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TANZANIA

FRIDAY 14 AUGUST, 2020

ENVIRONMENT



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TRC evaluating bids in electric train tendering

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE government is reviewing bids submitted by local and international firms that applied to supply locomotives and coaches for the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR).

The Deputy Minister for Works, Transport and Communications Atashasta Ndiye, told 'The Guardian' yesterday that a sizable number of companies submitted documents for the tender



It is intended that part of the proceeds of the funds would be used to cover eligible payment under the contract for supply, testing, commissioning and training of rolling stock for SGR railway system to operate in the Tanzania central railway corridor

that was floated back in 2018, noting that the selected winner will sign a purchase agreement with the government before supplying the items.

Ndiye (pictured) said the tendering review is currently being conducted by the government through the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC).

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VP: Community radios useful in curbing GBV



Donatus Richard (L), NMB Bank Plc's Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar Zone manager, briefs Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan when she toured a Kizimkazi Day exhibition in South Unga Region yesterday. The bank presented to the Vice President ten modern toilets worth a total of 10m/- for onward presentation to Kibuteni Primary School, which is in Kizimkazi area. Right is South Unga regional commissioner Ayoub Mohamed Mahmoud. Story on Page 13. Photo: VPO

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

VICE President Samia Suluhu Hassan has called on community radio stations in the country to create awareness and sensitize their audiences on the effects of gender-based violence (GBV).

More education on the situation is needed because contrary to popular belief that only women and girls are the victim, various studies show that boys are equally vulnerable to such acts, the VP said while inaugurating a community radio station assisted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Global studies show that GBV undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims, yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence. Victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies.

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I have really been dismayed by reports on the incidents of GBV that are now rampant on boys

Experts list do's, don'ts after mild earth tremor

By Henry Mwangonde

WITH no damage or injury reported after the late Wednesday earthquake off the coast of Dar es Salaam, the Geological Survey of Tanzania (GST) has issued guidelines to follow when earthquakes occur to avoid or minimize harm.

The earthquake measured 6.0 on the Richter scale, sending seismic waves northwards up to Mombasa and some inland areas in neighbouring Kenya.



If the incident happens when you are indoors, remain there and if it happens when you are outdoors remain there too

International media agencies reported the magnitude as 5.9 and

others including the United States Geological Survey (USGS) as 6.0 t its offshore epicenter.

USGS estimated that up to nine million people would have felt the tremor, mostly as weak to mild shaking, while around 59,000 people in the coastal areas closest to the epicenter felt it at moderate intensity.

Even after 15 hours from the moment the earthquake was registered, no

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Global coronavirus death toll hits 750,000

LONDON

THE world has reached the grim milestone of 750,000 confirmed deaths from the coronavirus pandemic, as countries prepare for a fresh wave of infections.

According to figures from Johns Hopkins University, the United States is the worst affected nation, with more than

160,000 coronavirus deaths - about one-fifth of the world's total - and a caseload of over five million.

Brazil is the only other nation to record more than 100,000 deaths linked to Covid-19. More than three million infections have also been identified there.

Mexico, with more than 50,000 deaths, has the third-highest toll, closely followed by

India and the UK.

More than 20 million Covid-19 cases have been confirmed worldwide, although the actual number is likely to be far higher as many infected people show no symptoms, scientists say.

India's coronavirus death toll has risen to the fourth-largest globally behind the US, Brazil and Mexico - with at least 2,396,637 confirmed cases and

47,033 fatalities.

As infections slow in other countries, India reported its highest single-day spike yesterday with 66,999 more cases and 942 deaths. Its total of 47,033 deaths trails only the United States (166,027), Brazil (104,201) and Mexico (54,666) and the pandemic shows no

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SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

FACT 1 Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity. Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

FACT 2 For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

FACT 3 Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people. For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

FACT 4 There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

FACT 5 You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:

- Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
- Seek medical advice if you
- Develop symptoms AND
 - Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.



cdc.gov/COVID-19



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TRC evaluating bids in electric train tendering

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He however did not name the firms bidding in the tender as this would be contrary to the Public Procurement Act.

"Currently, I cannot disclose the names of firms bidding in the tender. We are finalizing internal procedures and when it is over, it will be disclosed to the public," he elaborated.

Two years ago, the government through Reli Assets Holding Company Limited (RAHACO) before it was merged with Tanzania Railways Limited (TRL) to reconstitute TRC floated a tender for the supply of electric trains to be used on the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), now in the final stages of construction.

The invitation for pre-qualification advertised in newspapers followed the general procurement notice for the project that appeared on the tender portal of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and Rahco on September 9, 2018.

In the tender, RAHCO was seeking the supply, testing and commissioning of 14 electric locomotives for freight trains and five electric multiple units (EMU).

An EMU is an electric passenger train that has self-propelled carriages which use electricity as the motive power.

The EMU requires no separate locomotive, as electric traction motors are incorporated within one or a number of the carriages.

RAHCO was also looking for the supply of three electric locomotives for departmental trains, 15 first class coaches and 45 economy class coaches.

In the tender notice, it was said that the government had already set aside funds in the financial year 2017/18 for the purchase of the rolling stock.

"It is intended that part of the proceeds of the funds would be used to cover eligible payment under the contract for supply, testing, commissioning and training of rolling stock for SGR railway system to operate in the Tanzania central railway corridor," it stated.

The pre-qualification was set to be conducted through international competitive tendering procedures as set out in the Public Procurement Act No.7 of 2011 as amended in 2016, and the public procurement regulation 2013 as amended in 2016.

The deadline for the bids was January 30, 2019, the notice specified.

Construction of the SGR started after President John Magufuli laid the foundation stone for the 205-kilometre section between Dar es Salaam and Morogoro.

The section is being constructed by a consortium comprising the Turkish construction group Yapi Merkezi and Mota-Engil of Portugal.

The SGR runs from Dar es Salaam to Mwanza on the shores of Lake Victoria and Kigoma on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, with plans being worked upon to extend the railway to Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa pictured yesterday disembarking from MV Mafia, a ferry which Songoro Marine Company is building at Kigamboni in Dar es Salaam, shortly after an inspection tour. Upon completion, the ferry will operate between Mafia Island and Nyamisati in Coast Region. Photo: PMO.

VP: Community radios useful in curbing GBV

FROM PAGE 1

unsafe abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted infections like HIV, and even death.

With sustained messages on the subject in their programmes, the stations stand a better chance of helping the government end GBV in the country, the VP said.

She was speaking at the ceremony in Binguni in Zanzibar Central District, where she underlined that GBV incidents against boys are now pathetically frequent, noting

that if deliberate efforts are not made, there was a danger for the nation's coming generation to lack qualities of a good labor force and social or political leadership capacity.

"I have really been dismayed by reports on the incidents of GBV that are now rampant on boys," the VP said in alarm, urging the community to report such incidents to the respective authorities including the police.

The VP said there were women who

still keep quiet over these incidents by shielding their husbands who commit these offences in their families, fearing divorce.

The Zanzibar Minister for Information, Tourism and Heritage, Mahmoud Thabit Kombo expressed gratitude to UNESCO for sponsoring community radio stations in Zanzibar that help in disseminating messages on issues relevant for various communities.

The UNESCO country representative,

Tirso Do Santos called on administrators of community radio stations to utilize them in educating the community on the maintenance of peace during the election period.

"We are faced with the General Election in October where community radio stations are required to convey messages to the leaders and citizens to maintain the prevailing peace and avoid all forms of incitation that can unleash grave consequences," he appealed.



Handeni district commissioner Toba Anguilla (2nd-L) has a word with various officials in the district yesterday during an assessment tour of areas, infrastructure and water sources damaged by floods last year. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon.

750,000 succumb to Covid globally

FROM PAGE 1

signs of slowing.

India's outbreak has become one of the fastest-growing in the world, with the epicentre of the disease shifting from megacities like Mumbai and New Delhi to the country's vast hinterland where nearly 70 per cent of the country's 1.4 billion population live.

Alongside the 750,000 fatalities due to Covid-19 globally, the pandemic has sickened more than 2.6 million people. It is now moving from wealthier parts of the world to developing nations whose healthcare systems are quickly overwhelmed.

India's states of Bihar, Assam, Jharkhand, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh received most of the migrant workers. They lost their jobs in the cities when Prime Minister Narendra Modi ordered one of the world's most stringent lockdowns in March.

The western state of Maharashtra continues to be the worst-affected - with 529,663 cases. It has recorded 12,712 new cases in the past 24 hours and suffered 344 additional fatalities, taking the toll to 18,650.

Agencies

Experts list do's, don'ts after mild earth tremor

FROM PAGE 1

reports of serious damage or injuries had been received but had the quake occurred closer to the shore, it would have had a much more severe outcome.

A senior official at GST, Gabriel Mbogoni said when such incident happens there is need to avoid panicking as movements tend to increase risks.

"If the incident happens when you are indoors, remain there and if it happens when you are outdoors remain there too," he said in an interview.

Earthquakes are usually

followed by earth tremors, depending on the magnitude of the first quake.

Earlier, the Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA) assured the public that there was no threat of a tsunami following the earthquake.

It said in a statement that an earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.9 struck about 80 kilometers southeast of Dar es Salaam. The earthquake was widely felt but there were no reports of injuries.

It said the quake was centered in the sea, about 34 kilometers east of Kuruti Island. It struck

from 15 kilometers below the seafloor, making it a shallow earthquake.

"There's no impact or changes in ocean currents and weather forecast following the earthquake. TMA advises all those who reside close to the sea and anyone who engages in activities close to the shore to remain assured of their safety and continue with their daily activities," it said.

No reports of damage were obtained but effects of the quake were reportedly felt as far as the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, far inland.

The offshore quake struck at

a depth of 15.5 kilometres (9.6 miles) just after 8 pm (1700 GMT) local time., with its epicentre located at 66 kilometres southeast of Vikindu, just outside Dar es Salaam facing Boza beach, on the basis of the US Geological Survey.

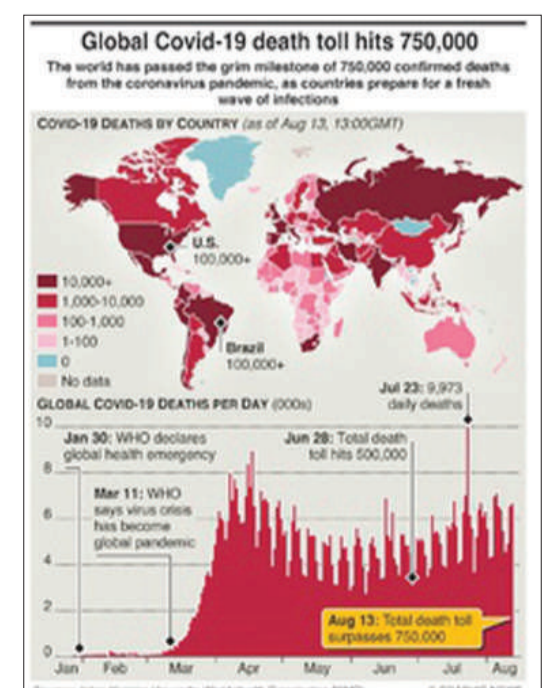
Deep quakes tend to cause less shaking than shallower ones, which have far more potential for destruction. Earthquakes are rare in East Africa.

Last night's tremor was the strongest earthquake in the region since 10th September 2016, when a similarly strong earthquake hit northwest Tanzania, killing at

least 17 people and injuring more than 400.

In Tuesday's quake, even in Arusha at 593 km distance NW of the epicenter and further north in Kenya, some people reported light shaking although the quake would not cause any damage at such distance.

Not many earthquakes of such size have occurred in recent years in this region as it is far from plate boundaries and major faults. Seismic activity in East Africa is mostly related to the Eastern African Rift further to the east.



Majaliwa issues ultimatum to Coast Region top officials over shortage of desks in schools

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa yesterday issued a two weeks ultimatum to the Coast Regional Commissioner and top executives in Mkuranga District to ensure availability of desks at Mwarusembe Secondary School.

He gave the ultimatum during his impromptu visit at the school where he found students sitting on the floor. The Premier promised to go back to Mwarusembe Secondary School after two weeks.

"I am giving you two weeks to make sure all the students have desks; I am told that

Form One students are sitting on the floor; this cannot happen in a District where there is a District Commissioner and executive director," said the PM.

He added: "I am disappointed with the situation at Mwarusembe Secondary School which is located along

the main road. I am not sure of the situation at secondary schools in remote rural areas."

Majaliwa noted that the Coast Region leads in a number of new factories, with Mkuranga District alone having 75 industries. He said leaders at the area have failed

to come up with a strategy to get the desks despite presence of investors.

He challenged them to consult industrial owners and investors on how they can facilitate manufacturing of desks through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes.

The premier questioned the officials on how they spent the 2bn/- revenue collected each year, since they are yet to fully invest in the education sector.

"You have different industries manufacturing wood, steel and cement, but you are still complaining of classroom shortage, you should come up

with a plan to engage stakeholders and investors in finding solutions to these problems," the premier ordered Mkuranga DC, Filbert Sanga.

According to Majaliwa, allowing students to sit on the floor makes it difficult for teachers to supervise student's cleanliness.



It's a leisurely walk close to the 40bn/- Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority (DAWASA) building (L), whose construction is nearing completion at Ubungo in the city, as captured yesterday by Correspondent Adelina Charles of Tumaini University Dar es Salaam College (TUDARCO)

Govt to plant one million trees on Mt. Kilimanjaro

By Guardian Correspondent, Moshi

THE Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union Affairs and Environment) Mussa Azzan Zungu has said his office has embarked on a programme to plant one million additional trees on Mt Kilimanjaro range.

He said the aim for planting the trees is to preserve the environment and protect water sources on Mt Kilimanjaro.

Zungu (pictured) unveiled the plan mid this week during his official visit to Kilimanjaro Region where he toured seven groups for tree planting and environmental preservation in Marangu area on the slopes of Mt Kilimanjaro.

The groups he visited included those of Mawenzi, Planeti, Sayari, St



Anthony, Zebra, Mshikamano and Eva Brin.

The minister said as for now his office was seeking funds for the tree planting programme.

"I am glad to hear that your groups are able to plant 14,000 trees per day and I beg you to continue doing

so in order to protect water sources so as to become good ambassadors for the environmental protection because Mt Kilimanjaro is an investment that earns revenues to the government," he said.

Zungu also called on the communities in the areas to adopt the habit of environmental protection by planting trees as a measure against climate change.

He however said the government will continue sensitizing the people on the importance of environmental protection through tree planting.

The minister also directed the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) manager for Northern Zone Lewis Nzali to prepare certificates for the groups for the recognition of their services in environmental protection.

Over 400 foreign universities alumni to meet in Dar for experience sharing

By Correspondent Joseph

Mwendapole

OVER 400 alumni from various overseas universities are expected to meet in Dar es Salaam in a unique event aimed to exchange ideas and learn how to make good use of their knowledge and skills to bring changes in the country.

Managing director of Global Education Link (GEL) Abdulmalik Mollel said that the alumni will meet in the special second graduation expected to be held on September 19.

He said that the event will involve a graduation ceremony, businesses and job fair which will be exclusively conducted by the invited local and international investors, employers, recruitment agencies and financial

institutions to exhibit potential employment and financial opportunities to graduates.

Mollel said the intention of the graduation ceremony is to make sure those graduates know their positions and contribute immensely in the development of the nation through their skills.

According to him, GEL's intention is to connect those graduates with

different government and private institutions and investors to build networks among them after they have stayed abroad for a very long time.

Mollel said that over 3,000 students who were enrolled through Global Education Link have successfully graduated from various overseas universities in various fields including medicine and allied sciences, engineering basic sciences,

business law, arts and humanities," he said. He added: "For the first time in Tanzania on 11th August 2019 GEL held the first graduation ceremony for 300 students who successfully completed their studies abroad that involved 2,000 participants, including families, employing institutions, education stakeholders, business entities and various government officials."

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Tundu Lissu fires up supporters on whirlwind tour seeking guarantors

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

CHADEMA's presidential nominee Tundu Lissu has garnered a total of 986 guarantors in Kahama District despite the minimum 200 guarantors required for each nominee in each region.

The guarantors came out in huge numbers at Kahama District party's offices yesterday, the figure including 505 women and 481 men.

Arriving at the party's offices at 4.00 pm, Lissu was met by hundreds of jubilant supporters including party members who were screaming for him to talk to them before leaving the place.

"I beg you to allow me to leave as I have a long journey ahead to seek for guarantors, I am supposed to go to Shinyanga, thereafter I have to sleep in Mwanza, today I passed here just to greet you, we shall arrange for another day to come here, remember we have two months for cam-

paings," Lissu said.

CHADEMA's chairman for Kahama District Juma Protax congratulated kahama residents for their support to Lissu as well as for supporting the party, calling for them to be well prepared for the election and appealed to the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to conduct free and fair elections.

"What happened here... where people started assembling since 7.00 am up to now shows that they are well prepared and I continue to stress upon NEC and other organs to ensure we have free and fair elections," Protax said.

Many party members also called on the polls body to conduct the elections freely and fairly to let Tanzanians get the right contestant as president for Tanzania.

Lissu continued with his tour seeking for guarantors in various regions, and after Kahama he went to Shinyanga Municipality after which he were to visit Mwanza City.



This is a scene Correspondent Jumanne Juma captured yesterday from Kerezange River bridge at Kitunda in suburban Dar es Salaam. It is undergoing construction.

Prof Mbarawa forbids use of contractors in water projects

By Guardian Correspondent, Shinyanga

WATER Minister Prof Makame Mbarawa has called on all water supply authorities in the country to stop using contractors in their water projects, noting that from experience all water projects in the country that employed contractors were not completed in time and instead they should continue with the force account system.

The minister was speaking mid this week during his visit in Shinyanga Region where he inspected completed water projects, including those still under implementation, and those which have basically been using the force account system, the procedure he said saves a lot of government money.

Speaking during his visit to the new Mwanza-Nyegezi water project, he said it was originally estimated to cost 2bn/-, but now in its final stages of completion, was going to cost only 1.1bn/-.

Prof Mbarawa (pictured) also called on the ministry to explore the possibility of using contractors on water projects only where it does not have the capacity to implement them.

Shinyanga district commissioner Jesinta Mboneko appealed to Prof Mbarawa to increase the funds for water projects in her district so that residents living outside projects areas could also benefit from the proximity of water infrastructures near them, to which the minister pledged to work on.

Meanwhile, a resident of Galamba Ward in the outskirts of Shinyanga Municipality, Gabriel Nkwabi, who is also a beneficiary of the water project, thanked the government for bringing water to their area as it has eradicated inconveniences experienced by the women when they had to walk long distances when fetching water.

After Shinyanga Municipality, Prof Mbarawa continues with his visit in Kahama District to complete his two-day visit in Shinyanga Region.



Educate people on protecting water sources, Sima tells Mbarali leaders

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbarali

DEPUTY Minister in the Vice-President's Office (Union and Environment) Musa Sima, said here yesterday there is a great need to protect water sources in Mbarali District because water that flows from that district, via Ruaha River, finally enters Rufiji River where Tanzania's biggest hydropower project is being built at Stiegler's Gorge.

Speaking at the Mnazi 50,630-hectare Paddy Irrigation Project here, the deputy minister said Mbarali District leaders must constantly educate people that water sources in their locations had great national importance because, he said, water from their areas finally flowed into Rufiji River where the giant project was being built. The district has livestock keepers and farmers.

"I appeal to all district leaders to continue educating people on protection of the ecology of water sources in their areas. Government leaders have the duty to educate people on how to protect water sources because water from this district finally enters Rufiji River where JKN Hydropower project is being built. Water from this district has great national significance," he argued.

The minister is accompanied by the Board Chairman of the National Environment Management Council (NEMC), Professor Esnati Chaggu, NEMC Director General Samuel Gwamaka and other experts from the council.

Suma said water sources must have known boundaries and must be protected according to the Environmental Management Act of 2004 and its Regulations.

Professor Chaggu told the function that the President John Magufuli's government was keen on protecting environment, explaining that every Tanzanian had to protect environment for his or her own good. She said that the water flowing in the project's five-kilometre canal had to be properly managed to stave off the danger of interfering with the area's ecology.

Dr Gwamaka said NEMC would cooperate with the district in educating people on protection of water sources. "This is our duty. We shall cooperate with the district to educate people on how to protect water sources and make people understand importance of water in sustaining lives of people, animals and creatures living in water," he said.

Assistant Mbeya Regional Administrative Officer Saidi Maditto, said Mbalali District was a small district playing host to a livestock population that overweighed its holding capacity. He said the livestock entered the district without permission and that the district's defence and security committee was handling the issue and would ensure environment was protected.

I appeal to all district leaders to continue educating people on protection of the ecology of water sources in their areas



ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED

PUBLIC NOTICE

INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM (E-FILING SYSTEM)

Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) wishes to inform the public that, it has rolled out the use of electronic system of filing tax returns (E-filing). The system can be accessed through the TRA website (www.tra.go.tz) under the **Online Tax Return Filing** menu. The system is intended to enhance efficiency in tax administration and minimize taxpayer's compliance costs.

The system was officially launched for use effective from **6th August, 2020**. Further to the current VAT returns which are submitted electronically, the developed system will cover the following types of tax returns;

- **Statement of Estimated Tax Payable by an Individual;**
- **Statement of Estimated Tax Payable by Installments on behalf of an Entity;**
- **Return of income by an Individual;**
- **Return of income made on behalf of an Entity;**
- **Monthly Skills Development Levy (SDL) return; and**
- **Monthly submission of statements for taxes withheld for employees (PAYE).**

For the time being, taxpayers involved in mining or exploration of gas and petroleum shall continue to submit their income tax returns using the old manual system. Additionally, tax returns not mentioned above will continue to be submitted to TRA offices manually.

Electronic submission of income tax returns shall effectively start with returns for the year of income 2019 (**that have not been submitted**). On the other hand, Electronic submission of Skills Development Levy (SDL) return and submission of statements for taxes withheld for employees (PAYE) shall effectively **start for the period of August 2020** whose due date are 7th September, 2020.

E-filing system shall enable taxpayers obtain tax assessments immediately after submission of the respective tax returns. In making all payments of taxes, taxpayers must register and make payments by using the Tax Debit Numbers from the tax assessments issued.

TRA shall issue periodic guidance and conduct trainings to taxpayers and other stakeholders to build capacity and ensure proper use of the system. TRA urges all taxpayers and stakeholders to make close fall up of guidance to be issued and also to attend training sessions to be prepared by TRA.

For further information, visit your nearest TRA office or use the following contacts

Website: www.tra.go.tz

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WhatsApp: 0744 23 33 33

**E-mail: huduma@tra.go.tz
services@tra.go.tz**

Agriculture sector earmarked for revolution, states minister

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Agriculture, Natural Resources, Livestock and Fisheries Minister Mmanga Mjengo Mjawiri has said his ministry is aiming to spur revolution in the agricultural sector to make it modern, inclusive and competitive.

He said the agricultural sector that includes crops, livestock, fishing, forests and immovable resources continue to be the main pillar of Zanzibar's economy. The minister was speaking at State House in Zanzibar when presenting a report for the implementation of the ministry's work plan for FY 2019/2020 and work plan for FY 2020/2021.

He said the sector contributes directly to the people in their wellbeing whereas 40 percent of them have been employed therein and it is estimated that about 70 percent of the

citizens depend on the sector which in 2019 contributed 21.2 percent to the national income.

Speaking about theft and rampant quarrying of sand, Mjawiri said the ministry working together with Zanzibar security organs has established a patrol unit that continues tackling the issue of illegal quarrying and rampant tree cutting.

He said the 2020/2021 work plan aims to spur revolution in agriculture, livestock and fisheries from traditional farming practices to sustainable commercial farming.

He explained that in general 263 people have been employed including farm hands and officers in various cadres including 68 experts.

He said in 2020/21 the ministry also aims to construct irrigation infrastructures in 65 hectares of land and refurbish 87 hectares of land.

He further said that the ministry will increase rice production to an average of 50,000 tonnes a year as well as provision of tractors and other farming equipment to farmers.

On his part, the Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein called on the ministry to continue working hard despite huge achievements already attained. He said his belief is that the exercise has greatly assisted in assessing activities of government ministries.



In general 263 people have been employed including farm hands and officers in various cadres including 68 experts



Deogratias Maneno, director of commercial services at the Weights and Measures Agency, presents the agency's donation of 16 computers worth 32m/- to Jangwani Girls Secondary headmistress Nyaiburi Bhoke in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole



Interesting Career Opportunities @ WFT-Trust: Senior Program Officer Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

WFT-Trust is the first and only women's rights fund in Tanzania that has been in existence since 2008 and has been at the forefront championing gender equality, equity and women and girls' rights through a funding mechanism that features strong capacity enhancement, strengthening linkages and collaboration among women's rights organizations and mobilising resources. WFT -Trust is seeking to engage a young feminist MEL Senior Program Officer to be based at its Dar Es Salaam Headquarters.

Are you passionate about doing Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning differently?

Do you have an understanding of feminist approaches to documenting stories of change, highlighting the creativity of women's rights organizations working in Tanzania? Will you bring feminist lens and less traditional MEL approaches to movement building processes with an empowering agenda for change? Are you in love with monitoring trends, enjoy fixing puzzles – causal effects, love joining dots and will be there every step of the way to create a web of informatics that will contribute to the mission and vision of WFT-Trust and its impact on gender equality and women empowerment from the grass roots to the national level?

We are looking for you!

Job Title: Senior Program Officer Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
Functionally Reports to: Head of Programs

Overall Purpose of the Job

The SPO monitoring, evaluation and Learning will be working closely with Grant Making, Strategic Alliance Building and Partnership and Resource Mobilization desks to support a feminist culture and practice of reliable planning, monitoring, evaluation, learning, accountability and reporting for WFT-Trust funded projects/interventions and internal operations. This includes developing, updating and coordinating monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) activities and events for WFT-Trust programs, grantees and women movement partners, building the capacity of WFT-Trust staff, board of trustees' members and select partners in MEL, promoting MEL knowledge transfer internally and externally and supporting research and documentation of policy issues. The position will ensure that MEL systems and capacity building effectively serve WFT-Trust's information needs, donor reporting requirements and learning agendas, members and partners while taking note of WFT-Trust's feminist MEL framework, guidelines and policies.

General duties

- Work with desk heads to develop feminist data collection tools, adapting existing tools to ensure that they are sensitive to power dynamics and that they are adapted to capture differences of experiences of all genders.
- Ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of project quality, using donor monitoring tools as appropriate
- To ensure that differential impacts of young men, young women, men and women are measured. Ensure that measurement are Tracking of Key Performance Indicators as approved by funding partners
- Support unit heads in routine data collection and documentation of grantee project information that confirms status of grantee project activities based on log-frames for donor reporting.
- Ensure log frames and routine data collection tools are feminist and integrate measurement that goes beyond solely measuring reach and vulnerability.
- Carry out data quality assessments/ audits regularly for MEL data based on agreed indicators making sure that they are gender transformative to guide adaptive decision making based on evolving power dynamics.
- Provide alerts to respective desks heads on corrective actions required to avoid delays in implementation, including flagging operational issues and risks requiring timely actions.
- Supporting program design – developing and refining program concepts, drafting program indicators and contributing to program strategy. The SPO MEL will ensure that all WFT-T funded project(s) reflect feminist and gender transformative strategic objectives.
- Travelling as necessary to support field-based grantee project implementation, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation.

