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Samia sets agro-sector axis to 2030

By Henry Mwangonde

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has outlined strategies which Tanzania has put in place to improve the agriculture sector to articulate the country's intention to help feed Africa and the world at large.

Launching the 2023 Africa Food Systems Forum (AGRF) at the State House in Dar es Salaam yesterday, President Samia said the government has formed a presidential agricultural delivery bureau which consists of people with track record in the sector.

The bureau which will spearhead the plan by the government to make Tanzania a food basket for Africa is chaired by a former prime minister, Mizengo Pinda

"When we talk of agriculture most people think of crop farming," she said, noting that agriculture is a huge field which involves fishing and livestock rearing, crop processing and other agro-industrial activities.

The president also ordered that all wheat farms which were idle should start operations, a shift going in tandem with conducting research for quality palm oil seeds to address the perennial shortage of cooking oil.

The presidential delivery team will evaluate implementation of plans set by the government and advise on what should be done to reach envisaged goals, she said.

"This team will also advise me on



Polycarp Cardinal Pengo, retired Archbishop of the Catholic Church Diocese of Dar es Salaam, leads death anniversary prayers at the grave of former President Dr John Pombe Joseph Magufuli (October 29, 1959 to March 17, 2021) at the latter's native Chato village in Geita Region on Thursday. Others are the Archbishop of the Catholic Church in the Geita Diocese, Dr Flavian Kassala; Dr Magufuli's widow, Janeth Magufuli (to Cardinal Pengo's right); other religious leaders and members of the Magufuli family. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Land uplifting project bearing fruit, MPs say

By Guardian Reporter

IMPROVED livelihoods are being noticed in the districts covered by a project to reverse land degradation in semi-arid areas after several years of project implementation, a visiting parliamentary team has stated. Jackson Kiswaga (Kalenga), the chairman of the Water and Environment standing committee of the National Assembly, said improved livelihoods are observable

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“ Tanzania feeds itself except for a few crops that are imported. Strategically, the government has been working on ensuring that the private sector is fully involved in agriculture

how the financial sector can contribute to promoting agriculture through the provision of credit," she elaborated.

The team will also help in resource mobilization to be used in agriculture, with intent to involve the youth and women, she said. Underlining that the government has decided to venture into block and cluster farming to allow more women and youth to enter into high yielding productive agro-sector engagement.

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, most countries globally started to face

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Tanzania, DRC vow to remove trade barriers

By Correspondent James Kan-doya

TANZANIA and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have agreed to eliminate non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to facilitate trade between them.

Maftah Bunini, the director of research, planning and information systems at the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) said yesterday that the

removal of NTBs would enable traders and investors to tap available business potential in the two countries.

He was addressing a forum between members of the local private sector and the DRC National Agency for the Promotion of Investment (ANAPI) in Dar es Salaam, jointly organized by TIC and ANAPI to promote business and investment opportunities in DRC.

The forum focuses on ena-

bling the local private sector to explore business and investment opportunities in the neighbouring state, with the TIC executive asserting that the two countries have a number of business and investment opportunities to share.

If well utilized, these opportunities can be a good source of income to individual entrepreneurs, while broadening the tax base, he stated.

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ECA wants Africa to ratify protocol on free movement

ADDIS ABABA

MORE work needs to be done by African countries in implementing the regional integration agenda, especially the free movement protocol, the United Nations oversight body has declared.

Stephen Karingi, the director for regional integration and trade

at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) made this observation yesterday in a presentation on the pace of regional integration. It assessed progress of promoting intra-regional trade by regional integration blocs in various parts of the continent, ahead of a crucial ministerial

conference. The two day conference early next week of African ministers of finance, planning and economic development is slated in African Union offices here. "More work is needed to accelerate the African Continental Free Trade

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT ON COMPLETION OF TWO YEARS UNDER THE ABLE LEADERSHIP OF HER EXCELLENCY DR. SAMIA SULUHU HASSAN

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Land uplifting project bearing fruit, MPs say

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in districts like Nzega (Tabora Region), Magu (Mwanza Region), Mkalama (Singida Region), Kondo (Dodoma Region) and Micheweni (Pemba Island).

He saluted President Samia Suluhu Hassan for ensuring sound management and monitoring of the project, on the basis of a statement by the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) circulated yesterday.

The MP noticed the changes during an inspection tour to view operations of the reversing land degradation trends and increasing food security in degraded ecosystems of semi-arid areas of Tanzania' (LDFS) in Nzega.

He said the president has placed much effort in issues of food security, boosting up efforts which have seen Tanzania stand out as a net food exporter to neighbouring countries.

The project targets agro-ecological systems where the need to enhance food security is directly linked to opportunities for generating local and global environmental benefits, project officials say.

It is geared to promote sustainable management and resilience of ecosystems and improvements in accessing services tied to more productive use of land, like water, conserving biodiversity and forests, all geared to address food insecurity.

At the same time, the project seeks to safeguard long-term potential of

critical food production systems in response to changing human needs, they said.

The MPs said they were happy with the way this project is being implemented under stewardship of the president and hope that it will be scaled up.

He urged that people in the project area and other parts of the country make greater efforts in planting trees and taking care of seedlings, and engage in sustainable food production methods to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Dr Selemani Jafo, the Vice President's Office state minister for Union and Environment lauded the parliamentary committee for visiting the project.

It enabled them to see how the government ensures that people benefit from environmental conservation projects, he said, expressing the wish that the projects will be well supervised to reach intended goals.

Good results expected by people in those areas are chiefly in the area of combating the effects of climate change, he said, pointing at the Nzega District Council as having done well in the project.

The LDFS project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and is coordinated by the Vice President's Office. In Nzega its activities are pegged to 2.5bn/- disbursed for the purpose, he added.



Finance and Planning minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba (2nd-L) holds talks in Dar es Salaam yesterday with a delegation from the US Embassy in Tanzania led by the Ambassador, Michael Battle (2nd-R). The US has pledged enhanced support to Tanzania's development plans. Photo courtesy of Finance ministry

ECA wants Africa to ratify protocol on free movement

FROM PAGE 1

Agreement (AfCFTA) and ratification of the protocol on the free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment," he stated. AU member states need to address integration challenges including inadequate credits for business undertakings, poor infrastructure networks, rising violence, threats of terrorism and political instability, he elaborated. "The integration agenda is experiencing slow implementation of policies and agreements," he said, pointing at the protocol on the free movement

of persons which embodies residence and establishment, implying the right to do business and purchase property. The protocol needs ratification because it is the bedrock of deepening integration as it interacts with the ability to move goods and services and help to optimise the potential embedded in AfCFTA, he further stated. Collective efforts are required from all member states, regional economic communities, key partners and stakeholders to realize economic benefits of integration and rolling out AfCFTA, he said. To support member states in their formulation

and implementation of economic policy and enhancing macroeconomic integration, ECA has developed a prototype macroeconomic model and provided support and training in 15 countries, he said. On the fiscal side, ECA supported taxation policy reform and revenue collection was rolled out in Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia, he specified. "The COVID-19 pandemic and the war in the Ukraine have, however, worsened public deficits and the debt burden, reducing infrastructural investment in the continent," he told the gathering.

During the meeting, participants from Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Chad and Cote d'Ivoire, raised concerns about worsening insecurity, poor infrastructure and high costs of communication across borders as key impediments to the process of integration. Antonio Pedro, the ECA acting executive secretary, said collaborative efforts by the United Nations, the African Union and regional economic communities were being deployed to respond to threats to peace and security. There are initiatives for the AU to participate in the management and resolution of conflict,

while stemming the tide of terrorism and coups on the continent, despite these efforts showing mixed results, he stated. To foster regional integration, ECA would enhance the support it provides to member states, regional economic communities, the African Union Commission and the AfCFTA secretariat to push the free trade area agenda, he stated. Africa remains constrained by huge infrastructure gaps, with an estimated annual financing need of \$130bn/- to \$170bn/-, an annual financing gap of \$68bn to \$108bn, he added.



Prof Gideon Kwisigabo (L), Director of the Mloganzila campus of the Centre of Excellence for Cardiovascular Diseases, updates visiting members of the Parliamentary Committee on Education, Culture and Sports in Dar es Salaam yesterday on progress in the implementation of the centre's projects. Third left is Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) vice chancellor Prof Andrew Pembe. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Samia sets agro-sector axis to 2030

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food shortages, as one in every five persons globally lacks food to a considerable extent.

The government has similarly formed a special fund to support agriculture, she stated, urging the private sector to contribute to the fund.

She cited East African food insecurity as standing at 60 percent, noting that the situation is better compared to other economic blocs on account of insufficient rains.

The block farming programme for the youth will take up a first batch of 812 youths, with intent that this lays the framework to vastly diminish the need to import sugar, cooking oil and wheat.

The reason is that the country did not sufficiently domesticate the technology applied in the respective value chains of the crops, she said.

"Tanzania feeds itself except for a few crops that are imported. Strategically, the government has been working on ensuring that the private sector is fully involved in agriculture," she explained.

The government has set priorities to invest more in agriculture value addition by ensuring that farmers use quality fertilizer, via the 'building a better tomorrow' programme where agro-inputs are a vital requirement.

AGRA chairman, the former Ethiopian head of government Hailemariam Desalegn said the past two years have seen a stark elaboration of the need for Africa to transform its systems of agriculture.

Dr Agnes Kalibata, the president of AGRA, said the organization believes in the power of Tanzania in feeding Africa, underlying that the country has the potential to carry out these initiatives.

Tanzania, DRC vow to eliminate trade barriers

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"Our cooperation in business can prosper if non-tariff barriers are removed," he said, underlining that Tanzania is ready to improve the business and investment climate that will also help to facilitate trade between us and DRC. He urged participants to speak out where there are barriers affecting trade transactions between local business people

and their DRC counterparts.

The government has taken a number of initiatives to improve the business and investment environment that includes elimination of trade barriers and enacting friendlier laws for trade across borders in particular, he affirmed.

TIC has so far registered 19 projects from DRC investors with a value of \$463.4m, already creating 1018

jobs, he stated, noting that the projects registered are in construction, manufacturing, commercial real estate, tourism and transportation.

Congolese businesspeople can invest in Tanzania in cattle fattening, processing of minerals and tourism especially in cable transport ventures, he stated.

Antony Nkizo Komole, the ANAPI director general, said the meeting

would showcase trade and investment opportunities that the Tanzania business community can explore in DRC.

The meeting would also highlight challenges hindering trade flows between the two countries and map out ways to eliminate them, he said, specifying that the business community in Tanzania can invest in food crops, fish processing and in

the mining sector.

DRC leads in cobalt mining," he said, noting that the relatively rare metal is vital in making mobile phones. It is high time that Tanzanians seek out those opportunities, he further noted.

Tanzania's top exports to the DRC are cigarettes, cement, soap, wheat, iron, and steel products. Still Tanzania has substantial comparative

advantage in cereals, edible oils, sugar and textiles, along with meat products.

Tanzania's imports from Congo were valued at \$2.59m during 2021, on the basis of the United Nations COMTRADE database on international trade. Its exports to DRC were valued at \$207.23m in the year, he added.



Kiula Kingu (with microphone), acting CEO with the Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority (Dawasa), briefs Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa on Thursday on the just-launched water supply project to run from Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam's Makongo suburb and benefit 450,000 people. It is jointly implemented by the Tanzanian government and the World Bank. To the PM's right is Water minister Jumaa Aweso. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Committee hails DIT for promoting technology

By Henry Mwangonde

THE Parliamentary Committee on Education, Culture and Sports has commended the Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) for taking a leading role in advancing technology and innovation.

Speaking after touring the institute in Dar es Salaam, the Committee deputy chairperson, Husna Sekiboko said DIT has been at the forefront in promoting and advancing technology and innovation through various programmes.

"What we have witnessed today is great, we need to empower this institute so that it scales up the innovations and technology which is seen as a solution to some of the challenges the country is facing," he said.

The Deputy Chairperson said during the tour, the committee witnessed design laboratories, and modern warehouses which if well promoted can address some of the challenges that the country was facing.

The committee also held the institute for implementing the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP) project.

Minister of Education Science and Technology Prof Adolf Mkenda said the institute was strategizing to innovate and commercialize its productions.

He said the aim was to internationalise DIT and market its products by linking it with other universities offering the same kind of training.

DIT is currently constructing the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP) project.

Chairman of the DIT council Dr Richard Masika said the project is strategic after the government had looked at strategic areas for development, which includes the ICT sector.

The 37bn/- project implementation started in 2019 and set for completion in 2024. Once completed, apart from accommodating students it would also be training lecturers.

The project will have two buildings, one for hostels and the other for teaching (Rafic building).

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has called upon the society to take part in preserving the environment and expose people who destroy water sources.

He made the call on Thursday while talking to stakeholders in the water sector and hundreds of citizens who attended the launch of a project for construction of water supply systems between Makongo in Dar es Salaam

and Bagamoyo town in Coast Region under the Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority (DAWASA).

The event went together with launch of the Water Week at Tegeta 'A' primary school grounds, in Dar es Salaam.

Majaliwa said the government has done a great job to improve water infrastructures, collection and distribution, hence the need for Tanzanians to take care of water sources.

Premier calls for water sources conservation

"We have a responsibility to take care and preserve water because our water sources are being destroyed. It is our responsibility to take care of them for our own benefit and future generation," said the Premier.

Majaliwa said the Vice President, Dr Philip Mpango issued guidelines for conservation of water sources, hence the need for every Tanzanian to preserve

the water sources and environment.

"The issue of conservation is important, DAWASA should also manage the issue closely and provide information in advance. Regular inspections should be conducted at the sources by authorities from our water basins such as Ruvuma, Rufiji and Malagarasi," he added.

Earlier, Minister for Water, Ju-

maa Aweso instructed the Acting Director of DAWASA, Kiula Kingu to ensure that all citizens who have requested for water services are connected within seven days as stated in the customer service agreement.

Explaining on implementation of water projects in his ministry, Aweso said President Samia Suluhu Hassan has provided a lot of money to the ministry which

will be directed on implementation of water projects.

"The President has so far provided over 90 percent of the funds for implementation of water projects countrywide. In previous years, funds were not disbursed in full, thus affecting execution of projects," he said.

He said the government is making greater efforts to ensure that every Tanzania has access to clean and safe water services.



Sotta Mining's non-executive director Dr Joas Kabete (R) raises a point during a Mining Sector Local Content Forum panel discussion held in Arusha city earlier this week. It was meant to evaluate and encourage the involvement of Tanzanians in the mining value chain through the promotion of local content. He is with Mining Commission commissioner Prof Abdulkarim Mruma (C) and a member of the Local Content Committee representing the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation, Ringo Ringo. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Govt provides 4.6bn/- for major rehabilitation of Kongwa Ranch

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has set aside 4.6bn/- for major rehabilitation of Kongwa Ranch including the purchase of improved breeds, tractors and digging of water wells.

This was disclosed by Kongwa Ranch Manager, Elisa Bunamungu while reading a report on the ranch's activities to the Dodoma Regional Commissioner, Rosemary Senyamule during her inspection visit to the NARCO Ranch.

Binamungu said the government has increased beef production at the 38,000-hectare ranch able to hold 25,000 livestock.

"This area is divided into two parts, the first one has 12,000 livestock and the second with 16,897," he said.

Addressing ranch workers and residents around the ranch area, RC Senyamule said: "When we talk about livestock, we talk about our economy, Tanzania is the second country in Africa in livestock population after Ethiopia.

"We have a huge livestock population but there are no huge meat exports, the inten-

tion of the Phase VI Government is to make a robust push in this area as there are many Tanzanians depending on the livestock sector," said RC Senyamule.

She said Kongwa area is strategic hence the ranch's management should use the opportunity to sell its products and advertise itself accordingly to be able to benefit from the main highway.

"The government has dished out a lot of funds to return the ranch to better condition, hence using this opportunity to advertise it, many people are not aware of it.

"I call upon you to continue having good relations with the surrounding communities to enable them to become its number one guards," said RC Senyamule.

Meanwhile, Kongwa District Council Chairman, White Zuberi said Kongwa Ranch is essential in boosting the country's economy and Kongwa people in particular.

Kongwa Ranch is among the oldest ranches in the country situated in Mtanana Ward, Kongwa District. It was the first ranch to be established during the colonial period.

Coast Region investors urge govt to improve power, water services

By Correspondent Theresia Victor, Kibaha

INVESTORS in Coast Region have urged the government to improve power supply and water services in industrial areas to facilitate operation of the factories and boost the sector's contribution to the economy.

They raised their concerns when speaking to board members of the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) who visited some TIC registered projects in the region.

Eng Charles Bilinga who is the managing director of Afriq Engineering and Construction Company Ltd said that water and electricity are among major obstacles thwarting development of the industrial

sector.

"We are building a modern industrial park worth \$51 billion (112m/-) that will accommodate 203 small and big industries, but power supply and water services has become a major concern for us since it disrupts our services," said Bilinga.

He said the project will be constructed in three phases and is expected to be completed by June 2026 in which more than 200,000 jobs will be created and offered to Tanzanians, mostly people around Kibaha District.

He added: "Apart from job creation, upon completion, the project will add value in the country's economic development

because all the investors in the industrial park will be paying tax to the government."

Sino Tan Industrial Park Ltd Assistant Chairman, Shawn He said Tanzania is a good place to invest and investors like the country. He said if water and power challenges are fixed, more investors will establish projects in Tanzania.

According to him, there are 200 investors who want to visit Tanzania to explore investment opportunities, among them, 100 factory owners' wants to work with Sino Tan Industrial Park while looking for other areas to invest.

"Out of 200 investors, seventy are ready to invest; they are only waiting for tax in-

centives, gas and power supply to be done to continue with construction of their factories," he noted.

Commenting on the same, Kairuki Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd, Plant Manager Ellen Magita said that power supply and water is an issue because it makes them produce below capacity.

"We have talked to concerned parties and they promised to work on it. We are hopeful that these two major issues will be sorted out accordingly," said Magita.

TIC board chairman, Dr Bilinith Mahenge promised to take all the investor's concerns to responsible authorities, noting the government is working to ensure

smooth operationalization of industries.

"There is a political will from President Samia Suluhu Hassan to resolve all issues related to electricity to motivate a good number of investors to invest in the country," he said.

TIC director, John Mathew said the visit aimed at understanding the investors' challenges and how it can help in eliminating them.

"The investors we have here today are our good will ambassadors to many more out there. Solving their challenges will help spread a word to others and hence an influx of investors will be coming to our country," said Mathew.



Prof Shadrack Mwakalila, Rector of the Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the achievements the institution has made over the years - particularly since President Samia Suluhu Hassan assumed power two years ago. He cited the implementation of a wide range of programmes and projects, including construction, expansion and renovation of some buildings in all its three campuses: Dar es Salaam, Pemba and Zanzibar. Photo: Selemani Mpochi

Harare moves towards food and water security

HARARE

ZIMBABWE has recorded an improvement in food security over the past few years, a development which dovetails with Vision 2030 prospects of ensuring the country becomes a middle-income economy.

According to the Zimbabwe Statistics Agency (ZimStat), the percentage of households with improved drinking water sources at national level stands at 8.4 per cent.

This follows reports that crop conditions have significantly improved following favourable rainfall patterns in many parts of the country, a development which will see an improvement in access to food.

Food security occurs when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

ZimStat director-general Taguma Mahonde said among key highlights of the Zimbabwe food security fact sheet, there had been improvements in the consumption of fruits and vegetables both in rural and urban areas.

"An average of 84.4 per cent of households have improved drinking water sources and figures stand at 96 per cent in urban areas and 74.9 per

cent in rural areas. Another highlight is that the percentage of households with improved sanitation facilities at the national level is 71.7 per cent," he said.

Mahonde said the country is yet to achieve the World Health Organisation's daily fruit and vegetable intake recommended level of 400 grams per person per day.

"We also noted that people in Zimbabwe consumed more than recommended cereals, sugar, fats and oils and less than recommended dairy products, fruits, vegetables, animal products, pulses and nuts. Median cost per 1 000 calories of a diet in Zimbabwe was \$0.09."

He also expressed gratitude to the government, COMESA and Statistics Norway for the support rendered throughout the food security project.

Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development Ministry permanent secretary Dr John Basera recently said the country is now food secure after achieving bumper maize and wheat harvests in the last few cropping seasons.

Dr Basera applauded farmers for working hard last year to achieve a milestone in wheat production, after attaining a record-breaking 375,000 tonnes of wheat and 1.5 million tonnes of maize last season.

Stakeholders call for urban health policy

By Correspondent Theresia Victor

STAKEHOLDERS have called for the formulation of an urban health policy which will guide nurses and health experts to provide extra care to pregnant mother to reduce the number of deaths during labour.

Speaking yesterday in Dar es Salaam when commemorating the 'White Ribbon Day,' Dr Rutoshia Dadi consultant global af-

fairs at the Canadian Embassy said that the urban health policy should have enough strategies that guide nurses on how to handle mother and newborn to avoid unnecessary death.

This year's white ribbon day themed 'every woman deserves quality inclusive and respectful productive service,' was held at Temeke regional hospital.

The white ribbon was launched to commemorate all women and

girls who died during giving birth adding that it is the nurse's responsibility to go the extra mile to make sure that women give birth to health babies.

He further noted that the nurses are required to identify patients' care requirements, focus on their needs and act on them, nurture a compassionate environment by providing psychological support that helps in easing their pains.

Rose Mlay, White ribbon alli-

ance national coordinator said that apart from following care regulations and standards, nurses need to go the extra mile in making sure that all women and girls who are in labour are being given extra care.

She further advised that there should be a single room in every hospital in the country that is reserved for women with disabilities so that they are able to come with their counterparts who will

be able to help them in close proximity as they know them better.

Thamini Uhai organisation director Banzi Msomi said that improving hospital infrastructure will be a move that align with this year's theme because all women and girls deserve to get good health services.

He said his organisation supports 18 dispensaries in high catchment areas, to improve ac-

cess to high quality skilled birth attendance and basic emergency obstetric and newborn care services.

Dr Ahmad Makuhani, acting director, department of maternal and child health, Ministry of Health said that the government is currently working to improve infrastructure in every hospital in the country in order to improve health services given to women and girls.



Honesta Msaki (R), deputy leader of the Regional Centre of Excellence in Road Safety at the National Institute of Transport in Dar es Salaam, pictured on Thursday briefing a visitor at NIT's pavilion at National Road Safety Week commemoration being held in Mwanza city at national level. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Mbowe calls upon Tanzanians to exercise patriotism and solidarity

By Guardian Correspondent, Serengeti

CHADEMA national chairman, Freeman Mbowe has called upon Tanzanians to exercise patriotism and solidarity of their nation instead of clinging to political parties that divides them thereby making them poorer while few officials reap benefits by the country's incomes from the country's resources.

Mbowe made the remarks on Wednesday this week when addressing residents of Mugumu in Serengeti District, Mara Region, saying the time has come now and called on Tanzanians to unite unmindful of party affiliations.

He also said that the issue of the need for a new constitution that will concentrate justice, freedom and democracy for all will be achieved if the people raise their voices without taking into consideration their party affiliations as it is the issue that will ensure genuine development for all.

He said he had already talked to President Samia Suluhu Hassan telling her that the country was heading at the wrong direction and that the only Tanzanians' salvation is the new constitution and nothing else.

He said the current constitution will continue protecting heavyweights in order to make do what they do but does not help other ordinary Tanzanians economically, politically and socially.

"In this issue we have to be united, we must abandon political ideologies, we have to rewrite the constitution to save our communities," said Mbowe.

