agreement for 240 million US dollars in financing.

The IMF staff made the announcement Wednesday (Dec. 21). The deal on economic policies concludes the 2nd & 3rd reviews under the Extended Credit Facility arrangement or ECF.

The Extended Credit Facility (ECF) provides financial assistance to countries with protracted balance of payments problems.

This scheme provides financial assistance to countries with protracted balance of payments problems. It's the Fund's main tool for providing medium-term support to low income countries.

Uganda will access the funding in the coming weeks, once the review is formally completed by the IMF executive board.

The funds will bring the total IMF financial support under the ECF-financed program to about US\$ 625 million.

The economic recovery is

underway according to the fund. Growth in the fiscal year 2022/23 (July-June) was projected at 5.3%, 0.7 percentage point lower than at the time of the first review in March.

According to the international body, this reflects weaker global demand and the impact of rising inflation and interest rates on domestic demand.

The announcement came after the IMF team led the head of the World Economic Studies division in the IMF's Research Department conducted a virtual mission to Uganda from October 31-November 22, 2022 to discuss progress on reforms and the authorities'



The funds will bring the total IMF financial support under the ECF-financed program to about US\$ 625 million



General manager at Barrick Bulyanhulu Mine, Cheick Sangare (left) presents a Christmas gift for Elizabeth Nicolaus admitted at Bugarama hospital, when he led a delegation of mine workers to visit the hospital and offer Christmas gifts for the patients and workers yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Ukraine to boost diplomacy in Africa, other regions

KYIV

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Friday that Kyiv would intensify diplomatic efforts in Africa, Latin America and Asia to take advantage of "colossal economic potential" and other international benefits.

African countries have had varying responses to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as some countries like South Africa have close trade and security ties with Russia they do not want to jeopardise.

In his nightly video address, Zelenskyy said diplomats would focus on countries where Ukraine has lesser influence, particularly in the Global South.

"There are colossal economic potential and considerable diplomatic avenues," he said.

He singled out votes in support of Ukraine from developing countries at the United Nations General Assembly as it fights off Russia's 10-month-old invasion.

Ukraine also seeks to develop ties with its traditional partners "to make next year the decisive one in

this war so that Ukraine attains its goals."

In earlier comments to diplomats, Zelenskyy singled out attempts to expand ties with Africa. Ukraine has been trying to rally African countries to its cause by promoting a humanitarian grain initiative to alleviate famine in vulnerable countries.

Russia's blockade of Ukrainian agricultural exports through the Black Sea sparked global grain and fertiliser shortages this year, endangering millions before a U.N.-brokered deal partially eased it in

July.

"We are overhauling relations with dozens of African countries," Zelenskyy told the diplomats. "Next year we need to strengthen this."

Zelenskyy said Ukraine also wants to set up trade representative offices in several hubs on the continent.

He did not specify where those new embassies or trade offices would be located, but added that he would like Ukraine to eventually be represented in 30 countries on the continent.

Tanzanians urged to regularly visit children orphanage centre

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

TANZANIANS have been urged to regularly visit orphanage centres in their respective localities with the aim of comforting children raised at their homes.

Chunya district commissioner, Mayeka Saimon Mayeka gave the advice on Saturday when he visited an orphanage centre at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) Konde Diocese in Iwambi, Mbeya Region.

Mayeka represented Mbeya regional commissioner, Juma Homera to present food items offered to children at the centre by President Samia Suluhu Hassan. The food items are part of the various products provided by the President to orphanage centres across the country.

President Samia gave food items to comfort children during this festive season.

Mayeka said that children who are raised at the centres need to be comforted through regular visits and provided with gifts especially during festive season.

He said remembering them during Christmas and New Year makes them happier as they eat and celebrate like other children who stay with their parents.

The DC added that children living in difficult conditions need to be provided with food and clothes.

“There are things we have at our homes but we do not use them; you can bring them here and help

change the lives of these children,” said Mayeka.

He said President Samia offered the items to all the orphans across the country to help the children celebrate and enjoy Christmas and New Year celebrations.

ELCT leader at Konde Diocese, thanked President Samia for remembering the children, saying it is the first time they are receiving such food items from the head of state.

He said children raised at the centre need various things including uniforms, clothes and other learning materials.

Speaking on behalf of other children, Dorcas Mwambwalo thanked President Samia for providing them with food, calling upon other Tanzanians to also support them as they are in need of many things.

She said the food items donated by the president which include rice, cooking oil and sugar will help reduce operation costs at the centre.



There are things we have at our homes but we do not use them; you can bring them here and help change the lives of these children

Samia donates food supply to Aloysia children centre

By Guardian Correspondent, Iramba

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has donated various food items to Aloysia children centre in Iramba district, Singida region to celebrate Christmas and New Year festive season.

The supply included 75 kilos of rice, three goats, 46 kilos of beans, 20 litres of cooking oil and various spices.

Handing over the food items, Iramba district commissioner, Suleiman Mwenda said the President has given the items out of love. He said President Samia has so much love for Tanzanians including children.

“The President loves everyone but mostly children and he wants you to study hard, love each other and love other people,” said Mwenda.

CCM district chairman, Martha Mlata said supporting children who live in difficult conditions is a good prayer. She said such support will help to change their behaviour, thus

making them good citizens.

“President Samia admires Singida region; she has provided funds for construction of secondary schools and dormitories for girls students,” she said, calling upon the residents to continue praying for the president so that she stays in good health.

Sister Ester from Aloysia children centre said that children are also provided with life skills. She said while at the centre they have access to education, health services and food.



The President loves everyone but mostly children and he wants you to study hard, love each other and love other people

Ethiopian investigators released final report into Boeing 737-MAX 8 crash

ADDIS ABABA

NEARLY four years after the crash of Ethiopian Airlines flight ET302 that killed 157 people, Ethiopian officials reiterated their accusations towards Boeing over mechanical faults they say downed the 737-MAX 8 aircraft. State investigators on Friday released their final report into the crash.

The head of Ethiopia's investigation, Amdeye Ayalew, blamed Boeing for their failure to “disclose early and attentively” issues with the 737-MAX 8's Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System (MCAS).

The aircraft, which was bound for the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, came down minutes after taking off from Addis Ababa.

The MCAS system is believed to have caused the plane to “pitch the nose of the airplane down to

the point the pilot lost control”, said Ethiopian Transport Minister Dagmawit Moges. “The airplane left (at an) angle of attack or AOA sensor failed immediately after takeoff sending faulty data to the flight control system, the erroneous data in turn triggered the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System or MCAS which repeatedly pitched the nose of the airplane down to the point the pilot lost control” Moges added.

The final report into the Ethiopian Airlines Group incident also concluded that all professionals and planes related to the crash were correctly certified.

In March 2019, Ethiopia's flight ET 302 Boeing 737-8 Max aircraft flying to the Kenyan capital Nairobi crashed six minutes after takeoff, killing all 157 people on board from 35 different countries.



Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development, deputy minister Ridhiwani Kikwete (L) presents a title deed to Kivule resident over the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Munir Shemweta

Arusha to accommodate all selected Form One students

By Guardian Reporter, Arusha

ARUSHA region has completed 100 per cent building all 258 classrooms and two dormitories built by the government using funds from its sources and Tanzania's COVID-19 Socioeconomic Response Plan (TCRP) worth 5.36bn/-.

Regional commissioner John Mongella said here over the weekend, saying: “As regional authorities we've already received 17 classrooms from the Meru Council.”

RC Mongella, said that the region received the funds in August this year and was directed by the President's

Office - Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), to have completed the rooms before January 2023, to receive the new Form One students.

“As Arusha region, we gave each other instructions until the middle of December this year, all the classrooms should be completed. We had the opportunity to regularly monitor these projects in all the districts of our region and the construction has gone well,” he said.

He added that the construction has been done through ‘force account’, whereby local technicians were used in the respective

areas, supervised by the school's construction committees as well as construction engineers in the district councils and the City of Arusha.

“After the completion of the projects, Mongella has instructed the District Heads of Monduli, Longido, Ngorongoro, Karatu and Arusha to continue with the process of receiving the classes in their areas and continue with preparations for the start of the 2023 academic term.”

The RC assured the parents of 13,400 children who were selected to join the Form One in January next year 2023 that all children will

start studies together and there will be no students who will enter in phases.

RC Mongella also directed the district heads and district executive directors, to use the remaining period to ensure that all children who should start primary education and first grade, are enrolled before December 31, this year.

During the hand-over ceremony, Meru DC executive director Zainab Makwinya, said in the council 340m/-, has been used in the construction of 17 classrooms with 50 chairs and tables in 13 secondary schools.



Muheza district operations commander, Edwin Musiba, speaks to residents on the importance of defence and security matters for peace keeping, saying is everyone's responsibility and not for the police alone. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

FAITHFUL CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH MASS



Faithful attend Christmas Mass at St Albans Cathedral in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma



Celebrating Christmas season by putting up a goat in Muheza district, Tanga region as captured by our photographer yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William



Roman Catholic Church faithful follow Christmas Eve Mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Martin Donald



Roman Catholic faithful in Muheza district, Tanga region coming out after Christmas Mass eve on Saturday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William



Rev John Ndimbo of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania wishes the faithful Merry Christmas yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William



Bishop Amon Kinyunyu of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Dodoma Diocese wishes believers Merry Christmas yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph



Bishop Dr Alex Malasusa of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese exchanges greetings with Zekeho Mapunda after Christmas Mass at Azania Front Church in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma



Bishop Stivie Mulenga of Free Pentecostal Church of Tanzania (FPCT) wishes Merry Christmas members of the church in Tanga region yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Oscar Assenga

Zanzibar First VP warns of uncouth government leaders

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR First Vice President Othman Masoud Othman has warned that the country is currently facing a big moral crisis which is caused by dishonest servants who are pocketing millions of public funds through their leadership positions.

Othman revealed this in Kiembesamaki in Unguja West District when opening the fifth annual gathering of Madrasat Hayaatul Atfaal.

According to him, well-educated servants are the one who lead in misusing or stealing public funds that those with low education level.

He wanted the society to ensure that it prepares youth and children by raising them in good manners as well as fear of God for them to become good citizens.

“Parents have the responsibility to prioritise in raising children in good manners, but these days, the responsibility has been left to teachers, parents are busy and not spending much to look how their children are growing, we need to make sure that we closely observe children and youth behaviours,” he explained.

He said Zanzibar has a good history of respecting and valuing customs and good behaviour due to its strong religious roots but things are currently changing and youth are falling into bad manners.

The First VP however commended the Madrsat leadership for investing heavily in good morals and supervising them to ensure that children grew in Quran principles, something which is a great challenge to many institutions in the Isles.

Zanzibar deputy chief Kadhi, Sheikh Othman Ame Chum said the Isles has been blessed with a number of talented children and that teachers should invest and put much effort in developing their talents.

He said that to address the

ongoing moral decay in Zanzibar where many youth have fallen into evil acts such as drug abuse and violence should not only focus on laws but also invest in raising children to have good morals and become respectable societies.

Earlier, Maalim Rashid Sinan said that apart from madrasa producing various Sheikhs, it was facing some challenges such as furniture, teaching and learning equipment and called for Muslims to extend their support so as to facilitate the institution to continue offering the crucial education to children and youth.

“Parents have the responsibility to prioritise in raising children in good manners, but these days, the responsibility has been left to teachers, parents are busy and not spending much to look how their children are growing, we need to make sure that we closely observe children and youth behaviours”



Women offering gumboot for hire at 1000/- to enter at Mabibo market because of muddy conditions following the ongoing rain in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

TCC to execute school feeding program by January next year

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari,

Tanga

TANGA City Council (TCC) is set to start implementing the school feeding programme by January next year to boost academic performance.

TCC deputy mayor Mwanaidi Kombo unveiled this here over the weekend when speaking at the Ward Councillors meeting, which received reports on school meal programmes in the city.

She said that feeding schoolchildren is the national agenda and contracts on school's nutrition interventions supervision have been signed from national level whereby President Samia Suluhu Hassan witnessed the signing event.

Mwanaidi explained that its implementation starting from street level, adding: “Feeding school children is not unavoidable; this is a national agenda for the side of Tanga. We must make sure that all education

stakeholders play a part in the matter for schools in Tanga city.”

Tanga City Nutrition Officer Sakina Mustafa has outlined benefits of giving school children meals as among other things to minimize drop out, uplifting academic performance among children as well as stabilizing their academic performance.

She further expounded that also the meals provided to schoolchildren is safe because it is prepared at safe places.

“School feeding programs

targeting social safety nets that provide both educational and health benefits to the most vulnerable children, thereby increasing enrollment rates, reducing absenteeism and improving food security at the household level,” said Sakina.

Some of the ward councillors pledged to educate parents and guardians to their respective wards on the importance of school feeding programs by insisting to them the importance of their contributions on that matter.



Dodoma referral hospital health officer, Mary Semngindo (R) gives a vaccine to child Yohana Baraka who was born during the Christmas Day yesterday. Others are the child's mother Abigael Muhuya (C) and left is nursing officer, Furaha Mbwilo. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Local charity brought a smile to displaced children in eastern DRC

GOMA

DISPLACED children in eastern DRC celebrated Christmas at an internally displaced camp 8 km from Goma, the regional capital of North Kivu province.

Children and families were forced to flee due to fighting between government forces and the M23 rebels.

“In our villages, our children used to celebrate Christmas properly, but now I was beginning to wonder how we were going to do it as we had fled the war. By the grace of God, there are benefactors who thought of us and came with something to make us smile again, so Christmas went well and I thank God very much”, said Josephine Riziki, a woman forced to flee the war.

Another displaced woman,

Furaha Mwashoro, added “we want the New Year to start with good things. Let the enemies leave our villages in Kibumba and let us leave this IDP camp (internally displaced

people, Ed.)”.

A local organisation welcomed the children to the camp with a meal, gifts and music.

On Friday, the M23 rebels met with a regional military force to hand over a strategic position near Goma.

“We have all been victims of what is happening here in the east, but one of the things we can do is to show that love, that generosity, that compassion and that solidarity with each other. That we don't just celebrate in the comfort of our homes, but that we realise that we can show gifts, a smile and give these children the opportunity to realise also that Christmas is a time of celebration for all”, said Camille Ntoto, President and pastor of “Un Nouveau Jour” (A New Day) charity.

In recent months, the M23 rebels, a former rebellion of Tutsi Congolese supported by Rwanda and Uganda, have seized vast territories in eastern DRC.

By Special Correspondent

Africa lags on universal access to electricity - report

AFRICA is the world's least electrified continent. Nearly 600 million people remain without access to electricity in Africa.

Yet the pandemic, with its attendant lockdowns, supply chain disruptions and diversion of fiscal resources by governments did even further damage.

According to the Energy Progress Report 2022 published by the United Nations, Covid-19 has slowed

progress towards universal access to electricity and clean cooking fuels and technology.

According to the report, sub-Saharan Africa's share of the global population without electricity rose from 71 per cent in 2018 to 77 percent in 2020. Most regions of the world saw declines. One of the factors preventing countries from

expanding access is cost. Achieving electrification for all in sub-Saharan Africa would require investing at least \$31 billion per year by 2030.

For context, only \$5 billion was received in 2017.

Gyude Moore is a senior policy fellow at the Center for Global Development. He has also served as Liberia's minister for public works.

He joins the show with insights on where to direct investment in order to expand access.

Closing Africa's science and technology skills gap

Many Sub-Saharan African countries have about one or less engineer per 10,000 inhabitants, according to the World Bank. Industrialized countries have 20-

50 for the same number. The skills gap in Africa is especially huge in applied sciences, engineering, and technology (ASET).

Graduates lack the skills and competencies required in modern enterprise, partly because university curricula is outdated.

As a result, many are going abroad for studies. We follow the story of

two female students in Romania.

Kenya: Coffee farmers battle climate change

Coffee production in Kenya is under threat - climate change means frequent droughts and irregular rains are drying coffee berries.

For most farmers, trying to mitigate these effects is a costly and time-consuming endeavours.

Minister calls upon employers to allow workers join trade unions

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

MINISTER of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Employment, Youth and the Disabled), Prof Joyce Ndalichako, has called on employers to allow workers to join trade unions.

She expressed concerns that there are some employers in the country who discourage employees from joining the unions, saying that is a violation of the law.

Prof Ndalichako maintained that trade unions are important in conflict solutions at work places and have better ways of handling contentious issues.

She made the statement while officiating at the launch of the Tanzania teachers annual conference, 2022, saying it is through the union that the government has been engaged on how to improve teachers' welfare and the outcome is desirable.

"I call on all employers in the country to allow workers to join trade unions as failure simply means deviation from the law," said the minister.

She termed TTU as one of the strongest in the country having many members, calling on others to follow suit. The minister said the government would not tolerate employees who do not abide by ethics too.

At the same time, she reminded them to follow up on the government's efforts to empower youths at all levels, saying that experience shows that many young people in the country are increasingly becoming proactive to government support initiatives.

Earlier this year, while officiating the launch of the workers' counsel, the minister also reminded the workers to shun any kind of corruption and work towards achieving the government goals.

"I therefore urge you to work in accordance with the government guidelines, be creative and open opportunities for youth development and employment" she said, adding that the target is to create eight million jobs.

The minister reminded the meeting that she was impressed on seeing how a cross-section of youth in Arusha have shown great enthusiasm in greenhouse agriculture. She added that it is the ministry's responsibility to empower youth.

She called on the Tanzania Union of Government & Health Employees (TUGHE) branch at the ministry to work with the management in ensuring a conducive working environment and cooperation.

Prof Ndalichako called on the management to ensure there is a client service charter to help people know their duties and responsibilities and obligations. "Let the doors to dialogue remain open to foster cooperation and development" she added.

In response, the Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disability Prof Jamal Katundu promised to work on all the observations made by the minister.

He said, "I will today start working on the issue of client service charter and give feedback as soon as possible" he said, adding that the management will work closely with the counsel for the betterment of the government.

He also thanked the minister for the devotion to push for development at the ministry which has seen budget allocation to the ministry increase tremendously.

According to the PS several improvements have taken place at the ministry since Prof Ndalichako took the helm of the ministry, adding that a lot more are expected.

Prof also promised that the management will work closely with TUGHE and the council, noting that the council helps in opinions and analysis of the ministry budget.

TUGHE branch chairperson at the ministry, Godfrey Chacha also promised to see the implementation of the minister's directives, adding that his group will show a good example of cooperation with the management.

"We are optimistic that through good cooperation we shall achieve the targets", he said, adding that aim is to support government initiatives in development.



We are optimistic that through good cooperation we shall achieve the target



Simanjiro district commissioner in Manyara region, Dr Suleiman Serera (L) presents 100 delivery kits worth 2.8m/- to Mererani health centre bought by Tanzanite businessman Charles Mullo (Kichunga) over the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

'Dishonest agents to blame for land dispute in Z'bar'

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR'S minister for Lands and Settlements Development, Rahma Kassim Ali has said that 80 per cent of land disputes in Isles are caused by dishonest agents who have been violating rules and regulations set by the government.

To address the same, the ministry was working on a special strategy so as to fight the challenge as it was thwarting development efforts.

Addressing reporters here during the weekend, the minister said that most of the land conflicts in

Isles are caused by the agents who have been selling plots without adhering to the set laws and that immediate measures are to be taken to overcome it.

"Real estate agents are the ones who are making things harder in the land sector, we as the government have recognized this and we are now taking robust measures to ensure that we address this, an agent can sell a plot to more than one person, something which later causes confusion and unnecessary conflicts," she explained.

She added: "We will act tough on

this, we will not tolerate anyone who will be found entertaining this behavior, agents should stop violating land laws or else get ready to face stern legal measures."

