



Tanzanian Affairs

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Elections & Aftermath
Tundu Lissu's Trial
TDT - Clean Water





Presidential election - "The Standard" newspaper cover on 29th October (top left), 30th October (top right), 1st Nov (bottom left) and 3rd Nov (bottom right)

Cover image shows an armed policeman walking in front of a defaced election poster during violence after the elections.





Ben Taylor:

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear reader,

Welcome to the latest issue of Tanzanian Affairs.

Events of the past few months in Tanzania mean that this is a somewhat mournful edition. The October 2025 election and its aftermath have deeply affected all of us who love Tanzania. The shadow it casts will remain heavy for some time.

Nevertheless, I believe that what we do in TA is even more important than ever at such a time. Prosperity thrives on peace and stability; peace and stability on justice and truth. Our contribution may be small, but by continuing in our commitment to honest reporting of the facts, we are doing our bit to help Tanzania find the right path.

I hope the next issue will have more positive news. And if you have any ideas, stories, or resources you'd like to see featured in future issues, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Warm regards,

Ben Taylor (Editor)

Ben Taylor:

ELECTIONS & AFTERMATH

Tumultuous 2025 “elections” and their aftermath

It was already clear well before election day that Tanzania's general “election” of October 29, 2025, would be far from a perfect exercise of democracy. But few predicted the horror that befell the country on polling day and its aftermath.

The country's first mass protests in decades rose up soon after polls opened, targeting a combination of election infrastructure and the property of prominent ruling party figures and supporters. This was met with a swift and uncompromising response by security forces – one that has reportedly cost the lives of hundreds, or very possibly thousands of citizens.

The “election” itself

President Samia Suluhu Hassan of CCM was contesting re-election as President essentially unopposed after her two meaningful opponents, Tundu Lissu of Chadema and Luhaga Mpina of ACT Wazalendo, were





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both blocked from standing. Lissu languished in a prison cell awaiting trial on charges of treason – charges that independent observers have described as baseless and politically motivated. Mpina was barred from standing by the “Independent” National Electoral Commission on the grounds on a supposed irregularity in his party’s nomination process.

There were wider signs of democracy in trouble as well, with new restrictions on the media and opposition political parties. UN human rights experts had earlier in 2025 expressed concern over a “pattern of enforced disappearance and torture” against political opponents, with over 200 cases documented.

Citing these and other concerns, Chadema declined to participate in the election at all. As a result, most CCM candidates for parliamentary seats were effectively unopposed as well.

Nevertheless, despite the lack of meaningful opposition, the “election” went ahead on October 29. Officially, President Samia was re-elected with 98% of the vote on an unprecedentedly high 87% turnout, figures that *The Economist* described as “ridiculous”. CCM candidates also “won” 270 out of 272 directly elected seats in parliament (ACT won the other two). A discreet, swearing-in ceremony for the President took place on military grounds on November 3, 2025.

The protests

In the lead up to polling day, various social media activists, including Mange Kimambi and Maria Sarungi, had been calling for citizens to take to the streets on election day to make their opposition to the “sham” elections clear. The widespread anger among citizens – particularly among young (so-called “Gen Z”) urban residents – appeared to stem from a combination of political and economic factors. Supporters of Chadema and Tundu Lissu were upset with the country’s political direction and increasing repression, with abductions featuring heavy on complaints on social media, while others focussed more on the lack of economic opportunities, especially for young people.

Nevertheless, previous attempts to mobilise similar protest movements in Tanzania (such as around constitutional and electoral reform in 2018) had largely fallen flat. There was therefore scepticism among observers that calls to protest on election day would deliver anything much.

In fact, the election day protests proved to be substantial. Thousands





of protesters took to the streets of Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Arusha and other urban centres across the country, marching and chanting and occasionally attacking polling stations and other election infrastructure or the property of prominent CCM leaders and supporters. Images on social media showed buses and petrol stations on fire, makeshift barricades with burning tyres erected, police stations and government offices torched or damaged, campaign billboards set on fire and ballot boxes and papers strewn across streets.

Protesters made concerted efforts to persuade security forces (particularly the army) to join them and/or to claim on social media that the army were on their side.

The reaction

On election day itself, the security forces had a highly visible presence on the streets of cities and towns nationwide. In some cases, this led to clashes with protesters, with stones and bullets flying in opposite directions.

Around the same time, as soon as substantial protests became apparent, the internet was taken offline across Tanzania, followed soon after by a nighttime curfew. The internet blackout made it harder for protesters to organise their efforts and to share what was happening with the wider world. It also made it harder for international observers and media organisations to understand what was taking place. For the next few days, only small amounts of information leaked out of the country. There was much misinformation too, on both sides.

And yet, the information blackout was not complete. Especially after the internet shutdown ended (five days later), thousands of stories and images and videos were shared with the wider world. Some of these have been scrutinised closely by the international media or human rights organisations, and found to be genuine. It is not possible to verify every image and every video, but nor is it credible that they were nothing more than a misinformation campaign by protesters and their supporters aiming to discredit the government.

The story told by these images and videos, as well as the testimony of participants and witnesses is horrific. Two days after polling day, a spokesperson from Chadema told the AFP news agency that “around 700” people had been killed in clashes with security forces, and a





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diplomatic source in Tanzania told the BBC there was credible evidence that at least 500 people had died. The violence did not stop there.

CNN, the BBC, Amnesty and the Centre for Information Resilience (among others) each separately reviewed a wide range of images and videos from social media and other sources and found them to be credible. What they show include uniformed officers appearing to fire at crowds and at people fleeing for their lives, and hundreds of images of bodies lying on the streets or piled up outside hospitals. There have been reports of mass graves on the outskirts of cities including Dar es Salaam and Arusha.

Stories have circulated widely of security forces picking up suspected protestors and supporters from their homes, many of whom have not been heard from since, and eyewitness accounts describe how live ammunition, tear gas, and brutal beatings became disturbingly common.

Amnesty's Evidence Lab verified one video showing at least 70 bodies piled up on the floors and on stretchers in the morgue at Mwananyamala Hospital in Dar es Salaam. "I had never seen so many people shot like this, and so many dead bodies piled up and crows eating their flesh," said one Dar es Salaam-based healthcare professional.

Other health workers spoke of how they told those with injuries that they were better off away from the hospital, as armed officers were visiting health facilities to "finish the job".

The Centre for Information Resilience conducted a detailed data collection and verification exercise, finding "a clear, repeated pattern of security forces using live ammunition against protesters," and "multiple instances where uniformed police and plain-clothed armed individuals were seen shooting."

The overall death toll from the violence will likely never be known, but UN experts in December estimated at least 700 extrajudicial killings (while noting that other estimates point to thousands.) Chadema leaders have suggested various much higher figures. Online compilations of those whose were killed or whereabouts are unknown have several hundred names and videos or images.

Amnesty concluded that Tanzanian security forces "used unnecessary or disproportionate force, including lethal force, to suppress election





protests, ... showing a shocking disregard for the right to life and for freedom of peaceful assembly as hundreds of people were reported killed or injured across the country." They found that security forces fired live ammunition and teargas directly at protesters and other individuals who posed no imminent threat of death or serious injury, and that security forces used firearms recklessly, injuring and killing bystanders, and abusively deployed tear gas in residential areas and into people's homes.

A text message was reported as being sent to all mobile phone users nationwide around the time of internet restoration (around November 3–4, 2025), when people began sharing unverified images of bodies and violence. The message read: "Avoid sharing pictures or videos that cause panic or degrade a person's dignity. Doing so is a criminal offense, and if identified, strict legal action will be taken."

In the immediate aftermath of the election, a senior minister described the violence as limited to "very few small pockets of incidents" caused by "criminal elements". He denied excessive force and called opposition death toll claims "hugely exaggerated."

Later, officials labelled critical media reports (e.g., CNN's investigation on shootings and mass graves) as "biased" or "information warfare" intended to "mislead and incite." The President herself in December said that "these were not protests, it was violence with malicious intentions. ... What happened was a manufactured event and those who planned it intended to bring down our government. In that situation, the government has a responsibility, and we swear to defend this country and its borders, to protect the safety of citizens and their property. And in that case, the force used is proportional to the event."

Commission of Inquiry

President Samia Suluhu Hassan has established a Commission of Inquiry into incidents of unrest during and after the October 2025 General Election, which she announced on November 14, 2025 at the opening of Tanzania's 13th Parliament in Dodoma. She also offered condolences for the loss of life.

She formally launched and inaugurated the commission on November 20, at State House Chamwino in Dodoma. In her launch speech, she emphasised its role under the Commissions of Inquiry Act of 2023 and





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directed it to examine claims that some protesters (particularly youth) were “paid” to participate and to investigate the role of local and international NGOs in the events.

The commission is an eight-member panel (described as “independent” by the government but criticised by others as lacking true independence), chaired by retired Chief Justice Mohamed Chande Othman. Other members include former state officials and retired civil servants, such as a former Inspector General of Police and the immediate former Minister of Defence (who held office during the period of violence).

The commission was initially asked to report within 90 days. Around the 90-day mark, it was reported that the commission had been granted an additional 42 days, effective from February 20. With the extension, the commission is now required to finalise its work and submit its report on or before April 3, 2026. The commission cited several reasons for the extension, stating that “the additional time will provide an opportunity for any individual, whether inside or outside the country, who has information, evidence or views to present, to come forward.”

Youth ministry

In the same speech to Parliament, the President also established the Ministry for Youth Affairs, which she said was specifically designed to address the socio-economic frustrations that fuelled much of the 2025 post-election unrest. It is also a strategic response to the demographic reality that youth (under age 35) make up more than 60% of Tanzania’s population.

The ministry is led by Dr Joel Arthur Nanauka, a well-known youth activist and author who previously focused on leadership and economic empowerment.

The ministry has already launched several high-profile initiatives. This includes a “Vijana App” national digital platform designed to coordinate youth issues and provide a feedback loop between the government and young people; a Youth Investment Fund aiming to establish over 100,000 youth-led companies by 2030; and a “Vijana Tuyajenge” campaign to shift the narrative from youth as “political protesters” to “nation builders” through entrepreneurship and civic participation.

The ministry is widely viewed as a “de-escalation tool.” By providing





a dedicated seat at the cabinet table for youth issues, the government is attempting to address the high unemployment and lack of political inclusion that became flashpoints during the October 2025 protests.

Arrests, and forgiveness?

Large numbers of Tanzanians, mainly young people, have been arrested in connection with the protests. Precise numbers are not available, but it has been reported that over 2,000 were arrested, with as many as 250 charged with treason.

Many of those charged were released starting in late November 2025, following a presidential directive from President Hassan urging leniency. In her address to Parliament, she acknowledged arrests of many young people, stated they “did not fully understand what they were getting involved in,” and asked prosecutors to “show leniency” toward those arrested in connection with the violence. Again, precise numbers are not available, but some reports have claimed that as many as 1,700 have been released.

Diplomatic reactions

The African Union (AU) election observation mission declared that the elections “did not comply with AU principles, normative frameworks, and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections,” citing issues like ballot stuffing, internet blackouts, and excessive force, while urging restraint and thorough investigations into violence against protesters.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) issued a rare sharp rebuke in its preliminary statement, describing the electoral commission as “compromised from inception” and concluding that “in most areas, voters could not express their democratic will.”

The European Union (EU) expressed deep concern over credible reports of killings, serious injuries, violence, and irregularities, including internet shutdowns, with the High Representative urging maximum restraint to preserve human lives and later supporting debates on freezing development aid amid the crackdown. In a joint statement, the EU Delegation, multiple EU member states (including France, Germany, and others), the UK (via the British High Commission), Canada, Norway, Switzerland, and additional partners on December 5, 2025, expressed regret over tragic losses of life and injuries, called for





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the release of bodies to families, the freeing of political prisoners, and addressing shortcomings identified in AU and SADC election reports.