Meanwhile, chairman Mbowe called upon the government to show pity for the people living near reserve areas especially when they are invaded by wild animals, killing them and their livestock, and while they try to protect themselves against the beasts, they get arrested and have their property confiscated thereby consigning them into deep poverty.

Former Arusha Urban Member of Parliament, Godbless Lema (Chadema) said that he has returned from exile in Canada where he was forced to flee to save his life that was being sought by the Phase V Government.

Lema said that President Samia Suluhu Hassan has put things in order and now he is here fighting for the rewriting of the constitution.

Former Tarime rural MP, John Heche said when the new constitution is obtained, it will improve the lives of the people and reduce poverty of people living near wildlife reserve areas.

He said even the lakes, rivers, mountains and valleys we have are sufficient to employ many people and reduce poverty if the constitution will show the way for the people who are poor to benefit from them.

NDC, TEMDO sign MoU to improve quality of products

By Correspondent James Kandoya

NATIONAL Development Corporation (NDC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tanzania Manufacturing and Designing Organisation (TEMDO) to improve the quality of products produced by Kilimanjaro Machine Tools (KMTC).

Speaking at the signing ceremony on Thursday in Dar es Salaam, NDC man-

aging director, Dr Nicolaus Shombe said under the agreement TEMDO will be designing while KTMC will play a role of ensuring massive production of the products.

He said without designing it will not be easy to produce quality products and TEMDO will be responsible for that.

The NDC boss said the collaboration is also meant to save forex currencies the government used to import spare parts.

He said signing of MoU seeks to further cement collaborations.

"The signing of MoU is to enhance the collaboration between TEMDO and KTMC all under the umbrella of NDC to produce quality products. Our target is to ensure that products manufactured by KTMC are of high quality and can be exported to countries within the East African Community (EAC) and South African Development Community (SADC).

According to him, there will be no wastage of time looking for spare parts since designing and production technology can be made at TEMDO.

Prof Frederick Kahimba, director general of TEMDO said that industrial development needs research and therefore the collaboration has come at the right time. He said from the agreement TEMDO will also play the role of training technology transfer support services and commercialisation.

Kahimba noted that products produced by KMTC will be designed by TEMDO to increase product quality. He said TEMDO will start designing galvanized communication towers and KTMC start manufacturing to reduce cost.

"The collaboration will help us to share technology among institutions and therefore saves time, cost and improve quality of products," he said.

NEMC participates in Expo 2023 in Doha

By Guardian Correspondent

THE National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) is among institutions from Tanzania which are participating at the Agriteq Expo 2023 in Doha, Qatar.

In the expo, NEMC is showcasing its experience including a campaign to fight against the use of plastics in the country.

During the expo which is conducted every year, has drawn about 300 companies and institutions and environmental stakeholders with NEMC being among the 16 companies from Tanzania which are taking part.

The expo was opened by the Municipal minister Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Subaie.

He said NEMC has shown how investment environment has improved including introduction of electronic systems of applying for business environment.

"Among the people who have visited NEMC pavilion are officials from the Tanzania embassy

in Qatar together with investors from various areas," he said.

Obasanjo Mniwako who is an officer for the southern zone said the expo will help in attracting investment in Tanzania.

Tilisa Mwambungo from NEMC southern highland zone said the council uses the platform to market Tanzania's tourists and investment attractions.

"The expo has offered opportunities to showcase investment opportunities in Tanzania including in areas of agriculture, fisheries and minerals," he said.

He said NEMC has also managed to educate people who visited the pavilion on what should be done for one to invest in Tanzania.

Apart from NEMC, other institutions participating in the expo include Tanzania embassy in Qatar, ministry of agriculture, Mama Africa, Sisal board, Msai Sandals, Nkona limited, Linga enterprises, Mambo Jambo design, Kolumba Art Studi Afnaan Limited and Amahoro Afrika Limited.



Irene John (3rd-L), National Environmental Management Council's (NEMC) communications and public relations manager, presents an alternative bag to one of the people who visited the council's pavilion at the international agricultural and environmental exhibition held in Qatar earlier this week. It was shortly after she briefed him on the headway Tanzania has made in combating the use of plastic bags. Photo courtesy of NEMC

Organic cotton farmers, ginners in joint venture to boost sector performance

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo,

Dodoma

FARMERS and ginners who engage in the organic cotton sector across the country have bridged efforts to formulate their special association, the useful podium to help scaling up performance and value chain of the vital economic cash crop in the country.

Dubbed 'Tanzania Organic Cotton Association (TOCA), the timely established organisation envisions to provide the most reliable platform of choice that nurtures the organic cotton industry by facilitating excellence in agriculture

and commerce.

According to the relevant statistics, more than 30,000 cotton farmers in Tanzania were internationally organic certified as of 2022.

Speaking on behalf of the organic cotton farmers and ginners from Singida and Simiyu during the founding and inception meeting of the association (TOCA) held yesterday in Dodoma Capital City under the auspicious of GIZ Tanzania and Helvetas, Dr Riyaz Haider said the reason behind establishment of the organisation was to heighten the performance of both, fresh and long-standing organic cotton farmers and ginners.

"Among others, the mission behind the formation of this association is to promote and protect the country's cotton industry with a unifying voice and actions that serve and engage its diverse members from farm to market place.

In further details, Dr Haider, who is the director of Biosustain Ltd, noted that the association would be used by members as a meaningful platform to discuss and hatch creative ideas to help solve numerous setbacks that troubles the growers and ginners.

"It is anticipated that, TOCA will be the chief developer of the organic cotton industry in Tanzania through providing leadership

consistent with organic principles and values, organised to create and further market opportunities for the organic cotton business," he expressed, added that the association was organised to promote the economic viability of organic cotton and to boost organic agriculture.

For his side, Marco Mtunga, the Director General of the Tanzania Cotton Board (TCB) observed that Tanzania was the fifth largest producer of organic cotton in the world and in the season 2021/22, more than 30,000 cotton growers were internationally certified organic.

"Over the last years, organic

cotton farmers in Tanzania have been harvesting bumper compared to their conventional peers, they received, on average, a 10-15 per cent premium on top of the farm gate price for seed cotton," he unveiled.

The DG noted that, through practicing regenerative agriculture the farmers are less vulnerable to weather extremes and pest attacks and that improved resilience of their crop production system and the use of locally produced botanical pesticides significantly reduces the cost for inputs, the impressive development that he said leads to a higher productivity of organic cotton produc-

tion in Tanzania.

"The Cotton Board (TCB) is very keen to stand at forefront in working closely to support TOCA achieving its needed ambitious visions. Contrary to the cotton being produced through conventional practices, organic cotton is currently attracting wider and lucrative prices at the world market and thus we have an array of reasons to support the side since Tanzania has in many areas endowed with all potential to grow cotton through biological farming," Mtunga stated.

Leonard Mtama, the coordinator for the Climate-Smart Organic Cotton Programme, the robust



Jackson Kiswaga (L), Chairman of the Parliamentary Water and Environment Committee, pictured at Buchama in Tinde ward, Shinyanga District, on Thursday leading members of the committee on an inspection tour of a 1.15 million-litre Lake Victoria water tank project at Tinde-Shelui whose implementation cost 24.47bn/-.

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

MNH set to start liver transplants by 2025

MUHIMBILI National Hospital (MNH) has said that it is in the final stages of preparation to start liver transplants in the country by 2025, a move which will reduce the cost of patients who go abroad.

MNH has said that this step has been reached after great success in the service of liver surgery, hearing aid replacement and kidney transplant for 100 people.

This was disclosed yesterday in Dar es Salaam by the surgical gastroenterologist of food system and liver of MNH, Dr Ally Mwanga, when talking about the international meeting of liver that starts today in the city.

He said that all services for liver disease starting with surgery, drugs and chemotherapy are available in this country adding that they have performed liver surgery with great success.

He said that in the past there were very few liver specialists and a patient with liver cancer seemed to have got a death ticket, but now the situation is different.

He said MNH started doing liver surgery in 2020 with great success and that is why it got the courage to move towards liver transplantation. "The first step towards liver transplantation is to afford liver surgery and we have succeeded above 70 percent of performing this kind of surgery, so we think we will be able to do liver transplantation by 2025," he said.

Dr Mwanga said in order to reach the stage of liver transplantation, there are many steps to go through including professional ones and educating the public about the disease as some are not aware of it.

Meanwhile, the Director of Medical Services

of MNH, Dr John Rwegasha, said that all professional preparations, infrastructure and financial resources towards the liver transplant have been done and there is still a small step left. He said that the transplant of any human organs costs a lot citing the example of people who transplant hearing devices that one patient is supposed to have up to 40 million shillings.

He gave another example that a kidney transplant for one patient in this country reaches up to 20 million shillings and that they have already successfully transplanted kidneys for 100 people.

He said patients who go abroad for liver transplant services are supposed to have more than 50 million, so having such services here in the country will reduce the burden.

"Liver transplantation requires very modern

infrastructure. For example in a hospital, you need to have a well-equipped laboratory with a reliable supply of blood because just one patient to undergo liver surgery needs 26 bottles of blood because that type of surgery can take up to 24 hours," said Dr Rwegasha.

"These surgical experts stand for the entire duration of the surgery, so safe blood must also be in a safe environment. The intensive care unit (ICU) must be very good so that you don't lose a patient because by that time he/she will be in critical condition," he said.

He said it is important to educate the public about the organ donation procedure as some of them have been calling to donate kidneys so that they get money.

He said there is good news that the government is preparing a bill to be sent to the parlia-

EACJ president encourages university students to conduct their research on the regional court

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT of the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) Justice Nestor Kayobera has encouraged criminal justice and international relations students from the United States International University (USIU), Africa to conduct their research on the East African Court of Justice.

The Judge noted that the court's jurisprudence has steadily developed during the last 21 years and as such offers a rich resource for students to undertake research on various legal issues pertaining to the East African Community.

He highlighted key cases that the court has handled on criminal justice, which include a case filed by Plaxeda Rugumba against the EAC Secretary General and the Government of Rwanda (Reference No 8 of 2010), challenging the arrest and detention of Lieutenant Colonel Seveline Rugigana Ngabo without trial.

The court issued a declaration stating that detention of Col

Rugigana Ngabo by the agents of the Rwandan Government from 20th August 2010 to 28th January 2011 was in breach of the fundamental principles of the Community under Articles 6 (d) & 7(2) of the EAC Treaty.

Judge Kayobera indicated that the court does not explicitly have jurisdiction over human rights matters. However, articles 6(d) and 7(2) of the EAC Treaty create scope for human rights matters to be brought before the EACJ.

The Head of the team from USIU-Africa, Racheal Ngumi thanked the Court for the warm reception and for granting the students an opportunity to attend on-going court sessions and interact with the Judges of the court.

The opportunity which she said was a great learning experience for the students and looks forward to further cooperation and engagements.

The meeting was also attended by Judges of the 1st Instance Division and staff of the court.

ment that will deal with the procedures of giving human organs to another person to prevent arbitrary giving.

"I have experienced that challenge myself. Some people call and others come to the hospital and say that they have financial problems in their home so they need to sell their kidneys. So if we don't control this situation, people will have their organs ripped out, that's why these things need laws and guidelines," he said.

He said MNH decided to start one step at a time in organ transplant and they started with hearing aid transplants and kidney transplants, all of which they have done with great success.

"When we did hearing aid transplant, we moved to the kidney transplant, so the environment of kidney transplant is similar to that of liver transplant, although the resources may differ a little but we are sure by 2025 we will perform liver transplant," said Dr Rwegasha.

Tanga port to receive a mega ship above 189 meters length

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

TANGA port is expected to receive a mega ship above 189 meters length with over 50,000 metric tonnes of petroleum bulk petcock that will go to Sayona Chemicals and Neelkanth Chemicals Limited. The event is expected at the end of this week.

Coming of megaship from Saudi Arabia is a record whereas the port had received three mega ships within a month, a move linked with completion of the first phase of the major improvements project by 100 per cent and the second phase, which has reached 93 per cent.

Tanga port manager, Masoud Mrisha made the remarks when briefing Tanga regional commissioner, Waziri Kindamba who visited the port this week.

Mrisha said: "Before the upgrading and renovation of the port, these kinds of ships were handled through stream operations but now the vessels will dock at the berth and serve quickly and efficiently."

The manager noted that the port is also expected to host another ship this year with 5,000 tonnes of fertiliser (ammonia nitrate), the cargo which had never been handled at the port.

The port is also set to handle 2,481 tonnes

of copper, which will pass through the facility to The DR Congo, he said.

He said since the improvement and expansion work is complete, the port expects to serve 50,000 Twenty Equivalent Unit (TEU's) annually from the current 12,000 TEU's and to serve 3,000,000 metric harbour tonnes (HBT) cargoes annually from the current 750,000 HBT.

Earlier, Tanga regional commissioner assured business people and investors to make use of the port due to its reliable security and efficiency in handling and clearing cargoes.

"Tanga port is the first East Africa's main gateway for seaport services. The various improvements and upgrading of berths will increase performance of the port as it offers quality services," remarked the RC.

In February 26 the port received a 150-meter length ship 'Baltic Pearl' that offloaded 6909.292 tonnes of ammonium nitrate chemical products from Russia that belonged to Simba Supply Solutions Limited and was cleared within four days.

March 15th this year, the port received a 179 meters length ship-IMO 9573828 from China that anchored spare parts, property of Maweni Limestone producer of Huaxin cements weighing 972 tonnes.



Sane Kwilabya (3rd-L), manager of Mponde Tea Plant in Lushoto District, briefs members of the Parliamentary Committee on Social Welfare and Development on Thursday on tea processing. The delegation was on a working tour of the Public Service Social Security Fund's (PSSSF) investment facility. It was led by the committee's chairperson, Fatma Tawfiq (4th-L), and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth Employment and People with Disabilities) Prof Joyce Ndalichako. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Applause as Samia expedites execution of strategic projects

By Guardian Correspondent, Musoma

CCM chairman for Mara Region, Patrick Chandi has showered praise on President Samia Suluhu Hassan for dishing out more than 420bn/- for implementing various projects in the region.

Chandi issued the praise here yesterday at the forum he had called to assess two years of President Samia leadership.

He said the provision of funds to

implement projects stems from CCM's 2020/25 Election Manifesto and added that CCM should be proud of the achievements by President Samia in her two years at the helms, the achievements that will ensure party victory in the 2024 Civic Elections as well as 2025 General elections.

"Our contract with the people is that we bring to them development, and they should give us votes, we have nothing to give them except our thanks to give CCM victory in 2024

and 2025," he said.

He appealed to President Samia to build Arusha-Mara railway whose implementation was announced in 1998 but so far nothing has been done and also called on her to think about splitting Serengeti District as it is very huge in order to have two constituencies as well as bringing social services closer to the people.

For his part, Mara Regional Commissioner, Gen. Suleiman Mzee gave his report in regard to the implemen-

tation of projects in the two years of President Samia's leadership on various sectors.

He said Mara Region has convened the forum to explain to the people on the implementation of various responsibilities in the two years, and cited one of the achievements as the one on water supply projects by RU-WASA.

He said more than 52 water projects valued at 15.75bn/- have been completed and more than 195 villag-

es now get clean and safe water, the supply of which has increased coverage from 54 to 71 per cent.

Meanwhile, he said the Mugango-Kiabakari-Butiama water project which began in 2020 that was supposed to have been completed in February last year has now reached 74 per cent and will supply water to villages in Butiama and Musoma districts.

In regard to the health sector, Gen Mzee said the region has received

more than 36.17bn/- for improving health services to the people including the purchase of medical devices and the construction of dispensaries, health centres as well as patients wards in the region's various hospitals.

The RC concluded his speech by saying 35bn/- was received by TANROADS for the construction of tarmac road infrastructures including the installation of street lights and rehabilitation of the drainage system.



Mainrad Rweyemamu, acting director (Companies and Business Names) at the Business Registrations and Licensing Agency (Brela), pictured in Mwanza city on Thursday addressing business consultants at a workshop on the implementation of the principles aimed at strengthening integrity and transparency in corporate bodies. Photo: Correspondent Vitus Audax

WHO renews alert on safeguards for health workers' recruitment

GENEVA

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) released an updated health workforce support and safeguards list 2023, identifying 55 countries as vulnerable for availability of health workers required to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goal target for universal health coverage (UHC) by 2030.

The impact of COVID-19 and widespread disruptions to health services has resulted in a rapid acceleration in the international recruitment of health workers.

For countries losing health personnel to international migration, this could negatively impact on health systems and hinder their progress towards achieving UHC and health security.

Of the 55 countries, 37 are in the WHO African region, eight in the Western Pacific region, six in the Eastern Mediterranean region, three in the South-East Asia region and one is in the Americas.

Eight countries have been newly added to the WHO health workforce support and safeguards list 2023 since its original publication in 2020.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General said: "Health workers are the backbone of every health system, and yet 55 countries with some of the world's most fragile health systems do not have enough and many are losing their health workers to international migration."

He said: "WHO is working with these countries to support them to strengthen their health workforce, and we call on all countries to respect the provisions in the WHO health

workforce support and safeguards list. The list should be used to inform advocacy, policy dialogue at all levels and financing efforts in support of health workforce education and employment in these countries."

The countries included in the WHO health workforce support and safeguards list 2023 have a UHC service coverage index below 55 and health workforce density below the global median: 49 medical doctors, nursing and midwifery personnel per 10 000 people.

These countries require priority support for health workforce development and health system strengthening, along with additional safeguards that limit active international recruitment.

The WHO health workforce support and safeguard list 2023 does not prohibit international recruitment, but recommends that government to government health worker migration agreements be informed by health labour market analysis and the adoption of measures to ensure adequate supply of health workers in the source countries.

WHO also recommends fir engagement of Ministries of Health in the negotiation and implementation of agreements and specify the health system benefits of the arrangement to both source and destination countries.

Implementation of the WHO Global code of practice on the international recruitment of health personnel (WHO Global Code) can ensure that international movement of health workers is ethically managed, supports the rights and welfare of migrant health workers and maintains health service delivery objectives.

SADC senior officials meet ahead of council of ministers meeting

By Guardian Reporter

THE standing committee of senior officials of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) kicked off their meeting this week ahead of the meeting of the Council of Ministers scheduled from March 18th to 20th, 2023 in Kinshasa, The Democratic Republic of Congo.

Speaking at the opening of the meeting, Ambassador Songhu Kayumba Donatien, Secretary General for the Ministry of Regional Integration and Francophone of the Democratic Republic of Congo and chair-

person of the SADC standing committee of senior officials called on the delegates to thoroughly deliberate the issues with a common goal of promoting regional integration and development.

Ambassador Donatien highlighted that the DRC, as the current chair of SADC, continues to promote and champion the SADC industrialisation agenda as a way of ensuring that SADC improves the livelihoods of the citizens of the region, and continues to be a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy.

The Council of Ministers meeting will be held under the 42nd SADC Summit theme, which is 'Promoting industrialization through agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, and regional value chains for inclusive and resilient economic growth'.

The theme takes into account the urgent need to enhance the roll out of SADC industrialization and market integration programmes as contained in the SADC regional indicative strategic development plan (RISDP) 2020-2030.

Among the key issues on regional in-

tegration and development, the Ministers will discuss the overall status of the implementation of council and summit decisions; status of implementation of the prioritised intervention areas for the theme of the 41st SADC summit of heads of state and government; status of the implementation plan of the regional indicative strategic development plan (2020-2030) and operationalisation of the SADC humanitarian and emergency operations centre (SHOC).

The SADC standing committee of senior officials is a technical advisory committee to the council of ministers and acts

as a clearing house for the agenda of the council of ministers. It is responsible for overseeing the functioning and development of SADC and ensuring that SADC policies are properly implemented.

The Executive Secretary of SADC, Elias M. Magosi, the deputy executive secretary- regional integration, Angele N'tumba, deputy executive secretary- corporate affairs, Ambassador Joseph André Nourrice and permanent secretaries, directors and other senior officials from the SADC member states are participating in the meeting.

Ijangala River waterfalls hydropower project nearing completion, says REA

By Guardian Correspondent, Makete

THE hydropower project from Ijangala River waterfalls at Masisi village, Makete District, Njombe Region is in the last stages of completion.

This was disclosed during the visit by top REA officials led by its board chairperson, Janet Mbene on Wednesday.

Accompanied by REA director general Hassan Saidi, board member Florian Hauke, Mbene expressed her satisfaction on the good job on the project expected to produce 360KW of electricity upon completion.

She said that she believes after its completion of the project implemented by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) and sponsored by REA and other stakeholders, it will pro-

vide motivation for other private institutions to do the same to enhance rural electrification.

Meanwhile, REA DG said ELCT's accomplishment is well admired as it has been completed in time and to the expected standards.

Speaking at different times, the Project Manager, Pastor Elikana Katahenga and Assistant to Njombe ELCT Diocese Bishop, Pastor Mathayo Sanga thanked REA for the cooperation and its big contribution since the start of the project.

They said REA has been at the front line in making sure the project is implemented not only from the fund's sponsorship, but from experts who visit from time to time.

When completed, the project is expected to sell power to TANESCO to be injected into the national power grid as a special contract between the two sides.



Felchesmi Mramba (3rd-L), Permanent Secretary in the Energy ministry, cuts a ribbon earlier this week to launch the Tanzania LPG Association. The association's main goal is to pull together all stakeholders in the industry, with a view to solving problems facing consumer problems in the country. Third-right is Oryx Gas Tanzania Limited director Araman Benoit, who doubles as the association's chairman. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Govt urges LPG players 'support for national clean cooking strategy

By Guardian Correspondent

THE government has urged players in the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) industry to jointly work and implement efforts that support the National Clean Cooking Strategy 2033 aimed to realise 80 per cent use of clean cooking fuels for Tanzanian households by 2033.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Energy, Eng Felchesmi Mramba made the call in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday when opening the first 'East Africa LPG Expo'.

The two-day event, which brought over 800 stakeholders and 50 exhibitors, aimed to discuss and share techniques that will help promote massive use of clean cooking

energies.

Mramba said: "In order for the strategy to be reality we really need to focus on increasing investment of Clean Cooking fuels such as LPG, Natural Gas (City Gas) and E-cooking. Therefore, events like these are very important not only for the business but also for the promotion of different Government agendas such as this."

He explained that the main elements of the National Energy Policy 2015 include developing domestic energy resources that are least cost options; promote economic energy pricing; improve energy reliability and security and enhance energy efficiency; encourage private sector participation in the economy; re-

duce forest depletion and develop human resources.

He noted that the congress was an important platform in raising awareness and promoting investment in the energy sector especially in LPG industry in Tanzania.

"Therefore, I hope during the discussions in this two day event you will get an opportunity to discuss issues on environment and healthy when discussing the cooking sector which in our country is mainly characterised by the traditional fuels like charcoal and firewood. Benefits of using LPG as an alternative fuel for cooking, cost, awareness, issues of safety for household uses are among the areas where we really need to get the experience on,"

he noted.

Organized by the LPG Expo in collaboration with the Tanzania LPG Association with support from the Ministry of Energy and the World LPG Association based in Paris, France, the two-day event brought together stakeholders from 30 nations including 50 exhibitors of gas tools and technologies.

Catherine Ho, director of LPG Expo said that this is one of the largest regional LPG events which is aimed to fuel discussion of clean energy and promote use of gas in various uses for sustainable development.

She noted that given the recent surge in LPG usage over the past few years, probably from the con-

tinuous efforts in promoting clean cooking and cleaner energy alternatives, Tanzania sets itself to be the ideal location for this year's East Africa LPG Expo series.

"We believe now is the opportune moment for LPG Expo to come in to help investors get to know Tanzania, acquiring the latest insights into this thriving market and help establish Tanzania as an integral link in the global LPG supply chain," she said.