The Minister also urged those who are seeking for land to buy both in Unguja and Pemba to ensure that they visit government offices so as to avoid meeting unethical agents.

Rahma also wanted investors and various people who have their own land plots to ensure that they develop them so as to avoid invasion that of late was on the increase in Isles.

"The government has issued a six months ultimatum for any citizen given land in Zanzibar to develop it while foreigners are given one year to develop their plots or else the government will take them," she explained.

She also said that in efforts aimed to strengthen urban planning and fight irregular construction of houses and buildings, the government recently signed an agreement with Properties International Company so as to work jointly in implementing various construction projects to further make Zanzibar smart.

The ministry recently conducted a tour to inspect various areas to assess the increasing land conflicts so as to come up with robust strategies to address them.



Ubungo residents queuing to buy meat for the festive season at the butcher in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

MP distributes medical equipment worth 14million /- to Magu district

By Guardian Reporter, Mwanza

SPECIAL Seats MP, Mary Masanja has distributed medical equipment worth 14m/- to Magu District Hospital as well as 100 gas cylinders for pregnant women.

Speaking over the weekend at

the handover ceremony of the equipment worth 14,575,000/- and 100 gas cylinders at the Magu District Hospital, Masanja said that the equipment came from her personal contribution as well as the contribution of the Doris Mollel Foundation.

She explained that the medical

equipment will help save the lives of children who were born with gas and also the gas cylinders will help pregnant women to reduce heavy activities in search of alternative energy.

Masanja, who is the deputy minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, tasked pregnant

women to attend the clinic regularly to know the progress of the child while in the womb.

She further asked the CCM's women wing (UWT) to support President Samia Suluhu Hassan for the efforts she is making to bring development to the people of Tanzania.

Magu district chief medical officer, Dr Maria Kapinga said that the equipment provided by deputy minister Masanja will help save children's lives born prematurely.

Kenya's baobab trees face new threats

NAIROBI

IN Kenya the recent discovery of old baobab trees being uprooted and prepared for export caused a public outcry.

The tree, native to Africa, is commonly found in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in dry areas.

Scientists believe the ancient species plays a role in fighting climate change.

"If we look at the composition of the baobab tree itself, it is a tree that is able to store large volumes of water, it is able to survive in different environmental conditions and baobab, by research, has been identified as the best tree that can be able to help in combating the effects of climate change", said Duncan Omwami, environmental research fellow at Kenyatta University.

But despite its environmental benefits, some farmers feel they can take up too much space in their small farms and don't generate an income.

Kibuyuni resident Mohammed Bakari added, "In the old days, the baobab tree was very important culturally to us. This is not the case nowadays. It also occupies too much space in our small farms in which we plant maize and vegetables. That is why we have chopped the trees down or have planted our crops far away from where the trees are."

Recently, the fruit produced by the baobab tree gained international recognition as a super food, a trend that may encourage farmers to preserve their trees and sell the fruits.

"Due to climate change variations and less rainfall, subsistence farming is increasingly failing. The baobab fruit can be used as a nutritional supplement for our traditional foods. This is because it is very rich in vitamin C, very rich in magnesium, and potassium and also fibre, which makes it a good supplement to replace our traditional foods during periods of drought", claims Amisha Patel, founder of O'bao.

Under Kenya law, the baobab tree is not a protected tree species, but permission is required to uproot them.



In the old days, the baobab tree was very important culturally to us. This is not the case nowadays. It also occupies too much space in our small farms in which we plant maize and vegetables. That is why we have chopped the trees down or have planted our crops far away from where the trees are

Mafinga to receive 2,703 children who passed primary leaving examination

By Correspondent Friday Simbaya, Mufindi

MAFINGA Town Council (MTC) is ready to receive 2,703 children who passed the primary leaving examination, equivalent to 95.5 per cent, of which 1,354 were boys and 1,349 were girls.

Mufindi district commissioner Saad Mtambule said this when presenting a report on the implementation of projects for the construction of ten (10) classes to the Region commissioner of Iringa Halima Dendego.

He said that all the candidates who were selected to join the first form in 2023 have been assigned to schools, explaining that in the exam to finish primary education in 2022, a total of 37 government primary schools had 2,831 candidates, of whom 1,416 were boys and 1,415 were girls.

MTC received 200m/- from the central government for the construction of ten classrooms, the construction of which is 100 percent complete which are built in secondary schools Luganga (02), Isalavanu (02), Upendo (03), Bumilayinga (02) and Ihongole (01) respectively.

"A total of 2,703 candidates passed the exam equal to 95.5 percent, among them there were 1,354 boys and while there were 1,349 girls, they will start secondary education next year after their classes are completed by 100 percent," said DC Mtambule.

Iringa RC Halima Dendego congratulated the Mafinga Town Council in Mufindi district for completing the construction project of classrooms in various secondary schools for the reception of form one students in 2023.

She said this yesterday during her visit to the council and inspected the implementation of various development projects in the district, including education projects.

MTC is one of the councils that received funds from the central government for the implementation of the construction of ten (10) classrooms, in secondary schools in five wards, for the reception of first form students in 2023.

"I am pleased with the implementation of the construction of 10 classrooms which is 100 percent complete, the aim being to ensure that all successful students who join the first form do not miss a chance," said RC Dendego.

Dendego, asked the students to

use the improved infrastructure for studying more and not otherwise.

She asked the students to avoid bad things that will affect their bodies and psychology, as the Iringa Region, especially the Mufindi District, has incidents of rape, defilement, sexual violence, murder of people committed by people who are desperate to find wealth for themselves by using local healers.

However, RC Dendego has asked the parents of children selected to join secondary education, to ensure that their children report to school in January 2023 and start their studies as soon as possible.

Dendego has said that even if there is no fee, no donation or school uniform, the student must report on that day to start studies and other things can follow.

She said, "I pray that this matter can be understood, in January, if there is a parent who took the child to be a laborer somewhere, to be the daughter of a worker, in January, the child should be here."

"I ask all the parents, all the guardians if you have a child who has finished the standard seven and has been selected to join the form one, on January 09, 2023, when the schools reopen the children come to school, there is no contribution for you as long as you cover your body come to class and study," she said.

In turn, DC Mtambule asked all students who join secondary education next year to focus on studies as well as to discipline teachers in order to be able to find doctors and professors.

Iringa Region, especially Mufindi District, has a high rate of HIV infection, so we want children who will pass through those schools to pass safely so that they can move forward.

"The construction of 10 classrooms is 100 percent occupied, the construction used technicians at the community level under the supervision of the director's office and various committees formed in all the schools that implemented these projects," explained Mtambule.

The completion of the construction of the classrooms eliminates the shortage of classrooms in secondary schools for the reception of students of the first form in 2023.

Mafinga Town Council has a total of eleven (11) government secondary schools located in nine wards.



Kahama district commissioner in Shinyanga region, Festo Kiswaga, drives a tractor given by NBC to Ushetu council farmer Hamisi Majogoro worth 53m/- yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Shaban Njia

Govt takes steps to ensure availability of fertiliser to farmers at subsidised prices

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE government has expressed commitment to ensure improved fertiliser supply to farmers at affordable prices, citing huge investments in the sector.

It noted that with the commencement of production by the Dodoma-based, Burundian company, Intracon Fertiliser Ltd, local production of the firm input is going to increase.

The factory built at Nala area in Dodoma City by a Burundi investor has started production of 200,000 metric tonnes.

Speaking here during a recent tour to the plant, the Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa expressed satisfaction with the ongoing production, assuring farmers of a stable supply of fertilizer.

The Premier noted that the

investment will also involve construction of other three factories for packaging materials, dairy and agricultural lime.

He said the availability of affordable fertiliser will increase farmers' productivity, hence; support the government's plan to transform the agricultural sector.

"There are a number of opportunities in the fertiliser factory apart from availability of reliable and affordable fertiliser, because here we also account for employment opportunities," said the Premier.

However, he said, city authority as well as the investor must ensure the entire necessary services are available at the factory including improving road, water, electricity among others.

In a related development, Majaliwa called upon Tanzanians employed in the factory to work

hard by observing ethics and professionalism to attain the intended goals.

"You must be good ambassadors to investors by showing commitment, trust and hard work and become true examples of the quality and skills, when it comes to other investors seeking advice," he underscored.

For his part, Minister for Agriculture, Hussein Bashe commended the government for creating the conducive and friendly investment environment which attracts the investors.

He said the fertiliser company will address the fertiliser's shortage facing farmers.

Minister Bashe, however cautioned agents who distribute subsidised fertiliser in the country to observe diligence in their work as the government is keeping a close eye on the whole exercise and will

not tolerate anyone going beyond or cheating.

Earlier, the factory Director General, Nduwimana Nazaire said the construction of the factory started in July 2021 and currently they are producing 200,000 tonnes and have employed 972 people.

"The equipment to be installed in the second and third phases of the investment are already in the country and by next year, we will be done with the construction, thus, having the capacity of producing one-million tonnes every year," said Nazaire.

He further said that they are well organised to ensure they produce quality and standard fertilisers, which meet the market and climate change demands, especially at an affordable price which farmers from all walks of life can manage to buy.

Kenya to boost production of rice after spike in demand

By Pauline Kairu

RICE production in Mwea in Kenya's Kirinyaga County has endured for decades, banking on the waters of the upper Tana catchment. And as is tradition, every December farmers are busy harvesting rice at the Mwea Irrigation Scheme (MIS), the source of 84 percent of all rice produced in Kenya.

It has been this way since 1950 when the colonial government first established the scheme using cheap Mau Mau labour.

Yet there is a problem. The 30,000-acre scheme (with a gazetted irrigation area of 25,000 acres) - and other irrigation schemes across the country, including Bura, Ahero, and in Budalangi - cannot meet the Kenyan demand for rice. The balance has to be imported, mostly from Pakistan.

According to Dr Mary Mutembei, the head of the Rice Promotion Programme at Kenya's Ministry of Agriculture, rice consumption in the country has nearly doubled to 23kgs per person per year from 12kgs per person per year in 2008.

Importing heavily "We're importing heavily to plug this deficit. Kenya spends about Ksh25 billion (\$200 million) per

year on rice importation. Yet we've got a very big and unexploited potential towards self-sufficiency," she told

On average Kenyans consume 720,000 metric tonnes of rice annually against a production capacity of less than 100,000 metric tonnes. It is estimated that this year Kenya will import 640,000 metric tonnes of rice to meet demand.

Under the national rice development strategy (2019-2030), Kenya hopes to increase the area under rice to meet at least 80 percent of local demand by expanding the scheme at Mwea.

The government has already allowed an additional irrigation area of 10,000 acres on trial basis, outside of the gazetted area of the scheme.

According to the Global Agriculture Information Network (Gain), a bulletin of the US Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), Kenya's rice production is set to increase to 90,000 metric tonnes in 2022/23 from 80,000 metric tonnes in the previous period as a result of the ongoing expansion that will tap water from Thiba Dam, currently under construction and with a capacity of 15.6million cubic metres of water when complete.



Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Authority in Tanga region, manager Upendo Lugongo climbs water tank built at Ngulwi ward in Lushoto district worth 578m/- over the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Hamida Kamchalla

JOHANNESBURG

THE South African National Parks (SANParks), a body responsible for managing national parks in the country, said on Thursday that they are in the process of developing a standard operating procedure to implement the recently approved polygraph testing policy to combat criminal activities by its employees.

SANParks said their board approved the polygraph testing policy on Nov. 22 after extensive consultation with relevant experts, including experts on

South African parks to implement polygraph testing to tackle poaching

labor law.

"It is accordingly important to appreciate that polygraph testing is not the answer to prevent staff involvement in criminality but is a tool that needs to be used as part of the toolkit with a full understanding of its benefits and limitations," said Rey Thakhuli, a manager at the SANParks.

The move follows a pilot study that was done on rangers in the Kruger National Park, and the polygraph testing policy is one of the many initiatives that SANParks uses to deter employees from participating in criminal activity, Thakhuli said.

Recently, some rangers and their relatives were arrested after it

was uncovered that they supplied criminals with information to facilitate poaching for payment.

SANParks said they have many other interventions to tackle poaching, which include using helicopters, using technology, dehorning the rhinos, and relying on people staying next to the parks to report suspicious movement.

MONDAY 26 DECEMBER 2022

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Why fighting corruption is key to addressing world's most pressing problems

INTERNATIONAL Anti-Corruption Day has been observed annually, on 9 December. Both grand and petty corruption are serious problems in Tanzania yet various comprehensive laws are in place to prevent corruption. It is largely due to a weak internal control and low or non-compliance with anti-corruption regulations within different government agencies. For instance, public procurement, taxation, and customs service are areas that are prone to corruption.

Foreign companies have identified that corruption within those sectors poses potential obstacles for doing business in Tanzania as bribes are often demanded. It is also believed that the existing large informal sector, 48.1 per cent of GDP, is associated with cumbersome business registration process which has created opportunities for corruption.

The government has launched a campaign against grand corruption and established a special court to handle the matter. As a result, corrupt officials have been fired. These efforts and similar projects are internationally supported by Germany and the European Union.

Corruption is a form of dishonesty or criminal offence undertaken by a person or organisation entrusted with a position of authority, to acquire illicit benefit or abuse power for one's private gain. Corruption may include many activities including bribery and embezzlement, though it may also involve practices that are legal in many countries. Political corruption occurs when an office-holder or other governmental employee acts in an official capacity for personal gain. Corruption is most common place in kleptocracies, oligarchies,

narco-states and mafia states. Corruption can occur on different scales, corruption ranges from small favours between a small number of people (petty corruption), to corruption that affects the government on a large scale (grand corruption), and corruption that is so prevalent that it is part of the everyday structure of society, including corruption as one of the symptoms of organised crime. Corruption and crime are endemic sociological occurrences which appear with regular frequency in virtually all countries on a global scale in varying degree and proportion. Individual nations each allocate domestic resources for the control and regulation of corruption and crime. Strategies to counter corruption are often summarised under the umbrella term anti-corruption. Additionally, global initiative like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 also has a target to substantially reduce corruption of all forms.

UN is concerned about the seriousness of problems and threats posed by corruption to the stability and security of societies, undermining the institutions and values of democracy, ethical values and justice and jeopardising sustainable development and the rule of law.

Tanzania and globally we should promote and strengthen measures to prevent and combat corruption more efficiently and effectively... promote, facilitate and support international cooperation and technical assistance in the prevention of and fight against corruption... [and] promote integrity, accountability and proper management of public affairs and public property...

Education is fundamental to development and growth

THE human mind makes possible all development achievements, from health advances and agricultural innovations to efficient public administration and private sector growth. For countries to reap these benefits fully, and Tanzania is no exception, they need to unleash the potential of the human mind. And there is no better tool for doing so than education.

Twenty years ago, government officials and development partners met to affirm the importance of education in development—on economic development and broadly on improving people's lives—and together declared Education for All as a goal. While enrolments have risen in promising fashion around the world, learning levels have remained disappointingly and many remain left behind. Because growth, development, and poverty reduction depend on the knowledge and skills that people acquire, not the number of years that they sit in a classroom, we must transform our call to action from Education for All to Learning for All.

First, foundational skills acquired early in childhood make possible a lifetime of learning. The traditional view of education as starting in primary school takes up the challenge too late. The science of brain development shows that learning needs to be encouraged early and often, both inside and outside of the formal schooling system. In the primary years, quality teaching is essential to give students the foundational literacy and numeracy on which lifelong learning depends. Adolescence is also a period of high potential for learning, but many teenagers leave school at this point, lured by the prospect of a job, the need to help their families, or turned away

by the cost of schooling. For those who drop out too early, second-chance and nonformal learning opportunities are essential to ensure that all youth can acquire skills for the labour market.

Second, getting results requires smart investments—that is, investments that prioritise and monitor learning, beyond traditional metrics, such as the number of teachers trained or number of students enrolled. Quality needs to be the focus of education investments, with learning gains as the key metric of quality. Resources are too limited and the challenges too big to be designing policies and programs in the dark. We need evidence on what works in order to invest smartly.

Third, learning for all means ensuring that all students, and not just the most privileged or gifted, acquire the knowledge and skills that they need. Major challenges of access remain for disadvantaged populations at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. We must lower the barriers that keep girls, children with disabilities, and ethnolinguistic minorities from attaining as much education as other population groups. "Learning for All" promotes the equity goals that underlie Education for All and the SDGs. Without confronting equity issues, it will be impossible to achieve the objective of learning for all.

Achieving learning for all will be challenging, but it is the right agenda for the next decade. It is the knowledge and skills that children and youth acquire today—not simply their school attendance—that will drive their employability, productivity, health, and well-being in the decades to come, and that will help ensure that their communities and nations thrive.

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By Chido Nwangwu

CHIDO Nwangwu writes about the expectations of President Muhammadu Buhari from the three-day US-African leaders summit which ended recently in Washington, D.C.

The White House-led US-Africa Leaders Summit in Washington, D.C. from December 13-15, 2022, had top leaders of the two continents in attendance. Among the key dignitaries were President Biden, Nigeria's Muhammadu Buhari, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) President Félix Tshisekedi and several others.

US Secretary of Defence, Lloyd J. Austin III, a retired army General, and his counterparts, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Samantha Power, administrator of USAID co-hosted the forum on Peace, Security and Governance.

"The African Leader Summit comes at a very important time for US-African relations. The United States has recognised the enormous potential and promise in Africa, and this is something that we definitely want to lean in on", said a senior defense official quoted in a briefing advisory seen by USAfricaonline.com.

The official added "Together, the Department of Defence, State and USAID will share perspectives on

Nigeria's high expectation from US-Africa leaders summit

the importance of our '3D' approach to Africa and share the stage with our African partners to hear their perspectives on security and the challenges in their countries."

Secretary Blinken also met with Tshisekedi to discuss the critical security and catastrophic humanitarian situation from severe flooding in eastern DRC.

Buhari, a retired army General, whose tenure of two terms (eight years) will end in May 2023 appealed that "Nigeria too seeks support from the US to be included in the G7's Climate Partnerships List for the co-creation of a Just Energy Transition Partnership."

Buhari told US and African government officials that the Nigeria government has "approved the plan earlier this year and adopted it as a national policy... to completely eliminate the use of petrol/diesel generators by 2060 and therefore need to deploy renewables, particularly solar, at an unprecedented scale. For instance, the Energy Transition Plan requires that 5.3 GW of Solar be deployed annually until 2060 to achieve our targets."

Buhari added that "as part of

the National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policy, we set the vision 30:30:30 which aims at achieving 30GW of electricity by 2030 with renewable energy contributing 30 per cent of the energy mix. Last year, Nigeria became the first African country to develop a detailed Energy Transition Plan to tackle both energy poverty and climate change, and deliver SDG7 by 2030 and net-zero by 2060."

He stated that Nigeria's government "aggressive power sector reforms have resulted in cost-reflective tariffs in the power sector for the first time since privatization. Under the Nigeria Electrification Project, over four million people have been impacted through solar mini-grids and solar stand-alone systems. With respect to hydro, the Zungeru hydropower project is nearing completion and will add 700MW in capacity to the grid."

Buhari said "our analysis shows that delivering the Energy Transition Plan requires \$1.9 trillion in spending up to 2060, including \$410 billion above business-as-usual spending. This additional financing requirement translates

to a \$10 billion investment needed per annum. Between 2000 and 2020, just \$3 billion per year was invested in renewable energy in the whole of Africa. Consequently, the \$10 billion per year target of our Energy Transition Plan represents a significant scaling of current investment flows and we need support from the U.S. to mobilize the needed resources... For our clean energy market to scale, Nigeria and more broadly Africa needs concessional, low-interest capital-led investments."