MEL Tool Development and Data Management

- Develop/Adopt an integrated database of all WFT-T funded projects and ensure accountability through regular data updates and ensure that lived experiences of all genders, especially women, results in actionable change.
- Work with unit heads to ensure the collection of relevant and appropriate data needed for an effective feminist MEL system which will be utilized in monitoring strengths, weaknesses and gaps in existing projects and services and for reporting on donor commitments.
- Review existing data collection tools for current WFT-T funded projects and desks
- Incorporate staff and partners feedback to ensure the continuous improvement of data collection and management

Monitoring and Reporting

- Support WFT-T grantees and other partners to develop M&E plans for their projects and offer technical assistance to the partners during implementation
- Ensure all WFT-T grantees and partners have updated work-plans and performance management plans (PMPs) in line with all approved proposals, regularly reviewing and updating as needed
- Review scheduled implementation progress reports from grantees and partners and ensure they have evidence to back-up and provide feedback to the respective unit heads.
- Support Head of Programs in data analysis and timely preparation of Quarterly and Annual MEL Reports and donor reports
- Ensure that inclusion and diversity issues such as participation, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability among others are effectively addressed/ mainstreamed in project implementations and reporting as part of ensuring accountability according to WFT-T values and in line with Feminist values and principles.

Research and Documentation

- Analyse the impact of grantee implemented projects and promote learning by documentation of best practices with WFT-T staff, grantees and partners
- Support WFT-T grantees and partners in designing and disseminating research studies by providing relevant inputs
- Analyse key women rights policy issues that WFT-T works on to shape policy advocacy work
- Sharing findings back to relevant constituents and ensuring that respondents in research/MEL are able to understand what happens with their voices/opinions upon such research

Capacity development

- Review the reporting needs of WFT-T's grantees and partners to have an understanding of the demand for reporting results;
- Review reports and evaluations to identify learning opportunities based on identified problems, review solutions and identify how to feedback this information into programs, training and capacity building;
- Conduct trainings and continuous capacity to WFT-T's relevant staff members and partners/members in line with the MEL- identified gaps;
- Any other duties as may be assigned.

Minimum Academic Qualifications and Requirements

- Be a Bachelor and/or a Master's degree holder in social sciences or other relevant disciplines from a recognized university.
- Persons with additional relevant trainings in monitoring and evaluation will have added advantage.
- At least 5 years relevant work experience at international, regional or sub- regional level.
- Experience in MEL system design and implementation.
- Proven experience in, exposure to, and capability for collaborative work, nurturing of networks and alliances and motivate people.
- Sound knowledge on gender and its mainstreaming strategies, leadership development and generally women's rights issues in Tanzania and Africa.
- Have good and proven knowledge on different monitoring and evaluation frameworks and tracking tools.
- Identify with women rights agenda, values and principles.
- Proven experience in, exposure to, and capability for collaborative work, nurturing of monitoring and evaluation skills at WFT-T

Remuneration will be in line with the set staff scheme of work of the organization which consider the experience and qualifications of the candidate.

Applications: Interested applicants should send their application letter accompanied by resume with names and addresses of 3 professional referees (including telephone and e-mail) Applications are by e-mails only, sent to: info@mailto:info@wft.or.tz

Please indicate on the subject line as Senior Program Officer Monitoring and Evaluation. Deadline for submission of applications is on **30th August 2020**

Please note: Only complete applications will be reviewed, and only candidates who have been selected for interview will be contacted. Young women & women living with disability are encouraged to apply.



Interesting Career Opportunities @ WFT-Trust: Program Officer Communications

WFT-Trust is the first and only women's rights fund in Tanzania that has been in existence since 2008 and has been at the forefront championing gender equality, equity and women and girls' rights through a funding mechanism that features strong capacity enhancement, strengthening linkages and collaboration among women's rights organizations and mobilising resources. WFT -Trust is seeking to engage a feminist Program Officer Communications to be based at its Dar Es Salaam Headquarters.

THE CANDIDATE

Do you have an understanding of feminist approaches to documenting stories of change, highlighting the creativity of women's rights organizations working in Tanzania? Will you bring feminist lens and less traditional MEL approaches to movement building processes with an empowering agenda for change? Are you in love with monitoring trends, enjoy fixing puzzles – causal effects, love joining dots and will be there every step of the way to create a web of informatics that will contribute to the mission and vision of WFT-Trust and its impact on gender equality and women empowerment from the grass roots to the national level?

Job Title: Program Officer Communications

Functionally Reports to: Head of Programs

JOB PURPOSE

Working closely with the Head of Programs this position aims to contribute to the establishment of the WFT-Trust communication unit and implementation of its communication strategy which will deepen our visibility and highlight WFT-T mission of advancing women and human rights in Tanzania. The Program Officer communication will act as an interface between WFT and its stakeholders (the donors, decision makers media, grantees and the entire community) to share its mission, achievement, herstories and popularize the work of women heroes in the country. The incumbent will also provide support to grantees WROs and Community Based groups to generate herstories and other achievements for fundraising, learning and visibility purposes. The position will also be a custodian of the WFT-T website and its related online platforms by ensuring that its up to date and reflects the organizational development in the women and children rights landscape.

General duties

- Work closely with WFT-T leadership to establish and manage the communications unit that will become a hub of Information, Communication and Technology within the organisation.
- Provide support in the management of the communication portfolio for WFT-T to advance its agenda and mandate.
- Provide support for the operationalisation of the WFT-T communication strategy by developing annual implementation plan by creating linkages with programs.
- Work closely with the partners to generate feminist stories that demonstrate aspirations, achievement, learning and profiling of the organizations.

Support WFT-Trust's online presence:

- Developing and sharing content on WFT-Trust social media channels and interacting with audience (Twitter, Instagram and Facebook) including curating and updating WFT-Trust twitter lists and WFT-Trust online network of social media allies.
- Maintaining the website and keeping it up to date and accurate and liaising with relevant desks on issues of safety, security, design and functionality including uploading news, blogs, analysis, publications, WFT-Trust reports, outputs and other content to WFT-Trust website
- Engaging with WFT-Trust audience online including by grantees online campaigns when required, and help to develop and design WFT-Trust led social media campaigns
- Support WFT-Trust knowledge building and resource platforms:
- Sourcing content and disseminating from a variety of sources to grantees, movement members and allies through different platforms and updating and maintaining resource database
- Creating and maintaining an online Resource Center and sourcing content for the Center (publications, research, political statements etc)
- Support the development, editing, copy-editing, design, and presentation of working papers and other written outputs
- Designing, disseminating and promoting WFT-Trust position papers on different subjects

Advocacy support:

- Support local, regional and international advocacy engagement by working with like-minded organizations and women funds to identify key spaces, target audience and key messages, including support for social media presence during advocacy engagement
- Work with the SPO MEL to keep track of WFT-Trust's M&E tool:
- Maintain and keep track of communications analytics (Google and social media analytics) and collect both qualitative and quantitative data and information related to communications
- Develop monthly and quarterly communications reports, collect data, and produce analysis and recommendations in quarterly reports In collaboration with SAB and GM maintain internal WFT-Trust grantee and partners contacts database up to date
- Capture narratives, stories and outcomes of WFT-Trust's communications engagement to support fundraising
- When needed, support with writing and editing of funding reports and proposals as related to communications priorities
- Liaise with Head of Programs regarding media enquiries and event invitations (when required)
- Support with development of design and lay out in innovative design for WFT-Trust's online and printed annual report
- Provide across the board administrative support to WF-Trust
- Provide administrative support for both in-person and virtual meetings including by taking minutes, and documenting actions and outcomes
- Attend movement events and WFT-Trust own events such as retreat to support with administration, communications and photography

Required Skills and experiences:

- Bachelor's Degree in Media and Public Relations, Information Communication and Technology, Mass Communications, Development Studies or related field. Master's degree in the similar field preferred
- Good analytical skills and ability to verify and triangulate information.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work well within a diverse set of stakeholders.
- Advanced skills using the following or similar: WordPress; Drupal; simple html coding; Canvas; Mailchimp; editing videos and images; newsletter and database management software; using social media tools for online community building, networking, and dissemination of information; design of visuals such as memes etc (required)
- Skills using the following or similar: design software; PDF design and production; content upload and design using online platforms such as WIX and medium; online database/resource databases or curation; graphic design; development, editing and production of publications and digital resources for a variety of audiences (desirable)
- Strong expertise in using social media to implement communications and online community building strategies including Twitter, Facebook, etc (required)
- Excellent organizational skills, attention to detail and ability to handle multi-tasking, problem solving and planning skills (required)
- Strong written and oral communication skills, including fluency in oral and written English and Swahili (required)
- Experience of using google analytics and developing monthly and quarterly communications reports, collecting data, and producing analysis and recommendations (desirable)
- Must be able to work as a team member and independently, with high level of self-motivation, ability to manage periodic high workloads; strong ability to prioritize and work under pressure (required)
- Ability to listen and communicate clearly and effectively with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds (required)

Remuneration will be in line with the set staff scheme of work of the organization which consider the experience and qualifications of the candidate.

Applications: Interested applicants should send their application letter accompanied by resume with names and addresses of 3 professional referees (including telephone and e-mail) Applications are by e-mails only, sent to: info@mailto:info@wft.or.tz

Please indicate on the subject line as Program Officer Communications. Deadline for submission of applications is on **30th August 2020**

Please note: Only complete applications will be reviewed, and only candidates who have been selected for interview will be contacted. Young women & women living with disability are encouraged to apply.



Government of The Republic of Malawi

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
BANK GROUP

Government of The United Republic of Tanzania

SECRETARIAT OF THE JOINT SONGWE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Songwe River Basin Development Programme

Date: 14th August, 2020

CALL FOR INTERVIEWS

The joint Songwe River Basin Commission (SRBC) has the pleasure of inviting the following shortlisted candidates for the posts of **Hydrology/FEWS Expert, Environment/Agro-forestry Expert and Procurement Expert** for an interview to be conducted from **24th - 28th August, 2020 at the Benjamin Mkapa Hall located in Mbeya City, Tanzania**. The schedule for the interview is as follows.

CANDIDATE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

| DATE | POST | NO. | NAME OF CANDIDATE | TIME |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 24/8/2020 | Hydrology/FEWS Expert | 1. | DR. JOHN MTHANDI | 09:00 – 09:30 hrs. |
| | | 2. | DAVID MUNKYALA | 09:30 – 10:00 hrs. |
| | | 3. | ENG. GEORGE YOGI KANYIKA | 10:00 – 10:30 hrs. |
| | | 4. | PETER SILVANT KIWELU | 10:30 – 11:00 hrs. |
| | | 5. | SALIMU I. LYIMO | 11:00 – 11:30 hrs. |
| | | 6. | SELEMANI MUSSA CHILLO | 11:30 – 12:00 hrs. |
| | | 7. | VINCENT CHEYO MSADALA | 12:30 – 13:00 hrs. |
| | Environment/Agro-forestry Expert | 8. | AGNES G. KAPINGA | 14:00 – 14:30 hrs. |
| | | 9. | ALEX NYAMUJULIRWA GEORGE | 14:30 – 15:00 hrs. |
| | | 10. | AMANI GIBSON SHIPELLA | 15:00 – 15:30 hrs. |
| | | 11. | BENJAMIN KAMANGA | 15:30 – 16:00 hrs. |
| | | 12. | BROWN ASULWISYE GWAMBENE | 16:00 – 16:30 hrs. |
| | | 13. | BONIPHACE FREDRICK CHACHA | 16:30 – 17:00 hrs. |
| 25/8/2020 | Environment/Agro-forestry Expert | 1. | BRYSON TASOKWA MSISKA | 09:00 – 09:30 hrs. |
| | | 2. | CALVIN ONESMO METTA | 09:30 – 10:00 hrs. |
| | | 3. | CATHERINE KULEMEKA | 10:00 – 10:30 hrs. |
| | | 4. | DAMAS AUGUSTINE MASOLOGO | 10:30 – 11:00 hrs. |
| | | 5. | DOMINICO BENEDICTO KILEMO | 11:00 – 11:30 hrs. |
| | | 6. | EMMANUEL CHARLES MKOMWA | 11:30 – 12:00 hrs. |
| | | 7. | EPHRON GAUSI | 12:30 – 13:00 hrs. |
| | | 8. | FARAJA ANJOLYE MBUDUKA | 14:00 – 14:30 hrs. |
| | | 9. | GASTON ROBERT MASALU | 14:30 – 15:00 hrs. |
| | | 10. | GEOFFREY KUMBUYO | 15:00 – 15:30 hrs. |
| | | 11. | HARRINGTON DOMASERIUS NYIRENDA | 15:30 – 16:00 hrs. |
| | | 12. | HERMAGAST AMBROSE MAKOI | 16:00 – 16:30 hrs. |
| | | 13. | HORACE KAMKOTO | 16:30 – 17:00 hrs. |
| 26/8/2020 | Environment/Agro-forestry Expert | 1. | ISAAC BOBO MUNTHALI | 09:00 – 09:30 hrs. |
| | | 2. | JOHN EDWARD RUTAGWABA | 09:30 – 10:00 hrs. |
| | | 3. | JUMA MANGUNYA LIMBE | 10:00 – 10:30 hrs. |
| | | 4. | KAFASALIRE ALIC STEPHEN JOE | 10:30 – 11:00 hrs. |
| | | 5. | LUSAKO ISAKWISA | 11:00 – 11:30 hrs. |
| | | 6. | MTEKI HERI CHISUTE | 11:30 – 12:00 hrs. |
| | | 7. | MWILA MBEGU | 12:30 – 13:00 hrs. |
| | | 8. | PAULINA NAHIMANA SIMON | 14:00 – 14:30 hrs. |
| | | 9. | PATRICK ELIGI NGOWI | 14:30 – 15:00 hrs. |
| | | 10. | REGINA KOKUHIRWA KABWOGI | 15:00 – 15:30 hrs. |
| | | 11. | SADIKI LOTH LAISER | 15:30 – 16:00 hrs. |
| | | 12. | SAFARANI ABDUL MSUYA | 16:00 – 16:30 hrs. |
| | | 13. | SAMWEL M. MATURA | 16:30 – 17:00 hrs. |
| 27/8/2020 | Environment/Agro-forestry Expert | 1. | SANJO MSILANGA MGETA | 09:00 – 09:30 hrs. |
| 27/8/2020 | Environment/Agro-forestry Expert | 2. | VICTOR LOUIS KASUZWENI | 09:30 – 10:00 hrs. |
| | | 3. | VIOLET JESSIE MSUKWA | 10:00 – 10:30 hrs. |
| | | 4. | WELTON PHALIRA | 10:30 – 11:00 hrs. |
| | | 5. | WILFRED WILTON NDOVI | 11:00 – 11:30 hrs. |
| | | 6. | ALBERT MREMA | 11:30 – 12:00 hrs. |
| | Procurement Expert | 7. | ALEX NAINGOLAI MOLLEL | 12:30 – 13:00 hrs. |
| | | 8. | ALINAFE BANDA MALISAWA | 14:00 – 14:30 hrs. |
| | | 9. | ANDY PAUL KOLOKO | 14:30 – 15:00 hrs. |
| | | 10. | ATUMPALEGE GENESIS MWAKYEMBE | 15:00 – 15:30 hrs. |
| | | 11. | BENEDICT. S. KAGIZO | 15:30 – 16:00 hrs. |
| | | 12. | COLLEN DANANI SIKOYA | 16:00 – 16:30 hrs. |
| | | 13. | GAITAN BANZI | 16:30 – 17:00 hrs. |
| | | 28/8/2020 | Procurement Expert | 1. |
| 2. | KONDWANI SHABA | | | 09:30 – 10:00 hrs. |
| 3. | LAWSON KAWAMALA | | | 10:00 – 10:30 hrs. |
| 4. | MAJANJARA ZEDIK SEMBA | | | 10:30 – 11:00 hrs. |
| 5. | MANUEL ASID MAONI | | | 11:00 – 11:30 hrs. |
| 6. | MAXWEL CHIMKOKOMO | | | 11:30 – 12:00 hrs. |
| 7. | MOSES NELSON MWASAGA | | | 12:30 – 13:00 hrs. |
| 8. | MUSA FIKIRI | | | 14:00 – 14:30 hrs. |
| 9. | OLAIS LUCAS LAIZER | | | 14:30 – 15:00 hrs. |
| 10. | STEPHEN FADSON BIDUDA | | | 15:00 – 15:30 hrs. |
| 11. | STEPHEN MAGHAI | | | 15:30 – 16:00 hrs. |
| 12. | ZAFANIYA MOYO | | | 16:00 – 16:30 hrs. |
| 13. | ZEBEDIA ELSON KAUNDA | | | 16:30 – 17:00 hrs. |

NOTE:

1. The cost for attending the interview will be borne by the candidate him/herself.
2. Candidates should arrive at the interview venue 30 minutes before commencement of the interview.
3. Candidates should bring original documents and corresponding certified true copies of their Academic and Professional Certificates during the interview.

For any inquiries, please contact the following during working hours (08:30 – 17:00 Hrs (EAT)):

Acting Executive Secretary
Songwe River Basin Commission
P.O Box 300,
Kyela, Tanzania
Email: info@songwerbc.org
Landline: +255 25 2957412

Charity organisation donates 200 beds and mattresses to Simiyu Secondary School

By Guardian Correspondent, Simiyu

WORLD Vision Tanzania has donated 200 beds and mattresses to Simiyu Secondary School so as to support students who are currently camping at the school to prepare for the forthcoming national examinations.

Speaking during the handover event here, World Vision acting manager for Nzega zone Gilselda Balyagati said that the support will contribute to, among other things, raise the performance of the students in exams.

He handed over the donation on behalf of the country's director Gilbert Kamanga.

"We have donated 100 beds and 100 mattresses worth 26.6m/- specifically for form two and form four students who are in school camp. We were informed that there were several students who failed to join the camps due to lack of mattresses, this is why we decided to extend our support to help the children," he said.

Balyagati said that the organisation's donation also complements the government's efforts to provide quality education for both primary and secondary level.

"We are aware that these equipment will also help to protect girl students from strangers as they spent most of their time in school," he said.

He further called on young girls in the area to value their life and focus more on studies so as to successfully reach their big dreams in life.

Vestina Madangwa, a teacher at the school commended World Vision for its support saying it is going to help students focus on their studies.

"We have some students who are not in the camp because they failed to purchase mattresses, so with this support, I am sure that all students who are in examination classes will join the camp immediately," she said.

She however said that there were also some students who were sleeping on the floor due to lack of beds and mattresses, a situation which was affecting their learning.

For his part, Simiyu Regional education officer Ernest Hinju said that the school is hosting students from various schools who are there for a special academic camp to prepare for the national examinations.

"Last year, we picked this school to be the centre of an academic camp bringing together students from different secondary schools, we hope that this camp will help improve performance and reduce zeros in national examinations," he said.

Earlier in his remarks, Bariadi District Commissioner Fes-to Kiswaga said that the region's aim is to ensure that it continues to perform well in examinations to enable students continue with further studies and thus attain their dreams.

Defensive driving training takes off

By Guardian Correspondent

THE first batch of heavy duty vehicles (trucks and lorries) drivers turned out at the Automobile Association of Tanzania (AAT) to attend a day-long defensive driving course in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

A total of 60 drivers from Dar es Salaam-based firms Simba Logistics and Transcargo Ltd opened the two and half month programme aimed at improving road safety in the country.

The Federation International de Automobile grant programme (FIA) & Michelin International organised course is held three days a week from Thursday through Saturday.

Three major topics were covered during yesterday's course opener as drivers learned and revised road traffic and transportation laws, fire fighting/rescue services and paramedics.

Soon after opening the course, programme coordinator Yusuf Ghor who happens to be the AAT CEO, Superintendent of Police Deus Sokoni took a centre stage.

Sokoni who looked to be confident and at his very best yesterday reminded drivers the need to understand and adhere to all laws linked to use of road furniture, transportation, regulations, insurance, licences and mechanical fitness of the vehicles.

Supported by Superintendent of Police Abel Swai drivers were reminded on the need for safe driving to avoid fatalities through careful driving and compliance to stipulated speed limits wherever they drive.

Gasper Kinyaha from Simba logistics hailed the training for defence driving saying it has been an eye opener to several issues in road safety. He said the course highlighted some important use of rules and was of transportation that keep on changing.

Another driver from Transcargo Logistics Yusuf Gideon said the course is useful as drivers have learned how best to work with authorities and safety of pedestrians.

Fares Kauli and Christine Charles took the afternoon session to detail to drivers on the importance of fire fighting and rescue during driving. They highlighted on the importance of installing fire extinguishers in vehicles as well as validity of the equipment in terms of expiry dates. They also reminded drivers on the choice of fire fighting equipments based on the nature of the fire to be extinguished.

AAT top notch driving instructor Samwel Saleh concluded yesterday's opening session. Saleh insisted on drivers to have their licences within reach every time they are on the road as well as taking care of pedestrians particularly school children.

The course continues today with more drivers from ASAS Dairy Products Ltd and ASAS Transporters Ltd firms.

Other firms lined up for training of their drivers for the rest of the month include Lake Oil, East Africa International School, Upanga Transport School, Dar es Salaam Independent School, Meck One, UDART-BRT, Cross Border and Bumble All School Buses. Other drivers are expected to turn out for training sessions scheduled for September and October.

1,000 farmers benefit from organic farming training in Rombo District

By Correspondent James Lanka, Moshi

SMALLHOLDER farmers from 16 wards in Rombo District, Kilimanjaro Region have benefited from organic farming training—a project meant to improve their livelihoods.

Implemented by the Action for Justice in Society (AJISO) with funding from the Germany based charitable organisation—Bread for the World, the project has so far benefited more than 1,000 smallholder farmers in the District.

The project is implemented through farmer's village community banking (VICOPA) and paralegals.

Virginia Silayo AJISO executive director said that through the training farmers have been able to produce different varieties of food and commercial crops using organic farming technologies.

She added that apart from producing food, farmers also produce commercial crops with purposes of alleviating hunger as well as poverty.

"The project is not only helping communities to get rid of poverty but empowering them with organic farming technologies to boost their harvests," she said.

"Some beneficiaries attended the just ended Nanenane agricultural exhibition in Arusha Region where they showcased some organically cultivated crops varieties. They also shared experience with fellow farmers from across the regions in the northern zone," Silayo stated.

Silayo urged farmers to be an inspiration to others who are not in the project so that they can also apply similar agricultural methods to increase productivity.

She was of the opinion that in-

creased productivity is in alignment with the government strategies to transform the country into a middle-income nation by 2025 through industrialisation.

She said most of the currently established factories depend on produced agricultural goods as raw materials, hence the need to enhance production.

A farmer, Joseph Shirima said that apart from producing high quality crops, the project has helped them to easily access markets for produced crops.

"We participated in the annual farmer's exhibition (Nanenane) in Arusha city, where we showcased and sold our food and commercial crops like coffee," said Shirima, noting that it was a great opportunity for farmers since they also learned about proper packaging of their products.



TPB Bank risk management and compliance director Moses Manyatta (3rd-R) pictured at Tabora Boys Secondary School yesterday symbolically presenting 177 bags of cement for use in the construction of the school's fence. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Interesting Career Opportunities @ WFT-Trust: Senior Program Officer Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

WFT-Trust is the first and only women's rights fund in Tanzania that has been in existence since 2008 and has been at the forefront championing gender equality, equity and women and girls' rights through a funding mechanism that features strong capacity enhancement, strengthening linkages and collaboration among women's rights organizations and mobilising resources. WFT -Trust is seeking to engage a Senior Program Officer SRHR based at its Dar Es Salaam Headquarters.

Are you passionate about championing Sexual Reproductive and Health Rights?

Do you have an understanding of SRHR ecosystem in Tanzania? Are you interested in working with an organization that values women rights' and believes in their collective organising power to leverage their voices and action towards realization of ALL rights for women?

Will you bring innovative approaches to movement building processes with an empowering agenda for change? Are you inspired to contribute to the mission and vision of WFT-Trust and its impact on gender equality, SRHR and women empowerment from the grass roots to the national level? Then this position is for you!

Job Title: Senior Program Officer Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
Functionally Reports to: Head of Programs

Overall Purpose of the Job

Under the supervision of the Head of Programs, the SRHR senior program officer will lead WFT's efforts to implement the SRHR component of Programs portfolio by providing conceptual and operational leadership in mainstreaming SRHR agenda into the suite of rights advocated by WFT-Trust and specifically on SRHR conversation into the rights based approach agenda to WR coalitions and platforms. Support grass roots women rights organizations, women organizations and youth led organizations that implement SRHR interventions through funding and collective organizing and action and enhance WFT-Trust institutional capacity to deliver on its mandate. To achieve this WFT-Trust will work with women rights coalitions, cross movement actors and platforms to strengthen SRHR programming and advocacy capacity and provide financial and non-financial support to grass roots women's rights organizations working within SRHR.

This is a senior level position that is expected to provide technical expertise, organization level internalization of the agenda and day to day management of the portfolio implementation cycle with a keen focus on outcomes delivery of the key outcome areas (KOAs) as articulated in the ProDoc and in alignment with the overall WFT-Trust strategic objectives. The position holder will also work closely with team of Grants Officers and the Finance team to ensure grants move efficiently through the grant management cycle.

General duties:

- Work with desk heads to mainstream SRHR agenda into program operations to ensure that they are sensitive to power dynamics.
- Provide organisational conceptual and ideological framework on SRHR and its link to the WFT vision and mission. Facilitate the setting of direction and coordination of all aspects of the project implementation, liaise with WR platforms, coalitions and grassroots women rights organisation focused on SRHR agenda through innovative programming design, funding, implementation support, monitoring, evaluation and learning of interventions that advance rights-based agenda on SRHR.

Project Management:

- Provide multisectoral expertise on the SRHR themes to WFT to ensure effective and optimal use of resources during internal proposal reviews, grant issuance and project implementation. Provide conceptual articulation of the essence of the project as well as programming leadership to implementation of the project in the field and at WFT-Trust program level integration.

Capacity Building and Learning:

- In collaboration with capacity building functions of GM and SPO MEL Oversee internal WFT-Trust assimilation of the SRHR agenda and its mainstreaming through coaching and mentoring on SRHR agenda to staff, board and trustee members and for Women Rights grassroots organisations through WFT's "learning accompaniment model" which provides for tacit and explicit knowledge, as well as skills and attitudes through mentorship, coaching and training.

Advocacy and networking:

- Being agenda influencer by strengthening the collective voice and action of WROs and diverse actors through amplifying the conversation around SRHR for women and girls. Profile WFT and coalition amongst policy makers, funders and partners and develop their database for advocacy visibility and resource mobilisation.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Support partners with development of SRHR Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning systems/tools to monitor and evaluate impact and capture program performance and results.
Tracking of Key Performance Indicators as approved by funding partners

Reporting and Communications:

- Provide accurate and timely reporting and updates on the SRHR portfolio and projects' progress, challenges and lesson learnt. Ensure that the documentation of project achievements for communications materials such as the annual reports, brochures, and website are up to date.

Resource Mobilisation:

- Contribute to resource mobilisation efforts of WFT for the advancement of the SRHR work, the entire organisation and the movement.
- Supporting program design - developing and refining program concepts, drafting program indicators and contributing to program strategy. The SPO SRHR will ensure that all WFT-T funded project(s) under SRHR reflect feminist and gender transformative strategic objectives.

Research and Documentation

- Analyse the impact of grantee implemented of SRHR projects and promote learning by documentation of best practices with WFT-T staff, grantees and partners
- Analyse key women rights policy issues within the SRHR ecosystem that WFT-T can leverage to shape policy advocacy work

Minimum Academic Qualifications and Requirements

A University Degree or advanced university degree in Public Health, Gender Studies, Sociology, Social Work, Community Development, Law, social sciences or related discipline.

