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## Chadema opts out of Budget sessions

Starts two weeks of isolating its MPs, bars them from travelling

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

THE opposition Chadema has announced two-week self-isolation for its legislators participating in the marathon Budget meeting of the National Assembly.

National chairman Freeman Mbowe said in a statement that the party arrived to the decision as some MPs have died from coronavirus infection.

"Chadema MPs will not attend the ongoing budget meeting or visit parliament buildings in Dodoma. We have also barred them from travelling to their constituencies until they are tested and confirmed to be negative," the statement declared.

Mbowe also suggested that the legislature suspend the Budget session for at least 21 days to allow MPs and employees of the Speaker's Office "to go for mandatory quarantine."

He underscored the need for the House to engage in widespread testing of MPs, workers and service providers to know exactly who may have contracted the disease.

"Testing all the people at the National Assembly will give a clear picture of infection rates and enable authorities to take appropriate measures," he said, urging the steering committee on Privileges, Ethics and Powers of MPs to work on the issue via video conferencing.

Mbowe appealed to members of the public to take precautions and adhere to Covid-19 prevention measures issued by health experts.

The highly contagious, pneumonia-causing disease first reported in Wuhan, China, has hit over three million people globally.

Experts have frequently been advising the public to avoid unnecessary gatherings, practice self-isolation to remain safe during this time when the world struggles to battle the Covid-19 outbreak.

Covid-19 is characterised by mild symptoms

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# JPM, diplomats express shock at minister Dr Mahiga's death



Late Constitutional and Legal Affairs minister Dr Augustine Mahiga

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT John Magufuli and members of the diplomatic corps are among those who expressed shock yesterday following the death of Constitutional and Legal Affairs minister Dr Augustine Philip Mahiga earlier in the day.

They mourned the long-serving diplomat by praising his contribution to his country and as an international civil servant.

Dr Mahiga (born August 28, 1945) died at his residence in Dodoma, where he had been attending the National Assembly's marathon annual Budget meeting, after a short illness.

Shortly after an official announcement on the death, condolence messages poured in to the mainstream media and on social media.

In a statement issued by the Directorate of Presidential Communication, President Magufuli extended his condolences to the National Assembly, the deceased's family members and relatives, the Constitutional and Legal Affairs staff and residents of Iringa Region, Dr Mahiga's home place.

The president Magufuli described the late minister as a humble person, noting that the government was mourning together with Tanzanians on the demise of a renowned leader who devoted himself fully to his career as a public servant locally and abroad.

"Dr Mahiga was a hard worker, a patriot, a

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## Treasury waives all taxes on medical imports, PPE

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

TAXES on imported medical equipments have been scrapped to enhance the fight against Covid-19.

Finance and Planning minister Dr Philip Mpango told the National Assembly here on Thursday that the Treasury has also disbursed 15.49bn/- to boost ongoing efforts to tackle the pandemic in the Mainland and another 500m/- for the Isles.

Responding to queries raised by MPs when contributing to debate on the proposed Health Ministry estimates for the 2020/2021 financial year, Dr Mpango said the government set out to

use approximately 382.5bn/- to fight COVID-19 from March to September 2020.

"On April 16, the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children presented to the Treasury an additional list of 15 different medical equipments that need to be exempted from taxes. We have already exempted Value Added Tax (VAT) and customs duty on the identified equipment," he told the House.

To ensure the tax exemption is not abused, the Treasury has imposed a number of conditions to importers, the minister noted, elaborating that the terms of importation will

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## Guterres: Synergies key in Covid-19 war

WASHINGTON, DC

UNITED Nations secretary-general Dr Antonio Guterres has said it is a tragedy that the world has been unable "to come together to face COVID-19 in an articulated and coordinated way."

Guterres said each country went with its own policy, where different countries have different perspectives and different strategies. "This has allowed the virus to spread," he declared.

"It's obvious we lack leadership in the fight against the virus," he said, urging major economies to come together and draw up a common strategy and then to bring with them the whole of the international community."

The UN estimates that eight percent of the world's population, about 500 million people,

could be forced into poverty by year's end because of the devastation brought by the virus.

The global tally of coronavirus cases continues to creep upwards.

The Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Centre said early yesterday that there are more than 3.2 million confirmed cases worldwide, with more than 233,000 deaths.

The United States leads the world in the number of reported cases and deaths. Johns Hopkins says the U.S. has over a million COVID-19 cases -- approximately a third of the world's total. More than 63,000 people have died in the U.S. from the virus.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on

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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.



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cdc.gov/COVID-19



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Biometric voter registration operators and clerks undergo instruction in Dar es Salaam yesterday on how to use the machines and kits to be deployed in implementing the process. Photo: Correspondent Christina Mwangala

## Treasury waives all taxes on medical imports, PPE

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be set out in the schedule on the tax exemption notice.

Dr Mpango assured MPs that the government was taking a number of initiatives to protect members of the public and health care workers in particular by ensuring availability of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Funds are also being directed to the procurement of drugs and essential medical supplies such as ventilators, ambulances, beds and reagents, he specified.

"The government's first priority is protecting people from the deadly disease. We call upon the private sector to continue providing support to the

government by contributing to the national disaster fund," he urged.

The government has also requested for funds from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through its Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) which provides rapid concessional financial assistance with limited conditions, he stated.

The RCF provides support in a wide variety of circumstances, including shocks, natural disasters and emergencies resulting from fragility, he further noted.

"We are expecting the IMF to respond to our request in the coming days," he said, also informing the House that the government has resolved to suspend implementation of various

development projects during the outbreak.

He said the monies that would otherwise be used there shall now be directed to the fight against COVID-19.

The World Bank has officially written to Tanzania on how it will implement the G20 decision which includes suspension of loan repayments and interest from May 1st to December 31st.

Last month, finance ministers and central bank governors of the Group of 20 (G20) major economies agreed on a coordinated approach for the suspension of debt service payments for the world's poorest countries starting May 1.

The decision to suspend both

principal repayments and interest payments applies to all countries included in the World Bank soft loan window special for poor countries, the International Development Association (IDA).

Many of these countries are currently on debt service to the IMF and the World Bank, being least developed countries as defined by the United Nations.

The move is part of efforts to provide stimulus as countries work out ways to rejuvenate economies in the wake of the new coronavirus outbreak, with experts noting that the global economy is into the steepest downturn since the Great Depression.

## JPM, diplomats express shock at minister Dr Mahiga's death

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diplomatic hero and an ethical leader who represented and fought gallantly for Tanzania in the international arena," the president declared.

"Despite holding various local and international leadership positions for many years, Dr Mahiga remained a humble person all his life," the presidential statement added.

In a condolence message, United Nations Resident Coordinator Zlatan Miliši said the UN family in Tanzania was sending condolences to the late Dr Mahiga's family and to the government and people of Tanzania for "this very sad loss".

"Balazi (Ambassador) Mahiga was part of the UN family, having held very senior UN positions in many different countries," said the UN top official.

The Chinese Embassy in Dar es Salaam meanwhile also expressed sadness and deep condolences to the passing of Dr Mahiga, saying his outstanding contribution to the development of Sino-Tanzania relations would be fondly remembered.

British High Commissioner Sarah Cooke said she was saddened on hearing of the passing of Dr Mahiga.

"He was a wise and experienced diplomat, a close partner and friend of the UK. My thoughts and prayers are with his family at this very sad time," she wrote on her twitter handle.

The German Embassy wrote on its twitter page that it was "with deep regret that we learned of the passing of Tanzania's Constitutional and Legal Affairs minister Dr Augustine Mahiga, who was also a former Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation."

For his part, East African Community Secretary General Ambassador Libérat Mfumukeko conveyed his condolences to President Magufuli, Dr Mahiga's family, relatives and friends as well as the government and the people of Tanzania.

He said Dr Mahiga was a dedicated East African who firmly believed in regional integration for the benefit of the people of East Africa, and demonstrated unwavering commitment and support to the regional bloc during his tenure as Minister for Foreign Affairs and East

African Cooperation from 2015 to 2019.

"A seasoned diplomat, Ambassador Mahiga forged ever-stronger international partnerships for the region besides deepening the Community's ties with the rest of the world. The demise of Ambassador Mahiga is therefore a big loss to Tanzania and the Community," noted Mfumukeko.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretary General Dr Stergomena Tax said the regional bloc would forever remember Dr Mahiga for his contribution and unwavering commitment to regional peace, stability and security when he served as chairman of the ministerial committee of the organ "at a critical time".

The Tanzania Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) also sent its condolences, describing Dr Mahiga as a patriotic figure who fought for Tanzania's development.

"We also join Tanzanians in mourning the death of Dr Mahiga. We are calling for the late diplomat's family to seek inner strength during this difficult time," the commission said, in part.

The CCM headquarters expressed its sadness on Dr Mahiga's passing, saying he was among leaders who have contributed immensely to Tanzania's development.

CCM Publicity and Ideology Secretary Humphrey Polepole noted in a statement that Dr Mahiga was also once a lecturer in the party's ideological college who used to shape selected Tanzanian youth to graduate into good leaders.

"The party joins Dr Mahiga's family members, relatives, friends and all Tanzanians in mourning his passing. He will be remembered for the patriotism he showed for the country," Polepole said.

Dr Mahiga served as Tanzania's 14th Foreign Affairs minister from 2015 to last year.

He previously served as the Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 2003 to 2010 and as the UNSpecial Representative and Head of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia from 2010 to 2013.

## Guterres: Synergies key in Covid-19 war

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Thursday that Britain is past the peak of the coronavirus outbreak and the number of new infections is on a downward slope.

In his first major address after recovering from COVID-19, Johnson said he would announce a plan next week on how the country's economy and lifestyle are to move forward after the pandemic that has killed close to 27,000 people in Britain and infected about 172,500.

Johnson is optimistic about a coronavirus vaccine being developed by Oxford University scientists and the British drug company AstraZeneca. If the vaccine proves to be effective, it could become widely available worldwide this fall.

Many European countries have already gradually begun reopening or have plans to do so in the coming weeks. The economy in the eurozone - European countries that use the common euro currency - shrank a record 3.8 percent in the first quarter of the year.

Meanwhile, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin announced Thursday he had tested positive for the coronavirus. State television showed his video call with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Mishustin will be replaced by First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov while he is in self-isolation.

Russia has more than 106,000 COVID-19 cases and more 1,000 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins. The country's economy has been hit by huge losses in oil revenues resulting from the global oil glut caused by worldwide shutdowns.

Russia's Tass news agency quoted Putin on Thursday saying the country's economic recovery plan must consider a new reality.

"We know the world is changing. The crisis relating to the coronavirus pandemic has influence on key markets, on the system of cooperative ties. Companies, including Russian ones, are looking for and quickly

implementing fundamentally new business models," Putin said.

The U.S. government also is looking for ways to restart its economy, which suffered a 4.8 percent loss in the first quarter, with more than 30 million unemployment claims filed in the past six weeks.

The Trump administration is not planning to extend federal coronavirus restrictions that expired Thursday, focusing instead on its efforts to work with states on plans to reopen the country.

U.S. governors have been at pains to decide when and at what pace to relax restrictions on nonessential businesses and group gatherings and end stay-at-home orders in their states. Some states have already begun phasing out those restrictions, even though the pandemic remains rampant.

Discussions about relaxing lockdown orders are also taking place in Asia. In Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Thursday his government is consulting experts about whether to extend a state of emergency that is set to expire Wednesday.

Japan has about 14,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases, and Abe said the situation remains "severe."

U.N. humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock told the Security Council that there are 44 confirmed cases and four deaths in Syria, a country he said cannot be expected "to cope with a crisis that is challenging even the wealthiest nations."

In Yemen, health officials reported the country's first two coronavirus deaths, as well as a cluster of new cases in the southern port city of Aden that has been a focal point in a five-year civil war.

The World Bank said developing countries would be hardest hit, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa, where nearly half of the continent's job losses have occurred.

It also said the economic downturn in South Asia would likely be the region's worst in 40 years.



**MESS, MESS, MESS:** No one to hold to account for this years-old eyesore and public health hazard? Really? Believe it or not, this is a photo of Dar es Salaam's much-touted Mabibo 'Mahakama ya Ndizi', as taken yesterday. Every passing day, it draws hundreds upon hundreds of people from across the city and its environs out to buy all manner of fresh green bananas and a wide variety of fruit, vegetables and other foodstuffs. But even a short-lived drizzle renders this otherwise invaluable crowd-puller too muddy to visit, much less do decent business in. Reason enough for heads to roll over the unending rot, as various people interviewed at the facility readily affirmed. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## Chadema opts out of Budget session

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including a runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever. Illness can be more severe for some people and can lead to pneumonia or breathing difficulties.

So far three MPs have died since

the opening of sessions of the 11th Budget meeting on March 31st.

They include Constitutional and Legal Affairs minister Dr Augustine Mahiga (74), who died here early yesterday after a short illness.

A statement by the Directorate of

Presidential Communications said he died suddenly as he was being taken to hospital.

Others are Special Seats MP Dr Getrude Rwakatare (69), who died at a hospital in Dar es Salaam on April 20 and Sumve MP Richard

Ndassa (CCM) who died on April 28 in Dodoma.

On April 20, Deputy Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson announced that one of the lawmakers had contracted Covid-19 and was undergoing treatment.

## 'Govt will continue with targeted Covid-19 testing'

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

THE government will continue with targeted Covid-19 testing, saying the method is more efficiency and cost effective in containing the pandemic.

This came after Members of Parliament pushed for widespread testing to find out who has the disease.

Dr Faustine Ndugulile, Deputy minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children, told the National Assembly on Thursday that targeted testing which is done through contact tracing has proved to be effective for Tanzania.

"We will stick to targeted testing since it is difficult to test all the 55 million people. Testing COVID-19 is also expensive and requires skilled health practitioners to take samples from suspected patients", said Dr Ndugulile noting each country fights the disease in accordance with its strategies.

He said with targeted testing the government invests much on clinical diagnosis before conducting laboratory tests for suspected cases. He said the yields are big when using targeted testing whereas between 70 and 80 out of 100 tested samples are diagnosed positive.

The Deputy minister added that the country's CPVID-19 testing capacity is good whereas the national community laboratory which operates 24hrs can test 500 samples per day.

Dr Ndugulile said the ministry has also identified other nine laboratories which will later be used for testing.

"You cannot just conduct coronavirus testing at dispensaries or health centers, test labs must have required testing kits as well as skilled workers. Countries that have opted for mass testing have just ended up with relatively low yields", he said.

He said the government has so far procured personal protective equipment (PPE) worth 12.3bn/- which will be distributed to various hospitals.

He urged health care workers to consider the basic guidelines for infection, prevention and control (IPC) when attending to COVID-19 patients. All healthcare workers require at least a basic understanding of IPC principles and practice. Infection prevention and control is a discipline that aims to prevent health care workers from diseases, said Dr Ndugulile.



# Dr. Reginald Mengi

His Legacy Lives On



Will Always Care For You

## Probe team reports gross legal, financial violations

By Guardian Reporter

PROBE team formed by the Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Luhanga Mpina tasked to investigate the construction project of the laboratory for Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI) Dar es Salaam centre has unearthed gross legal violations and weak supervision that called for the government to make hard decision.

In the circumstances Mpina directed the Ministry's Permanent Secretary to revoke the appointment of the manager of South West Indian Ocean fisheries governance (Swiofish) Flora Luhanga for failure to effectively supervise the project.

In addition Luhanga called for the review of the contract with the advisory firm - Y&P Architect Limited on the cost from 1.2b/- to 600m/- and paying back of 352m/- in excess.

He also directed the project's contractors, Petra Construction Limited be deducted all the money in one installment for the next payment of 568m/- for failing to streamline their implementation guarantee and called to 2.6b/- every day for failure to complete the project in accordance with the contract agreement starting April 21 2020.

He also said the amount so rescued in the project - over 500m/- be allocated to other uses including the renovation of the buildings and other infrastructures at TAFIRI headquarters.

Presenting his report to the probe team before Minister Mpina, the Ministry's director for Fisheries Magega Bulayi said the panel has discovered gross violation of laws and regulations in procuring the contractor - Petra Construction Company Limited as well as the advisory firm - Y&P Architect Limited.

He said the probe team comprised experts from the office of the Controller and auditor General (CAG), Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA), the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Tanzania Buildings Agency (TBA) and the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB).

Bulayi said the team also found out that Petra Construction Company Limited was awarded the tender for the project at a cost of 2.5b/- while they had no financial capability, the issue that delayed the project's implementation that is now 65 per cent complete only.

The team also discovered that the guarantees for both the initial payment and project implementation valued at 598m/- had expired since March 20 this year and Petra Construction Company Limited had not streamlined the said guarantees.

Bulayi said the team also discovered that Kampuni ya Petra Construction Company Limited orally promised to save over 500m/- from the project, the issue that was not fully explained anywhere and wherefrom would the money come.

Following the probe team's report, Minister Mpina called for more investigations to find out how the gross violation came about and cautioned over gross financial management of ministry's funds.

The representative of Petra Construction Limited, Vallency Assenga said the main causes for the project's delay are the ongoing rains including outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.



**In addition Luhanga called for the review of the contract with the advisory firm - Y&P Architect Limited on the cost from 1.2b/- to 600m/- and paying back of 352m/- in excess**



Motorbike riders do some 'calculations' before deciding whether - and, if so, how - to take their passengers across a muddy Jangwani Valley section of Dar es Salaam's Morogoro Road yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Ministry to spend 33bn/- on community development activities in FY 2020/2021

By Guardian Reporter

THE Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Children and Elders expects to spend a total of 33.195b/- to implement various social activities in the FY 2020/21.

Presenting in the House the ministry's estimates, minister, Ummu Mwalimu said in the FY 2020/21 the community development department intends

to spend the amount to strengthen services and training at community development institutions, revamping of elder's centres, construction of juvenile prisons and fight against gender violence.

She said the budget will help in the construction of twin halls and hostel at Tengeru Community Development College whereas 2.7b/- has been allocated; and strengthening of

professional training on community development and enhancing skills for graduates in building up for them capacity for self employment by allocating 6/6b/-.

She said other areas to be allocated with funds include 400m/- for the renovation of buildings and infrastructures of elders' centres; 200m/- for construction of assessment school in Geita Region and 700m/- for

the improvement of juvenile prisons in Kigoma and Mtwara.

In addition, she said 827.97m/- has been allocated to fight gender based violence in the society.

Ummu said the ministry has continued to strengthen wananchi's desire to participate in their economic and social improvement by using the work force and resources around them.



Youngsters drain a water tank swept away by floods along River Tegeta in Dar es Salaam yesterday before moving it to safe ground. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Discuss with banks on loans rescheduling, TPSF appeals to govt

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE government has been advised to talk with financial institutions that have provided loans to business people to suspend repayment of the loans or reduction of interest due to their businesses being adversely affected by Covid-19 pandemic.

The advice was given here yesterday by the chairman of the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) Iringo Ringo when he was speaking to newsmen

on the effects of the pandemic in the business sector in the country.

He said the disease's eruption has affected all business people, the situation that threatens their fate due to many of them having taken loans from various financial institutions.

Iringo said in order to assist the business people who closed their businesses due to the global economic downturn, the government must come up with strategies to meet with the financial institutions to discuss the

matter.

"At the moment many businesses have closed down such as here at Dodoma there are some wine making factories that have suspended production for more than a month now. In addition many hotels that depended on guests from various areas have closed down," said Ringo.

He said if the government can sit together with financial institutions to discuss how best to help them, it will reduce depressions that they undergo

as many of them run their businesses from loans.

He also called upon Tanzania Revenue Authority through its regional managers to meet with business associations to discuss the issue - either to suspend or reschedule payment of various taxes and levies.

"This is a transition period and relevant authorities should meet with business people to find a common ground on this emergency which has sent world economy reeling," he said.

## President Magufuli urges workers not to be distracted by coronavirus

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT John Magufuli has urged workers to continue working and offering various services while taking precautions to protect themselves against Coronavirus as we celebrate the International Workers Day.

In a statement by the Presidential Communication Directorate, President Magufuli said he was aware of the commitment and dedication that workers in Tanzania have towards serving Tanzanians, saying the government will continue improving working conditions.

The head of state said celebrations for the day have been cancelled as a part of efforts to control the spread of the disease which has so far claimed 16 lives in the country with 480 infected.

"Fellow workers I congratulate you for this day, we are together, I acknowledge the god job you are doing, may I request you that during this trying time of fighting Covid-19, let us continue working never will this disease be a reason to stop serving Tanzanians, I believe God will take us out of this," said President Magufuli.

The President called upon the workers to apply all their ability at

their work places so that Tanzanians continue benefiting from the services they are offering while they take precautions.

The President hailed all employers both from the private and public sector and for the job well done and asked them not to use the pandemic as a reason to mistreat workers.

International Workers' Day, also known as May Day or Labour Day in some countries is a celebration of labourers and the working classes that is promoted by the international labour movement which occurs every year.

Last week President Magufuli also announced the cancellation of this year's Union Day and Labour Day celebrations on, April 26, and Friday, May 1, respectively, due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Union Day is held to commemorate the anniversary of the Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanzania, whilst Labour Day celebrates both workers' rights and the changing of the seasons.

President Magufuli redirected the money set aside for the holiday celebrations to go toward fighting the coronavirus in the country.

## We shall take part in General Election at all levels, declares ACT-Wazalendo

By Guardian Reporter

ACT-Wazalendo party says it has mobilized itself to participate and win in this year's general elections at presidential, Members of Parliament, Members of the House of Representatives and Councilors levels.

A press statement issued by the party's secretary general Ado Shaibu said the party is well mobilised to put up candidates in all elective positions in Zanzibar and the Mainland.

Shaibu said already the party is making preparations and is waiting for the official election timetable for picking up forms and for nomination sittings of aspirants.

"In this period when party members are waiting for the official timetable, we like to remind the wananchi that part procedures and regulations allow members to announce their intentions for the preferred elective posts," he said.

He said the party has directed its Ward and Constituency secretaries to prepare the register for aspirants in their areas.

"In announcing their intentions, they are reminded to abide by the basics in regard to ethics, humanity and the party's nomination procedures and the party's department of communication and public relations should make sure it assists the aspirants," he added.



Vendors of raw cassava attend to customers at Tangi Bovu in Dar es Salaam yesterday. The tubers constitute an essential part of iftar, particularly during the Holy month of Ramadhan. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Govt stresses it will not interfere with setting of prices for agricultural produce in the country

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE government has reiterated that it will not interfere in setting up indicative prices for agriculture produce but rather leave the task to the farmers themselves to decide.

Deputy minister for Agriculture Omary Mgumba said this yesterday when speaking with leaders from TADCOS Ltd on the fertiliser importation.

According to him, the government will always remain supervisors of the sector but not price determiners.

"Prices of farm produce depend on market demand and changes, so it is difficult to control the price, farmers are free to produce and sell their crops anywhere but they should adhere to the country's rules and regulations,"

On the issue of the 'Warehouses Receipt Services', the minister said that the system was established for the aim of improving business services to traders and it will continue to be used for the interest of the farmers and traders.

He acknowledged that there were several challenges on the implementation of the system which is highly caused by leaders in of the Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Unions (AMCOs).

"The aim of the system is to ensure that farmers and traders benefit from the produce, it is meant to keep the produce in safe place. The farmer or trader has more advantage as he/she can use the receipt given to seek for loans in financial institutions while waiting for the produce to be sold at good price," he said.

According to him, if well supervised, the system will benefit and transform a number of farmers across the country.

Mgumba said that most of farmers

have recognised the importance of smart farming which include proper use of fertiliser which give them more yields.

In the meeting, Mgumba said that the country has enough surplus of fertiliser stock.

In November last year, President John Magufuli said that the government will not interfere in setting up maize prices.

The president said, when some people complain about maize prices it means that the farmers are happy because they are reaping from the hard work they put in the field.

President Magufuli, was speaking in Morogoro while on his way to Dodoma, he said farmers are investing a lot in purchasing agricultural inputs as well as human capital to produce, therefore; they are free to set the prices.

"The farmers are free to set prices because they are the one, who spend their energy and money to produce so the government can't dictate the prices...if you can't afford the prices you should produce your own maize," said the president.