Did the US government led by Joe Biden believe the picture and numbers Buhari painted in Washington, D.C.? It's a necessary context as it is important to note that Buhari is facing local and international criticisms for ineffective management of Nigeria's economy and infrastructure. He is also getting very low grade on the widespread insecurity and violence in most parts of Nigeria. The summit did not allay the critical concerns of the American government.

-Dr Nwangwu, is Founder of the first African-owned, U.S.-based newspaper on the internet, USAfricaonline.com

Washington's renewed attention to Africa part of the great game between the powers

By Special Correspondent

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen will visit Senegal, Zambia and South Africa from January 17 to 28, according to a statement released on, December 16, immediately after the conclusion of the US-Africa Summit held in Washington from December 13 to 15.

"Yellen will highlight the Biden administration's efforts to deepen economic ties between the United States and Africa and discuss ways the United States is working with African leaders to build a stronger, more resilient economy that benefits its citizens", says the statement, highlighting the change in US policy towards the African continent from an approach that emphasised anti-terrorist cooperation (which is still maintained) to one based on

economics.

The US-Africa Leaders Summit was attended by 49 African Heads of State and Government, in which US President Joe Biden promised that the African Union will soon have its own representation at the G20 summits because, as has said, Africa "must be able to make its voice heard in all circles that matter". Previously, Biden had not ruled out a possible African seat on the UN Security Council.

The last Summit between the USA and African countries dates back to 2014, at the time of the Obama Administration, which had launched a series of initiatives such as Power Africa, to promote energy generation and distribution networks in various African states, or the Young African Leaders Initiative, aimed at fostering the training of a new generation of

African leaders, linked to "Western values" (an initiative now taken up by the Obama Foundation Leaders Africa). The formation of personal ties between potential young leaders of foreign countries and the United States is one of the most enduring "soft power" strategies adopted by Washington since the dawn of the Cold War. Subsequently, it was complemented with actions to support civil society agents, including training sessions on non-violent forms of struggle.

By reconfirming these projects and extending the African Growth Opportunities Act (launched in 2000 to facilitate African exports to the United States) until 2025, the summit saw the conclusion of \$55 billion worth of public cooperation agreements in three years and 15,000 million in private investments in various sectors

ranging from space to health, through agriculture, transport, new technologies or food safety. Apart from the Summit, among others, two African countries, Rwanda and Nigeria, have adhered to the Artemis Accords, intended for the exploration and exploitation of lunar resources and other celestial bodies.

Washington's renewed attention to Africa goes hand in hand with that of the other powers towards the continent, which is experiencing population growth and is rich in mineral resources, such as cobalt, essential for the energy transition. The vote of the more than 50 African states is also important in UN bodies. They frequently host similar summits in China (the continent's largest trading partner), Russia, France, the European Union, Japan, Turkey and South Korea.

Let's create conducive environment for investments and spur growth

By Thomas Lyimo

ONE of the many attributes which made the late Julius Nyerere a respected statesman and admired pan-Africanist is that he accepted criticism and promoted corrective measures for the purpose of enhancing attainment of personal and national development.

He always desired success for the country and not for an individual and this was in line with what the great philosopher Plato posited earlier that the national interests should be above individual's interests. Nyerere hated selfishness as he always ventured into projects which he believed would benefit the entire nation.

The more someone is involved in many projects, the more knowledgeable they become and hence capable of advising the rest. Nyerere was not selfish to the extent of hiding reasons for failure in a certain project when it came to the greater interest of the nation. After retirement, he admitted his failures.

In one of his speeches, Nyerere declared that the reason for most African countries to fail in their economic endeavours



was cooperating with US and European nations using local ways. Western economic systems differ from the African systems such as socialism and self-reliance which Nyerere pursued.

Westerners had economic infrastructure which favoured them while Africans lacked economic infrastructures such as modern industries. Nyerere also argued that the inability of Africa to compete in the world was due to the fact that every boss or business associate was in pursuit of personal gain or profit.

It is a waste of time to continue complaining about low prices for agricultural raw

materials from Africa while there are no serious plans for industrialization. It is advised that if you are not able to do better, then keep quiet. The price of finished goods is high and makes industrialized countries rich but declining low prices for raw materials due to the so-called unequal exchange may devastate the economy as keeping raw materials for a long time in warehouses may render them useless. If agricultural products which contribute much of Africa's export are unsold, farmers will get discouraged in engaging in production and hence escalating unemployment and poverty.

What is important is to try our level best to understand what Nyerere meant when he said that it was a mistake to engage in modern economic pursuits using traditional means. Assessing the statement by Nyerere, one can be convinced that in order for Africa to succeed in her economic initiatives, she has to emulate success stories.

One of the ways in which Africa can succeed is allowing foreign investment with a trading environment that is open to the two parties in order to do away with the unfading story of unequal exchange while Africa has many experts who can ne-

gotiate good trade deals and make sound economic planning and implementation of the same.

Investors come with new technology, knowledge and links to the international markets which continue to increase the value for what is being produced on the continent. It has been a cry for many African countries when it comes to securing markets for locally produced goods including crops.

It is through selling our products abroad that individual countries and the continent get foreign currency for essential imports and implementation of development projects. Therefore, if

we do not adhere to what Nyerere advised us, we may ignore the role of foreign investors and find ourselves in a number of challenges that would increase difficulties to our people.

One of the effects of ignoring foreign investments is unemployment. The number of industries in Tanzania and Africa is small and hence most of the people find it difficult to get employment. It is through investments—local and foreign—that Tanzania and Africa can solve the problem of unemployment especially amongst the growing youth population.

Also, low investments normally result in decrease in tax to the government. It is a tax which enables the government to run its activities. Therefore, inadequate tax collection means failure by the government to meet needs of the people through provision of social services. Nyerere was once criticized by the West because he did not collect tax adequately. How can a country collect enough tax if there are few industries due to low level of investments?

Another effect of low level of investments is lack of new technology and skills transfer. For,

foreign investors come with new technology and knowledge which is necessary for the socio-economic development of our countries and continent. Inadequate foreign investments make it difficult for countries and continents to develop as production, which is the base of development, depends on technology and knowledge.

Undervaluing foreign investors means isolating the country from the international community. Investments play a key role in connecting countries. Through this relationship, other benefits emerge such as scholarships and growth of tourism as foreign investors also act as agents of promoting tourism in the countries they have invested in.

The collective result of undervaluing foreign investors is underdevelopment. Underdevelopment forces a country to seek loans which unfortunately come with interest. The result is a country seeking loans to repay other loans and hence the economic crisis.

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By Heidi Swart

SOUTH Africa has earned a spot as a top destination for organised criminals. In the world of trafficking guns, drugs, minerals, poached wildlife and human beings, SA ranked 19th out of 193 United Nations member states. That's according to a recently published two-year study from the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

Part of the reason for criminals' free rein, intelligence insiders who spoke to Daily Maverick and were granted anonymity to discuss sensitive matters, is that the South African Police Service (SAPS) and its Crime Intelligence Division (CI) are largely deprived of a crucial tool when tackling complex, well-organised syndicates: electronic communications surveillance. WhatsApp calls and texts, emails, Skype, and even just tracking suspects' movements in the field are out of law enforcement's reach.

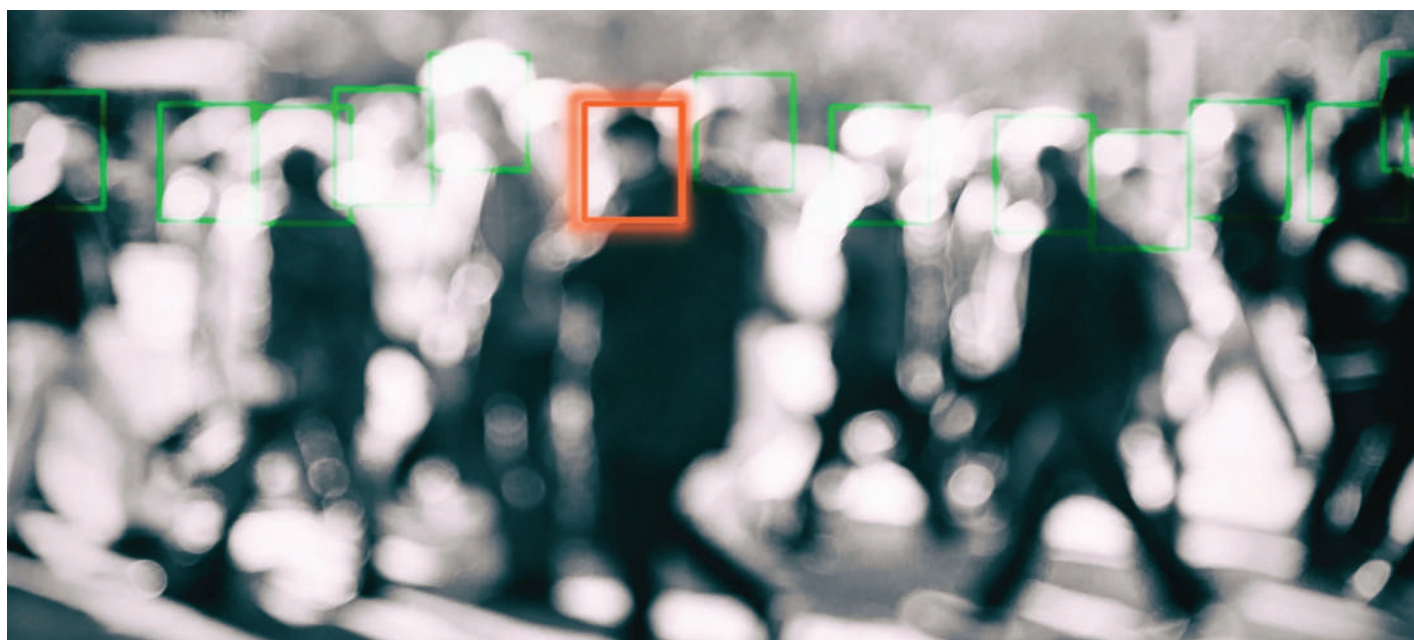
What's up, WhatsApp?

A long-standing headache for SAPS and CI is their inability to decrypt and read data messaging, particularly end-to-end encrypted messaging services like WhatsApp, Signal and Telegram.

Encryption, simply put, is a way to protect the content of a message. Roughly speaking, software is applied to scramble the message before it is transmitted, and again decipher it after it arrives at the receiver's smartphone or computer. It's crucial to privacy and cybersecurity, but it hampers an ill-equipped SAPS.

In a 2021 report to Parliament, the judge appointed to watch over South Africa's interception laws warned of the desperate spy technol-

Police spy equipment broken or gathering dust amid intelligence crisis?



ogy shortcomings SAPS faces. The judge (also known as the Rica judge) is responsible for granting SA's intelligence services warrants to allow interception of mobile phone communications and internet traffic. She does this in terms of Rica – the Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-Related Information Act.

Several issues were brought to the Rica judge's attention by SAPS Crime Intelligence, most related to what's known as the Office of Interception Centres (OIC) – the national interception hub that falls under the auspices of the State Security Agency (SSA), SA's main spy organisation. There are various satellite interception offices throughout the country and all are connected to the OIC.

Once the Rica judge grants an interception order to intelligence services, they serve that order on service providers (a mobile operator or an internet provider, for example). The provider then transmits a digital copy – and this can be in real time – of those communications to the OIC. Here, intelligence services can listen in, or read emails or messages. Theoretically.

In reality, SAPS CI told the Rica judge in March 2021 that the OIC system was "outdated" and regularly collapsed, "resulting in the loss of interception com-

munications products." To boot, the OIC can only intercept voice and SMS data. That was fine in the early 2000s when there was nothing else around, but things changed with the onset of 3G mobile technology and the resultant dominance of smartphones and platforms like WhatsApp, Zoom, emails and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

These newer forms of data communications can be intercepted, but intelligence services cannot decrypt them. It's not getting better.

An old problem

Says one source with ties to SAPS crime intelligence: "Encryption is a problem for everybody. Mobile providers can send data packets to the police, who attempt to decrypt it."

But, explains the source, after this step, service providers have no further obligation to assist. By law, once they receive a court order, service providers are compelled to send a copy of a surveillance target's communications to intelligence services. But that is where their responsibility ends.

SAPS are the ones legally responsible for decrypting that data – something they have been experiencing issues with for a number of years. Already back in 2015, a source within a major mobile

service provider (with extensive knowledge of the providers' working relations with intelligence services) told Daily Maverick that SAPS simply couldn't decrypt data communications.

Said the source: "...if subscriber A calls subscriber B, (and) they have encryption software on their phones, we will give it to them (SAPS) the way we read it. They must decrypt it. They are very unhappy with that. For example, BlackBerry Messenger and WhatsApp – those are all encrypted. BBM was not allowed in Iran or China... they cannot read it. They cannot decrypt it."

A mobile network technician explained that not much has changed since seven years ago: "The guys in the company just activate the interception process. They've got very little information about the actual data being sent to the OIC. The problem is they (the OIC) cannot decrypt it. I've looked for WhatsApp decryption software. I haven't found it. It's end-to-end encrypted and I have to admit, it's really well done. They (law enforcement) usually go and speak to the people behind WhatsApp – Facebook. They can decrypt it and give it to you."

To get Meta (formerly Facebook) to hand over the goods, SAPS must make use of a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty – a formal agreement between South Africa

and the United States to assist each other in criminal investigations. However, there is a lengthy bureaucratic process attached to this, especially with a giant like Meta.

Explains the mobile network technician: "If you look at the Oscar (Pistorius) case: it took long... the process of convincing them (Meta) that we need to get these messages." The source says that a treaty between governments isn't much help when it comes to corporates: "WhatsApp and Facebook...their terms and conditions are written so well, you actually have to kiss their asses."

Outdated

Apart from the OIC, there's another tool police could use to intercept communications. Known as a "grabber", this portable device looks like an oversized laptop with a small antenna stuffed into a pelican case. It acts as a false cell-phone tower, and the surveillance target's phone connects to it without their knowledge. The grabber then extracts information from the cellphone that allows police to identify the target. Grabbers are also useful when tracking a suspect on the move, and advanced grabbers can intercept voice calls and data traffic.

But, although SAPS recently acquired new grabbers, they've never been in use. In June last year, News24 reported on an internal memo from SAPS Crime Intelligence that revealed the dire state of grabber technology in the police. SAPS reportedly paid R102-million for 13 grabbers (costing R5.5-million each). However, upon receiving the devices in March 2020, SAPS locked them away in their Technology Support Unit in Silverton in Pretoria. The reason? A glitch with the procurement process.

Importing grabbers is not straightforward. It's an opaque process that lends itself to corruption while at the same time creating a lot of red tape. "It's not just, I want this thing and I'm buying it," explains a source with detailed knowledge of SAPS CI procurement processes. Within

Rica, grabbers fall under a special category of interception gear known as "listed equipment". One can only purchase listed equipment if you have a certificate of exemption issued by the Justice Minister. But when the grabbers arrived in Silverton in March 2020, SAPS still didn't have such a certificate.

Three independent sources with ties to SAPS Crime Intelligence confirmed to Daily Maverick that SAPS still doesn't have access to the new grabbers. According to the sources with detailed knowledge of SAPS CI procurement processes, the newer units stored at Silverton are already outdated: "The equipment can't handle 5G."

And SAPS could use some updated devices. Back in 2020 the internal Crime Intelligence memo reportedly stated that SAPS had three "outdated" grabbers that could only intercept 3G communications, meaning the increasingly dominant 4G and 5G communications couldn't be intercepted. The memo said that six units were "beyond repair."

To date, things haven't improved. When asked about the state of grabbers SAPS can use now, a second source laughed: "They have five units. One works. Four are broken."

In plain sight

It's not only encrypted communications that are out of SAPS's reach. Even monitoring information in plain sight is beyond their capabilities. Police don't have the software to monitor social media for potential leads in crimes. That's because the tender SAPS put out to procure this type of software, although awarded, has now been stalled for months. The tender first went out in March 2020.

Generation and self-consumption, the path to clean energy in Argentina

By Daniel Gutman

WITH large projects held back by the economic crisis and lack of infrastructure, Argentina seems to be looking at an alternative path towards a more sustainable energy mix involving small renewable energy projects, promoted by environmentally aware industries, businesses and private users.

The initiatives are aimed at covering their own consumption, sometimes with the addition of so-called distributed generation, in which user-generators who have a surplus of electricity can inject it into the national power grid and thus generate a tariff credit.

Distributed generation initiatives have just surpassed 1,000 projects already in operation, according to the latest official data.

At the same time, this month saw the inauguration of the largest private solar energy park in the city of Buenos Aires, an initiative of the Argentine Rural Society (SRA), the traditional business chamber of agricultural producers.

The park was installed in the exhibition center the SRA owns in the capital of this South American country, to supply part of its consumption with an investment of almost one million dollars and more than 1,000 solar panels.

“Small private renewable energy projects and distributed generation will be the ones to increase installed capacity in the coming years, because the electricity transmission and distribution system sets strong limits on large projects,” Mariela Beljansky, a specialist in energy and climate change issues, told IPS.

Beljansky, who was national director of Electricity Generation until early 2022, added: “Otherwise there will be no way to meet the growth targets for renewable sources set by Argentina, as part of its climate change mitigation commitments under the Paris Agreement.”

Argentina presented its National Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan, which includes 250 measures to be implemented by 2030, at the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) on climate change held by the United Nations in the Egyptian city of Sharm El Sheikh in November.

The National Secretariat for Climate Change estimated the total value of the plan’s implementation at 185.5 billion dollars, four times more than the debt Argentina incurred in 2018 with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which has generated a sharp deterioration of the economy since then.

According to the data included in the plan, the energy sector is the largest generator of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the country, generating 51 percent of emissions.

Although renewable sources (with wind projects in first place and solar in second place) reached a record in October, supplying 17.8 percent of total electricity demand, the energy mix continues to be sustained basically by oil, natural gas and large hydroelectric projects.

Furthermore, the country has not decided to slow down the development of fossil fuels. The main reason is that it has large reserves of shale natural gas in the Vaca Muerta field in the south of the country, which has been attracting the interest of international investors for years.



Aerial view of the 5000 square meter roof full of solar panels, in one of the pavilions of La Rural, the busiest fair and exhibition center in Buenos Aires. It is the largest private solar park in the capital of Argentina and required an investment of almost one million dollars. CREDIT: Courtesy of La Rural

The climate change plan sets the goal of using natural gas as a transition fuel to replace oil as much as possible.

The plan also includes the objectives of developing a variety of renewable energy sources (wind, solar, small hydro, biogas and biomass) and also distributed generation, “directly at the points of consumption” and connected to the public power grid, at the residential and commercial levels.

Large renewable projects experienced strong growth between 2016 and 2019, on the back of an official plan that guaranteed the purchase of electricity at attractive prices for investors, but since then there have been virtually no new initiatives.

Consumption subsidies “In Argentina’s current situation, where there is practically no financing, and there are restrictions on importing equipment, high inflation and economic uncertainty, it is difficult to think about large renewable energy parks, and small projects become more attractive,” Marcelo Alvarez, a member of the board of the Argentine Renewable Energy Chamber (Cader), told IPS. Alvarez pointed out that what con-

spires against small private and distributed generation projects are the subsidies that the Argentine government has been providing for years to energy consumption, including those families with high purchasing power that do not need them.

“Artificially cheap electricity rates and the scarcity of credit discourage the growth of renewables,” Alvarez said.

“The proof of this is that more than half of the distributed generation projects in operation are in the province of Cordoba (in the center of the country), where electricity prices are three times more expensive than in Buenos Aires and there is a special line of credit from the local bank (Bancor, which grants ‘eco-sustainable loans’) for renewable equipment,” he said.

