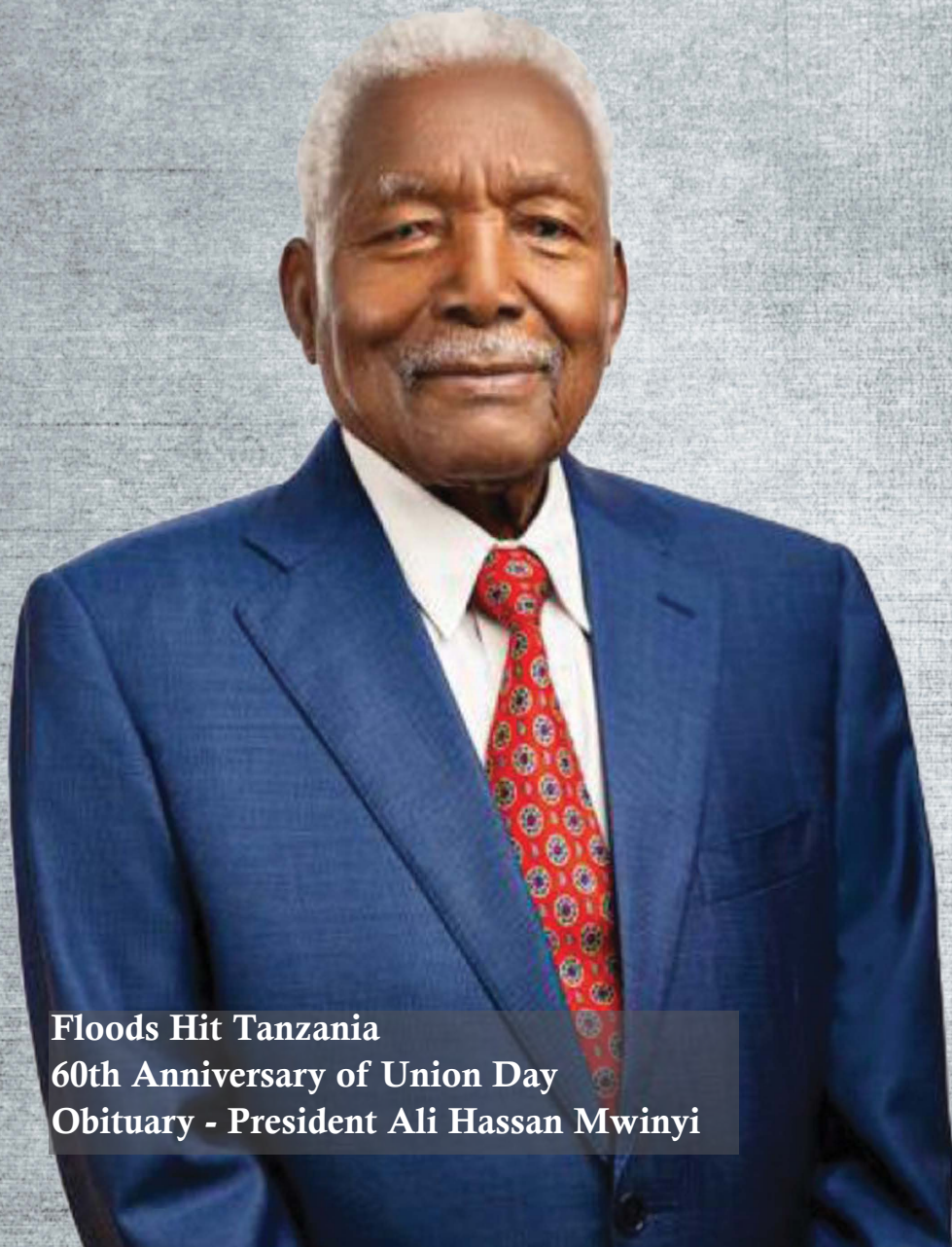


Tanzanian Affairs

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Floods Hit Tanzania

60th Anniversary of Union Day

Obituary - President Ali Hassan Mwinyi

Ben Taylor: FLOODS HIT TANZANIA



*President Samia at the rain affected Union Day celebrations in Dar-es-Salaam.
Photo State House*

A season of heavy rain has caused havoc – and over 150 deaths – across Tanzania. Speaking in late April, the Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said around 200,000 people and 50,000 households had been badly affected by the heavy rainfall. He warned that the rain could continue well into May.

“The heavy El Niño rains, accompanied by strong winds, floods, and landslides in various parts of the country, have caused significant damage,” he told parliament. “These include loss of life, destruction of crops, homes, citizens’ property, and infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and railways,” he added.

Similar devastation has been caused in Kenya as well, with 188 deaths reported.

Cover photo - President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Tanzania’s second president who died on 29th February 2024 (Obituary page 50)

To make matters worse, at the time of writing, a rare East African cyclone is anticipated for early May.

“Hidaya Cyclone ... is expected to dominate and affect the weather patterns in the country including heavy rain and strong winds in some regions near the Indian Ocean,” said the Tanzania Red Cross Society on X, formerly Twitter.

Hidaya, the equivalent of a Category 1 hurricane, is the first of its kind to develop in eastern Africa, according to the World Meteorological Organization.

Wind speeds of up to 100mph are expected, as well as coastal storm surges and heavy rain. Kenyan authorities have issued mandatory evacuation orders for residents near 178 dams and water reservoirs.

Chris Fawkes of BBC weather explained that one of the biggest drivers of the rains is the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). The IOD – sometimes called the “Indian Niño” because of its similarity to its Pacific equivalent – refers to the difference in sea-surface temperatures in opposite parts of the Indian Ocean. When waters in the western Indian Ocean are much warmer than normal, this can bring heavier rain regardless of El Niño. However, this happens at the same time as an El Niño event, as was the case last year, the rains in East Africa can become extreme.

Ben Taylor:

UNION DAY ANNIVERSARY

The heavy rain affected celebrations marking 60 years since the union between Zanzibar and Tanganyika, held on April 26th at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam. Attendance was understandably low as the rain fell throughout the ceremony.

Military parades went ahead in the wet weather, while dignitaries sheltered in the covered sections of the stadium.

Speaking at the event, President Samia Suluhu Hassan described how in 1964 the Presidents of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, Julius Nyerere and Abeid Karume respectively, were guided by wisdom, prudence, and courage in bringing Tanzanians together. She added that it was in this same spirit that leaders of all subsequent administrations have placed great importance on the Union.

On the social media platform X, formerly Twitter, she said that “The

4 *Union Day Anniversary*

only gift we can give to the founders of this union is to protect and live up to their great vision. We are all witnesses to the significant progress we have made in the past 60 years.”

“We have every reason to continue to be proud of and protect this unique union that arose from our own decisions. In advancing it, we must implement the philosophy of reconciliation, tolerance, reform, and rebuilding our country to maintain peace and stability, essential pillars for the prosperity and resilience of our nation.”

Diplomatic messages of congratulations also flowed in. King Charles III sent a congratulatory message, which read: “Happy Union Day, Tanzania! Dear Madam President, on the special occasion of your national day, my wife and I would like to convey our warmest congratulations to your Excellency and the people of the United Republic of Tanzania, Charles R.”

The US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, also congratulated Tanzania before adding: “We applaud Tanzania’s commitment to undertaking important reforms to strengthen democratic governance, increase transparency, and spur economic growth.”

The Chinese ambassador to Tanzania, Ms Chen Mingjian, said “May the friendship between China and Tanzania last forever.”

Ben Taylor:

TRANSPORT

All aboard the electric train trials

The Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) commenced its inaugural trial journey of the electric Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) train from Dar es Salaam to Morogoro on February 26, 2024, as part of the implementation of an order by the President Samia Suluhu Hassan. She directed that by July this year, SGR train services from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma should have begun.

Chief Government Spokesperson Mr Mobhare Matinyi spearheaded a group of journalists and editors from various media houses as they boarded the coaches to enjoy and have firsthand information on the historic trial. Departing from the Tanzanite Station in Dar es Salaam promptly at 10:30 am, the train arrived in Morogoro at 12:50 pm amid a wave of enthusiasm.



New electric TRC locomotive is offloaded in Dar-es-Salaam port

The test marks a significant step forward in Tanzania's efforts to modernize its transportation infrastructure and boost connectivity across the nation. The new line replaces the aged and less efficient meter-gauge railway system established during the colonial East African Railways.

The South Korean-made train, coupled with the Turkish/Chinese-built railway line, is poised to significantly reduce travel times and facilitate the efficient movement of goods and people. It is anticipated to be capable of reaching speeds of up to 160km per hour.

As trials for the standard gauge railway (SGR) electric train continue, TRC has said the process of setting fares for the service is still underway. "We at TRC have finished our part where we have submitted to the Land Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA) everything that is needed," said TRC Director General, Masanja Kadogosa. He said he understood that LATRA had already engaged in meetings with stakeholders in Dar es Salaam and Dodoma.

The proposed fares by TRC from Dar es Salaam-Morogoro are for the third class TSh 24,794 per adult, and TSh 12,397 for kids between the ages of 4-12. For Economy Class fares, the same route was TSh 29,752 per adult and TSh 14,876 for kids. These fares are subject to approval by LATRA.

Later, in April, TRC announced the arrival of the first ever Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) trains at the Dar es Salaam port, marking a significant leap forward for the project. This initial set consists of five electric locomotives and three passenger cars.

TRC said they expect to receive a total of 10 EMU sets, with the remaining units arriving monthly until October 2024. Additionally, they have already received 65 passenger cars and 9 electric locomotives, further bolstering their fleet.

Each EMU train can accommodate up to 589 passengers. The new units have prioritized passenger comfort with amenities such as Wi-Fi, designated seating for passengers with special needs, air conditioning, and CCTV cameras for enhanced security.

Once commissioned for service, the SGR trains will cut the time between Dar and Morogoro to around two hours, down from the current four-hour journey by buses and five hours by train on the old railway.

The 300km Dar-Morogoro line is the first phase of the SGR project, which is expected to run up to Mwanza on the shores of Lake Victoria and Kigoma on the northeastern shores of Lake Tanganyika in five phases. There are plans to add connections to Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo as part of the East African Railway Master Plan.

Phase two of the SGR project runs from Morogoro to Makutupora, covering 422 kilometres. The line is being extended to Tabora, 294km away in phase three. The fourth phase will link Tabora to Isaka, a 130km line, where it will branch to Mwanza and Kigoma.

Brief dispute between air traffic authorities in Kenya and Tanzania

For a few days in late January, a spat between air traffic authorities in Kenya and Tanzania caused a minor diplomatic incident, and flights were suspended.

Kenya denied Tanzania's request for cargo flights by its carrier, Air Tanzania Company Limited (ATCL), between Nairobi and third countries. In response the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA) suspended all Kenya Airways (KQ) passenger flights between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, effective January 22, 2024.

The TCAA cited the Kenyan authorities' refusal as a breach of Section 4 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Air Services signed between the two nations in 2016. This section stipulates reciprocal treatment for airlines of both countries.

The TCAA suspension of KQ flights never came into force, however, as the situation was resolved by the intervention of government ministers, including Tanzania's Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, January Makamba.

"I spoke to my Kenyan colleague @MusaliaMudavadi. We agree that restrictions on air travel between our countries and from either of our countries to a third country shouldn't stand. With the relevant authorities, we've resolved to settle this issue," said Mr Makamba on X (formerly Twitter).

