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PEMBA

MOZAMBIQUE'S President Filipe Nyusi yesterday visited the northern province of Cabo Delgado where the army is fighting jihadist insurgents.

The terror-hit region borders Tanzania and is home to many Tanzanians working mainly in the mines.

The military insists it is now in control of the key port of Mocimboa da Praia, which was reportedly taken by the militants earlier in the week.

The army was said to have retreated after running out of ammunition.

Nyusi (pictured) visited the provincial capital, Pemba, which is hundreds of kilometres from the heart of the insurgency.

He says the terrorists, who are linked to the Islamic State group, pose no threat to international efforts to exploit the region's gas reserves.

Yet the rebellion is evolving fast, and Mozambique's security forces appear to be, almost constantly, on the back foot.

With roads, electricity and phone-lines

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Reverend Dr Barnabas Mtokambali, Head of the Tanzania Assemblies of God Church, presents an award to President John Magufuli at the climax of the church's General Assembly in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: State House

Church awards JPM for COVID-19 stance

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE Tanzania Assemblies of God (TAG) has conferred on President John Magufuli a recognition award for strong leadership during the Covid-19 outbreak.

TAG head Reverend Dr Barnabas Mtokambali said the decision to award the president was reached during the TAG national convention in Dodoma.

He declared that the church acknowledges the important role played by the Head of State in instilling faith among Tanzanians that God was

The decision not to lockdown the country, calling for three days of prayer in search of God's intervention has put Tanzania in a very special position globally

the answer to such trying moments, while other countries opted for lockdown.

Unlike neighbouring countries and beyond, President Magufuli did not impose lockdown measures in seeking to mitigate the spread of Covid-19.

"The decision not to lockdown the country, calling for three days of prayer in search of God's intervention has put Tanzania in a very special position globally," said Rev Dr Mtokambali.

The bishop affirmed that the action touched the church council to an extent that when the president announced three days of prayer, TAG

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By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has banned a popular radio programme, slapped three online broadcasters with a total of 15m/- fines and warned four others over unethical content.

The regulator announced in Dar es Salaam yesterday that after deliberations, its content regulation committee had decided that Clouds FM's Jahazi programme be banned as it allegedly aired "unethical content that encouraged young people to perform masturbation."

"The programme was aired last month and it was not the first. The show had earlier encouraged people to consume

octopus soup to enhance their libido," said TCRA's content regulation committee chairman Joseph Mapunda.

He stressed that the station is barred from introducing a programme with similar content but should come up with a completely different show. Jahazi is usually aired from 4pm to 7pm.

On other hand, the regulator ordered Wasafi Media Online TV, Triple A FM and Carry Mastory Media Limited to pay 5m/- fine for each for breaching the Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations, 2020.

Wasafi Media Online TV has been penalised for broadcasting vulgar content showing men and women dancing in a sexually provocative manner.

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The programme aroused sexual feelings and encouraged audiences to engage in such acts

SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

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

FACT 1 Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

FACT 2 For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

FACT 3 Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

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

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

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

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you

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

cdc.gov/COVID-19

Chadema cries foul in zonal offices fire outbreak

By Guardian Reporter, Arusha

NORTHERN zone offices of Chadema were firebombed and destroyed on the eve of the arrival of its presidential candidate, Tundu Lissu in the city yesterday, the party said in a short message on Twitter.

The party said that some people invaded and set ablaze its northern zone offices in Arusha, asserting that the schedule of the candidate's activities would not change. "Nothing will stop the wind for change in Tanzania in the coming general election," it declared.

"They raided, poured petrol and then set ablaze our northern zone offices. The fire also affected our regional and district offices." The fire broke out in the early hours of yesterday.

Lissu intimated that the fire

outbreak at the office which for the past week was planning his reception amounted to intimidation.

"No amount of terror and intimidation will stop this tsunami for change in Tanzania."

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Church awards JPM for COVID-19 stance

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followers fasted for seven days and later another seven days.

"Historically no president in the world has turned to God at such a time when the world is undergoing traumatic moments like the COVID-19 pandemic," he stated.

President Magufuli who later addressed delegates of the convention thanked the church for the honour, saying he did not deserve such recognition, intimating that it is God who sailed the country through the time of the pandemic.

He however termed it a great gesture and a symbol of true friendship and teachings of God, calling on the church to keep on praying for him to remain humble "for he is nothing without God."

The president also thanked TAG and other religious organisations for the good work they do to support the government in providing services such as education, health and spiritual stewardship, among others, to the people.

He noted that religious institutions have a vital role in any nation's development via faithful teachings focusing on peace, love and harmony. Without religious teachings a lot of things could have not been realized, he emphasized.

"Many Tanzanians have benefited from services offered by religious institutions and as government we will continue working closely with religious leaders," he said.

The government will continue putting in place a conducive environment for religious entities to freely and greatly contribute in building the country's economy, he said, urging adherents in attendance to focus on building industries.

On the forthcoming election, President Magufuli called on religious leaders to urge their followers to turn out in large numbers and vote.

"The government has listened

to your long-time plea for election not to be held on worship days. Now you have no reason not to vote and elect your leaders through a constitutional process," he remarked.

He appealed to religious leaders to pray for peaceful campaigns and voting, warning that the country should not go the way of other countries where election season unleashes chaos.

He also called on people to shun those who preach hatred and violence during campaigns, as they have places to run to in the event where chaos engulfs the country.

Dodoma regional commissioner Dr Binilith Mahenge showered praise on the president, saying he is the only president in the history of the country who has completed first term in office without traveling overseas.

He also noted that the decision taken by the president to move the government to Dodoma has helped develop the then sleepy presumptive capital.

"We have to thank God for hearing our prayers for a leader who could steer the country to another level economically," he said.

Earlier the TAG leader thanked the president for his commitment to bring development to people, fight corruption and for his "great vision that has shaken the world."

He appealed to the president to help solve challenges affecting Africa as a continent and compel African countries to remain economically dependent. He also decried moral decadence among the country's youth, urging stronger government action and help save the younger generation.

Ranging from dressing, lack of patriotism to lack of respect for authority, the younger generation is completely headed to ruin and incapacity, the TAG leader had cautioned.



Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan exchanges greetings with some NBC Bank senior officials when she toured Kizimkazi Day exhibition in South Unguja Region on Thursday. The bank presented to her equipment and supplies worth over 29m/- for use in the ongoing construction of four classrooms at a nursery school in the area. Photo: Photo: Guardian Correspondent

President Nyusi visits terror-hit gas capital

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cut, information about what is going on in Mocimboa da Praia is hard to come by.

There is growing evidence to suggest that the rebels are now well-armed and increasingly ambitious.

The militants - known locally as al-Shabab, or the youth - have an Islamist agenda, but they're building on decades of local frustrations about unemployment, rigged elections, corruption and violence.

Extremists have been launching violent attacks on civilians in Cabo Delgado since October 2017,

resulting in at least 211,500 people being displaced. Events involving the group, known as Ahlu Sunna Wa-Jama, have been increasing with incessant attacks on civilians, government forces and military installations.

The group's activities have been concentrated on the coast of Cabo Delgado from Pemba to the Tanzanian border. Government response, however, is leading to human rights abuses. Government forces have detained journalists for covering events in Cabo Delgado and subjected civilians suspected of supporting the group to

perquisitions, looting and arbitrary detention.

These attacks have affected the food security situation in Cabo Delgado, where intense food crisis levels (IPC-3) are reported along the coast compared to minimal level (IPC-1) food insecurity in neighbouring provinces, due to restricted access to crops and livelihoods for fear of violence.

After years of violent episodes, Cabo Delgado has seen a surge in attacks since March. These assaults have decimated villages and terrified local populations. Macomia village which is now empty

for instance, was already home to thousands of displaced people from previous attacks. The numbers of those forced to leave their homes in Cabo Delgado Province is growing.

Access to the northern region of Mozambique has become more difficult since violence erupted in late 2017. However, humanitarian assistance is crucial for the displaced population already suffering from malaria and cholera outbreaks, and little access to HIV and TB care. These medical conditions are compounded by the violence in the province.



Dar es Salaam regional commissioner Aboubakar Kunenge (L) swears in Ng'irabuzu Ludigija as Ilala district commissioner yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Chadema complains after zonal offices fire outbreak

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Arusha here we come," the candidate said to his supporters.

The fire incident occurred at the Tindigani section of Kimandolu Ward in the Suye Division of Arusha city, where the opposition party has set up base. So far, no suspect has been arrested in connection with the fire.

Arusha Regional Police Commander, ACP Salum Hamduni confirmed the Kimandolu fire incident yesterday, saying that the Chadema offices, located at the foot of Suye Hill, were first vandalized before the culprits burnt the premises.

The police statement said that the door was found broken with all the six windows of the building smashed.

The RPC explained that the resulting fire destroyed all furniture and wooden

doors, and the police were investigating the incident.

The party's head of communications, Tumaini Makene had tweeted that the guard who was posted to watch over the premises in Kimandolu disappeared without trace after the fire incident.

Incumbent Arusha Urban MP Godbless Lema told city residents for three days as to expected arrival of the candidate, asking party members and supporters to turn up in large numbers for the proposed candidate's grand reception.

The party flag bearer was expected to report at the Kimandolu office yesterday to embark on his regional itinerary for gathering the party members' endorsement for his presidential bid.

The candidate was expected to arrive in the city from Karatu District.

Media content: TCRA lashes broadcasters

FROM PAGE 1

the regulator intoned.

"The programme aroused sexual feelings and encouraged audiences to engage in such acts," he said.

Triple A was fined for airing an advert for a witch doctor which TCRA says encouraged people to engage in superstitious beliefs. Carry Mastory Media will have to part with 5m/- for airing content that discussed unnatural sex.

Radio One, Radio Free Africa, Kiss FM, CG FM and Abood FM which are partner stations of the BBC were issued a warning for recently airing the British broadcaster's interview with opposition Chadema's presidential contender Tundu

Lissu.

TCRA announced mid-week that Tanzanian radio and television stations must acquire a new licence to able to broadcast live content of a foreign media and that foreign journalists visiting broadcast stations in the country for journalistic work or related business must be accompanied by a government official.

In its notice to the public published in newspapers at mid-week, the regulator said the decision was informed by challenges that emerged from implementation of regulation 37 of the Electronic and Postal Communications (Radio and Television Broadcasting Content) of 2018.

"There has been a challenge

with regard to programmes or live broadcasts especially when Tanzanian channels licensed by TCRA air foreign content that violate ethics and professionalism," the notice intoned.