Skills and Experience:

- Demonstrated experience in managing multi stakeholder projects especially in the field of sexual reproductive health and rights, women's and girls' rights and rights-based approaches.
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of gender and change dynamics in rights-based interventions and an awareness of Tanzanian context with regards to SRH
- Proficiency to learn, unlearn and relearn about intersectionality of rights of women, children and other marginalized groups.
- Skills in program and project management and planning to fulfill performance objectives, including the timely implementation and reporting of donor-funded project activities
- Demonstrated people skills and leadership qualities

Specific Attributes:

- Prior experience working with SRHR programs
- Gender transformation analytics skills
- Report writing and presentation skills

Remuneration will be in line with the set staff scheme of work of the organization which consider the experience and qualifications of the candidate.

Applications: Interested applicants should send their application letter accompanied by resume with names and addresses of 3 professional referees (including telephone and e-mail) Applications are by e-mails only, sent to: info@wft.or.tz

Please indicate on the subject line as Senior Program Officer Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, Deadline for submission of applications is on **30th August 2020**

Please note: Only complete applications will be reviewed, and only candidates who have been selected for interview will be contacted.

215657201



Expression of Interest

Consultancy for conducting a Baseline survey for the implementation of WEMA-PLUS Project

1. Organizational Context

Women Fund Tanzania Trust is the first and only women's fund in Tanzania. WFT Trust is uniquely positioned in the mainstream of women rights movement of Tanzania as an established women's rights fund focused on empowering girls, women and women rights' organizations by providing grants, thought leadership and investing in outreach and capacity enhancement for women rights issues. Its reach and focus on grassroots level women organizations engagement and agenda articulation means it is in touch with the real issues affecting real women in their real lives and circumstances.

Anchored in the women's rights movement of Tanzania WFT-Trust carries out its mandate through a two pronged approach to women and girls empowerment which focuses on an innovative grant making mechanism that targets and links grass roots women actors and national level organizations and its strategic alliances and partnership building functions that creates a mutually reinforcing and supportive movement building processes that seek to amplify women's voices and visibilising their contributions in building a Tanzanian society where women realize their full potential and engage fully in the transformation of their communities in order to achieve empowerment and social justice.

2. Introduction

WFT-Trust is implementing a two-year Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) project through the support of anonymous donor. As such, WFT-Trust and the donor have agreed that the implementation of the Project must be preceded by a Baseline survey that will further strengthen the formulation, implementation, results framework and future evaluation of the project. The Project will be implemented in Tanzania. The project is designed to contribute to increasing the capacity of women rights organizations and activist's intervention and advocacy for essential sexual and reproductive health services and impact on current policy environment in Tanzania as well as facilitating an atmosphere that is supportive of human rights and sexual and reproductive rights.

3. Qualifications and experience of consultant

- WFT-Trust is looking for a competent consultant(s)/firm with the following minimum qualifications:
- Educated to Master's level in Public Health, Social Sciences or related. PHD is an advantage
- At least 8 years of proven experience in conducting surveys or studies, Planning, design and management of both qualitative and quantitative surveys;
- Development of survey tools and Excellent Report writing skills;
- M&E systems development and implementation;
- Knowledge of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, Women Rights in Tanzania context, HIV and AIDS and governance issues;
- Experience on the workings of parliament, ministries and CSO's;
- Strong management, organizational, and communication skills;
- Proficiency in data analysis software and other computer processing applications; and
- Strong evaluation experience and capacity to independently manage the assignment

4. Purpose of Baseline Survey

The baseline survey is meant to assist the Implementation team at WFT-Trust with refining the design, establishing and implementing a comprehensive monitoring plan, including data collection plan, to identify baseline indicators, set project targets and to develop a cycle for mid-term and summative evaluation.

5. The objective of the Baseline Survey

The overall objective of the baseline survey is to assess the ecosystem of SRHR actors and their positioning with regards to the responses by national, local organizations and actors and establish benchmark values and indicators to inform the monitoring and evaluation plan. Therefore, WFT-Trust seeks to procure the services of a qualified and independent, external consultant(s)/firm to design, plan and conduct a baseline study for WEMA-Plus project. The baseline study is anticipated to start by end of August 2020.

6. Project description

Women Fund Tanzania Trust believes in the rights of all women to achieve their fundamental human rights which includes the right to life and the enjoyment of an equal and just society. In Tanzania these rights are enshrined in the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania. Women's sexual and reproductive health is related to multiple human rights, including the right to life, the right to be free from torture, the right to health, the right to privacy, the right to education, and the prohibition of discrimination.

WEMA-Plus Project seeks to address the critical need for conceptual/ideological clarity on rights agenda through mainstreaming a suite of rights with a specific focus on SRHR conversation into the rights based approach agenda to coalitions and platforms, Support grassroots women rights organizations, women organizations and youth led organizations that implement SRHR interventions through funding and enhance their institutional capacity. To achieve these goals, WFT-Trust will strengthen programming and advocacy capacity and provide financial and non-financial support to grassroots women's rights organizations working within SRHR. WFT-Trust will leverage its experience of over 10 years in grant making and working with grassroots actors, leverage existing linkages between the grassroots base and national level actors who are key in policy and legal frameworks change and its diverse base of cross movement partners through its coalitions and platforms.

Women Fund Tanzania will focus on three key strategies to push the SRHR agenda and achieve the below mentioned outcomes.

- Using WFT-Trust grant making mechanism to provide grants to grass roots women's organizations working within SRHR initiatives across Tanzania
- Mainstream the SRHR conversation in the current environment in Tanzania through coalitions and platforms that WFT-Trust is currently working with
- Support WFT-Trust institutional capacity on key areas such as governance, human resources and equipment.

7. Approach and Methodology

The consultant is required to develop and submit along with the expression of interest an inception phase report which details technical and financial proposal based on the Terms of Reference to be provided to the successful consultant outlining how the assignment will be carried out.

8. Application process

The consultant will be answerable to WFT-Trust through the Head of Programs. The consultant should submit an Expression of Interest letter, Technical and financial proposal and CVs by email to info@wft.or.tz and copied to carolmango@wft.or.tz

The Expression of Interest letters should concisely describe why the applicants is interested in the assignment and how competent he/she is to carry it out successfully. Applicants should also explain how their professional experience matches the skills and qualifications outlined. Closing date for application is **30th August 2020**

215657201

The Guardian

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FRIDAY 14 AUGUST 2020

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Cattle rustling may not end, but it can be vastly reduced

POLICE authorities have appealed to residents of Arusha Region to beware of new habits reported to have crept up there, giving a rather new picture to an old problem.

The issue is that cattle thefts are back, with rustlers having found "alternative" ways of escaping, and thus changing the situation said to have prevailed for some few years in the region.

It is reported that the incidence of livestock thefts had declined significantly or intensely during the past decade, but now appears to be on the rise again.

Police authorities say that thieves have come up with new methods of going about their criminal ways, including sneaking the animals they steal into a neighbouring country through informal routes.

The Stock Theft Prevention Unit, a paramilitary police regiment created specifically to combat rustling, admitted as much at a recent meeting with livestock keepers and animal traders. The admission is, to say the least, a note of alarm.

The STPU officer who made remarks to that effect spoke of new methods but they really don't appear to be all that new. Rather, it might just be that the relevant sections of our territorial border are now especially "susceptible" to being used for the purpose, which would call for both convincing explanation and immediate remedial action. The STPU officers at the meeting referred to did not dwell on recent data - for instance, if the problem is linked to the Covid-19 outbreak or it was there even earlier.

But a senior officer explained that, after crossing the border, the animals are sold at open-air markets - in which case it isn't a question of local herders boosting their stocks through rustling, but robbers selling soon after capturing the animals.

The officer urged members of the

pastoralist community in the region's Monduli District to do what most they could to rein in the network of criminals.

Evidently, this calls for ensuring that observance of the law is guaranteed at the community level as part of a strategy to prevent invaders from outside from snatching cattle or grabbing the animals at gunpoint and moving out just like that.

It is also in part a matter of detecting, exposing and reining all members of local communities who decide to play foul games on their fellow villagers - and any other people - and grab their cattle unnoticed or even with the cattle owners awake and watching.

Villagers don't have a habit of conducting night vigils too often, as war situations arise just once in a while in tribal life, where a horn is sounded. However, now there is an innovative war situation where neighbours play foul, sell cattle across the border - and things much change, increasing ensuring greater vigilance.

While it is vital for STPU officers to elicit the cooperation of Monduli villagers and other communities in the zone, it is equally important to emphasize the need for police officers to conduct more intensive investigative work to nail all culprits.

It may mean resorting to dispatching people hailing from the area or who can easily mix with the residents, and give them time to participate in daily activities, such that they begin to pierce the skin of criminal networks.

Within a month or two, they will likely have overwhelmed the whole criminal network - which would create a yawning gap in criminality as most criminals will be in jail without knowing who or what had hit them.

When local communities truly fear the long arm of the law, peace will prevail, and this would likely work greater wonders than any pleas for the naming of cattle rustlers and other criminals ever could.

Migration pressures stand as major factor behind trafficking in humans

TANZANIAN authorities found time on Tuesday to interact with international agencies and local actors at the commemoration of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

Home Affairs minister George Simbachawene declared that the government was working on ways to bring back home victims of human trafficking who are living abroad.

Although it wasn't immediately clear how dire that situation is in various countries, those who had relatives living in South Africa or the UK at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic will have noticed that in numerous instances they accepted some minimal benefits to leave.

Staying penniless and jobless in a foreign country, without entitlement to social security, can prove especially scaring as an option.

The cascade of returnees, and at times having the clear option of going back there when the situation has cleared or actually stabilised, shows that the situation for those who left the country - isn't everywhere a desperate situation.

If anything, the real cases of abuse frequently aired or otherwise published international news outlets relate to domestic servants in the Gulf Zone - and if some are exported as labourers with no rights elsewhere.

There have been instances of violence against immigrants, among them fairly successful entrepreneurs with shop frames as happened in South Africa, but not outright abuse.

Governments and other institutions in Europe need immigrants owing to the labour shortage there, but jobless youths hanker to have the foreigners expelled for what some see as obvious reasons.

Issues relating to migration are difficult enough at the local and international level, and to differentiate between migration and trafficking is even more difficult. The explanation here is that, in the latter case, the focus is placed on a third person - a middleman, if you will.

Activists lay much emphasis on the role of those who actually organise the passage from one country to another - particularly on the profits they make - as if this is an explanation for migration or strident exodus of people, youths and even children, from rural poverty to urban opportunity.

Experience is at times more illustrative of the situation, that middlemen facilitate this wish to migrate but without actually causing it.

There was a related report on this theme the previous day, at the start of the week, where a recent survey by NGOs including the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme showed what was happening during the school closure period.

Staring reality in the face is not the same as reclining to easy explanations about the role of traffickers - for instance in contemplating the leagues of young men putting their lives at risk by crossing first the Sahara Desert and then the Mediterranean Sea in the hope of landing in "continent of plenty" Europe.

Police in Tanzania have on several occasions come across lorries crammed with illegal migrants, and at times there are fatalities from such scenarios

So, instead of starting and ending by laying the blame on the ever-present traffickers, we ought to take the bull by the horns. This would preferably include by admitting that we need more workable solutions to mass poverty, as migrations are often first and foremost driven by desperation.

The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

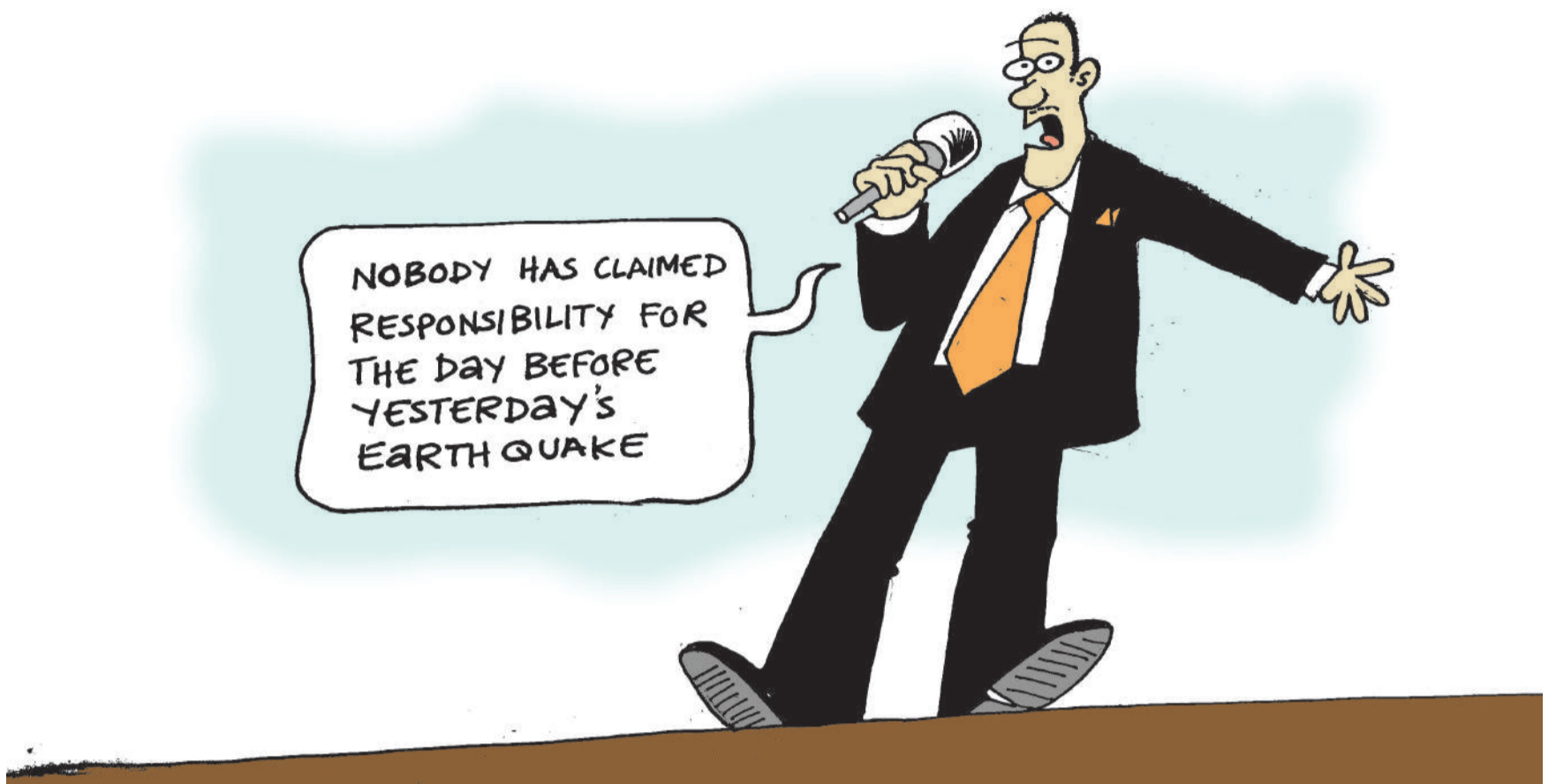
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Covid-19: A threat to food security in Africa

By Paul Akiwumi

THE International Monetary Fund has projected a deep coronavirus-induced global recession, which threatens a nearly 4 per cent drop in world GDP and could drag the GDP of African economies into a fall of about 1.4 per cent, with smaller economies facing a contraction of up to 7.8 per cent.

This decline is mainly a result of export adjustments affecting primary commodity exporters and associated tax revenue losses. This in turn, reduces governments' capacity to extend the public services needed to respond effectively to the crisis.

Overall, UNCTAD estimates a regional average of about 5 per cent in public revenue losses in Africa. Total merchandise exports are expected to contract by about 17 per cent this year.

These losses will have repercussions on Africa's progress towards the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063.

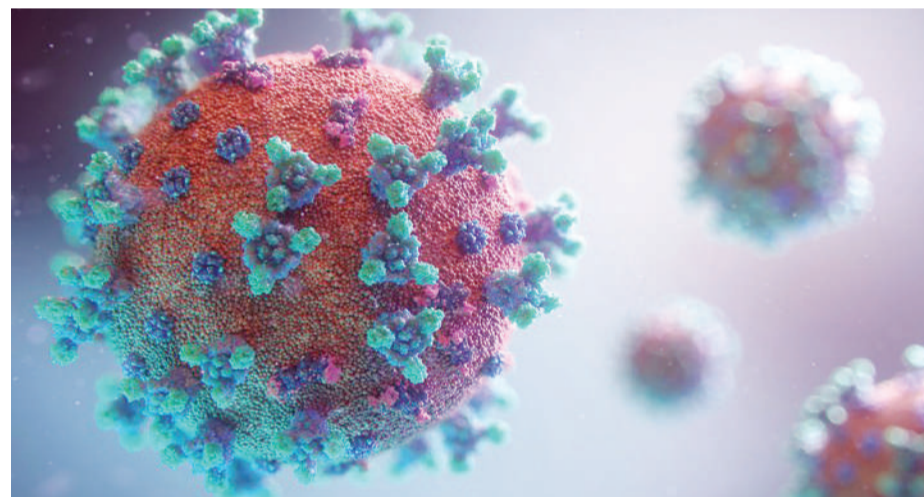
With at least 60 per cent of the African population dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods and access to food, any trade-related distortions to the sector can threaten the food security of the continent's poor.

In addition to the impact of extreme climate shocks on agricultural productivity, there is a strong positive correlation between economic recession and food insecurity in Africa. Despite the huge resource endowments Africa is blessed with - including a wide availability of arable land and a young, growing labour force, among other factors - the continent's agricultural production alone, hampered by distribution, access, and affordability challenges, is insufficient to meet its food security needs.

From 2016 to 2018, Africa imported about 85 per cent of its food from outside the continent, leading to an annual food import bill of US\$35 billion, which is forecast to reach US\$110 billion by 2025.

This heavy reliance on world markets is detrimental to food security, especially at a time of acute crisis - a situation exacerbated by the current Covid-19 crisis through its direct impacts on trade, logistics, production and value chains.

In several African countries, the disruption of marketing and trade activities as well as



Covid-19-related panic-buying, exacerbated food price increases - especially cereals - between March and June.

National policy responses to limit the impact of coronavirus pandemic on food markets in Africa have varied, from the removal of value-added taxes on food products to export restrictions on key food items.

For example, on March 26, Kenya reduced value-added tax on all goods from 16 per cent to 14 per cent. Sudan introduced a ban on sorghum exports on April 15 to ensure domestic availability.

Export restriction policies and hoarding short-circuit trade and distribution, thus exacerbating the risks of food insecurity, especially for the continent's most vulnerable populations.

Administrative restrictions imposed by governments, among them lockdowns, travel restrictions and physical distancing measures, have also worsened the risk of food insecurity.

These restrictions are being felt particularly strongly by low-income households and people working in the informal economy, owing to their loss of livelihoods and inability to access markets.

In Africa, recent estimates suggest that 73 million people are acutely food insecure. African regions, particularly the Sahel and southern Africa, have since last year further more been severely affected by climate change.

The unprecedented locust outbreak in the Horn of Africa put additional pressure on regional food systems. The region is particularly at risk, given the prevalence of conflict and political instability.

A regional slump in food production and a fall in global demand may prolong the negative trade effects of Covid-19, with poverty and food insecurity expected to continue to

rise next year.

UNCTAD's macro-economic model assessing the possible effects of Covid-19 on African economies generates conservative estimates based only on global shocks that affected trade between Africa and the rest of the world.

The results of the model show that African net food exporters were among the hardest hit. They not only faced low export volumes owing to depressed world demand but also witnessed a productivity slump.

This will take time to return to equilibrium after 2020. However, the impact on the food sector is disproportionately higher among smaller economies, which face a relatively deeper reduction in their food exports and resulting revenue.

UNCTAD estimates that, in the worst-case scenario of a 4 per cent drop in worldwide GDP, food exports from African countries could decline by about 3 per cent. This could be accompanied by a total contraction in the region's GDP of about 1.4 per cent. At the country level, GDP contractions could reach 7.8 per cent in the Comoros, 6 per cent in Guinea Bissau, 5.6 per cent in the Seychelles and 4.5 per cent in Malawi, among others.

Although food exports are important, for small island developing (SID) states like the Comoros and the Seychelles, the key Covid-19-related shock to their economies is the collapse in demand for tourism services.

Furthermore, heavy reliance on trade taxes and duties could lead to severe Covid-19-related revenue losses in African least developed countries.

According to UNCTAD's forthcoming model, revenue losses could reach 5.8 per cent in Burundi, -7.6 per cent in the Comoros, -10 per cent in The Gambia, -10.2 per cent in Ma-

lawi, and -7 per cent in Sierra Leone. Revenue losses greatly undermine the ability to import productivity-enhancing inputs for domestic production and food exports.

Furthermore, despite the favourability of lower fuel prices for net fuel importers, the recession in least developed countries and SIDS may also lead to reduced fuel imports, as production in other sectors remains depressed. For example, countries like Burundi (-26.6 per cent), Cape Verde (-8.5 per cent), the Comoros (-30 per cent) and Malawi (-15 per cent) are all expected to import less fuels across this year and next year.

In order to address the impact of Covid-19 on food security in the long term, Africa will need to build productive capacities to address underlying economic vulnerabilities and strengthen continental capabilities to better manage food, the pandemic and/or health-related crises.

Unnecessary export restrictions on food can have far-reaching consequences for the multilateral trading system and African economies. Such measures will not only impede progress in managing the current crisis but will compromise African countries' longer-term efforts to tackle food insecurity and poverty.

African governments should ensure that the movement of food and other goods as well as related essential services such as transportation is guaranteed. Covid-19 has clearly highlighted the degree of interconnectedness between countries and the importance of maintaining trade links to ensure minimal disruptions to food supply.

African countries also need to reduce their commodity dependence, which has been among the key factors increasing their vulnerability to food insecurity.

The diversification of their commodity base and value addition will be critical in achieving this, particularly if effectively augmented by a significant increase in agricultural labour productivity and the full implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

It is likely that food security in African countries will benefit from the effective implementation of the AfCFTA. This includes through greater economic diversification - value addition and intra-African trade, the creation of jobs and revenue to fight poverty and food insecurity.

Moreover, the AfCFTA can support the procurement of food from closer regional markets. All these factors could go a long way towards enhancing the continent's food security and reducing vulnerability to current and emerging shocks.

Paul Akiwumi is the Director, Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, at UNCTAD.

During a pandemic, cancer is all the more terrifying, uncertain and lonely

By Marion Renault

EMILY Dolley had accumulated symptoms for months. Her fatigue felt unshakable, her throat often sore, and her voice increasingly scratchy.

As Covid-19 peaked in Michigan, doctors dismissed Dolley's concerns as allergies or a cold, and she was told she had to wait until summer for an ultrasound, and even longer for biopsies or blood work. By the time she got her diagnosis, the cancer had spread from her thyroid to her lymph nodes.

Because of the pandemic, Dolley couldn't bring anyone along to the appointment where she got her diagnosis. When she began to cry at the news and wiped away her tears, the doctor instructed her not to touch her face.

As Dolley left the building, passing by Covid-19 screenings at its entrances, her new reality set in. "Now I had to worry about people who could get me sick on top of cancer," she recalls, adding: "I had a total meltdown. I was scared. I was alone. I was absolutely furious."

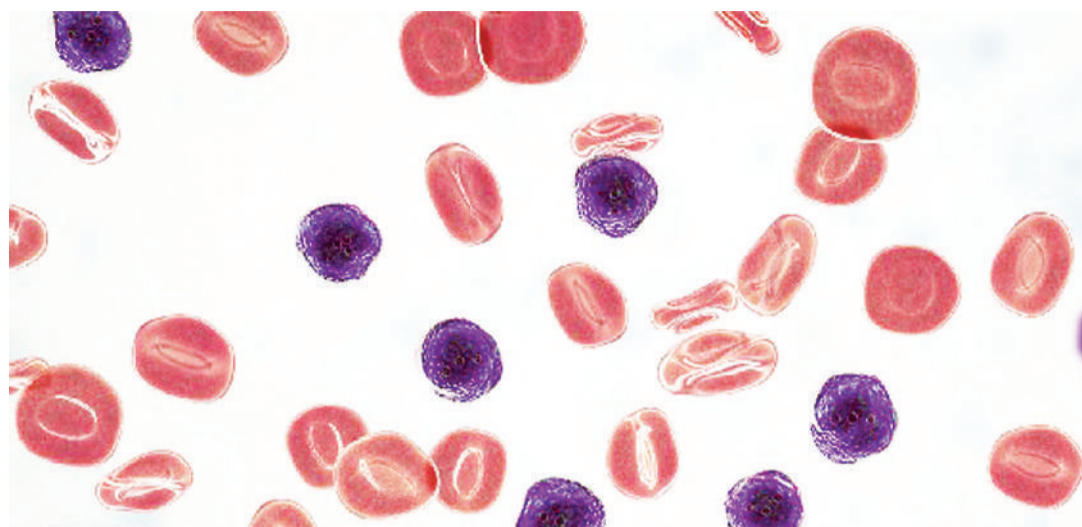
Though all she wants is her friends and family close by, Dolley will quarantine until her thyroidectomy, scheduled for mid-August. She doesn't know yet whether her husband will be allowed to hold her hand before surgery, or if he'll just drop her off at the door.

By restricting her access to everything from testing to emotional support, she says, Covid-19 has made cancer especially scary and lonely. "At times I do feel that Covid is more important than me and my cancer. Covid is always first," Dolley says, adding: "It is just making a very difficult situation so much more difficult."

Oncologists, too, say the high-stakes work of treating cancer has become even more precarious during the coronavirus pandemic. Over the course of this year, cancer specialists have struggled to understand how to protect their patients, whose immune systems are compromised by therapies like chemotherapy and radiation.

"The burning question," says Jeremy Warner, MD, MS, an oncologist at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Centre in Tennessee, "is: can we treat our patients the same way now as we did before?" What's worse: potential Covid-19 exposure, or delayed treatment?

People with cancer are all too aware of the risks of treatment, delayed or otherwise. Don Williamson, a 55-year-old retiree in Georgia, underwent seven weeks of radiation from March to May for his prostate cancer. "It's a



little bit nerve-racking not knowing if you were going to get the virus, but knowing you need to get treatment," he says.

He noted that, as the pandemic progresses, people with cancer have intimated to him that feelings of isolation and fear have only fortified.

Over the last six months, 30-year-old Katy Aiello has undergone chemotherapy, radiation, and a partial mastectomy and lymph node removal. When she's not in treatment to fight her breast cancer, she's holed up in her apartment, avoiding Covid-19.

"It's like getting attacked from the inside and the outside," Aiello says, adding: "What's safe? Nothing."

On a regular basis, oncologists must carefully balance hypothetical risk and benefit. What treatment could maximise someone's recovery with minimal side-effects?

The answer to that question is life-defining for patients. Armed with reason for hope, oncologists will aggressively pursue treatment despite potential hazards. But once remaining options seem more likely to harm than to help, they may counsel for hospice care.

"Obviously, when we give treatment, we hope it's going to work," says Sam Rubinstein, MD, a hematologist at the University of North Carolina's Lineberger cancer centre, adding: "We can't tell on the front end. It's not always obvious that the benefit outweighs the risk. And it's not always true."

Covid-19 makes that equation even harder to balance. At the pandemic's onset, healthcare providers delayed and cancelled all but the most urgent treatments and surgeries. Initially, it seemed worthwhile to keep people out of hospitals, for their own safety and to preserve personal protective equipment (PPE). Now, Rubinstein

says: "The script has flipped."