Indeed, according to data from the Energy Secretariat, there are 1,051 user undertakings that generate their own electricity and inject their surplus into the grid and 573 of them are in the province of Cordoba.

Argentine state energy subsidies totaled 11 billion dollars in 2021 and this year, up to October, they already exceeded seven billion dollars, according to data from the Argentine Association of Budget

and Public Financial Administration (Asap).

As for sources of financing, there is a line of credit endowed with 160 million dollars from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Banco de Inversión y Comercio Exterior (Bice), financed in part by the Green Climate Fund, which is aimed at renewable sources and energy efficiency projects for small and medium-sized businesses. However, most companies are unaware of its existence.

Private ventures

On Dec. 15, the Rural Society inaugurated the largest private solar park in Buenos Aires, in the 42,000 square meter covered area where the country’s most important fairs and exhibitions are held. The investment reportedly amounted to almost one million dollars.

“We have 42,000 square meters of roofs in our pavilions. It is a very important flat surface for the placement of solar panels, so we had been thinking about it for several years. We had done a pilot project in 2019, but then everything was delayed by the pandemic, which forced us to close the venue,” Claudio Dowdall, general manager

of La Rural, told IPS.

“At this stage we used 5,000 square meters of roofs, on which we placed 1,136 photovoltaic panels, with a total power of 619 kW. This is equivalent to the average consumption of 210 family homes and, for us, it is between 30 and 40 percent of the electricity we use,” he added.

Andrés Badino, founder of Utorak, a company that has been dedicated to renewable energy for families and companies for more than five years, confirms that consultations and demand are growing in the sector.

“People’s interest has been growing because of increased environmental awareness and, also, because of what can be saved on electricity bills for residential users and for educational institutions and healthcare centers as well,” Badino said.

“Argentina has a national industry for the production of solar thermal tanks, but not for the manufacture of panels, inverters or batteries, despite the fact that the country has one of the largest reserves in the world, the main component. But we are confident that international prices will go down and drive demand,” he said.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO



Left to right: Simon Tiemtore, Liliun Capital; Amadou Hott, African Development Bank; Alain Ebobisse, Africa50; Benedict Oramah, African Export-Import Bank; Patrick Dlamini, Development Bank of Southern Africa (2nd row); Alexia Latortue, U.S. Department of the Treasury; Eric Odiambho, Ecobank (2nd row); Enoch Ebong, U.S. Trade and Development Agency; Sanjeev Gupta, Africa Finance Corporation (2nd row); Reta Jo Lewis, Export-Import Bank of the United States; Chinelo Anohu, Africa Investment Forum (2nd row); Tony Elumelu, Heirs Holdings; Admassu Tadesse, Trade and Development Bank (2nd row); Sim Tshabalala, Standard Bank Group; Sola Yomi-Ajayi, UBA America posing in USTDA office.

AIF partners secure \$1 billion in MoU during the US-Africa leaders' summit

By Special Correspondent

AFRICA Investment Forum (AIF) has garnered strong support in the US to help advance key infrastructure projects for the continent.

Three founding members of the Africa Investment Forum signed memoranda of understanding worth over \$1 billion with the Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) to expand American trade and investment in Africa.

Exim President and Chair Reta Jo Lewis signed the agreement with the heads of the African Export-Import Bank, Africa Finance Corporation, and Africa50 at the three-day US-Africa Leaders Forum convened by the Biden Administration on 13 December 2022. The US-Africa engagement took place amid global fragility and as Africa faces an infrastructure financing gap estimated at more than \$100 billion per year.

Chair Lewis last November led an EXIM delegation to the

Africa Investment Forum's 2022 Market Days in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where the relationship with the three institutions was consolidated.

"The partnerships we are establishing today are very much a demonstration of EXIM's commitment to resetting and renewing our outreach efforts with Africa," Lewis said in remarks at the signing in Washington, DC.

She said while collaboration with Africa is one of EXIM's mandates, it is also a Biden-Harris Administration priority, "one that we are dedicated to fulfilling in support of the advancement of US exports."

During the event, African Development Bank Group Senior Director Chinelo Anohu, who heads the Africa Investment Forum, built on the momentum of the 2022 Africa Investment Forum Market Days (link is external) - which drew \$31 billion of investment interest - meeting with business leaders to explore further investment opportunities

to close Africa's infrastructure gap. She spoke about the significance of strengthening the partnerships between the Africa Investment Forum, American government institutions, and the US private sector. The forum brought together US and African business and civil society leaders, media, and members of the diaspora in Washington, D.C.

Earlier in the week, EXIM named Anohu as one of the 15 global women leaders of its Council for Advancing Women in Business, launched during its 2022 Annual Conference. The Council will play a key role in supporting EXIM's gender equity goals.

The African Development Bank also participated in the celebration of 30 years since the establishment of the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA). The event brought together Africa's preeminent finance institutions to discuss the future of infrastructure finance on the continent. During this meeting, Anohu and USTDA Director Enoch Ebong

highlighted the collaboration between the Africa Investment Forum and the USTDA - which they said has already delivered solid results, particularly in women-led investment.

Several other events took place on the margins of the US-Africa Leaders' Summit to advance discussions on Africa's efforts to boost climate action, support creative industries, and foster innovative solutions to the continent's infrastructure deficit.

These included an opening dinner hosted by the Atlantic Council, where ten Heads of State (link is external) engaged in dialogue with U.S. and African business leaders. There was also a roundtable with the new global news outlet Semafor (link is external), featuring the Africa Export-Import Bank and Atlantic Council on financing African creative.

Anohu also attended a program hosted by the Africa Finance Corporation and the Bank of America on innovating finance for climate change.

The summit closed with a commitment from U.S. President Biden for \$55 billion in new financing over the next three years to tackle some of Africa's greatest challenges, including health, climate, digital and trade and investment. The Africa Investment Forum and its founding partners expect to be key implementing partners working with the U.S. administration and the U.S. Congress in executing the new commitments.

The Africa Investment Forum is Africa's infrastructure investment marketplace, championed by the African Development Bank and seven other founding partners to accelerate the closure of the continent's investment gaps. It operates as a multi-stakeholder, multidisciplinary platform dedicated to advancing projects to bankable stages, raising capital, and accelerating the financial closure of deals. It also includes a digital platform for investors and project sponsors to profile their investment interests and deals.

Horn of Africa faces most severe drought more than two generations, says UNICEF

By Grace Ekpu

THE number of children suffering from dire drought conditions across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia has more than doubled in five months, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) has said.

Around 20.2 million children are under threat of severe hunger, thirst and disease - compared to 10 million in July - as climate change, conflict, global inflation and grain shortages devastate the region.

"While collective and

accelerated efforts have mitigated some of the worst impact of what has been feared, children in the Horn of Africa are still facing the most severe drought in more than two generations", stated UNICEF Deputy Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa Lieke van de Wiel.

Nearly two million children across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are estimated to need urgent treatment for severe acute malnutrition, the deadliest form of hunger. Meanwhile, water insecurity has more than dou-

bled with close to 24 million people now confronting dire water shortages.

At the same time, drought has internally displaced over two million people and driven approximately 2.7 million children out of school, with an additional four million others at risk of dropping out.

"Humanitarian assistance must be continued to save lives and build the resilience of the staggering number of children and families who are being pushed to the edge - dying from hunger and disease and being displaced in search of food, water and pasture for their livestock", said Ms. van de Wiel.

As increased stress is driv-

ing families to the edge, youth are facing child labour, child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

And widespread food insecurity and displacement are triggering sexual violence, exploitation, abuse, and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV).

"We need a global effort to mobilize resources urgently to reduce further devastating and irreversible damage to children in the Horn of Africa", continued the senior UNICEF official.

Thanks to the generous support of donors and partners, UNICEF continues to provide life-saving services to children and families

across the Horn of Africa, as it prepares for further shocks, builds resilience and strengthens key services.

This year, the UN agency and its partners reached nearly two million children and women with essential healthcare services; vaccinated against measles almost two million between the ages of six months and 15 years; and provided safe water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene to over 2.7 million people.

UNICEF's 2023 emergency appeal of \$759 million to support children and their families will require timely and flexible funding, especially surrounding education, wa-

ter and sanitation, and child protection - all of which were severely underfunded this year. An additional \$690 million is required to support long-term investments for children and their families to recover and adapt to climate change.

"As governments and people across the world prepare to welcome a New Year, we urge the international community to commit to responding now for what might hit the Horn of Africa next year, and in the years to come," Van de Wiel appealed.

"We must act now to save children's lives, preserve their dignity and protect their futures."

Young Zimbabweans choosing agriculture over corporate jobs

By Walter Marwizi

YOUNG, savvy university graduates are choosing farming over white-collar jobs as Zimbabwe seeks a return to its breadbasket status.

When Tavuya Manungo, 29, returned to his home town in Shamva in north-eastern Zimbabwe, he did so with a master's degree in finance and investment, and no desire for corporate employment. He also brought with him his brother Mako, 27, who holds a degree in business management.

They had decided to go farming. "Well-managed agricultural projects, small or large, are more lucrative than most jobs available. It is also fulfilling work that is easy to love," explained Manungo's younger brother.

The brothers are among a new generation of educated youth, many with degrees in business, law, finance and technology, who are shedding suits and ties and turning to agriculture.

Masimbiland farm, named after a nearby mountain, produces 15 hectares of oranges, 90 hectares of maize and three-and-a-half hectares of chillies. The farm also maintains over 30,000 egg-laying hens.

The farm also produces mango and citrus seedlings in its nursery, with targeted production of a million citrus seedlings by the end of 2022.

Tavuya Manungo oversees the farm's administration and finance, while Mako is in charge of the operations.

In 2015, the duo won a national Youngest Brahman Breeders award for their Brahman cattle. Starting small, they now also have well over 200 of the super beef breed.

The brothers hire over 40 pickers daily to help on the farm. "We're nothing without the people working in the field, they make it all possible," said Mako.

Another young person who has traded an office coat and tie for farm overalls is 27-year-old Hilary Chikambi. He returned "to the soil" after leaving his corporate job as an accountant.

"For me it was an act of faith because I had almost no knowledge in farming. I had watched my parents rear chickens in my childhood, and that is how I managed to convince a friend to invest in this project with me. I am happy that chicken-rearing has become a popular business venture in Zimbabwe as the inputs are relatively low, profit margins tend to be large and the turnaround time is short," he said.

But at his first attempt, heavy rainfall destroyed his chicken structures, killing almost all the birds, and after butchering them, a fridge malfunctioned, leading him to donate all the meat before it spoiled.

Now, four years on and many lessons later, Chikambi and his staff sell almost 2,000 birds a month to supermarkets, restaurants and individuals.

Having lost birds to poor disease control and what Chikambi describes as "minor mistakes", he has invested in staff training where the labourers he hires are taught good farming practices. He plans to expand into horticulture and maize production, which will help him reduce costs for chicken feeds.

"I want young people to know that you can make a good career out of farming, and honestly, there isn't a profession where the hand of God is more evident. You plant something in the ground, have faith and work hard at it, and in due time, something you can reap grows," Chikambi added.

In 2021, the country recorded its third-highest maize crop ever, according to United States Department of Agriculture statistics, and although the largely rain-fed crop headed lower in 2022, the country's agricultural diversity has grown by leaps and bounds. The country made its first exports of industrial hemp to Switzerland in 2022 and is building a credible cannabis farming industry on the back of its tobacco industry. The country remains the world's fifth-largest tobacco producer and also exports cotton, macadamia nuts, citrus, sugar, legumes and cut flowers.



A ten-month-old boy is treated for severe malnutrition at a hospital in Puntland, Somalia.

BUSINESS

Gold mine offers Christmas gifts to delivered mothers, patients at Bugarama health centre

By Guardian Reporter

BARRICK Gold Corporation's Bulyanhulu gold mine has presented Christmas gifts for delivered mothers and patients at the Bugarama Health Center's ward in Msalala Council.

Cheick Sangare, Bulyanhulu mine general manager was accompanied with his staff to distribute different gifts to the beneficiaries and health center's staff.

Sangare said the mine firm will continue to participate in development activities for the community living around the mine.

According to him, Barrick Bulyanhulu has successfully built 28 clinics in Msalala Council, Kahama District, Shinyanga Region and Nyang'hwale Council, Geita Region, some of which have been completed and started providing services and others are in various stages of construction.

He said that in parallel with the construction, Mgodhi has also contributed funds to the implementation of other development projects in the education sector by building secondary schools in the councils of Msalala and Nyang'hwale and other strategic sector projects including water.

Charles Fusi, Msalala Council executive director lauded the mine for contributing to development and participating in helping the challenges faced by the residents of neighboring areas.

"This exercise that is being held here to give gifts to the patients and staff of

the Bugarama Health Center is a sign great how that mine, cooperates with our community with love," said Fusi.

He said that in this financial year 2022/2023, a total of 18 clinics have been built in his council and nine of them have started providing health care to the people.

"On behalf of the government, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our colleagues from the Barrick Bulyanhulu mine for their cooperation and good work for the Msalala community, especially for the people living around the barrack mine, we as the government through our council congratulate them for their great contribution to development activities," said Fusi.

Doctor in charge at Bugarama Health Center, Dr. Silas Kayanda, said that the mine, through the Relations division, has been at the forefront in solving various challenges that arise in the center.

Jesca Msomi, Bugarama Ward Council said that the mine has succeeded in implementing the construction of the Ilogi Secondary School in the ward, at 100 percent and that the funds derived from the crude production of gold ore, corporate social responsibilities (CSR), have successfully implemented various projects including education, health and water.

On behalf of her colleagues, one of the patients who received a gift, Elizabert Nicolaus thanked Barrick Bulyanhulu for remembering them during this festive period.

Saving to save lives: How 'susu' empowered woman to flee from the violence

By Bertha Badu-Agyei

TWO years ago, Yaa Ataa (not her real name) led a life of quiet despair at Boma, a farming community in eastern Ghana. Her husband would beat her if she did not cook his favourite meal and rain blows on her accusing her of infidelity if she came home late from visiting her ailing mother in the neighboring village.

Her relatives and neighbors often told her to walk away, but the 36-year-old mother of three felt trapped. She wondered where she would go, what she would live on and who would take care of her children if she left. Without her own source of livelihood, she was fully dependent on her husband of 12 years and, in spite of the abuse, she stayed because she had a roof over her head, food for her children and sometimes enough to share with her mother.

Moreover, her husband threatened to disown their children and stop taking care of her ailing mother if she left. She endured for the sake of the children.

Now, all that is behind her. Today, she stands on her own with her children and is free from abuse thanks to a village savings and loans group commonly referred to as susu.

Yaa joined the susu initiated by the Obasima Foundation in 2019 when the local Queen Mother selected her to join the project to empower needy women in the community.

Women in rural communities in Ghana engage in subsistence farming, providing labour for farms. They also do small-scale cassava and corn flour production and gari and palm oil processing and petty trading. They have no fixed salary and do not earn a living wage, making them vulnerable to economic violence at home.

Economic violence involves making or attempting to make a person financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding access to money and/or curtailing attendance at school or employment.

Yaa, was among 20 women who were trained in gari processing, soap making, beads making, and cassava processing into flour and chips. The women were put into four groups of five women each and given seed money of GHc1,000, which they used to start their small businesses. They were trained to save from the profits and given six months to repay the loans.

The susu is led by five trustees, including the queen mother of the local community, who get basic training in bookkeeping and accounting to run group affairs. Each day, the women in the group contribute be-



tween GHc1 to GHc5, which is recorded in a ledger. Each member has a passbook to record contributions, loan disbursement and loan repayment.

After saving for three months, the women can borrow between GHc1,000 and GHc2,500 based on their contributions and needs. The women can use the money to expand their businesses or pay for school fees or other necessities. The loan attracts an interest rate of five per cent which is used to run the association. The susu provides access to credit, which the women would not normally have access to due to the stringent criteria for borrowers in the formal sector.

Members of the group meet twice a week, at a designated place, for forums on social issues, where they discuss gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health, housekeeping, parenting, bookkeeping and basic business management skills. After these discussions, they make their contributions and get loans.

Yaa joined the gari processing group, and after saving for six months, she qualified for a business expansion loan of GHc1,500 with a repayment period of a year. With savings of GHc800 from her business and loans from the group, she moved out of her husband's house and rented a room for herself and her children.

"Now I am able to rent my own house and take care of my children. Through the susu, I can confidently take care of my needs and contribute to community development," she said.

When she left her husband, he stopped meeting their children's

needs, so she pays for her daughters' fees and hopes that completing school will prepare them to be economically independent.

Between 2016 and 2020, more than half a million (543,131) girls aged 15-19 years had teenage pregnancies, while 13,444 teenage pregnancies were in girls aged 10-14 years according to the Ghana Health Service District Health Information Management System (DHIMS). The latest census showed that teenage girls aged 15-19 years accounted for one in every 10 births (52,250 births) in 2021.

Obasima Founder, Ms Ama Frimpoma told GNA that many of these girls drop out of school, live in poverty and suffer abuse when they get married. Nana Kuma Asi, the Queen Mother of Boma said that some of the women depended on their partners for everything and girls often got pregnant and dropped out of school, fueling the vicious cycle.

This was the case for Yaa, who dropped out of school at age 15 due to pregnancy. She was forced to live with the 23-year-old man who impregnated her, even though that was child abuse because the legal age of marriage in Ghana is 18 years, while the age of consent is 16 years. The baby died two months after birth and she got her second child two years later, at age 17, and a third later. The abuse that started in her teen years, continued into adulthood until she joined the susu and raised enough money to escape.

Ms Frimpoma told GNA that these conditions - teenage pregnancy and child marriage - drive a vicious cycle of poverty,

and economic dependency, and gender-based violence.

"It is difficult for most of these young women to leave abusive relationships because they have nothing to live on. Most of them are school dropouts, having dropped out of school as a result of teenage pregnancy," she said, adding that making women self-reliant is one of the ways of addressing gender-based violence.

By gaining skills the women begin to earn a living and become economically independent. Once the women become self-reliant, it has a ripple effect on keeping their own daughters in school and breaking the cycle of poverty that makes girls vulnerable to abuse. This improves the lives of women in rural areas.

"Most of our beneficiaries have daughters and once they are able to take care of them, we see a reduction in teenage pregnancy and school dropouts in their families," she said.

Yaa is now training two girls who dropped out of school and hopes that within a year, they will stand on their feet, establish their own businesses, and mentor others.

Yaa's story lends credence to a UNICEF report that states that tackling violence in households requires social protection interventions to relieve the financial stress that drives intimate partner violence. The UN agency adds that women's economic empowerment is an effective strategy for tackling gender-based violence in communities because it reduced the need for women and girls to rely on exploitative or transactional sex or marriage for economic security.

Brewer drills motorists, residents on road safety

By Guardian Reporter

SERENGETI Breweries Limited (SBL) has organized a special training session to sensitize drivers and other pedestrians on road safety hints for the end of year festive season.

Dubbed 'Responsible drinking and driving' the training session was held at the weekend on Kijitonyama grounds in Dar es Salaam.

The training brought together more than 100 motorcycles and Bajaj (tricycle) drivers, the Chief of Traffic, and SBL staff.

Reports have it that road accidents are a leading cause of fatal accidents in the country with the majority of it result from non-observance of road safety signs and regulations, over speeding and drunk driving. However, the situation gets worse during the festive season hence the need to sensitize road users.

During the session, SBL staff and the police sensitised the drivers on the importance of adhering to road safety measures and avoiding drunk-driving.

The drivers were also educated on moderation drinking and encouraged to be road safety ambassadors to their peers and other road users.