The United States announced a comprehensive review of its bilateral relationship with Tanzania on December 4, 2025, citing “disturbing violence against civilians” before and after the elections, alongside ongoing repression of religious freedom and free speech, which it said threatened mutual prosperity and security.

Regional leaders from neighbouring countries (such as Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and South Africa) notably skipped President Hassan’s inauguration, signalling either disapproval or unwillingness to risk stirring domestic anger by showing support for her. Former South African President Thabo Mbeki went further, stating through his foundation that Tanzania “currently lacks a legitimate government.”

China has taken a supportive stance toward the Tanzanian government, emphasising non-interference and stability. On January 11, the Chinese government conveyed congratulations to Tanzania for the “successful conduct of the General Elections held in October 2025” and expressed “strong support for the Government of Tanzania to safeguard constitutional order, protect lives, property, and national stability in accordance with law.”

The Commonwealth Secretariat attempted to initiate mediation, announcing Malawi’s former president Lazarus Chakwera as special envoy. However, his appointment was quietly rejected by the Tanzanian government and openly criticised by civil society groups.

Despite the internet restrictions and the absence of journalists from international media outlets in Tanzania at the time, global news coverage of the post-election situation was considerable. Coverage has been highly critical of the President and the security forces’ actions.

Chadema officially called for an investigation by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in November 2025. Later that same month, a coalition of Tanzanian civil society organisations and victims filed a formal petition at The Hague. This petition specifically named President Samia Suluhu Hassan and senior security officials, accusing them of authorising a “premeditated crackdown” on civilians. The court has not yet opened a formal investigation, but the Office of the Prosecutor is in the “Initial Review” phase. Under the court’s rules, the Prosecutor must





first determine if the alleged crimes fall under the court's jurisdiction and if the Tanzanian national justice system is "unwilling or unable" to prosecute the crimes itself. The Tanzanian government has pointed to the Commission of Inquiry as proof that this does not apply.

A way forward?

The trauma of October and November 2025 will cast a long shadow. As of February 2026, the immediate violence has subsided, but underlying tensions and deep divisions persist. Nor is it entirely over: reports of further abductions continue almost daily.

The commission of inquiry is ongoing, expected to guide the creation of a permanent Truth, Reconciliation, and Healing Commission, a long-term initiative aimed at addressing historical grievances and fostering national unity. President Samia has also committed to re-starting a constitutional review process, a key demand of the opposition. If genuinely inclusive and far-reaching, this has the potential to address fundamental issues of governance, electoral integrity, and human rights protection.

Nevertheless, the outcomes of these initiatives are highly dependent on the government's political will to implement meaningful reforms and ensure accountability for past abuses.

The 2025 elections and their violent aftermath represent a major setback for Tanzania's democratic journey, and perhaps the end of the country's reputation as an "island of peace" in a troubled region. The country descended into a maelstrom of contention, violence, and apparently widespread human rights abuses, leaving an indelible scar on the political landscape.

Perhaps there is a chance for President Samia and the nation as a whole to learn from this painful chapter, to collectively say "never again", to genuinely address the grievances that fuelled the unrest, and to rebuild independent democratic institutions – the electoral commission, security forces, the media and more.

The path to true reconciliation and a stable, democratic future will be long and arduous, requiring courage, transparency, and a profound commitment to justice for all Tanzanians. At the time of writing, there's a danger that President Samia will go down in history as the person who tipped Tanzania over the edge into tyranny, division, anger and





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brutality. But it's not too late to find another path – she could instead become the person who brought the country back from the brink and established lasting stability and prosperity.

Ben Taylor: **TUNDU LISSU'S TRIAL**

In a separate-but-related development, court proceedings in the treason trial of Tundu Lissu resumed in early February at the High Court in Dar es Salaam, after a hiatus of several months. Lissu is charged with treason, which carries a mandatory death penalty in Tanzania. The state alleges that he used public rallies in early 2025 to incite a rebellion and disrupt the election. He maintains the charges were “fabricated” to prevent him from participating in the election.

Lissu, who is representing himself, has been systematically picking apart the state's case witness by witness. More than once during cross-examination of prosecution witnesses, the courtroom has reportedly erupted in laughter. In one case, Lissu exposed that a witness had identified himself in court as an “electrician” but had listed his profession as a “farmer” in his police statement, and he exposed similar inconsistencies in other witnesses' testimony.

Lissu received three procedural boosts to his case. First, he has successfully argued that much of the state's evidence, including digital videos, is procedurally flawed and inadmissible. Second, the High Court ruled that laws allowing prosecution witnesses to testify in absolute secrecy (from enclosed booths) were unconstitutional. The judges noted that “justice must be seen to be done” and ordered Parliament to reform the law. This has severely weakened the state's plan to use anonymous “protected” witnesses against Lissu. Third, the prosecution failed in its attempt to block social media and news reporting of the trial, complaining that witnesses were being called “liars” online. The three-judge panel sided with Lissu's argument that “darkness” has no place in a treason trial.

The court has committed to hearing the case for 20 consecutive working days to clear the backlog caused by the election unrest. A final ruling on this specific treason trial is tentatively expected in early March, although procedural delays or new witnesses could push this date. Lissu remains in a maximum-security prison in Dar es Salaam, where he has been held since April 2025.





Genevieve Sekumbo: **YOUTH FED UP**

Young Tanzanians are fed up with not getting a slice of the economic action – research

When young Tanzanians poured into the streets on 29 October 2025, most observers saw an election protest. Protests in Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mwanza and other cities were met with live ammunition and internet blackouts. There were hundreds of casualties, according to human rights organisations.

My research suggests a deeper dynamic: a generation asserting their right to become adults.

As a PhD candidate, I set out in 2020 to understand how Tanzania's natural gas industry was shaping young people's transitions to adulthood. My research examined two interconnected questions. How does the gas industry shape youth transitions and experiences in Mtwara, a resource rich region, particularly in the context of unmet development promises? And how do young people themselves navigate and shape development narratives tied to natural gas extraction?

I found that youth transitions to adulthood are closely tied to commodity cycles: while the gas boom of 2010 briefly expanded pathways to employment, independence and social recognition, the subsequent downturn left many young people in prolonged "waithood".

This broader pattern of blocked transitions helps explain why youth-led protests such as those on 29 October resonate so deeply.

Blocked transitions to adulthood

My research lasted 15 months between 2020 and 2022. I conducted ethnographic fieldwork focused on young people aged 20-35. I began fieldwork in Mtwara region just as the gas sector entered a "gas bust". This was a dramatic reversal from the earlier "gas rush" of 2010-2015. The 2010 discovery of offshore natural gas had generated enormous expectations. Then president Jakaya Kikwete promised "Mtwara will be the new Dubai".

Young people saw prospects for industrialisation, jobs and economic independence. These were necessary to marry, build homes and establish themselves as adults. But by 2015, contractual disputes between the Tanzanian government and international oil companies, combined with falling global commodity prices, halted exploration. The





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promised transformation never materialised.

I documented how the gas sector's boom-bust cycle shaped young people's economic strategies and life trajectories.

Understanding what adulthood means in Tanzania requires recognising it as more than just age. It requires overcoming structural barriers to employment, housing and family formation, and being able to marry, start a family, and establish an independent household. Achieving these milestones enables the social and cultural responsibilities of adulthood. These include gaining respect, supporting extended family and participating meaningfully in community life. Tanzania's National Youth Development Policy defines youth as those up to age 35. That is over one-third of the population and nearly two-thirds of the labour force. For many young Tanzanians, the markers of adulthood remain perpetually out of reach.

My fieldwork revealed three interconnected dynamics that help explain both the everyday crisis young people face and the mobilisation on 29 October.

First, the crisis is not only about unemployment. It is about blocked adulthood. Young people I worked with understood clearly that Tanzania is not a poor country. They see natural resources extracted, infrastructure projects announced, and political elites displaying wealth on social media. From their perspective, their stalled transitions are not the result of national scarcity. They are born from a system in which political and social connections shape who benefits from public investment.

The economic reality reinforces this perception. Street vending, casual labour, motorcycle taxi driving and short-term contracts provide survival income. This is rarely enough to save, secure housing, or plan for family life. In Mtwara, young people watched offshore gas extraction generate capital flows with minimal local employment. Beyond the initial construction phase, the highly technical nature of operations excluded many from core jobs and from ancillary sectors operating in their own region.

Second, educational credentials have proved insufficient to overcome structural barriers. Many young people in their late twenties and thirties held secondary diplomas or tertiary certificates. They were





unable to secure stable employment that would enable them to attain recognised markers of adulthood. What emerged was a prolonged phase of waithood: a social limbo in which young people cannot fully claim adult status or access the respect and authority associated with it.

Thirdly, prolonged exclusion generates political consciousness, not only frustration. When young people cannot meet the economic and social criteria for adulthood, their claims to full citizenship are weakened. Their voices carry less weight, their grievances are dismissed, and their participation is treated as peripheral. Economic precarity, in this sense, translates into civic marginalisation.

During my study young people frequently referred to the 2013 and 2014 gas protests. These followed the government's decision to pipe newly discovered gas to Dar es Salaam rather than process it locally. The demonstrations became a defining political moment in the region. In conversations, they were described as about more than employment. They were framed as claims to recognition and inclusion in national development.

The 29 October protests follow a similar pattern: blocked economic futures translating into collective mobilisation for political recognition.

Why October 2025 became a breaking point

October 2025 brought together the structural conditions I documented between 2020 and 2022 with a tightening of political controls. In the months preceding the election, opposition leaders were jailed or barred from contesting, and reports of abductions and targeted violence circulated widely. President Samia Suluhu Hassan was declared the winner with 97.66% of the vote.

In my fieldwork, economic and political exclusion were consistently discussed as intertwined. Conversations about employment and income were frequently accompanied by concerns about voice and representation – perceptions of not being heard by authorities. These discussions reflected a broader sense that both economic mobility and political participation were constrained.

Seen in this context, the October protests reflected longer-term frustrations rooted in stalled transitions to adulthood and limited access to stable employment. They were linked not only to electoral developments but to perceptions of unequal access to opportunity and





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national resources.

The state's response followed patterns observed in earlier episodes of unrest in Mtwara. Security operations were concentrated in neighbourhoods where protests had taken place. Reports suggested an uneven use of force, with young men disproportionately affected. When further demonstrations were called for 9 December, they did not materialise.

The structural conditions shaping prolonged waithood and youth disillusionment, however, remain in place.

From this perspective, youth protest is tied to how young people attempt to secure economic independence, social recognition and meaningful inclusion under constrained conditions. Where pathways to adulthood remain uncertain, mobilisation becomes one of the few visible ways to assert presence and claim belonging.

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Dr Hildebrand Shayo: **ECONOMICS**

With robust gold reserves, the Bank of Tanzania is well placed to maintain the shilling's stability.

In 2026, particularly following the leadership of Dr. Samia, the President of Tanzania, who meticulously oversaw the initiative to commence gold purchases under the Central Bank of Tanzania's vigilant oversight, the outcome is the fortification of the Tanzanian shilling against other currencies. The analysis I have conducted, utilising data generated by the Central Bank of Tanzania, strongly indicates that the shilling is poised to maintain stability in 2026.

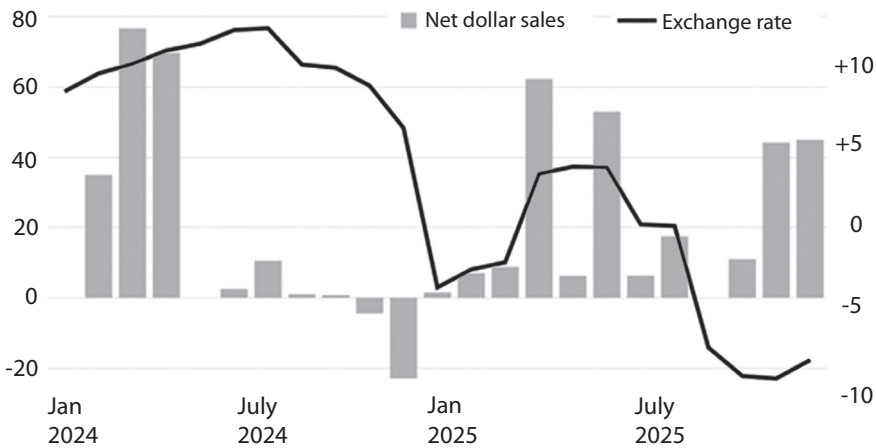
The appreciation of the Tanzanian shilling in the second half of 2025 was attributed to central bank intervention, stricter regulations on domestic US dollar usage, and positive developments in the external sector.