In May, Rubinstein and Warner co-authored an observational study in *The Lancet* of more than 1,000 people with both cancer and lab-confirmed coronavirus. Predictably, they found that patients with active cancer did worse - although those whose cancer was stable or responding to treatment did better - than applied to the most fragile and deteriorating patients.

But they found that anti-cancer therapy itself did not seem to increase a person's risk of death - even if it involved toxic chemotherapy or invasive surgery. Simply put: Continued cancer treatment doesn't seem to put people with cancer further in harm's way - but pausing care, and allowing a cancer to progress unchecked, could.

"We need to keep treating, even in the face of this. Cancer never stops," says Trisha Wise-Draper, MD, PhD, associate professor and oncologist at the University of Cincinnati Cancer Centre.

Layne Weatherford, PhD, a post-doctoral fellow who works with Wise-Draper, last month presented preliminary findings suggesting that immunotherapy - which activates the immune system against cancer - doesn't worsen complications for people with cancer infected with Covid-19.

"Our advice keeps changing. I think that has been the hardest part for patients," says Wise-Draper, adding: "They're watching science unfold in front of their eyes."

She says some people have been too afraid of Covid-19 to go for treatment. Now they're hearing that staying away, and putting off care, could be even more dangerous than the coronavirus.

"I'm super frustrated. The shifting of what is and what isn't high risk is very unclear to a lot of us. You want answers and no one has them," says Aiello, who has breast cancer.

Oncologists are also deeply worried about the cancer patients who don't know that they're cancer patients yet.

During the early and widespread lockdowns due to the Covid-19 outbreak, routine visits such as dental appointments, mammograms, pap smears, and annual physical exams were delayed.

"Everyone was afraid of being overwhelmed," says Fabio Moraes, MD, a radiation oncologist at Kingston General Hospital in Ontario, Canada, adding: "It was about trying to protect the system from overloading."

Unfortunately, all of those cases are also lost opportunities to catch cancer early - and research has begun to reveal the potential cost of putting them off. In the UK, 3,600 additional lives could be lost to breast, colorectal, esophageal and lung cancer over the next five years due to Covid-19-related delays in diagnosis.

This is according to findings published in *The Lancet* last month. Another *Lancet* study also published last month suggested that delays as short as two months could be enough for early stage tumours to progress from treatable to untreatable.

"We're pretty sure that there will be an increased wave of cancer cases coming," says Moraes, adding: "The impact of Covid-19 is not going to be seen now. It will be reflected in survival in the next five or ten years."

Gaby Berkman, a 31-year-old from near Boston, was surrounded by family during her first week of chemotherapy at the end of February, shortly after her stage 3 Hodgkin's lymphoma diagnosis. "It felt like everyone was there and I wouldn't be alone through it," she says.

During the second round in early March, Covid-19 was still a distant rumble. But by the third round, two weeks later, Berkman asked her mother to stay home, and the number of chairs in her infusion room dropped from eight to four. Her husband dropped her off outside for the fourth infusion.

"It just felt so unfair that I was going through this huge medical hardship, and Covid was dictating how it was happening to me," she says.

Berkman says that when doctors told her in late May that she was in remission, the news felt flat. Instead of rejoicing, she'll remain in isolation for the foreseeable future.

'A dispatch originally published in *Elemental*, a Medium publication about health and wellness. Marion Renault is a freelance science journalist.

How China fights 'protracted war' for prosperity amid uncertainties

BEIJING

IN coping with the disruptions from the COVID-19 epidemic and global economic slowdown, China's leadership has emphasized the need to steer the world's second-largest economy as if fighting a protracted war.

It called for the quickened establishment of a new development pattern which gives full play to the advantages of a huge domestic market, so that domestic and foreign markets can boost each other. It also said the domestic market should be the mainstay, emphasizing the need to tackle challenges from a protracted-war perspective.

"Since many problems we face are long- and medium-term, resolving such problems is like fighting a protracted war," the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee noted in a meeting on July 30 where arrangements for the economic work for the second half of the year were made.

Although this new development pattern puts more emphasis on self-sufficiency, it's improper to interpret it as a policy shift to less opening-up or less active interaction with foreign markets.

DUAL CIRCULATION

A commentary run by the *People's Daily*, the CPC flagship newspaper which local authorities tend to take as a reference for policy interpretation, noted that taking the domestic market as the mainstay is "absolutely not an operation behind closed doors." It is there to exploit the potential of domestic market demands to facilitate better connectivity between domestic and foreign markets for more resilient and sustainable growth.

The new development pattern, or dual circulation, is more of a solution proposed by China in tough times to boost both its economic resilience and that of the world's.

As overseas demand is expected to remain subdued due to the global coronavirus pandemic, the political bureau meeting urged efforts to keep expanding domestic demand, counteract the impact of COVID-19, boost final consumption and create conditions for consumption upgrading.

If the demand of the country's 1.4-billion-people market (and its 400 million middle-income earners in particular) is properly unleashed and well met, it is expected to provide forceful support for China's economic recovery. A solid recovery of the Chinese economy will in turn help boost global morale in pursuing post-pandemic growth.

On the supply side, China has taken multi-pronged measures, from tax and fee cuts to targeted financing support, to protect the supply chain from succumbing to epidemic shocks and retain the vitality of market entities.

If the Chinese economy managed to rebound steadily, analysts say more spillover effects can be expected across the world.

LONG-TERM VISION

For domestic analysts, the "protracted-war" approach also reflects China's resolution to maintain strategic focus in a time full of uncertainties for high-quality development.

Instead of being distracted by short-term disruptions, the Chinese leadership has been steadfast in grasping the current development opportunities to approach major issues concerning China's development from a longer-term,

strategic and systematic perspective, said Zhang Zhanbin, head of the School of Marxism at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee.

In October, the CPC Central Committee will meet to outline the 14th five-year plan covering the period from 2021 to 2025, as well as a long-term vision for 2035. In the near term, a range of development milestones, from poverty alleviation to completing the building of a moderately prosperous society, needs to be accomplished.

Dong Yu, executive deputy dean of the China Institute for Development Planning at Tsinghua University, agreed with a combination of short-term responses and long-term planning in making arrangements for the economic work for the rest of the year and beyond.

"On the one hand, in coping with the possible economic fallouts of COVID-19, more consideration should be given to difficulties and challenges. On the other hand, solid foundations need to be laid for future social and economic development," he said.

To fulfill targets and tasks, the political bureau meeting added emphasis for full implementation of macro policies, calling for pursuing a more proactive and effective fiscal policy that delivers solid outcomes, and a more flexible and appropriate monetary policy that targets sound results.

It signaled clearly that China will further ease the burden on market entities and promote the development of the real economy, said Zong Liang, chief researcher of the Bank of China. "With the policies more targeted and robust, the economy will continue to develop within the appropriate range," he said.

Shortly after the meeting, relevant authorities began to hold their mid-year work conferences to transform the top leadership's arrangements into detailed policies.

The People's Bank of China, for instance, said on Monday that it will promote a full implementation of the foreign investment administration model of pre-establishment national treatment plus a negative list, advance the internationalization of the renminbi and capital account convertibility proactively and soundly, and unify the foreign exchange management policies applied in the opening-up of China's bond market.

It will also be deeply involved in global financial governance, and safeguard multilateralism, the central bank said.

The China Securities Regulatory Commission said in a statement that it would continue to open up markets, industries and products to foreign investors, while simultaneously stepping up oversight to forestall risks.

Looking forward to the next five-year plan, Zhang Zhanbin was impressed by the "five musts" stressed at the political bureau meeting, which involves upholding and optimizing the mechanism of the Party in governing economic and social development, serving the people, implementing new development concepts in all sectors, advancing reform and opening-up, as well as improving prospective thinking, overall planning, strategic layout and integrated implementation.

"These five musts represent the valuable experience of China's economic development, which stresses optimizing economic governance from a holistic approach, and striking a dynamic equilibrium among multiple targets," he said. **Xinhua**

ILO underlines demands for decent work, role of trade unions

By Beatrice Philemon

IN a bid to promote decent work in the workplace, UN labour agency ILO says employers must treat their workers as friends and have social dialogue with them. If employees are happy they perform their duties efficiently and on time which in turn leads to increased productivity and improved labour relations.

It also will prevent conflicts in the workplace, promote human dignity, improve working conditions and wages, along with improving workers' protection in areas like safety and health at the workplace.

Maridadi Phanel, the programme coordinator for governance at the country office of the International Labour Organization (ILO) made these remarks at a one day National Youth Dialogue Forum organized by ActionAid Tanzania.

"If you don't make your employees friends, treat them well and fairly they can pilfer company resources and even damage equipment," he said.

The money a company gets from selling what workers produce will be used for maintenance or purchasing new equipment, increasing costs of running the industry, he pointed out.

He urged employers in various spheres to ensure respect for fundamental principles of workplace organisation, guarantee the protection of workers' rights and ensure security for employees to prevent accidents or contracting diseases while performing their duties.

They also must promote social dialogue with their staff, hold discussions about what they plan to do for the company or to change.

"If you plan to develop a new policy or strategy, please involve your workers, allow them to participate in the decision-making process so that you can come up with a comprehensive policy or strategy

for your company," he said.

Giving each employee the opportunity to voice opinions, share knowledge with others improves relationships between employers, employees and managers, encouraging a strong sense of teamwork among workers that in turn prevents conflicts in the workplace and increases productivity.

Fundamental principles and rights at work include freedom of association and collective bargaining, elimination of child labour, elimination of forced labour and abolition of discrimination, he stated.

In a bid to promote decent work, employment of children is an offence just like forced labour.

Furthermore discrimination in the workplace is not allowed. "Employers are required to promote equality in the workplace," he asserted.

Decent work is based on the principle of equality between men and women, where those with the same education are paid equally.

Decent work delivers fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families. It also involves articulating better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, participation in decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment in the workplace.

"If an employer does not create social justice, a better environment, provide opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, then equity, security and human dignity in the workplace will not be present, and that is not a decent work," he says.

Four pillars promote decent work in the workplace globally, including promoting standards, fundamental principles and rights at work and creating greater opportunities for women



District medical officers, doctors, lawyers, nurses, project coordinators, labour officers, entrepreneurs, representatives of the Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (TUICO), the Zanzibar Teachers Union (ZATU), the Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE) and ILO attending the National Youth Dialogue Forum organized by ActionAid Tanzania.

and men to decent employment and income. Others are enhancing the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all and strengthening tripartism and social dialogue, he said.

To promote decent work, employers must set and implement organizational policies and strategies that promote gender equality and comply with national employment policies and labour laws, he pointed out, noting that this ethos entails freedom of association, proper remuneration, leaves and organisational rights.

Social dialogue is vital, so employers should collaborate with government, workers and other stakeholders to find workable strategies that will promote decent work in any organisation.

For her part, ActionAid Tanzania head of programme and policy, Jovina Nawenzake called on labour officers in all areas where they are across the country to conduct regular inspections in workplaces to find out if employers comply with employment policies and labour legislation at a

specific factory or service enterprise.

Regular workplace inspections help prevent work-related incidents, risk of injuries and illnesses for employees as well as helping them to perform their duties in a conducive and safe environment.

"When labour officers carry out a regular inspection it is easier for them to identify the main challenges facing employees in the workplace, what they need and later provide advice to employers to improve working conditions or take legal actions against them," she said.

Apart from these issues, she called on the Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (TUICO), the Tanzania Teachers Union (CWT), the Zanzibar Association of Trade Union Congress (ZATUC) and the Tanzania Union of Government and Health Employees (TUGHE) to train employees on the Employment and Labour Relations Act, 2004 at the workplace as the majority of them are not aware of this law, or what this legislation provides.

"As trade unions you need to train union officials and workers on this Act as well as defend and protect workers' rights in accordance with the challenge they have as you're the representative voice for them when dealing with employers on what they face or encounter," she said.

Highlighting on trade unions, she says there are so many trade unions across the country but they don't take their responsibilities for its members in the workplace.

"They don't conduct visits in the workplace to meet with employees and have a face-to-face discussion with them to see the main challenges they have and what they need. When they visit the workplace they normally meet with human resource managers or employers and leave without talking to employees. That is not fair for its members," she says.

Keeping education within grasp of refugee children

By Mantoe Phakathi

“NOT being able to go to school is not something I’d wish on any child in this world,” said 21-year-old Nujeen Mustafa, a young advocate for refugees who fled the Syrian war with her sister. Mustafa, who now lives in Germany, is also the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) high profile supporter.

Speaking at a virtual seminar hosted by Education Cannot Wait (ECW) a day after the organisation launched its 2019 Annual Results Report, Mustafa said growing up in Syria was not easy. Even before the war, she said, she had to educate herself at home via TV, with the assistance of her older siblings, because government buildings were not accessible to someone who had to use a wheelchair like herself. Mustafa was born with cerebral palsy.

“As the conflict started, the situation deteriorated even further,” Mustafa told over 700 participants of the webinar held on International Youth Day, Aug. 12. “I had to flee because my safety was jeopardised.”

The high-level webinar was also addressed by former United Kingdom prime minister Gordon Brown, Norwegian Refugee Council secretary-general Jan Egeland, Afghanistan minister of education H.E. Rangina Hamidi, Theirworld president Justin Van Fleet, Norway minister of international development Dag-Inge Ulster and Canada’s parliamentary secretary Kamal Khara, among others.

Mustafa said the 75 million children who cannot access education as a result of crises was a demonstration of a failure on everyone’s part and that it was “unacceptable and inexcusable”. Her story resonates with many of the children in countries experiencing emergencies or conflict as highlighted in the ECW annual report titled Stronger Together in Crises.

Speaking at the same event, former United Kingdom prime minister



Brown said the world has a lost generation of 30 million refugees, 40 million displaced and 75 million in conflict and emergency zones.

“We now have the COVID generation deprived of school,” said Brown who is chair of the ECW high-level steering group and also the U.N. special envoy for global education. “Some people think 30 million children will never return to school even though they have been there before the pandemic.”

Globally 75 million children cannot access education as a result of crises. File photo

Brown said it was necessary to send a message of hope based on three pillars. Firstly, faith that education can bridge the gap between what people are and what they have in themselves to become. Secondly, the message should be based on the belief that every child who is in a conflict or emergency zone can be brought to school. Finally, he said the message should be based on confidence that the \$310 million needed by ECW to do its work can be raised.

“Hope doesn’t just die when a refugee ship is lost at a sea,” said Brown. “Hope dies when young people cannot plan and prepare for the future because there’s no school, no education within their grasp.”

Although there is still a long way to go in supporting children and youth in conflict countries, the Stronger Together in Crises Report shows significant progress. From 2017 to 2019, the primary enrolment rate for refugee children improved from 53 percent to 75 percent in Uganda and from 62 percent to 67 percent in Ethiopia. ECW disbursed \$131 million across 29 countries in 2019, more than its 2017 and 2018 investments combined.

“Globally, the share of education in all humanitarian funding increased from 4.3 percent in 2018 to 5.1 percent in 2019, representing a record amount of over \$700 million,” reads the report.

ECW director, Yasmine Sherif, attributes the progress made to three reasons. Firstly, breaking down silos and having all stakeholders working together to mobilise resources.

“Remove this whole issue of trying to raise money for oneself, one’s own siloed area but we’re bringing it to the sector, bringing it to the children and the youth out there and that’s what the fund does,” said Sherif.

Secondly, Sherif said, removing bureaucracy has resulted in moving with record speed in response to COVID-19. She said just a few weeks after the World Health Organisation declared it a pandemic, ECW was able to deliver in 27 countries and exhaust its entire emergency funding that was available and attracted more funding for a second round.

“Thirdly, ECW is part of a multilateral system that has been questioned over the years but if we’re going to be stronger together we have to be multilateralist,” she said. “We have to believe in the multilateral system that was created precisely for this.”

Sherif said 3.6 million children have been reached through a holistic approach that caters the needs of a child and youth from mental health and psychosocial services to school

feeding where WFP plays an important role. Considering that teachers are mentors and role models to young people during their formative years, ECW involves their training.

ECW also provides cash assistance that allows most families of the 75 million children who are living in extreme poverty to send their children to school because they may not be able to do so even if the school itself is free. It also creates infrastructure that is conducive to children with disabilities and provides protection especially in countries where there is violence and conflict. It also empowers governments to build their own coordination units and sustain the investments made.

The U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is hosting the ECW secretariat. UNICEF executive director, Henrietta Fore, said there is not enough advocacy to support children in conflict and emergency zones with learning, yet education is part of the humanitarian and development agenda.

“It is needed in the first day of the crises as you can see from Nujeen and it is needed five years later,” said Fore. “So, we have to think differently, it is a continuum of assistance we’re giving.”

She said the best thing that has been discovered is giving the world a great idea. One great idea that is considered is, if everyone could join with connecting every young person to learning everywhere, it would make a big difference.

“If we could do this in the next couple of years, it would change the world and it would make people realise that education is the foundation of all humanitarian and development response,” she said.

Ensuring that the education needs of children in crises zones needs resources and ECW is appealing for more support.

Agencies

The coronavirus may mess with thyroid levels, too

By Roxanne Khamsi

As the devastating outbreak of Covid-19 spread in Italy in March, doctors became curious if the ruthless virus, which seemed to wreak unpredictable havoc on the body, was mucking with important organs like the thyroid.

At the Ca’ Granda Main Polyclinic Hospital in Milan, it was feasible for the medical experts to investigate this because they routinely test critical care patients’ levels of thyroid-stimulating hormone, or TSH, which is an indirect indicator of thyroid health.

So Iliaria Muller, MD, PhD, an endocrinologist at the hospital, began comparing blood test results from patients admitted to that critical care unit with data from other patients the previous year to see if there was a difference in their thyroid hormones.

The thyroid, a butterfly-shaped gland that sits below the Adam’s apple at the base of the throat, performs crucial functions in the body. It secretes hormones that maintain a person’s metabolic rate, fertility and digestive system, to mention but a few of its many responsibilities.

Damage to this organ can cause a wide range of symptoms, including weight gain and brain fog, and has even been linked to an increased risk of miscarriage and heart disease.

After excluding people with pre-existing thyroid conditions from their analysis, Muller and her colleagues ended up with data from 85 critical care patients from this March and April, all of whom had Covid-19, and from 78 people admitted to that same unit during those months last year.

The study, published this July 30 in the *Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology* journal, found that 13 of those people with Covid-19 – around 15 per cent – were experiencing thyrotoxicosis, a condition in which there is an excess of thyroid hormone in the blood.

This can happen when the thyroid is damaged, causing an unusually large release of stored up hormone reserves. By comparison, only one of the 78 patients from last year’s group had evidence of thyrotoxicosis.

The researchers believe that Covid-19, caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, might be a risk factor for an atypical form of thyroiditis, which is characterised by inflammation of the thyroid that can lead to thyrotoxicosis.

Viral thyroiditis, also known as subacute thyroiditis, is a mystery in that doctors aren’t sure exactly which viruses can cause it, but researchers have found circumstantial evidence linking it to everything from influenza to hepatitis.

“Lots of viruses can affect the thyroid,” Muller says, adding, rhetorically. “So, why not SARS-CoV-2?”

Curiously, the people with Covid-19 in critical care with thyrotoxicosis had high levels of the thyroid hormone thyroxine, but not the elevated triiodothyronine levels typically seen in viral thyroiditis. They also never experienced any neck pain, which is a key feature of viral thyroiditis.

I know this symptom very well personally because I experienced this condition a couple years ago and had a giant, excruciating bulge at the base of my neck when I was finally diagnosed.

Muller notes that thyroid cells have the ACE-2 receptor on their surface, which SARS-CoV-2 uses to enter cells. She suspects that in severe cases the virus is able to infiltrate the thyroid, but this



might not happen commonly in milder cases.

Only one of the 41 Covid-19 patients without pre-existing thyroid conditions who received low-intensity care at the hospital in March and April had test results indicating thyrotoxicosis, says Muller.

Mounting evidence

Other groups have uncovered evidence suggesting that Covid-19 might disrupt thyroid hormones. A study published last month from another Italian team looked at data from almost 300 people with Covid-19 and found evidence of thyrotoxicosis in around 20 per cent of them, particularly those who seemed to have systemic inflammation from the infection.

Gherardo Mazziotti, MD, PhD, an endocrinologist and associate professor at Humanitas University of Milan who led

this work, explains that the long-term effects are still under exploration.

“It is reasonable to hypothesize that the thyroiditis induced by SARS-CoV-2 is transient,” Mazziotti says, but adding that “we cannot exclude” the fact that in some cases it might cause lasting, chronic thyroid dysfunction.

Viral thyroiditis is generally just a transient condition, but in anywhere from 5 per cent to 20 per cent of cases the thyroid damage means that patients require lifelong thyroid hormone replacement medication.

Muller and her team followed up with eight of the people with Covid-19 in their study who had signs of thyrotoxicosis. Ultrasounds of their thyroid glands showed signs of abnormalities, including three patients in whom these scans showed spots indicating that some cell death might have occurred.

Despite the spots on some of the ultrasounds, all the people with Covid-19 in Muller’s study seem to have recovered thyroid function. She says that her team plans to do stress tests in the future to see if their thyroids are still able to

work optimally when challenged.

It’s too early to say whether there is any link between the abnormal thyroid levels seen in some severely ill Covid-19 patients and reported Covid-19 effects such as a racing heartbeat and hair loss, which can occur with thyroid hormone changes.

However, Muller says that there’s ample evidence for doctors to consider screening people with Covid-19 for thyroid abnormalities to see whether these individuals should be followed up once they recover to ensure that the organ is working well.

She also notes that, according to her preliminary analysis, pre-existing thyroid conditions do not appear to be a risk factor for Covid-19.

In addition to these studies, there have been at least three case reports from Italy linking the novel coronavirus to thyroiditis. Meanwhile, a July 2020 study from researchers in China found thyroid level abnormalities, although these didn’t have the classical signature of thyroiditis.

However, the authors noted that these patients did not have their thyroid levels checked when they were admitted to the hospital and were already receiving steroids, which can affect hormone levels.

Some endocrinologists say it is too early to know if the link is solid. Erkam Sencar, MD, an endocrinologist at Diskapi Yildirim Beyazit Training and Research Hospital in Ankara, Turkey, remains skeptical that Covid-19 carries a heightened risk for thyroiditis.

“As an expert examining a large number of thyroid patients, I have not observed an increase in viral thyroiditis cases,” he says.

Sencar also cautions that there might be confounding factors in these studies such as patients’ exposure to the iodine injection they receive to improve the image of CT scans used to assess lung health. Iodine can have a big effect on thyroid function.

Furthermore, he notes that subacute thyroiditis typically occurs two to six weeks after viral infection. The timing of the thyroid hormone changes the researchers are seeing with Covid-19 are concurrent with the in-

fection, so this makes Sencar skeptical that it is explained by something like subacute thyroiditis.

For her part, Muller says that it is unlikely that the Covid-19 patients in her study received iodine before their blood was drawn upon being admitted to the hospital, and that this contrast agent isn’t always used in the kind of CT scans they receive.

Muller also stresses that she and her colleagues were careful to call this condition “atypical” thyroiditis, given that it doesn’t seem to fit the pattern of subacute thyroiditis. The Covid-19 patients might have some elements of what is known as nonthyroidal illness syndrome, a condition in which the body has difficulty converting thyroid hormones.

Other endocrinologists say that it might be useful to watch for thyroid hormone abnormalities in Covid-19 patients. “These studies indicate that patients with Covid-19, especially those with severe illness, should be monitored for signs and symptoms of thyroid problems and that there should be a low threshold for checking thyroid blood tests,” says Victor J. Bernet, MD. He is chair of the endocrinology department at the Mayo Clinic Florida and president-elect of the American Thyroid Association.

Bernet notes that autopsies of patients who died in the early 2000s during the outbreak of SARS, a disease closely related to Covid-19, found signs of thyroid inflammation when evaluating thyroid tissue under a microscope.

James Hennessey, MD, director of clinical endocrinology at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Centre in Boston, recommends a similar approach and says doctors should be aware about this possible link “so that thyroid function testing be performed in a timely manner” when nonspecific symptoms such as a rapid pulse rate suggest a potential thyroid basis.

• **A report originally published in *Elemental*, a Medium publication about health and wellness. Roxanne Khamsi is a health reporter uncovering overlooked science.**

GGML, Geita Town Council in 9.2billion/- contract to improve people's livelihoods

By Guardian Correspondent, Geita

GEITA Gold Mining Limited (GGML) and the Geita Town and District Councils yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth 9.2bn/- in relation to GGML's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Plan for 2020.

The signing of the MoU reaffirms GGML's commitment to the Tanzanian government and its people through compliance with the amended section 105 of the Mining Law that includes provisions relating to a mineral right holder's Corporate Social Responsibility Plan.

The implementation of the CSR plan will benefit Geita communities in the areas of environment, infrastructure, health, education and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Speaking during the brief ceremony, Geita Regional Commissioner, Eng. Robert Gabriel expressed the government's appreciation for the strong and healthy partnership between GGML and the Geita community.

He said GGML strives to support the Government of Tanzania's aspirations of sustainable social and economic development in host communities.

Meanwhile, GGML's managing director, Richard Jordinson said the company further endeavors to cooperate with the local authorities as well as the communities in the identification and management of key projects for the sustainable future of Geita region.

"We are delighted to reaffirm our commitment to the Government of Tanzania and the Geita communities. In what is now our third CSR plan since the amended section of the Mining Law, we are optimistic we can build upon previous projects to enhance ownership by the communities but also pledge to continue collaborating on sustainable projects that can outlast the life of the mine

"Since its inception, GGML has been working closely with the local government authorities to support a number of community projects in the Geita region through Public-Private Partnerships as well as National programmers.

"Consistent with its core value of providing the Geita community with sustainable socio-economic development that outlasts mining activity, GGML has carried out various projects in the local Geita community including water supply, education and economic development activities in the agriculture, construction and service sectors," he said



GGML managing director Richard Jordinson (R) pictured earlier this week presenting to regional commissioner Robert Gabriel a copy of an MoU document relating to the firm's corporate social responsibility plan for this year. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Tough choice as women lock horns in WTO top job

By Guardian Correspondent

THE World Trade Organisation is going through unprecedented crisis like never before for its 25-year history.

With the imbalance of trade between developing countries, particularly Africa, the China-US trade war, US-WTO strained relations and, coming closer home, Tanzania -Kenya tit-for-tat trade relations, our region need a balanced person at the trade organisation's realms.

Kenya, fielding her ace diplomat Amina Mohamed (pictured) has already courted Tanzania's support during the voting where Dar es Salaam will definitely, at the first round, cast her three votes out of four for African colleagues, Kenya, Egypt's Abdel-Hamid Mamdouh and Nigeria's Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

The remaining vote should

go to either South Korea's Yoo Myung-hee, Mexico's Dr Jesús Seade Kuri or England's Dr Liam Fox.

By default, three of seven candidates have happened to be women, Amina Mohammed from Kenya, Yoo Myung-hee from South Korea and Nigeria's Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

Sources following the process have it that there is broad support to pick a candidate from Africa and a woman because "there have been no African WTO director-general since its founding in 1995, nor headed its predecessor organization, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which started in 1948".

Largely isolated in global business, the Continent no needs a fair and balanced representation at the world's trade body by placing a person, not necessarily



coming from the continent, but one whose country understands what it takes to be a poor coun-

try, locked out or world's fair

trade and then take a leap to a club of developed economies.

Nigeria's Okonjo-Iweala who hails from an African economic power house is a development and finance specialist who spent a 25-year career at the World Bank as a development economist, rising to the position of managing director.