Zanzibar roll-on, roll-off ferries planned

Zanzibar port expects to develop a special berth for loading and unloading vehicles in what's referred to as Roll-on, Roll-off (Ro-Ro) ferries. President Hussein Mwinyi in January witnessed the signing of an agreement for the project, which will be implemented through Public Private Partnership (PPP).

Dr Mwinyi described the project as a landmark in marine transport under the blue economy, adding: "A major reform and development in transport is inevitable, especially to achieve our goals. Improved transportation systems in road, water, and air are required for our social and economic growth."

The signing ceremony was also witnessed by several executives, Ministers, and The Netherlands Ambassador to Tanzania, Mr Wiebe de Boer. The Ambassador said that relations between his country and Zanzibar have been growing stronger, where so far already there are 15 companies including KLM partnering in tourism and transport industries.

On his part, Zanzibar Minister for Infrastructure, Communication and Transport, Dr Khalid Salum Mohamed, noted the project will improve services at the current Ferry Terminal, and address passenger congestion and safety risks.

Air Tanzania fleet growth continues at pace

The government has continued with its efforts to uplift Tanzania's aviation sector with the arrival of a brand-new aircraft for Air Tanzania Company Limited (ATCL) in early March. The aircraft, a Boeing 737-9 Max with a capacity to carry 181 passengers, brings the number of the country's airline fleet to 15. The airline is expected to add one more Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner to its fleet before the end of the year.

Speaking during the reception to welcome the new plane, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa underlined the government's commitment on continuing to strengthen ATCL and the aviation sector as key catalysts for economic growth. "The aviation sector is very important for development of our country, as it guarantees economic advancement. Globally, development of the economy has been influenced by the presence of a stable transport system, which boosts investment, protect capital and strengthen communication among traders and other service providers" Mr Majaliwa said.

Mr Majaliwa added that the government is undertaking major renovation of the JNIA Terminal 2 (the former international terminal), which upon completion will be destined as ATCL terminal, to cater for the Eastern and Southern Africa markets. Furthermore, he said the government is undertaking various airport construction projects in other regions, including Dodoma, Kigoma and Shinyanga, saying the plan is to ensure most parts of the country are accessible through air transport.

ATCL's Managing Director, Engineer Ladislaus Matindi noted that the addition in the number of planes to the country's airline has inspired many customers to prefer flying than ever before. He said that in the 2022/2023 financial year, the company's planes carried over one million passengers, compared to only 160,000 in 2016/2017 when the government began engineering its revival. He said the airline currently serves 81 per cent of the local market.

Later, at the end of March, Air Tanzania launched direct flights between Dar es Salaam and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). "Starting today, March 31, 2024, direct flights to Dubai will operate four times per week with the brand new and ultra-modern aircraft, the Boeing 737 MAX 9," said Eng. Matindi.

The Dubai route will be the seventh international route to be launched by Air Tanzania. Other regional and international routes that have been inaugurated by the airline are Nairobi, Bujumbura, Lubumbashi, Entebbe, Ndola (Zambia), Johannesburg (launched in 2021, now suspended), Comoros, Harare, and Guangzhou.

Air Tanzania financial challenges continue at pace

Air Tanzania's losses surged by 61% to TSh 56.64 billion in 2022/23 (USD \$21m), compared to TSh 35.2 billion (\$13.5m) in the previous year, according to Controller and Auditor General (CAG) Charles Kichere.

"The loss widened despite the fact that the company received government grants worth TSh 31.55 billion to boost its operations," said Mr Kichere who handed the annual audit reports to President Samia Suluhu Hassan at State House.

According to the Transport ministry's annual budgets passed by Parliament from the 2016/17 financial year to date, the government has spent at least TSh 3.63 trillion (\$1.4bn) in reviving the airline during the last eight years.

TAZARA improvements planned

The World Bank has approved USD\$ 270 million (approx. TSh 690bn) finance to support improvements in transport and trade connectivity between Zambia and Tanzania, including to the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA). The money will be used to rehabilitate a portion of the TAZARA in Zambia, develop a modern border post between Zambia and Tanzania and introduce other supporting infrastructure.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Mr January Makamba, said that the project was one of the agenda when President Samia Suluhu Hassan's visit to Zambia last year. "This is a much-needed boost to Tanzania-Zambia transport and trade connectivity, which was part of agenda of visit by President Samia to Zambia last year. Thank you, excellences, for your leadership on this important matter," Mr Makamba wrote on his official X (formerly Twitter) platform.

Ben Taylor: **ENERGY & MINERALS**

Significant breakthrough in helium explorations

Helium One Global, the firm licensed for helium exploration in southwest Tanzania has discovered 4.7% helium concentrations at Rukwa Rift Basin. The company described the high concentrations as a big milestone towards achieving commerciality at the earliest opportunity.

“When performing the Basement Drilling Stem Testing (DST), high concentrations of helium began to flow to the surface,” read the statement from the company. The statement went on to add that the quantity of helium increases with depth.

Helium One Global’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Lorna Blaisse said that she was delighted with the findings. She added that she appreciated all collaborators including the Ministry of Minerals and the Mining Commission of Tanzania among others involved in bringing the project to the point of success.

Commenting on the findings, Assistant Commission in the Ministry of Minerals, Mr Francis Mihayo said the positive results from the exploration strengthen hope for helium extraction in Tanzania. He said the discovery of helium stands as the basis for further exploration, which will lead into a feasibility study and finally exploitation.

University of Dar es Salaam’s Head of School of Mines and Geosciences, Dr Elisante Mshiu, also the President of the Tanzania Geological Society (TGS), noted that concentration of 4.7% helium signals existence of huge volumes of the gas. “Concentration of 4.7 per cent is massive”, he said. He said further exploration will be undertaken at the area to estimate the actual volume of helium available, and expressed his optimism that Tanzania can become the global leading supplier of helium upon effective exploitation of the deposits.

Today, helium is produced primarily in just four countries including in the USA, Qatar, Algeria and Russia. It has multiple essential uses including in manufacturing of medical equipment.

Helium One Global holds prospecting licences totalling more than 2,965 square km across three distinct project areas which are Rukwa, Balangida, and Eyasi located within rift basins in the north and southwest of Tanzania.

The Company's flagship Rukwa Project is located within the Rukwa Rift Basin covering 1,900 square km in the south-west.

First turbine at Nyerere Hydropower Plant (Stiegler's Gorge) switched on

In February, Tanzania switched on the first turbine of a new hydroelectric plant at Steigler's Gorge on the Rufiji river. This was announced by Doto Biteko, energy minister and deputy prime minister, while visiting the 2,115 megawatt (MW) Julius Nyerere Hydropower Plant (JNHPP). He said that the first turbine was now contributing up to 235 MW of power to the grid.

The project has been highly controversial. Before construction began in 2019, conservationists warned that building the dam could affect wildlife and their habitats as well as agricultural productivity. The site is located within the Selous Game Reserve, one of the largest protected areas in Africa, harbouring one of the most significant concentrations of animals including elephant, black rhino and cheetah and a large variety of habitats, according to United Nations agency UNESCO.

On the positive side, the plant is expected to provide a major boost to the country's electricity generation capacity. Many areas have recently been suffering from extended power shortages, and load shedding has been estimated as costing between 5-7% of Tanzania's GDP. Further, it will achieve this at a much lower cost than existing sources: an estimated 4.5 cents per kilowatt-hour.

Nevertheless, in addition to critics of the project's impact on the environment and livelihoods, analysts have suggested that had the same level of investment gone into alternatives such as geothermal, solar and wind, the country could have generated double the output of JNHPP. It is impossible to make these calculations with any certainty, however, as little reliable information has been made public about the construction cost. The official price tag is USD \$2.9 billion, but experts claim this is unrealistic. Competing estimates range from \$3.9 billion to \$9.8 billion.

LNG project delayed further

Negotiations for the development of Tanzania's \$42 billion liquefied natural gas export plant have been delayed by proposed government

changes to a financial agreement reached last year, according to a government spokesperson and sources within the companies involved in the project.

The government and investors announced in May 2023 that they had completed negotiations on the project to unlock Tanzania's vast offshore gas resources. The government said at the time that the cabinet would review the agreements the following month.

Energy Minister Doto Biteko told parliament in April 2024 that the attorney general and other government institutions had provided feedback on the deals and negotiations were expected to conclude during the 2024/25 fiscal year.

A source from one of the investors told Reuters news agency that the delay related to changes that Biteko proposed to the host government agreement after he became energy minister last August. Biteko also serves as deputy prime minister.

The source, who asked not to be identified, said Biteko and his team came back to investors with a "rather interesting amendment to the HGA which completely blew the project economics out of the water". The source did not provide details but said that progressing on the project would be "definitely not quick" and that the minister's talk of completing negotiations in the coming fiscal year was "optimistic".

Meanwhile, "a source privy to the matter" told The Citizen newspaper that the government had concerns about several aspects of the proposed agreement. The source said the government was weighing a proposal by the companies that proceeds from the planned \$42 billion project be banked in foreign financial institutions, as well as a proposal that the companies should be compensated by the government in case that natural gas prices drop in the international market in the future.

Contacted for comment by The Citizen, Biteko said that the government and companies were "still negotiating to find common ground."

In March, the United States government warned Tanzania of a likely exodus of investors if delays continue. US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Joy Basu, told The EastAfrican newspaper that companies such as Exxon Mobil that have been pushing the deal with Tanzanian authorities had reached a point where they were now "willing to walk

away.”

“There is LNG in lots of places around the world now, and for Tanzania the window for this particular investment is closing fast. Such windows do not remain open forever,” said Ms Basu whose portfolio in the Joe Biden administration includes overseeing economic and regional affairs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Exxon Mobil, based in Houston, Texas, is one of several multinational firms that have stakes in the LNG project. Britain’s Shell and Norway’s Equinor, have been earmarked as joint main operators of the project, with Exxon Mobil, Pavilion Energy (Singapore), Medco Energi (Indonesia) and the state-owned Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC) as partners.

Barrick settles legal claims relating to North Mara gold mine

Barrick TZ Limited and North Mara Gold Mine Limited, local subsidiaries of Barrick Gold, announced in March that they have reached a settlement of the claims by Tanzanian residents against them in their UK legal action. They said that the settlement was reached “with no admission of liability on their part,” but provided no further details about the settlement’s content.

Fourteen Tanzanian citizens made claims against Barrick TZ and North Mara Gold Mine Limited for alleged human rights incidents between 2014 and September 2019. The Tanzanians alleged that the companies were legally responsible for deaths and injuries caused by the Tanzania police during security operations on or around the mine. The mine had a memorandum of understanding with the police for security under which it paid, housed and equipped the police.

Barrick TZ Limited and North Mara Gold Mine Limited denied the allegations.

The company’s decision to settle comes over four years after the proceedings were brought forward in the UK.

RAID, a UK-based NGO that exposes corporate wrongdoing, environmental harm, and human rights abuse, has repeatedly raised concerns about human rights violations at the North Mara mine.

In November 2022 it published findings showing the reported death

toll at the North Mara mine had risen to at least 77, along with 304 wounded, by police responsible for mine security, most of which occurred after Barrick acquired the mine in 2006. This would rank the North Mara mine as one of the deadliest industrial mines in Africa in terms of security-related violence.

RAID Executive Director Anneke Van Woudenberg said after the settlement was announced that she “welcomes any settlement that brings relief to the claimants after so many years.”