SBL's marketing and innovation director Anitha Rwehumbiza said, "Through this partnership with the Tanzania police we expect that the drivers and riders we have trained will be our road safety ambassadors especially in this festive period where we are encouraging them and the public not to drink and drive;

Our drivers and riders have a responsibility to ensure people reach their destinations safely which is why it is important they get the right level of education and awareness on road safety

and drunk-driving"

SBL played various audio visuals to showcase the dangers involved with drunk driving and conducted a question-and-answer (Q&A) session to gauge the level of understanding from the drivers and riders.

SBL used the opportunity to extend the awareness to the public through the media to inform the public to enjoy their products in moderation, drink water in-between, and use a designated driver or take a taxi as opposed to drinking and driving.

"The public is also encouraged to visit the SBL Drink IQ platform that is accessible via all devices. Drink IQ is an e-learning tool available in Swahili and English;

The tool offers information about the content of SBL drinks; how alcohol is made and the different ways the human body may respond to it; how to keep track of alcohol intake; "truth" about "common myths" concerning alcohol consumption," said asserted Rwehumbiza

Head of Traffic education desk headquarters, Deus Sokoni, commended SBL on their initiative to educate boda boda and Bajaj drivers on road safety especially during this critical time of festivities.

"I congratulate SBL on this approach because it has been engaging. With this informative session I believe we will avert unnecessary on-road accidents and incidents, especially during this festive season," said the Commander



Dairy farmers in Kyankwanzi lose Shs15m to power outages

KAMPALA

DAIRY farmers in Kiboga and Kyankwanzi districts have said they lose about 2,000 litres of milk worth Shs15m after every two weeks due to power outages.

The farmers also attribute the losses to poor infrastructure and the milking process.

Currently, a litre of milk at the trading centre costs Shs750.

Mr Johnson Kwesigabo, the chairperson of Dwaniro Dairy Farmers' Cooperative in Kiboga, said in September and October, about 10 trucks of milk with a capacity of 10,000 litres were rejected by Jesa Farm when the generators had broken down.

"Each truck is about Shs15m, so you can see the size of the loss," Mr Kwesigabo said.

However, he said such losses can be avoided with the utilisation of clean and reliable energy like solar.

"We have resorted to using diesel powered generators that are expensive to operate and maintain. We spend 40 percent of the cooperative's operating costs on diesel and maintaining the generators," Mr Kwesigabo said this week.

"Dairy farmers in rural areas can hardly access



Solar-powered milk cooler.

reliable markets, and those that do are challenged by the low and fluctuating prices as well as the poor road infrastructure," he added.

Mr Samuel Kajwenje, a dairy farmer in Kiboga, said the farm gate milk price is still very low, which affects the farmers.

"The Shs750 is lower than the price of a bottle of drinking water that costs Shs1,000. We supply more than 35,000 litres of milk per week to Jesa Farm Dairy Ltd at a fair price, and we are confident of a steady market for

our milk all year," Mr Kajwenje said.

Last month, Heifer International Uganda started a project to empower dairy farmers in Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Mityana Wakiso, Nakaseke, Nakasongola, and Kayunga districts to increase milk production, quality, improve access to reliable markets, maintain quality farm inputs, and access reliable services.

According to Dr Joshua Zimbe, the project manager, they have been able to increase the quantity of milk in seven projected areas.

"The milk production has increased from 23 million litres in 2020 to 27 million litres in 2021, and it is projected to reach 35 million litres by the end of this year. This milk is distributed to dairy processing companies at a premium price," Mr Zimbe said.

He said the project has also improved the livelihoods of farmers and their families, which also contributes to the economic transformation of the country.

The Dwaniro Dairy Farmers' Coop-

erative is one of the 25 dairy farmer unions that have been supported through the project.

Solar energy initiative

Heifer International Uganda connects five off-grid milk collection centres with solar power to enable them to increase their efficiency and reduce wastage. The two-year pilot project has attracted an investment of €1m (nearly Shs4b) and is expected to be scaled up until 2024.

RCEP the big opportunity for young people

HONG KONG

YOUTH have an important role to play in further advancing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the 15 member economies should continue to pool the strength of young people to advance regional development through the partnership, speakers said at a roundtable of the first RCEP Youth Dialogue on Friday.

The online event, organized by China Daily, the China Institute for Reform and Development and the China Oceanic Development Foundation, focused on young people's role in firmly advancing the RCEP process.

Li Ming, deputy director of the department of policy and planning at the China International Development Cooperation Agency, said China has always believed that young people are the driving force for development in international community and has encouraged and helped young people all over the world through foreign aid and international development cooperation.

Youth are the beneficiaries of as well as contributors to global development. Overcoming global challenges and promoting global development require more emphasis on the role of young people, promoting their growth and reliance on their strength to advance united, equal, balanced and mutually beneficial global development partnership, Li said.

He called for deepening North-South cooperation, South-South cooperation and third-party cooperation to ensure vulnerable and marginalized sections among youth can share an equal development opportunity, so that no country and no young people are left behind.

Guo Yanjun, director of the Institute of Asian Studies at China Foreign Affairs University, said the RCEP spans a region with a youthful population, so it is imperative socially and economically to empower youth with digital skills.

Digital technologies represent the most dynamic industry in the fourth industrial revolution. The digital empowering of youth requires introduction of the latest digital advancements so they could benefit and also promotion of their active participation in learning through creative competition, he said.

Education is also key to enhancing the role of youth in the RCEP member states, he said. It is important to build new digital educational infrastructure for youth, adopt new ideas, frameworks and standards of university management to accelerate students' digital learning, and develop and improve distant learning in rural areas and organize youth forums on smart education, he said.

Chen Yibing, an Olympic champion and associate researcher at Beijing Normal University, said without continuous open communication, progress in sports cannot be achieved and regional and international sports also cannot thrive, he said.

As the COVID-19 epidemic control measures became more sophisticated, new momentum is gathering for sports exchanges among RCEP member countries, he said.

Youth people are the heart of sports and competitions, and in the post-pandemic world, more attention will be paid to health, so sports and fitness need further development, Chen said.

In recent years, sports communication activities between China and ASEAN countries have deepened the relations and serve as a platform for promoting friendship and common development, he said.



Christmas: Last minute shoppers flock city, excitement fills the air

KIGALI

THE City of Kigali was a beehive of activity on Christmas eve as shoppers put in a last minute effort to stock up for the festive season ahead of Christmas to be celebrated this Sunday.

In downtown, shoppers dashed to shop items for the festive season, from clothes to foodstuffs and decorations. Traffic jams, people squeezing through spaces in malls and parking lots teeming with cars characterised Christmas eve while in Nyabugogo bus terminal many traveled to celebrate Christmas with their loved ones upcountry.

Excitement filled the air as many sought to make the most of the first Christmas without any restrictions over the past two years. In Quartier Matheus and around City Plaza, hundreds of people rubbed and bumped into each other as they scrambled for discounted goods as sellers made a quick kill.

From household utensils to clothes, carpets, shoes and electronics, everything went as hawkers and shop owners alike competed for customers with hope of cashing in on the festive season.

"We have received a lot of customers over the past two days, which means that the majority of the people got paid and engaged in last minute shopping," said Damien Shirimpumpu, a businessman based in downtown Kigali.

The most on-demand goods were Christmas merchandise including Christmas trees and decorations, while foodstuffs in Nyarunge market and in Nyabugogo market, commonly known as kwa Mutangana, sold out as quickly as they came in.

Asina Mukarubuga, 42, a trader in Irish potatoes, said that the demand increased tremendously this week as many people bought enough food to push them through the festive season.

"Business has been good over the past two weeks, considering that the past two Christmases were a bit restricted. We are excited to see people coming to buy," Mukarubuga said.

Other common food items on demand include bananas, maize flour, rice, sugar and vegetables while shop owners were cashing in on sugar, soft and alcoholic drinks as many stocked their fridges and stores with festive drinks.

At Nyabugogo abattoir, over 200 cows



Thousands of commuters stranded at Nyabugogo taxi park on their way to celebrate festive season with their families upcountry.

were slaughtered on Christmas eve as one of the workers told The New Times, while more were expected to be slaughtered in the evening and on Christmas morning. Meat buyers, particularly butchery owners streamed in and out as they bought enough meat for Christmas festivities.

"On average we are seeing people buy between 3 to 5 kilograms instead of the usual 1 kilogram, which means that people are looking to celebrate with meat," said Dieudonne Munyabugingo, a meat trader in Kimironko market, who buys his stock from Nyabugogo abattoir.

In Nyabugogo bus terminal, people could be seen boarding last minute buses heading upcountry to celebrate Christmas with their loved ones as travel agencies quickly sold out tickets for those looking to travel.

People traveling to destinations such as Huye, Rubavu, Musanze and Nyagatare, had to wait a little longer as buses quickly filled

up.

"I have been waiting for two hours now, but I have just got a ticket," Alex Mwenewabo, who was traveling to Huye, to celebrate the festive days with his parents, told the press.

Augustin Muhizi, a travel agent working with a local transport company, said majority of those traveling were young people, who wish to celebrate Christmas upcountry with their families - something they were not able to do over the past two Christmases.

"I think with the Covid-19 pandemic, many people realised that life can indeed be complicated and now they cannot take for granted an opportunity to be together as family," Muhizi said, explaining the upsurge in travel on Christmas eve.

Christmas away from home

Jerome Abazu, a national of Cameroon, currently living in Kigali, said that he was looking forward to celebrating his Christ-

mas away from home, in Rwanda.

"I am excited. Personally I think I have enjoyed the preparations, the decorations, the excitement in the air and of course the peace and quiet. I am pumped up to be honest," said Abazu, who was found doing some last minute shopping in downtown.

In his Christmas message, the Mayor City of Kigali, Pudence Rubingisa, called on city dwellers to celebrate but responsibly, for the festive season to be enjoyable and safe for all. Among other things, Rwandans were called on to avoid drinking and driving and at the same time be vigilant for their own security and that of their households.

Rubingisa called on families to ensure that children are safe and protected as they tend to become victims of lengthy and irresponsible celebrations. Security organs have promised a safe and secure festive season as Rwandans look to celebrate Christmas and usher in the new year in style.

Charity initiatives celebrate Christmas with the needy

KIGALI

As some people are already in the Christmas mood shopping, decorating Christmas trees, or traveling so that Christmas finds them with family and revel together, others, especially orphans and deprived people, could have no plans as they lack the necessary items such as food, and clothes for the special day.

It's for this motive that some charity organisations have shown a gesture of love by collecting money and items, spend time together and dine with them.

Some of these are 'Our Past Initiative' (a drive that educates the Rwandan young generation more on the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi) together with friends decided to spend the season with children of Shyorongi town, Rulindo District and Ngeruka, Bugesera district in an event dubbed, 'Celebrate Christmas'.

The initiative, called upon



Sheer love Rwanda children share a picture moment with the YB Foundation team, and guests at Spiderman Game Centre limited, shortly after receiving their scholastic items.

the public to participate in donations of clothes, shoes, books, and other items that are still in good condition to give out to children between the ages two to 18.

The Shyorongi town event happened on December 18, and about 60 children

received items such as clothes, and others while 10 families were given foodstuff to take them through a month.

Children also participated in games where they won gifts. According to Christian Intwari, the founder and director of 'Our Past Initiative',

the next charity event for children in Ngeruka is scheduled for December 26, where 200 children will receive items like shoes, and scholastic materials.

Intwari stresses that 10 families will be given foodstuff to last them a month and

more, and children will eat, drink, play, win prizes, and also be entertained by comedy night.

Singer and vocalist Ariel Wayz is also ready to perform for the children.

Intwari encourages people to give to others as it's a

bleasing to share however little it is, because one doesn't have to be rich to put a smile on other's faces, and any gift can make a difference to someone's life.

Also, YB Foundation, launched in honor of Yvan Buravan, through its 'Twande' initiative celebrated this season with children of Sheer love Rwanda on December 23.

These are former street children whom the centre shelters. At the event, they were handed gifts, scholastic materials at Spiderman Game Center limited.

Local artistes including Igor Mabano, Deborah Ikirezi and Divine Nshuti Muheto, the current Miss Rwanda graced the event, sung for the children and also shared with them messages of hope, respect, encouragement and wisdom.

This is the first charity that the foundation has done, and looks forward to supporting those in need, just as Buravan did.

Love the Kids Rwanda, a lo-

cal non-profit and charitable organisation will organise a charitable organisation called, 'Christmas with Children in Kimisagara' on December 27 where 53 children will be served with food and drinks, among various gifts at Kimisagara, St. Peter's building.

Casmir Foundation, an organisation that aspires to help educate and invest in the next generation, in partnership with the City of Kigali, anticipate hosting 1,500 children from underprivileged families in Nyamirambo's neighborhoods to rejoice together while supporting 500 of them, who were once on the street, with scholastic materials.

The event will take place on December 31, at the Kigali stadium from 11am to 3pm and will host officials from the government and the national troupe 'Urucyerezeza Juniors.'

Children will showcase their talents, in singing, dancing, poetry, and engage in games such as face painting, and mouse and rat races, and will also be rewarded accordingly.

Social media puts 'vital' in rural revitalisation and drives apple sales

TAIYUAN

SINCE the apple harvest at the end of October, Zhang Ru, an apple grower, has been busy packing and delivering apples every day, with hundreds of kilograms in daily sales.

"We used to sell our apples at the markets in the county. Our apples are now sold across the country through my WeChat Moments," said Zhang, who lives in Wanrong county of Yuncheng in North China's Shanxi province.

The young woman said that around 30 percent of her apple yield can be sold via the internet. Yuncheng is dubbed the "golden apple production base" due to its geographic and climate advantages. With a total plantation area of 100,000 hectares, the annual apple output in Yuncheng reaches 4 billion kilograms and planting apples has become a mainstay for many farmers.

In 2021, the brand value of the "Yuncheng Apple" was over 5.6 billion yuan (\$803.5 million), according to Fan Boping, director of the city's fruit industry development center.

However, the high-quality fruit didn't bring good profits for the growers. It was challenging to find buyers and the sales volume was not guaranteed, said Jia Jinmao, a local farmer.

"I have seen many young people return to the county from big cities in recent years. They sell apples on the internet and the fruit can go directly to the customers. It truly

broadens sales channels, which makes me want to have a go at e-commerce," Jia said.

"You have to know how to grow apples on the one hand and how to sell on the other hand. The internet can help you sell good things at a good price," said Zhang, adding that she participated in e-commerce training held by the county government and is preparing an online shop.

Meanwhile, the improving logistics system in rural areas has also boosted e-commerce development. As of July, a vast logistics network had covered all the 1,541 villages of 117 townships in Yuncheng.

"The popularity of the internet and the improvement of rural logistics have made the Yuncheng Apple go further and sell at a good price. It's also helped rural revitalization," said Geng Yejiang, a professor at the School of Economics and Management at Shanxi University.

The change in apple sales in Yuncheng is the epitome of the change in Chinese farmers' lives. Since the country has promoted the coordinated development of the rural revitalization strategy, rural residents have seen their incomes and living standards improve.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed that, in 2021, the per capita disposable income of rural residents nationwide grew by 9.7 percent year-on-year to 18,931 yuan, up 125.7 percent from 2012.



Farmers pick apples at an orchard in Wanrong county, Yuncheng, Shanxi province.



ITV	CAPITAL
<p>MONDAY 26 Dec</p> <p>5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>9:00 DWTV Journal</p> <p>9:30 Soap rpt: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>11:00 The Base rpt</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>12:30 Jungu Kuu</p> <p>13:00 Mjuzi Zaidi</p> <p>13:40 Art and Lifestyle rpt</p> <p>14:10 Soap rpt: Rebeca</p> <p>14:40 Mapishi</p> <p>15:00 Bongo Movie: Watoto Wetu</p> <p>16:30 The Base</p> <p>17:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe</p> <p>18:30 DW: Afrimax</p> <p>19:00 Afya ya Jamii</p> <p>19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Dakika 45</p> <p>22:00 Kipindi Maalum: Watumishi Housing</p> <p>22:30 Soap: Uzalo</p> <p>23:00 The Base</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p>	<p>Thurs 22 Dec</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Club 101 rpt</p> <p>11:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>11:30 Spots gazette</p> <p>12:00 Innovation</p> <p>Mon 26 Dec</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Club 101 rpt</p> <p>11:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>11:30 Business edition</p> <p>12:00 Out and About</p> <p>12:30 Our earth</p> <p>13:00 Telenovela rpt: Laws of love 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)</p> <p>16:00 Tomorrow Today</p> <p>16:30 EcoAfrica</p> <p>17:00 Dw News Africa rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 The Décor rpt</p> <p>19:30 Shamba lulu</p> <p>20:00 Innovation rpt</p> <p>20:45 The Monday Agenda</p> <p>21:30 Capital Prime News</p> <p>22:00 Kipima Joto</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Tues 27 Dec</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Club 101 rpt</p> <p>11:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>11:30 Monday agenda rpt</p> <p>12:15 Spots gazette</p> <p>12:45 Filler doc</p> <p>13:00 Telenovela rpt: Laws of love 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)</p> <p>16:00 Dw News Africa rpt</p> <p>16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 Rev</p> <p>19:00 Out & About Rpt</p> <p>20:00 Albu Yako</p> <p>20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition</p> <p>20:45 Telenovela Laws Of love 21:30 Capital Prime News</p> <p>22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Sat 31 Dec</p> <p>08:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>09:00 Rev rpt</p> <p>09:30 Jagina rpt</p> <p>10:00 Culinary delight rpt</p> <p>10:30 Innovation rpt</p> <p>11:00 Out n'about rpt</p> <p>11:30 Sports Gazette rpt</p> <p>12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt</p> <p>12:30 Our Earth rpt</p> <p>13:00 Business edition rpt</p> <p>13:30 Al Jazeera</p> <p>14:30 Telenovela rpt Laws Of love 17:15</p>
<p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>9:00 DWTV Journal</p> <p>9:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:25 Kipindi maalum: TARURA rpt</p> <p>11:00 The Base rpt</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>12:30 Our Earth rpt</p> <p>13:00 Dakika 45 rpt</p> <p>14:00 Kipindi maalum: NSSF rpt</p> <p>14:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt</p> <p>18:30 Jungu Kuu rpt</p> <p>19:00 Jarida la wanawake</p> <p>19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Albu Yako</p> <p>21:10 Kipindi maalum: Tanesco</p> <p>21:40 Kipindi maalum: Pesa Fasta</p> <p>22:00 Ripoti maalum</p> <p>22:30 Soap: Uzalo</p> <p>23:00 The Base</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p> <p>THURSDAY 29 Dec</p> <p>5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>9:00 DWTV Journal</p> <p>9:30 Soap rpt: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:30 Shamba lulu</p> <p>11:00 The Base rpt</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt</p> <p>13:00 Art and Lifestyle rpt</p> <p>13:30 Shansham za pwani rpt</p> <p>14:30 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe</p> <p>15:00 Meza Huru:</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Mapishi</p> <p>18:30 Jagina</p> <p>19:00 Usafiri Wako</p> <p>19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Malumbano ya hoja</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p> <p>23:30 The Base</p> <p>00:30 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p> <p>FRIDAY 30 Dec</p> <p>5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>9:00 DWTV Journal</p> <p>9:30 Soap rpt: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:30 Usafiri Wako</p> <p>11:00 The Base rpt</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p>	<p>12:30 Kipindi maalum: Tanesco rpt</p> <p>13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Maisha ni Nyumba rpt</p> <p>13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na Mahakama ya TZ</p> <p>14:30 DW: Afrimax rpt</p> <p>15:00 Meza Huru:</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base (DJ Show)</p> <p>17:30 Kiisiam</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe</p> <p>18:30 Uchumi Wetu</p> <p>19:00 Shamba lulu</p> <p>19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Kipima Joto</p> <p>23:00 The Base</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p> <p>SATURDAY 31 Dec</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:00 Habari</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>9:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:00 Kipindi maalum: FAO</p> <p>10:05 Shika Bamba 5</p> <p>10:35 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt</p> <p>11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt</p> <p>12:00 Hawavumi lakini wamo</p> <p>13:00 Usafiri wako</p> <p>13:30 Jagina</p> <p>14:00 Soap: In Love with Ramon rpt</p> <p>16:15 Igizo: Mizengwe</p> <p>16:30 Igizo: Rebeca</p> <p>17:00 Shansham za Pwani</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 ITV Top 10 rpt</p> <p>19:00 Jungu Kuu</p> <p>19:30 Shika Bamba</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Tatu Mzuka</p> <p>21:15 Igizo: Rebeca</p> <p>21:40 Art and Lifestyle</p> <p>22:10 ITV Top 10</p> <p>22:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo</p> <p>23:40 Soap: Uzalo rpt</p> <p>01:15 DWTV</p> <p>SUNDAY 1 Jan</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:00 Habari</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>09:00 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>10:00 Soap: In Love with Ramon rpt</p> <p>11:50 Bongo Movie rpt:</p> <p>14:00 Tamasha la Michezo</p> <p>15:30 Mwangaza</p> <p>16:30 ITV Top 10 rpt</p> <p>17:20 Kipindi cha kikristo</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Mapishi</p> <p>18:30 Malukio ya wiki</p> <p>19:30 Igizo: Rebeca</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Kipindi maalum: Biko</p> <p>21:10 Kipindi maalum: Reflexology</p> <p>21:15 Igizo: Mizengwe</p> <p>21:30 Mjuzi Zaidi</p> <p>22:15 Bongo movie:</p> <p>23:30 Soap: Uzalo rpt</p>

WORLD



A cyclist makes their way through fog on a frosty morning at Primrose Hill, in north London, on Dec 11, 2022. AFP

Bleak Christmas for struggling UK families amid cost-of-living crisis

LONDON

TEARS rolled down the cheeks of Christine Haycock, 42, as her eldest daughter Emily decided to save pocket money to buy a new jumper for the mother of three.

