



KINONDONI ROAD,
1ST FLOOR, TOGO TOWER
P.O. BOX 4441,
DAR ES SALAAM-TANZANIA
TEL: +255 22 266 6031
EMAIL: info@optimacorporate.co.tz
WEBSITE: www.optimacorporate.co.tz

GMSA recognizes M-Pesa for operational excellence

Vodacom M-Pesa yesterday marked yet another milestone after receiving the GSMA Mobile Money Certification at the Mobile 360 event in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Vodacom Tanzania said in a statement that the certification by the lobby group, which represents the interests of mobile network operators worldwide, demonstrates M-Pesa's commitment to providing secure and reliable services. It said the recognition is a clear manifestation of the company's intentional effort to protect the rights of consumers and to combat money laundering and terrorism financing. Vodacom M-Pesa met all necessary benchmarks to receive the GSMA Mobile Money Certification, which adheres to high standards for safeguarding of customer funds, service security safeguarding of customer data and privacy, and mitigation against money laundering, terrorist financing and fraud risks. "This certification validates Vodacom Tanzania's alignment to the applicant on of consistent risk mitigation and consumer protection practices across key areas of business," said Ian Ferrao. *"The Guardian, Property Watch Pg.13"*

Shoprite's entry shows Kenya is still a sweet spot for retail investment in Africa

After a three-decade run, one of Kenya's biggest supermarkets Uchumi closed its prime location at the Sarit Center mall in Nairobi in late February. Bedevilled by debts and stock-outs, the retailer had already been forced out of Tanzania and Uganda and saw the number of its countrywide stores in Kenya reduced to 20 branches. Uchumi's years-long woes were a precursor to the problems currently facing Nakumatt, once the country's largest supermarket chain. Yet the spaces left by Uchumi and Nakumatt respectively aren't being left vacant but are rather being taken up by new foreign outlets swooping in to fill their shoes. These international and regional outlets are bringing with them considerable investment buoyed by a rising middle class with increased purchasing power, positive economic metrics, besides shifting consumer habits that are leading to the development of new shopping malls. A day later, Shoprite, Africa's largest retailer, announced plans to enter the Kenyan market with a strategy to open seven stores. Specifically citing the "disarray" in the retail sector as a catalyst, the company said it wanted to strengthen its position in East Africa and would open its first store before the end of 2018. Across the continent, Shoprite has deliberately sought out Africa's growing middle-class consumers, customizing experiences in the 15 nations they operate in. *"The Guardian, Property Watch Pg.15"*

Dangote to get natural gas connection at last

Dangote Cement plant in Mtwara will start using natural gas in its production by the end of next month, The Citizen has learnt. The development creates hope that production at the country's largest cement producer will not be affected by electricity challenges resulting in a number of benefits to consumers such as reduced prices. The move follows the completion of infrastructure, complete with installation of a natural gas pipeline from Block Valve Station one (BVS 1), a 132 metre distance to the cement factory. A source at the cement factory told The Citizen that currently, the company is transforming its systems from diesel to natural gas consumption. "We are currently switching off our diesel systems and installing those that will use of natural gas. I am certain that once we start using natural gas as source of power, we will save a lot in production costs," he said, preferring anonymity since he is not the official spokesperson of the company. According to him, the factory is now forced to use six million litres of diesel per month at a total cost of about Sh10 billion. "With natural gas, our operational costs will go down and ultimately, the price of cement will also be reduced," he said. *"The Citizen, National News Pg.2"*

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