As we begin 2026, the shilling has appreciated by 6.5% against the USD in the second half of 2025. This indicates significant central bank intervention, exceeding USD260 million by the end of November



(compared with less than USD170 million in the same period in 2024), with a marked escalation of support in October and November, attributed to heightened dollar hoarding in the lead-up to the election.

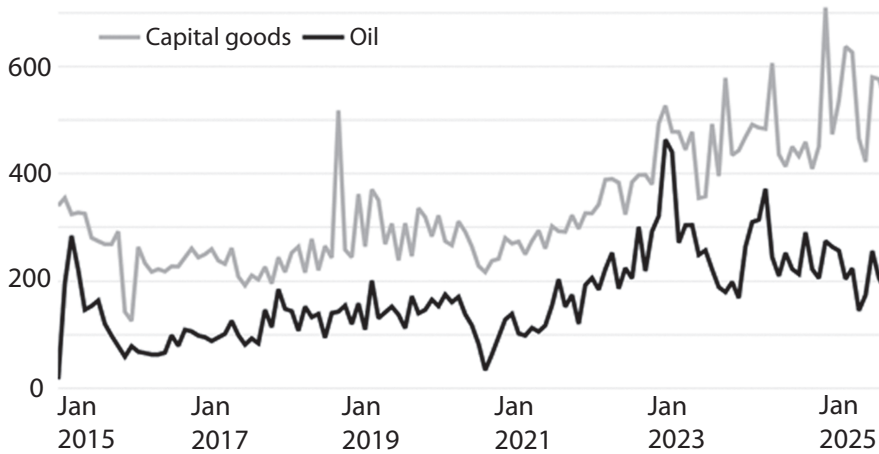
The central bank has progressively implemented stringent regulations regarding the use of domestic US dollars. In March 2025, the central bank declared that all pricing and payment for goods and services within the nation must be conducted in Tanzanian shillings. Based on BOT's data, an analysis of dollar sales, the USD exchange rate, and the USD per TSh % y-o-y, (see chart), indicates that shillings remain strong.



In conjunction with the robust performance of the Tanzanian shilling, a favourable trend in the trade deficit has further bolstered the currency. Rising gold prices, strong horticultural exports, and sustained government backing for import substitution have collectively boosted export levels and moderated import demand.

An examination of the BOT monthly economic review reports shows that Tanzania has achieved self-sufficiency in essential construction materials such as cement, tiles, iron sheets, and steel and is now aiming to enhance domestic production of sugar and fertiliser. From an economic point of view, these trends are bolstering the external sector and strengthening the shilling.

Nonetheless, demand for higher-value capital inputs, excluding raw materials, is expected to remain elevated due to robust infrastructure



development. However, this pressure on the import bill has been somewhat mitigated by declining global energy prices; for example, oil accounted for 19.9% of goods imports in 2024.

This interplay has helped moderate import expenditure and bolster the country's overall trade balance, as briefly shown in the figure below, which illustrates how rising capital goods import demand is partially offset by lower oil prices.

Given this trend, the Tanzanian shilling is projected to average approximately TSh 2,550 per USD across 2026. In light of possible lender withdrawals that could reduce financial inflows, the Bank of Tanzania has both the readiness and capacity to intervene, thereby ensuring the stability of the shilling.

The recent international scrutiny of the Tanzanian government's management of the October 2025 general elections could affect the immediate demand for Tanzanian assets. For example, the European Parliament has requested that the European Commission retract its proposed decision on the financing of the EU's Annual Action Plan for Tanzania, valued at EUR 156 million (approximately USD 181 million).

Notwithstanding donors' apprehensions and heightened domestic demand for US dollars, the central bank, led by Governor Mr. Tutuba, has shown commendable readiness to intervene to stabilise the currency.

The BoT's initiative to buy gold more strategically has indeed enhanced



reserves, which, according to the BoT's calculations, totalled USD 6.2 billion at the end of October. The rise in gold receipts, coupled with ongoing central bank initiatives to amass reserves, will undoubtedly equip the Bank of Tanzania with the capability and resolve to intervene, thereby bolstering dollar liquidity and currency stability.

Undoubtedly, a reduction in the current account deficit will contribute to the stability of the shilling. An in-depth analysis of BOT data shows that the current account deficit is projected to fall from 3.2% of GDP in 2025 (a revision from the previously estimated 2.5%, based on Q3 outcomes) to 2.5% in 2026 (adjusted from an earlier forecast of 2.3%).

Although primary income outflows are expected to remain substantial due to high debt-servicing obligations, strong performance in trade and services exports – especially from gold, horticulture, and the projected completion of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline by late 2026 – will help to offset this.

In the mining sector, data from the London Metal Exchange indicate that gold prices are projected to rise further in 2026, averaging USD3,700/oz, up from USD3,400/oz in 2025. With gold accounting for 39.4% of Tanzania's goods exports in 2024, the path to a stable shilling appears clear. Enhanced regional connectivity and competitive port costs are expected to bolster exports of transport services further.

Regarding the implications of currency revaluation, a weaker dollar, coupled with an expanding real interest rate differential between Tanzania and the United States, is poised to mitigate the shilling's depreciation against the US dollar in 2026.

My assessment of the data from the central bank of Tanzania contained in monthly economic review reports and how the august institution manages the economy, the DXY (that is U.S. Dollar Index, USDX, a benchmark that shows how strong the dollar is in global markets by measuring its value against a weighted basket of major foreign currencies i.e., the Euro, Japanese Yen, British Pound, Canadian Dollar, Swedish Krona, and Swiss Franc), is likely to experience a period of restraint in 2026, oscillating between 95 and 100.

This is attributable to robust US growth and solid corporate earnings, which will be offset by prevailing policy uncertainties and ongoing global fiscal deficits. Amidst this, the Bank of Tanzania is likely to



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maintain its policy rate in 2026, in contrast to the expected 50-basis-point reduction by the US Federal Reserve. This divergence will likely widen the real interest-rate differential between Tanzania and the United States dollar, thereby enhancing the relative appeal of Tanzanian assets.

Tanzania's decision to hold gold to boost the economy and the value of the Tanzanian shilling could be challenged if a significant drop in global gold prices were to adversely affect export revenues, hinder reserve accumulation, diminish the Bank of Tanzania's ability to intervene in foreign exchange markets, and put pressure on the shilling.

While other partners have not explicitly endorsed the European Council's decision to freeze or cancel the Annual Action Plan for Tanzania, there are indications that these trade partners recognise Tanzania's assertiveness on issues affecting its citizens and the reality on the ground, as the picture of what happened during the 29th October 2025 election slowly unfolds.

In light of this, Tanzania's continued alignment with partners such as China, for instance, in the rehabilitation of the Tanzara railway line, and its cooperation with other partners adopting distinct approaches to collaboration, will serve as mitigating factors in maintaining the shilling's stability in 2026, a positive sign for investors. In addition, an extension or renewal of the IMF's programmes, which are set to conclude in May 2026, will provide further support for inflows and help maintain Tanzania's currency stability.

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

Africa's Energy Future: Tanzania Calls for Bold Action at COP30

At COP30 in Belém, Brazil, Tanzania chaired the African Group and urged African nations to adopt a cautious approach to phasing out fossil fuels, emphasising the need to balance climate action with economic and social development priorities.

As a significant gas-producing country, Tanzania played a leading role in advising African ministers on fossil fuel policy. A document obtained by Climate Home News recommended that African countries resist a





rapid fossil fuel phase-out while prioritising universal energy access in the summit's final agreements.

Tanzania depends on fossil gas for a substantial portion of its electricity and has further reserves set for auction. The country also plays a key role in the 1,443 kilometre East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), linking Ugandan oil fields to the port of Tanga for export. These resources are critical for industrial growth, affordable electricity, and economic stability, particularly as Tanzania works to expand access to power for millions of households.

The Tanzanian delegation highlighted the importance of transitioning away from traditional biomass, such as wood and charcoal, while strategically utilising gas and other fossil fuels. This approach reflects a broader concern across Africa: energy transitions must not undermine electrification, industrial growth, or economic development.

Tanzania's stance also underscored divisions within the African bloc. Countries like Kenya and Sierra Leone supported a fossil fuel transition roadmap, while Nigeria and Ghana stressed the importance of maintaining energy access to safeguard economic and social stability. With over 600 million people still lacking electricity and many economies dependent on oil and gas revenues, Africa's approach reflects its unique development context.

Although explicit references to phasing out fossil fuels were removed from the final "Global Mutirão" political package, questions remain about the continent's collective position. Observers suggest the cautious approach is aimed at maintaining flexibility, protecting economic interests, and ensuring equitable energy access.

Experts note that Africa could have leveraged COP30 to advocate for a "just, equitable, and inclusive" transition pathway, but internal divergence limited influence. There is a clear need for predictable financing, technological support, and national ownership to make transitions feasible and sustainable. Without these resources, ambitious climate targets risk remaining unattainable.

Looking ahead, Tanzania and other African negotiators are emphasising strategies that integrate climate action with development objectives, prioritise secure financing, and allow countries to control their energy transition pathways. COP30 highlighted the tension between global





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climate ambitions and Africa's development realities, reinforcing the need to place energy access, economic growth, and equitable support at the centre of any transition strategy.

From Turmoil to Recovery: How Tourism Operators Are Reviving the Industry

Tourism operators across Tanzania are working to revive the sector after election-related unrest disrupted travel during the festive season. December, usually a period of high demand from Zanzibar's beaches to the northern safari circuit saw widespread cancellations, compounded by foreign travel advisories.

Operators have launched concerted efforts to restore confidence and reaffirm Tanzania's reputation as a safe, world-class destination. Initiatives include marketing campaigns, flexible booking options, and enhanced engagement with domestic, regional, and international travellers. Safari lodges, beach resorts, and travel agencies are offering special packages, while coordinating closely with local authorities to ensure safety and smooth logistics.

The unrest highlighted tourism's economic and social importance. The sector supports thousands of jobs and sustains communities that depend on visitor spending. Zanzibar and northern safari circuits are now witnessing a gradual return of travellers, reflecting the industry's resilience.

Looking ahead, stakeholders advocate for long-term strategies combining risk management, crisis communication, and sustainable tourism promotion. Strengthening infrastructure and contingency planning will help Tanzania maintain resilience against future disruptions. With operators leading recovery efforts, the country is reaffirming its position as one of Africa's premier travel destinations, showcasing its natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage.

TSh 1bn Equipment Sparks Forest Conservation Drive

In a major boost for sustainable forestry, Tanzania's Ministry of Tourism and Natural Resources received equipment worth over TSh 1 billion, aimed at strengthening forest conservation and curbing unregulated trade in forest products.

The equipment, including vehicles, motorcycles, drones, surveillance





boats, and radio communication systems, will enhance monitoring, enforcement, and management across the country. The Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS) will also deploy new point-of-sale systems to improve revenue collection.

This initiative forms part of the three-year Transformation of the Tanzania Fuel Wood Value Chain Project (2023–2026), funded by the European Union. The project seeks to shift Tanzania’s dependence on fuelwood toward cleaner energy solutions, addressing climate change while protecting forest resources. Training programs will equip district and village officials with skills in procurement, data collection, and permit management.