Two further legal actions alleging killings and injuries by security forces at Barrick’s North Mara mine remain ongoing – one in the Canadian courts against Barrick Gold and one in the UK against London Bullion Market Association (LBMA). The latter case alleges that the LBMA is liable in respect of the deaths of two artisanal miners at the mine in July and December 2019 because it certifies gold from the mine as responsibly sourced and free from serious human rights abuses. The LBMA says the claim has no merit.

Zanzibar launches first oil and gas licensing round

The President of Zanzibar, Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, on March 20 commissioned the first round auction of oil and gas blocks to investors.

Dr Mwinyi said the government had reviewed the legal and contractual frameworks around oil and natural gas before launching the round, to attract investors into the hydrocarbon industry.

“We made the review to create a friendly investment environment in the oil and gas sector here in Zanzibar because companies need to invest in a safe place where they can be profitable,” he said.

The government of Zanzibar has embarked on the “blue economy” policy, which includes oil and gas among the main priority areas.

“The government believes that the blue economy has many opportunities to promote economic development plans that aim at reducing poverty and creating employment opportunities,” said President Mwinyi.

He said that the exploration activities for oil and gas in Zanzibar started in the 1950s with the British Petroleum (BP) Company, in collaboration with Shell, conducting detailed investigations and drilling two wells on both sides of Unguja and Pemba, which were completed in 1963. After

the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964, oil and gas exploration activities were under the government of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Minister for Blue Economy and Fisheries in Zanzibar, Mr Shaaban Ali Othman, said the launch covered eight blocks out of the 12 existing blocks. “We are waiting for applications from investors for the eight blocks that are up for grabs in the next 10 years,” he said, welcoming investors.

He said both the laws governing the sector and the production sharing agreement (PSA) model were reviewed to facilitate investment.

The chief executive officer of the Zanzibar Petroleum Development Corporation (ZPDC), Mr Mikidadi Alli Rashid, said the investors will sign the PSA model with the minister and ZPDC to officially start oil and gas exploration and drilling.

He also urged residents to be patient, as oil and gas exploration and potential development take time. (*The Citizen*)

Dr Hildebrand Shayo: ECONOMICS

Key indicators show Tanzania’s economy to be in a good position

President Samia’s improved economic diplomacy has helped Tanzania expand economically, diversify economically, and become more resilient. This has improved Tanzania’s standing with her trading partners and, if it continues, has the potential to propel Tanzania’s economic growth to new heights. The economic indicators suggest that Tanzania is a favourable choice as an investment destination and allow many investors to come and invest, which will in turn provide sources of taxes and sources of employment to young Tanzanians.

For the first quarter of 2024, inflation stayed constant at 3%. This stability is caused by a plentiful domestic food supply and lower import inflation brought about by a slowdown in global market pricing. Notably, core inflation, a significant factor influencing total inflation dynamics, rose from 3.2% to 3.7%, the highest level since February 2023. The primary cause of this outturn is the pass-through impact of changes in domestic energy costs.

Additional data analysis indicates that the country’s current inflation

rate is within the intended range and in line with the standards established by the Southern African Development Community and the East African Community. The reduction of food prices is expected to maintain monthly bulleting inflation, which, looking at the data, is expected to stay constant and within the target range of 3-5% in the near and medium term, according to data analysis derived from the National Bureau of Statistics and Bank of Tanzania. However, OPEC+ continues to restrict oil production, and upside risk is still present in the case of geopolitical unrest and disruptions to the Red Sea supply.

Tanzania's food inflation rate is still relatively low; however, it slightly increased to 1.8% in February 2024 from 1.5% the month before. This result is linked to a sufficient supply of food in the home markets and a decline in demand from nearby nations. The cost of staple food crops is likewise trending to decrease. The energy, fuel, and utilities inflation sub-group, which comprises fuel, charcoal, firewood, electricity, and water charges, among other items, recorded an increase in inflation to 7.2% from 6.6% in the preceding month. This performance emphasises how stable the domestic food market is, which supports stability in the economy.

Regarding money and credit, the amount of money in circulation and credit extended to the private sector have both demonstrated steady growth, which has helped Tanzania's economy as a whole. The extended broad money supply (M3) rise was slightly higher in March at 13.1% compared to 12.8% the previous month. At 16.8%, the increase in private sector lending is vital but just slower than in the prior period. With a growth rate of 49.6%, credit to agricultural activities continues to record the fastest, followed by mining and quarrying. In the meantime, personal loans, which are mainly given to small and medium-sized firms and single proprietorships, continued to account for the majority of outstanding credit at 37.2%. Trade and agriculture came in second and third, respectively, at 13.6% and 10.2%. The sustained demand for loans indicates ongoing expansion in economic activities driven by favourable business conditions and supportive policies.

Regarding interest rates, the central bank rate (CBR) of 5.5% is still within a 200 basis point range for the 7-day interbank cash market rate. As a result, there has been no movement in the 7-day interest rate, which is currently sitting at 7.28% in February 2024, a slight increase from the

7.25% recorded in the previous month. Bank lending rates decreased in the first quarter of 2024; in February 2024, they averaged 15.44%, down from 15.96% in the same month in 2023. An improvement in credit risk, as shown by a decline in the percentage of non-performing loans falling below the Bank's 5% threshold, is partially responsible for this dip.

Furthermore, in February 2023, the negotiated lending rates dropped from 13.75% to 13.40%. The average deposit rate, however, was relatively steady at 7.39% overall. Negotiated deposit rates did, however, somewhat rise from 9.37% to 9.52%. Between February 2023 and February 2024, the difference in one-year interest rates shrank even more, going from 8.07% points to 7.04% points.

Regarding the market for government securities, there is still a lot of interest in the government securities auctions. Up to this point, every auction has seen oversubscriptions, consistent with the market's sufficient supply of shilling liquidity and reopening the previously issued Treasury bonds. Two Treasury bill auctions with a total tender size of TSh 164.2 billion will take place in Q1 2024 to support government funding and aid in price discovery. From 11.76% the previous month to 12.21% this month was the weighted average yield. In the meantime, TSh 148.8 billion and TSh 137.5 billion worth of 15- and 20-year Treasury bonds are being offered to meet government funding needs.

The combined bids for both auctions, which attracted oversubscription, totalled TSh 644.6 billion. The weighted average yield to maturity reached 13.66% and 15.83% for the 15- and 20-year Treasury bonds, respectively, from the rates registered in the previous auctions, and only bids totalling TSh 385.0 billion were accepted.

According to BOT figures for February 2024, domestic revenue from collections by the central and municipal governments was TSh 2,214.8 billion, or 92.8% of the monthly target. TSh 2,123.8 billion was the total revenue collected by the central government, of which TSh 1,817.8 billion came from tax collections and TSh 305.9 billion from non-tax sources. All main tax categories had lower revenue than expected, except income taxes, driven mainly by PAYE collections.

The government kept cutting back on spending while maintaining available resources. Preliminarily speaking, government spending in February 2024 was TSh 3,203.8 billion, of which TSh 2,289.2 billion

and TSh 914.6 billion were for ongoing and development expenses, respectively.

Regarding the national debt, the stock rose 0.8% to US\$ 44,963.4 million from its level the previous month. Both internal and foreign borrowing was blamed for the rise. Remarkably, 72.7% of the total stock was made up of external debt. The external debt the central government due was US\$ 23,164.3 million, followed by public businesses (US\$ 11.8 million). In February 2024, the federal government was disbursed US\$ 79.3 million of the US\$ 110.2 million in external debt. The total amount paid towards servicing external debt was US\$ 59.3 million.

Comparing exports of goods and services to the same time in 2023, they increased by 14.7% to reach US\$ 14,274 million. The primary drivers were revenue from tourism, traditional items, and minerals, particularly gold. Exports of conventional commodities totalled US\$ 1,022.7 million, up from US\$ 748.7 million the year before. The goods and services imported decreased to US\$ 16,087.2 million from US\$ 16,928.3 million in the previous year. Fertilisers, plastic products, and refined white petroleum products were the leading causes of the decline. On the other hand, there was a rise in the importation of machinery, industrial transport equipment, and passenger cars.

Tanzania's credit rating marked upwards

The credit rating agency, Moody's announced in March that it was upgrading the Government of Tanzania's long-term issuer ratings to B1 from B2 and changing the outlook to stable.

"The upgrade to B1 reflects Tanzania's track record of economic resilience throughout multiple external shocks in recent years, providing confidence in its shock absorption capacity going forward," read the announcement. Tanzania, Moody's said, is specifically credited for a diversified economic base and exports, stable debt burden and limited contingent liabilities. As such, Moody's expect that the country's continuation of conservative fiscal policy supports the rating at the B1 level.

"Moody's is sending a message to the international community – which includes the lenders – that Tanzania is financially disciplined," said economics professor, Semboja Haji. "It means that since, as a country, we use development funds for the intended purpose, then

lenders should have faith in us. This is a message to the international community that there is stability, sustainability and predictability in Tanzania's development strategy," he said.

In its statement, Moody's said Tanzania was taking tangible steps to improve institutional strength and foster an improving business environment. Although progress remains gradual and in the early stages, Moody's says, initial signs of improvements in the business environment were materialising as evidenced through an increase in private sector lending and increasing investment, both foreign and domestic.

Banking: CRDB posts record profit in 2023

CRDB Bank's net profit grew by 21% last year to demonstrate another strong financial performance of one Tanzania's leading financial institutions. Unaudited financial results released in January indicated that profit after tax increased to TSh 424bn in 2023 up from TSh 353bn in 2022.

The full-year results showed that total assets saw a notable 14 per cent increase from TSh 11.6tri to TSh 13tri.

CRDB Group CEO and Managing Director, Abdulmajid Nsekela, said "the impressive financial results reflect our commitment to delivering value to our stakeholders." He explained that delivery of the bank's new medium-term strategy (2023 – 2027) has been a key catalyst for achieving the record-breaking performance, highlighting strategic investments in digital transformation that are yielding significant returns.

In the past year, CRDB significantly broadened its horizons by extending its reach into new territories, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and venturing into the insurance sector with the establishment of CRDB Insurance Company.

"CRDB is well-positioned for the future, and we remain committed to delivering value to our customers, shareholders, and the communities we serve," Mr Nsekela said. (*Daily News*)

Economy grows, poverty persists

Tanzania is facing the challenge that strong economic growth is failing

to translate into poverty reduction while at the same time grappling with rapid population growth. This is according to the World Bank, which launched the 20th edition of the Tanzania Economic Update in Dar es Salaam in March.

The latest data shows that 3 million Tanzanians fell into poverty during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2018, around 14 million Tanzanians were living in poverty, but by December 2023, the number had risen to 17.3 million. Population projections suggest the number of people in Tanzania could reach around 140 million by 2050, driven by high birth rates. World Bank country director, Nathan Belete, said this surge could intensify demand for education and healthcare services beyond the economy's capacity, and will lead to challenges in job creation.

Mr Belete added that Tanzania can nevertheless attain a demographic dividend, which is the potential economic growth that can take place when a country undergoes a rapid improvement in health outcomes accompanied by a decline in fertility.

This includes intensifying efforts to expand access and strengthen completion of secondary education for girls and scaling up family planning services.