"To improve regulation of live programmes, regulation 37 was reviewed this year to include a subsection requiring all stations that intend to partner with local or foreign media including airing live broadcasts to apply for licence from TCRA."

On the other hand, the Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations, 2020 notice has not been received well by media stakeholders, with the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT)

saying the regulations impact negatively on editorial independence, media freedom, journalism practice and freedom of expression in general.

In its analysis of the regulations released mid-week, MCT cited mandatory requirement of the licence for provision of online content service as provided under Regulation 4 as a constraint to freedom of expression.

Content has been defined under Regulation 2 to mean information in form of speech or other sound, data, text or images whether still or moving except where transmitted in private communications.

"This is strange taking into account that article 18 of the Constitution grants individu-

als with the right to seek, receive and impart information regardless of national frontiers," the council asserted.

"Internet is one such medium which can be used to seek, receive and impart information in making use of that right. For that reason, imposition of the licence requirement is an unreasonable restriction of the right to freedom of expression."

MCT also took issue with Regulation 16 which it says gives open-ended and broad list of prohibited content. It says the prohibited content is provided in overly broad terms prone to multiple interpretations and manipulation, hence it may be used to restrict or censor tar-

geted information.

"For example, publication of indecent material is prohibited, but the term indecent material has been defined to mean material which is offensive, morally improper and against current standards of accepted behaviour which includes nudity and sex. It is unclear what constitutes "morally improper and against current standards of accepted behavior," which creates the risk of blanket prosecution of content providers," the council declared.

MCT also raised concern on regulations that allow TCRA to remove online content and restriction on the use of anonymity.

The changes on foreign con-

tent regulations will affect partner broadcasters of several international media outlets, including DW which reacted by warning against "a worrying trend towards restrictions on press freedom."

"This is a clumsy attempt to suppress critical voices before the election in Tanzania," said DW director Peter Limbourg in a statement posted on the radio's website, warning that it was hard to counter "this far-reaching form of state censorship."

"We support our partner broadcasters in Tanzania and together we will find ways to keep the population well informed, for example through the increased use of social media," the director added.

Ruwasa ordered to complete water infrastructure projects

By Correspondent Mutayoba Arbogast,

Bukoba

DEPUTY Minister for Water Jumaa Aweso has directed the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation agency (RUWASA) to supervise and make sure that several water projects which are currently under construction across the country are completed by October this year.

Aweso made the directive during his official tour in Missenyi District, in Kagera where he visited to oversee construction progress of various projects. "We will not listen to any excuse, so make sure that water in various villages is available before October this year, the government has already issued funds to implement the projects," he said.

Speaking while at the construction site of the Kyaka -Bunazi water project the minister directed contractors to ensure that they work hard to produce quality water projects on the scheduled time.

He said the Kyaka -Bunazi water project which drains from Kagera River will spend 9.4bn/- for the first phase.

He said, the government has already dished out 9.7bn/- for Kagera Region whereby 1.3bn/- has been allocated for Missenyi.

"While en-route from Karagwe District last year, President John Magufuli promised Missenyi Division of clean and safe water. The fifth phase government is committed to ensure that

it serves its people with all essential social needs including stable supply of water," he said.

Inaugurating Kanyigo water project in Kanyigo ward, the project costs being 684, Aweso assigned RUWASA manager in Missenyi to give out 170m/ to enable the project to be completed on time.

The project is currently implemented by the Bukoba Water Sanitation Agency (BUWASA) and the work has reached 80 per cent while producing water to serve the community.

The minister further urged water Committees for all projects to avoid keeping money in pockets or at home but rather open bank accounts so as to keep the public funds safe.

One of the residents, Deusdedith Kahwa appealed to the deputy minister to also consider the neighbouring Kashenye ward by sending water near to the community as they have been facing water shortage for a long time.

Responding, Aweso wanted RUWASA to send the proposal to the ministry. He said that the government had invested much of its efforts to address water blues in the country.

Another resident, Maria Kassano commended the government for bringing the project something which will address the prolonged water crisis facing the residents.

She said that the implementation of the project sounds a huge relief to the residents, especially women who have been walking miles away to search for the precious liquid.



Students of Lushoto District's Mabughai Community Development Technical Training Institute demonstrate their electrical installation skills to Dr John Jingu (in glasses), the Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children ministry's permanent secretary. The PS toured the institute on Thursday. Photo courtesy of Health ministry

Tanzania is proud of SADC achievements, says Kabudi

By Guardian Reporter

FOREIGN Affairs and East African Cooperation Minister Prof Palamagamba Kabudi has said Tanzania is proud of the several achievements recorded when the country was serving as chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) hailing members states for maintaining peace and unity. Speaking during the visual

meeting of the 40th SADC Council of Ministers held on Thursday Kabudi said that in the past one year, SADC Members States witnessed a number of developments ranging from social, economic and political.

During the meeting Prof Kabudi handed over the chairmanship of the SADC Council of Ministers to Veronica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

of the Republic of Mozambique.

Prof Kabudi said that under the chairmanship of the President John Magufuli, SADC finalised the formulation of the Post 2020 Agenda, culminating in the draft SADC Vision 2050 and Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030 Blueprints which are aimed at providing strategic direction to advance the SADC regional integration agenda.

He also said the multiple hazards such as COVID-19 have highlighted the importance of regional cooperation and coordinated response, as well as the need to come up with innovative mechanisms to strengthen resilience, preparedness and responsiveness for disasters including pandemics, epidemics and related hazards.

Kabudi said through collective resolve in response to the

COVID-19 pandemic, SADC was able to promote intra-trade in the region and beyond by developing Regional Guidelines on Harmonisation and Facilitation of Cross Border Transport of Goods across the Region, leading to a seamless flow of trade in the region and mitigating the negative health impacts of the pandemic.

The minister noted that at the 39th Summit of Heads of States

of SADC adopted Kiswahili as the fourth working language of SADC. Its adoption as SADC official language was positively received and it has since then been used in official meetings.

"It is our belief that SADC will continue to embrace the language and member states will introduce the same in their universities and schools curricula. The achievements we registered as a Community would have not

been possible without the hard work and commitment of all of us," he added.

Prof Kabudi further added: "As we handover the Chairmanship, Industrialisation remains at the core of the SADC integration agenda premised on the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015 -2063. No doubt, our region has made some progress in the economic integration of the region."

Shein calls for construction of a special hospital to treat communicable diseases

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein has stressed the need for the Indian Ocean archipelago to construct a special hospital for treating communicable diseases.

Dr Shein said the move will enable the government to quickly respond to disease outbreaks.

He made the statement yesterday during his meeting with Zanzibar's Second Vice President, Ambassador Seif Ali Idd at the State House. Dr Idd presented a report on implementation of a development strategy for the 2019/2020 financial year and proposals for the 2020/2021.

The President urged the office of the Second Vice President to direct the health ministry to start preparations for construction of the hospital which will help in fighting pandemic diseases such as Covid-19.

He however directed the office of the Vice President to repair the Kidmini health centre which was used to treat Covid-19 patients following lack of patients. He said the centre has not received any Coronavirus patient since June this year. Dr Shein was optimistic that Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) presidential candidate, Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi will emerge winner in the October general election since he has all the qualities of a good leader.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Idd congratulated government executives who helped Dr Shein to successfully implement development projects during his ten years tenure.

Mohamed Aboud Mohamed, Minister of State, Second Vice President's Office said the government recorded a number of successes in the 2019/2020 fiscal year including establishment of the Zanzibar Disaster Management Commission which played a great role in the fight against Covid-19. He said the commission conducted educational programs whereas Isles residents were educated on how to prevent themselves from Covid-19 as well as its symptoms. He said the commission also provided humanitarian assistance to victims of different disasters including floods in both Unguja and Pemba.

He said the ministry continues to construct houses of the 2017 flood victims at Nugwi in Unguja and Tumbe in Pemba. He said the job has now reached 85 percent.

About noted that his office has also improved provision of services to people with disabilities as well as providing loans to youth, women and entrepreneur groups.

He commended President Shein and the entire government for successfully battling Coronavirus in the Isles.

The highly contagious, pneumonia-causing illness (Coronavirus) firstly reported in Wuhan, China has infected millions 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.



Nguvu Komando (C), Vodacom Tanzania Plc's digital and value added service director, briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the firm's Digital Accelerator Competition. He said more than 500 'start-up' companies from various parts of Tanzania have already submitted innovative ideas for consideration, with three winning entries expected to be announced on Tuesday next week. He is with SmartCode senior project manager Isaack Shayo (R) and the project manager Sharron Nsule. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Govt directs local councils to survey all areas allocated for investment

By Guardian Correspondent, Bukombe

LAND officials in local councils have been instructed to ensure areas allocated for investment are surveyed and well planned for their better use in villages.

The directives were issued yesterday by the Deputy Minister for Lands, Housing and

Human Settlements Development, Dr Angeline Mabula during her inspection visit of the lands sector and projects implemented by the National Housing Corporation (NHC) in Geita Region.

Dr Mabula said some areas in the country's various local councils have been set aside for investments but have not been surveyed,

while plans for better land use for some villages have not even been formulated, the situation that she said would chase away prospective investors as well as inculcate land conflicts.

The Deputy Minister, who during her visit also visited Chato and Geita Districts, directed council officials thereof to increase the

pace in formulating plans for better land use in villages in order to minimize land conflicts, especially those pitting farmers and pastoralists.

In regard to work performance of the recently established regional lands offices, Dr Mabula called on the local councils to use them well for various lands issues.

Government sets aside over \$1bn/- for aflatoxin control and prevention strategies

By Guardian Correspondent, Tabora

THE government has set aside \$35 million (81.1bn/-) for aflatoxin control and prevention strategies, according to Permanent Secretary in Agriculture ministry, Gerald Kusaya.

Kusaya (pictured) who is in Tabora Region for an official visit, said the funds will include construction of food storing facilities whereas 14 warehouses will be



built in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar. The PS noted that an aflatoxin control laboratory will be built in Dodoma Region as well as a centre of excellence at Kongwa and Kibaha in the Coast Region.

The government will also provide training to farmers on how to make low cost food storage silos.

Kusaya added that poor storage of foods resulted in the death of 16 people from Dodoma and Manyara Regions in 2016. He said that 75 others were admitted at different hospitals after they consumed aflatoxin contaminated foods.

"Following the problem, President John Magufuli decided to allocate some funds to control and prevent aflatoxin in key crops across the country.

However, the Permanent Secretary noted that the National Irrigation Commission (NIRC) has requested for 100m/- from the ministry to conduct a feasibility study and maintenance of an irrigation scheme which was established in 1954.

