

## Govt keen on boosting development corridors

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Minister for infrastructure development Dr Shukuru Kawambwa

Tanzania will make full use of its four development corridors – Mtwara, Central, Tanga and Dar es Salaam – to bolster the country's economy and streamline inter-region trade, the minister for infrastructure development Dr Shukuru Kawambwa has said.

Kawambwa noted that there were various projects being developed in Mtwara Development Corridor, including preparations for the construction of a road from the port of Mtwara to Mbamba Bay port in Lake Nyasa at a tarmac level.

"The projects underway include the construction of a 56km-long Masasi-Mangaka road, the evaluation of the 260km-long Tunduru-Songea road," he told the National Assembly in Dodoma recently when presenting budget estimates recently, adding that evaluation of 66km-long Mbinga-Mbamba Bay road has been completed.

The minister acknowledged that the preparation for the construction of a 70km-long Namtumbo – Songea road under funding from the US Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has already started.

The minister said the construction of these roads is expected to take off in November this year.

He added that these preparations would go hand in hand with the construction of a 231km-long Tunduma-Sumbawanga road as well as the construction of Unity Bridge between Tanzania and Mozambique expected for completion by next October.

"The completion of these roads would open economic activities and trade between Tanzania and Malawi, DRC [Democratic Republic of Congo], Mozambique and Zambia through the port of Mtwara," the minister noted.

The construction of a small Unity Bridge II linking Tanzania and Mozambique at Mitomoni in Ruvuma region is completed and was officially opened in July last year. The bridge is vital for trade between Songea residents and those of Lichinga on the Mozambique side.

According to the minister, the government was planning to construct a 250km Itoni (Njombe) – Mchuchuma/Liganga – Manda at tarmac level to facilitate the giant coal and Iron ore projects in Mchuchuma and Liganga respectively.

On the Central Development Corridor, Kawambwa said the government has been going on improving railway infrastructure, roads and ports. The evaluation for the construction of Isaka – Kigali/Keza – Gitega – Musongati has been completed.

The evaluation of Isaka – Dar es Salaam rail network under the funding of the United States' Transportation Department Agency (USTDA) and US's Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) was progressing well, the minister noted.

He said the implementation for expansion of the Dar es Salaam port and those of the Great Lakes, were well in progress to cater for increased haulages in the region.

Tanga Development Corridor was being boosted by the government's quest to harvest soda ashes in Lake Natron. The project is being facilitated by the National Development Corporation (NDC) jointly with the private sector.

"The implementation of this project needs better roads, railways and ports to facilitate the transportation of loads in an efficient manner," the minister noted.

A study on the proper way of transporting 500,000 tonnes of soda ash from the factory to Arusha and later on for distribution to local and foreign markets has been done.

It has been proposed that a new 99km-long paved road should be constructed from the project area to Longido, a new 164km-long rail from the project area to Arusha as well as the improvement of a 437km-long Tanga-Arusha railway.

"It's our hope that these projects would greatly help spur development growth in various social-economic sectors," the minister noted.

As for the Dar es Salaam Development Corridor, Kawambwa said the projects would include the strengthening of infrastructure for the Tanzania Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA), roads and the port of Dar es Salaam which is the main gateway for inter-regional trade.

This corridor would involve the construction of a 167km-long Msimba – Ruaha/Ikokoto – Mafinga road. The construction of this road is underway and Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda launched it last month.

Also, the rehabilitation of Songea - Makambako road and Mafinga – Mgololo and the strengthening of TAZARA railway between Kitete – and Mpanga as well as the construction of the new Ruvu Bridge which is already completed.

**SOURCE: GUARDIAN ON SUNDAY**