"For Tanzania to benefit from demographic dividend, three pre-conditions need to be in place. The first is a rapid decline in mortality followed by a rapid decline in fertility. The second pre-condition is investment in human capital to create a healthy, well-educated and skilled labour force and lastly is the creation of good jobs and economic opportunities for this skilled labour force," said World Bank human development leader Aneesa Arur.

Planning and Investment minister Kitila Mkumbo said at the launch that the government has prioritised youth-focused and rural-oriented policies, with human investment being at the centre of President Samia Suluhu Hassan's agenda.

"Education remains key in terms of going forward as it correlates with low fertility rates. This goes hand in hand with family planning and reproductive health education," he said.

Prof Mkumbo added that the government has also made education and rural economic transformation a top priority through revision and

repositioning of the education policy and curriculum.

The World Bank also noted that while the economic outlook for Tanzania was broadly positive, several significant threats remained on the horizon. This includes the possibility of a global recession, faltering domestic reforms, and the effects of global heating on key sectors such as agriculture and tourism. (*The Citizen*)

James L.Laizer **TOURISM & ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

World Bank tourism funding suspended, affecting southern circuit

Many Tanzanians received with sadness the news that the World Bank has potentially suspended financing intended to develop tourism in southern Tanzania. In September 2017, the World Bank launched the Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth (REGROW) project through a US\$ 150 million loan to Tanzania, with \$ 100m already received. The objective of this project is to improve management of natural resources and tourism assets in priority areas of southern Tanzania and to increase access to livelihood activities for targeted communities. REGROW focuses on four national parks in southern Tanzania: Mikumi, Nyerere (formerly part of the Selous Game Reserve), Ruaha, and the Udzungwa Mountains.

The project has been helping the Tanzanian government develop these parks to increase tourism in the 'Southern Circuit' of the country, which is currently less visited compared to the world-famous safari attractions of the Serengeti, Ngorongoro Crater, and Mount Kilimanjaro in the north. A key objective of the project was to develop new and improved tourism products to expand the Circuit. Across these four priority parks, the project sought to increase the number of annual visitors from 98,504 in 2017 to 135,000 by 2025. It had four key components: first, strengthen management and improve infrastructure in priority Protected Areas; second, strengthen alternative livelihoods for targeted communities in proximity to the priority Protected Areas; third to strengthen landscape management and infrastructure investments in and upstream of the Ruaha national park; and fourth, on project management, institutional strengthening, quality assurance and control, and monitoring and



Elephants in Nyerere National Park (photo Discover Gorillas)

evaluation.

The World Bank has suspended financing after allegations of human rights violations captured global and local headlines, including in the UK BBC and Guardian. These allegations stem from claims by the US-based Oakland Institute, which alleges documented abuses by Tanzanian rangers against villagers accused of encroaching in the Ruaha national park.

“The World Bank is deeply concerned about the allegations of abuse and injustice related to the Resilient Natural Resources Management for Tourism and Growth (Regrow) project in Tanzania,” said a World Bank spokesperson. “We have recently received information that suggests breaches of our policies in the implementation of the Regrow project. We have therefore decided to suspend further disbursement of funds with immediate effect.”

In response, the Tanzanian government spokesperson Mobhare Matinyi stated that the Government of Tanzania does not violate the rights of its citizens and such allegations are baseless. The government has further denied any abuses, including forced evictions, in connection with the national park expansion project. Matinyi asserts that anyone relocated because of the project would be accorded all their rights.

Tanzania was due to receive a further \$50m of the REGROW funding, which is now in jeopardy. This funding is deemed important for tourism development not only in the southern part of the country, but in Tanzania in general. Whilst the allegations must be investigated and acted upon if they are proven, many view that suspending such a project will negatively impact the targeted population economically, restrict ongoing infrastructure development, affect conservation of biodiversity, and delay improvement of tourism assets in the Tanzania southern circuit – a region that is already underinvested in.

Drones to be used for forest conservation work in Tanzania

The Tanzania Forest Agency (TFA) is expanding its conservation toolkit with the addition of drones to protect its dwindling woodlands, which face pressure from various sources. “Drone technology is important because it will help us cover large areas more efficiently, allowing us to focus our vehicle and motorcycle patrols strategically,” said Dos Santos Salayo, TFA’s commissioner for conservation. The agency also announced the deployment of four new vehicles and nearly 40 motorcycles to further bolster its forest protection efforts.

“We are committed to enhancing the sector by equipping it with the necessary tools and expertise to drive positive outcomes in forest conservation,” said Angellah Kairuki, Tanzania’s minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, during the equipment unveiling ceremony.

Kairuki emphasized the importance of investing in various defense technologies due to the vastness of forest areas, noting that relying solely on traditional ground patrols won’t suffice in addressing illegal activities within the reserves. She highlighted the advantages of drones for surveillance and monitoring over large and sometimes inaccessible terrains, enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts in protecting forest reserves. “The TFS should consider investing in technologies like satellite imagery to align with global standards,” she added.

Tanzania has 45.7 million hectares of forests, covering about 40% of the country. This represents a significant decline from 61% in 2000, according to the World Bank. Tanzania loses about 400,000 hectares of forest each year – twice the global average deforestation rate. The TFA drones will expand Tanzania’s capacity to track illegal activities in the

forests and monitor less accessible areas, allowing for more effective patrol deployment, Kairuki said. This initiative builds on the country's 2016 decision to use drones to monitor its Ngorogoro Conservation Area for poachers and to deter elephants from the protected area.

Tanzania joins other African nations like Ghana, Liberia, Madagascar, and Namibia in utilizing drones for forest monitoring. Kenya and Madagascar also employ drones for reforestation efforts. Additionally, drones can deploy sensors within forests to help monitor tree health.

Tanzania collaborates with the environmental NGO Trees for the Future as part of a consortium of African countries, mostly in East Africa. This partnership utilizes drones to evaluate tree coverage, aiding farmers in protecting the health of their farmland and preventing erosion. According to Kairuki, illegal charcoal and firewood collection, illegal mining, livestock grazing, and agriculture are major threats to Tanzania's forests.

Tanzania's Tourism Sector Sets Records

Tanzania's tourism industry experienced a significant rebound last year, with tourist arrivals increasing by 24.3% to a record high of 1.8 million visitors, according to the Bank of Tanzania. Tourism remains Tanzania's top foreign exchange earner, generating \$3.37 billion in revenue in 2023. This success was followed by gold exports, which increased by seven percent to \$3 billion, and transportation earnings, which surged by almost 30 percent to \$2.4 billion. The Bank of Tanzania's (BoT) monthly economic review for January indicates that service receipts reached \$6,281m up from \$4,762m the year ending December 2022. This growth was primarily driven by travel and transport receipts.

Ben Taylor:

EDUCATION

Phasing-in of new education policy underway

The start of the new school year in January saw the beginning of a gradual process to phase in the country's new education and training policy.

This began with immediate implementation of the new policy for pre-primary, grade one, and grade three in primary schools, and the vocational training option for Form One students in secondary schools

that meet the necessary requirements. Curriculum changes for upper secondary schools are scheduled to begin in July 2024.

“Students in primary and secondary schools this year will complete their studies using the current curriculum. However, those joining Form One in 2024 will experience a dual curriculum scenario, with practical students following the improved curriculum while general education students continue with the existing one,” the circular noted.

The lower secondary education stage now has two streams: general education and vocational education. After completing the sixth grade in primary schools, students will take a national test and decide between general and practical secondary education when entering Form One.

“We have already started implementing the new education and training policy as well as new curricular in January 2024,” said the Minister of Education, Science and Technology Professor Adolph Mkenda. “There are huge changes that started for pre-primary, standard one to three for primary schools and form one for secondary schools,” he added.

“Logically it is a nightmare to start the whole changes at a go, which is why we have started gradually. We are quite optimistic it will transform the country’s education sector because its focus is competence and skills based,” he said.

He said 96 secondary schools are enlisted for vocational skills stream, of which 28 are government-owned schools and 68 are privately-owned.

Speaking in Parliament in February, the Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa, stated that the new education policy and curriculum have gained the trust of the public, and will effectively address competence, vocational skills, and unemployment issues.

He explained that the curriculum and policy, whose implementation began in January 2024, will put an end to the perception that the government is the sole employer, since it will increase the number of skilled and competent graduates in various fields to meet national and global market demands.

“An evaluation shows that parents and stakeholders in the education sector are satisfied with the new reforms, especially regarding technical and vocational training,” said Mr Majaliwa. “These reforms aim to provide learners with skills and knowledge for self-employment.”

Concerns raised over increase in English-medium schools

A recent surge in converting public schools to English medium has sparked a fiery debate across Tanzania. While some see it as a strategic leap towards quality education, others fear it will widen socioeconomic disparities. As of April 2023, there were reported to be 42 government-owned English medium primary schools in the country.

Supporters believe the English medium education offers a better foundation and welcome the alternative, even if it means paying extra for transportation.

Critics raise concerns about the selective nature of these schools and argue that preferential treatment for English medium schools discriminates against taxpayers who deserve equal access to quality education.

Government English medium primary schools operate differently from those using Kiswahili as a medium of instruction. Parents typically pay TSh 10,000 to take entry forms from those schools, and their children go through interviews to establish if they qualify to join. When accepted, parents pay TSh 400,000 as an annual school fee for their children.

The arrangement and the overall environment and atmosphere are different at these schools. The Chanzo online newspaper visited three such schools in the Kinondoni district and observed various things that are uncommon at regular schools. They have school buses, for example. Their classrooms are clean and well-designed, making them more attractive.

The government has branded the development as “progressive,” aiming to give parents more options for their children’s education and change the status quo that only the private sector can offer English medium schools.

Head of primary education for Dodoma City Council, Prisca Myalla highlighted the aim of providing quality education and nurturing talent for national development. She sees these schools as models for parents willing to contribute more for their children’s English-medium education.

Long-time education commentator, Richard Mabala, was concerned that the transition to secondary schooling would present challenges if some children had been through primary schooling in English and others in Swahili.

"It is dangerous," said Mr Mabala. "I mean, if I'm to write a book for Form I students now, I don't know how to accomplish that task. Because if you target this group, you'll lose the other, and vice versa." He said that a teacher teaching that class will have difficulty balancing each student's interests: he cannot go too fast because he'll fail those from Kiswahili medium, and he cannot go too slow because he'll bore those from English mediums.

Japhet Makongo, who has spent decades researching Tanzania's education sector, said that in his view, the government is walking back on the guarantee of equal opportunities by erecting such a "discriminatory" arrangement.

However, many Tanzanian parents want their children to study at English medium schools, Theresia Evarist Kyara, who heads the early childhood and primary education department at the Kinondoni municipal council, told *The Chanzo*.

She said that were it not for the parents' demands, the municipality would not have prioritised changing the schools to English mediums. Ms Kyara sees nothing wrong with the transformation.

Drop-out rates at "crisis levels"

The escalating dropout rates in Tanzanian classrooms, particularly in Standard Four (in primary schools) and Form Two (in secondary schools), have emerged as a critical concern among education stakeholders. At the heart of the debate is the impact of exams and the punitive measures associated with failing and repeating classes.

Official 2022 data revealed that 56,361 Standard Four students and 53,932 Form Two students dropped out of school. The classes coincide with national assessments, namely the Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) and the Form Two National Assessment (FTNA).

"The pressure exerted by these exams often leads to anxiety and disengagement among students," explains Dr Fatma Mwamba of the University of Dodoma. "The practice of compelling failed students to repeat a grade exacerbates the problem, pushing many to abandon their education altogether."