"That really got to me, a nine-year-old child understanding the plight we are in," Haycock told Xinhua in an interview at her home in an industrial town on the outskirts of Liverpool in northwestern England.

Haycock is struggling to make ends meet as Christmas comes. A few weeks ago, Haycock went to a food bank for the first time to collect some essential provisions to feed her family.

"I was upset to think I'd got to the point when I needed a food bank, thinking this is what I have to do to get us through Christmas," she said.

Amid the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, Haycock was not alone. Between April

and September, more than 320,000 people in the United Kingdom (UK) walked into the food banks of Trussell Trust, a leading charity fighting against hunger, for the first time, and 1.3 million emergency food parcels were provided across the country.

Haycock used old blankets against doors and windows to keep the cold draughts from coming in. "Things have never been as bad as this, and the cold weather is not helping. I'm looking forward to Christmas for the sake of the kids, but not so much for myself," she said.

Driven mainly by soaring energy prices, inflation in the UK has been running high this whole year in 2022, reaching successive new records.

In October, households paid 88.9 percent more on average for electricity, gas and other fuels than a year ago, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. Domestic gas prices in October, in par-

titular, were more than double that a year earlier.

"I am checking my bank balance every day, to make sure I don't go over," Haycock said, adding "My monthly energy bill had doubled from 120 pounds (\$145) a month to 222 pounds, which has made life this year more of a struggle."

Rising food prices also made a large contribution to inflation. Food and non-alcoholic beverage prices rose by 16.5 percent in the 12 months to November, and the annual inflation rate for this category has risen for 16 consecutive months, according to the ONS.

Some families across the UK in the current cold Christmas have to juggle household incomes between staying warm or buying food, said Keith Baker, a research fellow in fuel poverty and energy policy at Glasgow Caledonian University in Scotland.

"We've now got to the point where charities are trying to get out warm clothing to people," said Baker, who has worked with groups seeking to help people faced with the dual problems of a cost-of-living crisis and high energy bills.

The cost-of-living crisis has made British consumers more budget-conscious on Christmas gifts.

An ONS survey showed about 60 percent of adults were planning on cutting back on their Christmas spending compared with last year.

People are buying fewer and less expensive presents, less expensive food and drink, and eating out less this Christmas, said the ONS.

"It's all down to money. I get upset that I just can't get all the things the kids are hoping for on Christmas day," said Haycock who relies on universal credit, the government scheme that helps poor families.

"For 2023, I'd just like enough money to get by. It doesn't seem a lot to wish for," Haycock said.

Xi stresses building up China's strength in agriculture

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping has called for enhanced efforts to build up China's strength in agriculture and do a good job in work on agriculture and rural areas.

Xi (pictured), also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks while addressing the annual central rural work conference held from Friday to Saturday in Beijing.

Advancing rural revitalization across the board and moving faster to build up China's strength in agriculture is part of the CPC Central Committee's strategic plans of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects, Xi pointed out.

Xi called for full steam in pressing ahead with the work related to agriculture, rural areas and farmers with rural revitalization as the focus, and vigorously promoting agricultural and rural modernization.

Li Keqiang presided over the conference, which was also attended by Li Qiang, Wang Huning, Han Zheng, Cai Qi and Ding Xuexiang.

In building up China's strength in agriculture, efforts should be made to reflect Chinese characteristics, and take into consideration China's

national conditions, resource endowment featuring limited land for a huge population, the historical background of farming civilization, and the times' requirement of harmony between humanity and nature, Xi said.

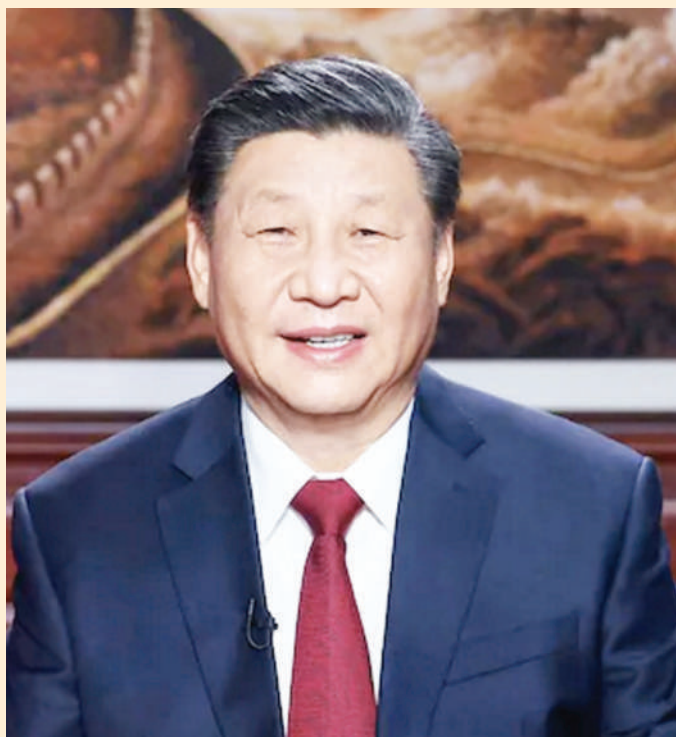
China should take its own path instead of simply following the foreign models of modern agriculture development, Xi added.

Xi called for strengthening top-level design and developing plans to move faster to build up China's strength in agriculture, taking steady and incremental steps, and solving practical issues that are most urgent for agricultural and rural development, and of the most pressing concern to farmers.

It is always a priority to ensure a stable and secure supply of grain and key farm produce, Xi stressed, urging efforts to keep the country's farmland area above the red line of about 120 million hectares and effectively revitalize the seed industry.

Xi said efforts should both be made to increase grain output and reduce losses, as well as to establish a diversified food supply system and expand food sources in multiple ways.

Advancing rural revitalization across the board is a crucial task for building up China's strength in agriculture in the new era, according to Xi. He



demanding shifting manpower, material resources and fiscal support to rural revitalization, saying consolidating and expanding the achievements in poverty alleviation is the bottom line task of rural revitalization.

Xi stressed the need to rely on both science and technology and reform to facilitate the work of strengthening China's agriculture. He called for efforts to establish a multi-level agricultural science and technology innovation system with sound division of labor and co-operation, and moderate competition.

Xi underscored deepening rural reform so that more fruits of reform could be shared by farmers.

It's necessary to remove institutional barriers that prevent the equal exchanges and two-way flows of production factors between urban and rural areas, and facilitate the flow of development factors as well as various services into rural areas, Xi said.

Xi stressed that modernization of rural areas is the intrinsic requirement and necessary condition for building up China's strength in agriculture, which entails the building of

a beautiful and harmonious countryside that is desirable to live and work in.

He demanded faster development of public service facilities in fields like epidemic prevention, elderly care, education and medical care in rural areas. Efforts are needed for improvement in rural infrastructure, public services and living environment to ensure that residents in the countryside can lead modern lives, he said.

The Party's leadership must be upheld unwaveringly in the work related to agriculture, rural areas and farmers, Xi said. Presiding over the conference, Li Keqiang called for efforts to earnestly study Xi's important speech, and well implement decisions and plans made by central authorities.

In his concluding remarks at the conference, Hu Chunhua said Xi's important speech is a scientific guide and program of action for building up China's strength in agriculture, accelerating agricultural and rural modernization, and advancing rural revitalization across the board. He stressed COVID-19 prevention and control in the rural areas to protect rural residents' health and normal production and living orders.

The conference also discussed a draft guideline on the major tasks of advancing rural revitalization across the board in 2023. *Xinhua*

Bloomberg owner eyes WSJ or Washington Post acquisition

LOS ANGELES/NEW YORK

MICHAEL Bloomberg has expressed the desire to own a big-name newspaper over the years but has not reached out to Rupert Murdoch to discuss a possible purchase of Dow Jones and its flagship paper the Wall Street Journal, sources told Reuters.

News website Axios reported earlier on Friday the billionaire owner of Bloomberg LP was interested in acquiring either WSJ parent Dow Jones from Murdoch's News Corp, or the Washington Post from Amazon.com's Jeff Bezos, citing a source familiar with Bloomberg's thinking.

Two people familiar with the matter told Reuters no approach has been made from Bloomberg's side to Murdoch. A spokesperson for the Washington Post, which Bezos bought in 2013 for \$250 million, said it is not for sale.

Acquiring a major newspaper has attracted Bloomberg's interest before, including the New York Times and Financial Times.

Either acquisition would give the 80-year-old billionaire a trophy media property to publicize his political agenda such as addressing climate change, or promoting tighter gun laws, sources told Reuters. Bloomberg is a former three-term mayor of New York City who also mounted an unsuccessful presidential bid in 2020, seeking to become the Democratic Party's nominee.

"A Bloomberg acquisition of the (Post) is not necessarily just a business decision. Mike B is a policy/political person - mayor, presidential candidate - and such an acquisition would provide a tool to affect Washington public policies," said Eli Noam, professor emeritus at Columbia University's business school.

A merger with the Journal or Dow Jones would create a financial data and news giant, strengthening the grip of Bloomberg on the industry while drawing scrutiny from antitrust regulators. Bloomberg is the world's 12th richest person, with an estimated net worth of \$76.8 billion, according to Forbes' calculations.

According to Axios, Bloomberg sees Dow Jones, also the publisher of Barron's and MarketWatch, as the ideal fit but would buy the Post if Bezos was interested in selling.

A Bloomberg LP spokesman dismissed the report as speculation and said, "there is nothing to comment on." Dow Jones did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment. Michael Bloomberg and Bezos did not immediately respond to requests for comment, and a spokesman for Rupert Murdoch declined to comment.

It is unclear if Murdoch - who is trying to reunite his News Corp and Fox Corp assets - would be open to considering an offer from Bloomberg, one person said.

Antitrust interest

Antitrust experts agreed that the merger of Bloomberg and Dow Jones' business news divisions would drive significant scrutiny from US regulators, especially as the Biden administration has taken a more muscular approach to enforcing antitrust laws.

The companies might be forced to divest business holdings to appease officials concerned about ensuring competition in the business news market, some experts said.

"They will be interested in the alternative choices available to users of financial information services and business journalism ... as well as the impact, if any, on the labor market for financial journalists," said antitrust lawyer Jonathan Rubin.

The Federal Trade Commission, Department of Justice and Federal Communications Commission declined to comment.

News Corp shares closed 2.8 percent higher on Friday, outpacing modest gains in the broader market.

Murdoch's efforts to reunite his media empire nearly a decade after the companies split has met with stern opposition from several shareholders who say a combination would not realize the full value of News Corp.

Activist investor Irenic Capital Management, which holds about 2 percent of News Corp's Class B voting shares, wrote a November letter to Murdoch and the News Corp board saying that Dow Jones would be highly valued as a separately traded company.

"The WSJ is a trophy property to the Murdoch family," said Craig Huber, media analyst at Huber Research Partners.

Media analyst Claire Enders of Britain's Enders Analysis said the Axios report will likely lead to nothing. "That's not happening. The WSJ is the core asset of News Corp," she said.



They will be interested in the alternative choices available to users of financial information services and business journalism ... as well as the impact, if any, on the labor market for financial journalists

Jointly mapping out new blueprint for global biodiversity conservation

A UN deal aimed at reversing biodiversity loss and setting the world on a path of recovery has been adopted at the second part of the COP15, formally known as the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, in Montreal, Canada on Dec. 19, local time.

The deal, officially known as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, has mapped out a new blueprint for global biodiversity governance up to 2030 and even beyond.

The international community believes that the Framework is both ambitious and practical, and is of mile-

stone significance.

The meeting adopted over 60 resolutions and reached consensus on the goals and targets, resource mobilization and Digital Sequence Information, or DSI, under the framework.

At the meeting, countries pledged to have restoration completed or underway on at least 30 percent of degraded terrestrial, inland waters, and coastal and marine ecosystems by 2030. It was made clear that developing countries will be supported by capital, technology and capacity building.

The Framework will guide the international community to stop and reverse biodiversity loss, promote biodiversity recovery and realize the

vision 2050 of "living in harmony with nature."

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said the Framework has unquestionably brought new hopes to human and nature.

On October 12, 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping addressed the leaders' summit of the COP15 held in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan province via video link. Recently he once again delivered a keynote speech via video link at the opening ceremony of the high-level segment of the second part of the COP15. Xi's speeches contributed Chinese wisdom, plans and strength to enhancing biodiversity conservation and injected important

impetus for the meeting to achieve positive results.

China has made unremitting efforts to play a leading and coordinating role as the presidency of the COP15. It promoted the adoption of the Kunming Declaration at the high-level segment of the first part of the COP15, charting the course for reversing biodiversity loss.

Between the first and second parts of the COP15, the country convened nearly 40 meetings of the presidium and more than 100 bilateral and multilateral coordination meetings at different levels to promote greater consensus among all parties.

China also made full use of impor-

tant occasions and opportunities such as the UN, the G20, and the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) to communicate and coordinate with all parties to make the second part of the COP15 a success.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, executive secretary of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity noted that the reaching of the Framework is not only a victory for China alone, but the whole world led by China.

The Framework boosted the world's confidence in joining hands to cope with global challenges. Biodiversity loss is a common challenge faced by

entire humanity. To promote global biodiversity governance, multilateralism must be practiced. The high-level segment of the second part of the COP15 was joined by the largest number of representatives in the history of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, which fully demonstrated the political will of all parties to advance the global process of biodiversity conservation. All parties worked to meet each other halfway during negotiations, demonstrating the spirit of cooperation. Facts once again proved that only by working together can the world accomplish big and great things with a far-reaching impact.

People's Daily

World faced unprecedented crisis with food in 2022

THE world has faced a food crisis of unprecedented proportions this year – the largest in modern history, as conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate crisis and rising costs have combined to pose great risks for hungry people across the world.

As many as 828 million people go to bed hungry every night. The number of those facing acute food insecurity has risen from 135 million to 345 million since 2019. A total of 49 million people in 49 countries are teetering on the edge of famine, according to figures from the United Nations' World Food Programme.

"We are facing an unprecedented global food crisis and all signs suggest we have not yet seen the worst. For the last three years, hunger numbers have repeatedly hit new peaks," WFP Executive Director David Beasley said. He warned that things can and will get worse unless there is a large-scale and coordinated effort to address the root causes of this crisis.

Monika Tothova, an economist with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, said there are many reasons for prevailing high levels of food insecurity.

"These reasons, often referred to as drivers, are increasing in frequency and intensity, and include conflicts, climate variability and weather extremes, economic slowdowns and downturns – all exacerbated by the underlying causes of poverty and very high and persistent levels of inequality," she said.

In addition, these drivers often do not act alone. For instance, conflicts are often accompanied by economic downturns, which affect livelihoods and the ability of people to earn resources, leading to increasing poverty levels and higher prevalence of food insecurity, she said.

Unfortunately, the main drivers of high levels of food insecurity have not improved this year. People in the Horn of Africa are facing a fifth consecutive failed rain season in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, which will constrain their production, and is likely to push many deeper into food insecurity.

Conflict is still the biggest driver of hunger, with 60 percent of the world's hungry living in areas afflicted by war and violence. The Russia-Ukraine conflict is further proof of how conflict feeds hunger, forcing people out of their homes and wiping out their sources of income, the WFP said.

Russia and Ukraine are among the world's most important producers of agricultural commodities. Both countries are net exporters of agricultural produce and play leading supply roles in global foodstuffs and fertilizer markets.

Since the outbreak of the conflict on Feb 24, commodity prices reached very high levels as the production, processing and transportation of agricultural commodities have been stagnated by the conflict, said Chen Yangfen, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences' Institute of Agricultural Economics and Development.

On July 22 Russia and Ukraine separately signed the Black Sea Grain Initiative in Istanbul with Turkey and the UN on grain and fertilizer exports to ensure supplies to global markets amid the conflict. Russia and Ukraine agreed in November to prolong the deal for a further 120 days.

Tothova said with this deal, more than 13.5 million metric tons of different agricultural commodities were shipped out of Ukraine. Although it is less than the shipments from Ukraine in the previous season, it did improve availability on the world market and sent a signal that it is possible to export from the country.

The initiative also helped Ukrainian farmers to sell their products, giving them resources to plant in the future.

Overall, there are no shortages globally. However, as energy and food prices are elevated, there are some importing countries that find prices too high, especially when facing balance-of-payments problems. The same applies to consumers. Amid increasing inflation and stagnating livelihoods, some consumers may not have enough resources to purchase sufficient amounts of food.

"At this point, food commodity prices have decreased from their peaks, but remain elevated. What will happen to food commodity prices in the future depends on a number of factors, including how the 2022/23 crop year will develop," she said. At the moment, fertilizer prices remain high, and this could impact the amount of fertilizer farmers use, eventually constraining the quantity produced.

In addition, there is uncertainty about the weather. And climatic shock affecting any major producer or exporter will introduce additional uncertainty into production – and consequently prices – which in turn impact the ability to purchase food, particularly of the most vulnerable people, Tothova said.

Chen said countries need to make joint efforts in the face of food security challenges against the backdrop of global geopolitics, climate change and economic recovery, as unilateralism is not the way out.

If the food situation continues to worsen, it may lead to political instability and even social unrest in some countries and regions, and the global community should work together to help the hungry cope with rising food prices, he said.

Public gatherings banned in Islamabad after suicide attack

ISLAMABAD

THE District Magistrate of Pakistan's capital Islamabad said on Friday that all public gatherings and meetings will be banned for two weeks in the city following a suicide attack in Islamabad's government district that left two people including an officer killed and eight others injured.

Militants thought to have been on the verge of carrying out a suicide bombing blew themselves up as police pursued their car.