Revival of the scheme will enable residents in Nzenge District to engage in irrigation farming, he said.

He said that revival of the irrigation scheme will include drilling of a dam as well as drainage systems. He said once completed, the scheme will enable farmers to cultivate crops three times a year.



Mwalimu Commercial Bank CEO Richard Makungwa (L) addresses the bank's 4th shareholders general meeting in Tabora municipality on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

'Government working to enhance use of village land guidelines to reduce human-wildlife conflicts'

By Felister Peter

THE government through the National Land Use Planning Commission (NLUPC) is working with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism to enhance the use of village land use guidelines to reduce the human-wildlife conflicts in communities surrounding national parks.

It is claimed that human encroachment contributes to increased man-made barriers

which affects wild animal's safe passages, thus resulting into human-animal conflicts.

The village land use plan guidelines prepared by NLUPC is meant to address sectoral land management statutory requirements and engage civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in protection of biodiversity ecosystem as well as improvement of human conditions to control destruction of biodiversity.

"Implementation of the village land use guidelines have already started in villages surrounding the Serengeti, Manyara and Tarangire National Parks, plans are to reach more villages across all the 21 national parks under the Tanzania National Parks (TAN-APA)," said Dr Stephen Nindi, Director General of the National Land Use Planning Commission.

He was speaking during a virtual breakfast debate on biodiversity conservation organised

by the Journalists Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET) in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

According to Dr Nindi, emphasize is put into the villagers to ensure proper land use plans to facilitate safe passage of wild animals. He gave an example of Kilombero District in Morogoro Region where the commission is working with the Southern Tanzania Elephant Programme

(STEP) to restore and open-up the elephant's passages.

Dr Nindi said the 20 years village land use plan programme under NLUPC will enable demarcation of areas for livestock keeping, commercial farming, forest areas, national parks, water resources, wildlife conservation areas and game reserves.

In his presentation on zoonotic diseases, Dr Iddi Lipende from the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) cautioned Tan-

zanians on consuming the wild meat since most of it do not go through the recommended meat inspection procedures thus posing a number of health risks.

Dr Lipende said that almost 60 percent of world diseases are transmitted from animals to humans. He linked the increase in zoonotic diseases with the increased population which has fueled the transition of animal-borne diseases.

He however said that zoonotic

diseases can rarely be transmitted from human to human.

He called for inclusive participatory strategy between stakeholders and journalists in educating the public on how to prevent themselves from animal-borne diseases.

"Villagers need to be educated on the health risks which might be caused by consuming bush meat which have not been inspected by professionals," he added.

Agriculture stakeholders urged to join efforts for sectors' growth

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

STAKEHOLDERS in the agriculture sector have been called upon to join efforts and enable it grow further since it is instrumental in the national economic growth to the upper middle income economy.

The call was made here yesterday by a cross section of stakeholders who gathered to discuss opportunities and challenges in developing the sector to another level, now that most farmers in the country have access to financial services.

The meeting convened by the Financial Sector Deepening Trust (FDST) called a new focus on developing agriculture in the county, focusing on increased value addition.

In this aspect, financial institutions such as banks were challenged on how to enable small farmers add value to their produce or enable them initiate small industries.

Speaking after the meeting, FSDT's Head of Agriculture and Rural Finance, Mwombeki Baregu observed that there is need for various partners to further consider contribution of agriculture sector towards the industrial economy.

He said the discussion based on the opportunities to enable farmers benefit from the existing financial services to expand and improve their productivity.

Mwombeki added that there should be policies that help further promote the sector and empower industries that use local agricultural raw products.

"Such strategies are very important as the nation move towards the upper middle-income economy," he said.

He cited increased access to finances by farmers as one of the successes of working together by different stakeholders to empower farmers through financial inclusion.

FSDT's Operations Director, Irene Mlola noted that the organisation played an important role in linking farmers with financial institutions.

"It's a point where we saw the need to bring together various stakeholders to debate on how to link farmers, especially small one in the rural areas with financial institutions and operators," she said.

She said the aim was to see how to look at the existing infrastructure to enable service providers reach farmers a move that resulted to over one million coffee and cashew nut farmers opening bank accounts and getting financial transactions through banks.

The National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) Marketing and Customer Services Manager, Hipoliti Lello acknowledged that it is through such partnership that the fund has managed to reach 6,700 farmers in the country.

He said through collaboration with FDST, the fund provided insurance service whereby they pay only Sh 76,800 per year for health services. "The only challenge is that the traditional health insurance is new mostly in informal sector," he said adding that most farmers just seek insurance services only when they are sick.



STRAIGHT FROM THE FARM: Grape farmer Frida Josia carries her fresh harvest from her farm at Matumbulu on the outskirts of Dodoma city yesterday. She gave the on-farm Price as 1,500/- per kg. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Minister directs REA to deduct 10 pct from payment of defaulting contractor

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

MINERALS Minister, Dr Medard Kalemami has instructed the contractor in Rural Energy Agency Phase III (REA III) Round I for Dodoma Region to deduct 10 percent from their payment due to delay in the work contract.

He issued the instructions mid this week (August 12) after inspecting the implementation work in various areas of the region's Chemba District.

Accompanied by the Chemba District Commissioner Simon Odunga, Dr Kalemami said REA must deduct the money owed to the contractor - M/s AZZ Infra Engineering Limited, beginning June 30 this year to the time they were supposed to complete the project.

Dr Kalemami called on the contractor to complete power connection to all 66 remaining villages before September 15 this year, or else, he said legal steps will be taken against them.

He directed the DC to impound passports of

the contractors' respective officials and ensure they do not travel out of Dodoma Region until they complete the projects.

Dr Kalemami also instructed the contractor to increase the number of labourers to finish the work in time.

"People want electric lights in their homes, they do not like seeing power poles lying about on the ground while you pass by without connecting their homes with power," he said. The minister also called on all contractors in the

country for REA III projects to finish work by September 15 this year.

The Nchemba DC thanked the minister for his follow up on REA projects adding that he had no faith in the said contractor due to the delay in completing the projects.

In his report to the minister, Dodoma region's TANESCO Manager Eng Frank Chambua said out of the region's 581 villages, 393 have been connected to power, equivalent to 67.47 of all the villages.

Expert advises farmers in Ruvuma to plant improved seedlings, get better coffee

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

A STRONG appeal has gone out to farmers in Ruvuma Region to be planting improved coffee seedlings which are highly productive and easily adapt to climate change.

Victa Akulumuka, agricultural expert from Tanzania Coffee Research Institute (TaCRI)-Ugano centre in Mbinga District made the advice when speaking at the just-ended Nane Nane Agricultural Exhibition at Msamala grounds in Songea Municipality.

"It is high time for farmers to use improved coffee seedlings, which ensure them better yields," he said, noting that the region has many areas which are fit for coffee farming, which has been proved to be an effective tool to address poverty and boost country's economy.

Akulumuka urged farmers to adhere to coffee agronomic practices such as mulching, stumping, pruning and desacking, and post-harvest handling as well as proper processing of coffee beans, soil and water conservation.

"This will ensure farmers achieve their desired results, whereby one plant can produce three kg, meaning that a farmer can get 1,500kgs per acre of 540 plants," the expert said.

He also encouraged extension officers to make closer follow-ups and educate farmers on better coffee farming techniques to increase productivity.

Citing examples, Akulumuka said Liganga area in Songea District at Aviv coffee farm wasn't used for coffee farming but now it is one of highly productive areas in the region.

Apart from Mbinga District, other areas which are fit for coffee farming in the region include Songea District particularly in Liganga, Mbingamhalule, Kizuka, Parangu Litisha, Ndongosi, Mpitimbi and Madaba wards.

TaCRI-Ugano centre provide coffee seedlings and technical-know-how free of charge to farmers in the region.

Coffee is Tanzania's largest export crop. Tanzanian coffee production averages between 30-40,000 metric tonnes annually of which approximately 70% is Arabica and 30% is Robusta.



This will ensure farmers achieve their desired results, whereby one plant can produce three kg, meaning that a farmer can get 1,500kgs per acre of 540 plants," the expert



Members of a predominantly pastoralist Maasai community sort out gemstones, chiefly rubies, a mining site at Mundarara in Longido District, Arusha Region, earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Govt embarks on strategic programme to advance sunflower crop cultivation

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

THE government has embarked on implementation of a strategic programme to advance cultivation of sunflower crop, a move aimed to increase the country's capacity in the production and availability of edible oil.

The underway initiatives, among others, focuses on empowering local seed breeders

and agricultural institutes to effectively engage in mass research, invention and production of improved and certified seed varieties for the key cash crop.

Statistics shows that the country spends at least 675bbn/- to import between 400,000 and 570,000 tonnes of crude edible oil annually.

In an exclusive interview with The Guardian, Agriculture Minister Josephat Hasunga said

the parent ministry has already tasked key seed research agencies and agricultural institutions like the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) and the Agricultural Seed Agency (ASA) to work round the clock in order to equip the vital sub-sector with enough certified and improved seed varieties.

"As we move forward with efforts to industrialise the coun-

try's economy, the sunflower sector becomes a vital side to fuel for mass metamorphosis of numerous industries, and thus, we have found it is of paramount importance to improve the sub-sector," he said.

Hasunga said the plan is also to train involved farmers over best practices in cultivation of the crop, as well as capacitating extension officers with needed skills and techniques in readiness to guide the farm-

ers more professionally.

"The initiative gears to empower more farmers to venture into mass cultivation of the crop through timely provisions and access to key inputs like fertilizers, pesticides as well as extension services," said the minister.

TARI Director General, Dr Geoffrey Mkamilo said the institute had already started a special move to ensure improved production of improved sun-

flower seed varieties, with an eye to capacitate the performance of the sub-sector.

"Ever since the demand of seed is substantially higher for sunflowers, TARI, in its Ilonga centre is currently making a follow-up for the seed to be multiplied and made available to farmers from this year. It is notable that TARI has strategies based on the production of certified seed and promotion of these new varieties for

adoption by farmers," he expressed.

The national coordinator for sunflower research at TARI-Ilonga, Dr Frank Reuben, informed that the centre has already invented at least three new varieties named TARI-ILO 2019 and TARI-NA 2019.

He said the varieties are of high yield of grains and oil, resistant to pests and diseases, but also are tolerant to drought conditions.

Chamwino intensifies campaign on measures to avoid COVID-19

By Polycarp Machira, Chamwino

CHAMWINO District Council has intensified campaign on measures to avoid COVID-19, saying it is the government directive to maintain hygiene and health standards.

Speaking during a public meeting here recently, the district's coordinator, Asha Msengwa noted that the council will not relent in the fight against spread of the disease.