In response, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology under Prof Adolf Mkenda, has announced the formation of a team of researchers tasked with investigating the root causes of the dropout

phenomenon.

“Despite the free education policy, we are witnessing a concerning rise in dropout rates. We need to understand why,” he explained.

Education policy consultant, Dr Jane Mdoe, emphasised the need to reevaluate the purpose and structure of national assessments. “The Standard Four and Form Two assessments should serve as tools for improvement, not punitive measures,” she contended, and called for a comprehensive review of the assessment framework to ensure its alignment with the objectives of inclusive and equitable education.

Ben Taylor: **HEALTH**

Universal health insurance imminent

Preparations for the introduction of a universal and compulsory health insurance scheme are at an advanced stage, according to the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Dr Godwin Mollel.

The law to govern the new insurance arrangements was enacted by parliament late in 2023 and signed by the President on November 10, 2023. However, it is up to the Minister to formally announce the date on which the implementation of the law will commence.

The Act aims to provide health insurance for all Tanzanian citizens, with special provisions for the financing of health care for the poor. It provides for reforms in regulation, governance, health service delivery and financing of health services to address the fragmentation of financing arrangements of existing health systems by combining the formal public health insurance and the Improved Community Health Funds (ICHF).

Under the new law, an equity fund will be established to subsidise premiums for low-income citizens and finance treatment for chronic diseases. This fund will be resourced through levies imposed on items such as carbonated drinks, alcoholic beverages and electronic transactions.

The Act stipulates the removal of exemptions previously granted in health care, compelling every Tanzanian to enrol in a health insurance scheme. Employers are now required to register their employees for

health insurance within 30 days of employment commencement. Those who are in informal employment, are self-employed or unemployed are required to join a recognised community health fund.

In a sign perhaps of the difficulties associated with such a major shift in health policy, a dispute arose in late February between the largest government provider of health insurance, the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) and several major hospitals. NHIF issued a new schedule of prices that it would be willing to pay for specified services, prompting hospitals in the Association of Private Health Facilities Tanzania (APHFTA) and the Christian Social Service Commission (CSSC) to suspend provision of services to NHIF members.

APHFTA said the new rates were around 20-30% lower than before and presented the hospitals with an impossible situation. A source at the group told The Citizen newspaper that profit margins were previously around 10%, and with the new prices, facilities could face up to a 30% loss on some treatments.

Within days, however, the situation had been largely resolved, and provision of services to NHIF members resumed in most hospitals in early March.

Ben Taylor: AGRICULTURE

Maize surplus

Tanzania's farmers produced a surplus of 2.1 million tonnes of maize during the 2022/23 season, according to Agriculture Minister Hussein Bashe. He explained that the country's farmers produced 8.1 million tonnes against a demand of 6 million tonnes, adding that production is expected to reach 10 million tonnes in the current (2023/24) season.

"Needy countries have started communicating with us," said the minister.

He advised traders who stored corn last season to continue storing since the Ministry of Agriculture would start issuing export permits for free, and he urged farmers not to sell their products due to overproduction to avoid selling at lower prices; instead, they should reserve to make more profit in the near future. "Prices may change in June, so try to save them, don't rush to sell," he advised.

Increase in crop exports

The value of crop exports increased to \$2.3 billion in the year to December 2023 from \$2.1 billion recorded in 2020/21, according to the Agriculture Minister, Hussein Bashe.

The 10% increase has mainly been attributed to exports of coffee, tobacco, cashew nuts, rice, sesame, legumes and horticultural produce, especially avocados. The minister said in a 2023 performance review that avocado exports increased from 17,711 tonnes worth \$51 million in 2020/21 to 26,826 tonnes valued at \$77.3 million in 2023.

“Avocados were exported to the Netherlands, France, UK, Spain, Belgium, Russia, Germany, Norway, South Africa, India and the United Arab Emirates. In 2024, Tanzania will start exporting avocados to China,” he says. Avocado production rose from 149,340 tonnes to 195,000 tonnes, making Tanzania the third biggest producer in Africa after South Africa and Kenya.

Cotton exports more than doubled, rising from 32,609 tonnes worth \$15.6 million in 2020/21 to 65,771 tonnes valued at \$33.5 million in 2023.

Mr Bashe says coffee exports rose more than three-fold from 25,084 tonnes worth \$44.1 million to 94,549 tonnes valued at \$170.2 million during the period under review.

Some 32,587 tonnes of tobacco valued at \$142.4 million were exported in 2023, up from 8,377 tonnes worth \$35.2 million that were sold outside in 2020/21.

Tanzania targets bamboo market

Tanzania is turning to bamboo as a key strategy to decrease carbon emissions while simultaneously claiming a share of the lucrative \$7 billion global market. Bamboo is also in high demand in China and other countries where it is used for furniture.

At the launch of the National Bamboo Development Strategy and Action Plan for 2023-2031 on February 19, the minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Ms Angellah Kairuki, said bamboo can reduce carbon emissions by 40 percent.

The target set in the strategy is to plant a total of 10,000 hectares of bamboo plantations and woodlots by June 2031, as well as establish

two bamboo seed orchards. “Countries like China are currently selling carbon through the bamboo crop,” explained biodiversity lecturer at the Sokoine University of Agriculture (Sua), Dr Paulo Lyimo. “Tanzania can also enter the market because it does not take long to grow: just five years, unlike other sources of timber, which take up to 100 years,” he said.

US rice donation to Tanzania under scrutiny

A donation of fortified rice, given by the US Department of Agriculture and Global Communities, a US-based NGO, prompted a heated debate on social media. The debate started on the X platform (formerly Twitter) after the US Embassy in Tanzania posted a picture showing bags of the rice, saying that it was a donation to “provide nutritious meals to students at the over 300 participating schools in Dodoma.”

Just hours later, Minister of Agriculture Hussein Bashe spoke out, saying that importers should not have brought in that rice since Tanzania has its own rice reserves. He added that if the issue was with the fortification or nutritional content of the rice, they should work to improve rice production and processing in Tanzania rather than undermining local markets.

“We told the NGO, tell the Americans that we have rice and beans in this country, and the money they use to give American farmers, they should give it to Tanzanian farmers. Let’s buy rice and beans from Tanzania, and then let the nutrients they want to add be added here in Tanzania; we all see that,” said Bashe, emphasizing that he has informed the NGO that Tanzania is self-sufficient in food.

Tanzania expects to harvest 5 million tonnes of rice this year, up from an estimated 2.3 million tonnes previously, while national demand for the staple food stands at slightly over 1 million tonnes.

The donation was part of the Pamoja Tuwalishe (Together let’s feed them) initiative, a project of the US Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with Global Communities. “This program reflects the U.S. commitment to fostering health, education, and opportunity for children across the globe,” the Embassy wrote.

Global Communities said it began implementing the first phase of the McGovern-Dole Food for Education project in Tanzania in 2010 with funding from the USDA. The programme is now in its fourth phase.

Philip Richards:

SPORT



Proposed Samia Suluhu Hassan Stadium in Arusha

Football

The government has confirmed it is currently prioritising construction and renovation of stadia ahead of the African Cup of Nations (AFCON) 2027 Finals which will be co-hosted by three East African states: Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. As a co-host, the national team Taifa Stars will automatically qualify for the finals which start in June 2027. New stadia are being constructed in Arusha and Dodoma, as well as the ongoing renovation of Benjamin Mkapa and Uhuru stadiums in Dar es Salaam. The Arusha stadium, proposed to be known as Samia Suluhu Hassan Stadium is reported to be funded by a Tsh 286bn contract with China Railway Construction Engineering Group (see design drawing below).

Further, there is a wider push from central government to see the broader expansion of sports infrastructure across the country as part of a longer-term strategy to identify and develop sporting talent and enhance success for sport internationally. Such success has been sadly lacking in recent years. The government is encouraging local authorities to allocate budget for so called “recreation centres” which will include facilities for football, netball, basketball, Olympic-size swimming pools, and volleyball, to mention a few. (*Daily News*. April 2024).

Athletics

The decision of World Athletics (WA) to award gold medallists at this year's Olympic Games in Paris a prize of US\$ 50,000 will obviously be seen as a key motivator for all competing athletes to strive for success. This includes Tanzanian long distance athletes Alphonse Simbu, Gabriel Geay, Magdalena Shauri and Jackline Sakilu who have already secured qualifying marks for the Games that start this July. The decision is a historic one for the Olympics and breaks with 128 years of tradition by becoming the first sport to give Olympic competitors prize money. In the past, a medal was seen to be sufficient reward for the honour of participating (along with bonuses from local athletics bodies). Shauri is reported as suggesting the prize should be split three ways to recognise the efforts of silver and bronze medallists rather than them receiving nothing, though we understand that WA has confirmed a cash prize will be available to second and third placed athletes from the 2028 Games in Los Angeles USA. (*The Citizen*, April 12 2024)

Cricket

Cricket has long been a popular sport in Tanzania. It was reportedly first played in 1890 and moves are afoot to further grow the game in the country. In one example of UK-Tanzania collaboration, Leicestershire



Dar Raptors Cricket Club

County Cricket Club has been working with Dar Raptors Cricket Club in Dar es Salaam to aid the development of cricket in Tanzania's largest city, donating cricket equipment and County Championship shirts to the junior club who were without kit for their training sessions. Founded in 2009, Dar Raptors have grown to a total of 250 boys and girls aged 9-15 now learning to play cricket at the club's rural hub. 12 students have gone on to play for Tanzania's Under 19 national team, with Kurtik Thakkar one of the team's headline success stories. However, the struggle to find funding and equipment has been a perpetual battle for the club.

Osman Bairu, Founder of Dar Raptors Cricket Club, said: "We are so grateful to Leicestershire for supporting us in our development as a club.