Catherine said that enhancing the use of LPG on a national scale has the potential to eliminate energy poverty, which would have positive impacts on population lives, economic growth, and the environment.

Furthermore, the usage of LPG can help minimise deforestation, a significant driver of global warming, as well as reduce air pollution.

"LPG definitely the best interim solution to improve the health of women and girls, significantly reducing their risk of diseases caused by smoke inhalation," she added.

Amos Jackson, the Tanzania LPG Association director said the will also serve as a collaborative platform to brainstorm solutions on the challenges faced in the industry as well as map out future paths.

He said that usage of gas especially in cooking was still very low in the country due to low awareness, something which needs efforts to increase public awareness.

DIDO Mwanafunzi Initiative donates books to primary, secondary schools

By Correspondent James Kandoyo

ABOUT 800 underprivileged primary and secondary school students in Coat Region have received uniforms, shoes, school bags and sanitary pads from DIDO Mwanafunzi Initiative.

Dubbed 'Mvishe Aende Shule Charity Drive' is a fundraising campaign organized by DIDO Mwanafunzi Initiative for purposes of helping underprivileged students with various school requirements.

Speaking at the handing over ceremony in Bagamoyo District, Coast Region recently, chairperson of DIDO Mwanafunzi Initiative, Rehema Moses said the initiative aimed at providing essential school supplies to underprivileged primary and secondary students in Tanzania.

She said the expected outcomes include improved school attendance and academic performance, reduced financial burden on families, and increased access to education for underprivileged students.

The initiative will be implemented through partnerships with local schools and community organizations and sustained through continuous fundraising efforts, added Moses.

"We have set bigger goals for 2023 and beyond. After successfully implementing the 'Mvishe Aende Shule' campaign, we are planning to expand to reach more children," she said.

She said the vision for 2023 is to engage more partners, sponsors, and donors to create a sustainable positive impact for students in need adding that to achieve the goal, they will focus on building strategic partnerships with organizations, government, and individuals who share similar vision and values.

She said the collaboration will provide the necessary resources and support to increase the program's impact and help more students in need throughout Tanzania.

According to her, the campaign recognizes the importance of students looking clean and presentable as it increases their identity and confidence in school.

Speaking on behalf of authorities from Bagamoyo District, George Mwalukasa emphasized on the importance of education as a fundamental child right and a force that drives personal and societal growth.

"As a government, we are pleased to see institutions like DMI dedicating themselves wholeheartedly to supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds and continuing to contribute to the development of education in our country," he said.

Bagamoyo District Education Officer, Wema Kajigili said: "We are here to support and assist the growth of these institutions and its campaigns."

One of the donors, Nahuja Hatibu said the campaign recorded various successes in 2022, attracting donations from surrounding communities, institutions, businesses and individuals.

The funds raised were used to purchase uniforms for students, and the distribution of the uniforms was done in collaboration with local schools and community organizations.

She said the success of the 'Mvishe Aende Shule' campaign last year demonstrates the community's commitment to supporting education and helping underprivileged students succeed.



Civil Society Protection Foundation executive director Nemency Iriya speaks at Mirerani township Simanjoro district Manyara region earlier this week on how Tanzanite business benefits the nation in general and women in particular. The NGO's vision is having a nation with full access to the enjoyment of basic rights and social well-being. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Engagements to help rebuild economies of S. Africa and Tanzania

JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa International Relations and Cooperation Minister, Dr Naledi Pandor, says she hopes that the engagements between Tanzania will help rebuild both countries and the region following the COVID-19 pandemic that battered economies.

Pandor made the remarks during the South Africa-Tanzania Bi-National Commission (BNC) with her Tanzanian counterpart, Dr Stergomena Tax, in Pretoria.

The BNC took place ahead of today's State Visit to South Africa by the President of Tanzania, Samia Suluhu Hassan, at the invitation of President Cyril Ramaphosa.

"The BNC is taking place at a time when we are rebuilding and refocusing our economies following the COVID-19 pan-

dem, and natural disasters that have plagued our region in recent months," she said.

"Through our bilateral cooperation, we are well placed to rebuild our national economies and contribute to the economic recovery of our region and the continent."

The commission seeks to enhance and strengthen the current excellent and cordial bilateral relations between the two states.

She told delegates that it was essential that mutually beneficial economic ties and investment flows grow between the two countries, as these are the foundations for regional integration.

"I am pleased that the Business Forum that is scheduled to take place will highlight this imperative," she added.

The Minister said the interactions and consultations provide an opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved and still needs to be done since the last BNC.

To date, Pandor said, there are 15 agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) that exist between the two nations in various fields of cooperation. "It is my hope that the reports we will receive this morning will provide updates on the status of the pending agreements and MOUs, with a view to their signature soon."

The Minister also acknowledged the long-standing amicable and historical ties with Tanzania.

"These ties were strengthened immensely during South Africa's liberation struggle against apartheid when the gov-

ernment and people of Tanzania unwaveringly supported our freedom fighters during very trying times."

She saluted the government and the people of Tanzania for their solidarity.

Pandor also highlighted some of the acts of solidarity performed by the South African businesses in Tanzania and the South African High Commission. These include the support to schools in the Kongwa District, delivery of more than 1 000 desks, and ablution facilities to the Miyembeni School in 2018.

"I believe Your Excellency, that there will be more such projects to support and partner with our fellow compatriots in Tanzania. Let this solidarity increase quantitatively and qualitatively."

Tax said that she was confident that the two countries would have an op-

portunity to discuss and make decisions on important issues that will further strengthen bilateral relations and improve citizens' lives.

The Tanzanian Minister said during the first BNC, which was held in Dar es Salaam in May 2017, the nations agreed to cooperate in many sectors. These include political and diplomatic, defence and security, economic, and social and cultural affairs.

Tax also paid tribute to the private sector, which remains an engine and a driver of the growth of economies and a key partner to the public sector.

"We, therefore, need to recognise the importance and contribution of the private sector, and facilitate it through, among other things, putting in place conducive business environments."

The Guardian

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Taking A New Look
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Sustainable soil, fertiliser practices will help Africa in realising Green Revolution dream

EXPERTS agree that micro-dosing, increased fertiliser use, private-sector investment, improved access to credit, reduction in import costs, smart subsidy programmes and accelerated sustainable soil practices will help Africa realise its Green Revolution dream. The challenge is for countries to work with the experts and follow through.

The Green Revolution, also known as the Third Agricultural Revolution, was a period of technology transfer initiatives that saw greatly increased crop yields and agricultural production. These changes in agriculture began in developed countries after World War II and spread globally till the late 1980s. Agriculture is the mainstay of Tanzania's rural economy and the livelihood of most of the country's poor. As a result, rural incomes and poverty reduction are closely linked to agricultural productivity. Yet, according to FAO, yields for important staple crops in Tanzania remain very low.

With a maize yield of 1.3 metric tonnes per hectare in 2011, Tanzania ranks behind Kenya and Ghana and way behind Vietnam or China.

A similar pattern holds for rice (paddy), with Tanzania's yield of 2.0 ha in 2011 being comparable to only about half of Kenya's (4.0 ha), and less than one third of China's (6.7 ha) in that year.

It is noteworthy too that there has been no general upward trend in yields over the past two decades, though there is considerable annual variation due to rainfall patterns.

One key constraint to improved agricultural productivity in Tanzania is the insufficient use of modern

inputs, such as fertiliser, improved seeds or pesticides. A powerful reminder of this relationship is India's Green Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s when significant increases in the use of fertiliser and high yielding seeds, together with investment in irrigation, generated impressive growth in crop productivity. The 2007/8 agricultural census confirmed that the use of improved seeds and chemical fertiliser is also strongly related to maize and paddy productivity in Tanzania. Still, few Tanzanian farmers use modern inputs.

The lack of capital faced by most subsistence farmers is the main reason behind their inability to use modern inputs. Removing this financial constraint has traditionally been the goal of most public input promotion schemes, which focus on price subsidies and credit provision. All of these options are being tried in Tanzania, in particular through the National Agricultural Input Voucher Scheme and the Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS).

Nevertheless, trends show that fertiliser use strongly declines when farmers are distant from a road or a market. This highlights the fact that investment in rural road infrastructure and transportation services can go a long way in reducing the costs associated with the distribution of agricultural inputs. Greater connectivity to markets therefore not only improves farmers' access to modern inputs but it also creates new opportunities for agricultural commercialisation, which in turn increase incentives to use modern inputs.

Africa should be committed to fight poverty and hunger

AFRICA is home to a quarter of the world's entire agricultural land. Nevertheless, in the 12 months that African leaders vowed to improve food security in the continent, over 20 million more people have been pushed into severe hunger.

Today a fifth of the African population (or 278 million) is undernourished, and 55 million of its children under the age of five are stunted due to severe malnutrition, Oxfam International adds to the above data in its report: Over 20 million more people hungry in Africa's 'year of nutrition'.

"The hunger African people are facing today is a direct result of inadequate political choices..." said Fati N'Zi-Hasane, Oxfam in Africa director.

The report further explains that chronic underinvestment in agriculture is a key cause of the widespread hunger experienced in 2022.

The majority of African governments (48 out of 54) reportedly spend an average of 3.8 per cent of their budgets on agriculture - some spending as little as 1 per cent. Nearly three quarters of these governments have reduced their agricultural spending since 2019, failing to honour their Malabo commitments to invest at least 10 per cent of their budget on agriculture.

In 2014 African leaders signed the Malabo Declaration, which stipulated that African governments must spend at least 10 per cent of their budget on Agriculture and supporting farmers.

In addition, worsening climate-fuelled droughts and floods, and a global rise in fuel and fertilisers prices, made food unobtainable for millions

of people. In 2022 alone, food inflation rose by double digits in all but ten African countries.

As the 36th African Union Summit was held in February 2023, focusing on intra-continental free trade, millions of smallholder farmers, who are vital food producers in the continent, cannot reach markets in neighbouring countries due to poor infrastructure and high intra-African tariffs.

In other words, many African nations find it cheaper to import food from outside the continent than from their next-door neighbour.

As of August 2022 (the last available figure), there were 139.95 million people in 35 African countries living in crisis or worse acute food insecurity.

This increase can be attributed to both a worsening acute food insecurity situation and an expansion in the population analysed between 2021 and 2022. (Source: Global Report on Food Crises Mid-Year Update 2022).

According to the CAADP report and the FAO Crop Prospects report, Africa's cereal production in 2022 was 207.4 million tons, a decline of 3.4 million tons from the average of the previous five years.

The increasing hunger in Africa which is imposed by both externally and internally is just part of a widespread drama.

In fact, climate change is fuelling hunger for millions of people around the world.

Climate change has resulted in more frequent and intense droughts, floods, and heat waves. The number of disasters has increased five-fold over the past 50 years.

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Leading the way to a sustainable tomorrow

By Herman Kasekende

WE need to ask ourselves this question: If we don't preserve our planet Earth today, will there be a planet left to do business on? This is what drove our bank to embark on a journey of investing in sustainable initiatives while supporting Tanzanian government in achieving its economic goals.

At Standard Chartered Bank, we're building a sustainable future for our stakeholders by aligning our business with society's greatest challenges. Together, we're developing new economies that can deliver sustained prosperity in the decades ahead. As our brand promise makes clear, we're 'here for good'.

As one of the oldest international banks in Tanzania, having started operations in 1917, we have become a trailblazer in the financial sector, introducing innovations, digital solutions, and cutting-edge products to the Tanzanian market while making sustainability (ESG) a core part of our business strategy.

As a bank, we're contributing to creating a sustainable future for Tanzania by focusing on three pillars: sustainable finance, being a responsible company, and investing in our communities.

These pillars reflect the approach we believe best fits our capabilities to make the greatest difference. Additionally, these pillars have allowed us to provide much-needed funding, donations, infrastructure, and skills throughout the year, in line with meeting the goals set under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Recently, we launched our first report, titled 'Here for Good: A Sustainable Future for Tanzania,' which highlighted our efforts in utilising our financial capabilities to address environmental and social challenges in Tanzania. The report covers a wide range of topics, including impact financing, efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, investing in communities, digital innovation, and initiatives to promote financial inclusion and literacy.

But why now? We've released this report because we understand it's important to create a platform that will spur conversations and inspire stakeholders to join this cause. Our report will provide businesses with a baseline/case on how they can include sustainability in their strategies.

Drawing from the report, the bank has coordinated USD 1.46 Billion TZS 3.7 trillion financing for the Tanzania Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project, which aims to construct a railway from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma (Makutupora). Once completed, the new SGR railway is



expected to reduce cargo transportation costs between Dar es Salaam and DRC from a minimum of TZS 14m per ton to about TZS 9m. Under lifting participation, The bank has also provided TZS 45.3 billion in financing to Car & General to support their working capital funding, which has enabled the client to maintain an all-women run assembly plant and warehouse.

We've further committed to being an agent for impact and driving diversity and inclusion by prioritising employee well-being and cultivating a workplace that enables our employees to thrive and perform at

their best.

We're also managing our environmental footprint by measuring key metrics, such as our usage of energy and water, generation of waste, carbon footprint, and paper usage, across our offices and branches. Additionally, we're lifting young people out of poverty through our FutureMarkers program by empowering them through education, employability, and entrepreneurship programs.

The choice for companies today is not whether they should embrace sustainability activities, but how. "Our Planet is Our Responsibility"

- it is the role of all of us to be stewards of the Earth, to protect the place that we call home, not only for our resources for survival but also for the enjoyment and prospect of having future generations enjoy it.

We are committed to leading the way to a sustainable Tanzania by strengthening our ability to respond to the needs of the Tanzanian economy. We are also keen to support the government and Tanzanians directly by leveraging our global networks and indirectly by supporting microfinance institutions that provide support to small business owners and individuals.

Instilling discipline in our children is crucial but beating isn't only way

By Telesphor Magobe

LAST week we briefly looked at a new development of an incident we had talked about before. It concerned a man who violently attacked his wife with a machete at night, causing her injuries on various parts of her body.

The wife lost consciousness and fell down. Thinking he had killed her wife,

the husband fled from the village to another village far away, but was later arrested and sent to a police station, thanks to the police and relatives of the wife. He was then taken to court.

Although in criminal justice the state has almost an exclusive jurisdiction, relatives of the husband approached the relatives of the wife, seeking reconciliation and offering to repay medical costs the wife had incurred.

After receiving the money, the wife started saying she had no interest in the case and was unfamiliar with court proceedings and so she preferred other options to court proceedings because she wouldn't benefit from it. Yet, according to sources, she has been rendered a dependent most probably for life since until now she still depends on a helper whenever she wants to eat, dress or undress, bathe or answer calls of nature.

Today, I invite you to briefly look at proper child upbringing. Recently, a colleague of mine shared with me some interesting news from his family, saying he has never beaten up his children or his wife for any reason whatsoever and even he doesn't think he will one day dare doing so. According to him, there is no cogent justification for beating up children or a wife.

He said he loved his wife and children and the only way that would reflect that love was to treat them the way he does. "My wife and children are very lovely and understanding and it is because I treat them well." However, in many families, wife or child beating is almost always the only way men show they are in control of everything, at least negatively.

As he was saying this to me, there was a lady seated near him who was attentively listening to him. She later said it was unbelievable that my colleague treated his wife and children in such a manner, which according to her, seemed to be impractical as far as child upbringing is concerned. To back her point, she recalled an old adage "Spare the rod and spoil the child".

While she was saying this, I recalled the

way a neighbour was treating her own children. She never knew how to speak politely to her children other than shouting to them for she believed being tough to them would make them conduct themselves well and be good persons in the future. But was it the only way? So, she would always be harsh to her children and hardly was she positive to them. Looking at how she behaves in front of her children, I thought she had a big problem she was struggling with in herself and perhaps children were just scapegoats. Even if a person happened to caution her against the way she was treating her children, she thought what she was doing was the best way of disciplining her children.

It is unbelievable that from morning to evening she would be just shouting to her children, thinking she is doing the right thing to them because she wants her children to behave well whenever they are at home or are playing with their peers or are at school.

This columnist believes the more energy a person spends on anything the less intelligence the person uses, while the more intelligence the person uses on anything the less the energy the person spends.

So, if a person spends so much energy shouting to his or her children every day, it means the person uses less intelligence in child upbringing. It is unfortunate that most children are brought up in circumstances under which their parents use less or no intelligence at all. Just imagine raising your children using very little or no intelligence at all! What a waste of time!

So, we are faced with this big problem of

child upbringing and the energy we spend on creating this problem does not correspond to the solution we seek.

When we are used to doing something it is difficult to change. But we can change it if we really want. A repetition of wrong does not make it right. Children need to be treated well because they learn things quickly and it is only upon us to know how to raise them well.

The colleague I am talking about has taught me something positive which I have decided to do from today: to love and treat my wife and children. Will you also do the same thing? Let us try it.

Above all, in whatever we do to our children let us be guided by section 13 of the Law of the Child Act (R.E. 2022) which provides: "(1) A person shall not subject a child to torture, or other cruel, inhuman punishment or degrading treatment, including any cultural practice which dehumanises or is injurious to the physical and mental well-being of a child. (2) No correction of a child is justifiable which is unreasonable in kind or in degree according to the age, physical and mental condition of the child and no correction is justifiable if the child is by reason of tender age or otherwise incapable of understanding the purpose of the correction."

Today's proverb: "Facts are hard things."

The author is a lawyer based in Dar es Salaam. He can be reached at tmagobe@gmail.com

The Law and You



Deals with India, South Africa golden opportunity for Tanzania

By Mark Mapambano

LAST week Tanzania sealed trade and bilateral deals with two historically friendly nations of India and South Africa. The two agreements come as twin golden opportunities for Tanzania due to enhanced trade and resultant income.

In the first deal, Tanzania and India agreed on an arrangement that will no longer make the US dollar indispensable in trade between the countries which will henceforth settle trade payments in Tanzanian shilling and Indian rupee.

Because of this ease of financial transaction, India is now likely to be one of the biggest Tanzania's leading trading partners and the value of trade between the two countries which stood at \$4.5 billion (about 10.4trn/-) during the year ending March 2022, is likely to see a tremendous increase.

This comes as sweet news for Tanzanian traders who export mainly minerals, especially gold, and agricultural products to India on one hand and Indian businesspeople who export largely petroleum products, medicines and engineering goods to Tanzania on the other.

But how does this work? Well, Tanzanian commercial banks will open what bankers call special Vostro accounts in India where traders there will make payments in rupees and Indian banks will do the same here where Tanzanian traders will settle transactions in shillings.

In the second deal, President Samia Suluhu Hassan and her South African counterpart and host Cyril Ramaphosa witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding on political and diplomatic consultations, and another for cooperation between the diplomatic academies of the two countries, bringing the number of sectoral agreements inked so far to 15.

The two leaders praised the excellent cooperation between the two countries' defence forces, lauding the joint training opportunities while exchanging views on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) pact, along with the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA).

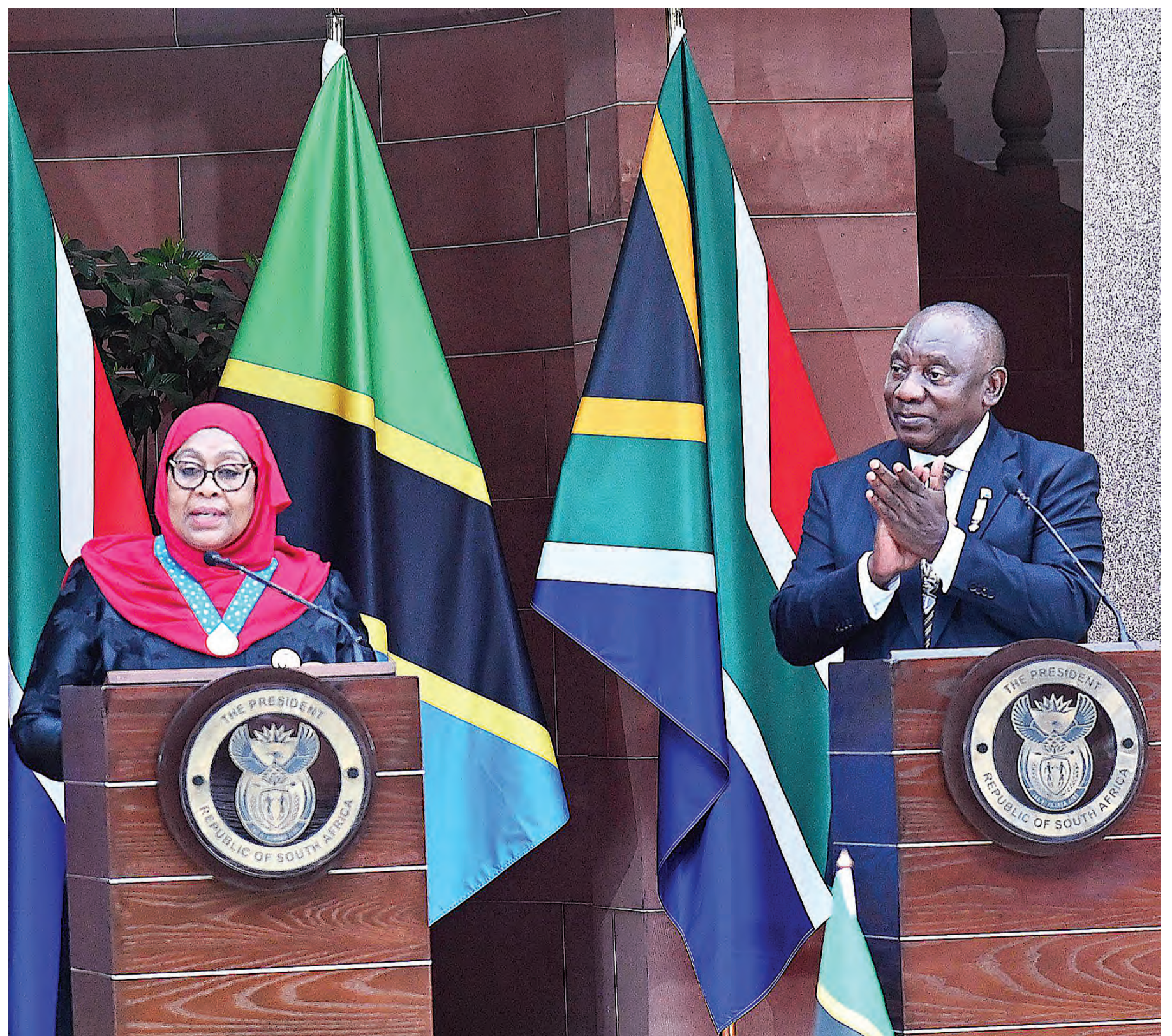
The Heads of State also participated in a business forum directed at forging a new deal between South Africa and Tanzania for high levels of trade and investments which brought together executives from the two countries' private sectors to explore trade and investment opportunities.

They agreed on expanding trade and investment activities to drive bilateral strategic engagement and address barriers to trade, the statement noted, indicating that the visiting Head of State and the host exchanged views on various regional, continental, and international issues.

In November 2022, South Africa exported 837 million rands (over 100bn/-) and imported goods worth 90.8 million rands from Tanzania, resulting in a positive trade balance of 746 million rands. Between November 2021 and November 2022 the exports of South Africa increased by 199 million rands (31.2 per cent) from 638 million rands to 837 million rands, making it one of Tanzania's biggest trading partners in Africa.

Here in East Africa, it should be remembered that Tanzania's trade with Kenya crossed the \$200 million mark for the first time in 2021, with export figures hitting \$182.6 million in the first half of the year, double the export figures from pre-pandemic levels.