The meeting was convened by a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) Women Wake UP (WOWAP) to get feedback on the previous public education campaign organised by the NGO through funding from the Foundation for Civil Society.

She said many residents of the district have adhered to the ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children's directive that people should follow the hygienic measures to keep the disease at bay.

"It is worth noting that many people in the district hold on to the government directive as almost every household has hand washing equipment with flowing water as well as soap," she said noting that the authority is still going on public education on the matter.

According to the coordinator, this is a sign that the public education on COVID-19 and other communicable diseases has reached a satisfying level though there are still some challenges.

She said one of the challenges is that of local brew clubs where drinkers share cups of brew in rounds and they hardly take precautionary measures. On the other hands such joints do not have good sanitation facilities like toilets.

Asha called on peer educators to continue providing public education to the people, calling on them to observe the directives against COVID-19 and other diseases and also to cooperate with health officer in their areas.

"Let us keep on with public education on the disease that is still here to stay," she added, noting that response in both primary and secondary schools in the district is impressive.

Naimu Saburi, a teacher at the Lusinde Primary School noted that the government earlier closed schools due to the outbreak of Covid-19 thus the need for people to remain vigilant.

Jackline Shana, a peer educator at Chilonwa village while speaking at the meeting said they are still doing public education, noting the public is slowly responding to the guidelines.

Manchali 'B' Village Executive Officer, Laudislaus Loboto noted that while leaders have constantly done their part educating the public on the disease, there is still one miner challenge, especially during funerals where people gather without considering risks.

WOWAP coordinator, Nasra Suleiman said the meeting was held to reflect on successes and challenges facing implementation of the previous programmes in the district.



Shopping for used 'school bags' in progress at a roadside market at Kisutu in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the going price ranging from 30,000/- to 35,000/- each - largely depending on quality and bargaining skills. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

RC forms committee to work on challenges facing businesspersons at Job Ndugai Central Market

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

DODOMA Regional Commissioner, Dr Binilith Mahenge has formed a committee that will specifically work to end challenges facing business people at the Job Ndugai Central Market.

Dr Mahenge's decision followed complaints from business people operating at the market. The traders also faulted officials at the market for giving some individuals more than two business stalls while there are some

struggling to get the stalls.

The team will work for seven days. It comprises of government executives from Dodoma city council and officers from the intelligent unit.

Commenting on the traders' complaints, City Council of Dodoma (CCD), Director Godwin Kunambi said that authorities will visit the market place to observe the environment as well as identify some of the traders who are conducting businesses at unfriendly environments.

"We are going to work on their challenges, our aim is to make sure traders are doing their businesses at friendly environment," said Kunambi calling upon the traders to be patient as they work to come up with a solution on the matter.

The newly established multi-billion Job Ndugai Central Market has several places for businesspeople, including food vendors, people selling drinks, financial services like mobile money services and ATM machines, a household goods section, mixed goods and

electronic goods, among others.

Commissioning the project, in November last year, President John Magufuli proposed the new market to be named after the National Assembly Speaker Job Ndugai to honor his contribution to the city and the legislature.

"This market will not only serve Dodoma residents but also traders in Mwanza, Iringa, Dar es Salaam, Morogoro and other regions as it will be built to international standards. It also has a section for petty traders," he said.



Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank managing director Japhet Justine (in glasses) briefs fishermen in Tanga city yesterday on the bank's guidelines as relate to the issuance of loans to members of the fishing community in the country. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon

Rwanda launches innovative group testing for coronavirus

KIGALI

WILFRED Ndifon, a Rwanda researcher has created an innovative pool testing method that enables multiple people to have their samples tested together for the coronavirus without the need for single tests to accurately determine individual results that come up positive.

Leon Mutesa, Professor of human genetics and member of Rwanda government's COVID-19 task force, explains how it works. "Now, we're pooling the tests because by mixing the samples, and creating smaller pools, we reduce the number of samples to be tested, which makes the process very fast, in one day we report and give feedback to the patients. This approach can be applied not only in low-income countries but also in high-income countries."

The algorithm, based on a mathematical formula, has refined the process –

enabling more tests be administered in a shorter time. A lifesaver for nations or health institutions short on supplies; In addition, this assures, in turn, less of unknowingly spreading the virus when awaiting results while also reducing the entire cost by half – which typically is around 50 USD.

This revolutionary method gives hope and confidence to health workers who had witnessed the horrifying spread of the coronavirus in Europe.

Rwanda has one of the lowest confirmed virus caseloads in Africa with just over 2,100 infections. The East African nation has conducted more than 300,000 tests for the virus.

The World Health Organisation has globally acknowledged the country's excellent response to the pandemic. Authorities have credited citizens with cooperating with the government's guidelines.



Rwanda has one of the lowest confirmed virus caseloads in Africa with just over 2,100 infections. The East African nation has conducted more than 300,000 tests for the virus

Experts bet on technology, innovations as rescue measure for Africa's agriculture

By Special Correspondent

AFRICAN governments, seed companies, and regional bodies have been asked to promote appropriate agricultural technologies and innovations that will help cushion smallholder farmers and agri-businesses against the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic on agricultural production and markets.

The call was made by experts speaking during a webinar hosted by the African

Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) themed, "Promotion of technologies and innovations for agri-business resilience in Africa in the wake of COVID-19."

The webinar, graced by a panel of renowned agricultural experts, recommended that African governments create an enabling policy environment for commercialization, support smart agri-input subsidy programmes without distorting market dynamics and promote digital agriculture solutions.

The moderator of the session, Dr Denis Kyetere, Executive Director of AATF, noted that agri-businesses in Africa remain vulnerable to threats such as climatic change, rapid population growth, pests, and diseases among others and that the emergence of COVID-19 complicates matters further threatening farmers' livelihoods.

"For the last 15 years, AATF has dedicated itself to empowering smallholder farmers in Africa, with a

wide choice of agricultural innovations and strategies to support their transition from subsistence to Agri-business," said Dr. Kyetere, adding that while these efforts are improving the productivity of farmers, emerging challenges are complicating progress.

Prof. Hamadi Boga, the Principal Secretary, State Department for Agricultural Research in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Kenya noted that the government developed measures and strategies to ensure food was available, accessible and affordable to the general population when the

first case of COVID-19 was reported in March 2020.

To further cushion citizens from the impact of the pandemic, Prof. Boga said the government ensured food production, processing, and marketing were maintained to protect citizens from exposure to hunger. "We developed protocols for agricultural value chains to continue with business to avoid food crisis," said Prof. Boga.

The Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry at the African Development Bank, Dr. Martin Fregene, noted that the Bank has unveiled a roadmap to assist African coun-

tries in tackling the food and nutrition security threat imposed by the COVID-19 crisis through a number of immediate and longer-term interventions under the Feed Africa Initiative.

"Ensuring food security for Africans in all situations is at the core of the Bank's Feed Africa Strategy. Our institution will coordinate its efforts with different stakeholders across the continent to effectively answer the needs of regional member countries," said Dr. Fregene, adding that the Bank is working with African governments to offer support to vulnerable communities during the

pandemic. The Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) Maize Compact Project that aims at increasing uptake and use of proven high-yielding climate-smart maize technologies by smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa, is one of the Bank's initiatives being implemented by AATF.

Dr. Emmanuel Okogbenin, the Director of Programme Development and Commercialisation at AATF, noted that agri-businesses in Africa face unique challenges including high post-harvest losses, poor infrastructure and limited access to agricultural finance and insurance.

Tarura directs Mjini-Matai road contractor to have Kalambo District project complete

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Rural and Urban Roads Agency (Tarura) has urged the contractor-Mbuya's Contractors Company Limited constructing the Mjini - Matai road in Kalambo District, Ruvuma Region to ensure timely completion of the project.

The road's construction follows promises made by President John Magufuli during the presidential election campaigns in 2015.

Tarura Executive Director Eng Victor Seff said: "You must complete the project in accordance with agreements signed in the contracts. The project should be implemented at recommended standards."

He promised to make frequent inspection visits at the project to make sure the road is completed on time.

The Tarura boss also visited various projects for construction of roads and bridges in Rukwa Region whereas in Nkasi District he inspected a project for construction of feeder roads at the Namanyere town.

The project is has been implemented since the 2019/2020 financial year.

Eng Seff expressed dismay over poor implementation of the Kavunja Bridge at Kirando village in Nkasi District. He also faulted officials at the Rukwa Regional Commissioner's office over poor supervision of the project as well as management of contractor's signed contracts.

He promised to send a team of experts to review the contracts and suggest solutions to the existing challenges that have somehow affected transport activities at the area.

In Sumbawanga municipal council, he inspected implementation progress of the Kankwale Bridge in Kankwale ward. The bridge was damaged during the ended rainfall season.

"We are constructing the bridge with funds allocated in the 2020/2021 District budget. The purpose is to restore transport services after the rains," he noted.

Acting Tarura Coordinator in Rukwa Region, Eng Selemani Mziray said they have been implementing road construction projects related to President Magufuli's promises during campaigns in 2015 whereas a total of 2 kilometers have been completed.

He said the remaining one kilometer will be completed by August 30th this year.

"We are trying to ensure timely completion of the projects especially those promised by the president during election campaigns. Completion of the roads will facilitate transport services in the district," he said.

He said efforts are ongoing to restore transport services at all the areas affected by the 'masika' rains.

Tarura was officially launched by Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa on July 2, 2017. He directed the agency to address the poor management of construction contracts between contractors and the authority in road projects, emphasizing transparency in all public works contracts.

Tarura is also tasked to facilitate improvements to the network of rural and urban roads, enabling people to transport crops and other items from villages to urban areas.



Work under way on the Dar es Salaam Rapid Transit (DART) road infrastructure along the stretch from the city's Mbagala suburb to the city centre, as found at the Uhasibu section of Kilwa Road yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Progressive reforms can turn the tide for Tanzanian farmers - Policy Analysis Group

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIAN farmers are set to reap positive rewards from the recent reforms on taxes, fees and levies affected within the agricultural sector.

This was a key takeaway for farmers and participants at the farmer's week (Nane Nane) celebration held in Simiyu Region who visited the Policy Analysis Group (PAG) pavilion at the Nyakabindi grounds and interacted with the group's members around recent policy reforms.

