

SGR cargo link to ease congestion at Dar Port

By **FLORIAN JAMAX**

TANZANIA is on the verge of a logistics breakthrough. Cargo will begin moving directly from the Port of Dar es Salaam via the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) by the end of this month, a strategic shift designed to ease congestion at the country's busiest gateway and cut logistics costs for traders.

The shift marks a key step in integrating the modern rail network with the port's operations, allowing containers to be loaded directly onto SGR freight trains and transported to inland commercial

hubs without intermediate handling.

Minister for Transport Professor Makame Mbarawa said the new arrangement would eliminate the current system in which cargo must first be transported to the Pugu Inland Container Depot before being transferred onto SGR wagons.

"By the end of this month, cargo will start moving directly from the port through the SGR to inland destinations," Prof Mbarawa said during a visit by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Infrastructure. "This will remove the need

for double handling, which has been costly and inefficient."

Direct rail access to the SGR will enable containers to be loaded onto trains at the port and transported more efficiently to key commercial and logistics hubs in the interior of the country.

Currently, a significant portion of cargo leaving the port is transported using the Metre-Gauge Railway (MGR), which has lower capacity and efficiency compared to the SGR.

Prof Mbarawa also said the government is upgrading the Tanzania-Zambia

Railway (TAZARA) line to strengthen trade with regional and international partners, including China. The upgrades are expected to increase train speeds from the current 32 kilometres per hour to about 80 kilometres per hour.

During the visit, members of the parliamentary committee received a progress report on the performance, construction and improvement of infrastructure at the Port of Dar es Salaam over the past nine years, from June 2017 when major reforms began to June 2026.

According to the report, the operational performance

of the port over the past five years (2020/21-2024/25) has recorded significant improvements, including increases in the number of ships served, cargo handled and revenue generated.

The number of vessels handled at the port increased from 1,512 in the 2020/21 financial year to 1,990 in the 2024/25 financial year, representing an average annual growth rate of 4.9 per cent.

Similarly, total cargo handled rose from 16.269 million tonnes in 2020/21 to 27.764 million tonnes in the 2024/25 financial year, equivalent to an average annual growth

rate of 14.3 per cent.

During the same period, revenue collected by the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) increased from 896.95bn/- in the 2020/21 financial year to 2.031tri/- in 2024/25. The total includes 1.314tri/- collected by TPA and 716.87bn/- collected by private operators, representing an average annual growth rate of 23.2 per cent.

At the same time, operational costs for TPA declined from 331.638bn/- before private sector participation to 174.764bn/- after private operators began managing some of the port's berths.

Despite these achievements, the port still faces several challenges, including a shortage of berths to accommodate the growing number of ships, ageing infrastructure and limited space for cargo handling and storage.

To address the shortage, TPA has begun constructing new berths, including two 500-metre berths at the Malindi Wharf area, with plans underway to build 10 additional berths.

In addition, development is underway at the Kurasini (Ex-EPZA) logistics area to expand cargo handling and storage capacity. The facility

will have the capacity to handle up to 700,000 containers at a time.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Infrastructure Chairperson Mr Selemani Kakoso commended TPA for its performance over the past five years and urged the authority to explore investments beyond traditional port operations in order to broaden its revenue base.

He also stressed the need to improve service quality to sustain trade between Tanzania and neighbouring countries, particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

LOGISTICS Cargo will begin moving directly from Dar port through the SGR by the end of this month

Cargo to move from Dar port via SGR this month

Transport minister Makame Mbarawa said the new arrangement will eliminate the current system where cargo is first transported by lorries to Pugu Station before being transferred to the SGR network

By Rosemary Mirondo
@miwaikama
rmirondo@tz.nationmedia.com

Dar es Salaam. The government has announced that cargo will begin moving directly from the Port of Dar es Salaam through the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) by the end of this month, a move expected to reduce congestion and cut logistics costs.

Transport minister Makame Mbarawa said the new arrangement will eliminate the current system where cargo is first transported by lorries to Pugu Station before being transferred to the SGR network.