This magic happened within a short period of time after President Samia came to power and normalized trade relations with Kenya. This was a shift from her



President Samia Suluhu Hassan with her South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa in Pretoria during the former's state visit to South Africa last week File photo

predecessor John Magufuli's hostile policies which stalled trade between the two neighbouring countries.

The rapprochement saw Kenya and Tanzania mend fences and eliminate barriers that hindered smooth flow of trade and people between the two East African nations for six years.

The feat was achieved in bilateral talks held between then Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and President Samia, first during her May 2021 state visit to Nairobi and later on December, 9, 2021, when President Kenyatta signed bilateral agreements in Dar es Salaam.

Last week's deals Tanzania inked with India and South Africa did not come by chance. Evidently, they are a direct result of good diplomacy which strengthens a nation and advances its interests.

Is diplomacy a thing of envoys posted to foreign diplomatic missions only? Officially, yes, but practically, no. Unknown to many is the important role of personal presidential involvement in diplomacy. And face-to-face diplomacy by a Head of State can do magic. That is why when President Samia chose not to follow her predecessor's stay-at-home style, and decided to travel and meet other leaders, the image of Tanzania

changed for the better and opportunities started presenting themselves.

Contrary to popular belief during Magufuli administration that a stay-at-home president is good for the country's coffers, economists and diplomats will tell you the opposite. Masters of economic diplomacy hold that a travelling president creates jobs at home and President Samia seems to be doing just that.

For a developing economy like Tanzania which needs foreign investments, there is no way the same can be achieved if the president is a stay-at-home one. For instance, bilateral trade opportunities that came with

Samia's visit to Pretoria last week would not have become a reality if she chose to relax at State House Chamwino or Dar es Salaam. Economic diplomacy is the way to go and cheap is always expensive.

The author is a political analyst based in Dar es Salaam. He can be reached on 0655 522 922.

Scaling up climate-smart trade policies in the Pacific

By Sudip Ranjan Basu, Juan Rodrigo and Alexey Kravchenko

THE impacts of the climate crisis are acutely felt in the Pacific region. In recent years, the region has been hit by devastating climate events, which cause widespread destruction and significant loss of lives and livelihoods across countries.

These events are a grim reminder of the increasingly severe climate events that are becoming the norm as a result of the changing regional climate patterns in the Pacific small island developing States (PSIDS).

To address climate catastrophes, there is a heightened need in adopting environmentally sustainable practices, including through international trade. In fact, climate-smart trade policies involve incorporating climate concerns into their trade policies.

Climate-smart trade policies are poised to play a catalytic role in enabling the PSIDS to access goods and services that can mitigate climate change. This approach can facilitate the shift towards a more environmentally friendly trade practice.

Harnessing technology for climate-smart strategies With the growing scale of digitalization of trade processes, there are emerging opportunities to make trade more efficient, and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) emissions. However, the digitalization of trade itself can contribute to GHG emissions and so, it's crucial to ensure a balance between the benefits and drawbacks of digital trade.

To mitigate these impacts, governments are increasingly adopting "climate-smart" trade policies, as highlighted in ESCAP's 2021 Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report, prepared in collaboration with UNCTAD and UNEP.

Governments have been implementing measures such as tariff reductions on renewable energy technologies, digital goods and other less polluting items. In the Pacific, climate smart initiatives such as the Agreement on Trade and Sustainability aims to reduce barriers on the trade of environmental goods as well as eliminating fossil fuel subsidies and encouraging voluntary eco-labelling programs and mechanisms.

At the national level, Samoa suspended import duties on renewable energy materials and Papua New Guinea reduced tariffs on solar equipment imports.

In addition, the digitization of cross-border trade procedures leads to faster clearance times, more transparency and reduced bureaucracy. Implementing digital trade facilitation has the potential for increased competitiveness and reduced GHG emissions.

However, PSIDS have the lowest implementation rate of trade facilitation measures, with limited adoption of paperless trade measures. Only five out of the twelve PSIDS have ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, with only Vanuatu having implemented an electronic single window system.

In particular, the implementation of the system in Vanuatu resulted in considerable environmental gains and has led to a 95 per cent decrease in the use of paper, which is equivalent to a reduction of at least 5,827 kg of CO2 emissions and a decrease of 86 per cent in trips between the customs department and the Biosecurity administration.

Furthermore, other Pacific Island States can emulate Tuvalu's move by joining "The Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific". This United Nations treaty aims to boost digital trade facilitation measures, thereby hastening trade transaction efficiencies, ultimately reducing emissions, and fostering trade growth.

Preparing the regulatory frameworks

Despite these efforts, only a few countries with the PSIDS have created trade strategies that reflect environmental concerns and climate-smart policies. Tuvalu is an exception, as they, with the help of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) for Trade Related Assistance for the Least Developed Countries and ESCAP, have incorporated "climate-smart" elements into their national trade development strategy.

The situation is further complicated by persistent digital divides in the region, with low internet penetration rates and high costs of fixed and mobile broadband in many of the smaller PSIDS. The high cost of energy consumption in the telecommunications sector is also a major concern, with energy usage accounting for 20 to 40 percent of telecommunications operating expenses.

As PSIDS work to improve broadband coverage and access, ensuring energy efficiency in the telecommunications sector will become increasingly important for



Vanuatu in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclones Judy and Kevin. March 2023. Credit: UNICEF/Sheenal Sharma

advancing climate-smart and digital trade.

Despite the potential benefits of implementing digital trade facilitation in the Pacific, the implementation rate of trade facilitation measures in PSIDS remains the lowest among other regions, at only 40.1 per cent. There are also considerable policy gaps in the PSIDS in areas related to e-transactions laws, consumer protection, privacy data protection and cybersecurity.

By putting in place these regulations, consumers, producers, and traders can engage in online transactions, while securing sustainable digital trade environment.

Advancing climate-smart and digital trade

Advancing climate-smart and digital trade is crucial for PSIDS. To support this development aspiration, the following policy actions need to be prioritized: implement digital & energy policies to democratize digital service access, remove tariffs on climate-friendly goods/services including renewable energy and develop regu-

lation for cross-border paperless trade and updating their regulatory framework for fostering digital trade.

Others are reducing reliance on fossil fuels and eliminating fossil fuel subsidies, including those in the fisheries sector, green logistics and transportation sectors with reduced costs and zero-emission vessels, invest in human resources for climate-smart and digital trade and integrate climate smart provisions on their trade agreements.

These measures can enhance the PSIDS' digital and energy infrastructure, competitiveness, efficiency, reduce their reliance on fossil fuels and also be complemented with nature-based solutions, such as riparian zone restoration to enhance carbon sequestration and to mitigate the impact of tidal surges

Sudip Ranjan Basu is Deputy Head and Senior Economic Affairs Officer; Juan Rodrigo is ESCAP Consultant and Alexey Kravchenko is Economic Affairs Officer.

IPS UN Bureau

The 'pernicious evil' of racism, discrimination, hatred and inequality

By Baher Kamal

THREE-QUARTERS of a century ago, the world adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, emphasising that all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights. The 2023 theme of its 75th anniversary focuses on the urgency of combating racism and racial discrimination.

More: nearly a quarter of a century ago, the world adopted in South Africa the Durban Declaration to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, distrust, intolerance, and hate, globally.

Since then, these "contagious killers" not only continued unabated but are now more spread than ever in all societies, in particular in those under the dominance of the so-called 'white supremacy.'

Centuries of colonialism, enslavement

Such a "Pernicious Evil" as rightfully described by the United Nations Chief, António Guterres, takes many forms and impacts all aspects of life. "Much of today's racism is 'deeply entrenched in centuries of colonialism and enslavement,'" he warned already two years ago.

The UN Chief then painted a picture of "pervasive discrimination and exclusion" suffered by people of African descent, injustices and oppression endured by indigenous

peoples, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred - and the latest abhorrence of violence against people of Asian descent who are being targeted unjustly for COVID-19.

The "repugnant" views of white supremacists

"We also see it in the biases built into the codes for facial recognition and artificial intelligence" as well as the "repugnant views of white supremacists and other extremist groups", added the top UN Official.

In fact, racism harms not just the lives of those who endure it but also society as a whole. It deepens mistrust, casting suspicion on all sides and tearing apart the social fabric, warns the United Nations.

Impacts could include the ability to find a job, get an education, have equal access to healthcare, housing, food, water or get fair treatment in a court of law, explains the world body.

"We all lose in a society characterised by discrimination, division, distrust, intolerance, and hate," as stated on the occasion of the 2023 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March).

Contagious killers

"Like COVID-19, racism and xenophobia are contagious killers," the UN emphasises.

In 2001, the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA)



A family from Sacha, a Quechua farming community in the Andes highlands region of Cuzco in southeastern Peru. When members of these native families move to the cities, they face different forms of racism. CREDIT: Mariela Jara/IPS

was adopted at the World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa. As the UN's blueprint to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance globally.

Alongside with the International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024, the implementation of the Durban Declaration should represent a top priority in the world's agenda. But is it?

Hatred spreading everywhere Evidently it is not. Reality shows that the narratives of separatism, discrimination, division and fear and hatred of the other continue to be widespread in the streets, in schools, at work, in public trans-

port; in the voting booth, on social media, at home and on the sports field.

Moreover, hate speech' scale and impact are now amplified by new communications technologies.

The main victims

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination lists the following communities among the major victims of abhorrent racism, discrimination and hatred:

People of African descent The descendants of the victims of the transatlantic slave trade or more recent migrants, frequently face racial discrimination and prejudice.

Discriminatory structures and institutions, legacies of the injustices of enslavement and colonialism result in people of African descent being among the poorest and most marginalised groups in society who also face "alarmingly high rates of police violence, and racial profiling."

In addition to People of African Descent and the descendants of the victims of the transatlantic slave trade, racism directly impacts the lives of many other communities and groups, including:

Indigenous peoples Systematically discriminated against, robbed of their basic rights, lands and cultures, there are nowadays over 476 million indigenous

people living in 90 countries across the world, accounting for 6.2% of the global population.

Of those, there are more than 5,000 distinct groups. Indigenous people speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages.

"Nevertheless, they are nearly three times as likely to be living in extreme poverty compared to their non-indigenous counterparts."

Migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people

There were 82.4 million people forcibly displaced world-wide at the end of 2020 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.

There are also millions of stateless people, who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.

Among the 82.4 million forcibly displaced: 26.4 million are refugees, around half of whom are under the age of 18; 20.7 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate, and 5.7 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

There were also 48 million internally displaced people, 4.1 million asylum seekers, and 3.9 million Venezuelans displaced abroad (UNHCR).

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
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Meet the Tanzanian farmer who revolutionises landscape

By Special Correspondents

"THERE is no culture like agriculture." That is the slogan that managing and founding director Dickson Alex uses at AGL Farms, a company he built by himself from scratch, and has now seen him reap significant rewards.

"I started with just 30 by 30 square metres of land," says 27-year-old Dickson. "I was alone working on my farm from morning to evening while still thinking big. It took time, but I now have 49 acres of land. It's quite big," he explains.

Dickson was 20 when he decided to embark on a career in agriculture. It had never occurred to him to visit or work on a farm prior to that point. His parents are business people and have no association with farm life. In Dickson's case, moving from the city to the country took a great deal of courage.

"As a young farmer, you have to sacrifice a lot. To forgo a town life as a young person, to come and live in a village like this, is a big challenge," Dickson said.

The sacrifice paid off for Dickson. He won a massive contract with Julius Nyerere Hydroelectric Power Station to supply fresh vegetables to over 3,000 workers. This initiative is one of Tanzania's largest government-run strategic projects, and it's right on the doorstep of AGL Farms.

Hamis Nyembenyembe, AGL Farm's Agronomist, says the business has come a long way since its inception. "At first, it was difficult. When I decided to come here, there was a bush, there was no farm here. Nowadays, people pass here, and they see there is change."

As the population of young people in Africa increases, it becomes more difficult for them to find employment. The FAO and UNIDO have worked together to create jobs in agriculture in Africa, including Tanzania, to give young people a chance, which also helps the continent's economy grow.

Omari Juma Bakari is in charge of AGL's operations. He says they started farming in the Tanzanian city of Kibiti because they saw problems in the agriculture business model.

"We wanted to do something for ourselves and also



Managing and founding director of AGL Farm, Dickson Alex

impact the youth. We saw something which we could do, which was positive," Omari says.

The FAO and UNIDO ini-

tiative helps young people by increasing the number of young people working in value chains, such as production, packaging and retailing

of products, both on and off the farm.

"We employ a lot of people, especially women and young people. I think as time goes

on, people start believing in farming. The government is promoting farming and investing in youth projects to venture into the farming soci-

ety," explains Dickson.

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), technological enhancements can help change how food is produced worldwide and make it less harmful to the climate and environment.

"It is very important to use technology because, with drip irrigation technology, you can produce throughout the year, whether the rain comes or doesn't. Most of the farmers depend on rain, but for us, we don't," Dickson enthused.

The WEF study also states that farmers and consumers will benefit from farm technology inputs and resources, boosting the agriculture industry's profitability.

"We produce high-quality produce in the greenhouses compared to the open field. That's why it is very important to adopt more advanced technologies to overcome the climate change effect," he adds.

Dickson wants to continue encouraging young people to work in agriculture so they see it as a valuable career opportunity and not just a stepping stone to finding something else.

All of his employees share this competitive spirit. "People say, 'Ah, you are doing agriculture, you've failed in life, you're zero.' But no, this is my office. I am doing work," says AGL Farms Operations Manager Omari Juma.

"I see myself going to the farm in smart clothes, not wearing torn clothes. I go there like an executive. Okay, fine. I'll do some work, maybe catch some dirt, but I enjoy it," he adds.

The career path of horticultural farming is becoming increasingly popular thanks to people like Dickson. It's hard to imagine a more rewarding scenario than saving the planet and making a living at the same time.

Tanzanian women crave for more say over land ownership

By Guardian Correspondent

"THE education which we have obtained, me and my wife on human rights and land ownership, has greatly helped us, it has changed my mind-set and I have been able to provide a land plot for the mother of children," said Ally Korongo, Kisangire Village Chairman in Kisarawe District, Coast Region.

Korongo said, previously, he did not see the importance for a woman to own land but after being trained by the Tanzania Women's Lawyers Association (TAWLA), he has changed for better and now he is aware that women also have right to own land and can do a number of positive things using the land.

TAWLA has provided capacity building training to men and women in Kisarawe so as to enable them know their rights including that of owning land to bring development in their families and society.

"With the skills that we got from the training and awareness programmes, every one (me and wife) have land, she

has power and a say to her properties including land, I have mine as well, but there are some properties which we jointly own together," Korongo explains.

He says that it is not good for men to deny women to own land because this has been raising conflicts among relatives especially when a father dies and leave behind wife and children.

"It is better and I call my fellow men to know this because engaging our women in our plans including family decisions and the right to own properties, will greatly help increase peace and welfare to the family, even if a husband dies, children will be in safe side because their mother will continue taking good care of them due to the power of ownership," he asserts.

Citizens in Kisarawe were trained on property ownership and equality through a special project implemented collaboratively by TAWLA and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

According to Isabella Nchimbi, TAWLA Programmes Officer says the

project aimed to strengthening women participation in land governance through facilitating development of gender sensitive by-laws.

She says gender sensitive by-laws is a tool that is increasingly win attraction of many development partners in addressing legal and policy local challenges through crafting context specific local legislation to provide local solution.

TAWLA work in Kisarawe has been implemented through phases, but to date TAWLA has facilitated gender sensitive by-law developed in 64 villages in Kisarawe District.

She says that the first phase started in 2015 to 2018 and focused on bylaws and started with two villages of Vilabwa and Kidugalo.

The second phase was from 2020 to 2022 focusing on training and promote better land use in Vilabwa and Kisangire villages.

"Our aim was to develop and test innovative strategies to mainstream gender in land tenure regularization processes to help translate the evi-

dence and knowhow generated by the activities into policy and practice for gender-sensitive land governance both for Tanzania and internationally," she said.

Nchimbi says in the second phase, TAWLA conducted assessment in 15 villages of Kisarawe to see how the first phase have provided required outcomes, spotting out challenges and address them.

"We wanted to ensure that we enable Kisarawe District to meet the drive to end land conflicts through better land use planning and issuance of customary title deeds in villages," she adds.

According to her, in an evaluation meeting held in Kisarawe last month, TAWLA acknowledges that the projects has started to bear positive outcomes with the mindset of the communities changing for better.

She says that a special forest area was allocated to enable women villagers to get various resources including firewood and thus reduce time that women spend in searching for firewood.

She says that the villages especially Vilabwa are now receiving stakeholders

who are interested to invest in the area after seeing that the land has been surveyed and allocated for various uses.

Tike Mwambipile, Director of TAWLA says the major objective of the assessment is to measure the understanding, implementation and impacts of some articles in the gender responsive by-laws as well as assess the engagement and participation of women in various land decision making.

"We have provided capacity building training for seven years helping them formulate bylaws and what is needed is for village leaders to supervise them, villagers also know about these bylaws," she said.

Acting District Executive Director, Peter Ngusa says there are some villages that are facing a lot of land conflicts and that the formulated bylaws will greatly help address them.

He wants leaders to play their roles well, and work hard to ensure that they find solutions of various land conflicts instead of fuelling them.

Kampala readies to host 10th East African petroleum conference and exhibition 2023

By Guardian Reporter

UGANDA'S Minister for Energy and Mineral Development, Dr Ruth Nankabirwa Ssentamu, has confirmed preparations were in the final stages as the country readies to host the 10th East African Petroleum Conference and Exhibition, 2023.

"I take this opportunity to welcome our distinguished guests and participants from all the seven Partner States and beyond to the 10th edition of the East African Petroleum Conference and Exhibition that Uganda will host from 9th to 11th May, 2023 in Kampala," said the Minister.

The 2023 edition of the conference under the theme 'East Africa as a hub for Investment in Exploration and Exploitation of Petroleum

Resources for Sustainable Energy and Socioeconomic Development', aims at showcasing the East African Community (EAC) as a destination of choice for oil and gas investment opportunities to enhance socio-economic transformation.

"Uganda is proud and honoured to host the 10th Edition of EAPCE," Dr Ssentamu added.

The EAC Secretary General, Dr Peter Mathuki noted that EAPCE'23 is in line with the Community's broad goal to achieve economic, social and political integration so as to create wealth in the region and enhance competitiveness through increased production, trade and investment in the oil and gas sector.

"The Conference will give the Partner States an opportunity to showcase the po-

tential for oil and gas that exists in the region and report on the on-going activities in exploration, development and production of the two commodities," said the Secretary General.

The SG noted that during the conference the partner states will share their policy, legal and regulatory frameworks and other initiatives aimed at continually improving the enabling and facilitative environment for the industry.

Held biennially since 2003, the East African Petroleum Conferences have provided increasing awareness of the potential for petroleum production in the region and other important issues in the petroleum sector, including technological advancements in exploration, development and production. The last nine petro-



leum conferences have proven a valuable forum for governments and petroleum industry players from around the world to dialogue.

Delegates can expect high-quality technical presentations and exhibitions from a wide spectrum of players from the petroleum sector. The conference programme integrates a pre-conference workshop, and field excursions to selected sites in each partner state for delegates to see the rich geological variety that the region possesses as well as the tourist attractions that the region is well known for.

EAPCE'23 will take place at a time when the EAC has embarked on a

journey to implement the EAC Vision 2050.

The objective of the energy sector development under the EAC Vision 2050 is to ensure sustainable, adequate, affordable, competitive, secure and reliable supply of energy to meet regional needs at the least cost. By 2050, the region's target is to transform the energy landscape to be characterised by efficient distribution of petroleum products with sufficient strategic reserves.

Belief in witchcraft costing lives of elderly women in Malawi

By Charles Mpaka

IN December last year, a video clip went viral of two elderly women surrounded by a charged-up crowd and engulfed in a cloud of dust as they filled up a grave in a village in the Mzimba district in northern Malawi.

As the two elderly sisters laboured in the task, which men in Malawi traditionally handle, someone in the mob kicked one of the women, Christian Mphande, and sent her flying into the open grave.

What was their crime?

A young woman related to the two had died, and people in the village accused Mphande, 77, of killing the young woman through witchcraft.

To punish her, Mphande was forced to bury the dead, helped by the sister. She was assaulted, her belongings, such as livestock, confiscated, and she was banished from the village.

It was yet another incident in the spiralling cases of harassment of older persons in Malawi.

Mphande is alive – now living away from home but within the district, probably to forever grapple with nightmares of her experience and live with the physical evidence of a gap in her gums after she lost some teeth in the assault by the mob.

But several elderly have lost their lives in Malawi at the hands of mobs. Five older women were killed between January and February 2023, according to the Malawi Network of Older Persons Organisations (MANEPO), a coalition of human rights organisations in the country.

In 2022, 15 elderly women were killed and 88 harassed for various reasons, largely on accusations of witchcraft – a rise from 13 killed and 58 harassed in 2021.

MANEPO's Country Director, Andrew Kavala, describes the abuses of elderly women as a scourge visiting the nation.

"As a society, we have failed our elderly. We have unjustified anger towards them. Whether driven by frustration due to survival failures, we are venting our anger on innocent people. This is a tragedy," Kavala laments in an interview with IPS.

Top of the factors behind this terror is what he describes as "baseless belief in witchcraft and magic," which, he says,

some people blame for their personal misfortunes.

Colonial witchcraft act

Malawi has in force the Witchcraft Act, which came into existence in 1911 under British colonial rule.

According to the Malawi Law Commission, the legislation was enacted with the aim of eradicating what the colonialists considered as dangerous some practices such as trial by ordeal, the use of charms and witchcraft itself.

In effect, the Act assumes that witchcraft does not exist. That being the case, it is, therefore, an offence for anyone to allege that someone practices witchcraft.

It is also an offence for anyone to claim that he or she practices witchcraft.

In 2006, the government set up a Special Law Commission on Witchcraft Act to review the 1911 witchcraft law. It was in response to calls that the law is alien to the common belief in witchcraft among Malawians.

In a report, the Special Law Commission indeed found a common and strong belief in the existence of witchcraft.

"There is witchcraft or, at least, a belief in witchcraft among Malawians," the report said, concluding, "It is not correct to argue that there is no witchcraft in Malawi for the sole reason that the practice is premised upon mere belief."

"Consequently, the commission concludes that the existence of witchcraft should not be regarded as a doubtful but conclusive (thing)," said the Commission's chairperson, Judge Robert Chinangwa, at a presentation of its report in 2021.

But human rights organisations trashed the recommendations of the Commission for the review of the law. In a joint statement, the organisations said by definition, a witch or wizard is someone who secretly uses supernatural powers for wicked purposes.

Assuming that the law is amended to criminalise the practice of witchcraft, there would be the difficult issue of evidence, they argued.

"It is a good law practice that for one to be convicted of a criminal offence, the prosecution must have proven its case beyond a reasonable doubt.

"However, witchcraft involves the use of



Attacks on the elderly are increasing in Malawi, often under the pretext that witchcraft is at play. Survivor Christian Mphande lived to tell her story, but there is a worrying increase in elder abuse. Credit: Charles Mpaka/IPS

supernatural powers. Therefore, proving the allegations would be very difficult in a court of law," they said in a joint statement.

The majority believe in witchcraft

There has been no conclusion since. That is, Malawi's fight against abuse of the elderly on witchcraft-related accusations finds itself stuck on the rough edges between strong belief in witchcraft on the one hand and, on the other, that there would be no proof for its existence in a court of law if reviewed. This belief in witchcraft is compromising Malawi Police Service's efforts to clamp down on the abuses against the elderly, according to national police spokesperson Peter Kalaya.