The Policy Analysis Group is a multi-sectoral platform that aims to promote coordination and partnership in policy dialogue so as to

accelerate the implementation of policy reforms in Tanzania. It champions policy coherence for agricultural transformation in Tanzania that is collating views of a wide spectrum of stakeholders involved in policy research, analysis and advocacy to speak one language. "Our group works closely with the Agricultural Sector Lead

Ministries to enhance policy improvements so as to build an enabling environment; increase farmer income; improve food and nutrition security; and encourage industrial development. We are excited to be participating in Nane Nane agricultural show for the first time ever as a group and not just as single enti-

ties that we present," said Auda Rukonge, Policy Analysis Group Chairman.

Throughout the week, PAG has interacted with a wide array of agriculture stakeholders participating in the farmers' fair around recent policy reforms.

"Nane Nane has provided us with the opportunity to not only

interact with participants to raise awareness on the recent policy reforms but also with the strategic opportunity to receive feedback from agricultural stakeholders on pending policy issues," said Mark Magila, Programme Coordinator of Tanzania Agricultural Partnership (TAP) from the Agricultural

Council of Tanzania (ACT) - one of PAG members.

Speaking from the ground, Jacqueline Mkindi, CEO of TAHA Group of Companies said, "Within the last five years, over 100 reforms have been made in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors to enhance the economic growth of the farmers."

Tropical forests risk real threat in coming decade

A FOREST is a large area of land dominated by trees. Hundreds of more precise definitions of forest are used throughout the world, incorporating factors such as tree density, tree height, land use, legal standing and ecological function.

In other words a forest is a piece of land with many trees. Many animals need forests to live and survive. Forests are very important and grow in many places around the world. They are an ecosystem which includes many plants and animals.

According to the widely used Food and Agriculture Organisation definition, forests covered 4 billion hectares or approximately 30 per cent of the world's land area in 2006.

Forests are the dominant terrestrial ecosystem of Earth, and are distributed around the globe. Forests account for 75 per cent of the gross primary production of the Earth's biosphere, and contain 80 per cent of the Earth's plant biomass.

Human society and forests influence each other in both positive and negative ways. Forests provide ecosystem services to humans and serve as tourist attractions. Forests can also affect people's health. Human activities, including harvesting forest resources, can negatively affect forest ecosystems. Tropical forests are forested landscapes in tropical regions. Some categories of tropical forest types are difficult. There is no single scheme that defines what a forest is, in tropical regions or elsewhere. Because of these difficulties, information on the extent of tropical forests varies between sources. However, Tropical Forests are extensive, making up just under half the world's forests. They are also cool, humid and full of rain.

Tropical forests can develop resistance to a warmer climate, but 71 per cent will come under threat in the next decade if global average temperatures reach two degrees Celsius above pre-

industrial levels, a new study warns.

Forest-dependent communities and the global climate will be affected if tropical forests are further degraded, experts say. Led by scientists at the University of Leeds and published in Science, the study involved 226 researchers from around the world.

Sustainable development in tropical regions will be directly impacted if the biodiversity of tropical forests is altered by rising temperatures and they lose their ability to absorb carbon, says Luiz Aragão, head of the remote sensing division at Brazil's National Institute for Space Research and a co-author of the study.

The resilience potential of forests can only be achieved with proper climate change mitigation and solutions for the conservation and restoration of native vegetation, the researchers say. "The results suggest that intact forests can withstand heating to some extent," but for this to happen it is vital that forests remain intact, agronomist and study co-author Simone Aparecida Vieira, from the Centre for Environmental Studies and Research at São Paulo's University of Campinas (Unicamp), tells SciDev.Net.

This requires reducing deforestation rates and the frequent fires associated with forest clearing, as well as mining, illegal logging and intensive low-productivity livestock farming.

But, the research offers a good starting point to deepen knowledge about forests' abilities to adapt to climate change. The findings presented in the survey are encouraging because they show that forests do indeed have a certain resilience to warming. And this has been shown based on robust mathematical modeling. However, more research is necessary to understand how rising temperatures impact different plant species.

It is important, therefore, that we identify which species are most resistant so that more effective reforestation actions can be put into practice.

African economies catch world attention amid huge challenges

AFRICA'S economic growth is driven by a number of factors, including an end to many armed conflicts, abundant natural resources and economic reforms that have promoted a better business climate. More political stability is lubricating the continent's economic engine. The economy of Africa consists of the trade, industry, agriculture, and human resources of the continent. As of 2019, approximately 1.3 billion people were living in 54 countries in Africa. Africa is a resource-rich continent. Recent growth has been due to growth in sales in commodities, services, and manufacturing. West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa in particular, are expected to reach a combined GDP of \$29 trillion by 2050.

There are a number of reasons for Africa's poor economy: historically, Africa had a number of rich empires trading with many parts of the world; however, European colonisation and the subsequent challenges created by decolonisation and exacerbated by the Cold War, created an environment of economic and social instability.

Africa's economy was diverse, driven by extensive trade routes that developed between cities and kingdoms.

Some parts of Africa had close trade relationships with Arab kingdoms, and by the time of the Ottoman Empire, Africans had begun converting to Islam in large numbers. This development, along with the economic potential in finding a trade route to the Indian Ocean, brought the Portuguese to sub-Saharan Africa as an imperial force. Colonial interests created new industries to feed European appetites for goods such as palm oil, rubber, cotton, precious metals, spices, cash crops other goods, and integrated especially the coastal

areas with the Atlantic economy.

Following the independence of African countries during the 20th century, economic, political and social upheaval consumed much of the continent. An economic rebound among some countries has been evident in recent years, however. The dawn of the African economic boom (which is in place since the 2000s) has been compared to the Chinese economic boom that had emerged in Asia since late 1970s. In 2013, Africa was home to seven of the world's fastest-growing economies.

Debt relief is being addressed by some international institutions in the interests of supporting economic development in Africa. In 1996, the UN sponsored the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, subsequently taken up by the IMF, World Bank and the African Development Fund (AfDF) in the form of the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). As of 2013, the initiative has given partial debt relief to 30 African countries.

Trade has driven much of the growth in Africa's economy in the early 21st century. China and India are increasingly important trade partners; 12.5 per cent of Africa's exports are to China, and 4 per cent are to India, which accounts for 5 per cent of China's imports and 8 per cent of India's. The Group of Five (Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates) are another increasingly important market for Africa's exports.

Africa's economy—with expanding trade, English language skills (official in many sub-Saharan countries), improving literacy and education, availability of splendid resources and cheaper labour force—is expected to continue to perform better into the future. Trade between Africa and China stood at US\$166 billion in 2011.

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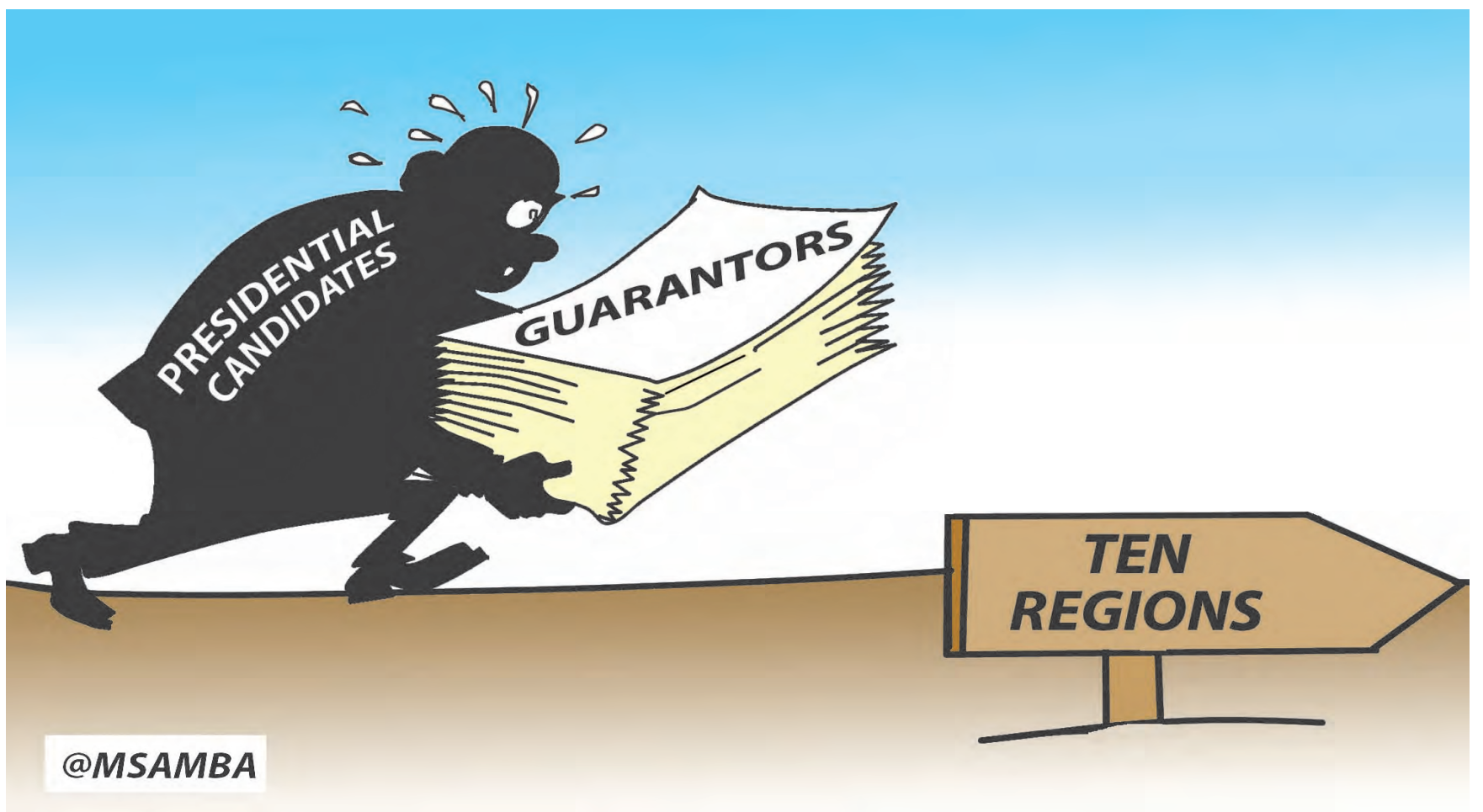
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Nigeria 2023 elections: Radical electoral reforms a must

By Inibehe Effiong

THE National Assembly should be responsible and responsive to the yearnings of the Nigerian people for a credible electoral system. All necessary Bills that are pending or that needs to be introduced should be given accelerated attention. Our legislators should be conscious of the historical and national imperative for electoral reforms.