The Nigerian economist believes that trade is a win-win for everybody if it is done properly but a few commentators doubt that she is a force to be reckoned with. According to Forbes magazine, during her tenure as finance minister, Okonjo-Iweala was "credited with developing reform programs that helped improve governmental transparency and stabilizing the economy. Forbes which ranked her 48th among the world's top 50 "Power

Women" in 2015.

Kenya's Amina Mohamed may not have rich economic competency but she is a skilled diplomat, lawyer and accomplished politician who is now serving in the docket of Sports, Culture and Heritage.

Mohammed has been a key person in her country's multilateral negotiations in bodies like the Commonwealth and the World Trade Organization and so is vested with negotiation skills.

Mohamed, also held the position of foreign minister from 2013 to 2018, becoming the first woman to hold this position and the first Muslim woman in Kenya's Cabinet.

As African states are tempted to look into the continent, another power to reckon with is from the country that shares a lot with African na-

tions - South Korea.

South Korea's trade minister Yoo Myung-hee seeking the position touts herself as a person who will be in the middle at the time when the World trade body needs reform.

"The international community is increasingly becoming more protectionist...in order for the WTO to overcome the current crisis, the role of a middle power to mediate conflicts among member states is important," Yoo said in a statement ahead of a press conference.

"Korea will be able to serve as a bridge, based on its growth experience through trade."

Yoo, (53), has the credentials of leading South Korea's renegotiation of a trade deal with US and worked on South Korea's trade pacts with Singapore and ASEAN.



Stanbic Bank Tanzania CEO Kevin Wingfield (L) presents a dummy cheque for 10m/- to his NovFeed counterpart, Diana Orembe (R), one of the top five winners of the bank's entrepreneurship challenge. The event was held in Dar es Salaam earlier this week. Looking on is Stanbic head of marketing Desideria Mwegelo. The Stanbic competition was launched as one of several initiatives to mark the bank's 25th anniversary, chiefly to support entrepreneurs to reach their goals and inspire dreams in Tanzania. Each of the five winners was awarded 10m/-. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Africa begins continent-wide study of COVID-19 antibodies

By Special Correspondent,

Johannesburg

AN Africa-wide study of antibodies to the coronavirus has begun, while evidence from a smaller study indicates that many more people have been infected than official numbers show, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday.

Experts are eager to know the real number of COVID-19 cases in Africa, as confirmed cases and deaths have been relatively low on the continent of 1.3 billion people. Poor data collection, however, has complicated efforts.

But recent surveys in Mozambique found antibodies - proteins the body makes when an infection occurs - to the virus in 5% of households in the city

of Nampula and 2.5% in the city of Pemba.

That's while Mozambique has just 2,481 confirmed virus cases. Further studies are underway in the capital, Maputo, and the city of Quelimane.

Africa's young population, with a median age of 19, has been called a possible factor.

The new continent-wide antibodies study will include all African countries, but the ones showing interest to start in the coming weeks are Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Nigeria and Morocco, Nkengasong said.

The African continent reached the milestone of 1 million confirmed cases last week, while global health experts have told The Associated Press the true number is estimated to be several times that. More than 24,000 deaths have been

confirmed, and the case fatality rate is 2.2%.

The Mozambique antibodies surveys detected the virus in all neighborhoods in Nampula and Pemba, National Institute of Health director Ilesh Jani told reporters.

The groups with the highest exposure to the virus were market vendors at 10%, followed by health professionals at between 5.5% and 7%, police at between 3.7% and 6% and shop and other business employees at between 5% and 5.5%.

"We don't know why more are not being hospitalized," Jani said. "In Nampula we thought we would see more mortality" but there has been no increase in deaths.

He wondered whether the low death rate will continue or whether the disease "is going to become more aggressive."

Using dialogue to deal with small-scale fishers' hiccups

By Correspondent Sikwese Austin

A Dialogue process launched by the government has finally opened up a vent through which the hitherto unheard of voices of small-scale fishers can reach stakeholders, in a move that could see vital inputs from the sector incorporated into policies designed to increase fish production.

The dialogue is a brainchild of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) under an initiative dubbed: 'Voluntarily Guideline for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication' (NSSF).

Already, views and ideas from small-scale fisheries stakeholders have been collected by the National Task Team lead by Yahya Mgawe in Kilwa- Masoko and

Kilwa Kivinje. They are to be used to weave out a National Plan of Action (NPOA) that aims to revamp the fisheries sector.

Mgawe says fisheries in Tanzania is small-scale yet churns out 98 per cent of fish landing.

"The economic potential of underutilized coastal and marine resources is too big to ignore, especially in terms of their capacity to promote sustainable livelihood," says Mgawe, a leading fisheries specialist.

The view-soliciting move will take place countrywide, with the team venturing into inland fishing powerhouses including Lake Victoria, Lake Tanganyika, Lake Nya-sa and Lake Rukwa, says Mgawe, a retired executive director of the Bagamoyo-based Fisheries Education and Training Authority (FETA).

It sounds incredible that 2.8 million tonnes of fish are available annually in all waters in Tanzania while just only 400,000 tonnes is harvested, which is some 300,000 tonnes short of demand.

"We have rich fishery resources but poor fishers," Mgawe points out, asking: "Should we just sit down and cross our fingers pretending that nothing is happening in the fishing industry? Or keep on agonising?"

The bright side is there exist great opportunities to boost up the fish output.

Now, with the dialogue solution in full swing, about 160 small-scale fishers willingly contributed views and idea in Kilwa-Kivinje on how the fishing industry can easily modify their livelihood through NPOA to be developed, Mgawe

says.

The view-gathering in Kilwa spanned diverse fishing activities such as fishers, fisher processors, input sellers, boat-builders, administrators and trader. Kilwa was the maiden gathering in the dialogue initiative, and so far the first of its kind in the fisheries history in the country.

The dialogue turned out to be useful interaction, as the local fishermen opened up and poured out their concerns, grievances and aspirations.

"Despite having such abundant fish resources in all waters in Tanzania, we fishers face a lot of challenges such as lack of credit facilities, lack of capital, low level of technology, market barriers, women exclusiveness, we also grapple with unfriendly regulations and conditions bu-

reaucracy in the process of getting loans," says Abdullah Issah Abdallah-a Kilwa-based fisherman.

Acquiring loan is not a smooth venture for small-scale fishermen despite this option being publicized by some politicians, who as Abdallah puts it, are out to tap into grassroots popularity.

He says their perennial promises to help people get loans at best turn out to be empty. "Had such leaders known the troubles we face in the high seas during our fishing expeditions, I believe they would not be able to summon an iota of courage to dupe us," the fisher notes.

Fishing is not just about catching fish; behind fishing, Abdallah says, is the story of the invaluable lives risked by men and women who routinely toil in some of the

most dangerous environments in the world to deliver fresh fish to the table.

According to him, fishing still accounts for far more injuries and death than any other industry.

"I ask the government and organizations which are in good position financially to come forward and provide us with fishing equipments on loan basis."

The most sought-after piece of machinery is Super Power 15, a Yamaha outboard motor make trusted by fishermen for its incredible cruising capability in the high seas.

"Superpower 15 is one of the machines which could support us to venture into the deep sea, as far from the coast as 20 kilometers, a distance the engine can cover in one hour," he says.

That far is where the species of fish that Abdallah catches, weighing between 100kg and 150kg are commonly found. Tantalising, yes; yet in reality and as far as Kilwa is concerned, such a point is unreachable to most small-scale fishers. No one in the whole Kivinje owns such a machine, says Abdullah Issah Abdallah.

In comparison, the traditional fishing tool, the local canoe does the trip in about six hours. Sea-subduing machinery, though, is not all that the fishermen need to improve their practice.

Ali Selemani Mmanit, another small-scale fisher lamented that they are left out in the cold when it comes to decision-making, despite their being willing to participate should there be chance for them to do so.

Covid-19: On the immune system, our pets, Africa and the mountains beyond mountains

By Jeffrey Lee, Noel Park, and Ezra Levy

WE take a broad view of the coronavirus, looking at who it is infecting and where the risk is greatest. Unfortunately, it is clear now that people of all ages are susceptible, with some children and young adults succumbing to the virus.

Even dogs, initially thought not to be targets, have become infected, although the health consequences are not clear. There is reason for hope, however, as our health systems and immune systems mount a response to the invaders.

Whether it is our own bodies, or the bodies of our trained companions, continued efforts to contain the virus can prove effective and must be sustained if we are to overcome the mountain that is this virus.

SARS-CoV-2 can infect everyone, but...

From the outset, different people reacted very differently to the virus, with the elderly or those with pre-existing conditions the most susceptible. While this continues to be true, recent reports are demonstrating that people from all age groups are at risk, with some severe reactions linked to specific age ranges.

The first concerns of a severe inflammatory reaction in children appeared in April, and recent reports have largely confirmed the rare but damaging link between viral infection and immune reaction in children.

A couple of decades older, young adults have been warned of the risk of stroke with infection, after an unusual flurry of deaths linked stroke and Covid-19. While patients of different ages suffer different symptoms, one thing links all their infections together: their immune system is trying its best to help and destroy the virus.

We previously wrote about how SARS-CoV-2 can over-activate im-



une signalling. In adults, this can lead to a deadly cytokine storm, and the recent reports of children with severe inflammatory responses suggest that immune system over-action is not limited to adults.

Keep in mind, though, that only a few patients over-react to the point of harm and that most people's immune responses are going to help them fight the virus. The immune system's activity against the virus has been assumed from the start but, until we studied their interaction more closely, it was not clear how this was happening.

Recent studies are clarifying that our bodies are protecting themselves not only with B cells that carry antibodies to recognize the virus, but also with T cells, trained and aimed at virus-infected cells.

This is good news, because it means that our bodies are recogniz-

ing and adapting to the presence of the virus. Intriguingly, some people who never had Covid-19 had T cells with activity against the virus.

The authors explain that this may be due to previous exposure to other coronaviruses with pieces similar enough to train the immune system against SARS-CoV-2. While these B and T cells are helping individuals overcome their own infections, the same cells may prove helpful for other patients battling Covid-19.

A preliminary report indicated that blood plasma transplants from recovered donors to infected patients can help reduce the patients' viral load. Though it is not yet known what part of the plasma is helping the most, this result indicates that our immune systems can react effectively against the virus.

Taken together, the T cell and

plasma results hint at the development of a longer-term immunity, but a long road awaits that hope before it becomes fact.

Dogs susceptible, but also potential solution

A study published this May 14 detailed the first two cases of dogs infected with the novel coronavirus. Viral genetic sequences of viruses from the two dogs in Hong Kong - a Pomeranian and a German shepherd - were identical to the virus detected in their respective owners' cases.

Since the infections in these two canines were reported, other pets have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, including a cat in Hong Kong and another two in New York state.

Previously, four tigers and three lions at New York City's Bronx Zoo also tested positive; this came nearly three weeks after that announcement.

Studies in cats have found that they can pass the virus to other felines without showing symptoms. The canine study showed no evidence that dogs can pass the infection to other dogs or to people, but it is impossible to be certain.

Meanwhile, trained dogs may be a part of the solution to re-opening: a trial to see whether they can detect the coronavirus in humans is set to begin soon.

Covid-19 and its effects on Africa

While much of the news has focused on Covid-19 throughout Asia, Europe and the Americas, other parts of the world are under siege by the virus as well. Countries on the African continent are experiencing a rise in morbidity and mortality associated with the pandemic, and governments have responded in varying manners.

The World Health Organisation has stated that up to 190,000 Africans could die in the first year if the virus is not contained. Despite these grim projections and the risks involved, NGOs are continuing to provide essential care and aid.

A mountain we can overcome

While the ever-essential data about Covid-19 can be hard to obtain in certain areas of the world owing to political and social factors, it is important to study this outbreak to understand the long-term impacts of widespread disease and death on social, economic and political stability.

Each country in the world can mitigate, contain and defeat Covid-19 by letting science and data dictate policy, rather than following fear.

The Haitian proverb "Dèyè mòn gen mòn (translated: mountains beyond mountains), famously used as the title for a biographical work on renowned physician and global health expert Dr Paul Farmer, serves as an excellent reminder of the state of the world we are currently living in.

As explained by Tracy Kidder, the author of the biography, the phrase tells us that the obstacles we face are endless, but so are the opportunities.

Covid-19 is an obstacle that quickly spread among us in the past several months and will fundamentally change how we operate as citizens of the world. The pandemic is a mountain which humanity must face, and it will not be the last, but we have faced seemingly insurmountable challenges and tasks since the dawn of civilisation and we undoubtedly will face new mountains in the years ahead. Like the outbreaks before it, we can overcome this mountain together through decisive action and find ways to build a world that is better for everyone.

Science continues to supply guidance and insight despite the virus-imposed slowdown, and serves as a source of hope during otherwise uncertain days. But, of course, keeping up can seem overwhelming.

A dispatch by Princeton University's Graduate Molecular Biology Outreach Programme. Jeffrey Lee, Noel Park and Ezra Levy are graduate students in the Department of Molecular Biology at Princeton University. The views expressed in this piece are, however, those of the authors themselves.

Reform of the United Nations Organisation

By Saber Azam, GENEVA

THE US detains essential keys to the political and economic stability of the planet. The last four years have been challenging for Americans, their allies, and the rest of the world.

The forthcoming US elections would be a game-changer and UN-related affairs high on the winner's agenda. If Mr. Trump is re-elected, he may continue his mistrust toward the world body, paving the way for its eventual demise. Should Mr. Biden win, he would be confronted with diverse views from the day one of his administration.

The UN is an inefficient bureaucracy. Political nepotism, waste of resources, outdated mandates, incoherent modus operandi, and fractured image characterize it. However, there is no alternative to the UN.

The winner of the presidential race should not rush to dismantle the body or re-establish "business as usual." After 75 years of questionable "service to humanity," it is time to mend the deficiencies, making the organization once again relevant. The following could constitute the basis of

food for thought:

The Charter of the UN defines its primary purposes as follows:

(i) "maintain international peace and security" to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,"

(ii) "develop friendly relations among nations" to "establish conditions under which justice and respect for obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained," and

(iii) "achieve international cooperation ... and respect for human rights" to safeguard "freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" and "dignity ... of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small."

The UN received the necessary support to achieve its goals. It created scores of bodies and received trillions or quadrillions of US dollars. However, a glance at the performance of the organization would imply that:

(a) Wars could not be prevented; their number increased. Terrorism and proxy clashes through unlawful armed groups emerged as new threats to world peace and stabil-



ity. The UN failed in its prime objective of "maintain[ing] international peace and security." Worst, peacekeepers have been accused of inaction during the genocide in Rwanda and sexual abuse of local populations in numerous countries. Questions are raised regarding their "complicity" in the massacre of Srebrenica.

(b) Antagonism among Member States continued to prevail, preventing the world from "develop[ing] friendly relations among nations."

Agreement on, accession, and ratification of international instruments by Member States, particularly during the UN's prime ages, constitute its most significant achievement. However, their implementation has proven challenging. Dignity of the human person, fundamentals of human rights, and respect for diversity remain imaginary notions in most parts of the world. Often, Member States violate their commitments without being subject to "penalty." Secretaries-General have often been tamed to the desire of the most powerful countries.

[1] The term UN applies to all United Nations Headquarters components and affiliated organs around the world.

(c) International cooperation through multi-lateral approaches had timid or quasi no effects. Serious questions have been raised on the impact of trillions of US dollars allocated to develop the socio-economic infrastructures of least developed countries. A simple examination of the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) demonstrates that practically no country achieved them.

Therefore, the UN proved to be an inadequate machinery. Mistrust regarding multilateralism has well-founded reasons. The organization cannot address its current and future pressing challenges without a complete overhaul of the system. It is only then that it can become once more relevant.

Political Reform:

The possibility of reforming the essence of bodies that affect the UN Charter would be quasi-impossible. It is vital to aim at improving their structure and functionality as much as possible. The need for political reform is focused on the membership of the Security Council.

The Charter gives the extra-ordinary veto power to only 5 Member States. Given the context and realities, an increase in the number of permanent members and a profound political reform would not be feasible. Efforts should focus on areas that can effectively be improved.

Reducing the Secretary-General and senior political appointees' service to only one term of five years would increase the organization's efficiency. Most often, the concern surrounding re-election or re-appointment diminishes significantly the ability of incumbents to fulfill their noble tasks. Some individuals are rotating in senior positions for decades, causing apathy and

sclerosis to the organization.

Mandates of Bodies and Agencies:

Countless organs have been created, and few abolished, leading to an endless proliferation of entities. A significant part of UN inefficiency also stems from the confusion of respective bodies' mandates. The overcast lines between department and/or agency mandates engender not only misunderstanding, but also needless competition for relevance and resources.

Such a streamlining exercise would also allow evaluating the efficiency of a particular organ. UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, and IOM have been efficient, and credentials are there to prove it. Others have less than satisfactory effects, particularly UNDP, considered a money-wasting institution. It makes sense to dismantle completely similar bodies, strengthening focused development agencies such as UNFPA, FAO, UNWOMEN, etc.

It is also high time to terminate endless Headquarters pseudo reforms to accommodate most senior officials. This practice has so far reduced the efficiency of the UN system considerably.

Structure:

The UN Headquarters are transformed into heavily staffed and expensive centers of bureaucracy. Political (Headquarters) and operational (field) dimensions of the body must be clearly defined. The Headquarters component should be at its strictly minimum, while the field components need-based.

Each organization has a Branch Office in as many countries as possible, regardless of actual need-leading to thousands of staff and perhaps billions of US dollars expenditure without a justifying added value. This practice should be revised and made unequivocally need-based and flexible.

Management:

Manifold sets of rules and procedures have been elaborated in the fields of human resources, financial management, and supply. There is no reason that the UN system should not obey the same rules. However, humanitarian emergency response supply procedures should preferably be field/operations-based to increase efficiency.

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 122 00--

WORD-FIT

3 LETTERS: ADO, ROE, ANT
 4 LETTERS: YEAR, GAIN, ACID, AMID, DODO
 POND, DOOR (7 WORDS)
 5 LETTERS: DILMA, NOTED, EMAIL, MOTET,
 DOORS (5 WORDS)
 6 LETTERS: DEARIE, IMMUNE, COLOUR, ESTATE
 CLINGY (5 WORDS)
 7 LETTERS: COLOMBO
 8 LETTERS: ABROGATE
 10 LETTERS: YUGOSLAVIA

CROSSWORD

CLUES: Across
 1 citations
 5 said at the end of a prayer
 7 God in Kiswahili
 8 consumed
 10 no longer young
 11 a strong request
 13 a handle in the shape of a round lump
 15 a thing that takes place
 17 afflicted
 19 a mountain or hill in South Africa
 20 Opposition female Mp from Mara

Down:
 1 absolute
 2 Independent
 3 identify class of people, places
 4 to flow over and enclose
 6 a fool
 7 Interfere
 9 adolescent
 12 an inlet
 14 Former president of Malawi
 16 a North America woodland thrush with a brown back and speckled breast
 17 Syrian cloth
 18 a spherical object

SOLUTIONS

WORD-FIT: ADO, ROE, ANT, YEAR, GAIN, ACID, AMID, DODO, POND, DOOR, DILMA, NOTED, EMAIL, MOTET, DOORS, DEARIE, IMMUNE, COLOUR, ESTATE, CLINGY, COLOMBO, ABROGATE, YUGOSLAVIA

CROSSWORD: 1. citations, 2. Independent, 3. identify class of people, places, 4. to flow over and enclose, 5. said at the end of a prayer, 6. a fool, 7. Interfere, 8. consumed, 9. adolescent, 10. no longer young, 11. a strong request, 12. an inlet, 13. a handle in the shape of a round lump, 14. Former president of Malawi, 15. a thing that takes place, 16. a North America woodland thrush with a brown back and speckled breast, 17. Syrian cloth, 18. a spherical object, 19. a mountain or hill in South Africa, 20. Opposition female Mp from Mara

TWIGA CEMENT PLANNING TO INCREASE PRODUCTION BY 300 TONNES NEXT YEAR

By Francis Kajubi

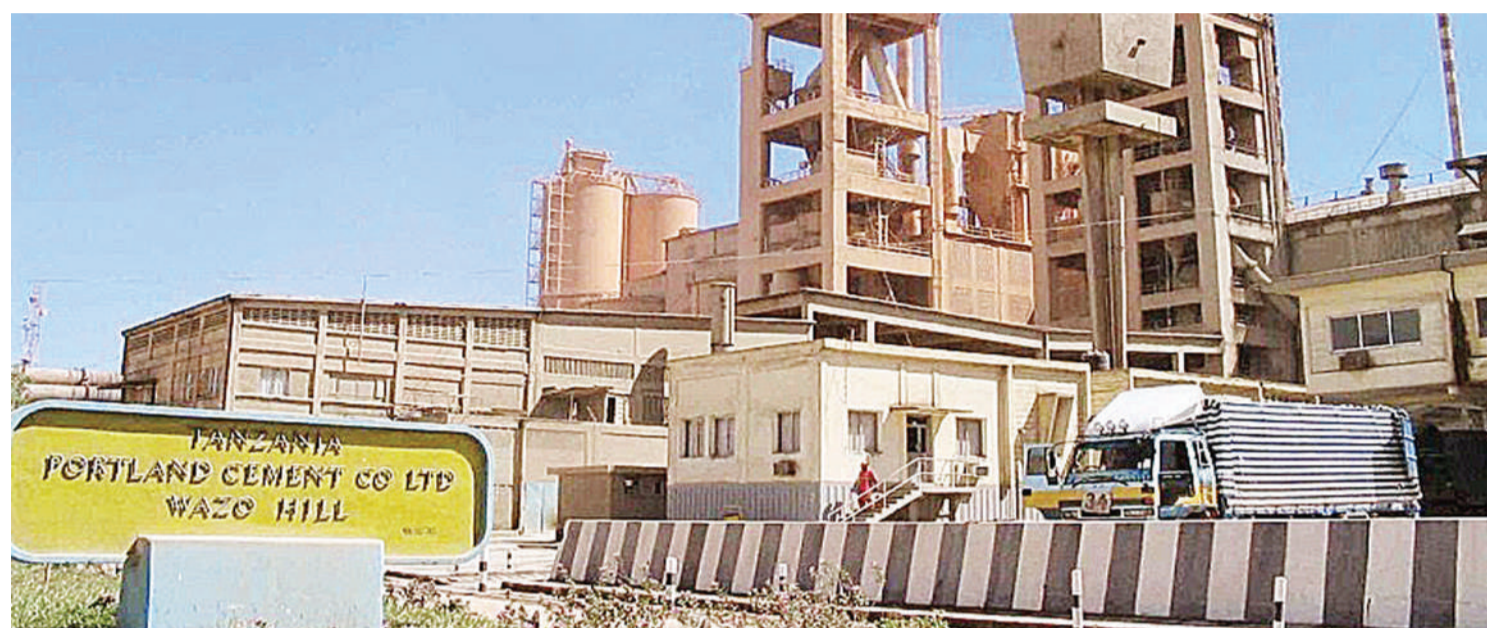
AS demand for cement in the local market is on the increase, Tanzania Portland Cement Plc will increase production from the current 1.9 million metric tons to 2.2 million tonnes next year.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam mid this week, TPC Plc's Head of Commercial Cluster East, South and Central Africa, Yves Mataigne said ongoing mega infrastructure projects by the government have drastically increased demand for cement.

"Implementation of the mega projects has made us rethink about our production capacity as we see an opportunity for growth," Mataigne said adding that the Wazo Hill based company which trades by its brand name 'Twiga Cement' in the market will invest 34bn/- this year and 33bn/- next year for sustainable growth.

He said currently, cement consumption locally is 5.9 million tons hence the need for expansion. Twiga Cement which is owned by HeldeburgCement Group has so far invested over 105bn/- in the past five for modernization and growth.

Responding to allegations of hiking cement prices in the market, Mataigne said, "We reduced bulk cement prices to contractors of mega projects to 147,000/- per ton this year from 210,000/- in 2013." He dismissed al-



TPC Plc plant at Wazo Hill in Dar es Salaam.

legations that his company was among producers who have increased prices unilaterally.

TPC Plc's Senior Commercial Manager, Engineer Danford Semwenda said cement consumption has increased by 11 percent between 2013 and 2019 during which period, local factories increased production from three million tons to six million tons.

"In 2013 Twiga cement used to produce 1.07 million tons of ce-

ment but today it produces 1.9 million tons and we are confident of increasing our production to meet rising demand," Semwenda said.

Speaking after visiting the Wazo Hill factory, Minister of Industry and Trade, Innocent Bashungwa warned manufacturers and dealers who increase prices of the product of risking to have their licenses revoked.

"There is no shortage of ce-

ment in the market so the price increase is a provocation against the government," Bashungwa warned saying when need for the prices to increase because of various factors, the government will endorse the move.

He however acknowledged that heavy rains during the period between March and June destroyed infrastructure and people's homes which spiked cement demand as rebuilding

increased.

Bashungwa however noted that due to lockdowns in neighbouring countries caused by the coronavirus outbreak, cement consumption declined as construction work stopped. "Rwanda in particular had a high demand of cement before the lockdown," he noted saying a fair amount of local cement is exported to Kigali.

Mombasa port rethinks strategy as Dar eyes bigger market share

NAIROBI

Kenya's Mombasa port has been compelled to change tack as competition from Dar es Salaam counterpart gets stiffer. The two ports have in the past two months introduced a number of products and promotional tariffs as they seek to have an edge in maintaining existing traders while attracting new businesses.

Recently The Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) waived 100 per cent port storage charges, targeting Rwandan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) cargo. This was meant to counter the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA), which had earlier extended the container free periods for transit traffic at the Mombasa port.

The Kenya Maritime Authority on July 1 extended the container free periods for transit traffic at the Port of Mombasa and along the Northern Corridor for as long as the Covid-19 pandemic challenges persist. Rwanda business community says they will always pick the port that provides convenience and lower costs.

"If the offers are coming and they are favouring us, we shall use the corridor that is cost-effective," said Stephen Ruzibiza, Rwanda Private Sector Federation (PSF) chief executive. Joseph Akumuntu, a Rwandan importer, told Shipping & Logistics that much as the cargo were allowed to leave the ports without levying fees, the bottlenecks associated with ongoing Covid-19 testing still hinder movement and clearance of cargo.

Shipper Council of East Africa (SCEA) chief executive Gilbert Lagat said Tanzania port in recent weeks has been giving promotional tariffs which will in future attract more business. According to the East Africa Logistics Survey, the average cost of transporting a 40-foot container from Mombasa to Nairobi dropped to \$1,000 last year from a high of \$1,300 in 2011, while that from Mombasa to Kampala came down to \$2,500 from \$3,400 in the same period.

This is, however, lower compared to the Central Corridor mainly served by the Port of Dar es Salaam, where rates recorded a marginal increase. This places Mombasa as the cheapest entry point for goods into the region.

SCEA data shows the transport cost from Dar es Salaam to Kampala has increased from \$2,507 in 2011 to \$4,500 last year, making Northern Corridor the better choice for Uganda. The Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) waived storage charges for all containers earmarked for auctioning as a result of accrued storage charges blamed on Covid-19 pandemic.

TPA in its circular waived 100 percent of the storage charges for over 2,000 containers that arrived between December and May this year, and which are stuck at the Dar es Salaam port. The move is meant to consolidate Tanzania's business ties with Rwanda.

TPA director-general Deusdedit Kakoko said waiving the charges will ensure Rwanda continues doing business with Dar es Salaam port. "In connection to your letter (Private Sector Federation Rwanda), TPA supports your application because of stiff competition for Rwandan cargo and our competitor Northern Corridor," read a section of the circular dated July 15.