"Our main challenge is that we work hard to enforce this law [Witchcraft Act] in a society where the majority believes witchcraft exists. As such, there is great resistance [to law enforcement]," Kalaya tells IPS.

The police's situation is worsened by the fact that, in most cases, incidents of abuse of older women occur in rural locations remote from the nearest police stations. According to Kalaya, this sometimes negatively affects police response to

provide a swift rescue of victims and arrest perpetrators. He further indicates how the police sometimes evade the treachery of the witchcraft law.

"Most of the abuses older persons face fall within the general crime of mob justice such as being beaten, killed, their houses and property being burnt and being subjected to verbal insults," he explains.

Wycliffe Masoo, Director of Disability and Elderly Rights at the Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC), a public body, says witchcraft belief in itself is not to blame; it is what happens as a result of that belief that is of concern.

"The question that remains is that if witchcraft exists, is it being practised by older persons only?" Masoo wonders. He says while police have at times been swift in arresting and investigating suspects for abusing the elderly, the wheels of prosecution take too long sometimes and give the abuses an edge.

Legislation already in place

According to Masoo, whether Malawi sticks with the Witchcraft Act or reviews it and contends with the tricky challenge of proving witchcraft in a court

of law, the country already has some legislation in place which, if properly used, would ably curb issues of mob justice on older persons.

For example, the Constitution prohibits discrimination of persons and guarantees "equal and effective protection against discrimination" on whatever grounds. It guarantees human dignity, stating that "no person shall be subject to torture of any kind or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

What Malawi needs, according to MHRC, Manepo and the police, is to expedite the enactment of the Older Persons Bill into law and invest in a formidable, coordinated mass awareness that brings along traditional, religious and judicial leadership for all Malawians to understand the rights of older persons.

"This will wholesomely protect older women," Masoo says.

IPS UN Bureau Report

campaign. The violence of July 2021 appears to have had a huge impact on the results of the ANC later that year. If Malema is seen as responsible for violence now, it is entirely possible that it backfires at the election polls.

At the same time, some of his public utterances appear to be designed to distance himself from any potential violence. But he will still likely be seen as responsible for violence if it does occur.

There may be one other wrinkle to all of this.

Currently, in Joburg, the Member of the Mayoral Committee for Community Safety is Dr Mgcini Tshwaku. He is from the EFF. And may now have some control over members of the Joburg Metro Police Department (JMPD).

This may well lead to questions about the limits of that power, and whether he will be able to give direct orders to members of the JMPD. And would it really be possible that somehow they do not give full support to officers of the SAPS?

It is probably unlikely that this will really have an impact on the ground; metro police officers are much more likely to respond to events on the ground than to respond to any political imperative. After all, political power has changed hands many times in metros with no real discernible difference in the way metro police officers have behaved.

That said, the actions of Tshwaku personally on the day may be worth monitoring.

In some ways, the real reasons for the huge discussion about the EFF's planned shutdown reveal much about our society. About the fear of many communities, about how our lived experience has deteriorated, about how easy it is to use the threat of violence to dominate the national narrative.

DM

By Stephen Grootes

March 20th: EFF's Day of Thunder approaches and SA is still confused

AS the EFF prepares for its 'National Shutdown' next week,

people in some communities are receiving messages warning them of possible violence. The DA is going to court in a bid to get an interdict to stop the shutdown. While it is almost impossible to predict what will happen on Monday, 20 March, it may be that underpinning element of fear in some communities what happened in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng in July 2021. And the fact that still, nearly two years later, virtually no one has been held accountable for what happened then.

It's been reported that EFF members have been driving around certain areas using loudspeakers to warn businesses to close on Monday to "avoid looting". At the same time, the EFF's leadership says it will bring the country to a halt in its quest to end load shedding and remove Cyril Ramaphosa as President.

Of course, Monday next week is a Monday between a weekend and a public holiday, on Tuesday, and many workers are unlikely to be at work that day anyway. Schools will be closed, which means that there will be much less movement around the country. Those that can take off work may well simply be taking their first long-weekend holiday of the year.

There may also be an element of deliberate politicking around this planned action in many ways.

The EFF may well be deliberate in its choice of targeting areas where minority communities live. It has affixed posters to lampposts in Gqeberha, and told people in Gauteng not to go to work. In Emalaheni, private security companies claim action is being planned there. In Cape Town, the DA administra-

tion wants an interdict against the event as a whole.

Also, there are claims on WhatsApp groups that security companies have found tyres being left under trees, claiming that they were being left there to be burnt during the shutdown.

Meanwhile, the SA Police Service (SAPS) says it will ensure that people obey the law.

Unfortunately, the SAPS has said that many times in the past and has been found wanting.

At the same time, security companies may be telling the truth, but as was seen in KZN (Phoenix in particular) in 2021, some have an interest in making customers fearful.

The DA too has a constituency to serve – if it can be shown to be the party using the law and the courts to protect communities, this may well help it win votes.

The EFF, of course, is the prime mover here, and its leadership is certainly enjoying all of the attention. Certainly, the party and Julius Malema have shown themselves to be adept at controlling the national narrative. Here, they appear to be succeeding before even actually doing anything.

It should be remembered that a "national shutdown" in itself is incredibly ambitious. It has hardly happened in our democratic era, and is worth reiterating that the only movement that could really do this since 1994 is Cosatu.

Also, even protests called by supporters of perhaps the most powerful political leader of the democratic era, Jacob Zuma, were only able to have an impact in just two provinces.

One of the key decisions for the EFF has been the decision by the trade union federation Saftu to join its protest. It is a sign that Saftu may be getting



EFF leader Julius Malema addresses the media on the planned national shutdown at Winnie Madikizela-Mandela House on Wednesday this week in Johannesburg, South Africa. (Photo: Gallo Images / Papi Morake)

closer to the EFF, particularly when it was Saftu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi who, in his previous life, was one of the first to refer to Malema (in his previous life) as a "right wing demagogue".

But even with Saftu's 700,000 members, it is almost impossible now for one organisation to bring the entire nation to a halt. South Africa is simply too big, with too diverse a population for that. It is also unlikely that all of Saftu's members will join such a protest.

And, the fact it is on this particular long-weekend-Monday will make it impossible to assess the impact of the EFF's actions. The party will probably try to claim victory almost no matter what happens.

However, what may be really

driving the reaction to the EFF's plans is the fear of so many people in different communities.

The slide in living standards, the virtual collapse of infrastructure, the decline in almost everything in the past 10 years, and particularly the last three, has been a shock to the system – it was simply not predicted.

But worse than that is the frightening rise in violence. Life in South Africa has become significantly nastier, more brutish and shorter in the past three years. No surprise that people are now prepared to believe the worst.

After all, no one really saw the KZN and Gauteng violence coming, so why can't it happen again? And underpinning that is the fact that it is now well known that our criminal justice

system has not been able to punish the people responsible for that violence. While some have been arrested, there was clear evidence of a concerted coordinated campaign involving politicians, including former president Jacob Zuma. It was his arrest that sparked it.

And yet, despite all of that, no real organiser has gone to jail. No one has even attempted to prosecute Zuma's daughter, Duduzile, who incited violence on Twitter, or his son, Duduzane, who publicly asked people to "loot responsibly".

At the same time, it is fairly certain that the EFF's shutdown won't achieve its stated aims. Load shedding will likely still be with us on the public holiday on Tuesday, and Ramaphosa is likely to still be in the Union

Buildings. This means that if the assessment is based on the stated aims of the shutdown, it's almost doomed to fail from the start.

Perhaps one way to really assess if the shutdown achieves its aim is to ask what the nation will be discussing on Wednesday morning, when it returns to work. If it is still the shutdown, if the impact of the shutdown is still being felt, then it may well have achieved its aim.

But if, given the relentless news cycle we are currently in, it is some other issue, then it would have failed. And perhaps the only way to make sure it is the dominant issue is if there are acts of violence.

There is also a risk for Malema here. This event is clearly part of the EFF's 2024 election

BUSINESS

65pc of alcohol manufacturers not registered

KAMPALA

THE Uganda Alcohol Industry Association has said about 65 per cent of alcohol manufacturers in Uganda are unregistered, which not only makes government lose a lot of taxable revenue but also exposes people to health risks.

Speaking at a public-private sector dialogue on illicit trade in Uganda, Ms Juliana Kaggwa, the Uganda Breweries Limited (UBL) corporate relations director, said only 35 per cent of alcohol manufacturers in Uganda pay tax, which makes government lose about Sh2 trillion in taxable revenue.

Therefore, she added, this means that at least 65 per cent of alcohol manufacturers in Uganda are not registered anywhere and are not taxed.

"About Sh2 trillion of taxes is what we lose. But it should be the job of an individual to question why they are drinking something whose source they don't know," Ms Kaggwa said, noting that their intervention, as an association, has been frustrated with trade in illicit alcohol growing at rate of 9 per cent per annum in the last five years.

Dr Julius Byaruhanga the Private Sector Foundation Uganda director of policy & business development, said illicit trade in alcohol is deeply entrenched, which means that to curb it sector players must have a clear action point, which might involve coming up with a public-private sector mechanism and framework.

"That technical group should be able to draw an action plan detailing roles of each of the players both public and public sector," he said.

On his part, Mr David Livingstone Ebiru, the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) executive director, said trade in illicit alcohol continues to thrive due to production in un gazetted places such as backyards of people's homes.

Illicit alcohol, he noted, beyond having a security bearing on the

economy and persons, exposes people to the consumption of unsafe products and tilts the trade balance.

In 2021, a report by Uganda Alcohol Industry Association has found that government loses approximately Sh1.6 trillion in unrealised taxes due to trade in illicit alcohol.

The loss, the report noted, is worsened by the laxity in enforcement of existing laws that govern the production and sale of alcohol.

Between 2017 and 2021, the report notes, the value of illicit alcoholic drinks increased to 18.3 per cent from \$577.8m in 2017 to \$956.8m in 2020.

During the period, total consumption of illicit alcohol increased by 9.1 per cent, due to growth in poverty and a lack of regulation.

Illicit alcohol is widely sold directly from private households, which are involved in the production, as well as consumption of these beverages.

According to the report, current penalties stipulated in the Act are not sufficient in curbing regular or new illicit players in the production, sales and smuggling of illicit alcoholic drinks.

The punishment imposed and paying of fines are considered worth the risk in illicit trading. This increase in consumption of illicit alcohol comes at a time when government banned alcohol in sachets, requiring use of bottles.

The report, titled "Understanding and Sizing Illicit Alcohol Consumption in Uganda" was released from a research that had been done by Euromonitor International, a leading independent provider of strategic market research for the past 40 years.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Mr Onapito Ekumoloi, the Uganda Alcohol Industry Association chairman, said as an industry, they are impacted by the thriving illicit alcohol trade, noting that they carry the burden of heavy taxation and regulatory measures that are not fairly distributed.

Switzerland extends 24billion/- for skills development project



Omar Kipanga (C), Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Technology, speaks yesterday in Dar es Salaam at the launch of SET II project. Left is Didier Chassot, Switzerland's Ambassador to Tanzania and right is Dr Noel Mbonde, director technical education in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Photo: Francis Kajubi.

By Francis Kajubi

SWISSCONTACT has launched its Skills for Employment Tanzania (SET II) project phase two that will see 10,000 women, school dropouts and young mothers benefiting with practical training in the agriculture sector value chain for self-employment in Morogoro region.

The SET II 2022-2026 project funded by the embassy of Switzerland in Tanzania is implemented by Swisscontact in coordination of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology at a tune of CHF9.5million (24billion/-).

Speaking during the launch event yesterday in Dar es Salaam, Didier Chassot ambassador of Switzerland to Tanzania said the SET II project aims to improve chances of gainful youth self-employment in response to the youth employment challenges.

"The project aims at improving non-formal vocational skills development (VSD) for youth between the age of 15 and 24 years including young mothers in

Morogoro region with potential expansion to Iringa nad Mbeya regions," said Chassot.

According to him, the project also targets to capacitate at least 300 teachers in Folk Development Colleges (FDCs).

He said the project has three components namely Labour market skills need assessment which targets at identifying areas of creating self-employment opportunities. The second component is continuing professional development of teachers in Folk Development College (FDC). The other component is youth training in agriculture and agribusiness value chain.

Sabine Roth, Swisscontact country director said the support of SET II will focus on non-formal vocational skills development as the vast majority of youth are engaged in the informal sector.

She underlined the immense potential of young people in Tanzania and the importance of equipping them with the right sets of skills, so that they are ready to join the labour market and to contribute to socio-economic development.

Omar Kipanga, Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Technology appreciated the Switzerland agency for the solid expertise it extends to the country's vocational education and training sector.

Kipanga emphasized the importance of the project's focus on job creation and self-employment opportunities in the informal sector and selected sectors of the economy.

"I'm glad to learn that the project focuses on the agriculture sector where most of the opportunities are created," said Kipanga.

According to him, the ministry is currently reviewing the education policy aiming at improving education system that will put more emphasis on practical learning.

To ensure that the challenge of vocational training are being addressed the ministry has developed the ten year National Skills Development Strategy 2016/26. The ministry is also implementing the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP). Involvement of less privileged groups is another key area of in-

terest by the ministry.

Paul Medeye, Youth Training Specialist Swisscontact said that SET phase one was implemented in Morogoro region between 2018 and 2022. The project reached 10,000 less privileged youths engaged in the agricultural value chain.

"The other beneficiaries of the project were the Morogoro Teachers College and the Folk Development College (FDC). The project fetched 18bn/- for its implementation," said Medeye.

Swisscontact is an international non-government organization registered in Tanzania with the intention of strengthening socio-economic relations with Switzerland. In 1981, Tanzania became a priority country for official Swiss development assistance.

The Swiss Cooperation Programme Tanzania 2021/25 aims to empower young people, especially young women to advance socially and economically through three cross-sectorial outcomes namely strengthening state institutions, promoting civic space and improving youth livelihoods.



Gold price at Kenya stock market registers historic highs

NAIROBI

GOLD exchange-traded funds (ETFs) at Kenya's stock market on Thursday rose to the highest level since listing in 2017, offering investors access to the global yellow metal market in local currency.

Investors at the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) can buy the listed 400,000 gold bullion debentures, each equivalent to 0.01 of an ounce of gold.

The price of the NewGold ETF rose to Sh2,606 at the close of trading on Thursday, up Sh2,572 on Wednesday, and Sh2,165 at the start of the year after the premium metal rose highest since early February.

The rise in global gold prices follows troubles at Swiss lender Credit Suisse amid renewed fears

of a banking crisis worldwide that steered traders towards the safe-haven metal.

On the NSE, the ETF price is determined by the global gold prices and dollar rate, with the strengthening of the US currency having the effect of increasing the metal's price at the Nairobi bourse.

Globally, spot gold was traded at \$1,924.63 per ounce on Thursday, after jumping to its highest since early February.

This together with the weakening of the shilling against the dollar, which hit a new low with an average of Sh129.76 on Thursday, has lifted the value of Kenya's NewGold ETF to a historic high.

"ETFs are just one of the safe-haven avenues for foreign investors as speculation remains the order

of the day as characterised by the equities sell-offs," observed Ronny Chokaa, a research analyst at Genghis Capital.

"It is possible that the price of the ETF varies without any significant volumes trading as the price is dictated by the price of the underlying asset [gold prices in the international market]."

Investors in the NewGold ETF are holding onto the asset, reflected by muted trading at the NSE amid increased turnover in the equities segment.

Given the price of the ETF is based on the underlying asset -- the prevailing price of gold -- this has meant investors in the asset have realized price gains without the need for trading.

Gold ETFs are commodity funds that trade like stocks and have

become a very popular form of investment.

Although they are made up of assets that are backed by gold, investors don't actually own the physical commodity.

Instead, they own small quantities of gold-related assets, providing more diversity in their portfolio.

They allow investors to gain exposure to gold via smaller investment positions than what is achievable through physical investment and futures contracts.

The NSE has been investing in new infrastructure, including trading of new products like ETFs, to diversify from equities and bonds.

The NewGold ETF or Absa's gold-backed exchange-traded fund was first listed on the Johannesburg

bourse in 2004 but it has since had secondary listings on other African exchanges, including Botswana, Nigeria, Mauritius, Namibia and Ghana.

In 2019, the Nairobi bourse launched the trading of futures contracts, offering investors index futures and single stock futures of the most heavily traded companies on the bourse.

The NSE, the main entry point for foreigners seeking to invest in East Africa, became sub-Saharan Africa's second bourse to offer exchange-traded derivatives after South Africa's Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE).

Known as the Next Derivatives Market, it offers investors index futures contracts on the NSE-25 share index and single stock futures on Safaricom, KCB Group,

Equity Group, EABL and BAT.

Telecoms operator Safaricom, lenders KCB and Equity, brewer EABL and tobacco firm BAT are the most heavily traded and well-capitalised stocks on the NSE.

Data from the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) show that foreign investors held 88.15 percent of the NewGold ETF or 233,600 units, a pointer that offshore participants are reaping the bulk of the gains.

In comparison, local individual and institutional investors hold a paltry 4.42 percent and 7.43 percent of the ETF units respectively.

The collapse of the US's Silicon Valley Bank and jitters over the financial health of European banks have offered support to gold prices. Gold is considered a hedge against economic uncertainties.

Horticulture faces low earnings as drought hits 40pc of avocado crop

NAIROBI

THE horticulture sector is starting at low earnings this year from avocado exports as 40 percent of the fruits have been affected by the ongoing drought even as the export market opens next week.

Exporters will be forced to pack at least 24 fruits in order to fill one carton because of the smaller size, as opposed to 16, which is normally ideal when the produce is of the right size.

The Horticulture Directorate says most of the avocados in western Kenya have matured and are ready for export, which is set to start on March 24 having been pushed from the original date of March 15.

"We may not get sizes 12 to 16 because of the drought that's led to smaller-sized fruits," said the head of the directorate Benjamin Tito.

Mr Tito said that even though the fruits are smaller in size, they have fully matured and are ready for export to overseas markets.

He added that the ongoing drought, which has been witnessed since October last year, will have a significant impact on earnings this year.

Revenue from horticultural sales abroad amounted to Sh120.26 billion last year from Sh133.23 billion in the prior year, provisional export statistics from the CBK indicate.

Avocado is one of the key fruits when it comes to export earnings

under horticulture and a drop in earnings from the produce will impact overall returns in the sector.

The avocado market was closed last November to curb harvesting of the immature crop as the season came to an end.

However, the regulator opened a two-week window in January for the export of off-season mature avocado.

The move was to allow farmers and orchards that had mature avocado to export the fruits within the issued time frame after the survey conducted in the first week of January showed that there were at least 10-35 percent of mature avocado in the east of rift and 10-30 percent in the west of rift, that were due for harvesting.

The chief executive officer of the Fresh Produce Consortium of Kenya Ojepat Okisegere said the sector had projected a 30 percent increment in production this year as more acreage was put under the cover of avocado.

"We are not going to achieve that (30 percent), this has been the worst drought and if anything, we shall be losing between 30 and 40 percent this year," said Mr Okisegere.

He urged exporters to ensure that they handle the produce well to avoid post-harvest losses and ensure only quality fruits are exported in order to safeguard the Kenyan market.

Kenya's earnings from horticultural



Farmers sort through some avocados loaded onto a pickup.

exports reduced by 9.7 percent in 2022 on the back of elevated inflation in main markets amid weaker currencies, according to the Central Bank of Kenya.

In January 2022, The horticulture regulator has extended the ban on the export of Kenya's popular avocado varieties to overseas markets to curb the harvesting of immature crop.

Head of Horticultural Crops Directorate (HCD) Benjamin Tito said

the ban on Fuerte and Hass varieties will continue indefinitely.

The ban was placed on November 15, 2021, with exceptions given to exporters specialising on the Jumbo variety and those having off-season crop.

"The harvesting of Hass and Fuerte avocado varieties will remain suspended until further notice," said Mr Tito.

He said exporters with the Jumbo variety, who are still allowed to ship

out, will only do it by air and not sea with the weight expected to be at least 184 grammes for a single fruit.

Dealers and companies with off-season crop shall request verification for inspection from HCD regional offices in writing within 24 hours, a requirement that has been in place since November 15 last year.

The review on when the ban was to be lifted was conducted on January 18 to ascertain the status of the crop. Exporters had projected that

the export market would be opened next month as it has been the tradition.

"The directorate has been closely monitoring harvest trends, patterns and undertaking surveys to authenticate the maturity indices of the avocado fruit in the major production zones. The recent survey indicated that the main season crop is still immature," Mr Tito said.

The move by the regulator is aimed at curbing harvesting of immature crop following previous rampant cases of traders picking young crops to capitalise on high prices of the commodity at the international market.

Avocado has been a major contributor of the earnings in the horticulture sector, raking in nearly half of the total returns from fruits.

Kenya's avocado market in the Middle East was hit in 2018 following the export of immature crop to that continent.

The price of avocado to Dubai dropped by almost half in 2018 as exports of immature crop hit the value of the produce to that market.

The HCD indicated that the price of a unit of avocado dropped from 35 dirhams (Sh945) previously to 16 dirhams (Sh432) in that year.

The decline resulted from immature avocados that were being exported to Dubai by unscrupulous businessmen following high demand of fruit in the world market.



High costs limit domestic air transport, airlines say

KAMPALA

AIR operators in the Uganda have said operational costs such as high fuel prices, poor state of regional airstrips and low domestic demand are key factors that limit growth on domestic air transport.

The operators, who were eight in total, made the call while seeking renewal of their Air Service Licenses by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) at a public hearing conducted by retired deputy Chief Justice and CAA chairman, Steven Kavuma.

Uganda has 26 licensed air operators operating scheduled, and non-scheduled flights for passengers, cargo, training and aerial works.

Ms Catherine Mugo, the AeroLink accountable manager, said fixing runways such as that of the Kisoro [District] Airstrip was necessary since it remained a challenge to their air hauling services offered to tourists.

Airline operators also argued that the cost of operations remain high, driven partly by high fuel prices, and high charges for international passengers transiting through Entebbe International Airport.

Airlines pay \$2.4 (Shs8,999) per litre of gasoline compared to their Kenyan counterparts who pay \$1.8 (Shs6,749).

Air operators in Uganda also incur an additional international passenger levy of \$57 (Shs213,731) for each passenger.

Ms Sheila Kobusingye, the Asante Aviation accountable man-

ager, noted that sourcing local financing for their operations remains a huge challenge. However, Mr Fred Bamwesigye, the CAA director general, said at least 13 airstrips are operational, but admitted that there is still low usage of the facilities.

"We use our own resources to maintain facilities because they can't [raise revenue] for sustaining them," he said.

Airlines have continued to recover from Covid-19 effects where they reported low sales, worsened by the recent Ebola attack.

Entebbe International Airport, the country's main gateway, has registered tremendous growth in passengers numbers, rising from 118,000 in 1991 to 1.8 million in 2019, before the advent of Covid-19, which greatly impacted the aviation industry.

In 2022, the airport recorded 1.57 million passengers, an increase of 87 percent post Covid-19 recovery. Cargo traffic has grown steadily over the years with 61,000 metric tons recorded in 2022.

In September last year, the \$9.5m (Shs35b) modernisation and automation of Entebbe International Airport project was commissioned in conjunction with the Korea International Cooperation Agency.

Part of the major project for upgrade and expansion of the airport, which includes resurfacing of both runways and associated taxiways were completed.

CAA data shows the Aircraft

operator intending to commence commercial operations (domestic or international) has to apply to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) for an operating license known as an Air Services Licence," said Mr Vianney Luggya, the communications director of the CAA.