The flaws and malfeasance that characterised the 2019 general elections were too apparent and pervasive to ignore. As the nation grapples with the failures of the Buhari regime, whose legitimacy continues to be questioned by a large section of the populace despite the judicial approval given to the 2019 presidential election, it behooves on the National Assembly and the president, on the one hand, and the civil society and the citizens, on the other hand, to expedite actions towards the reform of the electoral system.

Without disputation, the current electoral system in Nigeria does not inspire much confidence in the electorates. Many Nigerians are understandably and justifiably disenchanted with the poignant culture of electoral heist, brigandage, violence, inducement of voters, militarisation of elections, partisanship and corruption of the electoral umpire, and disenfranchisement of voters and other maladies.

Before the 2019 general elections, the Eighth National Assembly made spirited efforts to effect significant changes in the electoral system by further amending the extant Electoral Act. The Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill was passed a number of times but President Buhari consistently vetoed different versions of the Bills on suspicious, questionable and untenable grounds.

In one instance, President Buhari claimed that he withheld assent to the Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill because of typographical errors in the text. However, the president never presented his preferred or 'clean' version of the bill to the National Assembly for consideration. Since the president is allowed by law to propose legislations by way of Executive Bills, it was inexcusable for President Buhari to veto private member bills introduced by the Eighth National Assembly, which were geared towards reforming our flawed electoral system without put-



ting forward his own bill for consideration.

It is saddening that one year after the inauguration of the Ninth National Assembly, the National Assembly as the law-making organ of the Federal Government of Nigeria has not amended the 2010 Electoral Act to cure observable irregularities that have plagued successive elections in Nigeria.

It is my considered view that the time has come for Nigeria to abandon the fraud prone manual voting and adopt electronic voting. The National Assembly should muster the courage and incorporate electronic voting into the Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill 2020.

While it is acknowledged that the Electoral Act (Repeal and Re-enactment) Bill 2020 has been introduced in the Ninth National Assembly, and has passed through second reading in the Senate, with the deputy Senate president, Senator Ovie Omo-Agege as the lead sponsor, there appears to be a stalemate which has halted their legislative action on the bill. There are many aspects of our electoral laws and system that require urgent legislative attention. The issues are multifaceted, ranging from pre-election, election to post-election anomalies. In urging the Ninth National Assembly to accelerate action for a comprehensive amendment of the Constitution as it relates to elections and the 2010 Electoral Act, I am inclined to suggest certain aspects of our electoral system that require serious consideration.

It is my view that Nigeria is ripe for electronic accreditation and electronic voting. Although the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has issued Guidelines which enable the use of the smart card reader for authentication of the permanent voters card cum accreditation, the Supreme Court, in litany of decisions which arose from the 2015 general elections to date, has rendered the use of technology, particularly the smart card reader (SCR), impotent by

holding that although the SCR is a good innovation, it cannot be the basis for challenging the outcome of elections, since there is no express statutory provision for the use of the SCR in the Electoral Act.

The view of the Apex Court is that Guidelines issued by the INEC on the use of the SCR cannot override the extant provisions for manual accreditation under the Electoral Act. These judicial decisions have adversely affected Nigeria's aspiration for credible elections.

It is therefore essential for the National Assembly to make consequential and express amendments to the Electoral Act to make electronic accreditation through the SCR an exclusive mode of accreditation.

It is my considered view that the time has come for Nigeria to abandon the fraud prone manual voting and adopt electronic voting. The National Assembly should muster the courage and incorporate electronic voting into the Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill 2020.

Another area that deserves critical legislative consideration is diaspora voting. Given the vast population of Nigerian citizens abroad and their contribution to the country, especially in remittances, there is no justifiable reason for excluding our fellow countrymen abroad from the electoral process. Since Nigeria has diplomatic and consular offices in nearly every foreign country, the Electoral Act should be amended to enable citizens in diaspora to vote for their preferred candidates, particularly in presidential and National Assembly elections.

It is also my view that the powers of the president to appoint the chairman and national commissioners of INEC should be curtailed in line with the recommendations of the Justice Uwais Electoral Reform Committee. Other recommendations of the Uwais Committee should be addressed.

I implore the National Assembly to give legislative approval to independent candidature by

altering Section 221 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) which gives political parties the sole right to sponsor candidates in elections. Since our political parties, particularly the so-called major parties, are bereft of ideological inclinations, individuals should be allowed to contest for offices without having to seek the sponsorship of political parties.

Another area that the current efforts to further amend the Electoral Act should address relates to determination of post-election disputes. There are two important reforms that should be implemented before the next round of election petitions: First, the INEC should bear the onus of proving that an election was conducted in compliance or substantial compliance with the law. The present position where petitioners are required to prove substantial non-compliance with the Electoral Act is antiquated. Second, election petitions should be determined before swearing-in.

Our electoral jurisprudence needs surgical legislative intervention. Decisions of our courts in election petitions and pre-election matters are increasingly being subjected to public rebuke and controversies.

It is also my view that the powers of the president to appoint the chairman and national commissioners of INEC should be curtailed in line with the recommendations of the Justice Uwais Electoral Reform Committee. Other recommendations of the Uwais Committee should be addressed.

Given the continued use of violence and the needless militarisation of elections in Nigeria, I support the creation of either a permanent Special Electoral Offences Court or an ad-hoc Electoral Offences Tribunal, which should be constituted alongside Election Petition Tribunals. The absence of accountability has birthed impunity in Nigeria's electoral process. There is need for sustained citizen action to pressurise the National Assembly to suspend their ongoing recess or resume earlier than later to work on the various Bills which are pending in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Nigerians should own the fight for electoral reforms by asserting their sovereignty on their elected representatives in the National Assembly. Commendably, the Centre for Advancement of Civil Liberties, otherwise known as Centre for Liberty, in partnership with the Open Society for West Africa (OSIWA), are currently leading the civil society in this regard. The National Assembly should be responsible and responsive to the yearnings of the Nigerian people for a credible electoral system. All necessary Bills that are pending or that needs to be introduced should be given accelerated attention. Our legislators should be conscious of the historical and national imperative for electoral reforms.

The time to act is now!

Without disputation, the current electoral system in Nigeria does not inspire much confidence in the electorates

Don commends govt for taking bold efforts to strengthen tax collection, curb tax evasion

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

LITERATURES have shown that the rapid growth in the past decade in transparency and accountability initiatives in the extractive industries sector reflects attempts to devise institutional mechanisms to make governments accountable for the extraction, allocation and use of revenues that, if well invested, could alleviate socioeconomic inequalities among citizens.

Analysing policy impacts of faith leaders' One Billion Dollar Question Report, during a recent Policy Forum virtual debate focusing on accountability in the extractive sector: How can we improve tax collection and redistribution for development, Professor Honest Ngowi from the University of Mzumbe said that there have been bold efforts by the government to strengthen tax collection and curb tax evasion.

He said: "Among the defining characteristics of the 5th phase government under President Dr John Pombe Magufuli, is strengthening revenue/tax collection.

Prof Ngowi noted that there have been notable efforts including crack-down on tax evasion in various places including the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA).

"This is evidenced by the increased tax revenues and fiscal policy measures to increase revenue in the 2019/20 national budget," he noted.

Study on the 'Policy Impacts of the One Billion Dollar Question Report: Revisited Five Years Later. How much is Tanzania now losing in potential tax revenues?

Study commissioned by religious leaders (Interfaith Standing Committee on Economic Justice and Integrity of Creation - The Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC), Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) and BAKWATA) and launched in 2017, had aimed at investi-



Head of Department of Short Courses, Research and Consultancy Mzumbe University Dar es Salaam, Professor Honest Prosper Ngowi insists on a point. File photo.

gating on how much is Tanzania losing in potential tax revenues and to recommend best ways to curb the losses.

He said that before 2016, reports showed that Tanzania continued losing vast amount of revenues every year and the trends was increasing.

Some of the key findings on the recommendations were strengthening tax collection and curbing tax evasions.

Under-fiscalised sectors, such as agriculture, trade, mining and construction, contribute more and fairly to tax collections.

Dedicated efforts to make sure that the sectors above, contribute more and fairly to tax collections.

Efforts to increase revenues: Review of the Extractive Sector law (Amendment of Mining Act Number 14 of 2010, Cap 123 of the Laws of Tanzania - The Mining Act as amended in 2017.

Efforts to ensure that trade and construction sectors, contribute more and fairly to tax collection.

Efforts include crack down on tax evasion from these and other sectors.

However, he said that efforts to broaden the tax base have not just been concentrated in Dar es Salaam or in a small number of corporate and

individual tax payers.

They have instead included companies and professional organisations across the country including informal sector players.

There has been expansion of information and communications technology (ICT)-based revenue collection systems.

This includes electronic payments of various government revenues including using control numbers.

He further, noted that there have been increased efforts to fight tax evasion. "The tone from the President has been very clear and loud on this matter."

This is also the case for Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) that has been undertaking several efforts to fight against tax evasion.

He has suggested for the establishment of greater oversight over spending of the government budget to ensure corruption is minimised.

Prof Ngowi called for various efforts to reduce corruption in various areas including in public procurements; increased internal and external audits by (CAG) and scrutiny by the Parliament in general and several parliamentary committees.

Also efforts by Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) including public education through media, seminars, public meetings, brochures, anti-corruption clubs, articles, exhibitions and others.

Those engaged in corruption in the government including government projects have been punished.

There are no known efforts to adopt similar approach to Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) for other sectors than mining in order to monitor and reconcile large companies' tax payments to the government.

However, there are various efforts to collect and monitor revenues from all sectors of the economy.

Efforts include those done by TRA

to ensure that all eligible tax payers do pay their dues.

With regards to increased transparency, closing gaps and review of tax incentives, Prof Ngowi said that there have been various efforts towards this.

The Ministry of Finance publishes detailed reports on tax incentives granted. The information includes among others names of beneficiaries, amount of exemptions, reasons for exemptions, and years of exemption.

Furthermore, detailed tax exemption reports by the Ministry of Finance include beneficiaries in the Export Processing Zones (EPZs) and Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

There is need to close down gaps in VAT collections by abolishing incentives for oil and gas sector.

He said that there are still tax incentives enjoyed by various actors including those in the oil and gas sector.

These Tax incentives are granted under the Income Tax Act, 2004.

He said that the government has taken various steps against illicit capital flows.

"Government has waged war against sources of illicit financial flows, which include corruption, drug trafficking, tax evasion, human trafficking, among others, which are part of money laundering."

Education awareness on the impact of illicit financial flows to the public needed. And legal actions against those involved in various forms of illicit financial flows.

The establishment of a special court for grand corruption is among such efforts.

Meanwhile, he has commended the government for taking steps to ensure all the multinationals are importing and exporting goods at arms lengths value.