"By the end of this month we expect cargo to start moving directly from the port through the SGR to inland destinations. This will remove the need for double handling, which has been costly and inefficient," Prof Mbarawa said during a visit by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Infrastructure to the port.

Currently, a significant share of cargo leaving the port is transported through the Metre Gauge Railway (MGR), which officials say has limited efficiency and capacity.

To address the challenge, the government is constructing a railway link connecting the port area through Pugu to the SGR line. Once completed, cargo will move directly from the port to inland destinations.

The minister also said the gov-

ernment is upgrading the TAZARA Railway to allow trains to operate at speeds of about 80 kilometres per hour, compared with the current average of around 30 kilometres per hour, in order to strengthen trade links with regional markets and international partners, including China.

The Director General of the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA), Plauduce Mbossa, said cargo evacuation currently partly relies on the metre-gauge railway but efficiency remains low because cargo must first be transported to the Pugu Inland Container Depot before being transferred to the SGR.

"This creates double handling of cargo and increases costs," he said.

Under the new arrangement, the metre-gauge railway will continue serving routes to Kigoma and Zambia, while the SGR will handle cargo destined for Dodoma and other central regions.

Mr Mbossa said the government has also introduced private operators in port operations to improve efficiency through the use of modern technology and equipment.

He added that preparations for the construction of the Port of Bagamoyo are progressing, with a contractors' camp already completed.

According to him, Tanzania requires significant financial investment in major ports, including the Port of Tanga, the Port of Kigoma and several lake ports serving the Great Lakes region.

"Because government resources are limited, authorities are considering tariff adjustments to support port expansion projects," Mr Mbossa said.

He noted that the expansion efforts are being implemented in collabora-

tion with the Tanzania National Roads Agency (Tanroads) and the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) to ensure efficient movement of cargo from ports through road and rail networks.

Mr Mbossa also urged policymakers to support greater private sector participation in port operations.

"The government should not be afraid of involving the private sector in port operations because it improves efficiency and the use of technology," he said.

Members of Parliament welcomed the improvements but raised concerns about operational efficiency.

Mr Hamis Tabasamu (Sengerema-CCM), said Tanzania should strengthen links between the main port and lake ports in order to attract cargo from neighbouring countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda.

He also noted that Tanzania currently operates more than 28 cargo management systems, which can delay clearance procedures.

"These systems should be integrated into one or three main systems to speed up cargo processing," he said.

Another committee member, Mr Johnston Mtasingwa, said expanding cargo-handling equipment alone would not be sufficient.

"Infrastructure must also expand so that information about cargo movement is shared effectively between TRC and Tanroads," he said.

Mr Saidi Salim Hamadi said about 60 percent of cargo handled is destined for the Democratic Republic of Congo, stressing the need for stronger diplomatic engagement to promote regional trade.

Health coverage: Govt pledges closer relations with the private sector

By The Citizen Reporter
@TheCitizenTZ
news@tz.nationmedia.com

Dar es Salaam. The government has reaffirmed its commitment to working with private sector stakeholders to accelerate progress towards universal health coverage.

Government Chief Medical Officer Grace Magembe made the remarks during an Iftar networking dinner organised by the CEO Roundtable of Tanzania (CEOrt) in Dar es Salaam. The event brought together business leaders, policymakers and health stakeholders to discuss the private sector's role in strengthening the national health system.

Dr Magembe said partnerships with the private sector are crucial for implementing the Universal Health Insurance Act and improving access to quality healthcare across the country. "The government is ready to work with the private sector through platforms such as CEOrt to ensure universal health insurance reaches every Tanzanian," she added.

She outlined three key pillars of the universal health coverage agenda: expanding access to healthcare services, improving affordability and ensuring quality delivery.

"Universal health insurance ensures that every Tanzanian can access healthcare without facing financial hardship. While infrastructure and services are expanding, the insurance framework ensures affordability does not prevent care," Dr Magembe explained.

She noted that about 80-85

percent of the population can now reach a health facility within five kilometres. The government continues to invest in diagnostic technologies, emergency medical services and specialised medical training to strengthen healthcare capacity.