**Prices of farm produce depend on market demand and changes, so it is difficult to control the price, farmers are free to produce and sell their crops anywhere but they should adhere to the country's rules and regulations**

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

## 'Mkenda border served over 170 people in April this year'

MKENDA Immigration centre in Songea which borders Tanzanian and Mozambique has served 174 people including Tanzanians and foreigners in the month of April this year.

Speaking when he gave a report on the operations of the centre before the Ruvuma Regional Commissioner Christina Mndeme, head of the centre Inspector Ambinga Swai said out of the number, 73 were Tanzanians who entered the country, 44 went out of the country and 17 foreigners entered the country while 40 went out during the period.

She however said all Tanzanians and foreigners who entered the country

were all ordered to have a self-quarantine at Peramiho which is located some few meters from Songea town adding that by April 27, 92 people were quarantined.

She said out of the number 82 were Tanzanians and 10 were foreigners where only one was suspected to be covid-19 positive.

Speaking after inspecting the centre the RC hailed the immigration department for the job well done and warned

some savants whom she said were involving themselves in corruption practices in order to let in some people without being quarantined.

She called upon the immigration officers to wash their hands regularly and wear face masks but also ensure all foreigners and Tanzanians who enter the country are quarantined.

"Test everyone passing through this border whether Tanzanian or foreigner, we have brought you these thermal

scanners for the task, let me thank all health workers who are at the forefront to fight this pandemic," she added.

In another development, the RC gave 500,000/- as a token to officers who are providing security at the border for their dedication to securing the country.

Mkenda border which is located some 140 kilometers from Songea town and borders Mozambique started operations in 2009.

## Mwanza RC directs Magu authorities to supervise completion of OPD building at district's hospital

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

MWANZA Regional Commissioner John Mongella has directed authorities in Magu district council to supervise and make sure that the Out Patient Department (OPD) building at the district's hospital is completed before June 30, this year.

Mongella made the directive yesterday here when he visited the council to oversee implementation of various projects in the district.

"Work hard to ensure that the building is completed before the next fiscal year commences for the community to access health services, we hope that Prime Minister will be here to inaugurate the building once

completed," he said.

He said that the government major aim is to improve the overall health in the country thus reduce and eradicate all health complications.

For his part, the District's Executive Director George Lutengano said that the government gave them 200m/- for the rehabilitation of an older OPD building but the management decided to build a new one which will serve more people.

"We communicated with the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Government) who then agreed with our decision and promised to give us more funds so as to complete the construction," he said.

He promised the regional commissioner that they are going to work hard to ensure that they find other funds to complete the construction while waiting for the ministry to dish out the monies.

Some of the residents at the area said that the construction of the OPD building will increase the overall well-being of the residents by enabling people have access to quality health services as they will no longer have to travel miles searching for the quality services.

Reports shows that inadequate health services are a major obstacle to the socio-economic development and have a negative health impact in the population.



Aimana John (R), a nursing officer with Dar es Salaam's Jakaya Kikwete Cardiac Institute, speaks on the right way to clean hands. It was at a seminar on ways to fight Covid-19 held at the specialised medical facility yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Anna Nkinda

## HALMASHAURI YA JIJI LA DODOMA



### TANGAZO LA UUZAJI WA VIWANJA

Mkurugenzi wa Halmashauri ya Jiji la Dodoma anawatangazia Wananchi wote kuwa kutakuwa na zoezi uuzaji wa Viwanja kuanzia TAREHE 25/04/2020 katika eneo la wazi Manispaa ya zamani (karibu na Sabasaba) kuanzia saa 2:00 Asubuhi hadi saa 9:30 Alasiri.

Viwanja vinavyouzwa ni katika maeneo ya:

ENEO	MATUMIZI NA BEI TSHS KWA (SQM1)
Iyumbu New Town Centre, karibu na UDOM na mradi wa Watumishi Housing	• Apartment 7,500/= • Biashara 10,000/=
Njedengwa Investment Centre, Karibu na Mradi wa Nyumba 300 wa Kisa	• Apartment 13,070/= • Biashara 18,876/=
Nala Industrial Area, Karibu na Kituo cha Malori	• Viwanda 5,000/=
Medeli Extension, Karibu na Jengo la Hazina na Benki Kuu	• Hotel 80,000/= • Taasisi 40,000/=
Mtumba (Karibu na Mji wa Serikali na Ikulu)	• ZONE II Makazi 6,000/= • Makazi na Biashara 7,500/=
Nala, Karibu na Chuo cha IFM	• Makazi 2,500/=
Mahomanyika, KM 2 kutoka unapojengwa Uwanja Mpya wa Ndege	• Makazi 5,000/=
Mapinduzi, Karibu na Kituo cha SGR	• Makazi 6,500/=
Kitelela, Karibu na Unapojengwa Uwanja wa Ndege Mpya	• Makazi 5,000 • Makazi na Biashara 6,000/=
Ihumwa, Karibu na Itakapojengwa Bandari Kavu	• Makazi 6,000/= • Makazi na Biashara 6,500/=
Chahwa, Karibu na Ikulu	• Makazi 3,000/=

NB: Malipo yote yafanyike ndani ya Siku 90 baada ya kupata hati ya madai.

Kwa mawasiliano zaidi piga simu namba 0714 785513.

Tangazo hili limetolewa na:  
Mkurugenzi wa Jiji,  
DODOMA

# WFP warns food insecurity could more than double across East Africa

By Guardian Reporter

THE spread of COVID-19 risks is devastating countries across East Africa, where food insecurity could more than double in just three months, the United Nations has warned.

The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) estimates that some 20 million people currently do not have secure provisions of food across nine countries in the region: Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda.

Compared to other parts of the world, these countries have so far registered few confirmed COVID-19 cases, with numbers still counted in the dozens or hundreds.

However, due to their often weak economies and poor health infrastructure they are considered highly vulnerable to the impacts of the mounting crisis.

"WFP projections are currently that the number of food insecure people in the region is likely to increase to 34 or up to 43 million during the next three months due to the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19," spokeswoman Elisabeth Byrs told journalists in a virtual briefing.

In the worst-case scenario, "food insecurity will have more than doubled," she stressed, adding that nearly half of the projected 43 million people affected were expected to be acutely food insecure.

She said the WFP urgently needed more than \$500 million for just the next three to six months to scale up its operations in the Horn of Africa and wider East Africa.

The pandemic, which to date has killed more than 210,000 people worldwide out of more than three million infected, has created an "unprecedented crisis," Byrs said.

"It is not just a supply side problem, such as drought or locusts, or a demand side issue, such as a recession. It is both, at the same time and on a global scale," she said.

WFP's chief David Beasley rang leaders of some of the world's richest nations with a critical message: The coronavirus pandemic is not only affecting their economies but also the economies of vulnerable and conflict-torn countries where millions of people will face starvation if you cut the UN agency's funding for food, he said.

"If we have money and access we can avert famine and we can truly avert catastrophic humanitarian death from starvation," Beasley said.

"But if we lose our funding, or we lose supply chain, there's going to be disaster."

Last week, the director of the food agency warned the UN Security Council that the world is "on the brink of a hunger pandemic" that could lead to "multiple famines of biblical proportions" within a few months if immediate action was not taken.

"What you see in Africa right now is nothing compared to what you're going to see, just like what you were looking at in the United States or the UK just six weeks ago," he said.

*"But if we lose our funding, or we lose supply chain, there's going to be disaster."*



Arusha regional administrative secretary Richard Kwitega (L) checks a thermometer presented to him by Maasai Women Development Organisation director Ndinini Sika in Arusha city yesterday. The RAS received an assortment of items meant to complement efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19 infections. Photo: Correspondent Cynthia Mwilolezi

## Rukwa police report arresting man in connection with his father's murder

By Guardian Correspondent, Sumbawanga

POLICE in Rukwa Region have arrested one man, a resident of Mtenga village in Nkasi district alleged for killing his father Ntemi Seni (65) with machetes as he demanded inheritance.

The Regional Police Commander (RPC) for Rukwa Justine Masejo said the incident happened over the weekend at around 9:30 pm in the village.

The man (36) is reportedly to have forced his father to give him a share of his inheritance so that it helps him in life so that he stops being dependent.

According to the RPC, the suspect had on several occasions told his father to give him his inheritance but his father denied doing so prompting him to enter into a wrangle that made the two to physically confront each other.

It was during confrontation that the man sliced his father with machetes hence causing his death.

The RPC said the father bleed uncontrollably shortly after the incident and died.

According to the RPC the suspect is being questioned and he will be taken to court upon completion of investigations.

In another development, two pupils

from Sikaunga Primary school in Nkasi district have been found dead after drowning in a river where they went swimming.

The two pupils Himid Pastor (13) a standard five pupil and Andrew Pastor a standard two pupil were found dead along Kamawe river in the area.

The RPC said their bodies have been investigated and it has been discovered that they died of suffocation.



Dar es Salaam's River Ng'ombe undergoes expansion as part of a strategy to spare houses in the neighbourhood the destructive impact of floods. Photo: Selemani Mpochi

## Police hold 12 Coast Region traders allegedly for inflating price of sugar

By Guardian Correspondent, Kibaha

TWELVE traders from Bagamoyo, Kisarawe and Chalinze districts in Coast Region have been arrested allegedly for selling sugar at a hiked price contrary to the government's indicative price of 2,700/-.

Coast Regional Police Commander Wankyo Nyigesa said the traders have been selling the commodity between 3,000/- and 4,000/- despite the government's directives not to hike the price of the sweetener.

According to him, an operation conducted by the Police Force in various parts of the region found a number of dishonest traders hiking price of sugar illegally.

He named the suspects as Yohana Ally (41), Joackim James (35) and Hemed Ramadhani (28) from Kisarawe district who were selling the commodity at price of 3,200/-.

In Bagamoyo, the taskforce arrested traders identified as Hishimiwe Fanuel (48) who was caught with one kilogramme of sugar selling at 3,500/- Rose John (30) had three kilogrammes selling at 4,000/-.

Others are Boaz Zephania (27) found with five kilogrammes at a price of 3,000/- per kg, Mwanaabasi Ramadhani (32) had 40kg selling at 3,000/- and Ally Mwandike (30) who was found with 10kg.

Wankyo said that the operation also found other unscrupulous traders in

Chalinze. They are Deo Julius (50) who was caught with 150kg selling at 3,000/-, Andrew Msigwa (22) who had 30kg selling at price of 3,500/- and Daud Lucian (41) who had 20kg and selling at 3,000/-.

"The police force will be closely monitoring and conducting patrols to ensure that all the unscrupulous traders who have been selling sugar higher than the directive price stop the practice immediately," he said.

Commander Wankyo said that during the operation a total of 313kg of sugar have been seized since it was commenced on April 27, this year.

Recently, the government announced new price caps of sugar after domestic prices spiked to 4,500/-.

The government set a maximum retail price of 2,600/- per kg in the commercial hub of Dar es Salaam and somehow higher in upcountry.

Minister for Agriculture, Japhet Hasunga said retail in Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Manyara, Tanga, Morogoro, Coast will pay 2,700/- for a kilogramme of sugar.

However, residents of Kigoma, Katavi, Rukwa and Ruvuma will pay the highest amount to get a kilogramme of the sweetener where it will retail at 3,200/-.

The price caps, according to Hasunga, have been prepared in line with the Sugar Industry Act No. 26 of 2001 (Cap. 251).

## Iringa benefits from 31.9m/- worth aid to support fight against spread of Covid-19

By Correspondent Friday Simbaya, Iringa

IRINGA Region has received various items worth 31.9m/- from various stakeholders to support the fight against the spread of Covid-19 infections.

The support includes facemasks, sanitisers, thermo scanners, tanks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) dresses.

Receiving the donations yesterday

here, Regional Commissioner Ally Hapi commended all stakeholders for supporting the government's efforts to combat corona virus disease and in particular helping health service providers by supplying them with PPE general gown and surgical masks.

"We appreciate all contribution given by stakeholders and companies saying that the donation is highly needed this time when the country is struggling they contain the spread of

the infections," he said.

He said: "Qihaya General Enterprise, the manufacture of electric poles has donated 20 PPE overall gowns, sanitiser, liquid soap, six thermo scanners and hand washing tanks of 200 liters each.

The Iringa based-ASAS Group of Companies provided 1200 masks, medical supplies as well as 40 PPE overall gowns.

"Other stakeholders are SAI Energy

of Iringa municipal that provided 15 cartons of sanitisers, Clinton Institute of Iringa municipality has donated seven thermo scanners, 120 surgical masks, PPE and posters and the Ministry of Health from Dodoma who also provided thermo scanners, surgical masks and heavy duty PPE set," he noted.

Speaking, the chief executive officer of Qihaya General Enterprise Co. LTD, Leonard Maenda said the donation

was part of the organisation's service commitment to ensure that health servants and Tanzanians remain safe amid rapid spread of the Coronavirus disease.

The highly contagious, pneumonia-causing illness (Coronavirus) which was firstly reported in Wuhan, China has infected over 3 million people across the World.

Experts have frequently been advising the public to avoid

unnecessary gatherings, practice self-isolation for them to remain safe during this time when the country and the World at large struggles to battle the spread of the highly flu-like Covid-19 outbreak.

COVID-19 is characterised by mild symptoms including a runny nose, sore throat, cough, and fever. Illness can be more severe for some people and can lead to pneumonia or breathing difficulties.

# Chinese construction firm donates Covid-19 PPE to Sikonge District

By Correspondent Allan Ntana, Sikonge

CHINESE-based construction firm Jiangxi Geo-Engineering (Group) Corporation has donated protective stuffs worth 2.7m/- to Sikonge District in Tabora region to fight corona virus infections.

The company is currently building 108 km tarmac road from Tabora to Katavi (Usesula-Komanga)

Speaking at the handing over occasion held this week in Sikonge District, Jiangxi Geo-Engineering Corporation Highway Engineer, Guo Yuan fang said that the support will help to accelerate the government efforts toward preventing the corona virus pandemic.

He said since the commencement of the project they are granted all necessary support from the government and local communities, hence feeling indebted to give back prop-up to the community.

The company secretary, Li Bo clarified that the support will help to safeguard the well-being of communities in Sikonge District adding that they will continue supporting local communities in different areas.

He advised Sikonge communities to take care of their health and protect others by washing their hands with water and soap or using alcohol-based hand rub (sanitisers) to kills viruses that may be on their hands.

Sikonge District Commissioner Peres Magiri applauded Jiangxi Geo Engineering and Adam filling station for their essential support to Sikonge communities as it will minimise the shortage of protective stuffs in the district.

He urged people to wear face masks, wash their hands thoroughly with water and soap or use sanitisers and cover their mouth with flexed elbow or disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing.

Magiri ordered health care workers to assume full responsibility by

ensuring that all necessary preventive and protective measures are taken to minimise the risk of corona virus infections.

Sikonge District Council Chairman Peter Nzalalila narrated that proper use of personal protective gears and social distancing remains as the core course on preventing the community from acquiring the disease.

Dr Theopista Elisa, Sikonge District Medical Officer (DMO) revealed that currently there is no medication or vaccine approved by WHO to treat the disease hence advised the community to avoid close contacts with others as it spreads through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.

The donated stuffs were 4 cartons of soap worth 160,000/- (for washing hands), 10 buckets worth 200,000/-, thermo scanner machine worth 350,000/- and 2m/- cash for buying masks and other protective equipments.



Rehabilitation of a Kigogo Mbuyuni section of a road demolished by floodwaters after the banks of Dar es Salaam's River Msimbazi burst gets under way, as captured yesterday. Photo: Guardian Photographer



**He said since the commencement of the project they are granted all necessary support from the government and local communities, hence feeling indebted to give back prop-up to the community**

By Guardian Correspondent, Karatu

KARATU District Council has allocated 100m/- in tackling Covid-19 pandemic to be used for purchase of medical equipment, drugs and safe infrastructures aimed to tame the disease infections.

The Council Chairman Lazaro Gege said if there will be the need for the Council to sit, it will do so to discuss on the appropriate ways to fight the pandemic while calling for the committee tasked to tackle the disease to put up strategies for educating the wananchi on the preventive measures thereof.

He said the money that was originally allocated for various celebrations that had been planned should be diverted to the fight against Covid-19.

Karatu District Commissioner

# Karatu District sets aside 100m/- to fight Covid-19

Theresa Mahongo congratulated the Council's decision for allocating the money to Covid-19 issues and added that earlier, the Seventh Day Adventists Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church for Tanzania (ELCT) and other individuals contributed funds for the same purpose, which was used to purchase drugs and other necessities.

She hailed Health workers and staff for their great efforts and called for placing the militia at quarantine centres to ensure those isolated do not flee.

She also called on wananchi to ensure that no more than 30 people attend burials and cautioned people who have been playing pool, cards and drinking local brew without any precautions.

Karatu District Executive Director (DED) Waziri Mourice said the scourge they face needs to make tough decisions and so far it is the council's priority in its expenditure.

He said buying a vehicle for the director is not a priority - there are other pressing expenses necessitated

by the pandemic - especially to the health sector.

Karatu District Medical Officer Dr Mustafa Waziri said they have mobilised the public on the precautionary measures against Covid-19 infections including washing of hands by running water and calling on them to have such facilities at home and other areas congested with people - markets and auctions.

He said they will allocate schools to house Covid-19 patients in case their numbers will increase.



A vendor 'sells' locally made cloth-based face masks to motorists along then Mwenge stretch of Dar es Salaam's Sam Nujoma Road at yesterday. Photo: Guardian Photographer

# Kongwa District Council plans to increase revenue from market at Kibaigwa

By Polycarp Machira, Kongwa

KONGWA District Council is set to increase revenue collections and levies at Kibaigwa international market.

District executive director, Dr Omari Mkulo, said during an exclusive interview with this paper, calling on traders across the region to sell their maize through the market.

He said that the municipal authority has been collecting a total of 511 million/- per year from the international market, adding that plans are underway to collect more revenues.

Dr Omari urged traders and farmers in the region and beyond to use the market in efforts to help control influx of middlemen who are not trustworthy and do not have interests of farmers at heart.

"I urge farmers in the central zone and neighbouring regions to utilize the Kibaigwa market for grains for they will get the right value for their products unlike in other areas where they will get less monies for their products," he said.

The DED said the new marketing season has started and there are so many middlemen who have since started following farmers at the farms trying to lure them to purchase without weighing the yields.

Dr Omary also noted that to ensure no losses in grains, the authority has

changed the leadership of the market and have installed people employed by the municipal authority.

He named the newly appointed leaders at market included a manager and secretary who will ensure the collections are well utilized.

The acting market manager, Imani Matonya said the new season has begun and the market is already receiving new yields.

He said currently the market releases at least 10,000 tonnes of maize per day and the expectation is to increase the amount in the near future.

The market, according to the acting director receives maize from the regions of Dodoma, Morogoro and Tanga. However, the nearby region of Manyara is yet to supply maize at the market.

He noted that the daily collection of levies in the market is on average 2,000,000/- with sales of between 500/- and 550/- per kilogramme of grains.

*"I urge farmers in the central zone and neighbouring regions to utilize the Kibaigwa market for grains for they will get the right value for their products unlike in other areas where they will get less monies for their products"*

# Zanzibar Red Cross donates 6m/- worth of items to prisons

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

INTERNATIONAL Red Cross Organisation Zanzibar Zone has donated various items to Zanzibar Prisons for protection against Covid-19 infections.

Red Cross Zanzibar Representative Ubwa Salum said they have decided to give the donation to protect prisoners and remandees.

He said efforts to tackle the disease are more important in prisons because once the disease afflicts prisons it

would be catastrophic.

"We have decided to provide assistance valued at 6m/- including masks, sanitisers to be used for the protection of prisoners and staff thereof," he said.

Zanzibar Commissioner of Prisons

Ali Abdallah Ali congratulated the Red Cross for the assistance which has come at the right time in the fight against the pandemic.

He said the nation is faced with a great challenge against Covid-19 pandemic and prisons are places that

take in many people at different times.

Ali mentioned various steps already taken in the fight against the disease including reduction of congestion in prisons and discharging of bail able remandees.

"We have started implementing

the High Court's directive...we have discharged all remandees who qualified for bail to reduce congestion," he said.

He congratulated Red Cross for its assistance at different times aimed at improving conditions at prisons.

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SATURDAY 2 MAY 2020

Taking A New Look  
At The News  
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

## Workers are an important asset in the world of work

YESTERDAY the world marked Labour Day or May Day an annual holiday to celebrate the achievements of workers. Labour Day has its origins in the labour union movement, specifically the eight-hour day movement, which advocated eight hours for work, eight hours for recreation, and eight hours for rest.

For most countries, Labour Day is synonymous with, or linked with, International Workers' Day, which occurs on 1 May. For other countries, Labour Day is celebrated on a different date, often one with special significance for the labour movement in that country. Labour Day is a public holiday in many countries.

This holiday is most commonly associated as a commemoration of the achievements of the labour movement. The holiday may also be known as International Worker's Day or May Day and is marked with a public holiday in over 80 countries.

Dr. John P. Magufuli has always reiterated his mission to improve workers conditions saying it's among his top priorities for his five years tenure.

The President made the remarks as he was addressing thousands of workers who thronged the grounds at the capital city, Dodoma to mark the International workers day in 2016.

In his speech, Dr. Magufuli stressed on the importance of formal employment contracts for workers, insisting that the labour laws, which were reviewed in 2004, must be observed seriously and stern measures should be taken for employers who disobey them. The laws also provide for the right for employers and employees to form and/or join trade unions of their choice.

As regards social security schemes, the President announced his approval of merging some of the five state run pension funds to form fewer number of financially robust schemes urging for

more workers to join and contribute to the funds. He warned employers from public as well as private sectors to submit their workers' contributions in time.

We cannot tolerate corruption, laziness, and lack of integrity among workers ... the government should remain committed in dealing with those who cause losses to the country as per the law.

Workers are an important asset in the world of work and their contributions to building the economy should not be undermined.

The country's economic growth is currently improving at 7 per cent, this should be reflected on the lives of workers who are the main contributors to national development.

More than half of the developing world's workers nearly 1.5 billion people are in vulnerable employment. These workers are less likely than wage earners to have formal working arrangements, be covered by social protection such as pensions and health care or have regular earnings.

We acknowledged the efforts done by the government to create jobs for youth. The recently released Integrated Labour Force Survey report of 2014 showed that the economy had created 3.4 million jobs in 8 years.

We salute the fifth phase government endeavour in creating those jobs. It is imperative, in the same vein, that we also need to improve conditions for working women and men who are working but not earning enough to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

The world is now experiencing several forces which are transforming work, from technological developments, impact of climate change, to the changing character of production and employment. We therefore call upon the workers and employers to think about the future of workers.

## We can get rid of dangerous pollutants that weaken the planet's life systems

IN the early 21st century, there has been a global movement towards the phase-out of lightweight plastic bags. Single-use plastic shopping bags, commonly made from low-density polyethylene plastic, have traditionally been given for free to customers by stores when purchasing goods: the bags have long been considered a convenient, cheap, and hygienic way of transporting items.

Problems associated with plastic bags include use of non-renewable resources such as crude oil, gas and coal difficulties during disposal, and environmental impacts. Concurrently with the reduction in lightweight plastic bags, shops have introduced reusable shopping bags.

Governments all over the world have taken action to ban the sale of lightweight bags, charge customers for lightweight bags, or generate taxes from the stores that sell them. The Bangladesh government was the first to do so in 2002, imposing a total ban on lightweight plastic bags. Between 2010 and 2019, the number of public policies intended to phase out plastic carryout bags tripled.

As of 1 January 2020, such bans have been introduced in 74 countries, with varying degrees of enforcement, and 37 countries instead impose a charge per bag. Bans and charges have also been enacted by some local jurisdictions such as states.

Plastic bags cause many minor and major ecological and environmental issues. The most general issue with plastic bags is the amount of waste produced. Many plastic bags end up on streets and subsequently pollute major water sources, rivers, and streams.

Even when disposed of properly, they take many years to decompose and break down, generating large amounts of garbage over long periods of time. Improperly discarded bags have

polluted waterways, clogged sewers and been found in oceans, affecting the ecosystem of marine creatures.