The initiative targets high fuelwood-producing regions, including Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Tanga, Pwani, Mwanza, and Tabora. Collaboration between the government, WWF Tanzania, the Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative, and the Lawyers’ Environmental Action Team (LEAT) highlights the importance of public-private partnerships in promoting sustainable energy and forest governance.

With these resources, Tanzania is poised to strengthen leadership in sustainable forest management, enhance compliance with conservation laws, and transform the wood value chain to benefit both the environment and local communities. The TSh 1 billion equipment injection represents a decisive step toward preserving forests for current and future generations.

Ben Taylor: **ENERGY & MINERALS**

Increase in mining revenue, driven by gold

The Ministry of Mining collected TSh 650bn between July and December 2025, equivalent to 109% of its goal for the period and 54% of its target for the 2025-26 fiscal year, according to a statement from the Minister for Minerals, Anthony Mavunde.

This reflects a substantial and sustained growth in the sector, which has seen its contribution to the national GDP climb from 6.8% in 2020 to 12% in the second quarter of 2025. The sector’s overall revenue has dramatically increased from TSh 210bn in 2016/2017 fiscal year to TSh 1.07 trillion in 2024/2025.

The growth has been significantly bolstered by strong performance





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in the gold sub-sector. Between July and December 2025, 14.66 tonnes of gold, valued at TSh 3.75 trillion, were sold through the country's refineries.

Debate over gold reserves and development spending

In late January 2026, Minister of State in the President's Office Kitila Mkumbo announced the government planned to sell off part of its gold reserves to finance infrastructure projects, as it confronts a potential suspension of development aid from international partners.

Tanzania's relationship with gold reserves extends back decades. The Bank of Tanzania first established a gold reserve in 1990, though this practice was discontinued in 2002. The initiative to rebuild the reserve gained momentum after June 2021, to the point where the Bank of Tanzania's gold reserves stood at approximately US\$1.3 billion in December 2025, equivalent to about 18.9 tonnes of gold, according to Bloomberg. This represents a substantial asset, comprising approximately 36% of the country's total foreign assets.

The sale of national gold reserves to fund development is not unprecedented, though it remains relatively uncommon. Central banks and governments may liquidate portions of their gold holdings for various strategic reasons, including diversifying reserve portfolios, managing currency fluctuations, or investing in critical infrastructure projects.

Tanzania's decision to sell gold reserves must be understood in the context of a dramatic decline in aid finance. The country has historically been heavily dependent on foreign aid, though this has declined sharply in recent years. Official Development Assistance (ODA) peaked at USD \$761 million in 2013, before gradually declining to US\$389 million in 2024 and a projected US\$118 million in 2025, representing an 84 per cent collapse from the peak.

In 2024, ODA accounted for a little under 3% of Tanzania's public expenditure.

Further, US political changes in 2025 (see previous issues of TA) and global reactions to the post-election political context in Tanzania have shaken the aid finance picture further. The European Union has taken the most formal action: the European Parliament voted in November





2025 in favour of a non-binding resolution calling for the suspension of EUR156 million in EU aid to Tanzania; the resolution was adopted by 539 votes in favour, none against, and 27 abstentions. Nevertheless, the European Commission has not yet officially suspended the aid, but has instead frozen the funds pending further assessment and dialogue with Tanzanian authorities.

Zitto Kabwe, a prominent opposition politician and economist, has raised legal concerns about the proposal to sell-off gold reserves. Writing on X / Twitter, he warned that selling the central bank's gold for government projects could violate the Bank of Tanzania Act, specifically sections 51 and 52, which govern the use of foreign currency reserves.

LNG plant – progress, and a timeline

Deputy Minister for Energy Salome Makamba announced in January that Tanzania expects to sign a Host Government Agreement (HGA) for the long-discussed Liquid Natural gas (LNG) project before June this year, with first production anticipated by 2034.

Signing the HGA triggers the next development phase but does not mean a Final Investment Decision (FID) is imminent. Front end engineering design typically requires 2-3 years, during which a sales purchase agreement will be finalised, and the engineering procurement and construction contract and bidding process will take place. Offtake contracts with international buyers must also be negotiated prior to FID. This puts a realistic FID window around 2028-2029, with first LNG cargoes in the early 2030s, according to Energy, Capital and Power, an advisory service.

In the meantime, here is a reminder of previous announcements, projections and expectations for the proposed LNG plant.

Early 2010s: Offshore gas discoveries by international oil companies in Blocks 1, 2 and 4 were first made; these discoveries later formed the basis for plans to develop an LNG export facility. These discoveries sparked early discussions around export-oriented LNG infrastructure.

2014: The Tanzanian Ministry of Energy formally announced the intention to develop an LNG plant to monetise offshore gas, marking the first public projection of a large-scale LNG export project.

Mid-2015: Earlier planning documents and international economic





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analyses indicated that a final investment decision could occur “at the earliest in late 2016”, with production potentially after 2020, assuming supportive fiscal and legal frameworks were agreed. (IMF)

February 2016: Government acquired land in Lindi for the LNG terminal, showing intent to prepare the site as a precursor to development.

August 2016: President John Magufuli publicly urged officials to accelerate the LNG project to start construction.

November 2016: Statoil (now Equinor) said that, given the lack of a stable investment framework, a final investment decision would not be made for at least five years (i.e. not before around 2021 or later), reflecting ongoing uncertainties.

2018-2019: The Tanzanian government halted talks with potential investors toward the end of 2019 to review production sharing agreements covering offshore gas terms: delaying expectations for an FID.

Early 2021: After leadership change following President Magufuli’s untimely death in March 2021, President Samia Suluhu Hassan instructed the Ministry of Energy to accelerate LNG negotiations.

June 2022: Tanzania signed an initial Host Government Agreement (HGA) with Shell, Equinor and other partners: a significant step toward development. During this event, government officials publicly stated that a final investment decision was expected by 2025.

May 2023: Industry reports reiterated that following the framework agreement signed in 2022, a final investment decision was being targeted for 2025: with ensuing construction aimed at commissioning between 2029–2031.

February 2025: Energy Minister Doto Biteko said negotiations with investors could conclude by June 2025 (a milestone needed before progressing toward an FID).

October 2025: Reports noted that the Tanzanian government was pushing to finalise the LNG deal by the end of 2025, reflecting the culmination of more than a decade of negotiations and delays.

Jan 26-30, 2026: Tanzanian officials, including the Deputy Minister of Energy, stated the government expected to sign the binding Host Government Agreement before June 2026, a key precondition for progressing toward FID.





Ben Taylor:

TRANSPORT

Dar bus transport problems spark protests

In late September and early October 2025, a few weeks before the general elections, a spate of protests broke out on Dar es Salaam rapid transit buses. A key incident occurred at around 8pm on October 1, after a number of passengers were trying to board the limited number of available buses.

“Just kill us, just kill us,” hundreds of passengers shouted at Gerezani bus station as police tried to disperse the crowd by firing warning shots into the air. The unrest spread to other stations, including Magomeni Mapipa and Kagera, where drivers abandoned their vehicles to escape the angry mob.

This incident occurred only hours after Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner Albert Chalamila visited Kimara and other routes to apologise to frustrated customers of what many now see as a failing transportation project.

Chalamila’s intervention followed a week of spontaneous protests on the buses, where overcrowded passengers, often hanging from doors, windows, and even roofs, chanted political slogans. Some shouted, “We don’t want CCM,” while others sang in support of jailed opposition leader Tundu Lissu.

The principal cause of the discontent appears to be delays to the rollout of new phases of the bus network, which has added to congestion, long queues, poor maintenance of the existing network and irregular schedules. The planned expansion was due to start in September 2025, but has been delayed due to what Mr Chalamila called production and logistics challenges.

In response, President Samia Suluhu Hassan appointed new leaders to Dar Rapid Transit Agency (Dart) which regulates the system and Uda Rapid Transit (Udart) that operates Phase One.

Then, in mid-October, the first buses began operating on the Mbagala-Kilwa corridor route, Phase II of the BRT system. This phase involves 250 buses operated by Mofat Company under a 12-year contract. All buses are powered by natural gas, aligning with the government’s commitment to cleaner and more sustainable urban transport.





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Commuters who boarded the new BRT buses expressed optimism mixed with concerns. “I waited almost an hour for the bus at Mbagala Rangi Tatu Station since only a few [buses] have been deployed so far,” said one passenger.

In January 2026, it was reported that 49 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) buses had recently arrived in the country and had begun offloading at the port, with expectations that they will start operating shortly.

The Public Relations Officer of Udart, Gabriel Katanga said the buses already in the country are part of the 99 units expected in the first phase, aimed at improving transport services along the Kimara corridor under the BRT Phase One (BRT-1), which began operations in 2016.

The project, which was designed to operate with 305 buses, currently has only about 40 in service after many broke down. The decline has been attributed to prolonged operation without proper maintenance and overloading of passengers.

Mr Katanga also said the government has already released TSh 1.2bn for the rehabilitation of 30 buses, with 20 already repaired and ready to resume service. “We are confident that commuters will enjoy improved services,” he said, thanking the public for their patience and urging them to take care of the buses.

One resident of Mbezi said promises of improved services must be matched with action. “Even if 500 more buses are added, it will not help unless there is commitment, accountability and proper management,” she said.

TAZARA rehabilitation underway, and resumption of cross-border services

The Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) said its long-awaited revitalisation programme has entered an active stage following the mobilisation of equipment, technical personnel and other resources by its partner, China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC).

The state-run CCECC is set to revitalise TAZARA through a USD\$1.4bn investment for rehabilitation and operations, securing a 30-year concession to run the key trade route connecting Zambia’s copper belt to the Dar es Salaam port.



TAZARA Managing Director and CEO, Mr Bruno Ching'andu, said the move marked a critical transition from planning to implementation, laying the groundwork for phased rehabilitation of the ageing railway infrastructure. He said engineering teams were already on the ground conducting detailed assessments of the railway infrastructure to determine priority areas for intervention.

"The transformation of TAZARA will not happen overnight," said Mr Ching'andu. "The programme is being implemented in phases, and while there may be temporary service adjustments, the end goal is a safer, more reliable and predictable railway."

In mid-January, President Samia Suluhu Hassan hosted a visit from the Chinese Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi, who described TAZARA as a historic symbol of China–Tanzania friendship and said China is ready to support improvements to enhance the railway's efficiency and stimulate economic growth.

Further, in a separate development in February 2026, (but perhaps also as a sign of renewed attention), TAZARA reintroduced cross-border passenger services between Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Kapiri Mposhi, Zambia. The service was suspended in June 2024 due to what TAZARA described as "technical challenges."

In a statement issued January 6, 2025, TAZARA said the resumption would reaffirm the authority's founding mandate of promoting regional mobility, trade, tourism and people-to-people interaction.

Under the reorganisation, passenger services between Dar es Salaam and New Kapiri Mposhi will be rationalised, with weekly trips reduced from four to two, an adjustment that will enable the consolidation of passenger coaches and locomotives.

The Mukuba international train is now operating once per week in each direction, departing Dar es Salaam at 15.50 on Fridays and returning from Kapiri Mposhi at 14.00 on Tuesdays.

"The adjustment in service frequency reflects the realities of operating an ageing fleet undergoing phased rehabilitation. Our priority is to deploy available coaches and locomotives where they deliver the greatest public benefit, while maintaining safety, affordability and operational reliability," said Mr Ching'andu.



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SGR line faces high demand and infrastructure challenges

The recently redeveloped central line railway, currently connecting Dar es Salaam with Morogoro and Dodoma, has faced a number of challenges.

In October 2025, the line recorded its first accident since electric train operations began, following the derailment of an electric multiple unit (EMU) train at Ruvu in Coast Region. Photos and videos shared online showed one section of the high-speed train off the tracks near a signal post, sparking public concern and debate over the cause. No injuries were reported.

Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) Director General Machibya Shiwa Masanja attributed the accident to an operational fault rather than infrastructure failure.

“There was a challenge in operations, not on the line. The infrastructure remained intact, except that an operational error caused the problem. That’s why we were able to restore services quickly,” Mr Machibya told Mwananchi newspaper. He said services resumed later in the day.