Mr Kakoko said they decided to waive the charges to build good relationship with its customers, adding that by capturing the Rwandan market, it means extending port services to DRC as Kigali is a transit route to and from DRC. The ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam had announced intentions to auction all cargo which had overstayed in their facilities, majority of which arrived between January and May when effects of the coronavirus pandemic took their toll on logistics.

Importers say that while they had received respective governments' extension of free demurrage days from 14 days to 55 days, and nine days to 90 days for Tanzania and Kenya respectively, nothing has been done to honour this promise.



Mombasa Port.

By Property Watch Reporter

TEN modern toilets valued at 10m/- have been handed over to Kibuteni Primary School in Unguja South in Zanzibar by NMB Bank Plc.

NMB's Dar es Salaam Zone Manager, Donatus Richard who handed over the toilets to Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan said the toilets are targeted at serving both teachers and pupils. Richard told VP Hassan that the bank decided to assist the public schools so as to improve the learning environment.

"These state of the art toilets will also enable teachers and pupils avoid contamination by germs hence avoid getting sick which will boost their performance," he noted stressing that the country's largest bank will continue supporting government efforts to improve delivery of education and health services.

He further noted that the bank was also using the 'Kizimkazi' annual gathering to introduce its products and services to consumers because many people still don't have a bank account in the country.

"We are targeting small scale businesses, petty traders and smallholder farmers in both Unguja and Pemba who we are luring to open our group accounts known as 'Pamoja' Account," the NMB Dar es Salaam Zone Manager added.

Speaking after receiving the toilets, VP Hassan commended the Dar es Salaam based lender for continuing to support communities in key areas which serve the majority of ordinary people. "As government, we appreciate the role that this indigenous bank plays in



NMB Bank main branch in Zanzibar.

NMB hands over 10m/- modern toilets donation to Zanzibar school

backing state efforts to improve education and health services in the country," the Vice President noted.

Speaking at the same event, NMB Zanzibar Zone Manager, Abdullah Duchi said they will

continue supporting public projects in order to help solve many challenges facing communities in the country.

"Yesterday we participated in this youths annual celebration event by providing ba-

sic financial literacy training to help them use loans wisely," Duchi said adding that the bank has introduced a special 'Chipukizi' program targeting the group.

Sanral ready to implement R30bn worth of construction projects

JOHANNESBURG

Relief is in sight for South Africa's crisis-ridden construction industry, with the South African National Roads Agency (Sanral) announcing on Thursday that it is ready to implement R30 billion worth of construction projects. Sanral said they form part of President Cyril Ramaphosa's drive for "shovel-ready" infrastructure development projects to stimulate the economy post Covid-19.

Construction companies, industry associations and analysts have welcomed Sanral's announcement. "It will change the whole construction industry landscape if Sanral awards all these projects," said Rudolf Fourie, chief executive of JSE-listed road building

and maintenance focused company Raubex.

David Metelerkamp, senior economist at construction market intelligence firm Industry Insight, expressed confidence that these Sanral projects will happen, adding that Sanral is "the best by far" of all the state-owned enterprises (SOEs). However, he questioned when implementation of these projects will happen.

Welcome balm

SA Forum of Civil Engineering Contractors (Safcec) CEO Webster Mfebe welcomed Sanral's announcement, adding it will bring relief to the construction industry. David Fraser, executive chair of Peregrine Capital, said: "Wow, fantastic. Now they just need to start awarding. Sanral engineering

executive Louw Kannemeyer said on Thursday the roads agency has a portfolio of "shovel-ready" projects that will be implemented during the course of its 2020/21 financial year and beyond.

"In the current financial year, Sanral has advertised 278 maintenance, operations and construction projects worth approximately R30.2 billion. So far 136 projects to the value of R7.3 billion have been awarded," he said.

Kannemeyer added that Sanral plans to roll out more than 200 additional road infrastructure projects across all nine provinces in South Africa, which will impact directly on economic development, job creation and economic transformation.

Speaking at the Sustainable

Infrastructure Development Symposium in June, Ramaphosa said the government has placed infrastructure at the centre of the stimulus South Africa's economy needs to achieve a sustainable recovery.

Breaking ground a priority

Ramaphosa added that projects that have been fully developed for implementation will be the priority and ensure ground is broken as soon as possible. The government last month unveiled 50 Strategic Infrastructure Projects (Sips) and 12 special projects involving a total investment of R360 billion, as the first tranche of a massive infrastructure expenditure programme to drive the post Covid-19 economic recovery effort. These initial Sips are expected

to create an estimated 275 700 jobs in six sectors: water and sanitation, energy, transport, digital infrastructure, agriculture and agro-processing, and human settlements.

Kannemeyer said Sanral recognises the frustrations of the industry and is engaging with regulatory bodies such as National Treasury on ways to streamline its procurement processes to make them more efficient and ultimately to speed up the process of adjudicating and awarding tenders.

"We typically can receive as many as 60 tenders for a single project, especially on CIDB 6 projects [under R20 million] and all these are subject to various regulatory and compliance verifications to confirm that each bid is responsive.

ZANTEL CUSTOMERS TO PURCHASE AZAM SPEED BOATS FARE USING EZYPESA

By Property Watch Reporter

People travelling to Zanzibar aboard Azam speed boats can now buy their tickets electronically using Zantel's Ezypesa thanks to a deal entered between the telco and Kilimanjaro Fast Ferries Limited.

The deal which was announced earlier this week, involves Kilimanjaro Fast Ferries' fleet of four vessels which travel between Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. Speaking after signing the deal, Zantel's Head of Marketing and Mobile Money Services, Sakyi Opoku said the move will ensure that passengers get their tickets easily by paying through Ezypesa at their convenience promoting a digital lifestyle the domestic market's luxury ferry travel industry.

"With Ezypesa we ensure that customers make payments easily and from anywhere and at any time. Our partnership with Kilimanjaro Fast Ferries gives customers flexibility in purchasing tickets while reducing the time and the process of acquiring them manually," Opoku said.

He said Zantel customer will call

Azam's toll free number 0800 785 555 to book their boats upon which they will be given a reference number, then dial the Ezypesa for payment and thereafter receive a notification message for the payment.

"We believe that this solution will improve how customers experience marine services especially for the local people as they don't need to go physically to book and buy tickets," he added saying mobile phones will conclude the deal digitally.

In remarks at the same event, Azam Marine Company Limited's Managing Director, Abubakar Salim said the company has deployed online payment platforms that are applicable globally to ensure reliable transportation to the advantage for travellers.

"Partnering with Ezypesa has widened our payment portfolio which offers our customers with extreme freedom to purchase tickets wherever they are, at any time without any additional charges," Salim said. He explained that passengers who pay via Ezypesa will collect their physical tickets at port before departure by showing a text message as a proof of the payment made.



Azam Marine Company Limited's Kilimanjaro speed boat at Dar es Salaam Port.

Mozambican ports store ammonium nitrate safely

MAPUTO

The warehouses in the three main Mozambican ports of Maputo, Beira and Nacala that store ammonium nitrate do so under safe conditions, the government spokesperson, Deputy Justice Minister Filimao Suaze, assured reporters on Tuesday.

Ammonium nitrate is used to produce fertilisers, herbicides, insecticides and explosives. A cargo of 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate, abandoned for over six years in a warehouse in the port of Beirut, exploded on 4 August, killing at least 220 people, wounding many thousands of others, and devastating the city.

The cargo was sent from the Georgian port of Batumi, on the Black Sea, and was destined for the central Mozambican port of Beira. But the ship, the "Rhosus", operated by a shady Russian businessman, put in at Beirut and the Lebanese authorities would not allow it to leave, partly because it was unseaworthy and partly because it had not paid port fees.

The Russian abandoned the "Rhosus," which eventually sank in Beirut harbour, while the cargo of ammonium nitrate lay, like a forgotten time bomb, in a port warehouse. Questioned by reporters, at the end of the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers (Cabinet), Suaze said the handling of potentially dangerous chemicals in Mozambican ports is done in accordance with the safety rules established by Mozambican legislation.

Ammonium nitrate is regularly unloaded at Mozambican ports, mostly as a fertiliser, and mostly in transit to other countries, such as Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. Only eight per cent of the fertilisers unloaded are for Mozambican domestic use, Suaze said. From 2015 to the present, the Mozambican ports handled over four million tonnes of fertiliser, including ammonium nitrate.

There was no record on any accidents in Mozambique involving ammonium nitrate, Suaze added. He knew that a Mozambican company had intended to import the Georgian ammonium nitrate seven years ago, but it never arrived.

The Mozambican Explosives Factory (FEM) has confirmed that it placed the order, but would only pay for the ammonium nitrate on its arrival. Since it never arrived, FEM simply ordered more of the chemical from another supplier.

Ships should inform the Mozambican port authorities seven to 14 days in advance of their arrival, including details of the type of cargo they are carrying. According to Cornelder, the Dutch company that manages the port of Beira, at no time did the port receive any information that the "Rhosus" intended to unload cargo at Beira.



The Dutch company that manages the port of Beira, at no time did the port receive any information that the "Rhosus" intended to unload cargo at Beira.

Umubano Hotel up for sale again

KIGALI

Rwanda Development Board (RDB) has officially announced the sale of Umubano Hotel, as part of the government's plan to divest state-owned assets and companies to the private sector.

The government is marketing Umubano, currently managed by Agaciro Development Fund, to investors as a luxury hotel and considered one of the best in Rwanda. RDB is seeking investors who can buy the property in a fair and transparent competitive bidding process, the investment promotion agency said in a notice dated August 5.

"The purpose of this tender notice is to identify potential companies and/or consortiums with the requisite technical and financial capacity to purchase and operate the hotel," it said. One of the key factors for an investor who will take over the Kacyiru-based hotel facility is to turn it into a five-star hotel within the shortest time possible, according to the Prospectus.

RDB said it will work with the new investor to turn the hotel into a flagship that will meet various local and international environmental sustainable standards to attract local and international clients. Umubano, one of the oldest hotels in Rwanda, had been acquired by Madhvani Group at a tune of \$13 million (about Rwf11 billion) in April 2017 after years under liquidation.

It's not publicly clear when and why Madhvani Group, a Ugandan-based conglomerate, exited Umubano which they acquired barely three years ago, but the main issue even with previous investors, has always been failure to make the requisite investment to expand the hotel.

The hotel has been in the hands of several other investors, including the Libyan government-affiliated LAP Investments which operated it under Laico Hotels brand. It has also previously been managed by global hotel brands including Novotel, Meridian and Accord.

Meanwhile, the Government has set September 11 as the closing date for submission of applications from potential bidders. The sale of Umubano hotel comes as hospitality stakeholders are struggling to keep up with business amid the Covid-19 pandemic, which has kept clients and visitors away.

In the first two months of the pandemic, hotels counted Rwf13 billion in losses, and that loss may have gone up as government restricted movement and implemented a lockdown. W Hospitality Group estimated in June that half of the scheduled hotel development projects in Africa in 2020 will not open due to the novel Coronavirus outbreak.

In Rwanda, hotels have been allowed to reopen provided they put in place minimum health safety measures to keep customers safe. The Government also set up an Rwf100 billion recovery fund that hard-hit businesses, like those in the hospitality and tourism sectors, can benefit from to revive their operations.

StanChart, Airtel Africa deal to drive financial inclusion across Africa

By Property Watch Reporter

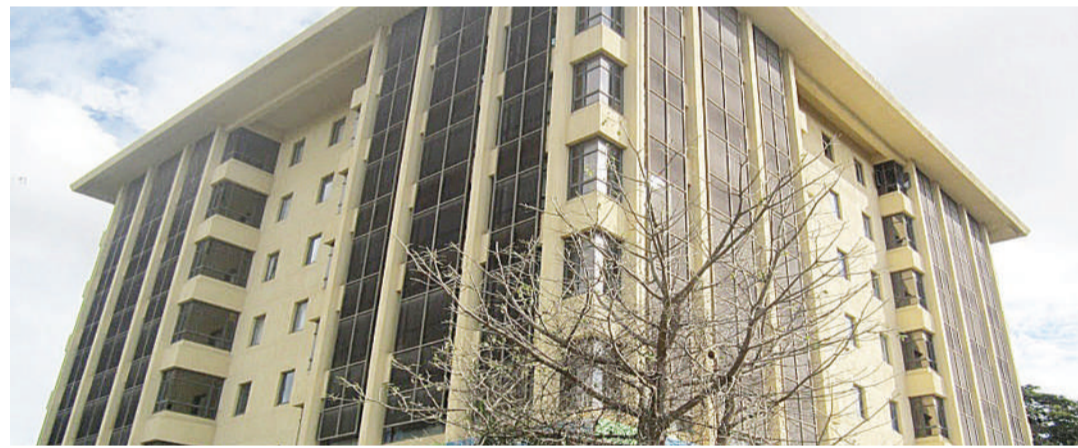
Standard Chartered Bank and Airtel Africa have announced a strategic partnership targeting to boost financial inclusion across key markets in Africa by providing customers with increased access to mobile financial services.

Through the deal, Standard Chartered and Airtel Africa will co-create new, innovative products aimed at enhancing the accessibility of financial services and, ultimately, better serve people across the continent.

In addition, Airtel Money's customers will be able to make real-time online deposits and withdrawals from Standard Chartered bank accounts, receive international money transfers directly to their wallets, and access savings products amongst other services.

The bank's corporate clients will also be able to make rapid and secure bulk disbursements, such as payroll payments, directly into the Airtel Money customers wallet hence reducing risks associated with travelling long distances for cash payments.

"By collaborating with innovative organisations like Airtel Africa, we are accelerating our mobile and digital-led strategy to provide best in class financial services to Africa. Over the past year, Standard Chartered has rapidly launched digital



StanChart head offices at International House in Dar es Salaam.

banks across nine countries on the continent, allowing our customers to enjoy seamless services from the safety of their homes even during the peak of the pandemic," said Sunil Kaushal, StanChart's Regional CEO for Africa and Middle East.

Kaushal added, "This partnership will further enhance the ability of our customers to manage and move money safely and securely and create market-leading financial solutions across countries."

The partnership also supports Airtel Africa's efforts to expand the range and depth of its Airtel Money offerings

across its 19 million customer base, with new products and services helping to promote the wider adoption of mobile money and increasing financial inclusion.

"Our relationship with Standard Chartered boosts financial inclusion across the continent, giving millions of people access to valuable banking services. We continue to invest heavily in cashing in and cashing out locations for our customers and increase our distribution," said Raghunath Mandava, CEO of Airtel Africa.

Mandava added, "This means that our customers

can now send or receive digital payments via Standard Chartered Bank directly to their mobile phones, as well as cash-out their funds at our exclusive kiosks and branches at their convenience. This highlights Airtel Africa's commitment to providing affordable, innovative, best-in-class solutions to enhance the daily lives of our customers."

Mobile banking transfers between Airtel Money and Standard Chartered Bank are now live in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Remaining products will be rolled out later this year subject to regulatory approvals.



Umubano Hotel in Kigali.

CONSTRUCTION

NEW WORLD BUYS SHANGHAI COMMERCIAL PROJECT FOR RMB 4.1 BN

BEIJING

New World Development has added a Shanghai project to its mainland commercial portfolio, winning an uncontested land auction for a site on Huaihai Road with a RMB 4.1 billion (\$590 million) bid, according to an official announcement today.

The land purchase gives the Hong Kong-based developer the opportunity to develop 68,683 square metres (739,300 square feet) of office and retail space along one of Shanghai's busiest commercial strips, on a site just two blocks from where the company completed its 59-storey Hong Kong New World Tower (now K11 Shanghai) in 2004.

While Shanghai currently faces a glut of new commercial projects, New World, which currently has some 46 investment properties in mainland China, was able to purchase the prime site without competition.

Adding to a glitzy strip "We have successfully won the bid for Middle Huaihai Road land parcel, Huangpu District by taking the advantages of the premium brand of 'New World Group' and the synergies of its diversified business," New World vice chairman and CEO Adrian Cheng said in a statement.

Keeping the focus on his drive to put his own stamp on the property and retail empire started by his grandfather, Cheng Yu-tung, the younger Cheng added that, "I will continue to lead the team to bring artistic and cultural elements to the city in an unconventional way, enrich people's lives, and promote business development through disruptive innovations."

New World's 17,171 square metre site is



New World's new project joins a Hong Kong-dominated commercial strip.

located just behind a renovated building on Huaihai Road that is home to joint boutique operated by luxury brand Hermes and its local brand Shang Xia, with the project stretching south to Taicang Road. The developer is paying the equivalent of RMB 59,845 per square metre of above ground gross floor area for the project.

The plot borders Huaihai Park to the east and will form a

bridge between that urban oasis and a pair of Hong Kong owned projects, Great Eagle Holdings' Andaz Hotel and Lai Fung Holdings' Hong Kong Plaza, which are separated from the parcel's western boundary by Songshan Road. James Macdonald, head of research for Savills in China sees the project fitting into the renovated "old Shanghai" vibe of Xintiandi, rather than becoming just another tower.

"There will be some historically preserved structures that will mean the site will be open plan to a certain extent," Macdonald noted, "while also with a key focus on arts and culture and focusing on high-end fashion so it should be in keeping with the surroundings."

Huaihai Lu ups its retail game Sited just north and east of Shui On Land's Xintiandi commercial and entertainment

project, the site forms part of what has been one of Shanghai's glitziest areas, with Hong Kong Plaza hosting an Apple store and the flagship Tiffany location in the city, although the strip has lost ground recently as newer projects have opened in competing districts.

"The retail market is always evolving and certainly the Huaihai Middle Road market has lost some appeal when compared

to Nanjing Road with HKRI Taikoo, or Xujiahui with Grand Gateway and ITC," Savill's Macdonald said, referring to Swire and HKRI's elite development in Jing An district and Sun Hung Kai's mega-sized ITC project in Xuhui.

"The new development will help to enhance the location, bridging the gap along Songshan Road between Corporate Avenue, luxury hotels and Hong Kong Plaza, and provide the Shangxia/Hermes location more critical mass in the luxury market," he added.

No more than 65 percent of the above ground area of the project may be developed for office use, and 35 percent must be dedicated to retail purposes, according to the terms of the tender. The site is within a few minutes' walk of the entrance to the Huangpi Nan Lu station on Shanghai's metro line 1 and is the first plot to be made available on the traditional shopping street in two decades.

Including underground and ancillary elements of the project, New World is allowed to develop up to 128,683 square metres of space on its new site, but it will be adding that fresh real estate to a Shanghai commercial market which is currently mired in a downturn.

Proptech survey distribution - 320x320

While Shanghai has seen office vacancy city-wide reach 20 percent this year, the Huaihai Road area averages 11 percent empty space as of the end of the second quarter, with typical effective rentals at around RMB 7.5 per square metre per day, according to Savills. Across Shanghai office leasing rates fell by 4.0 percent during the period from April through June - the city's worst performance since the 2009 global financial crisis.

Marriott expects cash burn to slow as bookings register rise

FRANKFURT

World's biggest hotel chain says global occupancy rates improved to 34% in the week ended August 1, up from 11% in April

Marriott International said on Monday it expects cash burn for the year to be slower than previous estimates as bookings slowly recover from the coronavirus lows that pushed the hotel chain to post its first quarterly loss in nearly nine years.

The world's largest hotel chain said it was seeing a steady recovery in occupancy rates across the world with economies reopening gradually, although it may take a few years for them to return to pre-Covid levels.

The company's stock reversed course to rise 1.6 per cent in early trading. The shares had fallen more than 3 per cent in premarket trading after the owner of Ritz-Carlton and St. Regis luxury hotel brands reported results.

"We see folks are increasingly willing to step out and travel," chief executive Arne Sorenson said. "Leisure (demand) may continue to be a significant source of recovery past Labour Day and into the fall ... but we would expect corporate to be slower."

The hotel and the airline industries have been among the worst affected due to the Covid-19 pandemic forcing Marriott and rival Hilton to cut thousands of jobs and shut many hotels as cancellations started mounting.

Marriott said on Monday Greater China was leading the global recovery and the market could approach 2019 occupancy levels as early as next year. Overall, the company's global occupancy rates improved to 34 per cent in the week ended August 1, up from 11 per cent in April.

Marriott now expects a cash burn of \$85 million a month in 2020, down from a prior expectation of \$145m. The company's loss attributable to stockholders was \$234 million, or 72 cents per share, in the second quarter ended June 30, compared with net income of \$232 million, or 69 cents per share, a year earlier.

On an adjusted basis, Marriott reported a loss of 64 cents per share in the second quarter ended June 30, bigger than analysts' expectation of a loss of 42 cents per share. Total revenue plunged 72.4 per cent to \$1.46 billion.

China's days as world's factory are over, iPhone maker says

BEIJING

A key supplier to Apple Inc. and a dozen other tech giants plans to split its supply chain between the Chinese market and the U.S., declaring that China's time as factory to the world is finished because of the trade war.

Hon Hai Precision Industry Co. Chairman Young Liu said it's gradually adding more capacity outside of China, the main base of production for gadgets from iPhones to Dell desktops and Nintendo Switches. The proportion outside the country is now at 30%, up from 25% last June.

That ratio will rise as the company - known also as Foxconn - moves more manufacturing to Southeast Asia and other regions to avoid escalating tariffs on Chinese-made goods headed to U.S. markets, Liu told reporters after his company reported financial results.

"No matter if it's India, Southeast Asia or the Americas, there will be a manufacturing ecosystem in each," Liu told investors on a conference call, adding that while China will still play a key role in Foxconn's manufacturing empire, the country's "days as the world's factory are done."

Foxconn said in a statement Thursday that, contrary to "inaccurate media reports," management's comments during the call did not refer to any specific companies, facilities or



A logo at Hon Hai Precision Industry in Shanghai.

products, and were intended to reflect macroeconomic and industry trends.

Intensifying trade tensions between Washington and Beijing have pushed device manufacturers to diversify their production bases away from China, and Liu last year said that Apple's most prized product, the iPhone, can be made outside China if needed. The two nations remain in trade talks, but Liu's comments affirm a growing expectation that the China-centric electronics supply chain will fragment over the longer term.

The Taiwanese company re-

ported better-than-expected net income of NT\$22.9 billion (\$778 million) for the quarter ended in June, a period that saw increased demand for iPads and MacBooks. Revenue was NT\$1.13 trillion, but Hon Hai warned it expects its third-quarter sales will be down by double digits relative to 2019. Apple is expected to delay its iPhone launch this year.

Hon Hai is bouncing back from a record profit slump in the first quarter as production at its factories recovered and shelter-in-place orders spurred demand for home computing equipment. The pan-

demically likely boosted iPad and Mac sales, even as Apple store closures weighed on iPhone sales, Apple CEO Tim Cook said on July 31 after reporting quarterly revenue that crushed estimates. Apple accounts for half of Hon Hai's sales.

Even as Apple outperformed, Hon Hai's other customers have fared less well. Hong Kong-listed subsidiary FIH Mobile Ltd. said in its Aug. 7 earnings release that while Huawei Technologies Co.'s new phones have been popular in China, they missed expectations elsewhere following U.S. sanctions. Another key customer Xiaomi

Corp. suffered a backlash in the Indian market amid growing tensions between China and the South Asian country. FIH lost \$100 million in the first half.

Foxconn has been shaking up its traditionally China-focused operations. Hon Hai is among Apple assembly partners that plan to expand operations in India, potentially helping the iPhone maker grow its presence in the country of 1.3 billion and shift some of the U.S. company's supply chain outside of China as ties between Washington and Beijing fray.

Chinese rivals are also posing a growing challenge. Local electronics titan Luxshare Precision Industry Co. is poised to become the first Chinese homegrown iPhone assembler after sealing a deal in July to buy an Apple handset production plant from Wistron Corp. While Hon Hai will keep assembly orders for premium iPhones, Luxshare will eat into the business for mid-to-entry-level Apple handsets, Fubon Securities analyst Arthur Liao wrote in a July 23 note.

Foxconn will work on its component business to maintain tech leadership and it also benefits from its long-term relationship with Apple, Liu said in response to several analysts' questions about Foxconn's competitive strategy against the rising Chinese supplier.

Orders could be further affected after President Donald Trump issued an executive order barring U.S. residents from doing business with Tencent Holdings Ltd.'s WeChat. Annual iPhone shipments could plunge 25%-30% if Apple is forced to remove the app from its app stores worldwide, TF International Securities analyst Kuo Ming-chi warned in an August 9 note.

US mortgage rates drop to record low amid pandemic-driven slowdown

ABU DHABI

Mortgage rates have found another record low, potentially boosting a housing market that has been a bright spot for a shaky US economy.

The average for a 30-year fixed loan fell to 2.88 per cent, the lowest in nearly 50 years of record keeping

by Freddie Mac. It was the eighth time since the coronavirus started roiling financial markets that rates have dropped to a new low.

The previous record was 2.98 per cent last month, when borrowing costs fell below 3 per cent for the first time. The lower rates are "giving potential buyers more purchasing power and strengthening demand,"

Sam Khater, chief economist at Freddie Mac, said in a statement on Thursday. The record-low rates have propped up home prices and fueled a housing recovery in an economy battered by the pandemic.

"This is definitely helping affordability," said Tendayi Kapfudz, chief economist at LendingTree. "It's also attracting a lot of people into

the market who otherwise might not have been so quick to act." The slide in borrowing costs comes as the Federal Reserve holds its benchmark rate near zero and buys mortgage bonds as part of its plan to stimulate the economy.

The low rates driven a surge in applications for mortgages that has inundated lenders. Credit standards

have tightened as they work through the flood of business, but borrowing could drop even more, according to Greg McBride, chief financial analyst at Bankrate.com. "As they have more capacity available, their quotes will become more competitive," he said. "You could see still lower rates on average as well as lower rates offers in the market place."

WORLD

Democrat Harris rebukes president Trump in historic campaign-trail debut with Biden

WILMINGTON, Del

KAMALA Harris made her campaign-trail debut as Joe Biden's Democratic running mate on Wednesday, delivering a strong rebuke of President Donald Trump's leadership and highlighting the historic significance of her new role.

Harris said Biden, the former vice president under President Barack Obama, had recognized the critical moment being faced by the country by picking her to be the first Black woman and Asian American on a major-party U.S. presidential ticket.

"Today, he takes his place in the ongoing story of America's march toward equality and justice as the only person who served alongside the first Black president, and has chosen the first Black woman as his running mate," said Harris, a U.S. senator from California.

Nearly nine out of 10 Democrats approved of Harris as Biden's pick, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Wednesday.

Forced by the coronavirus pandemic to stage a more subdued launch than would be expected from a typical presidential campaign, the new running mates managed to display a personal connection that dates back to Harris' friendship with Biden's son Beau, who died of cancer in 2015.

Harris said she had long admired Biden's commitment to his family and country, and she described him as ready to meet the challenges created by Trump's failures in handling the pandemic and its economic consequences, as well as racial unrest.

"This is a moment of real consequence for America," she said. "Everything we care about – our economy, our health, our kids, the kind of country we live in – it's all on the line." "America is crying out for leadership, yet we have a president who cares more about himself than the people who elected him, a president who is making every challenge we face even more difficult to solve," Harris said.

The speech, delivered in a Delaware

high school gymnasium near Biden's home, featured no cheering crowds. The two candidates wore masks as they arrived and kept their social distance on a stage flanked by state flags.

The joint appearance came just days before Biden will formally accept the Democratic presidential nomination at next week's party convention, which will take place largely as a virtual event due to COVID-19.