Uganda's aviation industry has been registering a pick-up since the national carrier, Uganda Airlines, returned to the skies in 2019. Several airlines have been tapping into the growing demand for air passenger and cargo services.

Last month, the CAA said Entebbe International Airport had recorded 5,014 metric tonnes - including 3,262 tonnes in exports - in January. This came as the airport recorded a total of 149,375 passengers compared to 110,547 in the same period last year.

The Air Services Licensing Committee seats annually to hear the defence from air transport players, with three new prospective entrants this year bringing up the figures to seven new and a total of 16 players in the last two years.

During the prerequisite public hearing, the prospective operators provide details of intention, proposed air routes, the aircraft available for use, business capitalisation, as well associated operational plans.

Members of the public who attend the hearing can share objections or divulge information to the licensing committee that can be used in the vetting process.

"A public hearing is a regulatory requirement that any air

Govt likely to take over PPC shares in CIMERWA

KIGALI

SOUTH Africa's PPC is seeking buyers for its stake in the Rwandan cement factory CIMERWA, stirring the government's interest to acquire the shares, according to reports.

"PPC is selling its 51 percent stake in CIMERWA and the government will discuss if it is able to buy the stake," Rwanda Development Board CEO, Clare Akamanzi told a news agency. "PPC is looking for buyers," she noted.

This comes after CIMERWA announced payment of Rwf10.5 billion in dividends to shareholders, following a record Rwf92.1 billion in total revenues in 2022, a 37 percent increase from Rwf67.4 billion in 2021.

This will be the first dividend payment since the cement manufacturer floated 100 percent of its shares on Rwanda Stock Exchange (RSE) in 2020.

Of the enlisted 703,219,520 shares on the stocks market, the government is the second largest shareholder.

PPC has also been considering offers for its Zimbabwean business, although it has yet to agree on pricing with potential buyers, Bloomberg reported

previously. A sale of its stake in CIMERWA would leave the continent's top cement maker with more time to focus on its core operations in South Africa and further pay down debt.

"PPC actively manages its business portfolio in Botswana, DRC, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe," the company responded once asked for a comment. "If and when appropriate PPC will communicate changes to its portfolio in line with applicable regulations."

The Johannesburg-based cement maker, founded in 1892, refinanced its short and long-term facilities with South African lenders and sold PPC Aggregate Quarries Botswana and PPC Lime, which assisted in de-gearing its South Africa balance sheet to acceptable levels, the company said in its annual report.

Asked to comment on the development, the CEO of Rwanda Stock Exchange, Pierre-Célestin Rwabukumba, could not confirm it.

Established in 1984, CIMERWA has a production plant based in Bugarama, Rusizi district, with 80 percent of production serving the domestic market while 20 percent is exported.



MTN Group chair Mcebisi Jonas identity mimicked in CSI fraud

CAPE TOWN

MCEBISI Jonas, chairman of Africa's largest telecoms group MTN, has fallen victim of impersonation as criminals assumed his identity to solicit money.

MTN Group, which has over 289 million subscribers across 19 markets, announced yesterday it will be commencing an internal audit and forensic process in an effort to weed out an organised crime syndicate, after it had been alerted to impersonation crime.

Impersonation has been on the increase in South Africa, where MTN is headquartered, with analysts warning it will escalate this year.

Last year in SA, impersonation increased by 264% for the first five months of the year compared to 2021, according to the Southern African Fraud Prevention Service (SAFPS), a non-profit organisation preventing fraud as a result of identity theft and impersonation.

The SAFPS sounded warning bells on the uptick of impersonation crimes, as fraudsters prey on their victims through



Mcebisi Jonas, MTN Group chairman

phishing, smishing and vishing.

Phishing uses emails and links, smishing uses text messages or common messaging apps, and vishing uses voice calls and voice-mails to obtain sensitive information.

Yesterday, MTN Group informed the public of the impersonation of its chairman, saying it had been 'made aware of incidents related to the false solici-

ation of funding under the guise of requests for sponsorship towards the company's Corporate Social Investment projects'.

"We have been made aware of an increasing number of incidents where our Group chairman of the board, Mcebisi Jonas, is being impersonated or false representatives reach out to the public requesting funding towards MTN foundation projects.

"This matter has been escalated with our Internal Audit and Forensic team and an investigation is underway," said Nompilo Morafo, MTN Chief Corporate Affairs and Sustainability Officer.

"We urge the public to not fall prey to scammers and report all suspicious and unsolicited phone calls, emails and WhatsApp communication received to us."

How the scam works

The fraudsters contact targeted victims, introducing themselves as an MTN representative and requests that an urgent EFT payment is made to a specific recipient, towards MTN operating company foundations projects.

Red flags the public should be aware of:

Emails or phone calls asking for personal details and/or urgent payments

Links or attachments that you haven't specifically asked for

Links within suspicious emails (do not click on these)

Strange email addresses and phone numbers (verify the contacts details)

Fictitious email domains are a giveaway. For example, using a "0" (zero) rather than a capital "O" (the letter) or other substitutions, such as using a lower case "r" and "n" (rn) in place of the letter "m".

What to do should fraudsters contact you MTN is urging the public to not click on any WhatsApp messages or emails with unusual requests.

All scam attempts including phone calls received from unregistered numbers should be reported to the Group's Internal Audit and Forensic Service.

Cash circulation improves, as new bank notes dry up

LAGOS

THOUGH normalcy seems to be gradual in coming, currency circulation has improved in major cities across Nigeria following the third day full implementation of the Supreme Court ruling on the legal tender status of old Naira banknote.

Local outlet findings reveal that banks have started simultaneous dispensing of the old banknotes over-counters and through the Automated Teller Machines, ATMs.

Also the old banknotes are now all accepted by most traders and services providers just as banks are now accepting them.

However, the banks appear to have run out of new Naira notes as both the ATMs and the banking halls visited by Vanguard show that only old banknotes were available.

A staff of one of the banks in Lagos Island

told Vanguard that most banks, including her own, have not received supply of the new banknotes since this week.

Also our findings reveal that the banks are still implementing cash withdrawal limits subject to a maximum of N10,000 per customer per day.

But some banks at the time of visit were not dispensing the currency notes due to lack of cash. A security personnel at one of the banks said the cash available had been exhausted earlier before the visit.

Meanwhile, in markets visited traders were seen accepting the old naira banknotes.

A businessman who had collected the old notes from a bank ATM on Lagos Island, said he bought petrol with the money and it was accepted. Motorists and traders in the vicinity also accepted the old currency notes.

Paratus Group's DR Congo fibre highway now goes live

KINSHASA

FAST Congo, a joint venture of the Paratus Group and Global Broadband Solution, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), announced yesterday its 620-kilometre fibre optic network link between Muanda, on the West Coast, and the capital, Kinshasa, is now active.

The South African-headquartered Paratus Group announced expansion p into the DRC last year, together with ISP Global Broadband Solution (GBS), after it secured the government tender to activate the 620km fibre optic network.

Paratus and GBS then established Fast Congo to deliver, operate and maintain the network link in an exclusive 15-year licence contract.

The fibre highway was originally funded by the World Bank following which, last year, the DRC government entity, Société Congolaise de Fibre Optique, announced that Fast Congo had won the tender to deploy, operate and maintain the fibre link.

Over the past few months, Paratus Group says Fast Congo has been installing the necessary infrastructure to connect the network, which is now live and fully operational.

By adding DRC to its network, Paratus group now boasts a footprint in Africa, which includes offices in seven SADC countries, five data centres (including the Google Equiano Cable landing station in Namibia), 6,000 VSAT terminals, an extended network through satellite connectivity-focused service in more than 37 African countries, and international points of presence in the

UK, Europe and the USA.

The inauguration event for the new DRC fibre route took place on Thursday in Kinshasa.

"This is a major milestone in delivering high-quality and high-capacity network services in the DRC. We are uniquely placed to connect the country to Angola and Zambia and beyond through our network in southern Africa," said Schalk Erasmus, Paratus Group CEO.

The event was attended by several delegates from the DRC government, along with executives from GBS and Paratus Group.

GBS CEO, Hassan Yahfoufi, commented: "The new network will unlock huge economic potential in the region. For the moment, we're only offering wholesale connectivity solutions, and this will enable other operators to offer high-speed fibre connectivity to businesses and consumers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, providing them with limitless opportunities to connect with anyone across the continent and globally."

The activation of the Paratus Group fibre comes as efforts to close the digital divide in DRC have accelerated with more investments coming into the country.

A fortnight ago, European Investment Bank (EIB) unveiled a bold plan a to connect more than two million people in the DRC.

The EIB is partnering with wholesale telecom infrastructure provider, Bandwidth and Cloud Services, to roll out new infrastructure in the DRC, and enable high-speed internet coverage.



SATURDAY 18 March		SUNDAY 19 March		MONDAY 20 March		TUESDAY 21 March		WEDNESDAY 22 March		THURSDAY 23 March		FRIDAY 24 March	
5:30	Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30	Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:00	Soap rpt: Uzalo	5:00	Soap rpt: Uzalo	5:00	Soap rpt: Uzalo	5:00	Soap rpt: Uzalo	5:00	Soap rpt: Uzalo
6:00	HABARI	6:00	HABARI	5:30	Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30	Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30	Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30	Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30	Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:40	Kumekucha	6:40	Kumekucha	6:00	HABARI	6:00	HABARI	6:00	HABARI	6:00	HABARI	6:00	HABARI
7:00	Habari	7:00	Habari	6:40	Kumekucha	6:40	Kumekucha	6:40	Kumekucha	6:40	Kumekucha	6:40	Kumekucha
8:00	Al Jazeera	8:00	Al Jazeera	7:30	HABARI	7:30	HABARI	7:30	HABARI	7:30	HABARI	7:30	HABARI
9:00	Watoto wetu	9:00	Watoto wetu	8:00	Kumekucha Michezo	8:00	Kumekucha Michezo	8:00	Kumekucha Michezo	8:00	Kumekucha Michezo	8:00	Kumekucha Michezo
10:00	Kipindi maalum: FAO	10:00	Kipindi maalum: Biko	8:55	Habari za saa	8:55	Habari za saa	8:55	Habari za saa	8:55	Habari za saa	8:55	Habari za saa
10:05	Shika Bamba 5	10:05	Kipindi maalum: Reflexology	9:00	Kumekucha Kishindo	9:00	Kumekucha Kishindo	9:00	Kumekucha Kishindo	9:00	Kumekucha Kishindo	9:00	Kumekucha Kishindo
10:35	Mjue Zaidi rpt	10:35	Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot	9:30	Soap: In Love with Ramon	9:30	Soap: In Love with Ramon	9:30	Soap: In Love with Ramon	9:30	Soap: In Love with Ramon	9:30	Soap: In Love with Ramon
11:15	Chetu ni chetu rpt	11:15	Igizo: Mizengwe	10:00	Watoto wetu	10:00	Watoto wetu	10:00	Watoto wetu	10:00	Watoto wetu	10:00	Watoto wetu
12:00	Hawavumi lakini wamo	11:15	Mjue Zaidi	10:30	Jagina rpt	10:30	Jagina rpt	10:30	Jagina rpt	10:30	Jagina rpt	10:30	Jagina rpt
13:00	Usafiri wako	12:20	Bongo movie	10:55	Habari za saa	10:55	Habari za saa	10:55	Habari za saa	10:55	Habari za saa	10:55	Habari za saa
13:30	Jagina	12:40	Tamasha la Michezo	11:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	11:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	11:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	11:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	11:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama
14:00	Soap: In Love with Ramon rpt	13:00	Mwangaza	11:55	Habari za saa	11:55	Habari za saa	11:55	Habari za saa	11:55	Habari za saa	11:55	Habari za saa
16:15	Igizo: Mizengwe	13:30	ITV Top 10 rpt	12:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	12:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	12:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	12:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama	12:00	Kipindi maalum rpt: Maa-dhimisho wiki usalama
16:30	Igizo: Rebeca	14:00	Tamasha la Michezo	12:55	Habari za saa	12:55	Habari za saa	12:55	Habari za saa	12:55	Habari za saa	12:55	Habari za saa
17:00	Shamsham za Pwani	14:00	Mjue Zaidi	13:00	Afya ya jamii	13:00	Afya ya jamii	13:00	Afya ya jamii	13:00	Afya ya jamii	13:00	Afya ya jamii
18:00	Jiji Letu	14:30	ITV Top 10 rpt	13:30	Ripoti maalum	13:30	Ripoti maalum	13:30	Ripoti maalum	13:30	Ripoti maalum	13:30	Ripoti maalum
18:15	ITV Top 10 rpt	14:30	ITV Top 10 rpt	13:55	Habari za saa	13:55	Habari za saa	13:55	Habari za saa	13:55	Habari za saa	13:55	Habari za saa
19:00	Jungu Kuu	15:00	Mjue Zaidi	14:00	Shikabamba	14:00	Shikabamba	14:00	Shikabamba	14:00	Shikabamba	14:00	Shikabamba
19:30	Shika Bamba	15:30	Igizo: Rebeca	14:30	Igizo rpt: Rebeca	14:30	Igizo rpt: Rebeca	14:30	Igizo rpt: Rebeca	14:30	Igizo rpt: Rebeca	14:30	Igizo rpt: Rebeca
20:00	Habari	16:00	Habari	14:55	Habari za saa	14:55	Habari za saa	14:55	Habari za saa	14:55	Habari za saa	14:55	Habari za saa
21:05	Kipindi Maalum: Tatu Mzuka	16:30	ITV Top 10 rpt	15:00	Meza Huru	15:00	Meza Huru	15:00	Meza Huru	15:00	Meza Huru	15:00	Meza Huru
21:15	Igizo: Rebeca	17:20	Kipindi cha kikristo	16:30	Watoto wetu	16:30	Watoto wetu	16:30	Watoto wetu	16:30	Watoto wetu	16:30	Watoto wetu
21:40	Art and Lifestyle	18:00	Jiji Letu	17:00	Music: The Base	17:00	Music: The Base	17:00	Music: The Base	17:00	Music: The Base	17:00	Music: The Base
22:10	ITV Top 10	18:15	Mapishi	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari
22:50	Hawavumi lakini wamo	18:15	Mapishi	21:05	Dakika 45	21:05	Dakika 45	21:05	Dakika 45	21:05	Dakika 45	21:05	Dakika 45
23:40	Soap: Uzalo rpt	18:30	Matukio ya wiki	22:00	Bundesliga na DW	22:00	Bundesliga na DW	22:00	Bundesliga na DW	22:00	Bundesliga na DW	22:00	Bundesliga na DW
01:15	DWTV	19:30	Igizo: Rebeca	22:15	Mapishi	22:15	Mapishi	22:15	Mapishi	22:15	Mapishi	22:15	Mapishi
		20:00	Habari	22:30	Soap: Uzalo	22:30	Soap: Uzalo	22:30	Soap: Uzalo	22:30	Soap: Uzalo	22:30	Soap: Uzalo
		21:05	Kipindi maalum: Biko	23:00	Habari	23:00	Habari	23:00	Habari	23:00	Habari	23:00	Habari
		21:10	Kipindi maalum: Reflexology	23:30	Music: The Base	23:30	Music: The Base	23:30	Music: The Base	23:30	Music: The Base	23:30	Music: The Base
		21:15	Kipindi maalum: Mchezo Supa Jackpot	00:30	Al Jazeera	00:30	Al Jazeera	00:30	Al Jazeera	00:30	Al Jazeera	00:30	Al Jazeera
		21:45	Igizo: Mizengwe	02:00	DWTV	02:00	DWTV	02:00	DWTV	02:00	DWTV	02:00	DWTV
		22:20	Bongo movie										
		23:30	Soap: Uzalo rpt										
		02:05	Al Jazeera										



WORLD

UK's Prince Harry to seek Mail on Sunday libel win without trial

LONDON

PRINCE Harry was expected later yesterday to seek to win his libel claim against publisher Associated Newspapers without the case going to trial, his lawyer said, as the British royal steps up his legal battles against the tabloid press.

Harry, King Charles' younger son, sued Associated Newspapers last year over an article in its Mail on Sunday newspaper that alleged he tried to keep secret details of his separate legal fight with Britain's government over his security arrangements.

London's High Court ruled in July that the Mail report was defamatory, paving the way for Harry to take the case forward against one of Britain's biggest media publishers.

The article said Harry, 38, had tried to keep secret details of his legal fight to re-

instate his police protection - which was withdrawn after he stepped back from royal duties in 2020 - and that his aides had then tried to put a positive spin on it.

His lawyers confirmed to Reuters that they would ask the judge Matthew Nicklin at a hearing later yesterday to give a summary judgment - a ruling in his favor without the need for a trial.

Two years ago, Harry's American wife Meghan, 41, likewise won a summary judgment in her privacy case against the Mail on Sunday for printing parts of a handwritten letter she had sent to her estranged father, Thomas Markle.

The couple have become embroiled in numerous court cases against tabloid papers since the time of their 2018 marriage, accusing them of racism, hounding them, and spreading lies.

Media intrusion was part of the rea-



Prince Harry (right) and Meghan Markle, Duke and Duchess of Sussex visit the track and field event at the Invictus Games in The Hague, Netherlands, April 17, 2022. (PHOTO / AP)

son they cited for stepping back from royal duties and moving to California to forge new lives and careers.

In his memoir "Spare" and in the couple's six-part Netflix documentary series, Harry focused heavily on the press, with accusations that other royals had been complicit in newspaper stories.

There has been no response from Buckingham Palace or other royals to those remarks.

Harry, officially known as the Duke of Sussex, also told one TV interview in January that he hoped his legal action would help reform

the media, adding that his father had described that as "probably a suicide mission".

Later this month, there is due to be a hearing in another case he has brought with singer Elton John and others against Associated Newspapers over allegations of phone-tapping and other privacy breaches.

In May, a lawsuit against the Daily Mirror newspaper over accusations of phone-hacking will go to a trial, and he is also suing News Group Newspapers, the publisher of the now-defunct News of the World and The Sun, also for alleged phone-hacking. **Agencies**

Pressure mounts on Macron after violent unrest over pensions

PARIS

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron on Friday faced the gravest challenge to his authority since the so-called Yellow Vest protests after his decision to push through a contested pension overhaul without a vote prompted violent unrest overnight.

Cars were torched in Paris and other French cities in the evening during otherwise peaceful demonstrations involving several thousand people. Trade unions urged workers to step up and briefly blocked the Paris ring road on Friday.

"Something fundamental happened, and that is that, immediately, spontaneous mobilisations took place throughout the country," hard-left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon said. "It goes without saying that I encourage them, I think that's where it's happening."

The pension overhaul raises France's retirement age by two years to 64, which the government says is essential to ensure the system does not go bust. Unions, and most French, disagree.

More than eight out of 10 people are unhappy with the government's decision to skip a vote in parliament, and 65 percent want strikes and protests to continue, a Toluna Harris Interactive poll for RTL radio showed.

Going ahead without a vote "is a denial of democracy... a total denial of what has been happening in the streets for several weeks," 52-year-old psychologist Nathalie Alquier said in Paris. "It's just unbearable."

A broad alliance of France's main unions said they would continue their mobilization to try and force a u-turn on the changes. Protests took place in cities including Toulon on Friday, and more were planned for the weekend. A new day of nationwide industrial action is scheduled for Thursday.

While eight days of nationwide protests since mid-January, and many more local industrial action, had so far been largely peaceful, the unrest overnight was reminiscent of the Yellow Vest protests which erupted in late 2018 over high fuel prices and forced Macron into a partial U-turn on a carbon tax.

Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said some 310 people had been arrested by police and he promised to crack down on troublemakers.

"Opposition is legitimate, protests are legitimate but causing mayhem is not," he told RTL radio.

Agencies

Cyclone Freddy toll passes 400 in Malawi, Mozambique

BLANTYRE

THE last thing Lukia Akimu remembers is the surge of floodwater that hit her village near Mount Soche this week when Tropical Cyclone Freddy tore through southern Malawi.

The next thing she knew, she woke up in hospital, her head wrapped in bandages and her neck in a brace.

"I saw a lot of water and some people being washed away. Then I do not know what happened. I do not know who brought me here," the 35-year-old said from a bed in Queen Elizabeth hospital in the city of Blantyre.

It is not known whether any of her family members survived, a nurse told Reuters.

Tropical Cyclone Freddy has killed more than 400 people in Malawi, Mozambique and Mada-

gascar since it first made landfall in Africa in late February and circled back to hit the region for a second time over the weekend.

The storm has now dissipated, but heavy rains are expected to continue in parts of Malawi and will likely cause more floods around lakeshore areas, the ministry of natural resources and climate change said in a statement.

In Mozambique, some villages have been completely cut off since the cyclone made its second landfall on Saturday.

"We mobilized boats and other means to search and rescue people. There are lots of communities stranded," Paulo Tomas, spokesperson for Mozambique's disaster relief agency, said.

"After this time they are starving and in need of a proper meal and medical assistance."

At least 53 people have died in



People receive food at a displacement center in Blantyre, southern Malawi on Wednesday. (PHOTO / AP)

Mozambique and 326 in Malawi since the weekend, according to government figures. The storm had already killed about 27 people in Madagascar and Mozambique before it lashed Mozambique a second time.

had to bury their dead.

In the southern village of Mtauchira, men stood in newly dug graves that had filled up like pools, scooping the water out with buckets so they could lower in the caskets.

While electricity was starting to come back in Malawi on Thursday, many places affected by the storm still had no running water, including in Blantyre, the second-biggest city.

Some Blantyre residents said they wished they had heeded warnings to flee before the cyclone hit, but they had not understood the gravity of the situation and now had nowhere to go.

"It was very difficult for people to really understand what was going on prior to this storm. Government sent out the messages but then nothing happened," Blantyre resident Logasiano Misoya

Emirates to increase flights from Dar es Salaam from five a week to daily

DUBAI

EMIRATES E will increase flights departing from Dar es Salaam, from five flights a week to daily flights starting May 1st this year. Tanzanians now have a wider choice to fly to Dubai and beyond whether for business or leisure.

The increase is part of Emirates 31 per cent boost in operations across the globe since the start of its financial year. Emirates has further plans to ramp up seat capacity in its latest published northern summer schedule starting 26 March.

In the past months, the airline has planned and executed the rapid growth of its network operations - reintroducing services to five cities; launching flights to a new destination, Tel Aviv. Emirates is adding 251 weekly flights onto existing routes; and continuing the roll-out of service enhancements in the air and on the ground.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Chief Commercial Officer said: "Emirates continues to expand its global network and deploy its capacity to meet travel demand across the world. Our financial year started relatively quietly as we held back our ramp up until the planned

northern runway rehabilitation programme at Dubai International airport was completed in June. From July 2022 onwards, it's been non-stop expansion."

He added: "Customer demand has been very strong, and our forward bookings are also robust. Emirates is working hard on several fronts - to bring back operating capacity as quickly as the ecosystem can manage, while also upgrading our fleet and product to ensure our customers always enjoy the best possible Emirates experience. So far, four of our A380 aircraft have been completely refurbished with our new cabin interiors and Premium Economy seats, and more will enter service as our US\$2 billion cabin and service enhancement program picks up pace."

In the coming months, established routes to Africa, Australia and Europe, will be served with more Emirates flights, while in East Asia, more cities are seeing route restarts.

Emirates continues to scale up its A380 operations with the reintroduction of the iconic double-decker across its network. The reintroduction starts with Glasgow on 26 March. Followed by Casablanca on 15

April. Other destinations are Beijing, 01 May, Shanghai, 04 June, Nice, 01 June, Birmingham, 1 July, Kuala Lumpur, 01 August, and Taipei, 01 August.