In Tanzania, environmental partners have commended the government's interventions to address environmental pollution, including the ban on plastic bags. "Hearty congratulations to the government of Tanzania for implementing the ban on plastic bags. The development partners group on environment stand ready to continue supporting these efforts," said Julia Hannig, the representative of development partners on environment during commemoration of the World Environment Day cycling event held at the Mnazi Mmoja grounds in Dar es Salaam.

The cycling event attracted more than 200 cyclists and representatives from UN agencies, the development partners group on environment, civil society, city council officials, philanthropists, youth and private sector entities.

Hanning noted that Tanzania has also committed itself to reducing the use of charcoal, the main indoor polluter and cause of over 20,000 deaths per year.

"Many development partners are supporting these efforts and hope that reusing and recycling through improved waste management will be given more attention in the coming days, especially in Dar es Salaam where most of the country's waste is produced," she said.

This year's global theme for World Environment Day—'Beat air pollution' is in-line with the government's ban of single use carrier bags.

"Seven days down the road, the government is quite impressed with the levels of compliance and response from the private sector and public as a whole towards the ban of plastic bags," said the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Vice President's Office, Ambassador Joseph Sokoine in his remarks at the same event.

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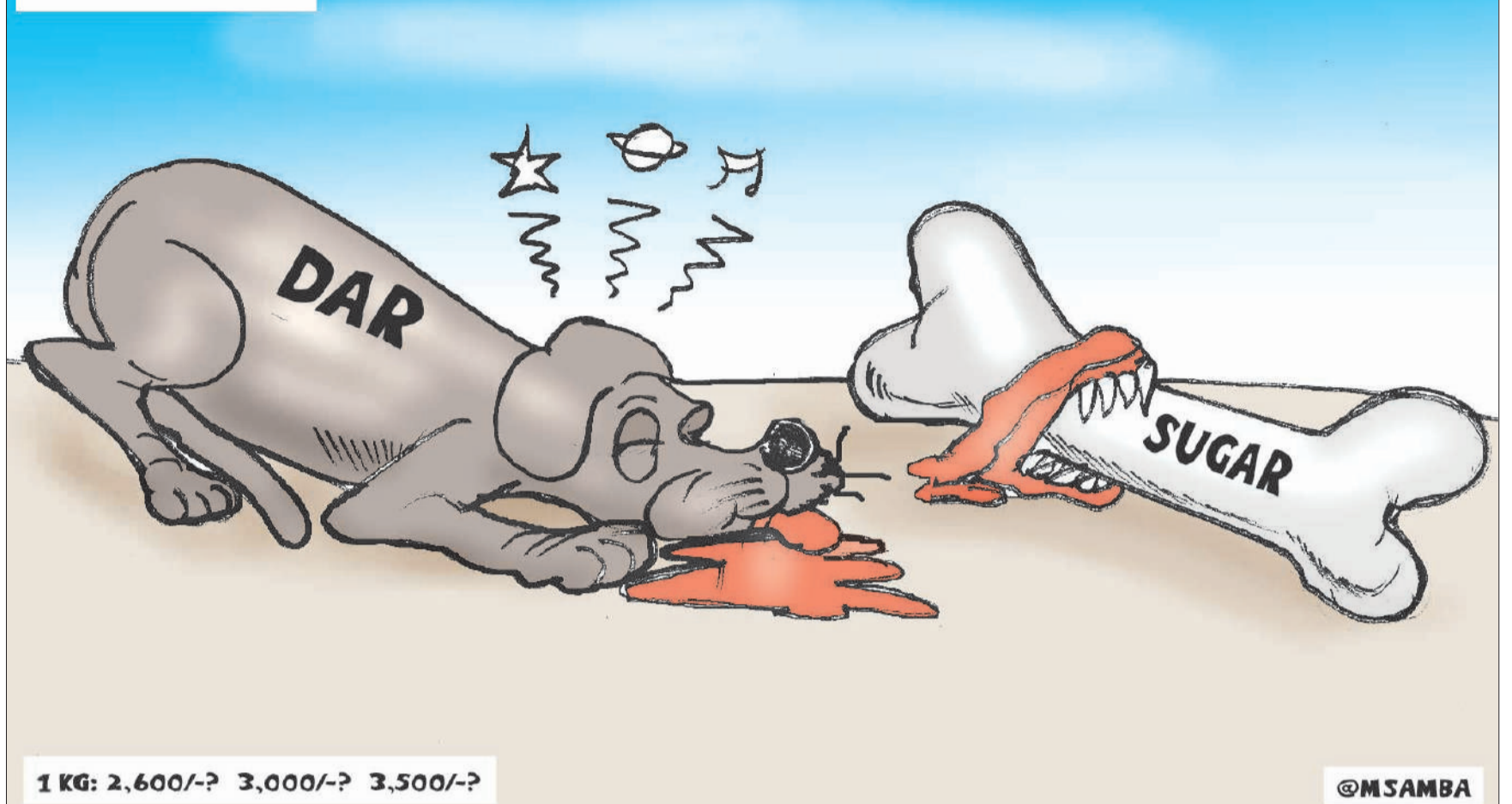
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### INDICATIVE PRICES



## The post-COVID-19 economy: What is to be done?

BY UDDIN IFEANYI

WE will need to do more by way of reforms if our economy is to live up to our sundry aspirations for it. For instance, we do not even know how many businesses have been bankrupted by the recent lockdown. How many employees have lost their jobs?... Simply by having data that reflect... the conditions of the economy, we indicate our preparedness to better plan for our people.

Speculation on the morphology of global economies as they pass through COVID-19 and its effects has become a niche category amongst talking heads everywhere. A sharp contraction; followed immediately by an equally sharp recovery. A sharp contraction; scraping the bottom of a deep (or shallow) trough for a while before rapidly mending. A sharp contraction; followed by several recovery iterations. The combinations vary. And the only thing on which all commentators agree is that the entry into the coming recession will be nasty and brutish. Another view is currently not in doubt. Despite the fancy, alphabet-themed shapes being peddled by eggheads across the world on the possible trajectories of recovery, different economies are going to emerge from this crisis in their own way. In a broader sense, though, the general biology of the global economy will matter.

For instance, it will matter how work changes as a result of this crisis, and how the changes to work help alter the outcomes of the crisis. This part of the conversation is not just about whether work, as we once knew it, changes under pressure from some staff becoming completely free of their desks at HQ. It has more to do with that part where the realisation of how integral China is to global supply chains forces companies to restructure in mitigation of what is now considered a severe vulnerability.

China's emergence as the world's contract manufacturer was not always the liability it seems today. In an alternate reality, it enabled mass production of goods and parts thereof on its territory, and just-in-time production in more advanced economies. It brought down prices across the board. Laptops, flatscreen television sets, cars all became affordable to more people. At a point, one of the strongest arguments against the trade wars initiated by the U.S. against China involved reminding the world that were the iPhone to be manufactured solely in the U.S., higher labour costs there would have put it beyond the reach of the many who now tout it as a fashion accessory. Such was the strength of this argument that in raising his multiple tariffs against



imports from China, Donald Trump, the U.S. president, took pains to exclude Bluetooth-enabled devices.

But that was such a long time ago, now. In a couple of months time, the strategic challenge before companies with a link to global supply chains will be to organise their processes to reduce the dependence on suppliers elsewhere. So, they will keep more inventory. They will move suppliers closer preferably opting for those located as close to them as possible. If the advances in global freight and logistics was a key part of the broadening of the idea of nearness to raw materials and supplies as a key consideration in the siting of industries in the old days, the reduction of vulnerabilities from exposure to one main, albeit low-cost supplier to the world, will help redesign global freight and logistics businesses going forward.

How to spur growth and development in such economies will become a new field for study. Using foreign exchange from the export of crude oil will certainly play no part in the new narrative. Forsooth, except for the likes of Norway, and to a lesser extent, Australia...

Airlines and the hospitality business have taken a hit from the lockdowns imposed by governments worldwide to try and tame the virus behind the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a fair bet that they will hurt more as global production rules change. And global prices will rise. Final demand will be cramped everywhere. And hopefully, economies will become that much inefficient, if not smaller, even. Worse, for frontier and emerging economies, a major part of their development storyline will change radically. The bit about emerging economies moving

into the production value chain that China abandons as it moves up the product quality log, will no longer be available.

How to spur growth and development in such economies will become a new field for study. Using foreign exchange from the export of crude oil will certainly play no part in the new narrative. Forsooth, except for the likes of Norway, and to a lesser extent, Australia, this part of the development dynamics for commodity exporting countries was always a myth.

So, what is an economy like ours to do? Put differently, what are our chances of emerging in decent fettle from this crisis? And of making a decent fist of the post-COVID-19 world? Slim. And slimmer. Yet, there is agreement that we improve our chances by reforming the economy. The Buhari administration's biggest conceit is to advertise itself as a reforming government. But even before this pandemic, it had superintended over what might arguably be the biggest enlargement of government as a player in the economy in recent times.

"What do we need to do to make our economy attractive to capital investment?" Much of the answers available run counter to current received opinion in the country. Take our insistence on conflating the naira's exchange rate with national virility.

To no effect. Alternative views describe a path out of our current crisis in terms of finding answers to one question: "What do we need to do to make our economy attractive to capital investment?" Much of the answers available run counter to current received opinion in the country. Take our insistence on conflating the naira's exchange rate with national virility.

In vindication of this reading of the imperatives before our economy, we have squandered several kings' ransoms defending the naira's exchange rate against "speculators" and "saboteurs". This mindset may help hold psychoses down, but by keeping the naira's exchange rate artificially high, we enforce an arbitrary allocation of wealth in favour of our cities and against rural communities.

Yet, the urban petty bourgeoisie's love of imported goods and services is but a minuscule part of this claim. Prices, relative far more than absolute ones, matter for how a society allocates resources between the production of different goods and services, and how much it saves or invests. And that is for internal prices. As an external price, the naira's exchange rate describes how much non-residents are willing to spend to hold local assets. And when that price is costlier than elsewhere, the only way you can keep money interested in this economy is tie yourself in knots as constraining as the central bank has done over the last three years.

We will need to do more by way of reforms if our economy is to live up to our sundry aspirations for it. For instance, we do not even know how many businesses have been bankrupted by the recent lockdown. How many employees have lost their jobs? Or how many of the latter are temporary. Consequently, it is improbable that the size of official intervention in support of all of these would be significant enough to push the economy's envelope. Simply by having data that reflect, as faithfully as possible, the conditions of the economy, we indicate our preparedness to better plan for our people.



# THRDC proposes cost reduction for ICT and internet services during Covid-19 pandemic

By Gerald Kitabu

**T**HE Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) has urged the government to address the costs of ICT products and services, mobile and internet services and advising service providers to reduce charges on consumers in light of the current Coronavirus outbreak in Tanzania.

THRDC's National Coordinator Onesmo Olungurumwa said that internet service providers should offer cost effective internet bundles to ease the burden on Tanzanians at this time where many people are working from home and students need internet services for learning purposes.

Ever since the government of the United Republic of Tanzania declared the first case of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on 16th March, 2020, and subsequently closure of schools, institutions of higher learning while imposing bans on unnecessary gatherings, there has been a sustained reduction of business activities in the country as offices and many businesses closed to prevent further spread of the virus.

As of 28th April 2020, according to Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa, the number of COVID-19 case victims have risen to 480, with 167 recoveries and 16 deaths. The current state of affairs has forced, students, teachers, businesses, human rights defenders, Civil Society Organizations and the public servants to close offices as part of implementing social distancing and

stay at home rules. This situation, however, is a blessing in disguise for mobile network operators, internet service providers and those working to provide Information and Communication Technology services, who have been earning huge profit, since electronic equipment such as mobile telephone and computers are increasingly being relied upon for most communications locally and across the world during these times of the coronavirus pandemic.

In the United States and United Kingdom for example, where coronavirus infections have intensified— forcing authorities to impose curfews, mobile networks and internet service providers in those countries such as AT&T and Comcast of US and Virgin Media and Vodafone of U.K and many others, have slashed service costs for their customers. Other service providers have gone an extra mile by offering free internet services for two months or more.

Therefore, the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) calls upon internet service providers, mobile networks operators, ICT companies, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), HRDs, CSOs stakeholders, the Tanzanian Government and internet and mobile service users to consider this situation.

We also urge human rights defenders (HRDs), CSOs and other stakeholders to set a good precedent for the public by making the best use of online communication tools and services as they work from home. We recommend using Zoom.com, Jitsi



Meet, Bluejeans, Wire and Skype for easy video conferencing. They can also use WhatsApp, Signal and Telegram for chat and instant messaging," he said.

Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition called upon mobile network operator, internet service providers, and vendors of ICT services to reduce costs for their services and products.

The internet service providers should offer cost effective internet bundles to ease the burden on Tanzanians at this time where many people are working

**The National Coordinator for Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) Onesmo Olungurumwa. File photo**

from home and students need internet services for learning purposes.

"We also ask the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) to instruct mobile service providers and internet service providers to reduce service costs or to provide free service packages to users such as free Wi-Fi at commuter bus stops.

This is the right time for TCRA to reduce or completely waive registration costs for owners of online accounts like YouTube and Blogs, so that teachers could make use of these platforms to teach students from home, let alone allowing the wider society to use them for educational purposes," he said.

Explaining further he advised students to stay at home and use social media platforms and television for educational purposes.

Vendors of ICT products including mobile telephones and computers should reduce prices for their products to ease the burden on their customers given that most families have suffered a substantial loss of income as the coronavirus pandemic continues to tighten its firm grip.

Mobile network users, internet users, and other users of electronic equipment including mobile telephones and computers should protect themselves against online criminals, conmen and

hackers, as well as upholding the social distancing policy to avoid being infected with the coronavirus.

Internet service providers as well as mobile money and other users of banking services to wisely use their monetary resources and save as much as possible since it is not known when this tragedy will eventually come to an end.

For his part, THRDC Advocacy Officer, Leopold Masha advised the Ministry of Finance through the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to reduce relevant taxes related to internet services for service providers, so that Tanzanians can enjoy using the internet at this time.

"We advise business owners to seize the opportunity and use social networks to promote and sell their products or services to prevent people from flocking in their stores," he said.

He called on police force to stop arresting Tanzanians who use their fundamental right to accessing and imparting information through digital platforms during this time. "The police should instead continue to protect online users against criminals who take advantage of the coronavirus pandemic to commit cybercrimes," he added.

THRDC acknowledged the role of the National ICT Broadband Backbone in supplying internet services in Tanzania and in neighboring countries. We call upon respective authorities to ensure that mobile network providers and internet users keep getting access to fast and reliable internet connection during this time, he said.

We request the Government, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and parents with school-going children to arrange and compensate teachers so that they can run online classes on multiple platforms, since teachers have their own needs as it is the case of other professionals.

# All the things we need to ditch once Covid-19 pandemic over

By Luvvie Ajayi Jones

**N**ORMAL is dead. There is no normal. Normal packed up its bags and left the keys on the kitchen counter.

This Covid-19 pandemic has turned the whole world upside down, and there is truly no going back. It's like when you shave off your eyebrows one too many times and think that the good shape you had will eventually grow back in.

Ask the older women in your life. There are some things you can't come back from, and this situation we are in is one of them.

The fact that the whole world is on a "divine time-out", as my girl Devi Brown calls it, is shaking the way we have lived to the core. It has overturned all that we know to be ordinary, and maybe it is for the best.

I think God is tired of our bad ways and has been telling us to saddown (sit down) and get it together for a while, but we haven't listened. So he brought on locusts and a plague. A global biological enemy had to lock us in our houses so we can go and think about what we have done.

What we are now seeing is that the way we have been living has been unsustainable. How we have been working is slowly killing us. And why we need to reprioritise is more evident than ever.

There are things we have been forced to do, now that we are sheltered in place, and new habits we have had to pick up. When all of this is done - Father Lord, let it be sooner than later; hot girl summer shouldn't be postponed till 2026 - what stays and what goes?

What did we once engage in that no longer serves us? What did we start doing more of now that we need to continue? Here are a few things.

## The 'keep' list

One: Staying connected to those we love. Since we are all hunkered down in the house, the only way we have been able to socialise with people who aren't under our roof is

by calling them. This has been heart food and has allowed many of us to connect with the friends we haven't talked to in too long.

We are video chatting more regularly with our loved ones, and that part has been glorious. The sister circles I have been a part of have really fed me. We have to keep that after all of this.

Two: The slowdown and self-care. The hustle and bustle and grinding of our lives has rendered many of us exhausted. Capitalism is a system that requires our constant GO GO GO, and it ages us and reduces the quality of our lives.

As a professional busybody, I have felt the effects of the rat race, logging more than 110,000 miles in travel in the past five years. And now, here I am, home for the longest stretch I can imagine, with nowhere to go.

This slowdown has allowed many of us to recharge and reset. When we can go outside again, we should really consider not working so much, so hard, so often. We should also continue to prioritise our mental health and well-being.

Many of us are finally making sure that we are getting adequate sleep and exercising, not just working ourselves to the bone. Let's keep that party going.

Three: The gratitude for essential workers. The people who are going to save us are the nurses, doctors, laboratory technicians, grocery store workers, delivery people and undertakers or morticians.

They aren't the billionaires. We are thanking essential workers for putting their lives on the line for us, treating patients, making sure we are getting our food and supplies, and overall getting things done.

When all of this is behind us, let us not forget the people who showed up for us. We have to protect them at all costs, pay them the value of their work, and not take them for granted when we are no longer in the eye of the storm. Keep that same grateful energy!



**The last two temporary hospitals in Wuhan, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak in central China's Hubei Province, were shut down marking the closure of all 16 temporary hospitals in the city.**

## The 'ditch' list

One: Shaking hands and hugging. Can we leave shaking hands as a greeting behind? I have learned that folks don't really wash their hands. I mean, I knew it, but it was at the beginning of the shutdown that this point was driven home.

Men started exclaiming that they have never seen the sinks in public restrooms so occupied. And you know we have seen our share of women use the bathroom and then walk clean out like they didn't just have their hands near their private parts.

With such indisputable evidence and my growing lack of trust in humans' hygiene habits, I say we put a stop to that cultural more of shaking the hands of people, especially in business settings. No thanks, man in suit. Take this head nod and keep it moving.

Also, hugging strangers. I've always been a little iffy about mashing waists with people I don't know. Now I really don't wanna do it. No shade.

It's not you - it's the microparticles in the air that

I'm trying to avoid. We can Wakanda Forever salute.

## Buffets

Buffets are cancelled. Now that we have had to face the truth of a virus that hangs in the air for an inordinate amount of time, plus, again, people are trash with their hygiene, let's be done with open-air all-you-can-eat restaurants.

Aunties everywhere will be devastated at this ask. Shoot, we went to a buffet after my college graduation, and a few of my aunties brought Tupperware. But I can't, in good faith and good stomach, go to one again.

People coughing all out in the open - and not into their elbows - or touching food that's supposed to be for everyone. I can't even. Buffets gotta stay gone.

## Unnecessary meetings

Now that we have all seen proof that most meet-

ings should have been emails, let's be more efficient and conduct fewer of these. Let us waste each other's time less.

We don't have to sit in a room pretending that we like our offensive co-worker's ideas so often. Now we can tell them via email, "I don't think this idea will have the impact we want." In other words, "Delete that thought, and let's pretend you didn't even have it."

Covid-19 has taught us that we spend a lot of time doing unnecessary things, and life is too short for all that. The best-case scenario in all of this is that we emerge with more clarity, with more kindness, and feeling more connected to our fellow human beings. And that we never have to go to another buffet with our aunties.

**Luvvie Ajayi Jones is NY Times best-selling author of I'm Judging You: The do-better manual.**

# Wildlife trade: The unsustainability of 'sustainable use'

By Ross Harvey

'Sustainable use' ideology ignores the complexity of ecological systems and the impact of repeated over-extraction on the functionality of those systems over time.

Global calls to end the wildlife trade are eminently sensible. Nonetheless, prominent academics have defended the trade on the grounds that it generates economic benefits. They argue, for instance, that if wildlife markets and breeding farms were shut down in China, 14 million people would go without livelihoods. This figure is from a newspaper article, but appears to have no scientific backing. Even if true, it seems a poor reason to support an industry that may precipitate global economic collapses like the one presently caused by Covid-19.

At the root of this debate is an ideological confrontation. On the one hand are those who call for new economic models that pivot away from treating the environment as free capital to be endlessly exploited for human consumption.

On the other hand, there are those who believe in the "sustainable use" of natural resources; that better regulation can overcome the failures of the current model. The animating proposition is that a maximum sustainable yield (MSY) can be scientifically established and a quota for extraction set that doesn't undermine "stock" replenishment ability. With the appropriate allocation of incentives and governance mechanisms to avoid over-exploitation, sustainable extraction can be achieved.

Slight problem: When this model fails, the default response is that the incentives need to be fine-tuned. So, we tinker round the edges while the planet burns.

But the South African govern-

ment continues to call for increased utilisation and even the farming of wild species.

"Sustainable use" ideology ignores the complexity of ecological systems and the impact of repeated over-extraction on the functionality of those systems over time.

Perhaps the starkest example of economic activities justified under the auspices of "sustainable use" is South Africa's captive lion-breeding industry. The government and its scientific authority see it as providing a potential buffer against wild lion exploitation.

In other words, if we breed lions in captivity, we will be able to supply a sufficient volume of their derivative parts (bones, claws, teeth and paws) to satisfy consumers that would crowd out illegal procurement. This ignores the opportunity costs of the activity in terms of the negative impact on a country's reputation. It ignores the criminality - that legal trade provides a channel for laundering illicitly procured product - embedded in the trade. And it ignores the fact that (while correlation shouldn't be confused with causation) wild lions are being exploited for their parts in Mozambique (in the Greater Limpopo transfrontier reserve). Demand for parts continues to grow, however, resulting in industry growth from about 5,800 lions in captivity in 2013 to more than 8,000 in 2019.

Behind the ideological confrontation is a battle over the correct interpretation of Section 24 of our Constitution:

**Everyone has the right to:**

- an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
- to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that

- prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
- promote conservation; and
- secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

Curiously, the phrase "sustainable utilisation" does not appear to be anywhere enshrined despite what its proponents would have us believe. The late Environmental Affairs minister, Edna Molewa, defending the captive lion breeding industry, reduced her government's interpretation to this soundbite:

"South Africa supports the trade in legally acquired specimens such as hunting trophies and other lion specimens such as skeletons in line with our sustainable utilisation policies." A study was under way, she said, to "strengthen the evidence base for the annual review of the export quota, in order to ensure that it is sustainable and not detrimental to wild populations". That research concluded that South Africa should continue a legal lion bone trade under "adaptive management".

But the parliamentary colloquium which followed Molewa's oped in August 2018, strongly concluded - with extensive input from groups typically in favour of the government's interpretation of "sustainable utilisation" - that the industry should be terminated. This was subsequently adopted as a parliamentary resolution.

These calls continue to go unheeded. Neither a single government report, nor responses to Parliament, acknowledge the parliamentary instruction to terminate the captive lion-breeding industry.

The government's response, instead, was to promise a "high-level panel" (HLP) to review policies pertaining to rhino, lion, elephant and leopard man-



agement, trade and hunting. Minister Barbara Creecy took up the mantle from Molewa and has now appointed this panel. The official terms of reference, as minimalistic and vague as they were, strongly suggested premeditated support for trading in wild animals and their parts, and in favour of trophy hunting.

Moreover, the way in which panel members were selected casts a cloud of suspicion over the integrity of the process. Gazetted criteria for selection to the panel were that nominees should be experts in "sustainable use".

These concerns were raised in a detailed letter from the Wildlife Animal Protection Forum to the minister and the director-general. A government press statement from October 22, 2019 indicated that the HLP would fortify its existing position (and the statement was only released after the panel had been selected). New terms of reference were then published.

On 27 March, the government issued a call for evidence to be submitted to the HLP. It stipulated a 60-day deadline.

A legal letter to the minister followed, detailing objections to this procedure.

First, the call for submissions was gazetted online, but not sent to all stakeholders.