There have been changes that aim at ensuring that related party transactions by multinational enterprises (MNEs) are taking place at arm's

length.

These include the 2018 change of Transfer Pricing (TP) regulations under New Tax administration (Transfer pricing) Regulations, 2018.

Efforts needed to increase the capacity of TRA in area of International Taxation in general and Transfer Pricing in particular.

Efforts include those funded by the government of Norway as well as those by the Japanese government.

TRA's 5th Corporate Plan 2017/18 - 2021/22 aims at strengthening the International Taxation Unit including the general staff capacity building.

TRA use of strengths such as availability of qualified staff to deal with issues of tax avoidance through Transfer Pricing by establishing ITU.

Condemn and step up measures against practices of MNEs using tax havens in their corporate structures and work internationally to abolish this.

There has been condemnation of tax havens. This is mainly the case from some Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

It has also been the case with some religious leaders individually and/or collectively, some politicians and academicians.

There have been efforts to ensure that there is effective governance of the mining sector in Tanzania.

Mineral auditing that was done by TMAA is now done at the Mining Commission under the Department of mineral audit and trade. "Partly due to confidentiality requirement, these audits are not 100 per cent made public."

Tanzania Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (TEITI) makes some cases public but with some limitations.

Publish quarterly and annual figures on tax expenditure on the mining sector. Tax exemptions in virtually all sectors are made public.

Enhance the process and speed of publishing Mineral Development Agreements (MDAs).

In order to attain win-win situation in the sector, the government has established various reforms:

In July 2017: New regulatory framework for the mining sector. Laws passed: The Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2017, the Natural Wealth and Resources (Permanent Sovereignty) Act 2017 and the Natural Wealth and Resources Contracts (Review and Re-Negotiation of Unconscionable Terms) Act 2017.

New framework affected existing MDAs. The MDAs are yet to be public in full partly due to commercially sensitive information on part of mining companies.

Tanzania EITI (TEITI) is encouraging the government and companies operating in the extractive sector to establish an open contract and license registry.

How – and when – will we know if a Covid-19 vaccine is working?

By Emily Mullin

THERE are more than 150 experimental Covid-19 vaccines in development right now, and a handful of those have recently entered the final stages of human testing.

Initial findings show a glimmer of promise: in early trials, these vaccines appear safe and seem to spur an immune response in the body. But how will we know that a vaccine is actually working? And how soon could that be?

Despite US President Donald Trump's rosy predictions that a vaccine will be ready by Election Day on November 3, experts say that timeline is unlikely.

"I don't see how that's possible," said Paul Offit, MD, director of the Vaccine Education Centre at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, during a National Press Foundation briefing for journalists on August 10.

"I think that would be a mistake. You want to make sure that we have clear efficacy data before we put this vaccine out there, because there is fragile vaccine confidence in this country," he added.

Moderna and Pfizer kicked off late-stage trials at the end of last month, with both companies hoping to enroll 30,000 people. In an August 7 email from Moderna obtained by CNN, investigators said they have so far enrolled 4,536 trial subjects.

Meanwhile, AstraZeneca is expected to begin a large trial in the United States soon. It will take time to screen people to first learn whether they're eligible to participate. Plus, the vaccines being tested by these companies each require two doses – an initial shot and a "booster" given about a month later.

After that, researchers will need to follow people for several weeks to learn whether they get sick with Covid-19 while going about their daily lives.

Investigators will also need to take blood samples from people and analyse them for antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. Specifically, they're hoping that a vaccine prompts the body into making antibodies that can neutralize the virus.

Looking for neutralising antibodies is more difficult and time-consuming than doing other antibody tests because scientists need to test the antibodies against the actual virus in a biosafety lab.

"I just have a hard time thinking that any of that information can be ready by

October or November," Thomas Denny, chief operating officer of the Duke Human Vaccine Institute, says.

Vaccine development is typically a slow process, often taking a decade or more. But the urgency of the coronavirus pandemic and the advent of new vaccine technology mean that a Covid-19 vaccine could be produced in record time. Still, vaccine studies can only go so fast.

Researchers first need to conduct Phase 1 trials, in which they give a vaccine in different doses to a small number of people, usually just a few dozen, to test for safety. They want to find the highest dose they can give people but with the least side-effects.

The bar for safety in a vaccine study is much higher than in a trial of a drug or therapy for a specific disease because vaccines are given to huge populations of healthy people.

Next are Phase 2 trials, where investigators give a vaccine to a few hundred people and widen the groups of people included, such as the elderly. They're looking for safety issues in a larger number of people, as well as determining whether the vaccine can stimulate the immune system.

Then come large Phase 3 trials, which typically include thousands or tens of thousands of people. This is the final stage of testing before a vaccine can be approved for use.

In these trials, researchers randomly give a vaccine or placebo to participants and look for efficacy – the reduction in disease among the vaccinated group. The gold standard for these trials is known as a "double blind" trial, which means that neither the participants nor the investigators know whether a person has received the vaccine or placebo.

This last phase can take years to conduct because investigators need to wait for people to be naturally exposed to the pathogen that the vaccine is meant to protect against.

"Prior to Covid-19, these types of trials would take a much longer period of time," says Denny, who has run HIV vaccine trials, adding: "We're in a different setting today from the one we are traditionally in. We have a highly infectious agent that spreads efficiently and easily."

In the US, Phase 3 trials are happening in many places that have become hot spots of infection, like Florida, Texas and California. In those places, the likelihood of being infected with the virus is great. By



enrolling people in these places who are at high risk of getting infected – like health-care workers and essential workers – we won't have to wait years until we know whether a Covid-19 vaccine works.

The speed of a trial is determined by three major factors: the rate of enrolment, the number of people needed to draw a conclusion about the vaccine efficacy, and the frequency of disease in the population where the trial is being conducted.

"We are all hoping that the alignment of those factors will lead to results as soon as possible," Katherine O'Brien, MD, director of the immunisation, vaccines and biologicals programme at the World Health Organisation, says.

In a Phase 3 trial, investigators determine whether a vaccine is working by comparing the number of infections in the non-vaccinated group to those who have received the vaccine, explained O'Brien.

Vaccine efficacy is measured as the difference in the rate of disease in the placebo group minus the rate of disease in the vaccinated group, all divided by the rate in the placebo group.

Risk also factors into the equation. With wearing masks and social distancing encouraged or required in many places, how likely is it that people in the trial will be exposed to the virus? Researchers want to make sure that both the placebo group and vaccinated group have an equal risk of exposure.

Consider a trial of 200 people – 100 who get a vaccine and 100 who get a placebo. If all 100 people in the placebo group get sick and no one in the vaccinated groups does, the vaccine would have a 100 per cent efficacy rate. If there are 100 infections in the placebo group and 50 in the

vaccinated group, the efficacy would be 50 per cent. If there number of infections in both groups is the same, the efficacy would be 0 per cent.

In June, the US Food and Drug Administration released guidance for the approval of a Covid-19 vaccine. It said in a statement that, to win regulatory approval, a vaccine will need to either prevent disease or decrease its severity in at least 50 per cent of people who are vaccinated.

For comparison, the flu vaccine is about 40 per cent to 60 per cent effective, and it varies every year. This year's flu vaccine is about 45 per cent effective, according to the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"We would of course like to see much higher levels," says Wayne Koff, PhD, the president of the Human Vaccines Project, a New York-based nonprofit with the goal of decoding the human immune system.

That's because efficacy rates, which are calculated from a clinical trial run under ideal conditions, differ from the actual effectiveness of a vaccine, which is how well it performs in real-world conditions.

Vaccine effectiveness is typically lower in the real world. A major reason is that clinical trials may exclude elderly people, who don't respond as well to vaccines owing to their weakening immune systems. Vaccine trials also tend to enroll people who are generally healthy, and scientists know that chronic illnesses can decrease the effectiveness of a vaccine.

A dispatch by Medium Coronavirus Blog, real-time resource for Covid-19 news, advice and commentary. Emily Mullin is a staff writer at OneZero covering biotechnology and Covid-19.

China to form new development pattern centred on 'internal circulation'

By Lu Ya'nan Li Xinping

CHINA will form a new development pattern centered on "internal circulation," and speed up a "dual circulation" growth model in which "internal circulation" and "international circulation" promote each other, said the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee during a meeting convened.

The meeting studied the current economic situation and made arrangements for the economic work for the second half of the year.

The meeting pointed out that the current economic situation remains complicated and challenging with unstable and uncertain factors. Since many problems China faces are long- and medium-term, resolving such problems is like fighting a protracted war, said the meeting.

The meeting demanded the country to establish a medium- and long-term coordination mechanism for COVID-19 control and economic and social development, keep its strategies in restructuring, rely on technological innovation, improve cross-cyclical macro-control design and regulations, and realize long-term balance between growth stability and risk control.

"To accelerate the forming of a new development pattern centered on 'internal circulation' is to expand domestic demand as soon as possible in an attempt to maintain the sound momentum of work resumption, as well as to realize a quick economic recovery," said Yang Guangpu, associate research fellow with the Department of Macroeconomic Research, Development Research Center of the State Council.

Guo Liyan, a research fellow with the Academy of Macroeconomic Research affiliated with China's National Development and Reform Commission, believes that the super large market is an important advantage and support of China to participate in the reshaping of the global competition pattern. Only by transforming the huge market potential into actual demand and accelerating the building of a modern economic system can China enhance the appeal and influence of its domestic market.

Taking the domestic market as the mainstay is absolutely not an operation behind closed doors. China will release the potential of its domestic demand, better connect the domestic and international markets, and make better use of the two resources, to realize robust sustainable development.

"What China will build is not a simple and unconditionally open system, but one that is more diverse, balanced, secure and efficient. Such a new system must be built based on stability, or the efficient internal circulation," said Liu Yuanchun, Vice President of the Renmin University of China.

Proposing to establish a medium- and long-term coordination mechanism for COVID-19 control and economic and social development, the meeting released a positive signal to the market, which will stabilize expectation, Yang analyzed.

China's private investment contracted 7.3 per cent in the first half of this year. The decrease narrowed 2.3 percentage points from that in the January-May period, but was still 4.2 percentage points down when compared with the fixed-asset investment growth.

People's Daily

Several politicians are making it clear they're not fit for the job

By Andy Slavitt

MAY, June and July were months spent training southern US governors on things they should have learned from April from New York. Confident and ignorant are a bad combination.

The governor of Texas at first didn't think masks were needed. He was sure businesses could open... Then he learned on the job. It took a while. Then things flattened out a little.