On the continent in addition to daily flights from Dar es Salaam the following are the increased frequencies. Cairo in Egypt, from 25 to 28 weekly flights by 29 October. For Entebbe in Uganda flights have increased from six flights a week to daily flights starting 01 July.

In Australia and New Zealand Emirates' non-stop Australia flights will return to pre-pandemic levels to Melbourne from 26 March. Sydney from 01 May and Brisbane on 01 June. For Brisbane an additional daily service starting 01 June will take Emirates to 14 flights per week to Brisbane. Daily flights from Christchurch will restart from Dubai via Sydney from 26 March.

An additional third daily service to Melbourne will start from 26 March via Singapore. This adds capacity to Melbourne and re-establishes connectivity between Singapore and Melbourne. The other two daily flights from Melbourne fly non-stop to Dubai. Last but not the least Sydney has a third daily non-stop service from 01 May.

In Europe Amsterdam will have 19 weekly

flights starting 02 April. In Athens an addition of a daily seasonal service for the summer demand will be available between 01 June to 30 September. Bologna and Budapest will commence daily services starting 01 May and 01 June respectively.

In London a second daily service to London Stansted will start on 01 May. This will take Emirates' London operations to 11 daily flights - including six times daily to London Heathrow and three times daily to Gatwick. In Venice there will be a daily service starting 01 June.

For East Asia, Bangkok adds a fifth daily service from 01 August. In Beijing Emirates commences an A380 non-stop flight effective 01 May. A second daily service will commence 01 September. Hong Kong will add a daily non-stop flight from 29 March. This increases Emirates' operations to 14 weekly flights including its existing daily Dubai-Bangkok-Hong Kong service.

Resumption of services to Tokyo Haneda with daily flights will start on 02 April. This takes Emirates' Japan operations to 21 weekly flights including a daily A380 service to Tokyo-Narita and a daily Boeing 777 service to Osaka.

There is no shortage of kindness and goodwill in China's diplomacy

IN response to the initiative of President Xi Jinping of China's support for developing good neighborly relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, delegations of the two countries recently held talks in Beijing.

In a joint statement released with China, Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed to reopen their embassies and diplomatic missions within two months, hold talks between their foreign ministers on the arrangement of ambassadors' exchange, and explore ways to improve bilateral ties.

The Saudi-Iranian agreement to restore diplomatic relation was hailed by Wang Yi, director of the Office of

the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, as "a victory for dialogue and peace" and has been widely welcomed worldwide.

The kindness and goodwill in China's diplomacy are reflected in the country's efforts to expand all-round diplomacy in a coordinated manner and to build a new type of international relations. China has had a growing network of friends, made more and more new friends, and strengthened ties with old ones.

China has never and will never invade or bully others, or seek hegemony. The country will take it as its

mission to defend its core interests. It firmly opposes any form of hegemonism and power politics, and firmly opposes the Cold War mentality, camp-based confrontation, and acts to contain and hold back other countries' development. It will resolutely safeguard its sovereignty, security and development interests.

The kindness and goodwill in China's diplomacy are reflected in the country's efforts to promote common prosperity of the world with its own high-quality development. Recently, the Chinese path to modernization has become a hot topic around the world. Chinese modernization offers solu-

tions to many challenges facing human development. It busts the myth that modernization is westernization; it creates a new form of human advancement; and it provides an important source of inspiration for the world, especially developing countries.

China hopes and believes that as more and more countries begin their own journey of modernization, the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind will become true.

China's development benefits the world and China cannot develop in isolation from the rest of the world. Amid rising unilateralism and protec-

tionism, China will solidly promote high-level opening up, not only making good use of the global market and resources to develop itself, but also promoting common development of the world.

The kindness and goodwill in China's diplomacy are reflected in the country's efforts to firmly uphold and practice multilateralism and actively improve global governance.

Through the past ten years, Xi has put forward a host of major initiatives and proposals, including building a community with a shared future for mankind, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the common values of human-

ity, the Global Development Initiative and the Global Security Initiative. The core message of these initiatives is that countries are interdependent, mankind have a shared future, and the international community must get united for cooperation.

China believes that global governance should be promoted in accordance with the law and the principles of international law enshrined in the UN Charter; equity and justice must be upheld while hegemonism and selfish interests must be rejected; solidarity must be defended while division and confrontation must be abandoned.

People's Daily

Level of Russians' trust in Vladimir Putin stands at almost 80% – poll

MOSCOW

THE level of people's trust in Russian President Vladimir Putin has decreased by 0.3% and currently stands at 79.7%, says a Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM) poll published yesterday.

The poll took place between March 6 and 12 and covered 1,600 adult Russians.

"When asked about trust in Putin, 79.7% of respondents answered in the affirmative (a 0.3% decrease in 7 days), the level of approval of the President's work decreased by 0.7% and currently stands at 76%," the poll says.

A total of 51.7% of respondents approved of the Russian government's work (a 0.4% decrease), while 54% of respondents approve of Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin's work (a 0.7% increase). A total of 62.4% of respondents trust in Mishustin (a 0.6% increase).

The respondents also gave their opinions about the heads of parliamentary factions. Thus, head of the Communist Party Gennady Zyuganov enjoys trust of 34.6% of respondents (a 0.4% increase), head of the 'Just Russia - For Truth' Party Sergey Mironov is trusted by 31.2% of respondents (a 2.5% decrease), Liberal Democratic Party of Russia leader Leonid Slutsky - 15.4% (a 1.5% decrease), and leader of the 'New People' Party Alexey Nechayev enjoys trust of 8% of respondents (a 0.7% increase).

The level of support for the United Russia political party stands at 39.5% (a 0.7% increase), the Communist Party - 10.6% (a 0.3% increase), the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia - 8.4% (a 0.3% decrease), the 'Just Russia - For Truth' - 5.6% (a 0.3% increase), the New People - 4.8% (a 0.4% increase).

India approves purchases of military equipment worth \$8.5b

NEW DELHI

INDIA on Thursday approved purchases of missiles, helicopters, artillery guns and electronic warfare systems worth \$8.5 billion as it sought to add more teeth to its military.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), the top government body for capital acquisition approvals for the Indian military, approved the orders worth 705 billion rupees (\$8.52 billion) for all its services, the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

All orders would be placed with Indian companies, it said, keeping with a push by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to boost domestic defense manufacturing.

India has been seeking to modernize its mostly Soviet-era military equipment.

The focus on the navy accounted for approvals worth 560 billion rupees on Thursday.

The list of purchases approved included 200 additional BrahMos missiles, 50 utility helicopters and electronic warfare systems for the navy.

BrahMos is a supersonic missile with a range of around 300 km that has been jointly developed by India and Russia. All three Indian military services have been using versions of the missile for over a decade.

The DAC also approved manufacturing of a diesel marine engine, which will be a first for India.

It approved the air force's proposal for a long range stand-off weapon to be used by the Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jet.

The army got the nod to buy 307 units of 155mm/52 caliber towed artillery guns, along with high mobility vehicles and gun towing vehicles.



A model of new generation anti-radiation missile Rudram-1 is displayed at the exhibition stall of Adani Defence and Aerospace on the second day of the Aero India 2023 at Yelahanka air base in Bengaluru, India, Feb 14, 2023. AP

UK drops plan to tax sovereign wealth funds

LONDON

BRITISH finance minister Jeremy Hunt has dropped a plan to tax sovereign wealth funds investing in Britain, according to a government document.

The report, detailing the measures in a budget plan announced by Hunt on Wednesday, showed "the government has carefully considered" responses to its consultation on the immunity of sovereign funds from direct taxation.

"It has decided that there will be no change to the current exemption, and that it will continue to operate as it does now," the document - which was first reported by the Financial Times on Friday - said.

The FT said business and trade minister Kemi Badenoch had urged the Treasury to drop the proposals out of concern that sovereign funds might pull out of projects in Britain.

Sovereign wealth funds from the Middle East and elsewhere have been big investors in some British infrastructure projects as well as in commercial property.

US Fed aggressive rate hikes shock financial system, further restraining operations

TOKYO

AS the shocking collapse of U.S. Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) triggered turmoil in global financial markets, Japanese media and experts blamed the U.S. Federal Reserve's continued aggressive interest rate hikes for the upheaval in the well-regarded lender.

The Fed's emergency shift in monetary policy could leave the U.S. financial system vulnerable, or bind itself to future policy actions, analysts warned.

Continuous price drops in bonds held by SVB led to a large amount of booking losses, which might translate into real losses when the lender has to sell its bond assets due to tight liquidity.

News of such losses triggered ferocious withdrawals from the bank and a final shutdown, according to Takahide Kiuchi, an economist at Nomura Research Institute.

Start-ups, which SVB mainly serves, are experiencing the ebb tide in the U.S. economic cycle as they began a run on the bank due to difficulties in raising funds, said Kiuchi, also a former Bank of Japan (BOJ) board member.

Kiuchi added that the aggressive rate hikes put banks like SVB to trouble and pushed the U.S. Treasury yield curve to its deepest inversion in over four decades, with two-year note yields exceeding 10-year yields, thus making the business model of SVB hard to sustain.

The SVB's collapse highlights the overall vulnerability of the U.S. banking industry, the Nikkei reported. As deposits are pulled for higher-yielding investments, many banks face huge paper losses in their bond operations, exposing them to huge potential risks, said the media outlet.

Data from the U.S. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation showed that unrealized losses, or assets which have decreased in value but have not been sold yet, of banks across the country swelled to 620 billion U.S. dollars by the end of last year, which highlights the vulnerability of the U.S. financial system in dealing with sudden shocks. Kiuchi believed the fallout from SVB could spread around the world.

Many banks in Europe and Japan also face large booking losses and inverted yield curves, and a string of problems could follow if trust in the financial system is damaged. SVB's emergency



People queue up outside the headquarters of the Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) in Santa Clara, California, the United States, March 13, 2023. (Photo by Li Jianguo/Xinhua)

shutdown has in fact led to a sharp rise in the market's risk-averse sentiment.

Money has been poured into safe assets such as the Japanese yen, the Swiss franc and gold since last weekend.

The Japanese stock market plunged for days, with the yen soaring and Japanese long-term interest rates decreasing significantly.

Since last year, Japanese government bonds have suffered continuous sell-offs as interest rate spread between Japan and the United States further widened amid upward pressure on long-term interest rates and the BOJ.

Following the SVB's collapse, the price of Japanese government bonds quickly rose while the yield of 10-year government bonds fell sharply.

Teppie Ino, a chief analyst at MUFG Bank, said that SVB's shutdown brought concerns about the outlook for the U.S. economy into the mainstream, and that the U.S. dollar could depreciate further if volatility in America's financial system continues to spread.

Whether the Fed continues to tighten monetary policy is no longer the biggest concern now, said Naokazu Koshimizu, a senior strategist at Nomura Securities.

According to him, investors, who worry about a domino effect on the banking system and the prospects for a U.S. economic recovery, may rush to the safety of U.S. treasuries in the near term, and U.S. interest rates may face downward pressure in the short term.

Masahiro Ichikawa, chief market

strategist at Sumitomo Mitsui DS Asset Management, said the closure of SVB exposed huge risks in the U.S. banking sector, and the Fed's next move may be constrained.

While the Fed's stance on raising interest rates to curb inflation remains unchanged, the intensity of such hikes could be adjusted, he said, expecting the rate hike to be reduced to 0.25 percent at the March policy meeting.

Yasuya Ueno, chief market economist at Mizuho Securities, pointed out that given the current turmoil in the U.S. financial system, it will be difficult for the Fed to continue raising interest rates.

Financial markets have been worried that the impact of the Fed's aggressive rate hikes will eventually hit the U.S. economy hard, said Kiuchi.

These concerns, now combined with the SVB collapse, will weigh on the Fed's policy outlook and financial markets, creating a new situation for the Fed's monetary policy, he said.

Iran says to send ambassador to UAE soon

TEHRAN

A senior Iranian diplomat said on Thursday that Iran will soon send its ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Ali Bagheri Kani, Iranian deputy foreign minister for political affairs, said that Iran has appointed the envoy and the process of dispatching him to Abu Dhabi is going through its final stages, reported the official news agency IRNA.

Kani made the remarks as Sec-

retary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani held talks on Thursday with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and National Security Advisor Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed Al Nahyan during a visit to the UAE.

The visit by Shamkhani comes days after Tehran and Riyadh reached a China-facilitated deal to re-establish relations and re-open embassies within two months.

"Considering the suitable platforms that have been created since a year ago for the development of relations between Iran and the UAE, I see this trip as a new stage for political, economic and security relations," said Shamkhani in Abu Dhabi, Iranian state media reported.

The UAE downgraded its diplomatic ties with Iran after Riyadh severed its ties with Tehran in 2016 following protests outside

the Saudi embassy in the Islamic Republic over Riyadh's execution of a prominent Shi'ite cleric.

After years of animosity on different sides of geo-political rivalries, the UAE started re-engaging with Tehran in 2019.

It resulted in upgraded diplomatic ties last year between Iran and the UAE, which has business and trade ties with Tehran stretching back more than a century, with Dubai emirate long being one of

Iran's main links to the outside world.



Considering the suitable platforms that have been created since a year ago for the development of relations between

China's urbanisation ushers in new stage

RECENTLY, the National Development and Reform Commission and other 18 Chinese departments jointly issued a document on guiding large settlement areas of poverty alleviation relocation to integrate into new-type urbanization for high-quality development.

Promoting the integrated development of more settlement areas and the towns they are located in is a necessary measure to consolidate the achievements of China's poverty alleviation relocation.

Urbanization is the sure route to modernization. The promotion of urbanization is of huge significance for ensuring great performance in the work relating to agriculture, rural areas, and farmers, promoting coordinated regional development, expanding domestic demand and driving industrial upgrading.

The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China said the country will thoroughly implement the new urbanization strategy, advance people-centered new urbanization and work faster to grant permanent urban residency to eligible people who move from rural to urban areas. Never in history has a developing country as populous as China attempted to engineer a well-managed process of urbanization.

Foreign practices have proved that China cannot follow the beaten track of inefficient and blinkered development relying on borrowed money that damages the environment and results in an imbalance between population and land. That path will lead the country nowhere.

In the past decade, China has explored a path of a new type of urbanization that puts people first, integrates the development of industrialization, IT application, urbanization and agricultural modernization, and features improved spatial layout, eco-environmental protection and preservation of Chinese cultural heritages.

On this path in the right direction, China is able to expand its domestic demand, improve labor productivity, break the urban-rural dual economic structure and promote social equality and common prosperity. It also benefits the global economy and ecological environment.

Cities are key elements driving the country's modernization and an important carrier of high-quality development. To empower economic and social development, urban spatial layout and form must be constantly optimized.

City clusters and metropolitan areas shall play an important role in boosting the economy, expanding human carrying capacity



Citizens read books in a book store in Siming district, Xiamen, southeast China's Fujian province, March 4, 2023. (Photo by Zhu Haipeng/People's Daily Online)

and driving regional development. Besides, it is also important to guide the development of small- and medium-sized cities and boost the county's economy so as to tackle "urban diseases."

Today, China's urbanization has entered a new stage, a key period when the country is transiting rapid development to a mature stage in its urbanization process.

China's urbanization will target the coordinated development of large, medium-sized and small cities relying on city clusters and metropolitan areas, and focus more on county-level regions. It will offer ceaseless energy for the country's high-quality development.

Over the recent years, many cities across China have been striving to build themselves into national civilized cities, implementing effective and targeted governance.

Urbanization calls for both physical expansion and releasing of cities' potential. It should address problems emerging in development and meet the diversified demands of different groups.

Urban ecology shall be improved so as to provide citizens with pleasant natural landscapes and retain their love of nature. The public health system shall be enhanced so that people would gain more sense of fulfillment, happiness and security. A sound environment for entrepreneurship should be built so that talents have opportunities to make their own accomplishments. Each of these efforts calls for cities' capability in urban planning, construction and governance.

People are at the core of the new type of urbanization. Promoting urban residency for rural people capable of securing a stable job in the cities remains the top priority of the new type of urbanization.

Over the past 10 years, China has granted urban residency to a total of 130 million rural-to-urban population and other permanent residents in cities.

To turn more rural-to-urban population into permanent urban residents, the country must deepen reform in its household registration system, improve education, health and other public services, and lift their vocational skills. As a result, they can truly fit into the new environment and embrace a new life.

When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, only 10.6 percent of Chinese people lived in cities. Now the figure soared to 65.2 percent as of the end of 2022. The country, which used to boast a huge rural population, is getting more and more urbanized today.

People's Daily

'Russia is doing the right thing': Chinese expert on 60-day extension of grain deal

SHANGHAI

THE 60-day extension of the Black Sea grain deal is sufficient to ease the situation, Professor Wang Ning from the Shanghai International Studies University's School of International Relations and Public Affairs told TASS yesterday.

"Russia is ready to extend the grain deal, which was previously prolonged for 120 days twice, for another 60 days. I believe this is enough to ease the situation."

It is also important from a humanistic point of view as it will positively impact global politics and the economy. Russia is doing the right thing," the expert pointed out.

He also noted that the move would benefit Ukraine the most. The expert added that the extension of the agreements would also be to Turkey's advantage as it sought to play a more active role in global affairs as a mediator country.

The agreements on Ukrainian food exports were made for a term of 120 days in Istanbul on July 22, 2022. One of the deals regulates grain exports from the

Ukraine-controlled ports of Odesa, Chernomoshk and Yuzhny. Under a Russia-UN memorandum, the United Nations should engage in efforts to lift anti-Russian restrictions preventing the export of agricultural products and fertilizers to global markets.

However, Russia keeps pointing out that the second part of the deal has not been implemented yet.

On Monday, consultations took place in Geneva, which involved Secretary General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Rebeca Grynspan, UN Under Secretary General Martin Griffiths and a Russian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin.

The Russian diplomat said after the meeting that Moscow did not oppose the grain deal being extended beyond March 18, but only for 60 days and not for 120 days like in November 2022.

According to him, this is enough time to objectively assess the implementation of the United Nations' promises to ensure the unhindered access of Russian agricultural goods and fertilizers to the global market. Agencies





Tanzania's female boxer, Beatrice Nyambega.

Dar boxer faces Indian opponent in 2023

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIAN boxer Beatrice Nyambega was, on Thursday, set to be in action in this year's International Boxing Association (IBA) Women's World Boxing Championship taking place in India.

Lukelo Wililo, Tanzania's leader of delegation in the showdown, disclosed that Beatrice was ready to face Indian pugilist, Jasmine Jasmine.

He said Tanzania's other pugilist, Rehema Maganga (Light Flyweight), will today be in action against Kenyan boxer, Christine Ongare.

Rehema and Christine met in the East Africa Club Championships in January this year and the latter won 3-2.

Wililo said that today's bout will be an opportunity for Rehema to show her prowess in boxing and seek revenge.

"We arrived in India safely and the draw was conducted, our boxers will all be on the blue corner, and one of them will be in action on Friday," the leader, also serving as Boxing Federation of Tanzania (BFT) secretary-general, stated.

"Rehema will on Saturday face Christine, they are ready for the bouts as they know that winning will take them to the round of 16 where they will start getting money pledged by IBA," he said.

The two Tanzanian boxers have been accompanied by coach Samwel Kapungu and matron Aisha George.

Wililo and Kapungu will also attend seminars for IBA international technical officials and team cutman technicians.

The Tanzania team was presented with the national flag by Minister for Culture, Arts, and Sports Pindi Chana, last weekend. Pindi asked the two boxers to fly the flag high in the championships.

She said the government is happy that for the first time, the country is taking part in the IBA Women's Championships.

"We are happy that for the first time, our country is taking part in the Women's World Boxing Champion-

ships, we are committed to developing sports in the country and we will continue doing that," she said.

She promised BFT of continued support, saying boxing is one of the sports disciplines that have done the country proud, as the pugilists have won medals.

"Boxing is one of the sporting events which have done the country proud, clinching medals in top competitions like Olympics and Commonwealth Games," the minister noted.

"In fact, in the last edition of Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, our boxers Kassim Mbundwike (Light Middleweight), and Yusuf Changarawe (Light Heavyweight) won bronze medals, we will continue working closely with BFT," she said.

The Tanzania team is in India having been sponsored by National Sports Council (NSC) and IBA while the local camp was sponsored by Africa Human Rights Network (AHRN) and Mbezi's Oasis Village and Club Gym.

The IBA Women's World Boxing Championships started in Scranton, USA in 2001 and this year, the showpiece sees Tanzania field its boxers in the showpiece for the first time.

More than 350 women from 74 countries are battling it out in the championships that are involving 12 weight classes.

The opening ceremony took place at the K.D. Jadhav Indoor Hall yesterday with preliminaries and quarterfinals scheduled from March 16-23, the semi-finals are set to take place on March 25.

For the first time, IBA has confirmed a lucrative prize fund of US\$2.4m for the Women's World Boxing Championships.

The IBA noted gold medal winners in each of the 12 weight categories will receive US\$100,000, ensuring a bumper reward for finishing top of the podium.

Boxers who finish as runners-up in their categories will collect US\$50,000, while pugilists winning bronze medals will each receive US\$25,000

Simba SC denies plans to sign Malian midfielder

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

TANZANIA Simba SC has denied reports alleging the outfit is looking to sign Mali's AS Real Bamako midfielder Ibourahima Sidibé who is also linked to the former's rivals, Yanga.

Sidibé is one of the most talented midfielders from the West African country, having joined AS Real Bamako three seasons ago and also went on loan to one of the clubs in Saudi Arabia.

The left-footed midfielder, who can efficiently play both wing positions and attacking midfield, gained popularity after his wonderful display in the 2022/23 CAF Confederation Cup Group D match pitting his club against Yanga in Dar es Salaam on March 8.

Simba SC's Information and Communication Manager, Ahmed Ally, stated that it is too early for his outfit to start thinking about the registration of players halfway



Ibourahima Sidibé

through the season.

The official was adamant his outfit is setting its sight on representing the nation well in the ongoing CAF Champions League Group Stage.

Ally pointed out that linking his outfit with registration rumours is normal but the club's leadership is seeking to ensure

that it excels and makes it to the quarterfinal stage and, possibly the semi-final of this season's CAF Champions League.

The official noted: "It is normal to be associated with players in the ongoing season, we are focused on all competitions that we have the opportunity to win, Sidibé is a tremendous player

but our focus is not on bringing in new players."

"Above all, the registration window is not open but, at the moment, all Simba SC leaders ought to monitor all CAF Confederation Cup games until we get into the main transfer window," the official added.

"We will not sign players on a hype, Sidibé is a good player but, at the moment, I do not have direct information if he will be signed or not, let's wait for the registration window," Ally noted.

Sidibé started playing competitive football in 2013 with the Djoliba AC club (Mali) and was later signed for MAS Fez of Morocco and turned out for the outfit from 2014-2017, taking part in 42 games and scoring three goals.

The player was later roped in by FUS Rabat (2017-2019), before being loaned to Kwakab Marakech (2018-2019).

In 2019, he decided to return to Mali and re-register with AS Real Bamako, an outfit he continues to play for until now.

AT to organize trials for 2023 CAA Junior Championships

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THE trials organized by Athletics Tanzania (AT) to select athletes that will represent the country in this year's Confederation of African Athletics (CAA) Junior Championships slated for Zambia next month have been received with mixed reactions.

The U-20 athletes set to represent the country in the CAA Junior Athletics Championships were to be selected during this year's East and Central Africa Junior Athletics Championships (EAAR) played in Dar es Salaam last week and ended with Tanzania finishing third.

The national athletics governing body said there were no domestic U-20 athletes that attained outright qualification for the CAA Junior Athletics Championships, therefore, the association will host trials next month.