"Our boys and girls are from poor families and we lack cricket gear. Here in Tanzania, equipment is very expensive and not everyone can afford it, but they are very keen to learn the game. We are proud to sport Leicestershire shirts and have been following the Club's progress through social media." (Source: Leicestershire CCC)

Donovan McGrath:

TANZANIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

Zanzibar beer: Alcohol shortage hits Tanzania's spice islands

(BBC News online – UK) *The spice islands of Zanzibar are facing a shortage of alcohol which threatens the tourism sector of Africa's top travel destinations. Extract continues:* Tourism generates about 90% of the Tanzanian archipelago's foreign revenue. Prices of beer have shot up by almost 100% after the supply chain was disrupted by a sudden change of importers. The island's tourism minister resigned recently citing poor work conditions. However, some have linked his resignation to issues with alcohol supplies... Last year, Zanzibar was ranked among the 10 best travel destinations in Africa by several tour magazines. But hoteliers now warn that the problems over alcohol supply might make the island lose its tourism shine... Mr Mshenga's business selling beer and seafood has been badly hit. "We are running short of beer at my bar, and I just have a stock of soft drinks," he told the BBC. "The government has to take action. It is the high season now, it's very hot and these tourists need

joy, they need cold beer on these beaches.” ... The local manufacture of alcohol is banned in Zanzibar, whose population is largely Muslim. Most of the alcohol sold on the islands comes from mainland Tanzania, while some is imported from South Africa. The initial shortage early this year began when the Zanzibar Liquor Control Board (ZLCB) delayed renewed permits for the three established importers – One Stop, Scotch Store, and ZMMI... (5 February 2024)

Eight children and an adult die in Zanzibar after eating sea turtle meat

(*Guardian online – UK*) *Extract:* Eight children and an adult have died after eating sea turtle meat on Pemba Island in the Zanzibar archipelago, and 78 other people have been taken to hospital, authorities said ... Sea turtle meat is considered a delicacy in Zanzibar but it periodically results in deaths from chelonitoxism, a type of food poisoning. The adult who died ... was the mother of one of the children who succumbed earlier, said the Mkoani district medical officer, Dr Jaji Bakari... [He] told the Associated Press that laboratory tests had confirmed all the victims had eaten sea turtle meat. Authorities in Zanzibar, which is a semi-autonomous region of the east African nation of Tanzania, sent a disaster management team that urged people to avoid consuming sea turtles. In November 2021, seven people, including a three-year-old, died on Pemba after eating turtle meat and three others were hospitalised [see TA131]. (9 March 2024)

Brits flock to African city rivalling party capital Magaluf with £1 beer, beautiful beaches and 30°C sun all year

(*Mail online – UK*) *Extract:* ... According to recent statistics by Luxury tour operator Scott Dunn, ‘up-and-coming’ Zanzibar has experienced an astonishing 83% surge in bookings among its clientele. Its sharp rise in tourism comes as popular European holiday destinations, such as Lanzarote and Amsterdam, crack down on rowdy behaviour and are asking boozy Brits to ‘stay away.’ However, there is a particular part of the island that isn’t the reserve of the well off and where British tourists are flocking in record numbers: the main town of Zanzibar City. One of the key attractions drawing British tourists to Zanzibar City is its unbeatable drink deals. Not only can you get pints from as little as £1.06, according to PintPrice, but Hikers Bay says you can get a meal in an affordable restaurant in the city from as little as £3.84. There are also

affordable prices on accommodation options, with one budget double room for two adults, found by Daily Star on booking.com, amounting to just £13 per night – that’s a cool £6.50 per person. There are many bars, clubs and restaurants where Brits have been partying the night away, as well as exploring historical sites such as Stone Town – the birthplace of Queen frontman Freddie Mercury... With flights on Skyscanner available for as little as £378 for a round trip, Zanzibar is poised to remain a top choice for travellers seeking an affordable yet unforgettable holiday for years to come... (17 March 2024)

Three Tanzanian soldiers are killed as violence persists in eastern Congo

(*Washington Post online – USA*) *Extract:* Three Tanzanian soldiers were killed and three others injured after a mortar shell landed near their camp in eastern Congo, where Tanzanians are deployed under the banner of a regional bloc to help quell violence. It remained unclear who was responsible for the attack ... reported ... by the regional bloc, the Southern African Development Community, or SADC. SADC also said in a statement that a South African soldier had died while being treated for undisclosed “health challenges.” It sent condolences to the Tanzanian families of the victims. The bloc’s peacekeeping mission was launched ... as a longstanding group of U.N. peacekeepers known as MONUSCO gradually pulls out of Congo. Eastern Congo is rich in minerals, with various armed groups battling for control of resources. The most prominent of them is the M23, which has caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in North Kivu province in recent years. The M23 was most recently threatening to take Goma, the largest city in the region... (9 April 2024)

Julius Nyerere: Former Tanzanian leader honoured by African Union statue

(*BBC News online – UK*) *Tanzania’s founding father Julius Nyerere has been honoured with a statue outside the African Union headquarters in Ethiopia’s capital, Addis Ababa. Extract continues:* Nyerere led what is now Tanzania from independence in 1961 until 1985. Known as Mwalimu, Swahili for teacher, he was a committed pan-Africanist and hosted independence fighters opposed to white minority rule in southern Africa. He played a key role in the creation of the Organisation of African Unity, which later became the African Union. Unveiling the statue at a ceremony attended



AU Commissioner Moussa Faki Mahamat, AU Chairperson Mohammed Ould Ghazouani, President Samia and various other Heads of State at the unveiling

by numerous African heads of state, AU Commission leader Moussa Faki Mahamat said: “The legacy of this remarkable leader encapsulates the essence of Pan Africanism, profound wisdom, and service to Africa.” He recalled Nyerere’s own comments at the inaugural OAU summit in 1963. “Our continent is one, and we are all Africans.” ... Paying tribute to Nyerere, Tanzania’s President Samia Suluhu Hassan said: “To him, Africa’s wellbeing came first, before popular approval, personal fortune or country wellbeing.” ... In a post on X, Zambia’s President Hakainde Hichilema described the unveiling of the statue to “one of our continent’s iconic figures” as a “proud day”... Nyerere is the third leader to be honoured with a statue outside the AU headquarters, after Ghana’s founding father and pan-Africanist Kwame Nkrumah, and Ethiopia’s emperor Haile Selassie, who became a symbol of African nationalism for resisting Italy’s attempts to colonise the country in the 1930s, and later agreed to host the OAU. (18 February 2024)

How a \$33,000-a-night private island inspired by the Kennedys became a beacon for sustainable tourism

(CNN online – USA) Extract: ... A luxury estate which must be rented in

its entirety, where prices start at \$33,000 per night, you'll have to share this tropical hideaway with some of Mother Nature's most majestic creatures, including the largest fish in the sea, the whale shark. Located a 30-minute helicopter ride from Tanzania's biggest city, Dar es Salaam, Thanda sits amid a private marine reserve with a rigorous conservation and restoration program – one that is already reaping rewards for visitors as well as the surrounding island communities. The brainchild of Swedish entrepreneurs Dan and Christin Olofsson, Thanda Island Hotel has been in operation since 2016. "They want to create the ultimate escape," says general manager Antigone Meda, who explains that multigenerational families and groups of friends are the island's typical guests, with most staying for five to eight nights. The island features a villa and two open-air beach chalets. "The villa was very inspired by the Kennedys' beach home," Meda says, referring to the compound in Cape Cod that belonged to the family of JFK. "It breeds beach romance, nostalgia, (with) a touch of East African flare." Thanda strives to be as self-sufficient as possible, she adds, with a seawater desalination plant on site, rainwater harvesting, and powered by the largest off-grid solar farm in Tanzania, she claims. Organic waste is turned into compost. But the hotel's sustainability credentials are only part of the allure for the environmentally conscious traveller... The benefits to tourism have been married to a number of projects engaging with the Mafia Island community. The majority of employees at Thanda Island come from the neighbouring island, and Thanda supports a series of entrepreneurs and small businesses there, says Meda. [Thanda's dive master, Hassan] Jumbe says other people from Mafia have been trained in open water diving and coral restoration... "(A) holistic approach to sustainable tourism is really finding its foot(ing) on the continent, because so much of tourism on the continent is in connection with the environment. And so you're seeing sustainability really on the cutting edge in some places," [Meda] explains. (21 March 2024)

Suffolk supports Tanzanian farmers combating climate change

(BBC News online – UK) Churches in Suffolk are raising money to help farmers in Tanzania combat the effects of climate change. Extract continues: The Bishops' Lent Appeal at the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich is paying for training and equipment in Kagera. The Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP) in Tanzania also provides

seeds for drought resistant crop varieties. "We see climate change with our own eyes," said CCMP leader Thomas Shavu. "There is a lot of evidence; streams are disappearing; potato, cassava and bananas, they are getting blight. "Farmers are struggling to know when to plant their crops." The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – a United Nations body – has said it is "indisputable" that human activities are causing climate change. Mr Shavu said: "In years back, they would know 'this is the planting seasons, this is the weeding season', but nowadays no-one knows. The rain may come early, but then stop, if you plant, then plants would dry. Or you plant late and the rain continues. Sometimes it's very heavy and causes flooding, or comes with winds and destroys crops." The Church of England in Suffolk has had a partnership with the diocese in Kagera since 1994, with regular exchange visits. Last year's appeal raised £25,000, and the diocese said it reached more than 50 villages, teaching new farming methods, supplying seeds and saplings, and training people to build rainwater tanks. It also paid for training for a local doctor in ophthalmology, provided bursaries for students in theology and bought motorbikes to help priests get around their parishes... (20 March 2024)

Globe-trotting billionaire

Mo Dewji made a fortune in East Africa selling palm oil, rope, and soda. Now he claims to have the recipe for transforming Tanzania into an agribusiness powerhouse. (Forbes online – USA) Extract: Puffing on a nicotine vape and seated on a white leather chair in his \$50 million home in Dubai, Mohammed "Mo" Dewji is waxing poetic about his plans to mechanize farming 2,500 miles away. "I want to make Africa, long term, a food basket for the world," says the 48-year-old billionaire, who was born, raised and until recently lived in Tanzania. A framed photograph of a street in Zanzibar, the Tanzanian archipelago famous for lush white beaches, hangs on a wall behind him. "Why the hell are we not investing in agri?" Dewji is well known in Tanzania, Africa's fifth largest country with a population of 70 million. The football team owner and former politician controls a range of businesses through his consumer goods conglomerate MeTL Group, including textile manufacturing, edible oil refineries and his Mo Cola carbonated beverages line (name after himself). MeTL already grows crops like tea, avocados, and sisal (a natural fiber used in rope), which are vertically integrated into his

other businesses. Now Dewji wants to grow his agribusiness empire – by order of magnitude. He is seeking to invest \$250 million, including \$100 million of his own capital, to buy and mechanize 100,000 hectares of farmland in Tanzania. MeTL would use the crops to feed its own businesses, then sell the surpluses to other Tanzanian firms, African countries and even European customers. Dewji says this “vision” came to him in the aftermath of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine as soaring food and fertilizer prices worsened conditions of poverty and malnutrition in Africa. Agriculture accounts for one-third of Tanzania’s annual GDP (of \$75 billion), but roughly 90% of that farming is done by subsistence farmers tilling less than 5 hectares of land each. As a result, food insecurity in Tanzania is widespread: Over 30% of children are stunted, and 13 million Tanzanians live in extreme poverty, while “many other live just above the poverty line,” according to the U.S. Agency for International Development... Bigger, more efficient farms could help solve Tanzania’s hunger problem. In developing countries, “Larger farms tend to be more efficient than their smaller counterparts,” a recent European Commission paper found. Within Africa, increasing agricultural productivity was “a substantial driver of growth and poverty reduction” in Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda and Uganda – in contrast to Tanzania and those countries where farming growth lagged, according to a UN study. But agribusiness also comes with costs: human displacement, environmental degradation, disruption of local trading networks upending entire communities. Dewji says the benefits outweigh the cons... He wants to prove his agribusiness model works in Tanzania, then raise money from global investors to replicate it in other African countries... (14 March 2024)

America’s Got Talent: Fantasy League won by Tanzania’s Ramadhani Brothers

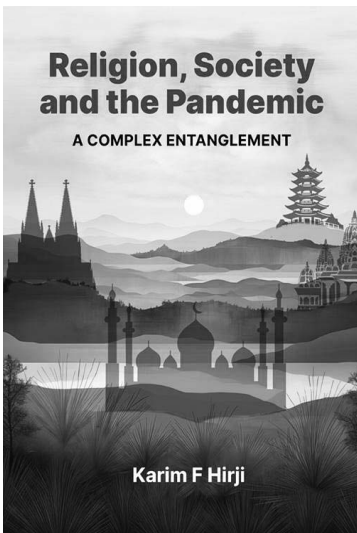
(BBC News online – UK) Extract: ... Fadhili Ramadhani, 36, and Ibrahim Jobu, 26, beat nine other finalists, taking home the inaugural trophy and \$250,000 (£198,000) in prize money. The pair are known for their daring head-balancing performances. Their mentor, judge Howie Mandel, said their routine was “probably one of the most terrifying acts in [AGT] history”... [I]n the show which is a spin-off of America’s Got Talent, featuring winners, finalists and fan favourites from previous seasons... Jobu told People Magazine that they would use the prize money to

buy more equipment and upgrade their training centre back home in Tanzania. “We also want to help other acrobats from our community improve their lives. We’d also like to buy land and build our own homes.” The pair are first to headline a show on the iconic Las Vegas Strip in the US. The two acrobats amazed the AGT: Fantasy League judges with acts that involved one [of] them balancing the other’s body weight on his head while navigating different sets... (20 February 2024)

Martin Walsh:

REVIEWS

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND THE PANDEMIC: A COMPLEX ENTANGLEMENT. Karim Hirji. Daraja Press and Zand Press, Toronto, 2024. 520 pp. ISBN: 9781990263958 (hardback) USD \$50.00; ISBN: 9781998309009 (eBook) USD \$7.99.