Then, in late December, heavy rains caused further issues, and trains were suspended. Masanja said the suspension was prompted by erosion of riverbanks near a railway bridge, not by any structural failure of the railway itself. “As a precautionary measure, we decided to suspend services to allow for reinforcement of the riverbanks,” he said.

This triggered criticism from some members of the public and politicians, who questioned how a railway completed barely a year ago could already be experiencing problems. Chadema vice chair John Heche criticised the project: “A mega project worth trillions of shillings has not even completed a year of operation – in fact, it has not even reached Mwanza. Why was there no proper feasibility study and detailed design?” he wrote.

Speaking during a visit to the affected area on January 2, Prime Minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba said the suspension of SGR services was not unusual and should be seen as a responsible safety measure.

“When there are strong winds affecting power lines, electricity flow becomes unstable. Those wishing ill for Tanzania want trains to continue operating regardless. You wouldn’t even transport potatoes in



such conditions, yet you want people to travel on electric trains during storms,” he said.

Meanwhile, the SGR line has been facing a very different type of problem – a sign of success rather than difficulties: excessive demand. Particularly at weekends and holiday periods, tickets are regularly selling out several days before travel.

Responding to complaints, Mr Masanja said demand for SGR services currently outstrips the number of available routes. “It is true demand is high, but we are addressing the issue. We are in the final technical stages of increasing routes between Dar es Salaam and Dodoma,” he said.

Mr Masanja added that TRC has sufficient trains stationed in Dodoma, and the new operating model will allow trains to pass each other instead of turning back immediately, enabling the transport of more passengers each day.

ATCL route expansion

National airline Air Tanzania Company Limited (ATCL) has launched new routes connecting Dar es Salaam with Cape Town, South Africa, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe and Accra, Ghana.

The inaugural flight to Accra, operated by a Boeing 737-9 Max, was welcomed with a traditional water cannon salute upon arrival at Kotoka International Airport in January, a ceremonial honour reserved for significant aviation milestones. Accra becomes the 32nd destination and the second in West Africa after Lagos on the carrier’s growing network.

Transport Minister Prof Makame Mbarawa said the new route is more than just a commercial venture, describing it as a step toward realising the Pan-African aspirations championed by Tanzania’s founding president Julius Nyerere and Ghana’s first leader Kwame Nkrumah.

“These are not meant to be mere lines drawn on the map, but connections that bring Africans together,” Prof Mbarawa said, adding that the Accra service will provide travellers from West Africa with faster and more convenient access to destinations in the Far East, including China and India.



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Increasing international connections

Other airlines have also increased their flights to Tanzania over recent months. This includes Brussels Airlines announcing plans to start direct flights to Kilimanjaro Airport from June 2026 and Etihad Airways announcing the resumption of direct flights between Abu Dhabi and Zanzibar for the 2026 summer season. Further, KLM and Air France both resumed services to Zanzibar that had been suspended in early 2025.

Philip Richards:

SPORT



Football – AFCON

Taifa Stars, the national men’s side, made history in the African Cup of Nations (AFCON) 2025 held in Morocco over the festive period. For the first time, they qualified from the group stage into the last 16.

They achieved this milestone despite not winning any of their games against fellow group contenders Nigeria, Tunisia and Uganda. Two draws and a narrow defeat to Nigeria proved sufficient to qualify as one of the best third-placed teams.

They were unfortunately defeated by Morocco (1-0) in the “last 16” knockout stage in front of a partisan home crowd in Rabat. Real Madrid’s Brahim Diaz fired home the winner for the Atlas Lions to progress to the quarter finals.



The Taifa Stars squad included 2 players plying their trade in England, albeit in the lower leagues. Haji Mnoga for Salford City in League 2, whilst Tarryn Allarakhia plays for non-league (National League) Rochdale.

Preparations are already underway for AFCON 2027, Africa's premier national team football competition, which will be jointly hosted by Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, marking a historic milestone for East African football. [Sources: BBC.com website (4/1/26), Daily News website (12/1/26), The Guardian (22/12/25)]

Cross country athletics

The national cross-country athletics team is scheduled to take part in the World Cross Country Championship that will commence on January 10th in Tallahassee, Florida. This 46th edition of the Championships will feature more than 500 athletes from some 65 countries, as athletes compete across five exhilarating races: the men's and women's U20 and senior events, and the mixed relay.

Despite funding issues and the coach and team officials being unable to fly to the USA after they failed to secure visas, the country will be represented by senior athletes Gabriel Geay, Emmanuel Dinday, Benjamin Ferdinand and Inyasi Sulle. The mixed relay team comprises Daniel Sinda, Ambrose Amba, Regina Mpigachai and Elizabeth Ilanda. [Source Daily News, 7/1/2026]

Donovan McGrath: TANZANIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

Five dead after helicopter crash on Mount Kilimanjaro

(Daily Mail online - UK) Extract: The Tanzania National Parks Authority said the victims were a Tanzanian guide Innocent Mbaga, a 32-year-old doctor Jimmy Daniel, a Zimbabwean pilot living in Tanzania Constantine Mazonde, 42 and two Czech tourists, David Plos and Anna Plosova, both 30, who were on board the Airbus helicopter when it crashed. The helicopter crashed near the mountain's Barafu camp ... Tanzania's Civil Aviation Authority said in a statement. The Mwananchi newspaper and East Africa TV, citing Kilimanjaro region's head of



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police, reported that the helicopter was on a medical rescue mission before it crashed. Musa Kuji, the commissioner for Tanzania National Parks, told reporters that the Czech tourists had been on a six-day trip ... They were on their descent from the mountain when the helicopter crashed around the Barafu Camp area in Kilimanjaro National Park, Mr Kuji said. Meanwhile, the Aviation Authority announced ... that an investigation had been launched, in accordance with international aviation safety standards, to determine the circumstances and probable cause of the crash. Although around 50,000 tourists climb Kilimanjaro annually, aircraft accidents are rare on Mount Kilimanjaro, with the last recorded incident in November 2008, when four people died. Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak, is nearly 6,000 metres (20,000 ft) above sea level. The crash happened between 4,670 and 4,700 metres, Mwananchi reported. The helicopter belonged to a company called Kilimedair, officials said. The company's website says it offers a speedy descent service for climbers who have reached Kilimanjaro's peak and find the 'traditional two-day descent' challenging, offering flights that allow them to 'skip the long trek'. (25 December 2025)

Newly identified species of Tanzanian tree toad leapfrog the tadpole stage and give birth to toadlets

(*CNN online - USA*) *Extract:* Scientists have newly described three extraordinary species of tree toad that leapfrog over the egg-to-tadpole stage. The females give birth on land to dozens of toadlets, each measuring just a few millimetres long. Live birth, or skipping the egg-laying and larva stage, is extremely rare in amphibians. Among nearly 8,000 species of frogs and toads, fewer than 1% are viviparous, or bear live young. This strategy may have evolved as an adaptation in habitats lacking easy access to water where frogs and toads typically lay their eggs, the study authors reported. "Describing these new species that give birth to live young is fascinating and helps us understand the evolutionary flexibility of amphibians, one of the most diverse and ecologically sensitive groups of vertebrates," said Dr. Diego José Santana, curator of amphibians and conservation ecologist at Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History... The three varieties of tree toad from Tanzania were previously classified as one species: *Nectophrynoides viviparus*. However, when scientists analysed the physical traits and genetic data of hundreds of museum specimens, along with vocal





recordings of toads in their habitats, they determined that the three types of toad were separate species in the *Nectophrynoides* genus. These newly described species provide researchers with a clearer picture of the diversity in tree toads that bear live young and could help to conserve them... Toads that reproduce in water lay an impressive number of eggs - in some cases about 20,000 in a single clutch. "They can do that every couple of weeks," said Dr. Mark Scherz, senior author of the study published ... in the journal *Vertebrate Zoology*. "They lay those eggs and they develop into teeny, tiny, tadpoles, of which only a fraction ever make it out of the pond," ... Live birth, in which the eggs are fertilized internally, by comparison, yields toad broods that are significantly smaller: around 40 to 60 toadlets. "The maximum we've ever recorded was, I believe, over 160 fully developed toadlets inside one individual," he added... In 1905, German herpetologist Gustav Tornier found and described the first viviparous toad species, *N. viviparus*, in Tanzania. They measure no more than 1.5 inches (37 millimetres) long, have slender fingers with rounded discs at the tips, and glandular masses (sometimes referred to as "warts") on their limbs. The toads come in a variety of hues, including white, pale grey, buttery yellow, caramel brown, earthy red or black. Scientists have since identified more than a dozen *Nectophrynoides* species that bear live young. *N. viviparus* is the most widespread species in the genus and the only one found in Southern Highlands of Tanzania as well as the country's Eastern Arc Mountains, where all other *Nectophrynoides* species live... (14 November 2025)

The TAZARA turns 50

(*Al Jazeera online - Qatar*) *Riding the troubled railway line between Tanzania and Zambia as China moves to rebuild it. Extract continues: Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, to Kapiri Mposhi, Zambia – In Dar-es-Salaam's train station, hundreds of passengers sat amid piles of luggage as a listless breeze blew through the open windows. Shortly before their scheduled 3:50pm departure on the Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority's (TAZARA) Mukuba Express train, an update crackled over the tannoy: the train would be leaving two hours late. A collective groan rippled through the crowd, and under the soaring roof of the station, pigeons darted back and forth, disappearing into holes left from rotted-out ceiling tiles. But nobody was really surprised. Given the train's reputation*





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for unreliable service, the passengers knew a two-hour delay for the TAZARA was practically on time. The railway runs from Tanzania's largest city through the country's southern highlands and across the border into Zambia's copper provinces, finally pulling into the town of Kapiri Mposhi some 1,860 kilometres (1,156 miles) away. It's a journey that, according to the official timetables, should take about 40 hours. For regular passengers, it's a cheap way to reach parts of the country that are not located near main highways. For foreign tourists, it's a unique way to see Tanzania's landscapes far from the bustling cities and overcrowded safari parks, provided they are not in a hurry. A first-class sleeper car all the way to Mbeya, a travel hub and border town just to the east of Zambia, surrounded by lush mountains and coffee farms, is just over \$20... [The] railroad celebrated its 50th anniversary, but it has struggled for most of its existence requiring foreign investment for basic upkeep and failing to haul the amount of freight it was built to carry. Inconsistent maintenance and limited investment have seen its infrastructure and cars deteriorate from decades of use. It's hard to determine exactly where a trip on the TAZARA will be at any given time, due to the myriad delays and breakdowns that randomise each journey. Simple derailments from poorly loaded cars and deteriorating tracks are common, and then there's the occasional unfortunate brush with nature ... [the] service was cancelled after a passenger train struck an African buffalo while passing through Tanzania's Mwalimu Julius Nyerere National Park. But since the beginning of 2025, the TAZARA has been plagued by more serious incidents – and fatalities that reveal the desperate need for an overhaul of both ageing infrastructure and poor safety management. In April, two locomotives being moved from Zambia to a workshop in Mbeya for repairs derailed at a bridge in southern Tanzania, killing both drivers. Two months later, in June, a train derailed in Zambia and was then struck by the “rescue train” dispatched to assist it. The collision killed one TAZARA employee and injured 10 staff and 19 passengers, according to a media release from the railway. Citing “unexpected operational challenges,” passenger service was briefly suspended ... As it turned out, the few operational locomotives the TAZARA could field were stuck in Tanzania, after a fire damaged one of the hundreds of bridges along the track. But big improvements for TAZARA are on the horizon, thanks to a major investment by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC), which