Second, this panel exists to bolster the government's "sustainable use" position, but it had no obvious guiding criteria for reviewing legislation or policy at the time it was constituted. When it "probes the breeding of lion in captivity" (as stated in the press release), for instance, exactly what is it probing for? Nowhere does HLP documentation state that it is designed to implement the parliamentary resolutions adopted by the National Assembly to terminate captive predator breeding.

Third, the call for submissions is "so broad and vague as to give stakeholders very little idea of the kind of information the HLP will regard as relevant, or the format in which this information should be submitted".

Finally, the timeframe of 60 days is clearly unreasonable, given the effects of the nationwide lockdown. Moreover, "new evidence is emerging at a rapid

rate about the origins of Covid-19 and the potential of humans to infect wild animals in turn."

Beyond the premeditated HLP construction and associated procedural confusion, a number of HLP members have an apparent vested financial interest in a particular set of outcomes. This removes all pretence of independence or objectivity, two basic criteria of decent governance. In no particular order, the following panel members have potential financial interests in the outcomes:

Mr Andries Lucas van Coller is the president of the Professional Hunters' Association of South Africa (PHASA). He is an avid supporter of all types of hunting, including of captive-bred lions.

He therefore appears to have a vested financial interest not only in the panel supporting trophy hunting in general, but in supporting the entire captive lion-breeding industry specifically. How can one expect him to make objective decisions or weigh the evidence dispassionately?

## MPs, civil society must show solidarity on resources amid Covid-19

By Nimi Mweta

DURING the current budgetary session of the legislature, some heated debate has taken place on priorities that the government should take in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. These are numerous propositions but the ones eliciting the keenest debate are those related to helping special groups. It would have been somewhat easier if contributors had the same idea of special groups, but it appears each group becomes special depending on the contributing MP. That sows confusion.

For instance, certain quarters of civil society and the official opposition in the legislature have been urging the government to come up with long and short term strategies to facilitate distance learning for primary and secondary school students during the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown.

A Shadow Minister for Education said in debating ministerial estimates that the proposed education budget should include putting in place e-learning facilities to enable teachers to have contacts with students through the internet. An idea was being built that access could be made available to all students at all levels if the government moved to prioritize the matter, which disturbs serenity in planning, etc.

The idea was being cultivated with an urgent note to it is that it is crucial to come up with alternative teaching approaches instead of relying on traditional methods which are currently not usable. But schools being what they are, what strategies really could be usable? How can there be a strategy that can be equally applied to all pupils and students irrespective of where they live? It isn't a plausible proposition at all, and fortunately this line of action is not about to be taken up by the government, but something more straightforward: end Covid-19 closure and allocate time to prepare.

The crucial point that the shadow minister raised was that there are

over 14m young people, with 12m primary and 2m secondary school pupils staying at home during the outbreak. The MP emphasized that among them there are candidates for this year's coming national examinations, appearing to suggest that such examinations must still be held irrespective of when the coronavirus outbreak actually ends.

This undue hurry with national examinations on the basis of grossly unequal social conditions for various categories of pupils and students trying to learn during the time that schools are closed informed the main part of the question. Ideas that the government should look into ways to facilitate availability of smartphones and tablets since many students cannot afford them were the natural result of this excessive concern with national examinations.

Even though the minister has now rectified the position, where maximum equity will be observed for all pupils and students to adequately prepare for exams - including finishing the syllabus in class and not on line - a few things still need to be said. The point is that this concern reflects private sector concerns about reopening schools after several months, or longer, without new school fees. That is how one comes to the idea that the education calendar must be observed by hooks and crooks, even by 'formalising' distance learning, availing smartphones and tablets - in short, Alice in the Wonderland!

Even in the face of such outlandish pressures, the government is struggling to make available testing materials and even some applicable drugs despite the rise of the herbal treatment panacea. In addition major sources of revenue like tourism and foreign trade are largely under lockdown and such quarters still expect the government to look for smartphones so as to keep up with the Joneses in preparation of this year's national examinations. It was astonishing to hear that idea, admittedly,



A trade unionist said the idleness arising from not going to school piles pressure on parents who have to juggle between work and keeping an eye on the children to keep them safe from coronavirus. That was largely a fiction, as parents just have to work instead of sitting at home to make sure children don't get out of the sitting room, and in some poorer quarters there is no sitting room to talk

about, for kids to play, etc.

The whole idea that lessons may be posted through digital platforms, radio or TV programmes using universities and college tutors available in particular areas fails to take account of the psychological mood of a coronavirus outbreak.

It is a constant waiting and hearing of the next relative who is infected and dies, so the sort of calm where

each student - and even pupil - takes to an online alternative and works as if nothing was happening is somewhat parochial to say the least. It is contempt of the pandemic to be certain, and illustrates educationist lobbying instead of solidarity as to how the government ought to use limited resources during this period.

It is the right focus that legislators and those with access to opinion

making platforms should positively use.

Saying we should formalize distance learning as an alternative is to make Covid-19 shutdown permanent, which is unwarranted at the moment, and if it later proved to be the case, it is what the pupils and students have learned up to that point that will help them in life as they adapt to new circumstances. That is the reality.

# Ecobank extends US\$3m to Africa to support fight against COVID-19

By Special Correspondent, Lome

THE Pan African Bank-Ecobank Group has contributed about US\$3 million to the fight against COVID-19 across its footprint in Africa.

In line with its commitment to the continent, various contributions were made to support the efforts of governments, the World Health Organization as

well as the private sector in alleviating the effect of the pandemic on the most vulnerable on the continent.

With our knowledge of Africa, and to complement various government efforts, we provided support in form of cash, health-care equipment and supplies, strong and sustained awareness campaigns while also using our digital platform to provide cash to some vulnerable members of

our societies, amongst others.

Ade AYEYEMI, Group CEO, Ecobank Group said: "Covid-19 is a major global threat adversely affecting all countries and our home, Africa, is particularly vulnerable. We believe in the importance of creating awareness in our communities, while also empowering them to protect themselves and their families as we battle the pandemic. We

are particularly mindful of the needs of our communities and therefore focused on these to ensure positive impact both in our urban and rural areas."

"We are also paying attention to the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak on our various customers and have taken the decision to alleviate some of the adverse impact by making some bank charges free on our digital channels. We will continue to antic-

pate situations that may require our support as developments evolve." Ade AYEYEMI added.

At Ecobank, the health and well-being of our staff and customers are our priority and we are closely following guidance from the World Health Organization, governments and health agencies.

We are encouraging virtual/remote working, wherever possible and have since suspended

physical gatherings, observing the required social and physical distancing in offices and branches which are open while also ensuring branches and ATMs are regularly disinfected across our network.

We continue to promote good hygiene and health measures within our offices and externally using our social media platforms to sensitize the public on preventive measures needed at this

critical period.

Ecobank's ATMs and call centres remain open 24/7 and full range of banking services are available via our digital platforms for all category of customers. Ecobank Mobile and Ecobank Online for the Consumer Bank customers, Ecobank Omni Lite for our Commercial Bank customers and Ecobank Omni for our Corporate and Investment Bank customers.

# Rangers keep up work to protect African wildlife despite pandemic

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

WILDLIFE rangers across Africa are continuing to protect animals and reserves despite the coronavirus pandemic, conservationists have said.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has released images of rangers at two projects it supports in Kenya and Zimbabwe continuing their work to look after threatened wildlife such as elephants.

But, because of Covid-19, they are not able to return to their homes and families between their shifts, while a lack of tourism has had a huge impact on local communities and economic pressure has increased the risk of poaching.

Rangers still hard at work include Team Lioness, eight women working to protect wildlife from poachers and safeguard people from conflicts with

elephants and other animals in community lands that surround Kenya's Amboseli National Park, on the border with Tanzania.

IFAW warned that hotels and lodges in the park have closed, incomes have dried up and there is a growing temptation to poach to provide food for families and for economic gain.

That has pushed up the risks for the female rangers, who also cannot see their children or the rest of their families, but some of whom is the only remaining breadwinner.

Community ranger Ruth Sikeita said: "I look after wild animals, providing security for the wildlife.

"It's important because animals are like us, they need to be safe like us. They benefit us, tourists visit here because of the wild animals and we are employed."

And at the IFAW-supported Panda Masuie Release Project in Victoria



Community ranger Ruth Sikeita carries out a daily wildlife patrol in Kenya

Falls, Zimbabwe, rangers are continuing to help a herd of 14 rescued and rehabilitated elephant orphans which are learning to live as wild animals.

The project aims to help young elephants slowly integrate with wild herds in what is now a protected forest reserve, but had once been used for hunting.

Handlers looking after individual elephants and forestry rangers who protect the animals and prevent them coming into conflict with local communities have been on site for up to eight weeks without a break, and are not expecting one soon.

But the long quarantine ensures their health and they are not currently having to wear protective gear,

IFAW said.

The forest reserve has not been exempt from the economic pressures brought on by the pandemic and has seen an increase in the number of poaching-related activities.

Neil Greenwood, IFAW's regional director, Southern Africa, said: "IFAW believes in the importance of rescuing and protecting individual animals as well as whole populations so this is a vital project which continues to provide daily care and protection, despite the challenges of the global pandemic."

Jos Danckwerts, project manager at the Panda Masuie release site, said: "It's impossible to put this kind

of rehabilitation work on hold - it simply can't be interrupted.

"Every day sees each individual take one step closer to living their lives as a free-roaming elephant.

"The handlers are selfless in their commitment, better still they can do their work knowing the elephants are secure and all thanks to the forestry rangers. It's a remarkable team effort."

The Panda Masuie Release Project is helping its staff cope in different ways, including building a small bush chapel and extending the vegetable garden for them to tend in downtime.

# IPA to help African innovators overcome challenges amid COVID-19 pandemic

GENEVA

THE International Publishers Association (IPA) announced on Thursday its offering financial support for African publishing entrepreneurs to overcome the staggering impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education in 2020 and beyond.

Under a four-year \$800,000 fund administered by the IPA in partnership with "Dubai Cares", the UAE-based global philanthropic organization, the grants for 2020 will be directed towards locally-owned, digital learning innovations to help African students continue their education.

This narrowed focus seeks to address the overnight predominance of homeschooling and remote learning amid the pandemic which, according to UNESCO, has forced 190 countries to close down schools and universities, affecting more than 1.5 billion school-aged children and youth, which represent around

90% of the world's student population. The winners will be selected by the IPA Africa Publishing Innovation Committee, comprising senior publishing leaders from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tunisia and South Africa.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has sent young learners and parents scrambling to find workable re-

mote learning solutions with little guidance or support. It is critical that students don't get left behind, especially in African countries where infrastructure and technological challenges are greatest," IPA Vice-President, Bodour Al Qasimi said in a statement on Thursday.

The Committee will issue a formal call for applications on 1 June

2020. It will subject applicants to a rigorous vetting process involving a written application, in-person interviews, presentations and multiple feedback sessions.

The number of grantees and amounts awarded are at the discretion of the Committee.

IPA is the world's largest federation of national, regional and

specialist publishers' associations. Our membership comprises 83 organisations from 69 countries in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe and the Americas.

Through its members, IPA represents thousands of individual publishers around the world who service markets containing more than 5.6 billion people.

# Improved seed varieties help in tackling drought, malnutrition in Malawi

By Angella Phiri

CHIMWEMWE Elifala, 29, is a farmer from Madimbo village in Mchinji district, Malawi. For several years, he has been inspiring the farming community in Madimbo and surrounding villages to adopt new agricultural technologies that he often showcases.

"I believe in knowledge sharing and farming is one area where knowledge has power. If a farmer does not know what is happening around him, he does not benefit from his farming activities," Elifala said.

His impact impressed staff at the Clinton Development Initiative (CDI) which is part of the Clinton Foundation.

The CDI helps African smallholder farming families meet their food needs and improve their livelihoods through a community agribusiness approach, which focuses on connecting farm communities to business opportunities in the agriculture sector. The CDI team worked with Elifala and his community group to start a test plot in Madimbo Village.

But this is no ordinary farmer's field. It has several varieties of maize and beans that are bred with highly desirable traits aimed at making Malawian farmers' crops more drought-tolerant and more nutritious.

Farmers visit these test plots to learn about the crops and decide which ones to grow at home.

The plot includes drought-tolerant maize varieties developed by the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT); other maize varieties that are both drought-tolerant and high in vitamin A, developed by the HarvestPlus program and CIMMYT; and a high-iron bean variety developed by HarvestPlus and the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).

These partners are all part of the CGIAR global partnership for a food secure future.

Through thirty of these test plots established in the current growing season, CDI, HarvestPlus and CIMMYT partners are reaching 30,000 farmers in 10 districts of Malawi.

CDI chief executive officer Bill Rustrick said CDI fosters economic opportunities among farming communities in



New agricultural technologies help Malawi farmers to fight malnutrition.

Malawi, Rwanda, and Tanzania by creating a supportive ecosystem of multi-sectoral partners to incubate these businesses.

"CDI works with partners, such as CIMMYT and HarvestPlus, to identify new varieties with higher yields that are climate resilient and have improved nutritional value, as these are most relevant and attractive to the farming communities we work with.

"Once farmers, through test plots, see the value of these varieties, we work to support the

availability of, and local access to them," he said.

Rustrick added that these varieties can play a catalytic role in improving lives for grower communities.

"Higher yields create surplus quality grains that also attract higher prices, and nutritious crops bring improved nutrition directly to the local community and the markets they sell to," he said.

CIMMYT, in partnership with public and private partners, has

been developing hundreds of new maize varieties with higher drought tolerance for countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Aparna Das, the Global Maize technical program manager at CIMMYT said: "The coming together of CIMMYT and CDI in 2019 was the beginning of an exciting partnership for deploying climate-resilient improved maize varieties in sub-Saharan Africa for the benefit of smallholder farmers.

"Ongoing farm trials in Malawi

as well as Tanzania, and the expansion of these trials to Rwanda in 2021, will help build a strong platform in catalyzing adoption of improved maize varieties and contribute to achieving the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."

Concerns about the impact of climate change in crop yields have highlighted the need for such crops.

Elifala and his community applaud CDI and its partners for helping the farmers understand

the need to plant drought-tolerant seed varieties.

"As farmers, we need to come up with measures that will help our community realize better yields and having drought-tolerant maize varieties will make it possible," he explains.

HarvestPlus and its partners have been developing and delivering micronutrient-rich varieties of common staple crops since 2003; more than 230 biofortified varieties of beans, maize, rice, wheat, cassava, orange sweet potato, and millet have been released so far in Africa, Asia, and Latin America/Caribbean.

These crops are a way to address micronutrient deficiency, or "hidden hunger," that is widespread among smallholder farmers and other rural populations.

When eaten regularly, vitamin A maize can provide up to 50 percent of daily vitamin A needs, while iron beans can provide up to 80 percent of daily iron needs.

HarvestPlus Malawi country manager Dellings Phiri said, "Working with partners is one of the most cost-effective ways of reaching many households with biofortified crops in a short a period of time.

"Our partnership with CDI will enable us to reach more than 10,000 farming households in 10 districts with vitamin A maize and iron beans within a year."

Mchinji district assistant agriculture development officer David Gondwe said demand for drought-tolerant and biofortified crop seeds call for increased supply to meet it.

"These demonstrations aim at encouraging farmers to buy seeds, hence the need for more seed stocks for both winter and rain-fed farming seasons," he said.

# As virus advances, doctors rethink rush to ventilate

BERLIN

WHEN he was diagnosed with COVID-19, Andre Bergmann knew exactly where he wanted to be treated: the Bethanien hospital lung clinic in Moers, near his home in northwestern Germany.

The clinic is known for its reluctance to put patients with breathing difficulties on mechanical ventilators - the kind that involve tubes down the throat.

The 48-year-old physician, father of two and aspiring triathlete worried that an invasive ventilator would be harmful. But soon after entering the clinic, Bergmann said, he struggled to breathe even with an oxygen mask, and felt so sick the ventilator seemed inevitable.

Even so, his doctors never put him on a machine that would breathe for him. A week later, he was well enough to go home.

Bergmann's case illustrates a shift on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, as doctors rethink when and how to use mechanical ventilators to treat severe sufferers of the disease - and in some cases whether to use them at all. While initially doctors packed intensive care units with intubated patients, now many are exploring other options.

Machines to help people breathe have become the major weapon for medics fighting COVID-19, which has so far killed more than 183,000 people. Within weeks of the disease's global emergence in February, governments around the world raced to build or buy ventilators as most hospitals said they were in critically short supply.

Germany has ordered 10,000 of them. Engineers from Britain to Uruguay are developing versions based on autos, vacuum cleaners or even windshield-wiper motors. U.S. President Donald Trump's administration is spending \$2.9 billion for nearly 190,000 ventilators. The U.S. government has contracted with automakers such as General Motors Co and Ford Motor Co as well as medical device manufacturers, and full delivery is expected by the end of the year. Trump declared this week that the U.S. was now "the king of ventilators."

However, as doctors get a better understanding of what COVID-19 does to the body, many say they have become more sparing with the equipment.

Reuters interviewed 30 doctors and medical professionals in countries including China, Italy, Spain, Germany and the United States, who have experience of dealing with COVID-19 patients. Nearly all agreed that ventilators are vitally important and have helped save lives. At the same time, many highlighted the risks from us-

ing the most invasive types of them - mechanical ventilators - too early or too frequently, or from non-specialists using them without proper training in overwhelmed hospitals.

Medical procedures have evolved in the pandemic as doctors better understand the disease, including the types of drugs used in treatments. The shift around ventilators has potentially far-reaching implications as countries and companies ramp up production of the devices.

## "BETTER RESULTS"

Many forms of ventilation use masks to help get oxygen into the lungs. Doctors' main concern is around mechanical ventilation, which involves putting tubes into patients' airways to pump air in, a process known as intubation. Patients are heavily sedated, to stop their respiratory muscles from fighting the machine.

Those with severe oxygen shortages, or hypoxia, have generally been intubated and hooked up to a ventilator for up to two to three weeks, with at best a fifty-fifty chance of surviving, according to doctors interviewed by Reuters and recent medical research. The picture is partial and evolving, but it suggests people with COVID-19 who have been intubated have had, at least in the early stages of the pandemic, a higher rate of death than other patients on ventilators who have conditions such as bacterial pneumonia or collapsed lungs.

This is not proof that ventilators have hastened death: The link between intubation and death rates needs further study, doctors say.

In China, 86% of 22 COVID-19 patients didn't survive invasive ventilation at an intensive care unit in Wuhan, the city where the pandemic began, according to a study published in *The Lancet* in February. Normally, the paper said, patients with severe breathing problems have a 50% chance of survival. A recent British study found two-thirds of COVID-19 patients put on mechanical ventilators ended up dying anyway, and a New York study found 88% of 320 mechanically ventilated COVID-19 patients had died.

More recently, none of the eight patients who went on ventilators at the Abu Dhabi hospital had died as of April 9, a doctor there told Reuters. And one ICU doctor at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta said he had had a "good" week when almost half the COVID-19 patients were successfully taken off the ventilator, when he had expected more to die.

The experiences can vary dramatically. The average time a COVID-19 patient spent on a ventilator at Scripps Health's five hospitals in California's San Diego County was just over

a week, compared with two weeks at the Hadassah Ein Kerem Medical Center in Jerusalem and three at the Universiti Malaysia Medical Centre in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur, medics at the hospitals said.

In Germany, as patient Bergmann struggled to breathe, he said he was getting too desperate to care.

"There came a moment when it simply no longer mattered," he told Reuters. "At one point I was so exhausted that I asked my doctor if I was going to get better. I was saying, if I had no children or partner then it would be easier just to be left in peace."

Instead of putting Bergmann on a mechanical ventilator, the clinic gave him morphine and kept him on the oxygen mask. He's since tested free of the infection, but not fully recovered. The head of the clinic, Thomas Voshhaar, a German pulmonologist, has argued strongly against early intubation of COVID-19 patients. Doctors including Voshhaar worry about the risk that ventilators will damage patients' lungs.

The doctors interviewed by Reuters agreed that mechanical ventilators are crucial life-saving devices, especially in severe cases when patients suddenly deteriorate. This happens to some when their immune systems go into overdrive in what is known as a "cytokine storm" of inflammation that can cause dangerously high blood pressure, lung damage and eventual organ failure.

The new coronavirus and COVID-19, the disease the virus causes, have been compared to the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918-19, which killed 50 million people worldwide. Now as then, the disease is novel, severe and spreading rapidly, pushing the limits of the public health and medical knowledge required to tackle it.

When coronavirus cases started surging in Louisiana, doctors at the state's largest hospital system, Ochsner Health, saw an influx of people with signs of acute respiratory distress syndrome, or ARDS. Patients with ARDS have inflammation in the lungs which can cause them to struggle to breathe and take rapid short breaths.

"Initially we were intubating fairly quickly on these patients as they began to have more respiratory distress," said Robert Hart, the hospital system's chief medical officer. "Over time what we learned is trying not to do that."

Instead, Hart's hospital tried other forms of ventilation using masks or thin nasal tubes, as Voshhaar did with his German patient. "We seem to be seeing better results," Hart said.

## CHANGED LUNGS

Other doctors painted a similar picture.



Thomas Voshhaar, head doctor of the Lung Clinic at the Bethanien Hospital in Moers

In Wuhan, where the novel coronavirus emerged, doctors at Tongji Hospital at the Huazhong University of Science and Technology said they initially turned quickly to intubation. Li Shusheng, head of the hospital's intensive care department, said a number of patients did not improve after ventilator treatment.

"The disease," he explained, "had changed their lungs beyond our imagination." His colleague Xu Shuyun, a doctor of respiratory medicine, said the hospital adapted by cutting back on intubation.

Luciano Gattinoni, a guest professor at the Department of Anaesthesiology, Emergency and Intensive Care Medicine, University of Göttingen in Germany, and a renowned expert in ventilators, was one of the first to raise questions about how they should be used to treat COVID-19.

"I realised as soon as I saw the first CT scan ... that this had nothing to do with what we had seen and done for the past 40 years," he told Reuters.

In a paper published by the American Thoracic Society on March 30, Gattinoni and other Italian doctors wrote that COVID-19 does not lead to "typical" respiratory problems. Patients' lungs were working better than they would expect for ARDS, they wrote - they were more elastic. So, he said, mechanical ventilation should be given "with a lower pressure than the one we are used to."

Ventilating some COVID-19 sufferers as if they were standard patients with ARDS is not appropriate, he told Reuters. "It's like using a Ferrari to go to the shop next door, you press on the accelerator and you smash the window."

The Italians were swiftly followed by Cameron Kyle-Sidell, a New York physician who put out a talk on YouTube saying that by preparing to put patients on ventilators, hospitals in America were treating "the wrong disease." Ventilation, he feared, would lead to "a tremendous amount of harm to a great number of people in a very short time." This remains his view, he told Reuters this week.

When Spain's outbreak erupted in mid-March, many patients went straight onto ventilators because lung X-rays and other test results "scared us," said Delia Torres, a physician at the Hospital General Universitario de Alicante. They now focus more on breathing and a patient's overall condition than just X-rays and tests. And they intubate less. "If the patient can get better without it, then there's no need," she said.

In Germany, lung specialist Voshhaar was also concerned. A mechanical ventilator itself can damage the lungs, he says. This means patients stay in

intensive care longer, blocking specialist beds and creating a vicious circle in which ever more ventilators are needed.

Of the 36 acute COVID-19 patients on his ward in mid-April, Voshhaar said, one had been intubated - a man with a serious neuro-muscular disorder - and he was the only patient to die. Another 31 had recovered.

## "IRON LUNGS"

Some doctors cautioned that the impression that the rush to ventilate is harmful may be partly due to the sheer numbers of patients in today's pandemic.

People working in intensive care units know that the mortality rate of ARDS patients who are intubated is around 40%, said Thierry Fumeaux, head of an ICU in Nyon, Switzerland, and president of the Swiss Intensive Care Medicine Society. That is high, but may be acceptable in normal times, when there are three or four patients in a unit and one of them doesn't make it.

"When you have 20 patients or more, this becomes very evident," said Fumeaux. "So you have this feeling - and I've heard this a lot - that ventilation kills the patient." That's not the case, he said. "No, it's not the ventilation that kills the patient, it's the lung disease."