This is Hirji’s third recent book about religion and society. The first part of the book draws on his expertise as a medical statistician to present comparative data on reported numbers of COVID cases, reported deaths per million of population, and excess mortality, the difference between the numbers reported to have died in a period and those who were expected to die. It is clear that for many countries only a fraction of the cases were known to their governments or reported. The data demonstrate that vaccines were effective in controlling the COVID pandemic, especially when combined with good-quality protective clothing for health workers, border closures, the wearing of masks, and lockdowns.

Most of the rest of the book comprises case studies of 17 countries which show how the responses to the pandemic were influenced by religious beliefs. In three of these, the predominant religion is Hinduism, in two it is Buddhism, in five Christianity (including the USA, Brazil, South Africa and Tanzania), in four Islam, and in three (Cuba, Singapore and China) religion does not have significant influence. This selection includes three of the countries which experienced the most cases and deaths per million people (the USA, Brazil and

India), but not Russia (which was not far behind the USA) or any European countries.

The main overall conclusion is that where leaders accepted the conclusions of the medical researchers and the World Health Organisation and imposed strict measures, the virus was controlled. Elsewhere it got close to getting out of hand and overwhelming the health services. Pope Francis was aware of this from an early stage and most of the Roman Catholic Church followed his lead. So did many of the reformed churches. The worst outcomes occurred where nationalist leaders downplayed what needed to be done and rubbished the work of the scientists, as in the USA under Trump, India under Modi, and Brazil under Bolsonaro.

Two months before the number of cases in America reached a million, Trump announced that “cases were going to be down, to close to zero”. He used racist language, especially against China, disparaged vaccines, and withdrew his country from the WHO, the nerve-centre of the international fight against the virus. Most mainstream churches supported vaccination and recognised the need for lockdowns. But many evangelicals and tele-evangelists, and other followers of Presidents Trump, did not.

In Africa, there was a great contrast between South Africa and Tanzania. In South Africa over 4 million cases were reported, and more than 90,000 people were reported to have died, though the actual figure is probably more. Tanzania had relatively few cases. Hirji’s 18 pages contrast the situations under Presidents Magufuli and Mama Samia Hassan. Magufuli closed the schools a day after the first case was detected, introduced quarantines for travellers entering the country, promoted mask-wearing, social distancing, and hand sanitisers, and limited the numbers of passengers on buses. He recruited artists and musicians to create murals and songs. But a few months later he started attacking vaccination and was promoting extremely dubious tests and remedies. He stopped the testing programmes and ceased supplying data to the WHO. He was the only world leader who said that going to church would save you from the virus!

Mama Samia quickly showed that she respected the scientists and international organisations. She implemented lockdowns, resumed the monitoring of incoming flights and the supply of data to the WHO and launched what turned out to be effective campaigns to get as many people as possible vaccinated, though those under 15 years of age (nearly half the population) were not included.

Hirji makes some heroic assumptions to replace the figures missing from the Magufuli period. But, even so, he concludes that Tanzania escaped extremely lightly, with one of the lowest rates of infection of any country. He speculates about why this was so. Children under 15 were less vulnerable, and there were relatively fewer old or very old people. Some immunity may have arisen from other viruses which were circulating. There are few homes for elderly people. He does not point out that a lot of activity in Tanzania takes place outdoors, and that where it is inside it is often in well-ventilated churches, mosques or temples or offices with “natural ventilation”. Buses, where the virus was widely spread in colder countries, are crowded but they have a lot of circulating air.

The final chapters make general points. In almost all countries, the concentration of medical expertise on combatting the virus diverted resources away from other health challenges. It “reversed a decade-long global trend of reduction of poverty and absolute poverty levels” and increased the numbers who were poor, while the very rich got even richer. It also reduced industrial and rural production, disrupted education, and increased intolerance and hate. Digital platforms “spawned fear and panic”. It took resources and interest away from the environmental crises which the world needs to face and encouraged authoritarian regimes and military spending. Overall, it showed up the limitations of the neo-liberal ideologies which dominate the present-day world.

This book does not single out any particular religion, but it is very supportive of religion as a whole: “Traditionally, religion has served as a key source of emotional and social support, especially when faced with loss, stress and uncertainty. People pray and reach out to the heavenly saviour [...] Scientific studies show that regular prayer calms the mind, enhances resilience, lightens the angst and worries weighing you down, mollifies anger and anxiety, and raises the spirit. [...] It is not an issue of whether God exists or not but of believing that he does” (p. 310). The book ends with a poem from a collection compiled by an American non-profit Catholic organisation with a mission to help the weak and the poor.

Andrew Coulson

Andrew Coulson worked in the Planning Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture in Dar es Salaam 1967-1971 and taught agricultural economics at the University of Dar es Salaam 1972-76. His edited book African Socialism in Practice: The Tanzanian Experience was published in 1979. Tanzania: A Political Economy followed in 1982, with a second edition in 2013. His most recent book, with

Antony Ellman and Emmanuel Mbiha, is Increasing Production from the Land: A Sourcebook on Agriculture for Teachers and Students in Africa (Mkuki na Nyota, 2018). He was Chair of the Britain Tanzania Society 2015-18.

BAOBAB: THE HADZA OF TANZANIA AND THE BAOBAB AS HUMANITY’S TREE OF LIFE. John Rashford. Springer, Cham, Switzerland, 2023. xxix + 382 pp. ISBN: 9783031264696 (hardback) £149.99; ISBN 9783031264702 (eBook) £119.50.

John Rashford is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the College of Charleston in South Carolina. Much of his research has focused on the ethnobotany of the Caribbean and over the years he has published several papers on the occurrence and uses of African baobabs (*Adansonia digitata*) both there and elsewhere, including an early (1987) article on baobabs and seasonal hunger among the San peoples of southern Africa. Now he has turned his interest in Africa’s most iconic tree into a full-length book that sets out to show how it may have played an important role in early human evolution on the continent. He does so by documenting the multiple uses of the baobab among the Hadza people of north-central Tanzania and projecting their practice into the distant past. While recognising that modern circumstances are very different, “Hadza are theorized to be similar to early hominins [sic] with respect to foraging on the African savanna” (p. xi), and so suitable as a model for palaeontological reconstruction. If the baobab can be shown to be their “tree of life”, then it can be presumed to have had the same status in the early history of humanity – or so Rashford argues.

There are of course all sorts of problems with this kind of argument, not least the assumptions it makes about both the present and the past and the ways in which they might be connected. To compound matters, the author is not a palaeontologist (as evidenced by his misuse of the term “hominin”) and has not undertaken research among Hadza speakers in Tanzania but has relied on the available literature, including travellers’ reports on the web. Oddly, there is no mention at all in *Baobab* of research into the genetic ancestry of Hadza and the history of their unique click language and the external influences upon it. Equally surprisingly, there is relatively little discussion of Hadza ethnobotanical knowledge and practice aside from the use of baobabs, and scant recognition of the very wide range of plants that feature in people’s lives and livelihoods other than this one species. As a result, the historical thesis that frames Rashford’s book never really goes anywhere, and his speculative attempts to prove it largely fizzle out well before the halfway mark, at the end of its second part.

That said, there's a lot more to this book than its framing hypothesis. Rashford knows his baobabs and covers a lot of ground, especially when searching for data on Hadza uses of the tree and supplementing this with comparative ethnographic evidence. This quest for knowledge dominates the remainder of the book (parts III-VII) and left me wondering whether it might have been rewritten as a critical review of what we know and don't know about the tangible and intangible uses of the baobab among Hadza speakers, with questions and suggestions for future researchers. As a reader with an interest in ethnobotanical knowledge and practice in the wider region, I know that I will continue to refer to these parts of the book as a source of ideas and useful information, references included. Rashford has a knack for questioning existing typologies and terminologies, and I found his discussion of seasonality and famine foods especially interesting, building as it does on his earlier work on baobabs.

I was struck by Rashford's analysis of the reasons for a lack of knowledge about the role of baobabs in what he calls Hadza "inspirational life", among them the predominantly "materialist orientation" of forager studies and the reluctance of Hadza to reveal everything about themselves to outsiders who often treated them with extreme prejudice in the past. Like many other researchers, Rashford does not refer to more obscure sources, such as Kohl-Larsen's collections of Hadza tales (*Das Elefantenspiel* and *Das Zauberhorn*, both 1956) and the selection of them translated into Swahili in Annette Wagner's compilation (*Hadithi za Wahadzabe kutoka Tanzania*, 2000). Nevertheless, given the circumstances in which these stories were recorded, they should be treated with caution. It would be good to see more of Hadza oral and other traditions in print and on film, and Rashford does make use of the excellent volume and accompanying CD of Hadza music compiled by Daudi Peterson and colleagues, *Hadzabe: By the Light of a Million Fires* (2013, reviewed in *Tanzanian Affairs* 110, 2015). Rashford's own book is very different from that work in its conception and presentation. It should have been extensively edited, and not just to remove obvious signs of carelessness, such as mistakes in the formatting of its references.

Martin Walsh

Martin Walsh is the Book Reviews Editor of Tanzanian Affairs.

SWAHILI WORLDS IN GLOBALISM. Chapurukha M. Kusimba. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2024. 98 pp. ISBN: 9781009495080 (hardback) £49.99; ISBN: 9781009074056 (paperback) £17.00.

Through nearly three decades of field research and numerous scholarly publications, Professor Chapurukha Kusimba has established an admirable reputation as one of the leading archaeologists currently working in East Africa. His newest title, *Swahili Worlds in Globalism*, is a contribution to a Cambridge University Press series of “concise studies that introduce [readers] to an uncentered interconnected world, 500-1500 CE” and focuses “on the globe’s geographic zones, its natural and built environments, its cultures, societies, arts, technologies, peoples, ecosystems, and lifeworlds.” Towards these ends, Kusimba organises his task into six short, summary chapters, beginning with the foundations of medieval, East African, urban civilisation; and the “rise” of the coastal states; and a detailed description of what the Swahili world was like. These three chapters comprise the data-based core of the book, while the next two look outward to fix the East African coast within the wider world of the Indian Ocean with chapters on its global, and specifically Asian connection.