has pledged \$1.4bn to refurbish the ageing rail line over the next three years... Most of the money will be spent on rehabilitating the tracks, but \$400m will go toward 32 new locomotives and 762 wagons, “significantly increasing freight and passenger transport capacity,” according to a TAZARA statement. In return, the Chinese state-owned corporation will receive a 30-year concession to run the TAZARA railway and recoup its investment before turning day-to-day management back over to Tanzanian and Zambian authorities... In the 1970s, the Chinese government invested in the TAZARA project – when Western nations wouldn’t – as a symbolic gesture towards former colonial and now-independent nations, hoping to spread goodwill and communist thought through cooperation and development. Now, infrastructure projects are more explicitly tied to financial outcomes. The scramble for copper in Zambia to fuel the development of green technology, electric cars, and more means repairing the TAZARA and increasing its reliability will facilitate the flow of copper ore to Chinese ports and factories. Throughout its life, the TAZARA has underperformed, moving a fraction of its design freight capacity of 5 million tonnes of cargo per year – currently, that number is about 500,000 instead. With the planned improvements, Chinese investors hope to quadruple that number to move two million tonnes of cargo annually along the railway. Many Tanzanians use the train for business as well, though on a much smaller scale. The passenger trains include room for cargo, and cheap goods from Dar-es-Salaam can be easily sent to towns and villages along the line. . . [What] is likely the real goal of China’s latest investment[?] While official statements from TAZARA and CCECC focus broadly on rehabilitation and efficient service, the railway’s core purpose – linking Zambia’s Copperbelt to Dar-es-Salaam’s port – makes copper exports the obvious driver... [Improved] timetables for passenger service, are likely secondary goals to those involved in the refurbishment project... [Representatives] from China, Tanzania and Zambia met in Lusaka to inaugurate the agreed-upon project, and promised a prosperous future for all involved. The revitalisation has started at Kapiri Mposhi, with an announcement of “boots on the ground” on TAZARA social media accounts, with pictures of a Zambian work crew lowering a new section of rail into place. Though the investment from China means ceding control of the TAZARA for three decades, Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema highlighted the potential upside of a new economic corridor, and focused on the people who have lived along the nearly 2,000km of





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railroad for generations. "This is your asset," he told them. "Look after it from Kapiri Mposhi in Zambia all the way up to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania." (28 December 2025)

Chronic water shortages dampen holiday mood in Tanzania's biggest city

(BBC News online - UK) At first light in Tanzania's main city Dar es Salaam, some of its six million residents begin their day with a frantic search for water. Extract continues: Christmas is approaching, but the festive mood is dampened by the dry pipes, as the city experiences serious water shortages. In some homes, plastic containers are stacked outside the door, ready to be carried at a moment's notice whenever word spreads that a nearby tap is flowing again. City authorities ration water. Homes get it once a week, but the wait can stretch for weeks for some families. The crisis, caused by a drought and rising demand, has persisted for months. Many people are forced to turn to private vendors, who source their water from boreholes and tanks. They are a respite for thousands of families, but their high costs are a heavy burden to low-income households... Furaha Awadhi, a mother of two living in Tegeta on the outskirts of the city, says the price of water has risen from \$4 (£3) for 1,000 litres to \$10... Unlike many other major Tanzanian cities, Dar es Salaam has been particularly vulnerable to the failure of the October to December rainy season. Even Dodoma, which often receives little rainfall throughout the year, is less affected thanks to its man-made dams. In contrast, Dar es Salaam lacks a nearby freshwater source ... Much of the city's drinking water (about 70%) comes from the Ruvu River, whose flow is closely linked to seasonal rainfall inland... "When water is scarce, everything else stops. . . The government has acknowledged the severity of the problem. Water Minister Juma Aweso told the BBC that Dar es Salaam's dependence on rainfall-fed rivers had left it particularly exposed. (24 December 2025)

Israel has confirmed Hamas handed over the remains of deceased Tanzanian hostage Joshua Mollé [...] under the US-brokered Gaza ceasefire deal.

The Israel prime minister's office said that, following the completion of forensic tests at the National Centre of Forensic Medicine, the foreign ministry had informed the 21-year-old student's family. Mollé was





undertaking an agricultural internship in southern Israel when Hamas-led gunmen attacked on 7 October 2023. He was killed at Kibbutz Nahal Oz and his body was then taken by fighters. His return means six deceased hostages - five Israelis and one Thai - are still in Gaza. "The government of Israel shares in the deep sorrow of the Mollel family and all the families of the fallen hostages," the Israeli prime minister's office said ... The Hostages and Missing Families Forum in Israel said: "Amid their grief and the knowledge that their hearts will never fully heal, Joshua's return offers some comfort to a family that has endured unbearable uncertainty for over two years." Before handing over Mollel's remains to the Red Cross in Gaza ... Hamas's military wing said that it had recovered a hostage's body in the eastern Shejaiya neighbourhood of Gaza City... (6 November 2025)

China, Tanzania reaffirm longstanding friendship, pledge deeper cooperation

(Xinhua News Agency - China) Extract: China and Tanzania are friends with a shared future, and the friendship forged and nurtured by leaders of the older generation remains the most valuable spiritual asset of the two countries, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said ... Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks during a meeting with Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Hassan asked Wang to convey her New Year greetings and best wishes to Chinese President Xi Jinping. She thanked China for its strong support for Tanzania's development under the framework of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation. The Tanzanian side firmly adheres to the one-China principle, Hassan said, adding that Tanzania is ready to align its development plans with China's, deepen practical cooperation, advance the revitalization of the Tanzania-Zambia Railway and the building of a regional prosperity belt, strengthen inter-party exchanges, expand people-to-people interactions, and promote economic growth so as to bring benefits to the two peoples. Hassan spoke highly of the four major global initiatives proposed by Xi, saying that Tanzania stands ready to enhance multilateral coordination with China and jointly promote a more just and equitable global governance system. The Chinese foreign minister conveyed Xi's cordial greetings to Hassan, saying that China and Tanzania are friends with a shared future. The





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friendship between the two countries was forged and nurtured by leaders of the older generation, has withstood the test of changing international circumstances, and remains a most valuable spiritual asset, he said... (12 January 2026)

Sheila Farrell: TANZANIA DEVELOPMENT TRUST

TDT's priorities: clean water

The scale of the problem

In rural Tanzania, fewer than half of all households have access to clean water within 30 minutes of their homes.

This leads to unnecessarily high rates of gastrointestinal illness, premature mortality especially amongst babies and young children, poor school attendance rates, lost working hours and a lot of time spent fetching water. In 2022 the World Bank estimated that inadequate water and sanitation were costing Tanzania a minimum of US\$2.4 billion p.a. or 3.2% of GDP . Almost 70% of these costs were incurred in rural areas.

Dirty water, poor sanitation and hygiene are the main causes of gastrointestinal infections like diarrhoea, cholera and hepatitis A & E which pose significant public health risks, especially amongst the under-fives. Although untreated water can be boiled, this does not eliminate all pathogens whilst increasing the already large demand for firewood.

In 2022, diarrhoea ranked fifth among diseases presented to outpatient departments, accounting for 3.7% of all cases. This increases to 8.5% for children under five, even though most cases are treated at home and therefore go unrecorded.

Studies suggest that access to clean water reduces the incidence of diarrhoea by 52%, compared with improved sanitation (24%) and more use of handwashing (30%) . This is why the provision of clean water to rural communities has become one of TDT's top priorities.

Poor water and sanitation are responsible for an estimated 31,000 deaths in Tanzania each year, of which 18,500 are children. Pregnant women are particularly susceptible to waterborne infections, which contribute to Tanzania's high rate of stillbirths – 19 per 1,000 births compared with only 3.2 per 1,000 births in the UK – and low birth weights.





Children face cognitive deficits, stunting, and a reduction in lifetime earnings due to their shortened learning time at school, whether this is due to absenteeism caused by illness or school time spent carrying water. Even when physically present their ability to learn may be undermined by debilitating waterborne diseases that result in poor digestion of food.

For adults, the World Bank estimates for Tanzania as a whole that water and sanitation related diseases cause the loss of at least six million working days each year, with a further 1.1bn hours lost travelling to fetch water. During the dry season the distance that rural households have to travel to reach any water source – clean or dirty – is approximately doubled as rivers and ponds dry up. Climate change, by extending the length of the dry season, is already making this situation noticeably worse.

The role of the public sector

In 2006 Tanzania launched its Water Sector Development Program (WSDP). Across three phases, this had a total budget of around US\$10bn, although the second half of the programme has been characterised by serious under-spending as support from international donors has become more difficult to secure.

Actual government spending on WASH projects has been around 2.5-3.0% of its budget before debt servicing. However, only 20-25% of the water budget has been spent on explicitly rural projects despite 60-65 % of Tanzania's population living in rural areas.

This is because urban water systems are expensive, politically visible, and better equipped to absorb big capital budgets, which makes them more attractive to the international donors who have funded around half of the WSDP.

Originally most WSDP projects in rural areas were implemented by small local authorities, with patchy results. Common failings were:

- The high proportion of rural water points falling out of use due to lack of maintenance.
- Weak post-construction support.
- Limited technical knowledge of water engineering within local authorities.





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- Affordability and revenue collection issues.

Partly to address these concerns, in 2019 the government created the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA). Instead of the large piped-water and storage systems found in urban areas, RUWASA focuses on boreholes, gravity-fed sources and small piped-water networks, as well as the rehabilitation of neglected water points that have fallen into disuse.

It works closely with community-based organisations, providing technical assistance to ensure that schemes remain operational over time, whilst devolving management responsibility to local communities as far as is practical. RUWASA also provides hygiene training to ensure that the benefits of clean water are not wasted.

Because RUWASA is still building up its operational capacity, it is difficult to assess how much difference it has made. Community management of water resources has been strengthened in some towns and villages and there appears to have been an increase in the proportion of Tanzania's water budget going to rural areas. This reflects not only RUWASA's ability to attract funding from international donors such as the World Bank, GIZ (Germany) and Enabel (Belgium) but also its willingness to work alongside NGOs like Water Mission and WaterAid. TDT has also benefitted from RUWASA's technical assistance when sponsoring water projects in rural areas.

Nevertheless, many households in rural Tanzania still have no access to clean water and government funding alone is insufficient to rectify this. This is why clean water projects have accounted for an increasing proportion of TDT's own expenditure in recent years.

TDT's water projects

On average just under half of TDT's annual income over the last four years has been spent on clean water projects. These are of four main types: shallow boreholes, spring protection works, deep boreholes, and rainwater-harvesting/water storage facilities.

Shallow boreholes up to 30m deep are drilled manually and equipped with hand-worked rope pumps. They are simple structures with low maintenance costs, representing excellent value for money at around £1,500 each, and typically serve communities of 1,500-3,000 people. However, the underlying geology is not always favourable, so this type





Natural spring before (left) and after protection works (right) to improve water quality and hygiene.

of project has been undertaken mainly in Kasulu District (Kigoma) where TDT's local partner MvG has now drilled around 180 such boreholes.

Spring protection schemes filter spring water through gravel beds and channel it into pipes, allowing villagers to fill their buckets from the pipes before the water hits the ground and becomes contaminated. The pipes lead into a concrete basin that takes the overflow (the pipes have no taps) and this is sometimes fenced to restrict animal access. These cost roughly the same as shallow boreholes and serve villages of a similar size, but whereas boreholes can be built close to people's homes, reducing the amount of time spent carrying water, spring protection works are restricted to places where water reaches the surface naturally. For geological reasons most of TDT's spring protection projects have been undertaken in Kagera Region to the west of Lake Victoria.

TDT has sponsored relatively few deep boreholes, which can go down to 200m before they reach water. These are more costly, at around £10,000-15,000 per borehole, and require the use of a contractor with expensive mechanical drilling equipment. Because pumping the water up to ground level requires electricity, this type of borehole may require





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a storage tank to protect villagers against power cuts or allow the use of solar power for pumping. TDT has recently been helping villages with no alternative means of accessing water to develop contracts that will transfer to the contractor more of the risk of not finding water.

Finally, TDT has funded several rainwater harvesting schemes, where water is collected from roofs when it is raining and channelled into storage tanks. These are suitable for small-scale users such as village schools and health centres.