The trials will be held at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on April 1 and AT's Acting Secretary-General Jackson Ndaweka said invitations have been extended to all regions of Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

The CAA Junior Athletics Championships will be held at National Heroes Stadium in Lusaka from April 19-23 and junior athletes from more than 50 African nations are expected to battle it out in the showpiece.

According to AT, currently, there is only one local U-20 athlete who attained the CAA Junior Athletics Championships' qualifying time.

Tanzania's athletics legend, Suleiman Nyambui, suggested that the trials should be postponed to another date, saying this will give coaches ample time to prepare their U-20 athletes for the trials.

The former AT Secretary-General, who is also an athletics coach, said in case the trials take place on the planned date, senior athletes should be included to push the juniors to work hard.

He also advised all local athletics coaches to work together so the country can have many athletes in the CAA Junior Athletics Championships.

Ahead of the next month's trials, Nyambui made several recommendations to AT,



Junior athletes participate in the recent East and Central Africa Junior Athletics Championships which took place in Dar es Salaam.

some of which include intensive training for the athletes before the trials.

The former athlete revealed: "AT ought to be given full technical support by all local athletics coaches, the selected athletes should enter camp outright, and there should be mutual communication between all athletics stakeholders."

"Up to now, there is only one local female athlete who attained the qualification for CAA Junior Athletics Championships, I have seen the qualification times set by CAA," Nyambui noted.

"It is difficult for our junior athletes to attain them, for that reason, I'm calling upon all local athletics coaches to use their brains so the country can have many junior athletes in the coming showpiece, we must work together, it's time for the nation's pride," he said.

Ndaweka said Nyambui's suggestions are good but they are out of time.

He said CAA communicated to AT that the deadline for the association to send names of athletes that have attained qualifying time for the CAA Junior Athletics Championships is April 3, thus, any trial happening after the date will not be acceptable.

Ndaweka acknowledged that it is difficult for many EAAR U-20 athletes to attain the qualifying time for CAA Junior Athletics Championships.

"I must confess, the CAA Junior Athletics Championships' qualifying times are very difficult this year, not only for local athletes but also for many others from the EAAR region," the AT official revealed.

Ndaweka added: "The same can be said of the seniors, there are few of them who can attain the times, of all athletes who competed in the EAAR Championships, there are few females that qualified for the 1500m and 5000m races while few males qualified for 100m, 200m, 1500m, and 5000m races."

"To postpone the trials for one week to give chance to coaches to prepare their athletes well is a good idea but it is out of time," Ndaweka disclosed.

"CAA has written us that all performances must be achieved from January 1-April 2 and all performances must be achieved during an official competition organized in conformity with World Athletics (WA)," he said.

He said the only hope for Tanzania is in 800m and 1500m races as well as some potential U-20 athletes who did not compete in the EAAR.

"Depending on the outcome of the trials, we plan to send six to eight U-20 athletes to CAA Junior Athletics Championships in Zambia," the AT official pointed out.

"We have hope in our athletes who did well in 800m and 1500m races and there are also some U-20 athletes with potential for qualifying but they did not compete in the EAAR, we hope they can do well in the trials and attain the qualifying time," he said.

As for the U-18 athletes, Ndaweka said there is no qualification time attached to the category but AT will only send athletes who have the potential to become popular in the sport.

"The U-18 showdown has no qualification time but we are not af-

ter quantity, we are after quality, so we will only send athletes with the potential to become prominent in the industry to CAA Junior Athletics Championships in Zambia," Ndaweka said.

"We are doing this because U-18 is the stage where one can either make or break an athlete, taking an athlete to the showpiece whilst knowing that he/she will not perform well breaks such an athlete."

"Poor performance, in most cases, makes an athlete lose hope and interest completely," he said.

Coaches Dennis Malle and Rogath John said the trials should be held on the planned date, adding the remaining two weeks before the trials are enough for a coach to prepare his/her athletes.

"In any sporting event, there is not enough time, the coaches must use the remaining time to prepare their athletes for the trials and hopefully the country will send many top athletes to Zambia for the CAA Junior Athletics Championships," Malle noted.

Six nations, Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Somalia, Zanzibar, and the host Mainland Tanzania battled it out in this year's edition of the EAAR.

Kenya emerged as the overall winner with 13 gold medals, five silver medals, and one bronze medal, followed by second-placed Zanzibar with one gold medal, three silver medals, and two bronze medals.

The host Mainland Tanzania settled for third place having collected one gold medal, four silver medals, and eight bronze medals.

Mainland Tanzania's

gold medal was won by Arusha's Eliah Chani in the long jump event, posting 6m 29cm.

Uganda took fourth place after collecting one silver medal, and two bronze medals, South Sudan ended fifth with one silver medal and one bronze medal. Somalia finished last having failed to win any medal.

Mainland Tanzania was represented by 19 junior athletes that were coached by Mwinga Mwanjala and Robert Kalyaha.

William Kallaghe, AT vice-president, disclosed during the EAAR's closing ceremony that junior championships are vital for the development of athletics in the region, hence, the need to put much emphasis.

He asked all EAAR member nations to start preparations for the CAA Junior Athletics Championships.

Jackson Tuwei, the EAAR Athletics Chairman, hailed tremendous athletics development initiatives set up by EAAR member states.

He said the region has a lot of world-class athletes due to its efforts in developing youth programs.

"The EAAR region is doing a lot in athletics and we must keep it up, it is good and currently our region is on top in terms of athletics," Tuwei revealed.

"This was evident in the recent World Cross-Country Championships in Australia where there were EAAR countries namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania in the top 10," the EAAR Athletics Chairman pointed out.

"This is a clear indication that we are doing great, now we should focus on the coming CAA Junior Athletics Championships," he said.

Tuwei, also serving as Athletics Kenya (AK) president, however, lamented the absence of some EAAR member nations in the regional showdown and appealed to them to take part in next year's event.

The CAA Junior Athletics Championships last took place in Abidjan, Ivory Coast in 2019.

Barcelona can virtually clinch Liga title in decisive Clasico

BARCELONA

XAVI Hernandez and his Barcelona side can take a decisive step towards winning La Liga on Sunday -- where a Clasico victory over Real Madrid would send them 12 points clear of the champions.

The Catalans have not won the Spanish title since Ernesto Valverde was at the helm in 2019 and expanding the gap on their bitter rivals in second would virtually clinch it.

Madrid won the first La Liga Clasico 3-1 in October but Xavi's side have vastly improved since then.

The coach is desperate to win the league title to validate the team's growth, while for the club it would represent a swift return on their outlay last summer.

Despite their financial crisis, Barcelona signed Robert Lewandowski, Jules Kounde, Raphinha and other players by selling off future television rights in a move some blasted for gambling with the club's future.

Champions League group-stage elimination, followed by a Europa League knock-out by Manchester United, confirmed Barcelona still have a long way to go, but they have made significant progress.

Beating Real Madrid 3-1 in the Spanish Super Cup final in January in Saudi Arabia earned Xavi his first trophy as coach, and the performance was dominant.

By contrast, when the teams met earlier March in the Copa del Rey semi-final first leg, Madrid had the better of the game, but Barcelona still scraped a 1-0 win.

How the Catalans approach this Clasico is a key issue for Xavi to decide.

Fans at Camp Nou may not react well to a similarly defensive performance, and will expect Barcelona to take the initiative more.

That will be significantly easier if midfield maestro Pedri is fit.

Without the Canary Islander, already essential for club and country at 20 years old, Barcelona seem virtually incapable of playing possession football.

Pedri has been missing with a thigh injury for six games across all competitions and in his absence, when Barcelona have won it has been by relying on their rock-solid defence.

Karim Benzema and Vinicius Junior fired blanks at the Santiago Bernabeu in the Copa Clasico and the latter has been shackled by Ronald Araujo in recent battles with Barcelona.

Xavi tends to select the Uruguayan centre-back at right-back against Madrid so he can face off against the Brazilian winger.

Barcelona have found that by shutting down Vinicius, Madrid's attack is significantly less dangerous.

"For me he is the best in the world," said Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti after the Champions League win over Liverpool in midweek, backing Vinicius to the hilt.

However Madrid may need to prove they have other routes to goal if Vinicius is kept quiet.

The winger set up Benzema as Los Blancos beat Liverpool 1-0 on Wednesday to reach the Champions League quarter-finals, 6-2 on aggregate.

It was a strong display which shows the reigning Spanish and European champions can produce the goods when it truly matters to them.

The opportunity to cut the gap on Barcelona to six points at the top of La Liga could re-ignite the title race, but the record 14-time European champions' main goal is retaining that trophy.

"We have to continue with this rhythm, playing like we've played today, and I hope it's like that in the Clasico, we have to win," said Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, after beating Liverpool.

Benzema is expected to be fit after taking a blow to the shin against the Reds, but Barcelona are still missing his compatriot Ousmane Dembele.

To upset the Catalans, Madrid will have to manage something only one other La Liga side have accomplished all season -- scoring against the hosts at Camp Nou.

Joselu netted a penalty for Espanyol in December and no player has scored from open play in the top flight this season at Barcelona's stadium.

Player to watch: Sergi Darder
Espanyol midfielder Sergi Darder has pulled the strings for his side this season and is key to their bid to avoid relegation. His side face Celta Vigo on Saturday at home and with Espanyol a point above the drop zone, it is a must-win game.

AFP

Sporting beat Arsenal in Europa stunner, Man Utd, Juve advance

LONDON

SPORTING Lisbon sent Arsenal crashing out of the Europa League with a penalty shoot-out triumph after Pedro Goncalves's stunning equaliser, while Manchester United and Juventus eased into the quarter-finals on Thursday.

Sporting trailed when Granit Xhaka put Premier League leaders Arsenal ahead at the Emirates Stadium.

But Portugal midfielder Goncalves forced extra-time when he caught out Arsenal goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale with a breathtaking strike from 46 yards out.

With reality television star Kim Kardashian and her Arsenal fan son Saint among the spectators, the match ended level at 1-1 on the night and 3-3 on aggregate, requiring penalties to settle the tie.

Sporting emerged with a shock 5-3 victory in the shoot-out as Gabriel Martinelli's effort was saved by Antonio Adan and Nuno Santos dispatched the winning kick.

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said the result was "a huge blow" and blasted his side for wasting chances.

"There were moments in the first 75 minutes where we weren't at our level. We gave every ball away and we didn't have the capacity to take the game," the Spaniard said.

"There were chances to win it in extra-time. There was a lot of uncertainty with the pens. It was a very difficult game."

- Juventus advance with ease -



Arsenal players react during the Europa League round of 16, second leg, soccer match between Arsenal and Sporting CP at the Emirates stadium in London, Thursday, March 16, 2023. (Agencies)

It was a far calmer night for Manchester United as Marcus Rashford's swerving strike from distance earned a 1-0 win at Real Betis and a 5-1 aggregate success.

Joaquin hit the post for Betis and Juanmi spurned two clear chances for the hosts as they started well, desperately trying to overturn their three-goal deficit at the lively Benito Villamarin stadium.

However Rashford's brilliant goal early in the second half killed off the tie.

"Once you score the first goal the game is gone, and they don't have the belief anymore," said Manchester United boss Erik ten Hag.

"That is another step (forward) we made mentally, a winning attitude, to deal with that." - Juventus advance with ease -

Three-time champions Juventus earned a 2-0 win over 10-man Freiburg to progress 3-0 on aggregate, with goals from Dusan Vlahovic and Federico Chiesa.

Juventus, leading Freiburg by a goal from the first leg, thought they had taken the lead when Vlahovic struck from close range, but it was ruled offside by VAR.

The Serbian forward then broke the deadlock just before the break from the penalty spot after Manuel Gulde handled in the box and was shown his second yellow card.

With Juventus fully in control and Freiburg at a numerical disadvantage, the tie was as good as over and Chiesa wrapped up the win late on.

Sevilla, the record six-time winners of this competition,

suffered a nervy 1-0 defeat at Fenerbahce as Enner Valencia netted from the spot, but still qualified 2-1 on aggregate.

Jorge Sampaoli's Sevilla, struggling badly in La Liga, suffered defeat in Turkey but had done enough at home to progress against Fenerbahce and continue their charge.

Michy Batshuayi went off injured for the hosts early on, damaging their comeback bid, but Jorge Jesus's team took the lead when Alex Telles handled in the box.

Veteran Ecuador striker Valencia drilled home his 24th goal of the season for Fenerbahce.

Sevilla held out to progress despite pressure from the hosts in the second half, as they looked for a second goal to force extra-time.

Feyenoord thrashed Shakhtar Donetsk 7-1 on the night at De Kuip to progress to the last eight 8-2 on aggregate.

Jose Mourinho's Roma drew 0-0 at Real Sociedad to advance 2-0 on aggregate, while Bayer Leverkusen won 2-0 at Ferencvaros to clinch a 4-0 aggregate success.

In the UEFA Conference League last 16, Fiorentina thrashed Sivasspor 4-1, triumphing 5-1 on aggregate, but fellow Serie A side Lazio were knocked out, losing 2-1 at AZ Alkmaar on the night and 4-2 on aggregate.

West Ham thrashed AEK Larnaca 4-0 to complete a 6-0 aggregate stroll, with Anderlecht beating Villarreal 2-1 on aggregate after a 1-0 victory in Spain.

AFP

Arsenal seek to pull clear of City as Premier League strugglers battle

LONDON

ARSENAL have a golden chance to stretch their lead at the top of the Premier League this weekend with Manchester City distracted by the FA Cup as the scramble to avoid the drop intensifies.

Tottenham will leapfrog third-placed Manchester United if they beat struggling Southampton while Newcastle can strengthen their push for a Champions League place by seeing off Nottingham Forest.

At the other end of the table, just five points separate 12th-placed Crystal Palace from basement club Southampton.

AFP Sport looks at some of the key talking points ahead of the weekend's action in the English top flight.

Arsenal eye clear blue water

A month ago Manchester City beat Arsenal 3-1 to go top of the Premier League table as Mikel Arteta's men wobbled.

Now the Gunners can pull eight points clear of the defending champions if they beat Palace at the Emirates on Sunday.

Arsenal have won all five league games since their defeat to City -- their only loss at home

this season -- while their closest rivals dropped two precious points against Forest.

A 3-0 victory at Fulham last weekend was the 100th win of the Arteta era, which started in 2019.

It came in the Spaniard's 168th game in charge, meaning his overall win percentage of 59.5 is the highest for any Arsenal manager in history.

Arteta has been deprived of the services of Eddie Nketiah, who is out of action with an ankle injury, but Gabriel Jesus returned to action last week following knee surgery to add more firepower.

January signing Leandro Trossard has also made a big impact in the final third -- the Belgian provided all three assists at Fulham.

Champions League battle

Behind Arsenal and City, the race is also on for the two remaining places in next season's Champions League.

Manchester United, in FA Cup quarter-final action this weekend, appeared to have a strong grip on third but that has been loosened after their 7-0 pummeling by Liverpool and a disap-

pointing goalless draw against Southampton.

Victory at Southampton on Saturday would lift Antonio Conte's Spurs one point above United, though they would have played two games more.

Draw specialists Newcastle beat Wolves 2-1 last week to reignite their top-four push after a spell in which they won just one of eight league games.

"We'd gone a few weeks without that feeling -- we wanted to return to our best and I felt we did," said Newcastle boss Eddie Howe. "Hopefully we can build on it."

Liverpool and Brighton are not in action

this weekend, meaning Brentford would go sixth if they condemn Leices- ter to a fifth straight defeat in all competitions.

Relegation scrap
The relegation battle is too close to call and no team below Aston Villa in 11th spot will feel safe.

West Ham and Leicester have been used to challenging for European football in recent seasons but both sit outside the bottom three only on goal difference.

Leicester boss Brendan Rodgers remains defiant that his side can find their mojo again after showing "resilience" to recover following a poor run earlier in the season.

With West Ham not playing, all of the bottom three could end the weekend outside the relegation zone.

Bournemouth are aiming to build on a 1-0 win over Liverpool last weekend when they travel to Villa, while Leeds, with just one victory in their past 13 league games, are away to fellow strugglers Wolves.

Everton are a point clear of the drop zone thanks an uptick in form under Sean Dyche, but face a tough trip away to a revitalised Chelsea.

Palace have not won this year and have failed to even score in their past four games.

"Our front players have

to change their mindset. We have to be more aggressive going forward," said Palace boss Patrick Vieira ahead of his return to Arsenal, whom he captained the last time the Gunners won the Premier League in 2003/04.

Fixtures
Today (1500 unless stated)

Aston Villa v Bournemouth, Brentford v Leicester, Southampton v Tottenham, Wolves v Leeds, Chelsea v Everton (1730)

Tomorrow
Arsenal v Crystal Palace (1400)
AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Sporting beat Arsenal in Europa stunner, Man Utd, Juve advance

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5 **TONIGHT @ 9:00**

EATV Sports

MONDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 Weekend Movie (r)
14:00 SKONGA (r)
14:30 Planet Bongo (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Akili & Me (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Bongo Hit
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 5SPORTS LIVE
22:00 Zote kuntu
23:00 Kurasa (r)
23:05 EATV SAA 1 (r)

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The week's local and international sporting events as well as in-depth analysis of the biggest sporting highlights of the week are covered on 5Sports.

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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

TOC educates Singida residents on trachoma disease

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA Olympic Committee (TOC) mid this week trained more than 400 students suffering from trachoma disease in Singida.

The training, conducted by TOC vice-president Henry Tandau, was held under the Game Changer program aimed at changing the mindset of students who live near schools.

In Singida, the training targeted students who reside near Ikhanoda and Mwasauya schools.

Before the training, there were football and netball matches between the two schools.

Ikhanoda cruised to a 7-4 victory over Mwasauya in netball, before garnering a 4-3 win in football.

Ikhanoda's victory in football was realized during post-match penalties and winners were presented with football kits.

After the matches, Tandau said Game Changer is a program operating under the Commonwealth Games through support from Commonwealth Sports Foundation.

He said the training aimed to educate the students on how one can contract the disease which is transmitted by bacteria that affects the eyes.

Neema Mlowe, the Head of the Desk for Non-Communicable Diseases (NTD) in Singida District, said trachoma is the biggest challenge in the district.

She said she is hopeful that the training will help to combat the spread of the disease in the district and the region.

"The training has come at a good time and it has targeted participants who are important in the fight to end trachoma in our district," she noted.

"This disease is here but many people don't know it, it's difficult to detect it, especially in the early stages," Neema disclosed.

"I thank TOC for this training, which is targeting students, given they are ideal agents for change," she said.

Trachoma affects the eyes, it is spread through the contaminated surface, saliva, skin to skin contact, and some of its symptoms are mild itching and irritation of the eyes and eyelids.

Some of its treatments include antibiotics and surgery, it is preventable by access to clean water and improved sanitation.

Team's targets override individual ambitions, says Mayele



Yanga's Congolese attacker, Fiston Mayele. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YANGA'S Congolese forward Fiston Mayele has said that increasing his efforts to fulfil his outfit's duties is the only way for him to lift the 2022/23 NBC Premier League's golden boot award.

Mayele leads the league's golden boot race with 15 goals and one assist, followed by the Simba SC duo of Moses Phiri and Saidi Ntibazokiza 'Saïdo' with 10 goals apiece.

The Yanga goal-getter said he realizes that the top-flight games are becoming more challenging and teams are turning more aggressive to-

wards the halfway of the 2022/23 season.

Mayele pointed out that they

realize there is a lot of work to be done in all competitions, which is a more important fulfillment

than eyeing individual objectives.

The forward revealed: "Each team needs a victory in fixtures that we play, but the way we cooperate adds strength in efforts to achieve our goals rather than seeking to improve individual statistics."

"Our team has to win first, that is the main aspect, then winning the golden boot award will follow."

"The main achievement is the team's goals, namely winning games and titles at the end of the season," Mayele noted.

The goal-getter revealed: "I know last season I was so close to winning the golden boot with so much pressure on my back after putting much effort to win it but, this season, it's something that I'm not thinking of because I want to help the team and improve myself."

Yanga leads the rest in the NBC Premier

League standings with 65 points after playing 24 games, having scored 45 goals.

The league leader's close challenger, Simba SC, remains in second place with 57 points after battling it out in 24 ties.

Until now, both Simba SC and Yanga have six matches left, including the clash between the clubs, before ending the eventful 2022/23 campaign.

Yanga will also aim to defend their title in Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC), with the side gearing up for a quarterfinal duel against Geita Gold FC set to take place in Dar es Salaam.

Tomorrow, Yanga will have the task of making sure they win this season's CAF Confederation Cup Group D tie against Tunisia's US Monastir, slated to take place in Dar es Salaam, and reach the quarterfinals of the continental showcase.

Sakho earns call-up for Senegal national team

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SIMBA SC attacking midfielder Pape Ousmane Sakho has been selected for Senegal's senior national football team by head coach Aliou Cisse for the upcoming African Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

Cissé selected his 24-man squad to face Mozambique on the third and fourth days of the qualifiers for the AFCON finals.

These ties will take place on March 24 and March 28, 2023. Ten players who took part in the 2022 World Cup in Qatar are absent from this list.

Long demanded by several Senegalese supporters, Pape Ousmane Sakho has finally won the selection done by Cissé, which happens to be the first call-up for the CAF 2021/2022 goal of the year winner.

"The doors of the national team are not closed for any Senegalese player", Aliou Cissé used to say each time when he was questioned on the summoning or not of a Senegalese international.

Sakho joins the senior national team, nicknamed 'Lions of Teranga', they will play a doubleheader against Mozambique, for the 2023 AFCON qualifiers.

The Simba SC attacking midfielder is one of the players who embody the future of Senegalese football.

The footballer moreover makes history as the first player from the East African club to make it to the Senegal senior national team.

Before winning selection for the 'Lions of Teranga' 24-man squad, Sakho joined the provisional squad to make it, through his exploits in training, Cisse was pleased with his ability.

Cisse met Sakho last year at the 2022 CAF Awards with reports speculating the midfielder was in for the

future call-up for the 'Lions of Teranga'.

Sakho joins 2022 CAF Player of the Year, compatriot Sadio Mane, who returned from an injury layoff while Chelsea goalkeeper, Edouard Mendy, has been left out.

The 30-year-old shot-stopper has just returned to training after his finger injury. In addition to the Chel-

sea goalkeeper, Cissé has been without several other popular footballers.

Abdou Diallo and Cheikhou Kouyaté, also nursing injuries, were not selected, as is the case with Pape Abou Cissé and Fodé Ballo-Touré, who are struggling to cut in at Olympiakos and AC Milan respectively.

Famara Diédhiou, lacking playing time in Granada,

Mamadou Loum Ndiaye, as well as Moustapha Name, will not take part in this double-header against Mozambique. Nicolas Jackson could join the national U-23 team.

Senegal's squad:

Goalkeepers: Alfred Gomis, Seny Dieng, and Mory Diaw

Defenders: Youssouf Sabaly, Noah Fadiga, Formose

Mendy, Kalidou Koulibaly, Moussa Niakhate, Ismail Jakobs, Abdoulaye Seck, and Abdallah Ndour

Midfielders: Idrissa Gueye, Pathé Ciss, Pape Matar Sarr, Dion Lopy, Nampalys Mendy, and Pape Gueye

Attackers: Sadio Mané, Krepin Diatta, Boulaye Dia, Habib Diallo, Iliman Ndiaye, Bamba Dieng, and Pape Ousmane Sakho



Tanzania's Simba SC players take part in training at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam yesterday to prepare for the 2022/23 CAF Champions League Group C clash between the club and Guinea's Horoya Athletic Club scheduled to take place at the stadium today. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Flexibles by David Chikoko