Mario Riccio, head of anaesthesiology and resuscitation at the Oglio Po hospital near Cremona in Lombardy, Italy's worst-hit region, says the machines are the only treatment to save a COVID-19 patient in serious condition. "The fact that people who were placed under mechanical ventilation in some cases die does not undermine this statement."

Originally nicknamed "iron lungs" when introduced in the 1920s and 1930s, mechanical ventilators are sometimes also called respirators. They use pressure to blow air - or a mixture of gases such as oxygen and air - into the lungs.

They can be set to exhale it, too, effectively taking over a patient's entire breathing process when their lungs fail. The aim is to give the body enough time to fight off an infection to be able to breathe independently and recover.

Some patients need them because they're losing the strength to breathe, said Yoram Weiss, director of Hadassah Ein Kerem Medical Center in Jerusalem. "It is very important to ventilate them before they collapse." At his hospital, 24 of 223 people with COVID-19 had been put on ventilators by April 13. Of those, four had died and three had come off the machines.

## AEROSOLS

Simpler forms of ventilation - face masks for example - are easier to administer. But respirator masks can

release micro-droplets known as aerosols which may spread infection. Some doctors said they avoided the masks, at least at first, because of that risk.

While mechanical ventilators do not produce aerosols, they carry other risks. Intubation requires patients to be heavily sedated so their respiratory muscles fully surrender. The recovery can be lengthy, with a risk of permanent lung damage.

Now that the initial wave of COVID-19 cases has peaked in many countries, doctors have time to examine other ways of managing the disease and are fine-tuning their approach.

Voshhaar, the German lung specialist, said some doctors were approaching COVID-19 lung problems as they would other forms of pneumonia. In a healthy patient, oxygen saturation - a measure of how much oxygen the haemoglobin in the blood contains - is around 96% of the maximum amount the blood can hold. When doctors check patients and see lower levels, indicating hypoxia, Voshhaar said, they can overreact and race to intubate.

"We lung doctors see this all the time," Voshhaar told Reuters. "We see 80% and still do nothing and let them breathe spontaneously. The patient doesn't feel great, but he can eat and drink and sit on the side of his bed."

He and other doctors think other tests can help before intubation. Voshhaar looks at a combination of measures including how fast the patient is breathing and their heart rate. His team are also guided by lung scans.

## "HAPPY HYPOXICS"

Several doctors in New York said they too had started to consider how to treat patients, known as "happy hypoxics," who can talk and laugh with no signs of mental cloudiness even though their oxygen might be critically low.

Rather than rushing to intubate, doctors say they now look for other ways to boost the patients' oxygen. One method, known as "proning," is telling or helping patients to roll over and lie on their fronts, said Scott Weingart, head of emergency critical care at Stony Brook University Medical Center on Long Island.

"If patients are left in one position in bed, they tend to desaturate, they lose the oxygen in their blood," Weingart said. Lying on the front shifts any fluid in the lungs to the front and frees up the back of the lungs to expand better.

"The position changes have radically impressive effects on the patient's oxygen saturations."

Weingart does recommend intubating a communicative patient with low oxygen levels if they start to lose mental clarity, if they experience a cytokine storm or if they start to really struggle to breathe. He feels there are enough ventilators for such patients at his hospital.

But for happy hypoxics, "I still don't want these patients on ventilators, because I think it's hurting them, not helping them."

## QUALITY, SKILL

As governments in the United States and elsewhere are scrambling to raise output of ventilators, some doctors worry the fast-built machines may not be up to snuff.

Doctors in Spain wrote to their local government to complain that ventilators it had bought were designed for use in ambulances, not intensive care units, and some were of poor quality. In the UK, the government has cancelled an order for thousands of units of a simple model because more sophisticated devices are needed.

More important, many doctors say, is that the additional machines will need highly trained and experienced operators.

"It's not just about running out of ventilators, it's running out of expertise," said David Hill, a pulmonology and critical care physician in Waterbury, Connecticut, who attends at Waterbury Hospital.

Long-term ventilation management is complex, but Hill said some U.S. hospitals were trying to bring non-critical care physicians up to speed fast with webinars or even tip sheets. "That is a recipe for bad outcomes."

"We intensivists don't ventilate by protocol," said Hill. "We may choose initial settings," he said, "but we adjust those settings. It's complicated."



Ventilators are seen in a climate room of Hamilton Medical AG a plant in Domat/Ems

## LOCKDOWN

## Jo'burg residents get physical as lockdown restrictions reduced

JOHANNESBURG

"THIS morning I got up at, like, half past five. I stood by the door until five to six and when those gates opened, it felt like Freedom Day." These were the words of Christoff Swanepoel from Emmarentia in Johannesburg on Friday morning.

He and his dog were finally able to go out for a jog thanks to the easing of restrictions under South Africa's Level 4 lockdown. Friday was the first day of Level 4 and in terms of the new regulations, citizens are allowed to leave home to walk, run or cycle from 06:00 to 09:00, for the first time since March 26.

They were cooped up indoors for more than a month under Level 5 measures that were in place to contain the spread of Covid-19. Emmarentia Dam was a hive of activity on Friday morning, with some residents out on their bikes, others stretching on the road, and some running with family members and pets.

I am at Emmarentia Dam this morning. A lot of people already taking their walks along with their dogs and others cycling. #Level4Restrictions @TeamNews24 pic.twitter.com/Jl95oUw7so. Swanepoel said he owned a small coffee shop in the area which had to close down after the lockdown was implemented last month. Two of his employees lost their jobs as a result.

"We owned a coffee shop called Affia. We employed two people, or used to employ. The community has been amazing this time but unfortunately, our business had to close down because of the fact that we just wouldn't be able to sustain business. Even now [that we are] able to do deliveries, we won't be able to manage," Swanepoel told News24.

However, he was happy about being able to be out and said he was worried that the government would change the regulations that allow exercising, just like it did with the tobacco sales ban. Swanepoel said



Residents of Emmarentia jog outside their homes on first day of level 4 of lockdown

he would also spend some time in the day buying winter clothes for his two-year-old daughter who outgrew her wardrobe.

There were similar scenes at Zoo Lake, where scores of residents, young and old, were out and about in their gym kits. Bridget Chivaviro, who left her home in Germiston on the eve of lockdown in March to move in with her sister in the area, said it was difficult to train in their backyard during the Level 5 lockdown.

Chivaviro said she had to learn new ways of exercising but was excited she finally had an opportunity to leave the house and go outside for a jog with her teenage daughter. "I stopped smoking during the period and have been working out a lot. With the whole period, you give up smoking because it was going to be difficult to find smokes," Chivaviro said.

Besides giving up smoking, the mom said she would also have to work towards losing weight

because there was nothing else to do but eat during the lockdown. Luthando Ntsangane, who was also in the crowd at the lake, told News24 he was excited to be out.

But because he is still conscious about big crowds, he said he would not go to any stores until things calmed down. "I know people will come out in numbers, so I [would] prefer staying at home," he said.

## RELIEF

## Rwanda eases Covid-19 lockdown; Here are 10 guidelines to follow

KIGALI

PRESIDENT Paul Kagame on Thursday, April 30, chaired an extraordinary cabinet meeting that assessed Rwanda's progress in fighting the coronavirus pandemic.

The Cabinet resolved to partially ease the lockdown with the following 10 guidelines that must be followed for 15 days from Monday, May 4, when they take effect.

Businesses to resume op-

erations

Public and private businesses will resume operations on Monday, May 4. However, only essential staff are to operate from the workplace while others are to continue working from home.

Hotels and Restaurants to close at 7 p.m.: Hotels and restaurants will be open to clients. However, bars will remain closed.

A curfew between 8 p.m., and 5 a.m.: All movement af-

ter 8 p.m. is banned unless you have special permission. The curfew will last up to 5 a.m.

Public and private transport

Public transport such as buses will resume operations from Monday, May 4 but will have to ensure social distancing of their passengers. This means that they will have less than their usual carrying capacity to be compliant. Moto bikes will not be allowed to

carry passengers but can ferry goods. Private transport will also resume but restricted to the same city.

Schools and churches remain closed

Schools will remain closed till September 2020. Worshippers will also have to wait a little longer before they can congregate in their respective places of worship. Meetings in public spaces and mass gatherings are also prohibited.

Individual sporting activities allowed, gyms to remain closed

Fitness enthusiasts will from Monday, May 4, have the liberty to carry out individual sporting activities in open spaces between 5 a.m., and 8 p.m. However, gyms and other recreation/sporting facilities will remain closed.

Limit to funeral participants: Funeral gatherings shall not exceed 30 mourners. Previously, a maximum

of 20 people were allowed to attend funerals.

Borders remain closed

The country's borders will remain closed except for cargo to allow imports and exports. Rwandans returning home and legal residents will also be allowed into the country. However, they will be subjected to a 14-day mandatory quarantine.

Intercity travel banned: Travel from one province to another is still prohibited.

Manufacturing and Construction to resume

Construction projects and manufacturing has been given the go-ahead to resume works. However, with only essential staff and ensuring the protection of workers. In addition to the above guidelines, the Cabinet also instructed the wearing of masks in public and other protective guidelines including social distancing.

## DIGITISATION

## South Sudan's first mobile money provider launches international remittance service

JUBA

SOUTH Sudan's first Mobile Money service, m-GURUSH has launched its International remittance service on their Mobile Money Platform.

The service was launched by the Governor of the Bank of South Sudan, Jamal Wani Abdalla. This is yet another groundbreaking innovative feature that will enable customers to conveniently send money across Africa and beyond using their mobile phones.

Customers will now be able to send money across East Africa and beyond. The customers will be able to send this money digitally in form of US Dollars or South Sudanese Pounds from their m-GURUSH account from the comfort and safety of their homes. The international remittance service will enable m-GURUSH registered customers to send and receive money to several countries across the globe using mobile money.

"The service will be particularly beneficial to the South Sudanese living in East Africa who will now be able to receive money using the existing mobile money services such as m-Pesa in Kenya and MTN Mobile Money in Uganda. This will further spur socio-economic development in South Sudan and digitally connect South Sudan to her other East African Community counterparts," said Abd-

dalla. Depending on the recipient's destination, the customer, can either send funds directly to a recipient's bank account or to a mobile wallet.

At the same time, the m-GURUSH International remittance service enables the South Sudanese in the Diaspora in several countries around the world to send money home. This is a fast, convenient and secure way to support loved ones by sending funds outside the country or receiving funds back home from outside the country.

The service will be accessed by customers dialing \*355# on the Zain network and also through the m-GURUSH application which can be downloaded from the Google Play Store.

"The way we transfer and manage our funds has changed drastically in the last few years. Gone are the days when the only option for sending money abroad was to queue at a counter for hours on end. Our customers can hold money in USD or South Sudanese Pounds in their m-GURUSH mobile wallet. They can initiate an international remittance from either of their m-GURUSH wallet." Mou Ambrose Thiik, m-GURUSH Chief of Operations said upon the launch of this service.

"The process of sending money using m-GURUSH is very simple and convenient. Customers will dial \*355# and then select

'International Remittances' from their m-GURUSH account. As we launch this service, customers can send money to Kenya and Uganda. We will add more countries in the following weeks." He added demonstrating how the service works during the launch.

The launch of this service comes at a time where digital money transfer services such as mobile money and electronic banking are being advocated for by various governments to curb the spread of COVID-19. "We are very excited to offer this revolutionary service and it demonstrates our long-standing commitment to providing fast, easy, safe and convenient mobile financial services to our m-GURUSH customers. Sub-Saharan African and South Sudan in particular is one of the most expensive remittance corridors in the world, a service such as this one will tremendously bring down the cost of international remittances in South Sudan.

From a Fiscal policy standpoint, this service will increasingly position the South Sudanese Pound as a currency of choice given that a currency earns value from its ability to transact. This service will therefore further strengthen the value of our SSP." Mr. Joseph Arinaitwe, Vice President m-GURUSH said.



Rwandan President Paul Kagame chairs a cabinet meeting.

## DETERRENT

## Swedish city dumping tonnes of chicken manure in park to deter visitors

STOCKHOLM

A SWEDISH city is dumping a ton of chicken manure in a popular park hoping the stench will keep thousands of people from visiting during a traditional celebration.

Local authorities in Lund, a city of about 125,000 people - many of whom are university students - made the novel decision to dump a ton of chicken manure in its

central park this week, according to The Guardian. The authorities are hoping it'll stop crowds of up to 30,000 people gathering for Walpurgis Night, a celebration marking the end of winter on the last day of April, where people party and build bonfires, according to The Local.

Lund's local council's environment committee chairman Gustav Lunblad told Sydsvenskan, a daily Swedish newspaper: "Lund

could very well become an epicentre for the spread of the coronavirus on the last night in April. [so] I think it was a good initiative."

He also said: "We get the opportunity to fertilise the lawns, and at the same time it will stink and so it may not be so nice to sit and drink beer in the park." As of April 29, Sweden has 20,302 confirmed cases of Covid-19 with 2,462 deaths, according to data

from Johns Hopkins University.

Sweden has imposed a less stringent lockdown compared to its neighbours, aiming for a sustainable long-term approach. People are allowed to go to bars, restaurants, and parks as long as they're in groups of 50 people or less. As of April 29, its coronavirus-related deaths per-capita were six times higher than Norway and Finland. Business Insider previously reported.

## DIGITISATION

## Stabus App- online booking platform seeks to transform Ghana's public transport

ACCRA

GHANAIAN startup Stabus, which provides a bus booking platform, is what commuters in the country need to navigate the challenges of using the public transport system.

That is the target of the online

booking platform, the startup's founder Isidore Kpotufe. According to the entrepreneur, a 10-minute ride Accra can last up to an hour. The problem of traffic congestion, which means people spend too much time moving from one end to another - not good for business!

Kpotufe, also the founder of software development studio Africa Web Consult, says he started Stabus to help bring efficiency in the sector.

The startup has a simple value proposition: Stabus' buses provide better services compared to the 'trotro'. The 'trotro'

refers to the buses that ply Ghana's routes - similar to Nigeria's danfo.

The startup uses a simple mechanism in its services: aggregate third-party public transport providers and connects them to passengers. Users access these services via mobile

apps or by USSD shortcodes. According to Kpotufe, Ghanaians will benefit from Stabus' exquisite services that aim to reduce traffic congestion.

Stabus passengers, nonetheless have to pay nearly 30% more in bus fare compared to what trotros charge. But the

trade-off is countered by the comfort of booking from an app instead of having to queue long hours at bus stops.

Passengers also benefit from fixed schedules, allowing for an effective transport system.

The platform operates as a self-funded startup and is in the

process of securing pre-seed funding. The company will use the funds to scale operations to meet growing demand.

Kpotufe believes the fact that many people do not think public transport will become any better is good news for the startup.

## EXERCISING

## Keep all fitness goals realistic for best results

NAIROBI

AT 23, Stacey Njoki Gitau stands at 175 centimetres and weighs 66 kilograms. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Exercise and Sports Science from Kenyatta University. She is a personal and group fitness trainer at Savannah Fitness Exchange and is the owner of Fitness Junkie Kenya - an online fitness wear company.

My fitness journey began right after high school. I had put on a lot of weight and I badly wanted to lose it, so working out was the first thing I committed to doing every morning when I woke up. That, plus the discipline, paid off.

Little did I know that I would later be selected to pursue a course that involved fitness. Losing weight was definitely my motivation when I started my fitness journey. Being fit and healthy were secondary at that moment.

With personal training, I make sure to get each client's details on their current physical and health status. This involves measuring their blood pres-

sure, then using an electrical bio impedance to measure the BMI, body fat percentage, hydration levels, muscle mass, obesity index and physical age.

Thereafter, we discuss and set short term and long-term goals. This gives me an idea of how the program should look like, and I immediately go into designing an individualised program that is subject to adjustments depending on the client's progress overtime.

I never once skip a dynamic warm up, foam rolling and mobility drills in any of my workout sessions. My charges range between Sh1,000 and Sh3,000 an hour depending on the service delivered. The most common fitness goal I have encountered with my clients is without a doubt losing belly fat.

I try to be as consistent and disciplined in other aspects of my life as I am in fitness. It's not always easy, but setting goals to achieve motivates me. Examples of workout essentials you may need at home in order to get the same results you would at the gym are resistance bands, skipping rope, steps and mats.

But accessing the gym a few times a month is important for strength and heavy lifting.

A typical home workout involves skipping rope, jumping jacks, push-ups, squats, planks, burpees among many others. My fitness idols are Heba Ali, Lisa Lanceford and Danyele Wilson. Body goals for sure. (Laughs).

I literally can't live without good fitness wear. When I look good, I feel good. That was one of the things that pushed me to starting my fitness wear line. And of course, I believe that Fitness Junkie Kenya has the best fitness wear. (Laughs).

Mindset is everything when it comes to getting into shape and weight loss. It's one thing to set your mind on something, and another to align everything you do with the specific goal in mind. This actually applies to our day-to-day lives as well. Convincing and believing in yourself follows closely when it comes to smashing personal best records in fitness.

Our thoughts literally become our actions. Having negative thoughts about your fitness journey makes



Stacey Njoki Gitau.

your morale go down. This is why you will find people making excuses, becoming on and off clients or giving up all together.

Over expectation is the biggest reason people fail to meet their fitness or weight loss goals. To achieve optimum results, one has to understand that it is not going to be an easy

journey. People expect too much too soon, and most times are not willing to put in the work.

The one piece of advice I like giving out to my clients is that fitness is for everyone, and not just a select group. Also, when you take care of your body, it will take care of you.

Working out and maintain poor eat-

ing habits do not go hand in hand. Nutrition is important to incorporate in your fitness journey.

As a health and fitness professional, your results are 70 percent nutrition and 30 percent exercise and that hasn't changed. I have to practice what I preach so I am definitely very keen on my nutrition.

## BOOST

## Nigeria business media startup gets seed investment from Luminare

LAGOS

STEARNS, Nigerian digital media and information startup, has secured \$600K in seed funding. The investment was courtesy of Luminare, one of the organizations that make up the Omidyar Group. Luminare made the investment alongside two other anonymous Nigerian venture capital funds.

Stearns was birthed at the London School of Economics, as a financial news publication on Nigeria. The organization's founders are Abdul Abdulrahim, Preston Ideh, Michael Famoroti, and Foluso Ogundana.

Media businesses across the globe are struggling with dwindling advertising revenue.

The situation is even worse across the African continent given the lack of enthusiasm by the readers to adopt subscription models.

Given the strong connections of political power to corporate business and government advertising preferences, this creates an independence-dilemma for media outlets.

Having been operational for 3 years, the startup owns Stearns Business, a niche digital publication on finance, economics, and policymaking. The company also owns Stearns Data, focusing on data collection, analytics and research.

The investment will go into talent acquisition, data collection, exploration of working business models, and the launch of CoreData, a digital platform that will empower governments and corporations with direct access to sub-national economic and demographic data by June 2020.

In an interview with Techpoint Africa, Stearns CEO, Preston Ideh explained how they initially intended to solve an information gap within the continent.

That was the motivation behind their launch of Stearns Business, and a yardstick from which they could expand their horizon into other information sectors.

He also pointed out their resilience and ability to make it this far without sacrificing their editorial independence for ad revenue as a sign of their reputation as a "trusted source of information."



Stearns CEO, Preston Ideh

## LITIGATION

## Tobacco association plans how to address government's U-turn on sales of cigarette

CAPE TOWN

The Fair Trade Independent Tobacco Association (FITA) says it will launch an urgent application over the government's decision to again ban cigarettes.

"Consulting with our attorneys and senior counsel on the urgent court application first thing in the morning. Let a court of law adjudicate on this issue once and for all," it tweeted on Wednesday shortly after the announcement. FITA's Sinenhlanhla Mnguni confirmed to News24 on Wednesday it would be taking legal action.

## Court application

"We had previously taken steps in this regard, but there was then no need to go to court due to President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement that the sale of cigarettes would be permitted.

"We will be consulting with our attorneys and senior counsel at 08:30 [on Thursday], and finalising our court application during the day to be served on the government as soon as reasonably possible," he said.

This after Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma announced what will and will not be allowed when the level 4 lockdown is implemented on Friday.

She said alcohol and cigarettes remained prohibited. Her announcement came days after President Cyril Ramaphosa said the sale of cigarettes would be allowed.

Dlamini-Zuma said the U-turn came after the government received more than 2 000 submissions from the public opposing the sale of tobacco products. "Cigarettes affect the lungs, that's why you cannot smoke in public in this country even where there is no Covid-19.

"Besides the effects of tobacco on lungs and the way tobacco is shared, it does not allow for social distancing and encourages the spread of the virus." Dlamini-Zuma specifically raised an example made in one submission, where concerns were raised about spreading the virus in saliva, when one has to lick paper when rolling a "zol."

"The World Health Organisation has very clear indications about tobacco and its health hazards. Covid-19 attacks mainly the respiratory system, it is not insinuations, it is science," she said.

WARNING

# Criminals raiding hospital waste to sell used coronavirus masks

BRUSSELS

CRIMINALS raiding hospital waste to sell used coronavirus masks on the blackmarket is a major threat in Europe, a new report has revealed.

Europe's police force, Europol, says there has been a "boom" in the sale of counterfeit masks and medicines related to Covid-19 and new criminal sellers appear on a daily basis. It is warning there will be an increase in counterfeit sales as more European countries make wearing masks in public compulsory.

But one of the major threats facing the continent is the trafficking of used Covid-19 hospital waste, it says in a specialist report focusing on coronavirus criminality in Europe. "The Covid-19 pandemic has led to a notable increase in the output of medical and sanitary waste across the EU," it said.

"The trafficking and inadequate disposal of medical and sanitary waste is a notable crime risk. "Both in terms of generating proceeds for the criminals involved in this activity and the potential associated harm to public health."

It comes as Germany introduced compulsory mask wearing in public and the UK's Prime Minister Boris Johnson hinted that masks will play a role in lifting its lockdown. "Counterfeiters have already been among the biggest profiteers of the Covid-19 pandemic," it said.

"A recession may further stimulate demand for cheaper daily consumer goods, which may be met by organised crime groups (OCGs) offering counterfeit or substandard alternatives. Reduced consumer spending power may inspire counterfeiters to expand into further product lines. "Demand for and the scarcity of certain goods, especially healthcare products and equipment, is driving a significant portion of criminals' activities in counterfeit and substandard

goods, organised property crime and fraud. A potential economic recession may also stimulate social tolerance for these types of goods and their distribution."

Its report looks at the impact of the pandemic on serious and organised crime and terrorism in the long term. "Criminals trading in counterfeit pharmaceutical and healthcare products have been quick to exploit the Covid-19 pandemic and to adapt their product portfolios to exploit shortages of genuine products, the fear and anxieties of regular citizens," it said.

"These OCGs have once again proven highly adaptable in terms of shifting product focus and offer new types of medical equipment, especially face masks, fake Corona test kits, disposable latex gloves, sanitisers and disinfectants.

"The trade of counterfeit and substandard goods especially those related to healthcare such as pharmaceuticals and equipment has boomed during the pandemic. As demand for these products remains very high, counterfeiters will continue to provide counterfeit and substandard versions of



Volunteers distribute face masks outside a metro station in Vincennes, near Paris.

these goods across the EU.

"The introduction of the mandatory wearing of masks may even increase the supply of such counterfeit items." Shockingly it revealed that as the world battles to find a vaccine, which is not expected to be available for at least 18 months, criminals are selling fake vaccines online. "Scammers are already offering versions of such a vaccine online," it said.

"However, once the development of a genuine vaccine has been announced, it is expected that counterfeiters and fraudsters will invest heavily in offering ineffective counterfeits of this vaccine especially online via different platforms and on social media." Fake vaccines are being offered for almost £300 on the black market and include drugs which have previously been mentioned by President Donald Trump which have not been proven to be effective.

IMPRESSIVE

## TikTok until now downloaded more than 2 billion times

NEW YORK

TIKTOK has now surpassed 2 billion downloads on mobile devices after seeing a surge in popularity during the coronavirus pandemic.