Dr Magembe said that public-private partnerships are central to advancing health sector reforms and improving service delivery nationwide.

"The most important resource any organisation has is its people. By investing in human capital and protecting the health of our workforce, we strengthen productivity, economic resilience and national development," she said.

Keynote speaker, Group CEO of Strategis Insurance Tanzania Limited, Dr Flora Minja said strong health systems support social wellbeing, business continuity and economic growth. She added that companies benefit when employees are healthy, as workforce disruptions reduce output and affect retention.

Expanding health insurance coverage, she said, helps improve workforce stability and contributes to national development. Dr Minja also warned that healthcare costs are rising faster than general inflation, underlining the need for preventive systems and broader insurance coverage.

CEOrt Executive Director Santana Benson said the private sector is ready to support national health priorities through workplace programmes, insurance schemes and strategic partnerships.

SGR kuanza kutoa mizigo bandarini

Aurea Simtowe, Mwananchi
asimtowe@mwananchi.co.tz

Dares Salaam. Serikali imesema kuanzia mwisho wa mwezi huu, itanza kutumia Treni ya Kisasa (SGR) kusafirisha mizigo moja kwa moja kutoka bandarini, badala ya kutumia bandari ya Pugu kama ilivyokuwa awali.

Hayo yameelezwa baada ya Kamati ya Kudumu ya Bunge ya Miundombinu kudai kuwa uondoshaji wa mizigo bandarini ni sababu inayofanya ufanisi wa bandari kutoonekana kwa haraka.

Ziara hiyo ilifanyika wakati TPA lishuhudia ongezeko la uwezo wa kuhudumia shehena kutoka tani milioni 17 kabla ya maboresho hadi kufikia tani milioni 50.

Akizungumza jana, Waziri wa Uchukuzi, Profesa Makame Mbarawa, alisema Serikali inaendelea kuboresha matumizi

ya reli ya kisasa ya SGR na MGR ili kusafirisha mizigo kutoka bandarini kwenda maeneo mbalimbali nchini na nchi jirani.

Alisema wanajenga kituo cha kutoa mizigo kutoka bandarini.

“Kuanzia mwisho wa mwezi Machi, MGR itatoa mizigo bandarini, Tazara itasafiri bandarini kuelekea Tunduma na Kapiri Mposhi, Zambia, SGR itanza kutoka hapa hadi Dodoma,” alisema.

Alisema hatua hiyo itasaidia kuongeza nguvu ya treni kwenda Zambia kutoka zaidi ya kilomita 30 kwa saa hadi zaidi ya kilomita 80 na kuongeza ushindani wa

200

Jumla ya mabehewa yaliyoundwa kwa ajili ya kubeba makontena, huku 64 kwa ajili ya kubeba mizigo isiyofungwa.

Bandari ya Dar es Salaam dhidi ya bandari nyingine katika ukanda wa Afrika Mashariki.

Kwa mara ya kwanza, SGR ilianza kusafirisha mizigo Aprili mwaka jana, na kati ya mabeheba 264 yaliyopo, 200 yameundwa kubeba makontena na 64 mizigo isiyofungwa (shehena kichele).

Awali, mbunge wa Bukoba Mjini, Wilfred Mtasiwa, alisema licha ya maboresho ya kiufundi bandarini, miundombinu ya kusaidia uondoshaji wa mizigo kama barabara bado haijaendana na ongezeko la shughuli za bandari.

Alisema ni muhimu Shirika la Reli Tanzania (TRC) na Wakala wa Barabara Tanzania (Tanroads) kupewa takwimu sahihi za mizigo zinazohudumiwa sasa ili kupanga namna ya kusaidia kusafirisha mizigo.

Mbunge wa Sengerema, Hamis Tabasamu, alisema uwepo wa mifumo mingi ya kielektroniki

umekuwa kikwazo katika uondoshaji wa mizigo, na kupendekeza mifumo michache inayunganishwa.