The interior ministry said the vehicle had been heading for a high-value target in the capital, without giving details, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said timely intervention by the police had averted a "bloodbath".

The car exploded near police headquarters on a main road leading to a government sector where parliament and the offices of senior officials are located.

The Pakistani Taliban claimed the car bombing, saying it was revenge for the killing of one of their leaders.

"We take responsibility for the suicide attack against the enemy of Islam," said a statement from the militants known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), an umbrella group of Sunni Islamist and sectarian groups.

The bombing came two days after a Pakistani military operation killed 25 TTP militants after a standoff at a counter-terrorism facility.

In a notification, Irfan Nawaz Memon, the district magistrate, as well as the deputy commissioner of Islamabad, said that in the light of recent advisories and threat alerts issued by the law enforcement agencies, and the attack on police, all kinds of corner meetings, gatherings and congregations in Islamabad will be prohibited for two weeks.

The security of the capital has been beefed up to obviate the threats which can disrupt peace and tranquility causing damage to life and property, but the likelihood of such activities cannot be ruled out in the coming days, he said.

"Thus immediate prevention and speedy remedy were required, and directions appearing were necessary to protect public life and property," the notification added.

Political meetings at public places for the local body elections to be held on Dec 31 have also been prohibited.

The capital was already on high alert due to threats of a high-profile attack, said Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah. "Had the car reached its target, it would have caused heavy losses," he told Geo News TV.

Islamabad police chief Sohail Zafar said police gave chase after the car failed to stop at a checkpoint.

"As they chased it, the people inside the car blew it up," he said, adding that four police and two civilians were injured, he said.

Agencies

China maximumly reduces COVID-19's impacts on economic, social development

AS China optimizes its pandemic response measures, regions across the country have resumed work, industrial production and commercial activities.

A tunnel of the Shenyang-Baishan high-speed railway in Baishan city, northeast China's Jilin province has resumed construction; in the Haikou International Duty Free City in south China's Hainan province, consumers are lining up in front of cashiers; an enterprise in Changde, central China's Hunan province recently received a 20-million-yuan (\$2.87 million) export order.

In 2020, China became the first major economy to attain positive economic growth; in 2021, the country's GDP topped 114 trillion yuan, with its two-year average growth standing at 5.1 percent; this year, the Chinese economy withstood pressure and kept consolidating the trend of recovery.

China has struck a balance between implementing COVID-19 response measures and stabilizing growth, between promoting development and keeping a red line in pandemic control, and between addressing short-term demands and pursuing long-term goals.

While safeguarding the lives and health of its huge population, the country has eradicated absolute poverty, built a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and got off to a good start in implementing the 14th Five-Year Plan, embarking on a new journey toward building a modern socialist country in all respects.

Practices proved that China has explored a path that well coordinates pandemic control and economic and social development. The country has to the maximum extent protected people's lives and health, and reduced the impacts from COVID-19 on economic and social development to the fullest.

Coping with COVID-19 is a major



Medicines are shipped from a distribution center of a pharmaceutical company in Lianyungang, east China's Jiangsu province, Dec. 18, 2022. (Photo by Geng Yuhe/People's Daily Online)

test of the century, in which the most important thing is to ensure the safety of the people while advancing economy and livelihood. In the recent three years, China has constantly adjusted and optimized its prevention and control measures in accordance with the new features of the variants and the development of the pandemic. It has always been seeking a balance between COVID-19 response and economic development.

Over the recent three years, China has offered over a trillion yuan in tax relief for individual businesses and seen its annual grain output standing at more than 650 billion kilograms. It has launched a series of signature projects to promote high-quality development and released domestic demand through halving vehicle purchase tax and issuing consumption coupons.

China has coped with difficulties with science-based policies. It front-loaded and strengthened macro policies and accelerated the targeted implementation of micro policies, which boosted the confidence

and relieved the burden of market entities. The country's efforts stabilized the general economic and social development and realized economic recovery.

Addressing both pandemic response and economic development, China has demonstrated its strategic composure in complicated situations, as well as its capability in effectively coordinating COVID-19 prevention and control and economic and social development.

Now China has come to a new stage of pandemic response and optimized its control measures in accordance with the dynamics of COVID-19. It is earnestly implementing the new control measures, ensuring medical supply and services for the people, focusing on the control work for seniors and people with underlying diseases, ensuring people's health and preventing patients from developing critical symptoms.

By optimizing control measures, enhancing coordination, and ensuring organized implementation, the country will successfully cope with the currently rising infections and

maintain a sound social order.

At present, the momentum for China's rapid economic rebound is being accumulated and released. The Chinese economy enjoys strong resilience, huge potential and strong vitality. The fundamentals sustaining China's long-term economic growth remain unchanged, and so do the factors supporting the country's high-quality development.

It is believed that as China further implements its new COVID-19 response measures and the country's policies to stabilize its economy continue taking effect, China's economic and social vitality will be released to the maximum extent, contributing to the country's economic recovery.

People's Daily

Ancient terraces in E China included on World Heritage Irrigation Structures List

THE Shangbao Terraces in Chongyi, east China's Jiangxi province, whose development traces back to over 2,200 years, were recently included on the World Heritage Irrigation Structures (WHIS) List.

It is the second world heritage title claimed by the site after it was inscribed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System.

The Shangbao Terraces mirror how local farmers respect and conform to nature. On the top of it, there are luxuriant trees that help conserve water resources. Creeks flowing down the hills provide a natural irrigation system. Terrace steps along the slopes help preserve soil and water. The complete irrigation and drainage system forms a virtuous cycle in which the hills, water resources, farmland, and soil nurture each other.

The Shangbao Terraces are located in the Zhuguang Mountains in the southern section of Luoxiao Mountains. The core section of the terraces is in Shangbao township.

Zhu Yuanjin, deputy mayor of Shangbao township, told People's Daily that the hill where the Shangbao Terraces located is made of granite, which absorbs and holds water, and rainwater retained on the top and slopes of the hills would seep out from the hillside to irrigate crops, just like a natural underground water transmission and drainage system.

"In obedience to the law of nature, our ancestors built a water distribution system on the slopes. Therefore, channels and ditches in the Shangbao Terraces would not dry up even in lasting droughts," said Lu Xinping, head of the water conservancy bureau of Chongyi county.

According to him, the ter-



Rice matures in the Shangbao Terraces in Chongyi county, Ganzhou, east China's Jiangxi province, October 2022. (Photo by Shi Yu/People's Daily Online)

racers were built with local materials, which were primarily soil, bamboos, and rocks. After constant expansion and renovation, the Shangbao Terraces boast a total coverage of over 3,300 hectares.

The Shangbao Terraces, built on complicated terrain, is an early example of the ecosystem consisting of mountains, rivers, forests, farmlands, lakes, grasslands, and deserts. The terraces come with forests, water, farmland, and villages, thus featuring water conservation, irrigation, water and soil conservation, and crop farming.

Traditional farming has been kept there for generations, which maintains soil fertility. However, in the eyes of Chen Yuyi, general manager of an agricultural company in Ganzhou, Jiangxi province, the Shangbao Terraces can be of higher value.

Chen, who studied biological engineering, said Shangbao township is a perfect place for planting quality rice varieties, explaining that the terraces have an altitude ranging from 500 to 1,000 meters, which helps improve the taste and nutrition of rice. Besides, many terrace steps are surrounded by bamboos, which increase negative oxygen ion content in the air and help prevent insect pests, Chen said.

Chen applies organic fertilizers and uses biological insecticides in the terrace field he contracts. While inheriting traditional farming models, the man also employs modern agricultural technologies. For instance, vibrant barnyard grass in the field is removed artificially, but other grass is kept there to improve the vitality of rice. "Improving the rice's ability to fight diseases and insect pests through the ecologi-

cal environment is similar to ancient farming wisdom," Chen said.

In Chen's field, there is a rice variety that grows as tall as an adult. "This is a special variety that we have introduced from the national germplasm center, which bears 180 grains on a single ear. It will be our best product," Chen said.

Today, a cluster of ecological tourism destinations centered on the Shangbao Terraces is taking shape, and the terraces are taking on a new look.

People's Daily



Abdi Banda

We are treated equally along native South African players - Banda

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

APART from school, the environment and living in different places is an enough education in life as explained by the Tanzanian defender, Abdi Banda, who plays for Chippa United of South Africa.

Banda, who is an experienced player in the DStv Premiership, before joining Chippa United this year he played for Baroka (2017-2019) and then Highland Park (2019/20).

He then returned home and joined Mtibwa Sugar where he served last season before getting back to South Africa to join Chippa United.

The defender, who also served Coastal Union (2012-2014), Simba (2014-2017) and Taifa Stars at different times, admits to learning many things about soccer that have been a key to his consistency at top level football.

In his interview with The Guardian, he talked about his life in and outside football and emphasized that it is everyone's obligation not to give up hope while still alive, vowing to fight until the last minute to achieve his goals.

Banda hasn't feature for the Chilli Boys since September after picking an injury and is set to return in the upcoming fixtures after the South African Premier League (PSL) went on a break due to the World Cup finals.

"Before returning home and joining Mtibwa Sugar, where I played for one year, I stayed out for six months and most of them knew that it was the end of me in international league level. All I had to do was train harder and making sure I get at my very best while ignoring the outside noises.

"Despite all that, I never gave up. That's why in my contract with Mtibwa Sugar, I put a provision that if I get a team out, I will leave. I am very grateful that the management had a great cooperation with me and it is the team that helped me to raise my level and return to South Africa with Chippa United."

He says that life is very expensive in South Africa, but because he lived there before it doesn't bother him. He sees everything as normal and nothing stops him from fulfilling his football dreams and he gets the morale of working hard according to the type of players he has in the team.

He says that every player stays at his house, unless when they go to play far away, then they stay together for a while and after finishing their duties, each one returns home.

"I live in an apartment that I have chosen myself. It is in the city of Port Elizabeth near the beach so that the family does not have to walk a long distance if they want to come to the stadium to support me.

"The team has paid my rent, it pays the sanitation workers even though I rely on myself for food and everything is available, such as seafood, local chickens, and okra from Mozambique and Zambia. They are available at normal prices, although there are also those available at high prices. Often when my wife comes for a visit she is the one who cooks. I only buy once in a while because I have very little time."

Banda says there is a special car to take him to practice and bring him back to where he lives.

"There is a driver who drives me to practice, so I have not been given a car directly, but I don't have any problems at all because everything is done at the right time."

He says the biggest thing he learned is that no player is pushed to do his responsibilities. Everyone realizes his responsibilities and takes care of himself and that is the reason always they are staying at their homes without setting up a camp.

"If you do frivolous things, you are deceiving yourself, because at the end of the day, when the coach wants you to help the team you must be ready to perform as required. I have to fight because I have come here looking for greener pastures in the country that I will one day live," he says.

"Actually, we are not treated differently from the natives. Although that is like a warning for the foreigner to work harder to stay in the team, but if you see us in training, play or sit on the bench you can't see any difference.

"What they want is a player to do his job and not to be humiliated outside the field, unlike at home in Tanzania where a foreigner is valued more than a native in the sense of the type of places they stay and payment. Equal treatment will increase competition, otherwise it will discourage local players when they see that they are doing the same job but are treated differently."

He says that in the league, if a player does well, they congratulate him and do not make him a king above the others and that everyone has his own affairs and no one deals with anyone's matters.

Feisal Salum shift to Azam: Unsettled issues on player value and opportunity

By Correspondent John Kimbute

SOCCER airwaves have lately been intensely disturbed by speculation, eventually confirmed, of an impending shift of dependable midfielder Feisal Salum, one among the players who help to shape the wider image of Young Africans SC as a team.

While the midfielder is arguably ranked just below their two or three best professionals, there is no doubt that the player makes a difference in the club.

Pundits admit there are others to take up his position, but aren't quite duplicates.

On the basis of what has been officiously affirmed, that the Azam FC offer was something in the region of tripling the player's salary and add some sweeteners on top of that, it was unlikely Yanga would renegotiate his contract in that manner.

It was more feasible for them to accept the money, replace him with another player, then look at recruitment options subsequently. At an apparently lower level salary take, and the awe his name and abilities touch among fans, he just waited to leave.

At first the speculation was that a North African club was looking for him, and that made sense to plenty of fans as that is

how it should be - either North Africa, South Africa or within the region, as talent discovery from this part of the map.

When it finally dawned that it was Azam FC who were pursuing the player, there was something disconcerting to the fan base, as it sort of put to the test the idea that Yanga is a bigger club than the ice cream makers.

The idea isn't entirely at fault, but as this example shows, nothing is fixed about city clubs in terms of worth, prospects.

As it was the case when Luis Miquissone and Clatous Chama left Simba, if only for the latter to return while the former is yet to be forgotten in the club rank and file, this shift is at once significant and modest.

It is much less significant at the point of departure than at the point of arrival, that is, not overly significant in terms of letting the player leave, as that is simply the run-ins of commerce in the sport.

The issue is what sort of adaptation the club side makes in the absence of the player as then there are issues of riding the issue out, thus gaining, or fail, lose.

The nearest comparison that can be made with the better known cases of shifting among professionals is this season's sensational purchase of Sadio Mane from Liverpool to Bayern Munich, and how that



Feisal Salum 'Fei Toto'

change rattled the Anfield side.

One aspect of that move was to disable the flawless link and scoring ability with Mohamed Salah, after which something else had to be thought up, by some other technique. It took several months for Liverpool to return to form, its attack trick.

Names that are being mentioned to replace Feisal start with Aziz Ki being in a better position playing at central midfield, which is plausible, and adding a more assured start for Abubakar Salum 'Sure Boy.'

Going through some entries on his shift to Yanga from Azam FC, it was clear he was sup-

posed to be a strategic player and not a filler to an absent Aziz Ki or 'Fei Toto.' But as the Jangwani Street side is a powerhouse, having excess talent in various positions isn't terribly surprising.

What is a bit puzzling is how it is possible that the player's value could have been put at a third of its potential value on the local scene for two or three years. That sort of framing of the issue would be problematic, for it would imply that the player, when signing for Yanga, was unaware of his going value, which is plainly unlikely.

It implies that the market for players is rapidly changing in the city or

its neighbourhood; more Premier League sides becoming more intensely professional.

It is not often that big value signings occur within the Premier League clubs by using contract breaking clause, which is synonymous with 'breaking the bank.' It is an indication of a player's success, to have hugely impressed not just another club as such but appeared to fit in the imagination of a specific head coach, seeing him as a strategic signing, for whom the club should do anything it can to obtain his signature.

That is how one comes with a proposal to triple the salary and pay the contract breaking clause at once, and that isn't a North African club, or other.

Financially the deal is a success for Yanga but as it happens, all sweet things in soccer have their hidden costs. No one can say how intense the frontline depended on the outgoing midfielder for their scoring prowess, or how cleverly that position is likely to be filled, though the mood is that the gap will not be overly protruding.

With more clubs seeking to play in continental competitions next year and beyond, the signings revolution has only just begun, elevating the Premier League to new heights, with players scaling the ladder in pay - as exposure sharpens their skills.



Members of God's Messengers Jogging Club warming up under their coach Joseph Kisaka (L) at the Seventh-Day Adventist Church's open ground at Mbezi Luis in Dar es Salaam yesterday. PHOTO: GUARDIAN CORRESPONDENT

LA jury convicts Tory Lanez of shooting Megan Thee Stallion

LOS ANGELES

IN a courtroom that turned chaotic after a trial that seethed with tension, a Los Angeles jury on Friday found rapper Tory Lanez guilty of three felonies in the 2020 shooting of hip-hop star Megan Thee Stallion. The attack left her wounded with bullet fragments in her feet and Lanez' conviction could send him to prison for more than 20 years.

Lanez, who was put in handcuffs and led to jail while wearing a powder pink coat with matching pants, showed no visible reaction as the verdict was read.

But moments later, after the jury was escorted out, his father, Sonstar Peterson, leapt up and shouted "This wicked system stands judged before God

almighty!" as deputies closed in on him.

Peterson then pointed to the two prosecutors and yelled "You two are evil, wicked people. You know exactly what you did."

With considerable effort, deputies wrestled him from the courtroom, where he shouted in the hallway.

The jury of seven women and five men deliberated since Thursday before convicting the 30-year-old Canadian rapper, whose legal name is Daystar Peterson, of assault with a semiautomatic firearm, having a loaded, unregistered firearm in a vehicle and discharging a firearm with gross negligence.

Jurors also agreed that there were aggravating factors in the attack, meaning Lanez could face up to 22 years in prison and deportation when is is sen-

tenced on Jan 25.

Three young children, including Lanez' son, sat in the front row of the courtroom while the verdict was read. A young girl cried and was hugged by Lanez's stepmother, who was also tearful before she began shouting along with her husband.

Others in the audience shouted agreement, and one woman shouted "we love you Tory" as he was led away.

Supporters of Megan and Lanez gathered outside the courthouse for most of the eight-day trial and crowded the courtroom and the hallway. The scene was tense at times, but remained mostly peaceful until the verdict was read.

Megan Thee Stallion, whose legal name is Megan Pete, testified during the trial that Lanez fired a handgun at the back of

her feet and shouted for her to dance as she walked away from an SUV in which they had been riding in the Hollywood Hills in the summer of 2020. She said the two had gotten into a dispute that became especially heated when she started insulting his music.

She needed surgery to remove bullet fragments from her feet.

After the verdict, her lawyer, Alex Spiro said "the jury got it right" and said he was "thankful there is justice for Meg."

Lanez' lawyer George Mgedesyan said they were "shocked by the verdict."

"There was not sufficient evidence to convict Mr. Peterson," Mgedesyan said in a statement. "We believe this case was not proven beyond a reasonable doubt. We will be exploring all options including an appeal."

Pelé's family gathers at hospital in Sao Paulo

SAO PAULO

FAMILY members of Brazilian soccer great Pele are gathering at the Albert Einstein hospital in Sao Paulo where the 82-year-old global icon has been since the end of November.

Doctors said earlier this week that Pele's cancer had advanced, adding the three-time World Cup winner is under "elevated care" related to "kidney and cardiac dysfunctions." No other hospital statements have been published since.

Edson Cholbi Nascimento, one of Pele's sons and known as Edinho, arrived Saturday, one day after he gave a news conference to deny he would visit his father in hospital. Edinho, who works for a soccer club in southern Brazil, had said then that only doctors could help his father.

"He (Edson) is here," Kely Nascimento, one of Pele's daughters, said in a posting on Instagram with a picture showing her sitting next to Edinho and two of his children at the hospital. "I am not leaving, no one will take me out of here."

Hours later, Edinho, a former Santos goalkeeper, posted a picture showing his hand holding his father's.

"Dad... my strength is yours," Pele's son said.

Edson Arantes do Nascimento, who is globally known as Pele, had a colon tumor removed in September 2021. Neither his family nor the hospital have said whether it had spread to other organs.

Kely Nascimento and her sister Flavia Arantes do Nascimento used their social media channels Friday night to post an undated picture of Pele apparently holding Kely with one hand as he lay on his hospital bed and Flavia slept on a couch.

"We continue to be here, in this fight and with faith. Another night together," Kely Nascimento wrote.

The hospital has not mentioned any signs of Pele's recent respiratory infection, which was aggravated by COVID-19.

Newspaper Folha de S.Paulo reported last weekend that Pele's chemotherapy was not working and that doctors had decided to put him on palliative care. Pele's family denied that report.

Pele led Brazil to victory in the 1958, 1962 and 1970 World Cups and remains one of the team's all-time leading scorers with 77 goals. Neymar tied Pele's record during the latest World Cup.