The video-sharing app already had a monstrous start to 2020, attracting 315 million new installs since January, according to app analytics firm Sensor Tower. That reportedly is the most downloads any app has ever gotten in a single quarter.

TikTok, known for the viral, short-form videos its users create, has seen a surge in popularity in the last several months as countries were placed under lockdown orders and people continue to adjust to life indoors.

Users have filled TikTok with light-hearted content providing an alternative to coronavirus-related news, including doctors taking dance breaks, people sharing DIY fashion and home renovation projects, and quarantined families making creative uses of their time at home together.

TikTok's 315 million first-quarter downloads dwarfs numbers out of other platforms, but social apps across the board have seen significant boosts in usage and downloads since the pandemic started. In Q1, Facebook accrued 186.1 million mobile downloads, and Instagram saw 151.8 million installs.

TikTok has become the go-to launch pad for memes and internet culture since it was launched by the China-based company ByteDance in September 2017. When TikTok debuted in the US less than a year later, it became the next best thing for creators since Vine, the video-sharing Twit-

ter shut down in 2016.

The 2 billion downloads mark comes just over a year after TikTok reached 1 billion downloads globally. It took the app nearly 1.5 years to reach its first billion.

US-based companies and startups have made several attempts at their TikTok competitors, but none have been able to reach the level of popularity that TikTok has achieved and is continuing to build upon. The only platform to have found comparable success in the US was Musically - which ByteDance acquired in 2017 before shutting it down a year later to merge it into TikTok.

Most recently, The Information reported that YouTube is working on Shorts, an in-app feature for short-form video-sharing. Google, YouTube's parent company, had also previously been rumoured to be in talks to acquire a TikTok competitor called Firework, the Wall Street Journal reported in October 2019.

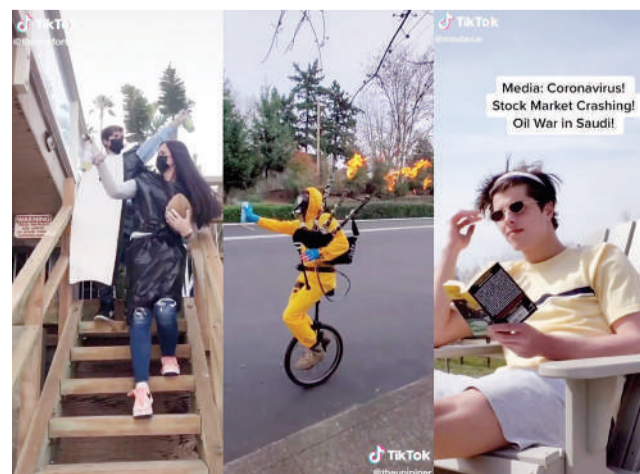
Facebook released a TikTok competitor in November 2018 named Lasso, but the app has remained quiet since its debut. Vine's co-founder launched an app called Byte in early 2020, which has seen some initial success in download numbers, but has yet to birth any internet stars or viral memes.

Triller, advertised as a music-discovery app, is banking on partnerships with major music labels to rival TikTok. Although lip-syncing app Dubsmash has been instrumental in launching some TikTok-famous dances - notably, the "The Renegade" - it has only around one-third of the US downloads of TikTok, according to Sensor Tower data provided to TechCrunch in early 2020.



## ISIDINGO MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

ITV PGM SCHEDULE	23:00 Habari	8:55 Habariz a saa	22:15 Kesho leo rpt	09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
<b>SATURDAY 02 May</b>	23:30 The Base	9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo	22:45 Isidingo rpt	13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	00:30 Al Jazeera	9:30 Isidingo	01:30 DWTV	14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
6:00 HABARI	02:00 DWTV	9:55 Habari za saa		16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
6:40 Kumekucha		10:00 Watoto	<b>SUNDAY 10 May</b>	16:30 Tanzania Yetu rpt
7:00 Habari	<b>TUESDAY 05 May</b>	10:30 Shamba lulu rpt	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	17:00 Eco@Africa rpt
8:00 Al Jazeera	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	11:00 The Base rpt	6:00 HABARI	17:30 Meza huru
9:00 Watoto wetu	6:00 Habari	11:55 Habari za saa	6:40 Kumekucha	19:00 The Décor rpt
10:00 Shika Bamba 5	6:40 Kumekucha	12:00 Al Jazeera	7:00 Habari	19:30 Shamba lulu
10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt	7:30 HABARI	12:30 Ijue Sheria	8:00 Al Jazeera	20:00 Series: Itohan
11:15 The Base rpt	8:00 Kumekucha Michezo	12:55 Habari za saa	09:00 Watoto Wetu	20:45 The Monday Agenda
11:45 The Great Queen Seonduk	9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo	13:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Utawala bora na utumishi	10:00 Isidingo	21:30 Capital Prime News
12:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt	9:30 Isidingo	13:30 Tanzania yetu rpt	11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt	22:00 Kipima Joto
13:15 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	10:00 Watoto wetu	13:55 Habari za saa	12:00 Bongo Movie rpt:	00:00 Al Jazeera
15:30 Igizo rpt: Mapito	10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt	14:00 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	14:00 Tamasha la Michezo	
16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe	11:00 The Base rpt	15:00 Meza huru	15:00 Mwangaza	<b>Tues 05 May</b>
16:20 Igizo: Mtego	12:00 Al Jazeera	16:00 Watoto Wetu	16:00 The Great queen Seonduk	06:00 Al Jazeera
17:00 Shamsam za Pwani	12:30 Afya ya jamii rpt	17:00 The Base	16:45 ITV Top 10	07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
18:00 Jiji Letu	13:00 Kipindi maalum: KTMDA	18:00 Jiji Letu	17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo	09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
18:15 Mapishi	13:30 Shika Bamba rpt	18:15 Mapishi	18:00 Jiji Letu	13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
18:30 Igizo: Mapito	13:55 Habari za saa	18:30 Jagina	18:15 Mapishi	14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
19:00 Jungu Kuu	14:00 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	19:00 Usafiri wako	18:30 Jagina	16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
19:30 Shika Bamba	14:55 Habari za saa	19:30 Isidingo	19:00 Usafiri wako	16:30 Capchat rpt
20:00 Habari	15:00 Meza Huru	20:00 Habari	19:30 Isidingo	17:30 Meza huru
21:00 Art and lifestyle	16:30 Watoto wetu	21:00 Malumbano ya hoja	21:00 Habari	19:00 Innovation
21:30 Hawavumi lakini wamo	17:00 The Base	23:00 Habari	22:05 Bongo Movie:	19:30 Jagina rpt
22:15 Kesho leo rpt	18:00 Jiji Letu	23:30 The Base	23:35 ITV Top 10	20:00 Series: Itohan
22:45 Isidingo rpt	18:15 Mapishi rpt	00:30 DWTV	00:30 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	20:45 Telenovela: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
01:30 DWTV	18:30 Uchumi na biashara			21:30 Capital Prime
	19:00 Jarida la wanawake	<b>FRIDAY 08 May</b>		22:00 Turning the spotlight rpt
	19:30 Isidingo	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi		22:30 Eco@Africa
	20:00 Habari	6:00 HABARI		23:00 Al Jazeera
	21:00 Tanzania Yetu	6:40 Kumekucha	<b>CAPITAL</b>	
	21:30 Chetu ni chetu	7:30 HABARI	<b>Sat 02 May</b>	
	22:15 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost	8:00 Kumekucha Michezo	08:00 CNN International	<b>Wed 06 May</b>
	23:00 Habari	9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo	09:00 Drive It rpt	06:00 Al Jazeera
	23:30 The Base	9:30 Isidingo	09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt	07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
	00:30 DWTV	10:00 Watoto wetu	10:00 Culinary delight rpt	09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
		10:30 Usafiri wako rpt	10:30 Innovation rpt	13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
	<b>WEDNESDAY 06 May</b>	11:00 The Base	11:00 Out n' about rpt	14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	12:00 Al Jazeera	11:30 Sports Gazette rpt	16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
	6:00 HABARI	12:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanesco	12:00 Usafiri wako rpt	16:30 Culinary delight rpt
	6:40 Kumekucha	13:00 Jagina rpt	12:30 Eco@Africa rpt	17:00 Innovation rpt
	7:30 HABARI	13:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt	13:00 Business edition rpt	17:30 Meza Huru
	8:00 Kumekucha Michezo	14:10 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	13:30 Korean Drama rpt: Kimchi Family	19:00 Sports Gazette
	8:55 Habari za saa	15:00 Meza huru	14:30 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?	19:30 Chetu ni chetu
	9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo	16:00 Watoto Wetu	17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt	19:00 Innovation
	9:30 Isidingo	17:00 The Base	17:45 Bundesliga kick off	20:00 Series: Itohan
	09:55 Habari za saa	18:00 Jiji Letu	18:15 Capchat rpt	20:45 Telenovela: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
	10:00 Watoto wetu	18:15 Mizengwe rpt	19:15 Mizengwe	21:30 Capital Prime News
	10:30 Uchumi na biashara	18:30 Shamba lulu	19:30 The Décor	22:00 Dakika 45:
	10:55 Habari za saa	19:00 Kipindi Maalum: TMDA	20:00 Korean Drama: Kimchi Family	22:45 The Décor
	11:00 The Base rpt	19:30 Isidingo	21:00 Out n' About	23:15 Al Jazeera
	11:55 Habari za saa	20:00 Habari	21:30 Movie: Night of terror	
	12:00 Al Jazeera	21:05 Kipima Joto	23:00 Series rpt: Itohan	<b>Thurs 07 May</b>
	12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt	23:00 Habari	01:00 Al Jazeera	06:00 Al Jazeera
	12:55 Habari za saa	23:30 The Base		07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
	13:00 Dakika 45	00:30 DWTV		09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
	13:55 Habari za saa			13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
	14:00 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	<b>SATURDAY 09 May</b>		14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
	14:55 Habari za saa	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi		16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
	15:00 Meza huru	6:00 HABARI		16:30 Business edition rpt
	16:30 Watoto Wetu	6:40 Kumekucha		17:00 In good shape
	17:00 The Base	7:00 Habari		17:30 Meza huru
	18:00 Jiji Letu	8:00 Al Jazeera		19:00 Turning the spotlight
	18:15 Korean drama: The great queen Seonduk	9:00 Watoto wetu		19:30 Tanzania yetu
	19:00 Ijue Sheria	10:00 Shika Bamba 5		20:00 Series: Itohan
	19:30 Isidingo	11:15 The Base rpt		20:45 Telenovela: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
	19:30 Igizo Mtego rpt	11:45 The Great Queen Seonduk		21:30 Capital Prime News
	20:00 Mjue Zaidi	12:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt		22:00 Capchat rpt
	20:00 Habari	13:15 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost		23:00 Al Jazeera
	20:00 Habari	13:30 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe		
	21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tatu Mzuka	16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe		<b>Frid 08 May</b>
	21:10 Abu Yakol Hata wewe?	17:00 Shamsam za Pwani		06:00 Al Jazeera
	21:15 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco	18:00 Jiji Letu		07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
	21:45 Ripoti Maalum:	18:15 Mapishi		09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
	Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	18:30 Igizo: Mapito		13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa?
	22:15 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	19:00 Jungu Kuu		14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
	23:00 Habari	19:30 Shika Bamba		16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
	23:30 The Base	20:00 Habari		16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt
	00:30 Al Jazeera	21:00 Art and lifestyle		17:30 Movie: Keeping mum
	2:00 DWTV	21:30 Hawavumi lakini wamo		
	<b>THURSDAY 07 May</b>			
	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi			
	6:00 HABARI			
	6:40 Kumekucha			
	7:30 HABARI			
	8:00 Kumekucha Michezo			
	8:00 Kumekucha Michezo			



A combo photo showing TikTok's downloaded images.

## WORLD

# WHO should be bellwether, not scapegoat, in global pandemic fight

BEIJING

TO some politicians in Washington, nothing is more valuable than their political self-interests -- not even human lives. Their recent ever-escalating attacks on the World Health Organization (WHO) over the coronavirus pandemic is the latest case in point.

In a desperate attempt to shift blame for Washington's clumsy handling of the pandemic, some White House politicians, notably U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, have rushed to accuse the WHO of withholding critical information after the outbreak, being "China-centric," and mismanaging the pandemic response.

More blatantly, Washington has also decided to suspend funding to the UN health body, even suggesting that it might create an alternative agency.

The truth is that the WHO has been faithfully performing its responsibilities since the outbreak.

ities since the outbreak.

It alerted the world of the disease as early as Jan. 5, kept the international community duly updated on the progress of the situation, and coordinated a global drive against the pandemic.

The world body has facilitated the shipping of millions of units of personal protective equipment to 105 countries, and lab supplies to more than 127 countries, and is leading a global effort to develop vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics for the virus.

Washington should be the last entity to criticize the WHO over so-called transparency issues.

It has been receiving real-time information about the coronavirus from U.S. officials and experts at the WHO from the outset, and even often knew in advance what the agency planned to do or announce, according to U.S. media. Those U.S. politicians have simply slapped their own faces when attacking the WHO



WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

for so-called cover-ups.

Obviously, Washington has tried to scapegoat the WHO to deflect the blame for its inept and chaotic pandemic response at home, as the U.S. caseload has topped 1 million -- some one third of the world's total -- and more than 60,000 have died.

The White House's ill-disposed bid to blame the WHO, as well as its tactics of pressure and coercion, have exposed once again its long-standing hegemonic mindset, which seeks to put "America first," even though doing so could hurt the common interests of the world.

In the eyes of those Washington politicians, money equals power. Since the United States is the institution's largest donor, they believe that the UN health body should only act on behalf of Washington's interests.

That is a toxic legacy of America's notorious money politics. So when the WHO warns against Washington's moves to politicize the pandemic, and does its work in an objective, fair and science-based manner, those Washington politicians must have felt betrayed.

U.S. hegemonic bullying runs counter to the will of the global community, including many Americans.

Many world leaders from the Group of 77,

as well as from countries including China, Germany, France, and Italy, have voiced firm support for the group.

At the moment, the fight against the pandemic remains arduous and many factors about the deadly virus remain unknown, meaning the WHO has become more indispensable than ever as a source of guidance.

To weaken the group is akin to throwing the pilot out of a plane while a flight is in progress, as German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas recently said.

For more than seven decades, the WHO has led countries worldwide to combat the threat of deadly diseases such as polio and malaria, and aided in the elimination of smallpox in the 1970s through many years of joint work.

Yet, in an age of a ravaging pandemic when nobody is safe until all are safe, those self-centered Washington politicians' dangerous attempt to portray this bellwether of international pandemic containment as a scapegoat will only put more lives, including those in America, on the line.

If they continue down the wrong path, history will record that many died in the pandemic not just because of the deadly virus, but also because of a hegemonic superpower's reluctance to own up to its due responsibility.

Xinhua

## EgyptAir takes over 120 Russian from Cairo to Moscow

CAIRO

MORE than 120 Russians flew yesterday from Cairo to Moscow via EgyptAir, the head of the consular department of the Russian Embassy in Cairo, Yusup Abakarov told TASS yesterday.

"The 121 people boarded the plane, among them many ill people, there are elderly and pregnant women who were included in the list for departure for humanitarian reasons, everything went fine," he said.

The Egyptian national air carrier organized four flights yesterday, for its citizens who were stuck abroad due to the interruption of air traffic between the countries due to the pandemic of the new coronavirus.

There are plans to fly to Moscow and Washington DC, as well as two to Kiev, which is operated by the EgyptAir subsidiary Air-Cairo.

Russians stuck in Egypt, living in Moscow, St. Petersburg and cities located not far from the two capitals could take advantage of the flight to Moscow.

The lists were formed through the public services web site, about 150 people were invited



to the flight, but, according to the diplomat, several dozen Russians refused to fly for various reasons.

The Egyptian airline has determined the cost of a ticket for this flight at \$600. The flight was also used by residents of other Russian regions who were in

emergency situations and must urgently get home.

"They will be identified in an observatory in the suburbs and after compulsory quarantine will be able to get to other regions, including Dagestan, Stavropol, Crimea," Abakarov (pictured) added.

After the pandemic began, Egypt announced the closure of foreign flights March 19, and thousands of Russian tourists were in limbo.

Many managed to leave on their own. At the end of March, more than 2,000 Russians and citizens of the CIS countries

were transported to Moscow by Belavia airlines with the assistance of the Russian authorities and the embassy for three days from the resorts of Hurgada and Sharm el-Sheikh. A flight from Cairo was expected in April, but it never took place.

The quarantine measures in Egypt have been extended until the end of May, the air service is still closed, with no certain plans to resume it.

In Egypt, to date, more than 5,500 patients with COVID-19 have been identified, almost 400 people have died.

Agencies

## Top US spy agency says coronavirus 'not manmade'

WASHINGTON

The top US intelligence agency said on Thursday the country's intelligence community does not believe the coronavirus was man-made or genetically modified.

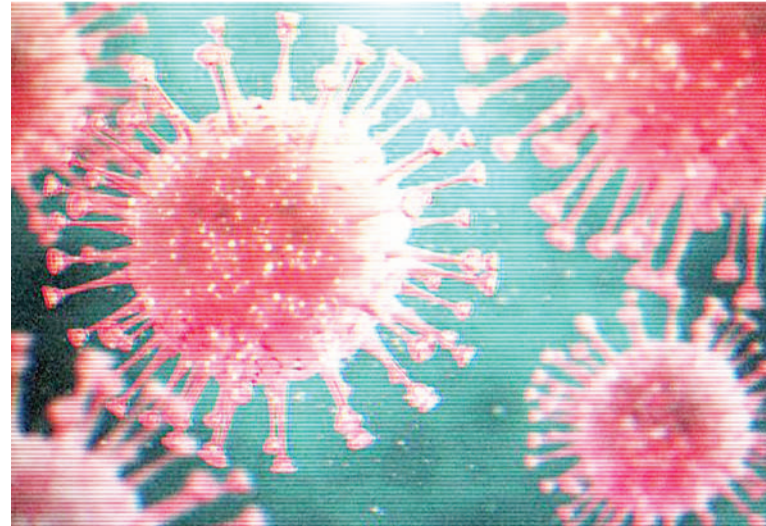
The US intelligence community "concur with the wide scientific consensus that the COVID-19 virus was not manmade or genetically modified," the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) said in a statement.

The ODNI said it was investigating whether the virus emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China, although the rumor has been repeatedly dismissed among scientists, who generally believe the virus jumped from animals to humans in some natural way involving farming, hunting or the transporting of wild animals.

Citing current and former US officials, The New York Times reported Thursday that senior Trump administration officials pushed intelligence agencies to hunt for evidence to support an unsubstantiated theory that a lab in Wuhan was the origin of the outbreak as President Donald Trump escalated a public campaign to blame China for the pandemic.

Some intelligence analysts are concerned that the pressure from those officials will distort assessments about the virus and that they could be used as a political weapon, according to the report.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), took the lead in pushing intelligence agencies for more information, said the report, adding that Matthew Pottinger, Trump's deputy



national security adviser, pressed intelligence agencies off and on since January to gather information that "might support any origin theory linked to a lab."

The report also said that Anthony

Ruggiero, the head of the National Security Council's bureau tracking weapons of mass destruction, expressed frustration during a video conference in January that the CIA was unable to get behind any theo-

ry of the outbreak's origin.

Most intelligence agencies remain skeptical that conclusive evidence of a link to a lab can be found, and scientists who have studied the genetics of the coronavirus say that the overwhelming probability is that it leapt from animal to human in a nonlaboratory setting, as was the case with HIV, Ebola and SARS, according to the report.

As COVID-19 deaths continue to increase in the United States, the Trump administration and its allies in Congress have tried desperately to deflect criticisms about their blunders by blaming others.

As of Thursday noon, the United States reported more than 1.04 million COVID-19 cases with over 61,000 deaths, according to a tally from the Johns Hopkins University.

Xinhua

## Germany social distancing rules 'to be extended until May 10'

BERLIN

SOCIAL distancing measures in Germany will be extended until May 10, Chancellor Angela Merkel's chief of staff said ahead of a government meeting later on Thursday to review lockdown restrictions.

Merkel and state leaders will discuss proposals on reopening schools and nurseries and resuming sporting events, but will wait until May 6 for data on the effect of first steps to ease the lockdown before moving again, Helge Braun said.

The novel coronavirus reproduction rate in Germany is currently estimated at 0.76 on average, the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for infectious diseases said.

Germany registered 1,478 new confirmed COVID-19 cases over the past 24 hours, raising its total cases to 159,119, said RKI on Thursday.

The death toll now stands at 6,288, up 173 within the same period, according to RKI.

Four of Germany's leading science institutes said on Wednesday Germans must persevere with social distancing or risk exponential growth in the number of coronavirus cases.

Germany's government tamped down any hopes in the tourism sector that it might relax holiday guidance when it extended its warning against worldwide travel until June 14 on Wednesday.

WHO

World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Wednesday that he will reconvene the Emergency Committee on Thursday to evaluate the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and to advise on updated recommendations.

"In the three months since the Emergency Committee last met, WHO has worked day in day out to sound the alarm, support countries and save lives," he said at a virtual press conference from Geneva.

"We sounded the alarm early, and we sounded it often. We said repeatedly that the world had a window of opportunity to prepare and to prevent widespread community transmission," Tedros stressed.

Noting that the WHO was committed to transparency and accountability, Tedros repeated his call for unity and solidarity.

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported to the WHO has exceeded 3 million worldwide, according to WHO's latest statistics.

As of 11:00 pm CET, the WHO's COVID-19 dashboard showed a worldwide total of 3,024,059 confirmed cases, including 208,112 deaths, have been reported to the organization.

The United States has reported 983,457 confirmed cases, with 50,492 deaths, to the UN health agency, making it the hardest hit country.

In Spain and Italy, the second and third worst-hit countries in terms of the number of infections, there had been 210,773 and 201,505 cases respectively. The death numbers in the two countries are 23,822 and 27,359 respectively.

Trailing behind were the United Kingdom, with 161,149 confirmed cases, and Germany, with 157,641 confirmed cases.

US

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday said the White House current coronavirus guidelines will be "fading out" as more states begin to reopen their economies despite coronavirus concern.

The governor of Florida, whose state was among the last to be locked down against the US coronavirus outbreak, announced on Wednesday he would permit limited economic reopening next week while leaving restraints in place for the greater Miami area.

Meanwhile, California Governor Gavin Newsom will announce on Thursday the closure of all beaches and parks in the state amid concerns over the coronavirus pandemic after crowds jammed beaches last weekend, according to a memo seen by Reuters.

In Los Angeles, free COVID-19 tests will be offered to all residents of the county regardless of their symptoms, becoming the first major US city to make wide-scale tests available.

In another development, the Trump administration is planning to speed up development of a coronavirus vaccine with the goal of having 100 million doses ready by the end of 2020, a senior administration official said. **Agencies**



A customer wearing a face mask selects clothes at a shop in Berlin, capital of Germany, on Thursday. XINHUA

## New Zealand exporters rush fresh food to China via charter shipments

NEW ZEALAND exporters are accelerating shipments of fresh food to China to grab the vast consumer market by increasing charter flights and vessels.

A charter vessel loaded with 4,500 tons of seasonal Zespri kiwifruit from New Zealand is expected to arrive in Shanghai on Saturday. This will be the third shipment of Zespri kiwifruit arriving in China this year, despite the coronavirus pandemic.

The company is chartering more ships to get kiwifruit to China faster. Normal container

shipments take more than three weeks, but the direct charter service takes only 10 to 14 days to get to Shanghai, though it costs more.

"China is the largest single market for Zespri, or about 20 percent of its total global business. To ensure the efficiency of transportation, we have increased the use of charter shipments from seven to nine this year," a spokesperson from Zespri told the Global Times on Tuesday.

Exports of fresh food, sea-

food in particular, were initially affected by the onset of COVID-19 during the Chinese New Year holiday, but trade is now recovering, according to the New Zealand China Council.

"Maintaining supply to China is critically important for our producers, and both the public and private sectors have been working together to ensure that our supply chains remain open," Rachel Maidment, Executive Director of New Zealand China Council told the Global Times on Tuesday.