Mbunge wa Kilombero, Aboubakar Asenga, ameitaka Serikali kuharakisha ujenzi wa bandari kavu Kwala ili kupunguza msongamano wa mizigo.

Mbunge Said Hamad alisema pamoja na maboresho, bado kuna changamoto ya udokozi wa baadhi ya bidhaa na kuhitaji kumimarisha mifumo ya ulinzi.

Mbunge wa Monduli, Isaac Joseph, amehoji uwepo wa magari mengi bandarini na kupongeza matarajio ya kupunguza msongamano.

Akijibu uwepo wa magari bandarini, Mkurugenzi Mkuu wa TPA, Plasduce Mbossa, alisema sababu ya kuwepo kwa magari mengi bandarini ni kwamba meli zinapofika hupakua mizigo kwanza kabla ya kukamilika kwa tara-

tibu nyingine kama uhakiki na ulipaji wa kodi.

Alieleza kuwa magari mengi hupelekwa katika bandari binafsi za magari kusubiri kukaguliwa na kulipiwa kodi kabla ya kutolewa.

“Tunaendelea kuboresha mifumo na kushirikiana na waendeshaji binafsi wa bandari ili kuongeza ufanisi katika uondoshaji wa mizigo, na mifumo yote hivi sasa inasomana,” alisema.

Mmoja wa wafanyabiashara na mwingizaji wa bidhaa kutoka nje, Laitus Samson, alisema hali hiyo itarahisisha upataji wa mizigo kwa wafanyabiashara wote na kupunguza malalamiko ya wateja.

“Mizigo ya nje ya Dar es Salaam ikitolewa kwa urahisi, ile ya Dar es Salaam inayobaki inakuwa rahisi kuipata tofauti na mizigo yote kuwa sehemu moja,” alisema.



Transport resumes on Arusha–Loliondo road

From JOHN MHALA
in Arusha

Earlier last week several bus operators announced the suspension of transport services along the route after heavy rains damaged sections of the road and nearby bridges. They said services would resume once the road infrastructure was repaired. Private vehicles were also unable to use the road due to the extensive damage.

However, TANROADS Arusha Regional Manager Christopher Soul told the Daily News that passenger and private vehicle services resumed after engineers worked around the clock to restore the road.

Mr Soul said the most affected section was at Athumani River, where heavy rainfall caused flood that washed away part of the bridge.

After the water levels subsided, engineers temporarily reinforced the crossing using compacted stones to allow vehicles, including buses to pass.

He said TANROADS plans to construct a permanent bridge at Athumani River to ensure vehicles can cross safely throughout the year.

“Currently, when water levels rise during heavy rains,

vehicles cannot pass, which disrupts passenger transport services,” he explained.

Mr Soul added that other flood-prone areas, including Engaruka and Ngaresero, have also been stabilised by TANROADS engineers working day and night to restore traffic flow along the Arusha–Loliondo road.

He also thanked residents

in the affected areas for their cooperation during the repair works.

Meanwhile, a transporter, Mr John Kimambo said seven consecutive days of heavy rainfall caused rivers, including Athumani and Monick River, to overflow, flooding sections of the Arusha–Loliondo road and preventing many vehicles from passing.

He explained that buses travelling from Arusha were forced to stop at Mto wa Mbu, where passengers were advised to seek alternative transport.

Similarly, buses travelling from Loliondo had to remain at Engaruka until weather conditions improved or repairs were completed at the Athumani River crossing.

Recently, the Regional

Commissioner for Arusha, Amos Makalla directed TANROADS to always get prepared especially during the rainy season to ensure quick response to road infrastructure damage.

He emphasised the need to prevent prolonged disruptions to transport services and to address flooding that frequently damages roads across Arusha Region.

TRANSPORT Regulator has begun engaging public various stakeholders to explore the introduction of an e-ticketing system for commuter buses

Government mulls commuter bus e-ticketing countrywide

By Hellen Nachilongo
@MUSANACHIBU

hnachilongo@tz.nationmedia.com

Dar es Salaam. The Land Transport Regulatory Authority (Latra) has begun engaging public transport stakeholders to explore the introduction of an electronic ticketing system for commuter buses, commonly known as *daladala*, as part of wider efforts to modernise urban transport services and improve fare collection.