In his introduction, Professor Kusimba briefly reviews past interpretations of who the people of the Swahili communities were and what their putative “origins” were. Along these lines, readers will recognise the long-familiar notion of their “Arab” past, which persisted well into the 1960s. Since then, a wide array of archaeological field work, historical linguistic research, and close textual studies of external accounts and local oral traditions have altered and refined this perspective considerably. Most scholars now subscribe to an important emendation of this thesis, which hinge on the important distinction between the actual origins of coastal civilization and the identities coastal inhabitants have assumed over the centuries. The intensive research mentioned above has established definitively their African ancestry. In Chapters 1-2, Kusimba marshals forth the archaeological attestations for their Sabaki Bantu-speaking ancestry, along with some of the linguistic evidence.

Notwithstanding this African heritage, intensive commercial intercourse and immigration began around 800 CE and extended well into the second millennium. In Chapters 2-3, he reviews how Swahili communities underwent extensive cultural and social changes, some of which he summarises in the text. The results were stunning, especially in entrepôts (e.g. Manda, Pate, Kilwa) that functioned as the commercial centres of regional webs that stretched inland and to captive feeders of commodities and craft production. His

discussion then details their dramatic increases of wealth, the noticeable trend towards Islamisation, intensified immigration from African hinterlands and Asia, and their conspicuous trends towards regionalisation, social complexity, and stratification. In Chapter 5, he further discusses the wider community to which Swahili-speaking towns were conjoined in the vast array of oceanic commerce that included primarily Western and South Asian centres of trade and industrial production like Chaul, Gujerat, Siraf, and, secondarily, Eastern and Southeastern Asia. He provides, for example, a brilliant analysis and delineation of the direct trade between Chaul and Mtwapa (pp. 56-68).

Professor Kusimba concludes with a final chapter that summarises his views concerning “who” medieval, coastal East Africans were. He cites the presence of pastoralists at some early sites (namely Shanga) and the presence of some Cushitic loanwords in Swahili as evidence of shared Bantu and Cushitic origins. However, this hypothesis is ambivalent, in as much as Bantu-speakers were in close proximity to and borrowing loanwords from Cushitic-speakers well before they settled the coast. The same applies to his (and others’) proposition that their earliest ancestors retained matrilineal customs and rights until later conversion to Islam (c. 800-1500 CE) shifted them more towards patrilineality. Again, the evidence for this is ambiguous, and alternative postulations are equally plausible.

Aside from such minor quibbles, however, Professor Kusimba’s new contribution to East African and Swahili studies is a fine work of investigative scholarship. It provides readers with a clear, concise, and evidenced-packed update of the present state of what has been revealed from archaeological research over the past thirty-odd years.

Randall L. Pouwels

Randall Pouwels is an Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Central Arkansas. He received his B.A. degree from the University of Wisconsin, and his Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Los Angeles. Since 1974, he has published widely on the history of East Africa, with a specialty in using oral traditions for historical reconstruction.

Also noticed:

USIMAMIZI WA MISIKITI: KWA UFANISI. M. Bashir Khatri. PKA Books Limited, Leicester, 2023 (first translated 2021). vi + 66 pp. ISBN: 9780954391102 (eBook). Free to download from <https://www.pkabooks.com/shop/usimamizi-wa-miskiti-kwa-ufanisi/>.

This slim volume is a Swahili translation of M. Bashir Khatri's *Management of the Masjid: A Strategic Approach* (2015), a guide to managing mosques and their affairs in the UK. As the original blurb states, "The author's aim is to meet the needs of the readers who want to understand and apply management principles strategically in line with Islam. This book is written in a style easy to read for stakeholders / worshippers as well as those who are trustees, managers, volunteers, academics and professionals." Together with other works written by the Zanzibar-born author, a trained accountant who has lived in the UK since 1972, it is available on his self-publishing website, www.pkabooks.com.

Martin Walsh

Ben Taylor:

OBITUARIES

Tanzania's second President, **Ali Hassan Mwinyi**, died on February 29, 2024 at the age of 98 after battling lung cancer. Popularly known as "Mzee Rukhsa" (Mr Permission), Mwinyi served as President of the United Republic of Tanzania from 1985 to 1995. A teacher by profession, he also briefly held the offices of President of Zanzibar and Vice President of the United Republic.

President Mwinyi earned his nickname primarily for the economic reforms he brought in, by which restrictions were lifted on many things which had previously been prohibited or tightly controlled – import restrictions, private enterprise, television ownership by individuals and more. Over time, relaxations extended to political freedoms, including independent media and multi-party democracy.

He took office at a time when the country's economy was struggling, and many – including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – were urging liberalisation. But having been hand-picked by his predecessor, Mwl. Julius Nyerere, who remained as chair of CCM, the widespread expectation was that this shy new leader would be little more than a puppet. People should "not expect many changes," wrote *The Economist*, as "Mr Mwinyi is Mr Nyerere's man."

Mwinyi skilfully negotiated a balance between loyalty to Nyerere and driving reforms. He described himself as an anthill succeeding Mount Kilimanjaro. Given the respect with which Nyerere was still held, there

can be little doubt that Mwinyi must have had some form of approval from his predecessor for the measures that he introduced – indeed, in stepping aside, Nyerere had admitted that Ujamaa had failed and said he had decided it was time the country tried another leader. But the transformation was dramatic. Mwinyi essentially dismantled Ujamaa and the Arusha Declaration, though he insisted he was not usurping these but rather perfecting them to keep up with changing times.

During his first address as President to Parliament in 1986, Mwinyi promised to resume negotiations with the IMF and World Bank, arguing that any resulting agreement would be beneficial to citizens. Later that same year he made an agreement with the IMF to receive a \$78 million standby loan – Tanzania’s first foreign loan in over six years. Bilateral donors approved this austerity plan and agreed to reschedule Tanzania’s debt payments for a period of five years, requiring that Tanzania pay only 2.5% of their debts in the meantime. With the economy on the brink of collapse, the reforms were seen as having saved the economy. Severe food, fuel and foreign currency shortages were alleviated, and economic growth picked up.

Political reforms followed a few years later, including the re-introduction of multi-partyism. “We’re not an island,” and so can’t be unconcerned with global affairs,” he said in explanation. These reforms were left incomplete, however, with Mwinyi and the CCM leadership deciding against enacting many of the changes proposed by the Nyalali Commission.

Mwinyi’s leadership was not without criticism. In particular, his decision to allow political leaders to run private businesses was criticised for opening up the way for high corruption levels during and beyond his time in office. It was said that his decision to open the windows and allow the fresh air to come in, but that this also allowed insects inside as well.

President Mwinyi left office peacefully in 1995 at the age of 70, after serving two five-year terms of office. In retirement, he kept a relatively low profile, but released his memoir, *Mzee Rukhsa: The Journey of My Life*, in 2021, and also served as President of the Britain-Tanzania Society.

Speaking at the burial ceremony, President Samia Suluhu Hassan paid tribute. “Mr. Mwinyi was a wonderful leader who highlighted

the importance of translating leadership into service to people and maintaining diligent and ethical services,” she said.

“Throughout my tenure, I’ve tried to follow his steps, though I am uncertain of my success. I’m not sure if I fitted his shoes. But all I can tell is that the library has burned down,” she lamented.

King Charles released a statement that read: “It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of former President Mwinyi. He was a true friend of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, and a leading figure in Tanzania’s economic and political development.”

He is survived by his two wives and a number of children, including Zanzibar’s current President Hussein Mwinyi.

Former Prime Minister of Tanzania, **Edward Ngoyai Lowassa** died on February 10, 2024 at the age of 70. He served as Prime Minister from 2005 as a close ally of President Jakaya Kikwete. However, his time in office was shortened by a corruption scandal that led to his resignation in 2008, and he never achieved his ambition of becoming President.

Lowassa first sought the nomination of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) as its presidential candidate in 1995 but was eliminated in the early stages by an intervention from former President Julius Nyerere, who argued that Lowassa was not then correct material for the Presidency – a marked non-endorsement that followed him for years.

Following the 2000 general elections, Lowassa was appointed Minister of Water and Livestock Development and made his name as a hardworking minister. He stood firm against a colonial-era treaty in order to supply water from Lake Victoria to the towns of Kahama and Shinyanga, and took similarly decisive action when the privatised water utility in Dar es Salaam was seen as failing.

As Prime Minister from 2005, Lowassa again demonstrated his ability to get things done, delivering a massive expansion in secondary school provision across the country.

However, it was not long before he became embroiled in the “Richmond” emergency power generation scandal. In 2006 as the nation faced serious power shortages due to low water levels in hydropower facilities, the government invited investors to apply for the production and supply



of over 100 megawatts. A US-based firm, Richmond LLC won the tender, but it soon emerged that the process had been marred by irregularities. A parliamentary committee concluded that Richmond was a briefcase company and found the contract to have been fraudulently entered into. Further, while Richmond was contracted to provide 100MW each day, their generators arrived late and did not work as expected, and yet the government was reportedly paying the company more than \$100,000 a day. Lowassa's office was then accused of extending the contract against

official advice. Lowassa denied culpability, but eventually, in February 2008, he resigned as Prime Minister along with two other cabinet ministers.

Lowassa continued to court – and win – the support of the CCM hierarchy as well as the wider public, and he made no secret of his continued presidential aspirations. In 2015, as a frontrunner, his name was struck from the list of potential CCM nominees following an intervention by party elders, to the shock of many.

Shortly afterwards, he defected from CCM to the main opposition party, Chadema, where he ran a presidential campaign against the CCM nominee, John Magufuli. He was unsuccessful but achieved 39.9% of the vote, the highest number by any non-CCM candidate in the country's history. Three and a half years later he rejoined CCM.

Lowassa was a divisive figure in Tanzania politics. His supporters pointed to his unrivalled ability to get things done, while his critics pointed to his massive personal wealth and portrayed him as the embodiment of political corruption.

Speaking at his funeral, President Samia described Lowassa as "a force to be reckoned with." She described him as creative and said he had sacrificed a lot for national development.

Freeman Mbowe of Chadema, said Lowassa's 2015 campaign had given CCM a challenge on a level they had never seen before.

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EDITOR and *POLITICS, ECONOMICS, TRANSPORT, HEALTH*: **Ben Taylor**. E-mail: ben.d.taylor@gmail.com.

GRAPHICS, ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING: **Jacob Knight**. E-mail: jacob@kwangu.com

CO-EDITOR and *TZ IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA*: **Donovan McGrath**. Tel: 020 8960 6668. E-mail: mzee.mzima@talktalk.net

FOREIGN RELATIONS and *AGRICULTURE*: **David Brewin**, 14 Westbourne Grove Terrace, London W2 5SD. Tel: 020 7727 1755. E-mail: davidbrewin@btinternet.com

TOURISM & CONSERVATION: **James L. Laizer**.

BUSINESS & THE ECONOMY: **Hildebrand Shayo**.

ENERGY & MINERALS: **Volunteer requested**.

EDUCATION: **Angela Ilomo**. E-mail: angelafalres12@gmail.com

SPORT: **Philip Richards**. E-mail: philip.r.richards@gmail.com

BOOK REVIEWS EDITOR: **Martin Walsh**. E-mail: kisutu@virginmedia.com

The views expressed or reported in *Tanzanian Affairs* are those of the person concerned and do not necessarily represent the views of the Britain-Tanzania Society

BRITAIN-TANZANIA SOCIETY

Readers wishing to join the Britain - Tanzania Society should contact the membership secretary:

Godlisten Pallangyo, Tel: 07935 818103 E-mail: godlistenj7@gmail.com

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