Compared with the scale of the problem, TDT's contribution is small. But it is providing clean water to villages that would otherwise have to wait many years for it, with low-cost projects that make a big difference to people's lives. Since 2021-22 we have helped 295,000 people to access clean water. We are grateful to the BTS members who support this work.

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Donovan Lee McGrath: SWAHILI MATTERS

On the origin of Monopoly – the board game

Mtu yeyote ambaye amewahi kucheza mchezo wa ubao wa Monopoly anafahamu vizuri mienendo ya Mafanikio kwa Wenye Mafanikio: wachezaji wanaobahatika kutua kwenye mali ghali mapema katika mchezo wanaweza kuinunua, kujenga hoteli, na kupata kodi kubwa sana kutoka kwa wachezaji wenzao, hivyo kujikusanyia mali ya ushindi huku wakiwafilisi wengine. Kinachovutia, hata hivyo, ni kwamba mchezo huo hapo awali uliitwa 'Mchezo wa Mmilikaji Ardhi' na ulibuniwa mahususi kufichua dhuluma inayotokana na umilikaji wa mali uliozidi kwa mikono ya wachache, siyo kuuadhimisha.

Mvumbuzi wa mchezo huo, Elizabeth Magie, alikuwa mwungaji mkono mwenye msimamo wazi wa mawazo ya Henry George, na





wakati alipoubuni mchezo wake kwa mara ya kwanza mwaka elfu moja mia tisa na tatu aliupa seti mbili tofauti kabisa za kanuni za kucheza kwa zamu. Chini ya seti ya kanuni za 'Ustawi', kila mchezaji alinufaika kila mara mtu aliponunua mali mpya (ikiakisi wito wa George wa kodi ya thamani ya ardhi), na mchezo huo ulishindwa (kwa pamoja) wakati mchezaji aliyeanza akiwa na kiasi kidogo sana cha pesa alipozizidisha mara mbili. Chini ya seti ya pili ya kanuni za 'Mhodhi', wachezaji walipata faida kwa kuwadaiki kodi waliokuwa na bahati mbaya ya kutua kwenye mali zao - na yeyote aliyewahi kuwafilisi wote wengine alikuwa mshindi wa pekee.

Kusudio la kuwa na seti hizo mbili za kanuni, alisema Magie, lilikuwa kwa wachezaji kupata uzoefu wa 'mafafanuzi ya kiutendaji ya mfumo wa sasa wa kunyakua ardhi pamoja na matokeo na athari zake za kawaida,' ili waweze kuelewa jinsi mitazamo mbalimbali ya umilikaji wa mali inavyoweza kusababisha matokeo ya kijamii yanayotofautiana kwa kiasi kikubwa. 'Huenda ungeweza kuitwa "Mchezo wa Maisha", Magie alinena, 'kwa maana una vipengele vyote vya mafanikio na kushindwa katika dunia halisi.' Hata hivyo kampuni ya kutengeneza michezo ya Parker Brothers iliponunua hataza ya Mchezo wa 'Mmilikaji Ardhi' kutoka kwa Magie wakati wa miaka ya elfu moja mia tisa na thelathini, waliuzindua upya kwa jina la Monopoly pekee, na kuwapatia umma wenye hamu seti moja tu ya kanuni: zile zilizosherehekea ushindi wa mtu mmoja juu ya wote.

Anyone who has played the board game Monopoly is well versed in the dynamics of Success to the Successful: players who are lucky enough to land on expensive properties early in the game can buy them up, build hotels, and reap vast rents from their fellow players, thus accumulating a winning fortune as they bankrupt the rest. Fascinatingly, however, the game was originally called 'The Landlord's Game' and was designed precisely to reveal the injustice arising out of such concentrated property ownership, not to celebrate it.

The game's inventor Elizabeth Magie was an outspoken supporter of Henry George's ideas and when she first created her game in 1903 she gave it two very different sets of rules to be played in turn. Under the 'Prosperity' set of rules, every player gained each time someone acquired a new property (echoing George's call for a land value tax), and the game was won (by all) when the player who had started out





with the least money had doubled it. Under the second, 'Monopolist' set of rules, players gained by charging rent to those who were unfortunate enough to land on their properties - and whoever managed to bankrupt the rest was the sole winner.

The purpose of the dual sets of rules, said Magie, was for players to experience a 'practical demonstration of the present system of land grabbing with all its usual outcomes and consequences' and so understand how different approaches to property ownership can lead to vastly different social outcomes. 'It might well have been called "The Game of Life",' remarked Magie, 'as it contains all the elements of success and failure in the real world.' But when the games manufacturer Parker Brothers bought the patent for the Landlord's Game from Magie in the 1930s, they relaunched it simply as Monopoly, and provided the eager public with just one set of rules: those that celebrate the triumph of one over all.

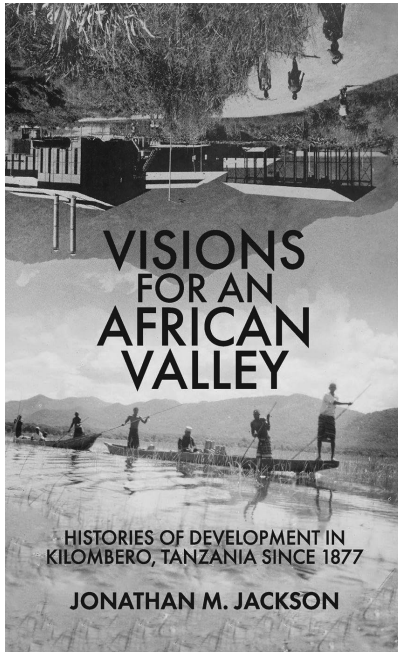
(cf. *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist* by Kate Raworth (2017))

Martin Walsh: **REVIEWS**

VISIONS FOR AN AFRICAN VALLEY: HISTORIES OF DEVELOPMENT IN KILOMBERO, TANZANIA SINCE 1877. Jonathan M. Jackson. James Currey, Woodbridge, Suffolk, and Rochester, NY, 2025. xvi + 253 pp. ISBN 9781847013941 (hardback) £95.00. ISBN 9781805435525 (eBook) £19.00.

Research on the history of colonial development and future-making in Tanzania has focused on the racial and class politics that influenced development visions and practices. Studies of postcolonial development history have demonstrated how state leaders and their ideologies shaped nation-building trajectories. Notwithstanding the temporal dynamics, scholars have analysed how the flow of finance and technical assistance reveals intertwined global forces such as nationalism and the Cold War, and how foreign development assistance shaped development in Tanzania. *Visions for an African Valley* moves beyond this conventional analysis. Instead of employing ideological lenses in analysis, it specifically examines how colonial and postcolonial development actors perceived and planned for the Kilombero Valley as a specific geographical area. The choice of Kilombero as a window in exploring Tanzania's development





history is apt given that both colonial and postcolonial governments regarded the valley as a ‘critical development zone.’

Visions for an African Valley employs analytical concepts of ‘future making’ and ‘imagined futures’ to explain the negotiated and contested nature of development plans in the Kilombero Valley. Building on the broad range of archival sources and government reports from Tanzania and the United Kingdom, it contends that colonial and postcolonial development plans in the valley were a ‘future-making’ process dominated by Western development discourses and practices. The author posits that the Kilombero Valley was a tantalising ‘potential’ site for socio-economic development for both colonial and post-independent governments. The

multifaceted visions of colonial and post-independent actors regarding the valley led to convoluted development plans. Kilombero’s ecology proved cumbersome to Western experts who had limited knowledge of African tropical ecologies. Consequently, many development ideas and plans failed to materialise. One of the significant points the book makes is that of the colonial and post-independence continuities in dependence on Western finance and expatriates in the planning and implementation of the ‘imagined futures.’ As a consequence, the plans for socio-economic development in the valley assumed a top-down character as they were planned by Western experts without incorporating local populations.

As in Joseph M. Hodges’ *Triumph of the Expert* (2007), Western-based development consultants and agencies used Western donors’ funds, technologies and expertise to plan for Kilombero Valley development without involving Africans who resided in it. Jonathan Jackson expounds further that many plans and ideas to develop Kilombero ended on paper as great “technical knowledge, gained through reconnaissance and from surveys” (p. 58), but failed to resolve its problems. This observation corroborates recent studies on ‘delayed or failed futures’, which have highlighted how river basin development projects, especially Stiegler’s Gorge (now Julius Nyerere Hydropower Scheme), became





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‘delayed futures’ despite both colonial and post-independent development planners envisioning it as indispensable for socio-economic development.

In chapters 1 to 7, the book interweaves the history of development with the history of waterways and transport infrastructure in the valley. It carefully analyses the way colonial imagining of the valley connected development with the plans to build reliable transport infrastructure, a subject which existing development studies have overlooked. To be precise, in chapters 1 to 5, Jackson accounts for how the German and British colonial governments unsuccessfully addressed the transport challenge. He points out that “[i]n many respects, the history of the development in Kilombero is the history of the development of a transport infrastructure, or ultimately its underdevelopment” (p. 57). As in Daniel R. Headrick’s *The Tools of Empire* (1981), colonial planners viewed railways, roads, and bridges in the colonies, not just in Kilombero Valley, as technical systems for exploiting natural resources for the benefit of colonial empires. Colonial governments planned to bridge the coast and the interior through a railway line, but their visions failed to materialise. The failure of colonial visions to provide reliable transport infrastructure is one of the areas where colonial theory failed to meet practice. Jackson offers valuable insights into transport infrastructure history, thus, extending analysis beyond electricity and irrigation infrastructures, which currently dominate analyses of the valley.

In the last two empirical chapters, 6 and 7, Jackson examines how confidence in using Kilombero to drive development continued in the post-independence era. In building the nation, government perceived the valley “as a spearhead for industrial and economic development” (p. 166). It planned to establish timber and sugar industries and to develop the valley as the country’s agricultural modernisation training centre. Consequently, it received greater financial and technical assistance from international agencies in the 1960s and 1970s, including the construction of TAZARA and a resettlement scheme under socialist *Ujamaa* policy. Jackson argues that, although these schemes glorified progress, statecraft and patriotic spirit in building the new nation, they were, in reality, a materialisation of past colonial visions, particularly the need for reliable transport infrastructure and stable population in the valley. Although TAZARA “was a railway *through* and not for Kilombero,” says Jackson, “in any case, it was the fulfilment of one of the earliest development visions for the region” (p. 171).

On villagisation, he writes that, though “[f]or many Tanzanians today, historical memory insists that villagisation began with the implementation of *Ujamaa*





after the Arusha Declaration” (p. 208), Kilombero resettlement schemes of the 1960s and 1970s were a fulfilment of colonial visions to populate the Valley in efforts to address the labour challenge. For him, *Ujamaa* formalised and implemented earlier visions. TAZARA, villagisation and many other post-independent development projects in the Kilombero Valley were not new post-independence development visions but the realisation of colonial ‘past futures.’

However, this well-researched and impressive piece has some pitfalls. Reading the book’s subtitle, *Histories of Development in Kilombero, Tanzania since 1877*, one expects to encounter a detailed analysis of Tanzania development issues from 1877 to the present. However, the book’s focus is mainly on the colonial period. Five chapters (1-5) cover the colonial period, while only two chapters (6-7) focus on the post-independence era. Moreover, in chapters 6 and 7, one can only find Tanzanian socialist development visions and practices up to 1976. Despite the subtitle’s promise, Tanzania’s post-socialist development is missing in the analysis, except for a few recent developments, which Jackson mentions in passing in the concluding remarks.

As a matter of fact, the Kilombero Valley has continued to be viewed as a potential area for socio-economic development in Tanzania even today. In addition, the liberal era, which began in the mid-1980s, was ground-breaking in the history of Tanzanian post-independence development. The adoption of liberal policies might have saved the country from the economic crisis of the 1980s, and the Kilombero Valley in particular evidenced a rejuvenated development vision, including an increase in foreign investors. Therefore, to exclude detailed analysis of this period in a book on ‘past futures’ makes Tanzania’s development trajectory incomplete and not helpful to the book’s cause. Readers could have benefited more from the analysis of changes and continuities in development visions in the valley, especially as Tanzania entered its era of economic liberalisation.