China is New Zealand's largest trade partner and a key market for New Zealand food producers. Its top exports to China include dairy, meat, seafood.

"In terms of air freight, the government and private sector have moved quickly to ensure that channels are kept open for premium New Zealand products to be exported," said Maidment.

Air New Zealand resumed daily cargo flights between New Zealand and China on March 31. The planes carry seafood,

honey, health products and milk powder to China and transport masks, protective clothing, hand sanitizer and routers to New Zealand, an employee of the airline told the Global Times on Monday.

Its Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner can uplift 11 cargo pallets. Each of these pallets can hold up to 12 cubic meters in volume and up to 4.6 tons in weight, according to the company.

China is New Zealand's largest food and beverage export destination with a 31 per-

cent share, according to New Zealand Trade & Enterprise (NZTE).

"Food and beverage exports to China grew 34 percent in 2019 to NZ\$11.3 billion (\$6.9 billion), accounting for 68 percent of total merchandise exports. Dairy, meat and fruit products are the top three food and beverage exports to China," Maxwell Shi, regional marketing and communications manager of NZTE Greater China, told the Global Times on Monday.

According to Shi, NZTE is working with Air New Zealand, freight forwarders, exporters and government agencies to support additional charter flights to back its exporters.

Demand for imported fruits in China rose amid the coronavirus pandemic, with orders doubling year-on-year, according to data from FruitDay, a Chinese e-commerce provider that focuses on importing global fresh fruit products.

Global Times



# Countries to tentatively ease lockdown to cushion economic fallout

BEIJING

A TOTAL of 187 countries and regions have been hit by COVID-19, which has infected more than 3.2 million people with over 233,000 deaths globally, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally yesterday.

While making an all-out effort to combat the pandemic, countries are tentatively easing anti-coronavirus restrictions and rolling out multiple aid measures to counter the economic fallout.

Meanwhile, researchers around the world are devoting themselves to studying the nature and transmission of the virus, and have made important findings.

## LOCKDOWN EASING

To restore livelihoods, more countries have planned to loosen their lockdowns.

In Ireland, Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said on Thursday his government is developing a plan to gradually ease the restrictions.

Changes will be made every two to four weeks, he said, adding the government would intervene if things are "going off track."

Also on Thursday, Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa announced that his country will enter a "state of calamity" as of Sunday after the "state of emergency" ends on Saturday.

"There is no reason to renew the state of emergency, but that does not mean that the risk has been overcome. We have to maintain a high level of security," Costa said, adding Portugal will start to reopen its economy and society in three phases, starting on Monday.

Germany decided on Thursday to continue to cautiously ease the COVID-19 restrictions, opening playgrounds, museums, galleries, zoological and botanical gardens, and places of worship. However, the social distancing rules introduced earlier remain in force.

Ukrainian Health Minister Maksym Stepanov said Thursday that COVID-19 quarantine measures would be eased for small businesses starting May 11.

Outside Europe, Uzbek authorities said Thursday the country has eased restrictions to allow its citizens to take part in outdoor activities. Thailand also decided to ease restrictions by allowing six categories of business to reopen from Sunday.

Besides, South African officials said Thursday that schools and universities are going to open under strict conditions.

## AID MEASURES

Around 1,000 economic experts from 110-odd countries and regions expect the global economy to shrink 1.9 percent in 2020 due to the corona-



A staff member (R) gives a takeaway pizza to a customer in a restaurant that provides takeaway service only due to the concern of COVID-19 in Dusseldorf, Germany, on Wednesday. (Xinhua)

virus crisis, and this is "lowest number since the survey began in 1989," said a survey published by Germany's influential Ifo Institute on Thursday.

Amid the grim economic outlook, many countries have drawn up action plans to mitigate the virus' impact.

The U.S. Federal Reserve on Thursday announced that it is expanding the scope and eligibility for its 600-billion-dollar Main Street Lending Program designed to help small and medium-sized businesses hit by the pandemic.

Also on Thursday, the European

Central Bank decided to leave key interest rates for the euro area unchanged while introducing a series of new measures to boost its pandemic response.

Lebanese Prime Minister Hassan Diab announced Thursday a comprehensive financial plan, based on financial, economic, banking, monetary, social security and development factors, to save the country from its financial and economic crisis.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held a meeting with senior ministers of his cabinet to dis-

cuss strategies to attract more foreign investments and promote local investments to boost the economy against the backdrop of the pandemic.

In Africa, Botswana's central bank has cut its benchmark interest rate by 50 basis points to 4.25 percent "to support domestic economic activity," while the Namibian government has ushered in regulations and directives to provide job and income security for those who were employed before COVID-19.

## KEY FINDINGS

According to a paper published on Science magazine Wednesday, a new COVID-19 transmission model, based on contact survey data from nearly 1,200 people in the Chinese cities of Wuhan and Shanghai, suggests that strict social distancing measures were sufficient to curtail the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The paper, written by a research team led by Zhang Juanjuan from Fudan University and joined by researchers from China, Italy and the United States, said that an average resident's daily interpersonal contacts dropped seven to nine folds, from 14 and 20 people per day in Wuhan and Shanghai, respectively, to about two contacts per day in both locations by early February, after social distancing measures were put in place.

Xinhua

# Japan's Abe warns of 'protracted battle against virus' ahead of likely extension of emergency period

TOKYO

JAPAN will likely extend the nationwide state of emergency until the end of May at the earliest as the nation continues to grapple with containing the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, government sources said on Thursday.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Thursday reportedly told Toshihiro Nikai, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), that he was almost certainly going to extend the state of emergency past May 6.

"Returning to normalcy from May 7 is difficult and we need to brace for a protracted battle against the virus," the prime minister told reporters at his office. "I will consult

with experts as to the length of an extension," Abe (pictured) said. Government sources said such consultations could happen as early as Friday, with a final decision being made by Abe at some point thereafter as to the duration of the extension once he has heard an expert panel's assessment as to the pneumonia-carrying virus' spread across Japan and other pertinent details related to the pandemic.

The final decision may come on Monday next week, the sources said, although independent political watchers inferred it could come sooner. "Local governments need to make preparations so I will make a decision sometime before the expiration date of May 6," Abe said. Abe first declared a

month-long state of emergency on April 7 until May 6 for Tokyo and six other prefectures as infections had started to spike in urban areas.

On April 16, Abe expanded the emergency declaration to cover all of Japan's 47 prefectures, with the move deliberately coming ahead of the Golden Week string of national holidays amid concerns masses of people may return to their hometowns or otherwise take vacations during the long holidays and further spread the virus to rural areas and further overburden the nation's already strained health system.

Under the state of emergency, people across Japan have been asked by local governments to remain at home as much as possible and sig-



nificantly reduce their amount of human-to-human contact. Some businesses have also been requested to shutter their operations to contain the spread of the virus. Coronavirus cases in Japan increased by 188 to 14,305, according to

the most recent figures from the health ministry and local authorities released late Thursday evening.

The figures included 46 new infections in Tokyo and 28 in Japan's northernmost prefecture of Hokkaido.

The nationwide death toll from the virus has now increased to 468, including those from a cruise ship that was quarantined in Yokohama near Tokyo.

In Tokyo, the epicenter of Japan's outbreak, the number of COVID-19 cases has increased to 4,152, accounting for more than one-third of all COVID-19 cases across the nation, followed by Osaka Prefecture with 1,626 infections.

Kanagawa Prefecture, meanwhile, has recorded 1,023 infections, Saitama Prefecture 860 infections, Chiba Prefecture 835 cases, Hokkaido Prefecture 767 infections, while Hyogo Prefecture has recorded 646 cases of COVID-19, according to the latest figures Thursday night.

Xinhua

# Over 3,600 COVID-19 patients aged above 80 in Hubei have recovered

WANG Xin, an 87-year-old patient of the novel coronavirus who was pictured watching the sunset with his doctor in a viral image was discharged from the east campus of the Renmin Hospital of Wuhan University on April 9.

"It was the caring and treatment by the medical staff that brought my father back to health," said Wang's daughter, bursting into tears.

The picture was taken a month ago on Wang's way to take a CT scan with Liu Kai, a doctor with Zhongshan Hospital affiliated to Fudan University, Shanghai who went to Hubei for assistance. It later went viral and touched many as a glimpse of sunshine, something that had been long absent in the daily life of COVID-19 patients, was particularly valuable.

It is reported that over 3,600 COVID-19 patients aged above 80 in Hubei, once the epicenter of the outbreak in China, had been cured thanks to the joint efforts made by assisting medical teams from across the country and the medical workers in Wuhan.

It's relatively more difficult and expensive to treat the senior patients, and it also calls for more medical re-



A patient in ICU of Huoshenshan Hospital, Wuhan and a medical worker give the thumbs-up to each other, April 2, 2020. Photo by People's Daily

sources, said an official with China's National Health Commission (NHC). However, medical workers must take people's lives and health as top priority and protect them wholeheartedly, the official added.

On the morning of April 12, deputy director Sui Shaoguang of the emergency department of the Second Hospital of Dalian Medical University received a video message from a woman surnamed Ding expressing her gratitude for Sui's treatment for her mother.

"My mother eats and sleeps well, and looks great," said Ding in the video in which her mother gives a

thumb up to Sui.

Both Ding, 55 and her 98-year-old mother surnamed Hu contracted the novel coronavirus, and they were transferred to Wuhan's makeshift hospital Leishenshan on Feb. 13. "Hu has underlying health problems such as high blood pressure and heart disease, and had a temperature of 40 degrees Celsius when hospitalized. She was in a critical condition then," introduced Sui, who held a group consultation with 14 key doctors from emergency, cardiology, respiratory medicine and critical care medicine departments of three first-class hospitals at grade

3, the top level in China immediately after receiving Hu.

Wang Chen, academician and president of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences was also invited to help treat the senior patients.

Under the joint efforts of the experts, Hu and Ding were both discharged from hospital on March 1. "To save those in need is our duty, and we will leave nobody behind," Sui noted.

According to Jiao Yahui, a senior inspector with the NHC, over 90 percent of the senior patients in severe and critical conditions had underlying diseases, which posed serious challenges for the treatment.

In Hubei, patients with mild and severe symptoms are treated differently, and those aged above 65 are always hospitalized in hospitals with better facilities as most of them have underlying diseases. The recovery rate of severe and critical patients in Wuhan has been significantly improved thanks to the joint efforts and cooperation by the assisting force from across the country and local medics in the city. Nearly 70 percent of the patients aged above 80 in Wuhan have been cured.

People's Daily

# Sinopec helps transform oil refinery project into a makeshift hospital in Kuwait

DOMESTIC energy giant China Petrochemical Corp (Sinopec) is helping Kuwait transform a local oil refinery project into a makeshift hospital to aid the country in its fight against an outbreak of COVID-19, as the number of confirmed cases rises and Kuwait moves to repatriate its citizens from abroad.

A subsidiary of Sinopec, Sinopec Fifth Construction Co, is helping transform a camp of the Al-Zour New Refinery Project (NRP) into a makeshift hospital to accommodate the increasing number of confirmed COVID-19 cases, the company told the Global Times on Tuesday.

The makeshift hospital is scheduled to be completed by April 20, a Sinopec Fifth Construction employee surnamed Chen told the Global Times.

The camp was built for NRP workers, who totaled 4,500 dur-

ing the peak construction period. It is located in the southern desert of Kuwait and covers 170,000 square meters, equivalent to the size of 24 football fields. There are 1,066 rooms and canteen, clinic and bathroom facilities.

"The Kuwaiti government chose our camp because it is in the desert, a good place for isolation. With its existing facilities, it can be converted into a makeshift hospital with little modification," said Chen.

About 1,700 people will be admitted to the hospital, which will greatly promote the treatment and intensive isolation of COVID-19 cases in Kuwait, according to Sinopec's announcement.

Six of the NRP's 15 main oil-refining units, built by the Sinopec subsidiary, were handed over to its general contractor at the end of October 2019.

"After the project was delivered,

more than 10 of our employees stayed on for maintenance. The camp was supposed to be used as a dormitory facility for a follow-up project. Our employees have now left, and the company is paying for their stay in Kuwait," said Chen.

Kuwait had 1,300 confirmed cases as of Monday, and those receiving treatment at hospitals reached 1,148 patients, the Kuwait News Agency reported on Monday.

Kuwait also plans to repatriate 50,000 citizens stranded abroad. "Increasing cases of the COVID-19, as well as an influx of returning Kuwaiti citizens, means the makeshift hospital is necessary to accommodate any increase in confirmed cases in Kuwait," a medic surnamed Shi told the Global Times on Tuesday.

Global Times

# Only one out of Normandy Four Paris summit's decisions implemented so far – Lavrov

MOSCOW

Foreign Ministers of the Normandy Four (Russia, Ukraine, France, Germany) confirmed implementation of only one decision out of nine adopted during the Paris summit, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told journalists Thursday, following a Normandy Four video conference.

"We stated that, out of nine points of the Paris summit, only one was implemented, and even that one - only partially," the foreign minister said, adding that

he means the exchange of people in custody.

The Paris Normandy Four summit took place on December 9, 2019. The next meeting of leaders of the four states was supposed to take place in April 2020.

Prisoner exchange  
The Russian, Ukrainian, French and German top diplomats have discussed another prisoner exchange in Donbass, Lavrov said.

"Today, we spoke about preparations for another prisoner swap. The process of hammering out a sequence of steps is

underway, because, as you know, the Minsk agreements provide for all for all exchanges. However, in practical terms it turned out that it is necessary to identify everyone first before exchanging all," he noted.

A total of 230 people were exchanged during two exchanges between Kiev and Donetsk and Lugansk, in December and April, the minister reminded.

The Paris Normandy Four summit took place on December 9, 2019. The next meeting of leaders of the four states was supposed

to take place in April 2020. Special status of Donbass

Moscow has reiterated that ensuring the special status of Donbass as part of Ukraine is crucial for resolving the conflict.

"We pointed out that one of the key provisions of the Minsk Agreements concerns ensuring the special status of Donbass as part of Ukraine. This is the goal and basis of efforts to resolve the conflict," Lavrov said.

According to the Russian top diplomat, progress on this track would create conditions for

progress in other areas, including security, social, economic and humanitarian issues.

"Unfortunately, there is nothing to boast about. The Kiev authorities are reluctant to build direct dialogue with Donetsk and Lugansk, though the parties need to hold direct dialogue to agree on all legal aspects concerning permanent special status," Lavrov emphasized.

He added that there had been no progress in efforts to make specific decisions in relation to incorporating the Steinmeier For-

mula into Ukrainian legislation. "I would like to point out that the Steinmeier Formula establishes a link between plans to hold elections and the provision of special status to Donbass," Lavrov noted. He said that Russia had once again called on other Normandy Four countries "to press the Contact Group to implement this decision, which was made at the Paris summit."

'Politicized accusations'  
Donetsk and Lugansk are facing politicized accusations over the new entry rules they

introduced in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, Lavrov said.

"We took note of the fact that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission's reports contain strong criticism of the DPR and LPR [the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics - TASS]. We were asked to react to the situation and their move to change the rules for crossing the line of contact for the OSCE SMM members," Lavrov said.

Agencies

The  
**Guardian**

# SPORT



Irrfan Khan

Rishi Kapoor

## Bollywood mourns loss of two of its most versatile actors

GURUGRAM, India

TWO of India's most beloved movie stars, Irrfan Khan and Rishi Kapoor, died within a day of each other this week, and though they came from two very different worlds and two very different schools of acting, both leave behind a treasure of cinematic work and millions of grieving fans.

This double whammy for India's Hindi-language film industry, known as Bollywood, comes amid a crippling coronavirus lockdown that has brought the entertainment business – along with so much else – to a complete halt.

"It seems we are in the midst of a nightmare," popular actor Akshay Kumar tweeted.

In normal times, the funerals for two of Bollywood's most-admired actors would mean tens of thousands of fans gathering to bid them goodbye. Instead, their ceremonies were held in the presence of a handful of family and friends, surrounded by police.

The 54-year-old Khan died Wednesday after battling a rare cancer, while the 67-year-old Kapoor had leukemia and died Thursday.

The career trajectories of both actors reflect the changing contours of Bollywood, which in the past traversed two parallel streams of arthouse cinema and commercial films. The growing acceptance and box-office viability of content-driven films over the last two decades gave the two a chance to cross paths and act in movies that were both critically acclaimed and popular.

A trained stage actor, Khan started his career with television and found work in new-age Bollywood, which was experimenting with visceral themes reflecting India's social and political fault lines in the 1990s.

It took years of roles in small films before Khan made it to the Bollywood big leagues. Balancing arthouse movies with popular commercial fare, Khan went on to play a wide array of roles including an intensely tormented lover in "Maqbool," an adaptation of "Macbeth," and a gentle immigrant in Mira Nair's "The Namesake."

Unlike other Bollywood superstars with mega-stylized personas, the versatile Khan brought a rare intelligence and empathy to his characters over his 30-year career.

"He managed to walk off the screen and come home with us," wrote film critic Shubhra Gupta in the Indian Express newspaper.

One of the best-known Indian faces in world cinema, Khan crossed over to Hollywood with ease, playing a variety of parts in movies like "Slumdog Millionaire," "Life of Pi" and "The Amazing Spider

Man."

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences said in a tweet that Khan was an "incredible talent" and "left his imprint on global cinema."

"Gone too soon. When he is on screen, you can't take your eyes off of him. He lives on in his films," tweeted Hollywood filmmaker Ava DuVernay.

Kapoor's cinematic journey could not have been more different.

Kapoor was a third-generation actor, born with showbiz in his blood. His grandfather Prithviraj Kapoor and father Raj Kapoor were legendary actors of their time.

Rishi Kapoor started young, receiving the National Award, India's preeminent film award, for his role as a child artist in his father's 1970 film "Mera Naam Joker."

"Acting was in my blood and there was simply no escaping it," Kapoor wrote in his 2017 autobiography.

The runaway success of the teenage romance "Bobby" in 1973 made him a Bollywood heartthrob and a string of romantic, musical blockbusters followed.

The charming lover boy of the 1970s and 1980s went on to become one of the most dependable actors of his time and appeared in some of Bollywood's most-loved films, including "Amar Akbar Anthony" and "Chandni."

To be in sync with contemporary filmmakers moving away from melodrama and mining plot-driven stories, Kapoor refashioned his career in later years to play a variety of strong character roles. His portrayal of an old man in the 2016 movie "Kapoor & Sons" and as a Muslim man forced to prove his patriotism in "Mulk" in 2017 won him great acclaim. His most recent movie "The Body" was released last year.

"There may not be another actor who grew up and grew old on camera," tweeted film critic Uday Bhatia.

In his final years, Kapoor became a popular presence on social media, and was refreshingly honest about his opinions. In his last tweet on April 2, he appealed to people to respect the work frontline health workers were doing.

"We have to win this Coronavirus war together," Kapoor wrote.

Altogether Kapoor acted in more than 100 movies in a career spanning more than 40 years.

"He smiled on screen and the world outside became a little bit lighter," film critic Baradwaj Rangan wrote in a tribute. "He gave us joy."

AP

## Fan of routine, Djokovic finds it tough to adjust to uncertainty

LONDON

WORLD number one Novak Djokovic said he initially struggled to cope with the uncertainty surrounding when tennis can restart after its shutdown in early March due to the novel coronavirus.

The sport is suspended till at least mid July due to the virus, which has infected more than 3.19 million people and killed almost 227,000, according to a Reuters tally.

"For us tennis players it is important that the calendar is clear," Djokovic told Sky Sport Italia. "Officially it is the 13th of July, many

people say it is difficult we will start again on that day.

"For me it is important to have a routine. I cannot keep on waiting for that day. I train every day at the gym, I run at home, I play with my kids and this is also hard work.

"At the beginning I was mentally a bit empty and confused, because (the timing) wasn't clear. I talked with my team, I tried to train every day, even though I didn't follow the preparation strictly." Djokovic was in imperious form before the circuit came to a halt.

AP

## From Russia, with tips for sports reporting during COVID-19

By Special Correspondent

WHEN the first case of COVID-19 was reported in Wuhan, China, late last year, no one could have anticipated that it would lead to the postponement of the planet's biggest sporting event – this summer's Olympic Games.

Today, the pandemic is dominating headlines all over the world. Journalists are working in overdrive, stepping up to meet the challenge. With sports events cancelled everywhere, the field of sports journalism in particular finds itself in a most unusual and uneasy position.

How is sports media coping with its new reality during this pandemic? Sports journalism is at its core event-driven. Stories are driven by live events and competitions.

"Our world is very special. It has a very strict schedule and plans – and absolutely unpredictable events," Evgeny Zuenko, editor-in-chief of Sport, told IJNet.

Zuenko elaborated: "Nobody knows who is going to win an upcoming match; miracles and surprises can happen. But, you know your schedule years in advance.

"In September, the Champions League starts, the National Hockey League gets going in October and the Europa League finals in May. Every two years we get either the FIFA World Cup or European Football Championship."

The COVID-19 pandemic has decimated the sports calendar. Almost all national and international sports events have been cancelled or postponed. Never before in history has there been such a disruption, Zuenko noted.

Even when the US and more than 60 other countries boycotted the Olympics in 1980, and four years later when the Soviet Union and 13 other Communist nations boycotted the 1984 Olympic games, the events carried on. American sports journalists have compared the current situation to 9/11's impact on the sports world.

Match TV, Russia's only TV sports channel free to the public, has seen its ratings slump, according to Russian business daily Vedomosti.

Dmitry Navosha, the CEO of Tribuna Digital and co-founder of Sports.ru, meanwhile said that viewership has suffered, but the drop has been insignificant.

"Yes, there are no more sporting events, but people's interest in sports and athletes is still there," Navosha told IJNet, adding: "People also can't spend all day only reading news and statistics about the coronavirus; they feel the need for other updates even more."

Zuenko said the decline for MK



Dar es Salaam's African Lyon players take part in drills in the city recently as part of preparations for this season's First Division League (FDL). The tournament and the rest of sporting activities in Tanzania have been suspended as directed by the government in an effort to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Sport has also been manageable so far, noting: "We expected to lose around 10 per cent of readership, but news around the cancellation of the Olympics still helped us maintain our audience."

With none of the typical stories to cover, sports journalists have found new ways to be creative. So, what does a sports reporter cover in the absence of sports? Here are some ideas.

One: Incorporate reporting on the pandemic. For example, add a "COVID-19" tab alongside the "hockey", "football", "basketball" tabs on your website.

There, you can upload news around cancellations of games and events, stories about sports personalities with the virus and their families, coverage of athletes' philanthropy, interviews about self-isolation, statistics, and so on.

Two: Turn to history. Take a look back at impactful events of the past, like the top ten soccer goals scored, or the 15 greatest moments in basketball history. Recount the 2009 biathlon doping scandal, or write about what soccer was like during the cholera outbreak.

Three: Become an analyst. Review the season, make predictions and evaluate financial implications. Investigate who gains the most from the Russian Premier League being suspended, for example, or how the pandemic will change the world of sports.

Four: Conduct lots of interviews. In the form of short messages with an athlete in self-isolation, or a full-scale, in-depth interview – having your

subject review, reflect and open up.

Five: Explore new forms of storytelling. Update your newsroom's YouTube channel, or start a new podcast – for example, about the founders of the Spartak football club.

Six: Look into other sports, in other countries. Write about soccer culture in Belarus, or about e-sports – for instance, a video game tournament featuring high-profile athletes, or a Russian online basketball championship.

Seven: Entertain. With games and movies. Put together a quiz on soccer terms, or ask an athlete for book suggestions during quarantine.

Where is this all headed? Media analysts say that it is too soon to assess the long-term impact of the COVID-19 crisis on sports journalism. Some sports editors are showing optimism, however. "Match TV has a lot of its own shows and exclusive content, so we hope that the situation will improve," a Match TV representative said.

Navosha echoed the optimism – that the situation is under control, saying: "Of course, both an unprecedented sports shutdown and economic issues in the country will hit hard. But, our media projects have a loyal audience and we are very resistant to this kind of situation."

"We launched Sports.ru during the crisis of 1998, so the ability to keep the balance and even grow through hard times is a part of our DNA," added Navosha.