Currently, commuter bus conductors collect the fares in cash from passengers.

Under the proposed system, commuters will pay through digital platforms, making it easier to track payments and ensure operators receive their rightful income without leakages.

Latra Public Relations and Communications head Salum Pазzy said the initiative follows the rollout of electronic ticketing in upcountry buses, where selected transport companies have already begun issuing digital tickets under the regulator's supervision.

He said ten companies that met the required standards were approved to pilot the system, while others are being advised to partner with compliant firms as they work

to meet the conditions.

"We have already released the final list of companies that qualified and the system has been working well in regional bus services. We are now preparing to engage *daladala* operators and other stakeholders so that we can introduce electronic ticketing in commuter transport," Mr Pазzy said.

He added that the move is intended to strengthen revenue collection, ensure fairness between operators and passengers and reduce disputes over fares.

"We want to make payment systems easier, safer and more transparent for both passengers and bus owners."

How it works

According to Mr Pазzy, the new arrangement will connect *daladala* owners to an e-ticketing system through authorised vendors, in line with regulations that govern public transport services and ticketing procedures.

"Under the proposed system, passengers and transport operators will access ticketing services through vendors who will be issued with devices known as Point of Sale (POS) machines. Through these machines, vendors will be able to issue a ticket to every passenger

boarding the bus," he said.

"The system will enable passengers to pay for their tickets electronically, including through their vendors mobile phones. However, passengers will also have the option of paying in cash, similar to the current practice in upcountry buses."

Mr Pазzy hinted that beyond the immediate rollout of e-ticketing, authorities are also exploring the possibility of introducing a broader Integrated Transport System (ITS) for urban commuter transport.

The system would allow passengers to pay fares using a rechargeable transport card.



We are now preparing to engage *daladala* operators and other relevant stakeholders

MR PАЗZY | LATRA

To support the system, Mr Pазzy said buses will be equipped with infrastructure that allows passengers to tap or swipe their cards, ensuring that payments are automatically transferred to the respective service providers.

"Our long-term goal is to integrate all urban transport services including BRT buses, *daladala* and the planned commuter trains into a single payment system. As you are aware, the government is also preparing to introduce commuter train services. Our intention is to ensure that all these modes of transport are integrated so that passengers can move across the city using a single payment system."

Mwanza among early adopters

Preparations have already started in Mwanza, where transport operators are expected to begin using electronic ticketing through a coordinated network by the end of March.

Mr Pазzy said Mwanza was selected as an early adopter because local transport unions had shown strong commitment to improving commuter services.

A commuter in Dar es Salaam, Ms Hope Kizigo, raised concerns about its implementation adding that electronic ticketing could help address

fare disputes and overcharging.

"Digital ticketing would make fares clearer and reduce arguments between passengers and conductors. Sometimes conductors change fares suddenly or refuse to give change. With electronic tickets, we will know the real price," she said.

Another commuter, Mr Hamis Mgaya, supported the idea but warned that network reliability must be ensured.

Experts urge public education

Latra Consumer Consultative Council executive secretary Daudi Daudi said the country is moving towards a future where cash transactions in public transport will gradually decline.

"This is the direction we are heading. Travelling with cash will not always be necessary. I support the decision to start with Mwanza as a case study so that challenges can be identified and resolved before expanding to other cities," he said.

Mr Daudi described the use of technology as a positive step for operators but stressed the need for adequate public education.

"Whenever something new is introduced, people need time and guidance to adopt it. Latra should also involve mobile network operators so they can help pioneer and support e-ticketing in the market."

Dar es Salaam Commuter Bus Owners Association acting secretary-general Shifaya Lema said the introduction of e-ticketing for *daladala* is not entirely new, as it is already reflected in Latra regulations.

He added that bus owners are ready to cooperate, provided the system is affordable and practical.