Additionally, the analysis could have been extended to integrate development plans in Kilombero Valley with broader development discourses in the country and globally at large. Although Kilombero received special attention from colonial and post-independence planners, it was not the only place that attracted actors’ attention in Tanzania. How did plans and visions on Kilombero Valley uncover broader ideas of exploiting river basins for socio-economic development in colonial and post-independence Tanzania? This is an important question that the book did not address. This makes analysis of the visions on the valley appear as isolated case from other development practices in Tanzania





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and the world. Lastly, there are minor linguistic mistakes, particularly on the use of Swahili phrases. For instance, one Swahili phrase is written *Maendeleo wa Jamhuri* instead of the *Maendeleo ya Jamhuri* (Development of the Republic). Nonetheless, *Visions for an African Valley* is an essential publication for students and researchers in colonial and postcolonial development studies in Africa. Moreover, historians of technology and infrastructures can also benefit from the book especially on how and why development actors strove for the construction of much-desired transport infrastructure in the Kilombero Valley.

(This is an edited version of a review that first appeared in *Zamani: A Journal of African Historical Studies* (Vol. 2 (1), pp. 185-188) and was published online on 17 October 2025: <https://www.scienceopen.com/hosted-document?doi=10.56279/ZJAHS.2.1.185>.)

Emanuel Lukio Mchome

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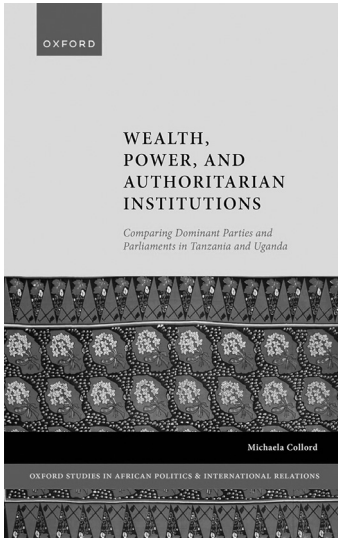
Also noticed:

WEALTH, POWER, AND AUTHORITARIAN INSTITUTIONS: COMPARING DOMINANT PARTIES AND PARLIAMENTS IN TANZANIA AND UGANDA. Michaela Collord. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2024. xiv + 292 pp. ISBN 9780192855183 (hardback) £102.99. ISBN 9780191945335 (Kindle) £90.00.

The author of this comparative study is a Lecturer in Politics and Development at the Global Development Institute, University of Manchester. It's based on her Oxford DPhil and published in the series *Oxford Studies in African Politics and International Relations*. The publisher's abstract follows.

“Through an analysis of the recent political history of Tanzania and Uganda, *Wealth, Power, and Authoritarian Institutions* offers a novel explanation of why authoritarian parties and legislatures vary in strength, and why this variation matters. Authoritarian political institutions reflect—and to some extent, magnify—elite power dynamics. They are a ‘terrain of contest’, an arena where power is tested, negotiated, and re-ordered. While there are many sources of elite power, the book centres on wealth, exploring how the socio-economic foundations of a regime affect its institutional landscape. This analysis first





considers how diverse trajectories of state-led capitalist development shape divergent patterns of wealth accumulation across regimes. Where accumulation is more closely controlled by state and party leaders, as was true in Tanzania until economic liberalization in the 1980s, rival factions remain subdued. Ruling parties can then build up relatively strong institutional structures and parliament remains marginal. Conversely, where a class of private wealth accumulators expands, as occurred in Tanzania after the 1980s and in Uganda after the *National Resistance Movement* took power in 1986, rival patron-client factions can more easily form. Factional rivalries then channel through the ruling party and into the legislature, simultaneously eroding

party institutions and encouraging greater legislative strength. Finally, the book reflects on the significance of a stronger legislature, particularly for distributive politics. It details mechanisms through which legislatures, as ‘terrains of contest’, contribute to both regressive and progressive redistributive outcomes. To support its analysis, the book draws on extensive fieldwork in Tanzania and Uganda.”

Martin Walsh

Martin Walsh is the Book Reviews Editor of Tanzanian Affairs.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE IN TANZANIA THROUGH A HEALTH SYSTEMS LENS: A HISTORY OF THE STRUGGLE FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE. Ntuli A. Kapologwe, James Tumaini Kengia, Eric van Praag, Japhet Killewo, Albino Kalolo. CABI, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, and Boston, MA, 2023. xv + 257 pp. ISBN 9781800623316 (hardback) £120.75. ISBN 9781800623323 (eBook) £120.75.

This edited collection, written primarily by Tanzanian health professionals, is described by the publisher as follows:

“Robust health care systems are paramount for the health, security, and prosperity of people and countries as a whole. This book provides for the first time a chronicle of the struggle for, and eventual success of, universal health coverage (UHC) in Tanzania. Beginning with an introduction to primary health





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care in the country, from its historical foundations to the major milestones of implementation, this book then considers stewardship of this important aspect of health systems over time. Written in a way to allow the application of lessons learned to other countries' contexts, this book covers:

- Policy and governance issues such as leadership, human resources, and financing of health systems;
- Practical aspects of health system delivery, including supply chains, community care, new technologies, and the integration of services for particular population groups;
- The impact and mitigation of global events on health systems, such as resilience and preparedness in the light of disease outbreaks or climate change, and social, commercial, and political influences.

Concluding with a look to the future, forecasting the changes and new solutions needed to adapt to a changing world, this book is a valuable reference for policy makers, global health practitioners, health system managers, researchers, students, and all those with an interest in primary health care and reforms - both in Tanzania and beyond.”

The book comprises chapters with the following headings: “Introduction to Primary Health Care”, “Leadership and Governance for Primary Health Care in Tanzania”, “Human Resources for Health”, “Primary Health-Care Financing and Resource Mobilization”, “Health Commodities Supply Chain”, “Health Management Information and Evidence in Primary Health Care in Tanzania”, “Health-Service Delivery”, “Community Health Within Primary Health Care”, “Achieving Health-Systems Resilience in Tanzania”, “Beyond Health-System Building Blocks: Context and Determinants of Health”, and “Looking to the Future of Primary Health Care in Tanzania”.

Martin Walsh

PROSPERITY GOSPEL REDEFINED: THE IMPACT OF CHARISMATISATION OF THE MAINLINE CHURCHES IN TANZANIA. Leita Ngoy. Brill Schöningh, Paderborn, Germany, 2025. xxi + 293 pp. ISBN 9783506796288 (hardback) EUR €92.52. ISBN 9783657796281 (eBook) free to download from <https://brill.com/display/title/69943>.

This open access book, written by a Lutheran Pastor, is based on her doctoral dissertation at Ruhr University Bochum. It's published by Brill Schöningh in their *Global Religion* series, and here is their summary:





“This book provides an in-depth discussion of the cultural and missional implications of the explosion of charismatic Christianity on mainline denominations in Africa. The book proposes that the charismatization of mainline churches is a contextual, missional, and transcultural phenomenon that enriches and invigorates African Christian communities. Focused on the experience of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and using Prosperity Gospel as an example, the book explores how some mainline churches are being enriched by adopting practices of charismatic Christianity. It proposes a holistic and contextual understanding of the Prosperity Gospel, understood as the mafanikio gospel in Tanzania, as a relevant theological resource for Lutherans in Dar-es-Salaam. In doing so, it intends to contribute to the needed paradigm shift in theological discourses around Prosperity Gospel to challenge stereotypical criticisms that label it false and misleading.”

Martin Walsh

Ben Taylor:

OBITUARIES

Former Minister **Jenista Mhagama** has died at the age of 58. She had served in various capacities in government and Parliament, and will be remembered by colleagues as a dedicated public servant whose contributions had shaped policy and influenced national debate.

Mhagama, born in June 1967, completed her schooling from Peramiho Girls' Secondary School before achieving a Diploma in Education from the Korogwe Teachers Training College. She worked as a teacher for six years between 1991 and 1997.

She was first appointed to the Parliament from a special seat reserved for women in 2000. In 2005, she defeated former Finance Minister Simon Mbilinyi for the right to represent CCM in the upcoming elections for the Peramiho constituency in Ruvuma Region.

Mhagama's first ministerial role was as Deputy Minister for Education and Vocational Training in President Jakaya Kikwete's administration between January 2014 and January 2015. She went on to serve in several other roles, including Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office for Policy, coordination and parliamentary affairs, Minister of State in the President's Office responsible for Public Service Management and Good Governance. Her last cabinet position was as the Minister for Health, a





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position she held until a few weeks before her death.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan expressed her sadness on social media, describing Ms Mhagama as a “distinguished” member of the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party for 38 years. The President acknowledged her contributions as a stalwart youth and women’s leader, a minister across multiple administrations, and a mentor in both public life and politics.

Edwin Mtei, Tanzania’s first Governor of the Bank of Tanzania (BoT) and a founding member of the opposition party Chadema, has died aged 94. He passed away in the early hours of Tuesday, January 20, 2026.

Mr Mtei served as Bank of Tanzania governor from 1966 to 1974, before going on to become secretary general of the East Africa Community from 1974 to 1977 and Minister of Finance and Planning from 1977 to 1979.

When President Julius Nyerere appointed Edwin Mteito this latter role, the decision placed two men of fundamentally different economic philosophies at the helm of Tanzania’s struggling economy. The collapse of the East African Community, the closure of the Kenya border, declining exports and mounting fiscal pressures had left the economy fragile and increasingly dependent on state intervention.

As detailed in his 2009 book titled *From Goatherd to Governor*, *The Autobiography of Edwin Mtei*, he clashed with the President, and the wider cabinet, on issues including export tariffs (which he opposed), parastatal reform (including part-privatisation, which he advocated for). His ideas were unpopular with his colleagues in an era when socialism defined economic legitimacy. Any proposal resembling private ownership was dismissed as ideological betrayal. President Nyerere in particular, while aware of the parastatals’ failures, was unwilling to accept reforms that touched ownership structures or diluted state control.

When Tanzania entered negotiations with the IMF on economic rehabilitation, Mtei sided with IMF on some key points, including parastatal privatisation and devaluation of the shilling. On both counts, Nyerere dismissed the advice, accusing the visitors of insolence and



declaring that he would not allow Tanzania to be “run from Washington”. Shortly after this, Mtei resigned his position.

Within weeks, he turned to farming, exchanging his Dar es Salaam home for a coffee estate in Arusha. After initial struggles, a bumper coffee harvest in 1981-82 enabled him to clear debts and stabilise operations.

He also found his way back into public service. He was appointed executive director for African affairs at the International Monetary Fund in 1983 – a post for which President Nyerere recommended him, showing an impressive ability to refrain from holding grudges. Appointments to key commissions on banking, taxation and public finance put him once again at the heart of reform debates that would reshape Tanzania’s economy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, including seeing many of the reforms that he had previously advocated for being put into practice.



After Tanzania amended its constitution in 1992 to allow a multiparty system, Mtei founded an opposition party, Chadema, with a liberal ideology that reflected the economic views he had proposed as finance minister. Mtei himself quit frontline politics in 1998, but Chadema has survived to be the leading opposition party in the country to date.

Freeman Mbowe, the former national chairperson of Chadema, remembered his predecessor as a man who “was not one for quarrels” but for principled debate on policy.

The party’s current chair Tundu Lissu also paid tribute to Mtei, in a statement issued from prison, where he faces charges of treason. Lissu described Mtei as a principled patriot and a public servant who refused to compromise his convictions in the face of poor governance.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan issued a statement describing Mr Mtei as a “distinguished public servant and visionary” who played a key role in building the country’s economic institutions. She further acknowledged his “historic contribution to the introduction of multiparty democracy.”



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