Arteta wants Arsenal to seize title chance as Premier League returns

LONDON

MIKEL Arteta has urged leaders Arsenal to carry on from where they left off by winning their first Premier League title since 2004 when English football's top-flight resumes after the World Cup break.

The Gunners were in superb form, with 12 wins from 14 matches, when the league was paused in unprecedented fashion to allow for the first World Cup held in a northern hemisphere winter to take place in Qatar.

All season long, fans and pundits have been debating whether the break will be a help or a hindrance to clubs' ambitions, with Arsenal now without Gabriel Jesus after he was sent home early from the World Cup with a knee problem sustained in Brazil's shock defeat by Cameroon.

Arteta, however, was in buoyant mood ahead of his side's return to Premier League action

against London rivals West Ham at the Emirates on Monday.

"You know, I want the team to play a certain way, and the more consistent we are on that the more we are going to win," he told Sky Sports.

"There is excitement, and we should be excited and we should be embracing the opportunity that we have ahead of us."

Arsenal are currently five points clear of reigning champions Manchester City.

City will be the last of the title contenders in action during the Boxing Day holiday round of fixtures when they travel to strugglers Leeds on Wednesday.

Saudi-backed Newcastle, riding high in third place, are away to Leicester on Monday.

The Magpies last won a major domestic trophy in 1955 and such is the northeast club's desire to end that drought, Howe used all five of his players who had been in Qatar during a hard-fought 1-0 win over Premier League rivals Bour-



Mikel Arteta

nemouth that secured a place in the last eight of the League Cup.

Champions League qualification also remains a real possibility, with Tottenham and Manchester United, fourth and fifth respectively, snapping at Newcastle's heels.

- 'World class' Kane -

United, given their status, may be under most pressure to achieve a top-four finish, although manager Erik ten Hag said: "I think also for the manager of Chelsea (Graham Potter), of Newcastle (Eddie Howe), all those clubs invest a lot in their squad. So for every manager it's a

big pressure to get into the Champions League, that's clear."

Tottenham travel to Brentford with manager Antonio Conte confident Harry Kane will have put his World Cup heartache behind him.

Kane's missed penalty late on against Spurs team-mate Hugo Lloris was a key moment in England's 2-1 quarter-final loss to France.

"No, honestly (I am not worried) because we're talking about a world class striker," Conte said.

Liverpool will try to kickstart their season again away to Aston Villa on Monday.

Bottom of the table Wolves begin their quest for top-flight survival under new manager Julen Lopetegui when the former Spain and Real Madrid coach, who oversaw a midweek League Cup win over Gillingham, makes his Premier League debut away to Everton.

"For me, the only aim in front is the next match," said Lopetegui, who replaced the sacked Bruno Lage.

Fulham's match against Crystal Palace on Monday will be their first game since the death of club great and England 1966 World Cup-winner George Cohen at the age of 83.

Premier League chiefs announced there will be a moment's applause before all top-flight matches between Boxing Day and December 28 in honour of Cohen, with all players and officials wearing black armbands as a mark of respect.

Fixtures (1500 GMT unless stated)

Today:

Arsenal v West Ham (2000 GMT), Aston Villa v Liverpool (1730 GMT), Brentford v Tottenham (1230 GMT), Crystal Palace v Fulham, Everton v Wolves, Leicester v Newcastle, Southampton v Brighton

Tomorrow: Chelsea v Bournemouth (1730 GMT), Manchester United v Nottingham Forest (2000 GMT)

Wednesday: Leeds v Manchester City (2000 GMT)

AFP

Ten Hag says other managers also under top four 'big pressure'

LONDON

MANCHESTER United manager Erik ten Hag said on Friday he is far from alone among Premier League coaches in facing pressure to deliver a top-four finish.

United resume their Premier League campaign after the World Cup break at home to Nottingham Forest on Tuesday. The Red Devils are fifth, three points behind fourth-placed Tottenham with a game in hand.

United finished sixth last season and failed to qualify for the Champions League.

A top-four finish that would ensure a return to European football's elite competition is one of the key staging posts in Ten Hag's mission to restore past glories.

Asked if United's history created more pressure, Ten Hag told reporters: "I accept it, how it is."

"But I think also for the manager of Chelsea (Graham Potter), of Newcastle (Eddie Howe), all those clubs invest a lot in their squad. So for every manager it's a big pressure to get into the Champions League, that's clear."

"You want to be in the top four, to fight for trophies, and that's our aim."

"We are aware the competition is tough, but I think it counts for all the seven, eight clubs who are fighting for the top four."

"You have to really battle for every duel to get your points. I'm looking at the process, how we're performing, and of course we have to get the results as well. But if the process is right, when we get the right progress, I think we have a good chance to get into that top four."

United eased into the quarter-finals of the

League Cup with a 2-0 win over Burnley on Wednesday in their first competitive match since the World Cup.

Neither of United's World Cup finalists, Lisandro Martinez, an unused substitute for Argentina, and Raphael Varane, a member of the France side that lost on penalties, were in the squad against Burnley and Ten Hag would not say if they would be back against Forest.

"I can't answer that question now," he said when asked about Martinez.

"He has been celebrating in Buenos Aires."

"It's the highest you can achieve. But also, Lisandro has to understand that on December 27th the Premier League is back!"

Ten Hag said Varane, a World Cup winner in 2018, could also be proud.

"Of course he is disappointed about losing but I think also he can be proud that he was again in that final and of all that he achieved already in his career."

Meanwhile, Eddie Howe has insisted he has no interest in looking at the Premier League table as Newcastle bid to maintain their impressive start to the season following the World Cup break.

England's top flight paused for the tournament in Qatar with the Saudi-backed Magpies riding high in third place, having lost just one game in all competitions all season and won their last five in the league.

Newcastle, who haven't won a major domestic trophy since lifting the 1955 FA Cup, resume their league campaign away to Leicester on Monday with manager Howe trying to keep a lid on the growing expectation of



Erik ten Hag

the team's large and passionate fan-base.

"I haven't actually looked at the league table once, genuinely I haven't," he said.

"That's not to say that I'm not aware of where we are, but for me the focus is always on the next training session to make sure we give the players the best chance to play well in the next game and let everything else fall into place."

This time last year, Newcastle were firmly fixed in the relegation zone after winning just one of their first 18 fixtures.

But, aided by a January transfer window spending spree that saw Kieran Trippier, Dan Burn, Bruno Guimaraes and loan signing Matt Targett all arrive at St James' Park, they climbed away

from danger to preserve their top-flight status.

Howe, however, had no great interest in looking back despite overseeing Newcastle's remarkable rise since being appointed in November 2021.

"I tend not to reflect too much, to be honest, because it's maybe something you do at the end of the season when you're bringing your ideas together for what the next season will look like," said the 45-year-old former Bournemouth boss.

"It has gone, no denying it, amazingly well and we've enjoyed what we've done to this point, but it feels like we're only halfway through."

Monday's match sees Newcastle up against a Leicester side they will face in next month's

League Cup quarter-finals, with the Foxes having won six of their last seven matches in all competitions after a sluggish start to the campaign.

"They're a top team with a top manager and that never changed, in my opinion, even though they had a difficult start to their season," said Howe.

"The quality of Brendan's (Rodgers) work always shines through in his teams and if you look at their players, not a dramatic amount has changed from the team that excelled in previous years, so we respect them immensely."

Meanwhile, Pep Guardiola said Friday that Manchester City midfielder Calvin Phillips had returned from his World Cup stint with England "overweight" and unable to train.

City manager Guardiola was initially vague over why the injury prone 27-year-old was not even on the bench for Thursday's League Cup win over holders Liverpool at the Etihad Stadium.

But following a 3-2 victory that took City into the quarter-finals, Guardiola said: "He's not injured. He arrived overweight. I don't know (why). He didn't arrive in

the condition to do training sessions and to play."

City had 16 players on international duty at the World Cup, more than any other Premier League club, and they were all given time off after their involvement at Qatar 2022 ended, which in Phillips' case came after England's quarter-final loss to France.

"When he will be ready he will play, because we need him, we need him a lot," said Guardiola, who added he had "absolutely" no issue with England's training regime.

Asked if he was disappointed, the Spanish boss replied: "It's a private conversation with Calvin".

City resume their Premier League title defence away to Phillips' former club Leeds on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Tottenham Hotspur manager Antonio Conte has insisted Harry Kane will be in the right frame of mind when the England striker returns to Premier League action following his World Cup heartache.

Kane's missed penalty late on against Spurs team-mate Hugo Lloris was a key moment in England's 2-1 quarter-final loss to France.

AFP

Ukraine's Shakhtar tackles FIFA on \$42M transfer market case

GENEVA

A \$42 million claim for compensation from FIFA will be tough for Shakhtar Donetsk to win, the Ukrainian club's chief executive acknowledged Friday, though a clear message had been sent by taking the case to sport's highest court.

Shakhtar is determined not to be a pushover in the January transfer window.

Not after the club believed it lost control of too many players who left Ukraine this year as other teams gained from FIFA's emergency transfer rules during the Russian invasion.

"We will not accept that our players should be sold at discounts," Shakhtar CEO Sergei Palkin told The Associated Press, one day after helping to present the club's case against FIFA at the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Shakhtar values its most prized asset at 100 million euros (\$106 million) with Premier League leader Arsenal most strongly linked to winger Mykhaylo Mudryk.

"I don't want European clubs to use our situation to devalue our players," Palkin said in a telephone interview. "That is the worst scenario."

Players who were under Shakhtar's control when Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24 – one day before the national league was to resume after a winter break – are now with clubs in Brazil, England, France and Italy.

Those clubs could avoid paying a transfer fee to Shakhtar, whose 2021-22 season was abandoned along with the rest of domestic soccer in Ukraine.

Instead, FIFA allowed the players to suspend their contracts in Ukraine – initially until the end of last season in June, then for all of this season – and seek more playing and contractual stability in another country not at war.

FIFA believed its interim rules better protected clubs than simply terminating all contracts, as the FIFPRO players' union suggested, or having players seek to void deals that might require them to stay in Ukraine.

FIFA's emergency rules ended up costing Shakhtar tens of millions of euros (dollars), the club argues, because it had no leverage in the transfer market.

Palkin said Shakhtar is up against "the biggest, most influential organization" in soccer at CAS, where it suggested FIFA could have helped by creating a reparations fund for Ukraine.

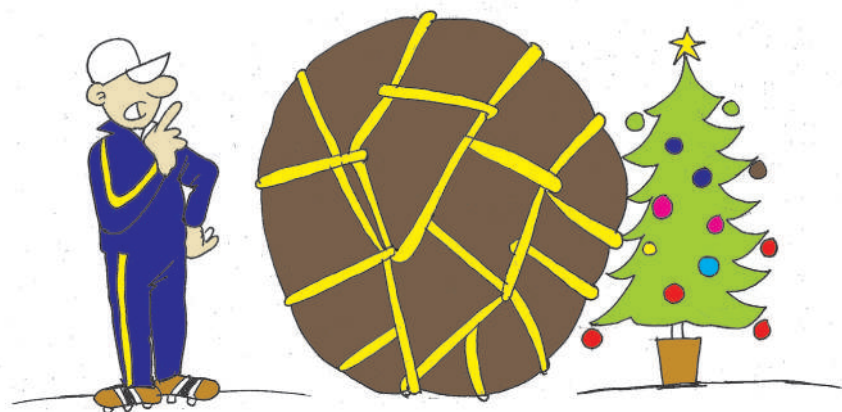
"It will be difficult to get a positive decision," he said. "But it's important that our views should be heard. From my point of view the hearing was good."

A verdict from the CAS judges could come by mid-January though without the full written reasons to explain why. Those could take several months to publish.

In a separate but similar case at CAS, a group of Russian clubs have also challenged the FIFA transfer rules. Players and coaches could suspend their contracts at Russian clubs which were banned this season from UEFA-organized European competitions.

AP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Arteta wants Arsenal to seize title chance as Premier League returns

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EATV
TUESDAY
11:00 DADAZ LIVE
11:55 MPYA
12:00 Mperampera
13:30 Kall Za Wana
14:00 SPORTS (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Mperampera
16:00 Zote kuntu
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SLELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 aNews
18:30 Bongo Hits
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 MJADALA
21:30 Zote Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa
23:05 EATV SAA 1 (r)

TO NIGHT @ 9:00

MJADALA

MJADALA

MJADALA is a program that brings together stakeholders and the executive elite to discuss timely, national development issues.

The program targets an audience that is aware of current developmental challenges and opportunities and is keen to share, engage and participate in the shopping process.

eastafrica RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM
DAR ES SALAAM

India beats Bangladesh by 3 wickets to sweep 2-test series

DHAKA, Bangladesh

RAVICHANDRAN Ashwin and Shreyas Iyer held their collective nerve to help India clinch a three-wicket victory against Bangladesh in the second cricket test yesterday.

They shared 71 runs with a mix of caution and aggression in an extremely turning wicket after Bangladesh closed in on a historical victory, reducing India to 74-7.

Ashwin was unbeaten on 42 off 62, a knock which included four fours and one six with Iyer on 29 off 46 with four boundaries as India raced to the victory target of 145-7 on the first session on day four.

Ashwin, who also took six wickets in the match, including 4-71 in the first innings, fittingly hit a boundary through mid-on against offspinner Mehidy Hasan to ensure the victory and finally helped the side sweep the two-match test series. The visitors won the first test by 188 runs.

India earlier lost the three-match ODI series 2-1.

"We've played enough cricket to realise that someone will put their hand up to win us the game," India captain K.L. Rahul said.

"But I'm not going to lie, there was a lot of tension in the dressing room. It was a tough wicket to bat on, they put us under pressure in both innings. It was a matter of who plays the new ball better. We did lose a few more wickets than ideal (in the chase) but we got the job done."

After India resumed at 45-4 on tricky surface, Bangladesh, which started this year with a landmark test win on New Zealand soil, was highly favored to end the year with another victory against a high profile team.

"Credit goes to Shreyas and Ashwin, they absorbed the pressure well and built a partnership," Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan said.

"We had 70-odd runs to play with, just needed one wicket. We can think of several ifs and buts, but I'm proud of the way we fought. We had our moments this year but hopefully, next year will be much better for Bangladesh."

And the home side got the success in just the second over of the day, with captain Shakib Al Hasan (2-50) trapping Jaydev Unadkat leg-before for 13.

Mehidy who took 5-67 for his ninth five-for in test cricket then brought Bangladesh closer to a victory, striking twice in his successive two overs.

He rattled the stump of Axar Patel for 34, with a delivery that turned viciously and had Rishabh Pant, the highest scorer for India in the first innings, leg-before for just 9.

But Ashwin and Iyer refused to give up. They took the disciplined Bangladesh spin attack to precision and most importantly held the nerve.

Ashwin could have gone for just 1 had Mominul Haque not put down a catch at short leg of a delivery of Mehidy.

He and Iyer then played smartly to take the side to victory.

The win helped India move to second position behind Australia in the World Test Championship points table.

Bangladesh was all out for 227 in its first innings, after opting to bat first. India however racked up 314 to take an 87-run lead. The home side batted poorly again to be bowled out for 231 in the second innings, setting India a 145-run target to win the game.

AP

Youngsters shine in JMK Park Open basketball showpiece



Arusha's Mitaani junior basketball squad's guard (in orange jersey) outfoxes Dar es Salaam's Ukonga Ukonga Basketball Academy performers as the teams took on each other in a Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (JMK) Youth Park Open showdown's tie which took place recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

By Guardian Correspondent

THIS season's JMK Park Open tournament climaxed at Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (JMK) Youth Park in Dar es Salaam last weekend whilst witnessing the trio of Ukonga Basketball Academy, Unmatched, and Monduli's Orkeeswa Blue emerging as winners.

The tournament has been hosted by JMK Youth Park for a variety of sports disciplines including basketball, football, and hockey.

Ukonga Basketball Academy cruised to 31-27 victory over Arusha's Mitaani in boys' basketball showdown.

Mitaani's gaffer Selemani Nyaki revealed despite his side's loss, the squad put stellar showing.

"Definitely minor mistakes by my youngsters proved costly," the tactician said.

Nyaki revealed his players that total 20 have nevertheless appreciated JMK Youth Park's

good preparation for the showdown.

Arusha-based Orkeeswa side's coach, Raymond Yusuph Ngenzi, disclosed the success his squad

garnered in this season's JMK Park Open has come about thanks to his outfit's participation in a special program.

"I have a squad with lots of good players. I hardly see a side which can challenge my squad in the next two years," Ngezi said.

In another pulsating tie

played at the same court, Monduli's Orkeeswa Blue walloped Singida's Itigi side 15-6 in the girls' category.

Ukonga Basketball Academy's performer Stanley Denis was presented with the best player accolade in boys' U-16 category.

In the girls' U-16 category, Rahel Salimu of Orkeeswa outfit was voted as the best player.

The girls' U-18 event saw Orkeeswa Blue command 34-30 victory over the other Monduli-based outfit Or-

keeswa Red. Unmatched outfit garnered 32-20 victory over tough side of JMK Youth Park in boys' showdown.

Unmatched squad's player Mbatia Sikar was presented with the best player trophy after the completion of the coveted tournament for U-18 performers.

Ngashe Ngaleson from Orkeeswa Blue received the best player prize in girls' U-18 showdown.

JMK Youth Park's Bahati Mgunda, the center's

tournament coordinator, heaped praises on the participants for showcasing stellar performance in the showdown.

The gaffer stated: "The success which has been seen in this season's JMK Park Open has been brought about by the increase in performers."

Mgunda pointed out: "Honestly it has proved these outfits appreciate this center's role in promoting sports."

Simba look to bounce back against KMC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe



Juma Mgunda

SIMBA SC will look to bounce back to winning form in the NBC Premier League in their clash with KMC at CCM Kirumba Stadium, Mwanza in the evening, kick-off at 4PM.

Simba suffered their fifth draw of the season when they came from behind to hold Kagera to a one-all stalemate at Kaitaba Stadium on Wednesday.

They begin this round of fixtures in second place on 38 points.

The Msimbazi Street side's interim head coach Juma Mgunda has injury issues and won't have the services of Zambian forward Moses Phiri. Phiri, who is the club's top scorer with ten league goals, after he picked a knock against Kagera Sugar which could sideline up until mid-next month.

On Saturday, Simba confirmed the signing of Said Ntibazonkiza on a one and half year deal and the Burundi international could be ready to feature against KMC.

With four goals and six assists to his name in 12 league appearances, Ntibazonkiza adds depth to the Simba squad.

With Phiri's absence, Mgunda will be demanding that the former Young Africans player hit the ground running on Monday afternoon.

Mgunda will also have midfielders Victor Akpan and Jonas Mkude available. Both were on the bench in their Lake Zone trip last week.

It was also revealed that Peter Banda is now available for selection after being missing since the start of November due to a hamstring problem.

As for hosts KMC, after a dreadful run in September and October, it looked as if head coach Thierry Hitimana's days were numbered.

However, KMC have had a fairly decent December. They started the month with a 1-1 draw over Mbeya, then followed it with another stalemate with Prisons.

They returned to winning form with back-to-back victories against Coastal Union and Polisi Tanzania.

They have surged to ninth place in the rankings - five points clear of the relegation zone and just three points adrift of a potential top-five place.

They have now stabilised their goal difference too, by scoring more goals than they have conceded.

The recent clean sheets over Polisi Tanzania and Coastal Union were a major factor in that.

Coach Hitimana won't have Matheo Anthony or Hance Masoud for the fixture. However, he will be able to pick from the rest of the squad, as KMC's team is mostly fit for this encounter.

In head-to-head stats, Simba and KMC have met in nine league matches since the 2018/19 season.

Simba had won all the previous eight matches until early this season when they were held to a 2-2 draw in August at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