The Republican convention, where Trump is set to be nominated to seek a second four-year term, follows a week later and kicks off a 10-week sprint to Election Day on Nov. 3.

STUFF OF PRESIDENTS

In choosing Harris, Biden selected a former rival for the nomination whose most memorable campaign moment came during a televised debate when she criticized his past position on using busing to integrate schools and talked about its effect on her as a little girl.

Biden on Wednesday said her addition to the ticket sent a powerful message to girls across America.

"This morning, all across the nation, little girls woke up – especially little black and brown girls, who so often feel overlooked and undervalued in their communities – today, just maybe, they're seeing themselves in the first time in a new way. As the stuff of presidents, and vice presidents," Biden said.

In recent months, as unrest has convulsed many U.S. cities following the May police killing

of George Floyd, a Black man, in Minneapolis, Harris has been a prominent voice calling for change. She has marched alongside protesters and pushed legislation to reform policing practices.

Some activists have said her work in the Senate had helped temper concerns about her past as a prosecutor in California and could build enthusiasm among some of the party's liberal voters for the more centrist Biden.

Harris is the daughter of immigrants, her mother from India and her father from Jamaica. On Wednesday, Harris recalled her parents' involvement in the U.S. civil rights movement, and her friendship with Beau Biden, who was attorney general of Delaware when Harris was attorney general in California. She stressed that, like Biden, "my family means everything to me."

Harris, 55, was announced as Biden's choice on Tuesday after a selection process that drew extra scrutiny thanks to Biden's age. The 77-year-old would be the oldest president ever if he wins, raising speculation that he would not seek reelection in 2024.

At a joint fundraiser with Harris later on Wednesday, Biden said his campaign had raised \$26 million and had 150,000 new contributors in the 24 hours since he revealed his pick.

Trump told reporters at a White House news conference that he had watched some of the Biden-Harris rollout event and was surprised his Democratic opponent had chosen someone who failed in her own presidential bid. **Agencies**

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris arrive to a campaign event in Wilmington, Delaware on Wednesday. (PHOTO / BLOOMBERG)



Trump 'privately discussing' replacing Esper after election

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has privately discussed with advisers the possibility of replacing Defense Secretary Mark Esper after the November election following a growing number of differences between them, a source familiar with the internal debate said on Wednesday.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the two men were "not in a good place" but that Trump did not intend to move on Esper (pictured) until voters have rendered their judgment on a second Trump term on Nov. 3.

Esper, a former Army secretary, is respected by Republicans and Democrats as a steady hand at the Pentagon during a turbulent administration that has seen Trump repeatedly draw the military into hot-button domestic political issues, including the border wall with Mexico.

But Trump was troubled by Esper's opposition to invoking the Insurrection Act to deploy active-duty forces to quell civil unrest that broke out in June after the death of George Floyd, a Black man who was in police custody in Minneapolis.

Esper also appeared to publicly split with Trump last month by issuing a de facto ban on the Confederate flag at military installations, at a time when Trump was citing free speech rights in his defense of Americans who fly the Confederate flag.

The source acknowledged the Confederate flag issue was another source of tension.

The Confederate flag was flown by breakaway Southern states that advocated for the continuation of slavery and lost the 1861-65 US Civil War. Flying the flag can be offensive to many Americans, who see it as a reminder of the enslavement of Black Americans and as a symbol of white supremacy.

Supporters say the flag represents the South's heritage and culture and serves as a memorial to Confederate casualties in the Civil War.

"We have no personnel announcements at this time nor would it be appropriate to speculate about changes after the election or in a second term," said White House spokesman Judd Deere. **Agencies**



Czech PM refutes Pompeo's claim of 'China threat'

PRAGUE

CZECH Prime Minister Andrej Babis said on Wednesday that the Czech Republic is a sovereign country, and he does not see any major threat in the country.

He made the remarks after visiting US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, while speaking at a joint press briefing in Prague, claimed that the United States, a country with a poor track record of respecting other nations' sovereignty, stood "prepared to support" the Czech people if the latter were bullied by others.

During his visit, Pompeo repeated his anti-China agenda while



US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, left, and the Czech Republic's Prime Minister Andrej Babis address the media during a joint press conference in Prague, Czech Republic, on Wednesday. (AP)

He claimed that using technologies from China and Russia would pose a "danger" to the sovereignty and

security of the Czech Republic.

Calling the Czech Republic "a leader in Europe" on 5G and cybersecurity, Babis said his country is "a sovereign country and I do not see any major threat here."

On relations with China, Babis said that the Czech Republic "seeks lines with the European Union and there's no fundamental problem here," despite Pompeo's botched attempt to sow discord.

Pompeo's groundless claims about China have aroused strong condemnation from the Chinese Embassy in the Czech Republic.

Calling Pompeo's rhetoric as "full of ideological bias and Cold War ideas," the embassy said Pompeo

is attacking China without any substantiation. "In the name of so-called 'democracy and freedom,' Pompeo is attacking China without any substantiation, tarnishing China, trying to make China scapegoat for all existing problems and deliberately fomenting discord between other countries and China," the embassy said.

Quoting a Czech proverb that says "people are often caught in their own trap," the embassy urged Pompeo to stop spreading political viruses and false information, interfering in China's internal affairs, and subverting the unity and cooperation of the international community. **Xinhua**

Russia ready for 'international cooperation' on Covid-19 vaccine for everyone - UN envoy

MOSCOW

HAVING registered the world's first Covid-19 vaccine, Russia is prepared to cooperate with anyone interested in developing and producing vaccines and treatment for the coronavirus, Moscow's envoy to the United Nations has said.

"We are ready for international cooperation with all interested partners in the development and production of vaccines and treatments to ensure a coordinated global response to the spread of Covid-19 and a common victory

over the pandemic," Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told the UN Security Council on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, Russia registered the world's first vaccine against Covid-19, named 'Sputnik V', after it passed all the domestic testing requirements. The vaccine will continue to be tested on thousands of volunteers in Russia and abroad.

Nebenzia (pictured) said that clinical trials have already shown it to be both safe and highly effective, and noted that other "promising" vaccines were being developed in Russia as well.



Some Western governments have disparaged the Russian achievement, demanding to see evidence of the vaccine's safety, even as their

own pharmaceutical companies have required absolute immunity from liability lawsuits over potential adverse effects.

"The point is not to be first with a vaccine, the point is to have a vaccine that is safe and effective for the American people and the people of the world," US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar said on Tuesday.

Russian officials have shrugged off such criticism. Health Minister Mikhail Murashko called it "totally groundless" and blamed it on fear of "competition and competitive

disadvantages from Russia's product."

Kirill Dmitriev, head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) which funded the vaccine research, went a step further, saying that a "politicized approach to the Russian vaccine on the part of a number of Western countries endangers the lives of their citizens."

As of Wednesday, the US has registered over 5.3 million cases of Covid-19, and more than 168,000 deaths. Russia has counted 902,700 cases and 15,260 deaths. **Agencies**

China International Fair for Trade in Services scheduled to be held in Beijing next month

The 2020 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) will kick off in September at the China National Convention Center in Beijing.

At present, posters and banners have been set up at the China National Convention Center in Beijing to welcome guests from home and abroad.

So far, 141 international organizations, embassies in China, chambers of commerce, business associations and institutions have confirmed their participation in this year's CIFTIS.

More than 2,000 domestic and foreign companies will also

attend the event, during which more than 100 forums and discussions will be held.

Pavilion construction, guest reception, and epidemic prevention and control are currently being advanced under high standard.

Formerly known as China (Beijing) International Fair for Trade in Services, the China International Fair for Trade in Services took its new name in 2019.

One year later, the shortened name for the event was changed from "Beijing Fair" to "CIFTIS".

The CIFTIS (including the former Beijing Fair) has successfully held six sessions, attracting 184 countries and regions, nearly 300 international organizations and overseas business associations and more than 10,000 companies, and achieving an accumulated intended transaction amount of \$529.33 billion.

It is one of the three major exhibition platforms for China's opening-up, with the other two being the China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair) and China International Import Expo (CIIE).

Considering the global COVID-19 pandemic situation, the CIFTIS this year will be hosted through both online and offline channels.

Overseas guests and exhibitors will mainly participate in online exhibitions while domestic entities in offline activities. The fair will set up virtual 3D exhibition booths to provide more intelligent experience for visitors.

Through technical means like 5G, live-streaming, video conference, online translation, it will allow participants from various parts of the world to

communicate smoothly during online and offline conferences and forums. By employing tools such as instant messaging, video negotiation, online translation, and intelligent customer service, it intends to build virtual negotiation rooms for participants. Besides, the fair will also broadcast summits and forums through omnimedia.

The CIFTIS this year is more diversified compared with the previous sessions as it has integrated contents of China (Beijing) International Cultural & Creative Industry Expo (ICCIE), China International Tourism

Commodities Fair (CITCF), Beijing International Finance Expo (BIFE), World Winter Sports (Beijing) Expo as well as World Robot Conference (WRC) and has innovated a new model that is characterized by one selected exhibition area, eight featured exhibitions and several functional service areas.

The selected exhibition area includes the preface hall, public health and epidemic prevention zone, national, provincial, regional and municipal zone, and enterprise zone for twelve major fields of the service trade. It will mainly display the lat-

est trends, technologies, products in the development of domestic and foreign service trade as well as Chinese solutions.

Eight featured exhibitions vary from culture services, financial services, winter sports, tourism services, service robot, educational services, sports services to 5G communication services.

Besides, the fair will establish some functional service areas to provide supporting services for exhibitors, such as negotiation, experience and catering. **People's Daily**

US says Iran forces boarded tanker in international waters

By Bloomberg

IRANIAN special forces boarded a tanker in international waters for between four and five hours on Wednesday before releasing it, according to an US official familiar with the matter.

Two Iranian ships were in the vicinity when the personnel roped down from a helicopter onto the Wila, a Liberian-flagged chemicals and oil-products tanker, around 5.30 pm Dubai time, said the official, asked not to be named because they're not authorized to speak publicly.

The Wila was in the Gulf of Oman and around 20 miles from the United Arab Emirates, said the official. It passed through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical choke-point that borders Iran and accounts for about one-third of the world's seaborne oil flows, on July 16, according to ship-tracking data compiled by Bloomberg.

While Iran regularly intercepts ships it alleges have entered its waters or are illegally smuggling fuel, the incident comes as US President Donald Trump looks to tighten United Nations sanctions on the Islamic Republic and renew an arms embargo.

The US military was only involved in monitoring and did not receive a distress call, the person said. US Central Command tweeted footage of the event on Wednesday.

The White House and National Security Council didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. Neither did officials in Iran, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran didn't answer calls during the Iranian weekend on Thursday.

Wila has been floating off the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates for about a month and is now near Khor Fakkan port, according to the ship-tracking data. The vessel's previous stop was around July 8 near the Iraqi oil terminal of Al Basra where its draft increased, indicating it picked up a shipment.

With a capacity of about 50,000 barrels, the Wila is small compared with the tankers that ship Middle East crude. Those can usually hold as much as 2 million barrels.

A larger oil ship anchored off Khor Fakkan sailed to Iran in July under mysterious circumstances. The crew of the 1-million-barrel Gulf Sky said it was hijacked. It left UAE waters on July



In this image made from video released by the US military's Central Command, Iranian commandos fast-rope down from a helicopter onto the MV Wila oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman off the coast of the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday. (AP)

5 while under arrest pending a court decision on its ownership.

In May, the US intercepted US\$23.4 million in payments from an entity it said was acting on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' elite Quds Force to buy the Gulf Sky.

It was the largest US seizure of funds from the organization. The loss of the vessel dealt a blow to the US's efforts to contain Iran's activities beyond its borders.

Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign aims to cut off Iran's oil exports,

a crucial source of revenue. Overseas sales dropped from 2.5 million barrels a day in April 2018 to just under 200,000 barrels last month, according to Bloomberg's latest tracking data.

Iran has been accused of disrupting oil shipping near the Strait of Hormuz on several occasions since then. Four oil vessels were attacked with explosives in May 2019 while at anchorage off Fujairah, less than 15 miles from Khor Fakkan. Two more were sabotaged in the Gulf of Oman in June. Iran was blamed for the incidents but denied involvement.

The country's navy seized a British oil tanker in the strait last year for about two months, triggering volatility in oil prices.

The US has recently stepped up efforts to limit trade between Iran and Venezuela, which is also under American sanctions.

Five Iranian tankers carrying a total of 1.5 million barrels of gasoline arrived in Venezuela in May and June. US prosecutors last month said they're seeking to seize gasoline on board four more Venezuela-bound Iranian vessels. **Agencies**

Africa CDC director urges strong collaboration to contain COVID-19 in Africa

ADDIS ABABA

DIRECTOR of the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), John Nkengasong, on Wednesday called for strong continental and global collaboration to contain the rapid spread of COVID-19 in Africa.

As of Wednesday, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Africa surged to 1,064,546 as the death toll rose to 23,839. The number of people who recovered from their COVID-19 infections also reached 758,292 so far, according to the Africa CDC.

Speaking exclusively with Xinhua on Wednesday, Director of the Africa CDC, a specialized healthcare agency of the African Union (AU) Commission, stressed that "we are seeing rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 infections across the continent."

Nkengasong (pictured) emphasized the need to work under cooperation, collaboration and partnership principles in Africa and beyond across the globe, and commended the Chinese government and enterprises, such as the Jack Ma and Alibaba foundations for their support to Africa's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nkengasong, noting that about 63 percent of African countries have reported less than 5,000 COVID-19 positive cases, stressed that "we still have a very good opportunity to intensify the fight against COVID-19 as a continent."

Noting that the number of COVID-19 testing in Africa is "encouraging" as more than 9 million people have been tested so far, the director, however, stressed that African countries still need to intensify their testing capabilities.

Nkengasong also emphasized that as a continent Africa needs to conduct about 15 million tests per month to be ahead of the pandemic. **Xinhua**



UN chief calls for comprehensive approach to peacebuilding amid pandemic

UNITED NATIONS

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday called for a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace amid challenges posed by the pandemic.

"More than ever, multi-dimensional, coordinated and conflict-sensitive responses and whole-of-society approaches are crucial. They are key to ensuring that peacebuilding and sustaining peace initiatives go hand-in-hand with inclusive and sustainable development, anchored in the protection and promotion of human rights, gender equality, and the commitment to leave no one behind," he told the Security Council.

"COVID-19 is a human

tragedy. But we can mitigate the impacts by the choices we make."

First, responses to the pandemic must be conflict-sensitive, starting with a multidimensional analysis that looks at how the pandemic affects underlying risks that drive conflict, he told an open debate of the Security Council on pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace.

Second, inclusion is critical in the design of humanitarian and development responses to pandemics. Dialogues, especially with communities and marginalized groups, help rebuild trust and enhance social cohesion.

"In particular, we must find avenues for far stronger engagement with women's groups who play such



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

a pivotal role in securing peace at the community level.

They are also critical rebuilders of trust which is often absent in fragile and fractured communities, and without which public health messaging and behavioral change to slow the pandemic simply does not take root." Young people are also essential to peacebuilding solutions, he said.

Third, sustaining peace requires an integrated and coherent approach through strong collaboration across humanitarian, development and peace actors, he said. There is also a need to build ever-stronger partnerships with governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, the private sector and civil society actors.

International financial institutions must integrate sustaining peace as a priority and as a core element of COVID-19 recovery strategies and building back better, he said.

Fourth, there is a need for flexibility and a tailored approach to peacebuilding needs in the context of the

pandemic, he said.

The Peacebuilding Fund has swiftly adjusted its work on the ground and identified new areas of support in response to COVID-19. Unfortunately, the demand for the fund continues to outpace supply, said Guterres.

He warned of three key dangers brought about by the pandemic: the erosion of public trust, the destabilization of the global economic order, the weakening of the social fabric.

The pandemic threatens not only hard-won development and peacebuilding gains, but also risks exacerbating conflicts or fomenting new ones, he said.

The challenges of this pandemic underscore like never before the imperative of coherent, multi-dimensional and cross-pillar responses along with the integrated logic of the Sustainable Development Goals, he said.

"We know that conflict-sensitive and coherent, preventative approaches that help address the health and humanitarian crisis will help deliver sustainable peace." **Xinhua**

China turns waste tires from 'black pollution' to 'black gold'

CHINA has made great efforts to turn waste tires, also known as "black pollution", into "black gold", as part of efforts to promote the healthy development of the industry and effectively improve the efficiency of resource utilization.

There were about 330 million waste tires produced in 2019, with a total weight of over 10 million tons. Every year, the amount of waste tires produced by scrapping continues to grow at a rate of 6 to 8 percent, according to data.

China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology recently issued the standard conditions for the comprehensive utilization of waste tires, which put forward standard requirements for various aspects such as technical equipment and process, ecological environmental protection, product quality control and safety management.

"In the past, local refining workshops for waste tires were rampant, and waste gas was discharged directly into the air,



A group of car tires placed on Yima Road in Wuhu City, Anhui Province attracts attention. These scrap tires are graffiti with many beautiful color patterns, and there are interesting pictures of butterflies, dragonflies, frogs, happy monkeys and so on. There are also some blessing texts such as "dreams, health and happiness". (People's Daily)

causing serious damage to the environment," said Zhu Jun, president of China's Tire Recycling Association (CTRA).

Zhu Jun added that in recent years, with key technologies continuing to tackle the problem and environmental protection management being strengthened, new pyrolysis technology has become an important direction that has been taken in the

comprehensive utilization of waste tires.

Since the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology issued the access conditions for the comprehensive utilization of waste tires in 2012, it has announced six batches of 80 enterprises that meet these conditions.

"These enterprises represent the advanced level of the indus-

try and play a leading role in the green recycling of waste tires," Zhu said.

Under the guidance of the circular economy policy, in recent years, the comprehensive utilization industry of waste tires in China has developed rapidly, and the recycling utilization rate of waste tires has been increasing year by year.

In 2019, there were about 1,500 comprehensive utilization enterprises, and about 200 million waste tires were recovered and reused, with a recycling rate of about 60 percent.

Although many difficult challenges still need to be overcome, the surveyed enterprises in the industry are generally optimistic about the market prospects for the comprehensive utilization of waste tires.

With the constant upgrading of national environmental policies and continuous industrial regulation, waste tires are being turned from "black pollution" to "black gold". **People's Daily**

Russia's prison population falls to a record low - still large by European standards, but far smaller than US'

MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S prison numbers have been falling for two decades, due to the liberalization of the penal system and use of alternative penalties. For the first time, fewer than 500,000 in the world's largest country are now incarcerated.

"Today, there are 496,791 people in the correctional facilities," the Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN) announced on Thursday. "These are both citizens who are in pre-trial detention facilities on suspicion of committing crimes, and convicts in penal colonies."

Particularly notable is the significant fall in the number of convicts in those colonies. It now totals 391,614, versus 463,000 early last year.

The Russian figures remain high when measured against those in the rest of Europe, with only Belarus having more people currently imprisoned per capita.

The incarceration rate is around three times higher than



that of France and more than two times larger than the United Kingdom's. However, it's now around half that of the United States, which has the world's largest overall prison population.

In recent years, there has been a stable decline in the number of individuals kept behind bars in Russia. "This is linked to a broad use of alternative penalties other than imprisonment, and the liberalization of the penal and correctional policy in general," the FSIN explained.

In the past five years, the number of inmates in penal colonies

with two, three or more convictions has declined by a third.

The federal prison authority notes a positive trend concerning individuals convicted for the first time - the number of such people in penal colonies has dropped by 26 percent since 2015.

In February, President Vladimir Putin said the number of inmates in Russia's correctional system had declined by roughly 50 percent over the past two decades, without it being widely heralded. Putin said this was a revolutionary development. **Agencies**

Islamic State-linked fighters seize Mozambique LNG port town

By Bloomberg

FIGHTERS linked to Islamic State took control of a northern Mozambican port town that's been a key logistics link for a US\$23 billion natural-gas project that Total SE is building, according to Risk Advisory Group.

It's the third time this year the insurgents have seized Mocimboa da Praia, located about 60 kilometers south of the LNG project and the closest harbor. About three months ago, fighters that first pledged allegiance to IS in 2018 occupied it for as long as three days.

The site of Total's project is in the preparation stage, with the company having recently finalized an initial US\$15 billion of financing and the

town is among several access points to bring in supplies, including a port and airport at the development. The fighting, though, shows an escalation of insurgent attacks in the region that authorities are battling to contain.

"The capture of Mocimboa da Praia, as well as the previous assaults on district capitals since March, shows that the capabilities of IS militants has improved," Tristan Gueret, an analyst at RAG in London, said by email on Wednesday.

Total didn't immediately respond to emails seeking comment.

Gas projects in the country's northern-most Cabo Delgado province are central to plans to transform the impoverished southeast African nation. Projected revenue from the develop-



Soldiers from the Mozambican army patrol the streets after security in the area was increased, following a two-day attack from suspected islamists in October last year, on March 7, 2018 in Mocimboa da Praia, Mozambique. (BLOOMBERG)

ments are estimated at more than three times its current gross domestic product.

Mocimboa is where Islamist militants started a war in 2017 that's left more than 1,500 people dead, according to estimates from the Madison, Wisconsin-based Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, which tracks global violence. The conflict has displaced 220,000 people in the region.

'Dedicated Force'

"Although it is another indication of the fast deterioration in the security environment in Cabo Delgado, the success of the attack in Mocimboa da Praia does not necessarily have major or immediate implications for

LNG operations," Gueret said. The Total project area is "currently secured by a dedicated force, and this means that mounting a successful raid there would be much more challenging for the group," he said.

Even with the help of private military contractors flying helicopters armed with machine guns, the Mozambican government has struggled to curb the insurgency, which has grown increasingly brazen in its attacks this year.

Security forces have in the past seven days killed 59 fighters in the region and destroyed six of their camps, the government said in a statement. Fighting is continuing in order to "neutralize" the militants, it said. **Agencies**

The
Guardian

SPORT

Prosecutors charge 3 with threatening women in R. Kelly case



In this June 26, 2019 file photo, R&B singer R. Kelly, center, arrives at the Leighton Criminal Court building for an arraignment on sex-related felonies in Chicago. Federal prosecutors announced charges Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2020, against three men accused of threatening and intimidating women who have accused Kelly of abuse, including one man suspected of setting fire to a vehicle in Florida. (AP Photo)

NEW YORK

FEDERAL prosecutors announced charges Wednesday against three men accused of threatening and intimidating women who have accused R&B singer R. Kelly of abuse, including one man suspected of setting fire to a vehicle in Florida.

A longtime friend of the indicted singer offered to pay a victim \$500,000 to keep her from cooperating in Kelly's prosecution, authorities said, while a manager and adviser of Kelly threatened to release sexually explicit photographs of a woman who sued Kelly.

A Kelly defense attorney said he had "no involvement whatsoever" in any attempt to silence witnesses.

"He hasn't attempted to intimidate anyone, or encouraged anyone else to do so," attorney Steve Greenberg said on Twitter.

The Grammy-award winning musician has pleaded not guilty to dozens of state and federal sexual misconduct charges in Illinois, Minnesota and New York.

The charges range from sexual assault to heading a racketeering scheme aimed at supplying Kelly with girls. Kelly also is accused of having unprotected sex with a minor in 2015 without disclosing he had herpes.

Prosecutors described a third man accused of intimidating witnesses as being related to a former Kelly publicist. They said Michael Williams, 37, of Valdosta, Georgia, traveled to Florida in June and set fire to an SUV parked outside a residence where one of Kelly's victims was staying.

Williams also conducted Internet searches for "the detonation properties of fertilizer and diesel fuel, witness intimidation and witness tampering and countries that do not have extradition with the United States," authorities said in a news release.

A message was sent to Williams' attorney seeking comment.

"The men charged today allegedly have shown that there is no line they will not cross to help Kelly avoid the consequences of his alleged crimes — even if it means revictimizing his accusers," Peter Fitzhugh, special agent in charge of the Homeland Security Investigations in New York, said in a statement.

Also charged were two Illinois men with ties to Kelly. His longtime friend, Richard Arline Jr., 31, is accused of offering to pay off a woman he believed had "too much" incriminating information against Kelly.

Authorities said they set up a wiretap and recorded a call in which Arline claimed he had spoken with Kelly behind bars during a three-way call.

Donnell Russell, 45, of Chicago, is charged with harassing a Kelly victim and her mother after the unidentified woman filed a lawsuit against Kelly. Authorities said Russell, a manager and adviser to Kelly, sent a letter to the woman's lawyer with cropped nude photographs of her and later sent her a text warning her: "Pull the plug or you will be exposed."

It was not immediately clear whether Russell and Arline had attorneys who could comment on the charges.

AP

Voting focus could be legacy for latest wave of NBA activism

BY KYLE HIGHTOWER

NBA players are building on the framework of Colin Kaepernick's protests during the national anthem that helped raise awareness about police brutality, efforts that have permeated the league since it restarted its season in Florida last month amid the coronavirus pandemic.

But where Kaepernick's demonstrations raised awareness, NBA players want their actions to move the needle further. But transforming the widespread embrace for social justice in America from a moment into a movement requires targeting systemic barriers and changing laws, not just mindsets.

One target has been voting, with initiatives such as the LeBron James-led More Than A Vote.

"We have some ears," James said recently, "and we will continue to push the envelope."

Pushing the voting envelope could provide a tangible legacy for today's socially conscience players who want to transition symbolism into substantive change.

According to Pew Research Center, Black voter turnout saw a sizable jump during the 2018 midterm elections to 51.4%, up 10.8 percentage points since 2014. That's after declining in 2016 for the first time in two decades.

More Than A Vote is working to see that trend continue in 2020. So far, the main targets for the group have been helping to restore voting rights of ex-felons and the procurement of arenas in states in which access to voting venues and early voting has been restricted.

In states like Florida, for example, More Than A Vote donated \$100,000 to local organizations that are helping to pay monies owed by ex-felons who can't regain their voting eligibility until their fines and restitution are cleared.

The arena efforts go toward easing historical cynicism about a system that has tried to keep Black people from the polls and any con-



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (23) warms up before a NBA basketball game against the Indiana Pacers, Saturday, Aug. 8, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. (AP)

cerns that a mailed ballot won't get counted.

Teams in Atlanta, Charlotte, Detroit, and Sacramento have already signed on, with secretaries of state in Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and New Jersey working to add more.

The efforts have inspired NBA players to use both their social media platforms and interview sessions inside the bubble to advocate not only for justice for Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd and others, but voting as well.

"I think there's a lot of power in coming together and voting," Celtics forward Jaylen Brown said. "There's a lot of power in exercising that. We've got to use it."

A lot of the efforts in Florida have been to ensure people do just that, though they began before players went inside the bubble.

It was back in February that James' friend and business partner Maverick Carter reached out to Addisu Demissie, a political consultant who ran California Gov. Gavin Newsom's 2018 gubernatorial campaign and Cory Booker's 2020 presidential bid, with the idea of starting a politics-oriented nonprofit.

Those initial discussions were brought to a standstill in March when the coronavirus pandemic hit. Then the world quickly

changed in a much different way following the deaths of Taylor, Floyd and Arbery.

As the three incidents incited protests and unrest erupted around the country, those initial discussions between Demissie and James' team soon picked up in earnest.

"It just made it even clearer that this organization needed to exist, A, and B, it crystallized sort of what our mission would be about black political participation and black political empowerment," Demissie said.

James, Carter and others quickly recruited nearly three dozen prominent current and former Black athletes like NBA stars Trae Young and Draymond Green, NFL players Patrick Mahomes and Alvin Kamara and entertainers like Kevin Hart to join the group. It formally launched in June.