Still, it's difficult to predict when the sports lockdown will end. Forecasting advertisement revenue and the

sustainability of advertisers also adds uncertainty to newsrooms' editorial plans.

Some members of the journalism community are more pessimistic, expecting a total collapse of sports media in Russia if the current lockdown is extended.

"The foundation of all our business plans, of our content monetisation models, was the fact that 2020 was the year of two major events: the European Football Championship and the Olympic Games," said Zuenko.

"It's crucial for sports media: in even-numbered years we earn much more than in odd-numbered years, because a great number of advertisers – at least in Russia – show up just in time for the Olympics and the major soccer tournaments. Today, we have to rewrite all these plans," Zuenko added.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the lives of sports journalists have changed significantly. It started with restricting access to locker rooms, and has continued into the complete silence of the sports world, catching both players and fans by surprise.

There is no precedent, nor is there a guide for how to work under these circumstances. Sports reporters have had to adapt, fundamentally adjusting the nature of their coverage.

They have worked quickly to devise new, creative approaches to their craft, to cover a world with no sports games or events – not even an Olympics or European Football Championship – and this is their new reality.

## 'You Are the Champions': Queen, under lockdown, record health worker anthem

LONDON

ROCK band Queen and singer Adam Lambert are raising money for health workers fighting COVID-19 with new single "You Are the Champions", an updated version of classic hit "We Are the Champions" recorded on mobile phones under lockdown.

The track is for "all those in the frontline, all around the world... the people who are risking their lives to save us and save our families," guitarist Brian May told Reuters in a video conference call interview from his home in London.

The single came to life when May posted a video online of himself playing his part, inviting the public to jam. He then urged drummer Roger Taylor and Lambert, who tours with the band in the place of late singer Freddie Mercury, to join in. The band discussed whether to update the lyrics. In the end, Lambert swapped in "you" for "we" in the final verse, and left the rest of the words unchanged. It was an unusual move for Queen to alter even a single word of a classic song written by Mercury more than 40 years ago.

"But I think this is the type of event that warranted such a change. And it really, because it's such a well-known title, changing that one word makes a huge impact," Lambert told Reuters from his home in Los Angeles.

The lyrics still stand as the ideal anthem for the fight against coronavirus, he added: "It's really a song about overcoming obstacles. It's a song about, you know, defying the odds. And I think



In this Sept. 28, 2019 file photo, Adam Lambert, left, and Brian May, of Queen, perform at the Global Citizen Festival in New York. (AP)

that's what we're doing right now."

Taylor's wife filmed him adding drums from his home in the English county of Cornwall. He listened to May's track on headphones and played along while watching on a computer. "It was quite tricky because Brian was just playing without a metronome or anything," Taylor confided to Reuters. The musicians and Mercury's estate are donating their proceeds to a World

Health Organization fund for health workers. The music video shows footage of frontline workers around the world, including Taylor's daughter, Dr Rory Taylor, a family doctor in West London.

"People feel it in themselves," May said of Mercury's song. "They feel this challenge. They want to be the best. They want to win. And the song just has it. So it's become a wonderful way of expressing triumph and determination in the face of something very difficult."

The band was meant to be on the road now but had to postpone a 27-date UK and European tour. May said it was "heartbreaking" to call off shows after fans bought 400,000 tickets, and the band hopes to reschedule for next year.

REUTERS

## Aguero, Rudiger among Prem stars wary of return

LONDON

MANCHESTER City striker Sergio Aguero believes many Premier League players will be fearful of resuming the season in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, potentially putting their families at risk in the rush to get back on the pitch.

The Argentina forward has said the thought of returning to training and playing matches frightens him and the feeling will be mutual among lots of players.

"The majority of players are scared because they have family, they have children, they have babies," he told El Chiringuito TV.

"When we go back, I imagine that we will be very tense, we will be very careful and the moment someone feels ill, you will think: 'What's gone on there?'. It does scare me."

The coronavirus has killed over 26,000 people in the United Kingdom and infected more than 165,000.

Premier League clubs are due to meet on Friday to discuss plans to resume training and complete the season, but Aguero believes the nature of the virus will naturally leave players at risk until a vaccine is readily available.

"There are people who have it, but they don't have symptoms and they can infect you. You can be infected and you don't know anything about it," he said.

Chelsea's Germany defender Antonio Rudiger has also questioned whether it is morally right to contin-

ue the season while deaths around the world continue to rise.

Rudiger believes it must be clear there is no danger of spreading infection further with a Premier League re-start.

Sources told ESPN that Chelsea have asked their first-team players who are overseas to return to England by Sunday and be on standby should the Premier League step up plans to return.

"If we continue to play and there is a danger, and we ignore that while people are dying somewhere in the world, I don't know if that would sit right on my conscience," he told Germany's ZDF.

"If everything fits and it comes from those in charge that it's okay, there's no danger, then we can start.

"But if there is a danger that it will start again and more people will get infected [then there should be no re-start]."

Rudiger added that if the season cannot get back underway and is cancelled, runaway leaders Liverpool should be handed the league title, which would be their first since 1990.

"Honestly, as far as I'm concerned they can give Liverpool the title. At the end of the day they deserve it, they've had a great season," he said.

"They were going to win the thing anyway, so the title is theirs ethically. Of course, I hope that the season can be finished and it will be sporting for everyone."

(Agencies)

## Liverpool hit back at mayor's call to end season

LONDON

PREMIER League leaders Liverpool said they were "disappointed" by the city's mayor saying the Premier League season should not be re-started even behind closed doors because of the risk of fans gathering outside Anfield.

Liverpool were 25 points clear of closest rivals Manchester City, who have a game in hand, when the league was suspended in March and need only two wins to secure their first top-flight title in 30 years.

Premier League clubs are set to meet on Friday to discuss ways to finish the season, with some already back in individual training.

However, Liverpool Mayor Joe Anderson said on Thursday that health and safety was the bottom line and the best thing to do was to declare the season over and hand the title to Liverpool as deserving champions.

"Even if it was behind closed doors, there'd be many thousands of people who would turn up outside Anfield," said Anderson, a fan of Liverpool's city rivals Everton.

"There's not many people who would

respect what we were saying and stay away from the ground, a lot of people would come to celebrate so I think it's a non-starter.

"I think it would be really difficult for the police to keep people apart and maintain social distancing if they were going to celebrate outside Anfield. It would be farcical."

Liverpool replied in a statement saying there was "a lack of evidence to support such claims."

"In recent weeks, we have engaged with supporters' groups who have informed us of their determination to respect social distancing measures," the club added.

"In the event of a resumption of football being announced, we would continue to work with them and other key stakeholders in keeping with our collective desire to achieve this crucial objective."

Mark Roberts, the national lead for football policing, said on Wednesday that police want to be able to cancel the season if fans did not respect social-distancing guidelines once matches resumed.

(Agencies)

## Rapinoe offers to be Biden's running mate

NEW YORK

MEGAN Rapinoe, the reigning FIFA Women's World Player of the Year, is eyeing another prestigious title: vice president of the United States of America.

The 34-year-old soccer star told presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden on Thursday that she is willing to serve as his running mate.

Rapinoe conducted a 44-minute Instagram Live chat with Biden and his wife, Dr. Jill Biden, during which she endorsed the former vice president in his candidacy for president. She had supported Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren during the primaries.

Biden has committed to selecting a female running mate.

Rapinoe said to Biden, "I don't want to put you on the spot - I think I could still play soccer and do this. But if you need a vice president, I'm just saying I'm available for an interview. We can talk logistics and the details. Put it on your list. No pres-

sure."

Biden said, "You would have to take a pay cut to become vice president."

Rapinoe replied, "Yeah, no, I'm not into that," possibly a reference to the U.S. women's soccer team's ongoing equal-pay lawsuit against the U.S. Soccer Federation.

Rapinoe is no stranger to political issues, as she is an outspoken advocate for the LGBTQ community.

Last summer, she got into a public spat with President Donald Trump after she said she would not visit the White House if the U.S. team won the Women's World Cup.

Trump tweeted, "I am a big fan of the American Team, and Women's Soccer, but Megan should WIN first before she TALKS! Finish the job!"

Rapinoe subsequently led the U.S. team to the championship, in the process winning the Women's World Cup's Golden Ball as the event's top player and the Golden Boot as the tournament's top scorer.

(Agencies)

## Arsenal's stress just beginning as Aubameyang, Saka and Alexandre Lacazette need new deals

LONDON

THE announcement that Arsenal had agreed a 12.5% pay cut with their playing staff initially appeared to be a victory for everyone involved. Here was an example of a group of highly paid and much-storied footballers, routinely maligned for existing in a bubble of exorbitant wealth, recognising the reality of the world and making an economic sacrifice for the greater good during exceptional times.

In doing so, the Gunners became the first Premier League club to confirm a salary reduction as opposed to a deferral, setting an example to others by demonstrating both the severity of the financial damage this coronavirus pandemic will likely inflict and an admirable collective willingness to face that challenge. By saving a maximum of around £20 million over the next 12 months - their salaries are repaid in full if they qualify for the Champions League, or 7.5% is returned upon reaching the Europa League - the reduction meant that the club's non-playing staff were less likely to be furloughed.

And yet, the negotiations also shone a light on the internal tensions in the Arsenal squad that pose one of the biggest sporting tests to head coach Mikel Arteta as he rebuilds this team.

Contract negotiations have long been an issue for the Gunners. It's why the club sought to bring additional expertise on board, including former Team Sky lawyer Huss Fahmy and Raul Sanllehi from Barcelona. Yet despite the goal of injecting greater diligence and ruthlessness into their operations, the Gunners conducted their pay-cut conversations against a backdrop of uncertainty surrounding the futures of several influential players.

Upon taking the helm after chief executive Ivan Gazidis' departure for AC Milan at the end of 2018, Arsenal head of football Sanllehi and managing director Vinai Venkatesham underlined how they wanted to establish fresh business practices following the end of Arsene Wenger's 22-year reign and a large-scale restructuring. "Internally, we are calling this period 'The New Chapter,' which I think says a lot," Sanllehi claimed in November 2018. That sea change had multiple components, chief among them a need to improve the club's methodology around contract negotiations, with the Gunners having lost an array of talent on unfavourable terms.

In 2019, Aaron Ramsey joined a painfully long list at the end of last season after the club withdrew a longstanding offer to end what they privately vowed would be the last stalemate of its kind.

"You should try to always avoid going into the last year of a contract for many different reasons, from the club's side and also for the player," Sanllehi said. "We will try to get clarity earlier."

Yet a cloudy picture persists, and more than a year later, that search for clarity continues. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, Bukayo Saka and Alexandre Lacazette are among a number of players facing uncertain futures, amid the metaphorical clock ticking and growing speculation over exactly the sort of cut-price departure Arsenal wanted to avoid. Aubameyang and Saka are out of contract in 2021, Lacazette in 2022.

A partial explanation for the delay in tying players down can be found in the upheaval caused by Unai Emery's departure in November. The Spaniard's tenure unravelled to an alarming extent, but the club were so reluctant to sack him that there was no immediate replacement lined up. The club opted to give club legend and assistant first-team coach Freddie Ljungberg a chance to prove himself.

The Swede had an excellent relationship with Arsenal's young players from his work as U-23 manager but failed to address the tactical issues that contributed to Emery's departure. Having held an interest in Arteta when Wenger departed, the Gunners opted to appoint the Spaniard in mid-December.

But as the coronavirus spread across the globe, causing mass disruption to daily life and presenting unprecedented challenges, discussions inside the club turned to cash flow and Arsenal found themselves in the awkward position of having to simultaneously present competing arguments to certain players.

The spirit of those conversations was awkward: We need you to take a pay cut to safeguard the club's future, but also believe us when we say we're in a position to compete for trophies in future ... so why not sign a new long-term contract?

The most obvious example of a player caught at the crossroads is Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, who will have one year remaining on his existing contract whenever the current season ends. The striker turns 31 in June and his next contract will probably be the last big deal of his topflight career. He's in a strong negotiating position, having shared the Premier League Golden Boot with Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane last season before backing that up with 17 goals this term, second in the standings behind Leicester's Jamie Vardy.

Aubameyang's haul is especially impressive given the team's broader struggles under Emery. The Gunners' all-time record goal scorer, Thierry Henry, echoed the sentiments of many supporters when reflecting in December: "Without the goals of Aubameyang I don't know where we would have been right now."

No other Arsenal player is in double figures, with Lacazette next best on seven league goals and Nicolas Pepe with four. To underline Aubameyang's talismanic effect on the squad, Aubameyang was given the captain's armband when Granit Xhaka was demoted following an altercation with supporters.



Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang

The striker used his programme notes in January to scotch rumours of a possible departure, adding: "I am committed to it and desperate to bring it back to the top, where it belongs."

However, there are some senior figures at the club who, while welcoming that public show of loyalty, would have liked to have seen a stronger indication from Aubameyang that he is ready to sign a new deal. Talks have been delayed as a result of the coronavirus, but already it was understood that Aubameyang's position involved waiting to see whether the club qualified for the Champions League and how well-placed they were to fight for silverware during the theoretical apotheosis of his career.

All of which is difficult to square with Arsenal being the only club to take a pay cut - and one lasting 12 months at that, rather than the three- or four-month deferrals reported at other clubs. Aubameyang's future is undecided, but other clubs including Chelsea, Barcelona and Inter Milan sense an opportunity he could be tempted away.

Saka is at the opposite end of the spectrum in terms of age and influence, but finds himself pondering a similar dilemma. The 19-year-old has been one of Arsenal's success stories this season, breaking into the first team with maturity, consistency and quality - form made all the more remarkable by his doing so largely while playing out of position at left-back rather than in his preferred guise as a winger.

Like Aubameyang, Saka will have one year left on his deal, and with just 26 first-team appearances under his belt, he already has attracted interest from a host of clubs including Borussia Dortmund in addition to being namechecked for a future international call-up by England head coach Gareth Southgate. He joined Arsenal at the age of 9 and is deeply fond of the club, but rivals will make a compelling case that they're better positioned to aid his development.

Saka earns a fraction of Aubameyang's

£200,000-a-week wage and would therefore feel the pinch more acutely over the next year, but this isn't about the money as much as it is ambition.

Arsenal undoubtedly need considerable investment to help them compete again for the Premier League and Champions League. Sanllehi and Venkatesham are engaging characters with the club's best interests at heart, but do they have the resources to create the conditions for the Gunners to challenge? And if not, will owner Stan Kroenke buck a trend and invest to help bridge the gap?

These are the types of issues Mesut Ozil felt did not get satisfactory answers before declining to join his teammates in taking a pay cut. Talks are ongoing with Ozil and at least two other players, who are all open to finding a solution, but no agreement is close.

Ozil's £350,000-a-week contract has been a financial strain on the club and often hard to justify, particularly when the midfielder was frozen out under Emery. Rather than that figure hailing the dawn of a new era in which the club could rival the biggest salaries around, it remains an outlier in the first-team squad to this day.

Other players have referenced it as a benchmark in negotiations. Arsenal have not played a Champions League match since Ozil signed that deal in January 2018, and a lack of income from Europe's premier competition has compromised any chance of offering other players a similar wage.

It's perhaps little surprise Ozil has yet to be offered any sort of extension, even one on reduced terms. The German midfielder was free to leave last summer, but no club could match his salary. Although he never agitated for a move and has enjoyed a revival under Arteta, it feels as though both Arsenal and Ozil have reached a point where their association is no longer mutually beneficial.

After seven years at the club - eight if Ozil sees out his contract to its conclusion - it will be a landmark moment for the

Gunners. Those with intimate knowledge of the player insist his motivation in rejecting a pay cut is not financial - he gives away more than £2m per year to charitable causes - but a question of aspiration, aptitude and intent.

Those questions have been asked of Kroenke for a long time prior to the coronavirus pandemic. They will be asked by prospective new signings, too.

Shkodran Mustafi, David Luiz and Sokratis Papastathopoulos all have deals that expire in 2021. The former has been a divisive figure for some time, while the latter pair are believed to have options in their existing agreements to extend by a further year; all will need addressing soon. Lacazette has two years remaining, giving the club a little more insulation against external market forces, but the French striker has not always looked entirely happy in north London and another tough decision over his future sits on the horizon unless there is a change in mood around the club.

Of course, Arsenal are not alone in facing these challenges. Chelsea were in discussions over a 10% cut for their first-team squad but failed to reach an agreement. Tottenham and Liverpool were forced into reversing their decision to furlough non-playing staff and neither have secured a deferral or cut from their players as yet.

At the time of writing, Manchester United insist they are not considering reductions or deferrals, but executive vice chairman Ed Woodward claimed last week that the economic impact would affect their ability to compete in the transfer market when football resumes. And if that is true of a financial behemoth like United, the rest of the Premier League really is in trouble.

The lasting effect of the coronavirus on football is a long way from being known, but as clubs adjust to a future not yet fully formed, a familiar issue plagues Arsenal's path.

(Agencies)

Gwiji by David Chikoko



# SPORT

Arsenal's stress just beginning as  
Aubameyang, Saka, Lacazette need deals

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Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara speaks during a news conference in Colombo June 27, 2015. REUTERS

## Sarwan hits back at Gayle for 'scandalous' allegations

SAN JUAN

CALLING the allegations leveled against him by Chris Gayle as "scandalous", former West Indies batsman and Jamaica Tallawahs assistant coach Ramnaresh Sarwan has "categorically" denied he had any role to play in the former being released by the franchise for the 2020 season of the Caribbean Premier League.

"I categorically deny any involvement in the decision or the decision-making process, which led to Gayle's non-selection to represent the Jamaica Tallawahs in the 2020 Caribbean Premier League (CPL) Tournament," Sarwan said in a two-page statement he issued on his Facebook account on Thursday.

Sarwan's reaction comes a day after the Tallawahs issued their own statement on Gayle's release, saying the decision was made "collectively by the Ownership and Management team which did not include Mr. Ramnaresh Sarwan and based purely on business and cricketing reasoning."

Gayle was subsequently hired by the St Lucia Zouks for CPL 2020, which is scheduled to be played in August-September.

Sarwan said Gayle's outburst was "quite unfortunate" and the only reason he came out with his own statement was to "protect the character" of people like him who he said were falsely accused.

"In that video, he has leveled false allegations and tarnished the good name and reputation of a series of persons," Sarwan said. "I was the focus of most of the onslaughts. I reply, not because I feel that Gayle's rantings are worthy of it, but because I feel that the public's record must be set straight and also, to protect the character and careers of so many people, whose image he sought to besmirch."

Sarwan expressed dismay and "shock" at his former long-time West Indies team-mate's allegations. Sarwan had played in 249 international matches involving Gayle with their association going back to Under-19 days. "Let me make it abundantly clear, that I have played with Gayle from the inception of my international career and I have always respected him as an extraordinary talent, a colleague and most importantly, a close friend. Hence, my utter shock by these scandalous allegations."

Sarwan said Gayle was a dear friend known to his family and that he had even "rallied" behind the Jamaican when in 2016 there were calls to ban Gayle from cricket after he was involved in a sexism row while appearing to proposition a female journalist on live television during the Big Bash League.

Gayle, who was hired as the marquee player and appointed captain by the Tallawahs, had said at the outset of the 2019 CPL season that Sarwan wanted to be head coach, but he told the Guyanese that he was "not fit" for that role as it entailed various requirements. According to Sarwan, Tallawahs had in fact appointed him as the head coach, a role he had not taken in 2018 because he wanted Mark O' Donnell in the position, who had been with the franchise for a long time to be in charge.

"In 2019, I was appointed Head Coach. I reached out to Chris and discussed with him, the selection of a team. I did so out of respect for him. In my conversation with Gayle about the team, he informed me that Donovan Miller, a Jamaican and a very close friend of Chris should be appointed Head Coach as he would better understand the culture of the Jamaican players. I conveyed Gayle's view to the CEO, informing the CEO that I would be happy to step aside for Miller's appointment given that Chris feels strongly about his appointment. My priority was what would be in the best interest of the team. Gayle is fully aware of the background, yet he accuses me of fighting to be Head Coach."

Gayle had also accused Sarwan of instigating the overseas players to "make a mockery" of him in front of younger players for not being present on training days, a routine he said he had followed in all T20 leagues around the world. Gayle admitted he had been "flipped" by the whispers and "put everyone in their place" during a "heated meeting" ahead of Tallawahs' final match last year.

"I absolutely reject Gayle's allegation that I encouraged foreign players to disrespect him," Sarwan said. "I really do not understand how he came to such a conclusion and this simply is not true."

Sarwan expressed "deep regret on this unfortunate saga" and wished Gayle good luck for his stint with the Zouks. However, Sarwan feared that Gayle might have set a wrong precedent in that young players might want to follow him in expressing disgruntlement in future in a similar fashion.

"My deep concern, is that young and upcoming players who regard Gayle as a role model, may think that this is an acceptable way of addressing problems which may befall them in their careers."

AGENCIES



Yanga players participate in training in Dar es Salaam recently as part of preparations for the Vodacom Premier League. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

## Yanga set to start welcoming investors

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

YANGA Chairman, Mshindo Msolla, has said all is set for commercialization of the club.

Msolla pointed out yesterday his leadership is committed to turning the club into a business entity and assured the side's supporters that the club will remain in their hands.

"Yanga are turning commercial soon and I'm happy that the process is going on smoothly, but let me assure all our sup-

porters that turning commercial does not mean that the club will not be in their hands," he disclosed.

"Yanga are for 'Wananchi' (Citizens) and they will remain like that, the only thing which will change is that we will now be operating as a business entity," he said.

Msolla said going commercial is the right way as football now is money spinning business.

He thanked one of the club's sponsors GSM Group Limited for being in the forefront of ef-

forts to see to it that the idea of commercialization is realized.

"The aim is to see the club become self-reliant, we have a good number of supporters who for sure will be in the forefront supporting their team to be financially stable," he disclosed.

"With that stability we can sign top players, have our own modern infrastructure and many other things which can generate economy for the club," he added.

He further said before becoming turning commercial the club

will educate its supporters on the benefit of the development.

In the process of turning commercial, Yanga named a sub-committee which is headed by lawyer Alex Mgongolwa.

Should the Jangwani Street-based outfit turn commercial, it will follow on the footsteps of their rivals Simba who did the same late last month.

Former Simba SC Chairman Ismail Aden Rage hailed the commercialization model of Yanga, saying it is applicable in the country.

## MCC chief Sangakkara wants England, Australia to tour Pakistan

LONDON

ENGLAND and Australia must tour Pakistan to facilitate regular international cricket in the South Asian country, Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) president Kumar Sangakkara has said.

Top teams have shunned Pakistan since the 2009 attack on a bus carrying the Sri Lanka team in Lahore in which six players were injured and eight Pakistanis, including six policemen, were killed.

Batting great Sangakkara, who was part of that team, returned to Pakistan with an MCC team in February this year but top teams have stayed away with security apprehensions.

"It doesn't matter an Asian side going there or a secondary side in terms of world prominence when it comes to having security measures in place," Sangakkara told The Cricket Show on Sky Sports Cricket.

"I think it's important that England or Australia, even South Africa, make up their minds to actually tour when security is assured and they have those discussions; the MCC tour will be a precursor to that."

In December, Pakistan played their first test match on home soil since 2009 when they hosted Sri Lanka in Karachi while Bangladesh also played a test match in Rawalpindi in February.

Bangladesh split their tour in three parts even though the final leg was called off in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sangakkara, who has scored more than 28,000 international runs for Sri Lanka, agreed it was too early for any extended tour of Pakistan.

"I don't think you are ever going to see in the near future a five-test match series coupled with a one-day series played back-to-back," said the former Sri Lanka captain.

"I think it will be more a case of you play two test matches, you take a break, you go back and play three one-dayers."

"It's not exactly the right time for extended tours, but I'm sure that with the right communication and the measures in place that players can go back and play some great quality cricket, have a great time and bring cricket back to Pakistan."

Pakistan have offered to host global flagship tournaments after the governing International Cricket Council invited expression of interest for events in the 2023-31 cycle.

REUTERS

## Flexibles by David Chikoko



"I don't think you are ever going to see in the near future a five-test match series coupled with a one-day series played back-to-back," said the former Sri Lanka captain