The group has sought to distinguish itself from past athlete-led efforts by focusing not simply on voting registration, but by eliminating barriers in the voting process. NBA teams like the Orlando Magic have also since announced their own voting initiatives.

Dr. Todd Boyd, a professor of critical studies at the University of Southern California, said while symbolic gestures such as having Black Lives Matter emblazoned on NBA courts and statements of social justice on jerseys certainly

can support and lead to targeted action, they alone aren't enough.

"It's not the same as taking direct action," said Boyd, who has written extensively on the study of race in sports and popular culture. "The objective of a sports league is always going to be bottom line and profit."

It wasn't enough for James, who explained his decision not to wear one of the 29 NBA-approved statements on the back of his jersey during the NBA's restart.

"I commend anyone that decides to put something on the back of their jersey. It's just something that didn't really seriously resonate with my mission, with my goal," he said.

Len Elmore, who played in the NBA for 10 seasons and teaches a course at Columbia University on athlete activism and social justice in sports, is encouraged by players not relying solely on rhetoric.

"You use the system to your favor, to your benefit. And that's what they've done," said Elmore, who played in the league during the mid-1970s and early 80s and spent time as a broadcaster before going to Harvard Law School and becoming a district attorney in New York.

Elmore said More Than A Vote is "one of the more creative and more unprecedented types of actions in the spirit of obtaining social justice. The vote, has been critical over a number of generations ever since the securing of the Voting Rights Act. ... It's time to use that system as much as anything else."

Demissie said this is just the beginning.

"There's a reason why we're named More Than A Vote. Voting, is in many ways Step 1," Demissie said. "It's what we're focused on in 2020. But once we're through this election cycle, this organization is going to continue to exist and fight for justice."

AP



In this April 11, 2019, file photo, fans walk along the first hole during the first round for the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga. The Masters, the major known as much for the roars of the crowd as the raw beauty of Augusta National, will be on mute this year. The club decided Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2020, there will be no spectators. (AP Photo)

No roars at Augusta as Masters to be played without fans

BY DOUG FERGUSON

THE Masters, known as much for the roars as the raw beauty of Augusta National, will be on mute this year. The club decided Wednesday there will be no spectators.

That means all three majors in this year of COVID-19 will not have fans, and the silence figures to be most deafening at Augusta National when the Masters is played Nov. 12-15.

From the opening holes down to Amen Corner all the way through the back nine, players can often figure out what's happening with others just by listening. That will be missing this year, along with the azalea and dogwood blooms from having to move it from April.

"Ultimately, we determined that the potential risks of welcoming patrons and guests to our grounds in November are simply too significant to

overcome," club chairman Fred Ridley said.

Considered in some circles to be the cathedral of golf, Augusta National now will sound like one.

"Part of the allure and kind of majesty of Augusta National is the patrons," Brandt Snedeker said. "You have that electricity from the first moment on Thursday morning to the last putt goes in on Sunday night on every hole. It's not just on the back nine — it's on every hole. So to not have that there is going to be a different feeling."

Ridley said the health of everyone involved with the tournament during the COVID-19 pandemic was paramount in rescheduling the Masters from April and deciding whether it could have spectators, even a limited gallery.

"The guests who come to Augusta each spring from around the world are a key component

to making the tournament so special," he said. "Augusta National has the responsibility, however, to understand and accept the challenges associated with this virus and take the necessary precautions to conduct all aspects of the tournament in a safe manner."

"We look forward to the day when we can welcome all of our patrons back, hopefully in April 2021."

He said all tickets will be honored for next April, and the club would contact ticket holders and those who have applied for tickets for next April's Masters sometime next month.

Golf is coming off its first major without fans last week at the PGA Championship. The U.S. Open, moved from June to Sept. 17-20 because of the pandemic, previously announced it won't have spectators at Winged Foot.

The British Open announced in April it would be canceled

this year.

The lack of noise was noticeable at Harding Park last week for the PGA Championship in San Francisco, especially when Collin Morikawa hit driver to 7 feet on the 16th hole for an eagle that sent him to his first major championship. There were a few media, mainly the broadcast crew, along with a few volunteers and support staff.

But a shot that memorable was greeted with mostly silence.

"This is the one time I really wish there were crowds right there," Morikawa said with a laugh.

The Masters, though, is different.

Built on a former nursery, the back nine descends steeply toward Rae's Creek and Amen Corner before making a steady climb toward the clubhouse. Pockets of roars come from everywhere.

Tiger Woods leaned on them

when he won his fifth green jacket last year, studying every white scoreboard so that he would understand who was where and what a cheer might mean.

"When I got down to 13, I got a chance to look at the board and see where everyone stood," Woods said last year in an interview the GolfTV. "I'm like, 'OK, the next board I see is not until 15, because there's no board on 14.' So I get a good understanding, see where they all are, look at what holes they're on in case I hear any roars who that might be."

"Obviously, there's significance to certain roars," he said. "But I want to know what players are in what position so after I played 14 and headed to 15, I have a pretty good understanding of what's going on."

The roars carried Jack Nicklaus to his astounding 30 on the back nine when he rallied to win his sixth Masters in 1986.

The fabled "Arnie's Army" began with a group of soldiers from nearby Fort Gordon in the late 1950s, but it grew to include practically every patron on the grounds. Palmer felt as though he knew them all as they cheered him to four victories.

Snedeker played his first Masters in 2004 as the U.S. Amateur Public Links champion. He made the cut, finished early and stayed to the end as Phil Mickelson made an 18-foot birdie putt on the final hole to win his first major. Snedeker was watching on TV in the clubhouse. He heard the cheer before it was captured on television.

"That's what you historically remember with Augusta, so to not have that is going to be totally different," he said. "It's going to be an odd feeling, to say the least. Last week at Harding Park it kind of felt odd, too, because you just didn't have the

nerve as much because the fans weren't there adding a little bit of electricity to it and you didn't have the excitement."

Woods was making a charge in 2011 when two reporters waiting to cross the eighth fairway heard a roar that rattled the pines. What happened? A marshal said Woods had just hit his approach, and it was clear what the noise meant — an eagle that momentarily tied him for the lead.

A few minutes later, a roar from Amen Corner. And then another from behind the 13th green. And another from the second green. That was from all the scoreboards being changed to show Woods tied for the lead.

That's what will be missing in November.

It will be different for the television viewers, too. They will see Augusta National like never before, lined by Georgia pines instead of spectators.

AP

PSG break through Champions League glass ceiling after years of disappointment

LISBON

AFTER years of failing to live up to their billing in Europe, Paris Saint-Germain are within 90 minutes of the Champions League final thanks to their dramatic win over Atalanta on Wednesday, and coach Thomas Tuchel now knows "everything is possible" for his team.

PSG were on the verge of another disappointing Champions League exit as they trailed Atalanta 1-0 into the 90th minute in Lisbon, where all the latter stages are being played after the long coronavirus shutdown.

But Mario Pasalic's 27th-minute strike for the Italians was finally cancelled out by Marquinhos, who scrambled in a last-gasp leveller.

Then, three minutes into injury time, Kylian Mbappe set up fellow substitute Eric Choupo-Moting to convert the clinching goal.

"The goals came very late but we deserved the victory. We never stopped believing or attacking," said Tuchel, whose team will face Atletico Madrid or RB Leipzig in the semi-final, the club's first since 1995.

"The boys who came off the bench had a big impact. We deserved it, we made our own luck."

The money ploughed into the French champions by their Qatari owners has increased the pressure on PSG to deliver and losing to Atalanta would have invited more criticism of a club whose recent record in such games has been poor.

After all, Atalanta's entire wage bill is believed to be equivalent to what PSG pay Neymar per year (about 36 million euros, or \$42.5m).

Absent from decisive Champions League games in the last two seasons because of injuries, Neymar was excellent here, never giving up. He set up the equaliser and played a part in the winner.

"Going home never crossed my mind," said the world's most expensive player.

Mbappe was only fit enough to play the final half-hour, after a spell on the sidelines with an ankle injury, but his pace down the left flank had Atalanta on the back foot in the closing stages and he laid on the winner.

- Choupo-Moting makes his mark -

PSG will be hopeful the France

AFP

Messi's toughest task as Barcelona face up to Bayern Munich

LISBON

LIONEL Messi might never have been faced with a more daunting task at Barcelona than engineering a victory against Bayern Munich in Lisbon on Friday.

The only surviving former winners of European club football's greatest prize -- with five titles each -- meet in a heavyweight Champions League quarter-final behind closed doors at the Estadio da Luz.

It is not often that Messi's Barcelona come into such a big European tie as the underdogs, but they have this time, with Quique Setien's team having lost out to Real Madrid in the Spanish title race while Bayern appeared flawless on the way to winning a German league and cup double.

Messi is now 33, yet Barcelona appear more reliant on him than ever.

He scored twice against Bayern in the quarter-finals in 2009 when Barcelona went on to win the Champions League under Pep Guardiola.

He hit four against Arsenal the following year and five against Bayer Leverkusen in 2012 but on both occasions, Barca were favourites.

Messi also sank Real Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu in 2011 when his double in the first leg of the semi-final, including one of the finest goals the competition has ever seen, transcended a rivalry that had been dragged to its ugliest point.

And he was part of perhaps the

star can start the semi-final next Tuesday, but it is thanks to Choupo-Moting that they are there at all.

"We've already won four titles this season but the most important is this one," declared the Cameroon striker.

It seems ironic that PSG -- the world's fifth-richest club according to this year's Deloitte Football League -- needed to rely on a free transfer from Stoke City to take them through to the Champions League semi-finals for the first time since the Qatari takeover in 2011.

They had gone out in the last 16 the past three years, but Choupo-Moting's goal saw them break through the glass ceiling on the same day PSG marked their 50th anniversary.

From Zlatan Ibrahimovic to Ronaldinho, some fabulous players have turned out for the club in their relatively short history, although Choupo-Moting has not made much of a mark in his two seasons in Paris.

He had not previously scored in the Champions League and would probably have been best remembered for missing an open goal while standing on the line in a game against Strasbourg.

Indeed he would not even have been playing in this match in different circumstances.

Choupo-Moting's contract expired in June but he agreed to stay on for two months to play a part in the 'Final Eight' after Edinson Cavani -- PSG's all-time top scorer, who was also out of contract -- walked away.

And so the 31-year-old came on for the ineffective Mauro Icardi for the closing stages. He will at best have a bit-part role to play in the semi-final, though.

Mbappe could be ready to start then and Angel Di Maria will return from suspension, although Marco Verratti will probably be out again injured.

"There is a big difference between playing with or without Kylian," Tuchel said.

"That's clear, and it's the same with Marco and Angel. Now we have six days for Kylian to get back to his best.

"I'm not sure about Marco, but we are in the last four, everything is possible."

Bayern should smash Barcelona and Messi, but can you ever count the Catalans out?



Lionel Messi, right, famously humbled Jerome Boateng, far left, the most recent time these teams met in this competition. What will Friday's clash hold in store? (Agencies)

BY GRAHAM HUNTER, ESPN SPAIN WRITER

IF history has its way, Bayern Munich will stick three or four unanswered goals past Barcelona on Friday evening and then go on to complete their second Treble by winning the Champions League just over a week later.

When Bayern meet Barcelona's perennial Spanish rivals, Real Madrid, in Europe, it's a kind of continental Clasico, full of enmity, insults, red cards, drama, jealousy, anger and utterly blistering football. That means the Catalan-Bavarian "mini-Clasico" of Europe has been significantly overlooked.

It's understandable, I guess, that by the time Barcelona even won the Champions League (in its old European Cup guise back in 1992), Madrid and Bayern had already lifted this trophy nine times between them. They'd also crossed swords, kicking, bullying and even stomping on each other across 13 two-legged ties: 26 red-hot matches in all.

RM (Madrid) vs. FCB (Barça) in Spain is El Clasico, but RM vs. FCB (FC Bayern) in Europe is definitely El Clasico Continental, no question. By comparison, it's pretty remarkable that Bayern and Barça have gone head to head in UEFA competitions only five times -- a mere four meetings in the Champions League. But the impact of each of those ties has been genuinely seismic, hence the idea that Friday's meeting might be, too.

Bayern first spoiled the Barca party in 1996, when their 2-1 win at the Camp Nou in the UEFA Cup semifinal convinced Blaugrana president Josep Nunez to sack Johan Cruyff, which he duly did. It remains perhaps the worst decision in the history of the Catalan club, and while Bayern weren't the root cause, they were the catalyst.

Even when they next met, two years later in the Champions League group stage, the impact was gigantic. The Bavarians, coached by the brilliant Ottmar Hitzfeld, comfortably beat Barcelona home and away, defeats that guaranteed Louis Van Gaal's side wouldn't qualify from a group also containing Manchester United.

It also guaranteed that Barca's dream of reaching the Champions League final, which was to be played at Camp Nou in celebration of the Catalan club's centenary, was shattered. (Oh, and it famously led to that last-second Manchester United defeat of Bayern.)

So, the running total so far: Bayern cause Barcelona to sack the greatest football mind there has ever been, then ensure that there was no chance of lifting the Cup With The Big Ears at Blaugrana HQ on the 100th anniversary of their birth. Not bad, Bavaria, not bad. It took over a decade for Lady Fate to fancy the Catalan-Bavarian mini-Clasico again, but it had the

same kind of era-defining impact.

Barcelona were in the middle of their Pep Guardiola revolution and already en route to winning both La Liga and the Copa del Rey. Their 5-1 thrashing of Bayern, the home leg sealing the deal at the first time of asking thanks to a 4-0 (goals from Samuel Eto'o, Lionel Messi, Thierry Henry) dismantling of Jurgen Klinsmann's team, set Barca up to defeat Chelsea and Manchester United and become Spain's first Treble-winning side -- only Celtic, PSV, Ajax and Manchester United had previously achieved that fabled level.

You see the trend? The German FCB meets the Catalan FCB and big things happen, either in the moment or directly as a result of their clash.

It was the same story in 2013. Barcelona had ripped the La Liga title race to shreds, playing with verve and conviction under the late (and much-missed) Tito Vilanova. But his terrible illness -- twice that season, Vilanova had to hand the reins to Jordi Roura so he could undergo cancer treatment -- hurt everything about Barcelona's ability to prepare, mentally and physically, for meeting Jupp Heynckes' Bavarian FCB in the Champions League semifinal.

They were first pressed (4-0) at the Allianz Arena, and then clinically picked apart (3-0) at Camp Nou. The hugely revered (and not largely changed) Barca squad, which had wowed the football world with their 2011 Champions League victory at Wembley and had then been within

47 minutes of reaching the final against 10-man Chelsea in 2012, were instead pummelled into their record competition defeat against Bayern.

By now, given the evidence and the flow of the argument, it should barely need stating that, of course, Bayern went on to win that competition that year and achieve an excelsior moment in their garlanded history, becoming the first German club to win the Treble, and only the sixth ever to achieve this epic feat.

Before the 2014 World Cup, I interviewed Xavi, mentioned the footballing disaster of the year before and, full of conviction, rather than bravado or bluff, he argued that: "It was an anomaly that we lost like that to Bayern; the scoreline doesn't tell the proper story of how the two squads measure up. It was the collision of a team in great physical and athletic shape with one that wasn't."

At the time, given the monumental embarrassment for Barcelona's tired, beleaguered playing staff, it took blind faith in Xavi's sincerity to consider taking that argument seriously. His words were given some weight and veracity just two years later when, rejuvenated and with Neymar and Luis Suarez supporting Messi, Barcelona gave one of their great modern performances to beat Guardiola's Bayern 3-0 in the Champions League semifinal first leg -- with all the goals coming after the 77th minute.

It truly was an epic night. Bayern making man-to-man, trying to asphyxiate

Luis Enrique's Barcelona, barely making a mistake all night until first Juan Bernat did so, then Jerome Boateng added his inexplicable rag-doll collapse and the Messi-Neymar partnership ran riot. Neymar's two goals in Bavaria also meant that the power of Bayern's attempt to wrest back control of the tie was brave and beautiful, but futile.

Again, just for the record, the meeting of Barcelona and Bayern led to the winner of those ties not only winning the Champions League (as in 2009 and 2013), but clinching the Treble, too. Hence my opening point.

If there's one athletically superb team going into this tie, packed with talent, that can win a Treble this season and with attractive momentum given their recent propensity for scoring seven times against English rivals, it's patently not Barcelona.

Another thing history dictates is that every time these two have met in a Champions League knock-out tie, one or the other has won one of those legs by three clear goals or more. Again, that won't be Barcelona this time. They simply aren't capable.

On the "compare and contrast" test, Bayern are a model for how, and why, you can change coach mid-term and not only get it right, but achieve a huge boost of confidence, organisation, conviction and playing power from it.

The removal of Niko Kovac, with Hansi Flick now his long-term, permanent replacement, addressed significant problems with things such as morale and playing style, hitting the

bull's-eye each time. Now Bayern, utterly invigorated, are on the verge of becoming only the second club after Barca to win the Treble twice.

In comparison, Barcelona's decision to replace Ernesto Valverde with Quique Setien looks risible.

It's a patent truth that Messi & Co. deeply desire the Champions League. It's not just the prestige, either; it's because they've failed to conquer Europe at all in five years, during which Madrid have made everyone kneel, and because some of them are running out of opportunities to do so.

If desire alone was sufficient to win Friday's match, along with two more 90-minute contests in Lisbon, Portugal, then Messi could already be planning how to lift the cup and what speech to give. But that's not enough. Perhaps, just perhaps, Barcelona have one of their most remarkable modern performances up their collective sleeves -- and there's no denying that football is jam-packed with the most remarkable surprises and human stories -- but the evidence says no. Loudly.

This won't be a 7-0 defeat like in 2013, not least because that was over two matches. It looks and feels, particularly athletically, like Bayern have too potent a combination of skill, aggression, physical power, speed and stamina. But before you say it, yes -- we must take Messi's genius into account.

Can he really drag Barcelona through what should be a no-win, no-way tie? Watch and find out.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



Simba SC to unveil new jerseys, logo today

SPORT

Bayern should smash Barcelona and Messi, but can you ever count the Catalans out?

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Fares Kauli from Fire and Rescue unit attempts to extinguish fire during a demonstration in the defensive driving course held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF ABBAS GHOR

Defensive driving training takes off

By Guardian Correspondent

THE first batch of heavy duty vehicles' (trucks and lorries) drivers turned out at the Automobile Association of Tanzania (AAT) office to attend a day-long defensive driving course in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

A total of 60 drivers from Dar es Salaam-based firms Simba Logistics and Transcargo Ltd opened the two and half month program aimed at improving road safety in the country.

The Federation International de Automobile (FIA) grant program & Michelin International-organized course is held three days a week from Thursday through Saturday.

Three major topics were covered during yesterday's course opener as drivers learned and revised road traffic and transportation laws, fire fighting/rescue services and paramedics.

Soon after opening the course, program coordinator Yusuf Ghor, who happens to be the AAT CEO, Superintendent of Police, Deus Sokoni, took a centre stage.

Sokoni, who looked to be confident and at his very best yesterday, reminded drivers the need to understand and adhere to all laws linked to use of road furniture, transportation, regulations, insurance, licences and mechanical fitness of the vehicles.

Supported by Superintendent of Police Abel Swai drivers were reminded on the need for safe driving to avoid fatalities through careful driving and compliance to stipulated speed limits wherever they drive.

Gasper Kinyaha from Simba Logistics hailed the training for defence driving saying it has been an eye opener to several issues in road safety. He said the course highlighted some important use of rules and laws of transportation that keep on changing.

Another driver from Transcargo Logistics, Yusuf Gideon, said the course is useful as drivers have learned how best to work with authorities and safety of pedestrians.

Fares Kauli and Christine Charles took the afternoon session to detail to drivers on the importance of fire fighting and rescue during driving. They highlighted on the importance of installing fire extinguishers in vehicles as well as validity of the equipment in terms of expiry dates. They also reminded drivers on the choice of fire fighting equipments based on the nature of the fire to be extinguished.

The AAT top notch driving instructor, Samwel Saleh, concluded yesterday's opening session. Saleh insisted on drivers to have their licences within reach everytime they are on the road as well as taking care of pedestrians particularly school children.

The course continues today with more drivers from ASAS Dairy Products Ltd and ASAS Transporters Ltd firms.

Other firms lined for training of their drivers for the rest of the month include Lake Oil, East Africa International School, Upanga Transport School, Dar es Salaam Independent School, Meck One, UDART-BRT, Cross Border and Bumblebee All School Buses. Other drivers are expected to turn out for training sessions scheduled for September and October.



Simba SC players jubilate after their team netted a goal against Mwanza's Alliance FC in this season's Vodacom Premier League game, which took place in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi

SIMBA SC have always made a big fuss about their jerseys' launches ahead of each

new season.

This year, it promises to be even more special with the club set to unveil a brand-new logo and jerseys ahead of the 2020/21

season.

The club's information officer, Haji Manara, announced their week long festivities kicks off today, with the release of a

rebranded new logo and season jerseys that is sure to excite all fans of the club.

"Tomorrow (Friday) that is August 14 to August 22, 2020 is our week, called Champions' week which we have dubbed 'Another Level'," he disclosed.

"On Friday we will launch the new club logo. We have rebranded it to match the current market conditions. After the launch of the new logo we will launch the new jersey of the season. This is 'Another Level'. Then we start announcing new players."

"On Saturday from 2am we will be on the Indian Ocean beaches in the Salendara area for cleanliness activities." "Those in the upcountry can do it in their own areas. On Sunday from 6pm we will be at the club's headquarters to make a special prayer's session."

"In support of the government domestic tourism, on Monday and Tuesday all branches across the country will be visiting tourist attractions."

"All coders should visit tourist

attractions. It's a special day for the 'Msimbazi Reds' to support local tourism."

"Also on Tuesday in collaboration with the main sponsors SportPesa we will provide support to vulnerable children and provide them with jerseys, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are blood donation days.

"On Thursday we will go to Independence School, we will go with the players to meet children with different needs and the club will offer contributions to this cause."

"On Monday we will announce the visiting team that will play against us on the eve of Simba Day and the ticket prices for the respective game. For the first time we will use two stadiums for our event."

"We will use Mkapa Stadium and Uhuru Stadium whereby a large screen will beam live what is going on to the other side."

The club's first team players will debut the new jerseys for the first time in the game against the invited team on August 22.

Twiga Titans cricketers close in on 2020 APL semi-finals

By Guardian Reporter

TWIGA Titans' cricketers have inched closer to a place in the 2020 Advanced Players League (APL) last four, notching a seven-wicket victory over Chui Challengers in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

It was the fourth victory for Twiga Titans that have now made certain of their status as strong contenders for the league's title.

Scintillating batting displays by the squad's experienced all rounders, skipper Kassim Nassor and Nassibu Kelvin, played key role in their ability to emerge victorious yesterday, as the duo saw to it the outfit made the most of its innings.

Twiga Titans won the toss and chose to bowl, limiting Chui Challengers to 107 runs for six wickets in 20 overs.

Chui Challengers looked to have struggled early on in the innings following quick dismissals of their openers, Ejaz Aziz and Nandakishan Pottachira.

Jitin Pratap Singh and Suraj Pala gave their squad hopes of amassing a good total, scoring 19 runs and 18 runs respectively.

Singh cleared the boundary twice in his stint at the crease, Pala had a four in his double digit score.

Captain Riziki Kizito boosted the side's quest of a challenging target with his 21 runs not out, which consisted of a four, only for the team to experience a blow given experienced all rounder, Khalil Rehemtullah, faced an early exit.

Abdullah Jabiri was, in the end, the top run getter in Chui Challengers innings given he posted 29 runs which included a four.

Twiga Titans' youngster, Karimu Athumani, ended with an impressive bowling figure, in which he registered two wickets and leaked 17 runs in two overs.

Twiga Titans chased a modest



Twiga Titans Cricket Club's skipper, Kassim Nassor. PHOTO: COURTESY OF NIKHIL PUJARA

target of 108 runs for the loss of three wickets and, in the process, significantly boosted their pursuit of the top honour.

Youngster Abdulrahman Akida notched 13 runs, which consisted of a four, Nassibu had 26 runs, which included three fours, in what was overall a good start by the squad in the chase.

Nassor, in the end, forged an unbeaten stand with youngster Dhruvit Mehta to make certain of their club's victory.

Nassor recorded 34 runs not out, which included two boundaries, Mehta notched 25 runs not out, which consisted of three boundaries.

Pala's spirited bowling showing, which ended with bowler taking two wickets and leaking 19 runs in four overs, failed to help Chui Challengers frustrate their

opponents' chase.

It turned out to be a second defeat for Chui Challengers that had, on Wednesday, attempted to bounce back with 23-run victory over Royal Rhinos.

The clash had Chui Challengers racing to 161 runs for loss of seven wickets in 20 overs once they had won the toss and chose to bat first.

Royal Rhinos, in response, failed to chase Chui Challengers' total, recording 138 runs for the loss of nine wickets in 20 overs.

Buffalo Blasters took on Tembo Stars in Thursday's other clash in the afternoon.

The Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA)-organized league, which started last Saturday and will climax on Sunday, takes place with a view to raising the standard of the sport at the domestic level.

Yanga now free to appeal against TFF ruling on Bernard Morrison

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THE Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) Legal, Ethics and Players Status Committee has said Yanga is free to appeal anywhere if they are not satisfied with the committee's verdict of Ghanaian player Bernard Morrison.

On Wednesday, the committee, headed by chairman Elias Mwanjala, ruled that Morrison, who played for Yanga in the just ended season, is a free agent, after the committee had observed that the new contract, which he signed with Yanga, had some flaws.

In yesterday's radio interview, Mwanjala said they are convinced beyond reasonable doubt that the contract between the two parties (Yanga and Morrison) had some flaws which made it invalid, but he noted since his committee's judgment is appealable Yanga can take it anywhere.

Morrison took Yanga to TFF, challenging that his signature on the contract, purportedly to have been signed by him, was forged. The TFF reported the matter to police for further investigations, But Mwanjala said no forgery was found.

"We looked at many things, the issue of forgery was ruled out, we found some flaws on the contract like lack of signatures of the two parties on some pages and also the dates were not corresponding," he noted.

"But in pursuant of justice, appealing is a right to any party which feels aggrieved, Yanga have the right to appeal anywhere," he said.

The Ethics and Players Status Committee has since ordered Morrison to pay back the US dollars 30, 000 which he took from Yanga as an advance payment and has

also referred the player to the TFF Disciplinary Committee to make its ruling on contractual commit as the player signed another contract with Simba SC while his case was in process.

Mwanjala remarks comes after Yanga, through the outfit's Acting Secretary General Simon Patrick, expressed their intention to take the matter to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) once they are served with the verdict of the committee.

Patrick, who is also a trained lawyer, said they are not satisfied with the ruling.

"In my whole life, I have never heard anywhere where a contract becomes invalid because the dates are not corresponding, the judgment leaves a lot to be desired," he stated.

"For now I cannot talk much as we are waiting for the committee verdict so as we can analyze it and take the matter to CAS, we feel the player belongs to us," he said.

Yanga's Chairman, Mshindo Msolla, also had reservations on the ruling and said his club is waiting for the case verdict.

"There are many things which we are not happy with, but since the committee has not given us the copy of the judgment, I cannot comment much until that time when it is handed over to us," he said.

Meanwhile, Yanga have appealed to their members and fans to remain calm as the club is doing everything possible to see to it that justice is being done.

"The management is urging all members and supporters to be calm and continue working hand in hand with the team's leadership regarding the development of the club, the club will continue working with the sponsors to ensure the club grows," a press release from the club disclosed.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