But he stopped enforcing mask orders. Ignored the border. Bragged about how well businesses were doing. Now, Texas has over 500,000 Covid-19 cases, 1,400 deaths this week, and almost 10,000 overall, high positive tests, high hospitalization numbers. Limited access to tests.

Yet he is more than ready to open the schools. Why? Because he has studied the data.

Oh, I make myself laugh. Ah, no. Because he's literal. And he hasn't seen a problem in schools yet. Georgia school districts that opened under order are already closing. There were 100,000 children infected the last weeks of July, and studies now show that asymptomatic people may shed the virus equally.

Next example is under the cover of darkness, the US Department of Health and Human Services cut off the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) from releasing hospital data. People were suspicious, but they made clear that they had a better system. That system is a week behind and can't get it right. At least we're paying a hand-picked vendor!

Why does everybody need to be an experiential learner? At this point in the virus, maybe our elected officials and political appointees can learn to anticipate a bit better, or at all. Or learn from one another.

But we still do it. A lot of smart peo-



ple have a theory that the reason the curve flattens in states after a month or so is the underlying cross-immunity that people have. I've shared, but not endorsed, that theory here.

You know what this is called? A theory. Any data that could fit that pattern? Yes. Any data that could disprove that? Again, yes.

Yet in the White House and a num-

ber of states eager for quick fixes, they are talking not so quietly about why people don't need to worry about strong NPIs (personal non-pharmaceutical interventions or community mitigation strategies) like masks. Because of this thing they don't actually understand.

Let's let scientists study the theories. Policymakers don't get hired to gamble with our lives. This is called asymptomatic risk. The cost of being wrong is high. The benefit of being right is almost none, unless you count bragging on Twitter - which is no small thing.

As Connie Schultz said, you can't make people undead. So avoid the unproven theories that just allow you to use citizens as guinea pigs. We are living in a time when you can pick your theory first and then go find some data that selectively supports it.

Some politicians have stopped paying attention, have stopped listening, and don't care anymore.

People who run for office do it with a variety of motivations. Not enough of them thought through whether they would like to manage a global pandemic on their sure stepping stone to the presidency. Turns out not all can.

Politicians who don't believe in government are a particular joy in a crisis. Cut taxes can't pay for a public health emergency. Billions more going to some trust fund inheritance doesn't keep people from dying.

The Republican Minnesota Senate has announced that they are removing a commissioner every 30 days. (They don't believe in the pandemic.) Today they fired the commish (commissioner) in charge of workplace safety. They say they will do this until the governor ends the state of emergency in Minnesota. A belief that government can't do anything right is #CancelGovernment. Cancel regulations, cut taxes, stop enforcing consumer protections, invest in nothing. It's quite a premise to run for office on. But what if you actually have to do something.

"The deep state" - career civil servants - are the opposite. Deep experts, committed to the public, who prepare for critical scenarios. If the no-nothing politicians spend all their time cutting budgets and demeaning them, it's no surprise when they're unprepared to do anything.

When there's a situation like a global pandemic and so many aren't up for the job, I propose letting these leaders out of their jobs. At the first sign of insufficient attention to human life. Or inability to muster a basic response.

Maybe when we vote in the future, we'll put competency, accountability, decency and a commitment to making government work higher on the list. Working around some of these people is getting old. Retiring them will be better.

A Medium Coronavirus Blog dispatch. Andy Slavitt is a former medicare and head for former US President Barack Obama.

The US presidential election campaign begins – again...

By Kyle Pope

JOE Biden's selection of Kamala Harris as his running mate - a thrillingly historic choice, no matter your politics - has delivered a restart of the 2020 campaign cycle for the US.

Since March, election reporters have mostly been sitting on their hands, watching the Covid-19 pandemic subsume their beat. Now their instinct is to pick up where they left off - to wallow in the trivia of the candidates' personalities and polls. My advice: don't do it.

You could see the muscle memory kicking in on day one of the Harris coverage. First came the ridiculous speculation on media Twitter, based on flight data, about whose private planes were descending into Delaware.

Once Biden made his announcement - which, notably, not a single political reporter scooped - the game was on. Did Harris apologise during the vetting for ripping Biden over his opposition to integrating schools through busing? How many candidates were interviewed and by whom? What would choosing Harris mean for the 2024 and 2028 presidential campaigns?

In the New York Times, an examination of Harris's policy stances was treated like a sidebar. CNN carried Donald Trump live as he gave his reaction to the press and, instinctively, used a sexist slur to describe Harris; more vileness is no doubt forthcoming. Acolytes of the president foreshadowed that the next three months would involve a radical takeover of the Democratic Party.

Must we go back to where we were early this year, before the coronavirus and Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, brutally killed a Black man named George Floyd? America is in the midst of a deadly pandemic and an uprising for racial justice - so, why should journalism act as if the spring and summer never happened?

It doesn't have to be this way. On the eve of Trump's inauguration, I wrote an open letter, with misguided optimism, about what to expect from a newly energised, independent White House press corps.

We would set the ground rules, I wrote then. We would shape the narrative. We would decide which stories most needed telling.

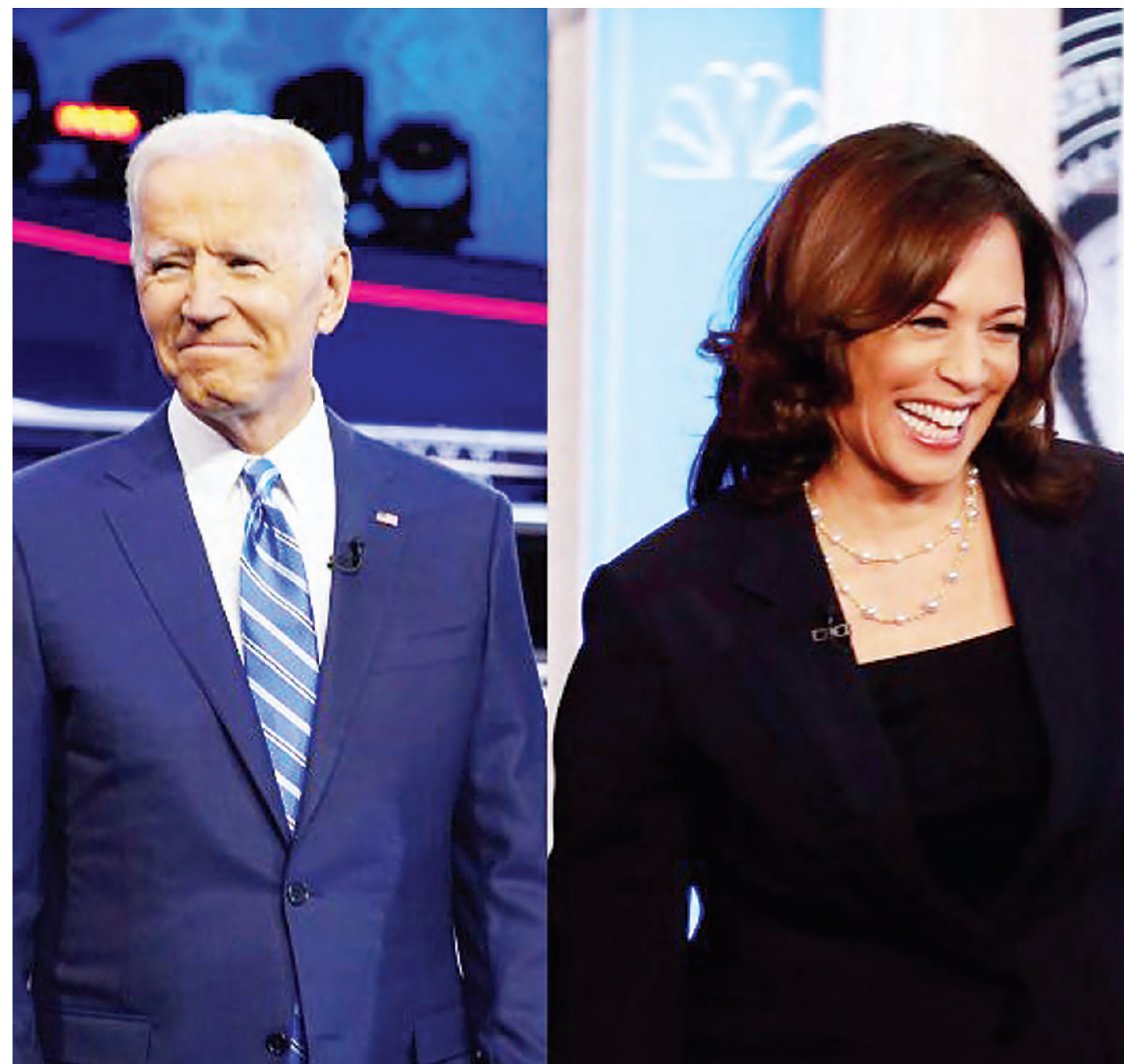
How naive I was. Within weeks of Trump taking office, the status quo of political reporting resumed and grew ever more insidious. For too many newsrooms, Trump's Twitter feed became the assignment desk. Trump's lies were given credence they never deserved.

Political reporting, especially on television, became an exercise in hate-watching. The spectacle reflected nothing about the experience of living in a torn, dysfunctional country.

By placing Trump at the centre, the press was beholden to his whims and follies and cultivated distractions. He is a fount of misinformation; covering his every move is perilous.

That is not a problem new to Washington, of course - as Michael Herr, who was the Vietnam correspondent for Esquire, wrote in his 1977 book, *Dispatches*: "It was inevitable that once the media took the diversions seriously enough to report them, they also legitimised them."

Herr went on: "The press got all the facts (more or less); it got too many of them. But it never found a way to report meaning-



Former Vice President Joe Biden (L) and Sen. Kamala Harris

fully about death." His subject was a war: ours is the ongoing epidemic of police brutality against Black people and now the coronavirus pandemic.

Recently, when Covid-19 froze the campaign and protesters filled the streets, we experienced a reprieve: officialdom was

stripped of its agency. Journalists recognised the futility of reporting on an emergency from inside an administration that tells us the opposite of what we see happening in our hospitals.

Police information, which is never that worthy of trust, was deemed an unreliable source on the demonstrations. As five million people

became sick, and more than 162,000 died, many reporters decided to focus less on stock-market analysis than on the human beings facing destitution. The disinformation streaming from officials was rightfully hectorated, then

ignored.

For those of us disillusioned by the status quo of political reporting, the past five months have been, in that one sense, freeing, as we've been spared the vacuous town halls and inane analysis and empty prime-time speculation.

Instead, we have seen some magnificent journalism that takes America's problems seriously. Ed Yong, of *The Atlantic*, has covered the coronavirus as a signifier of the country's systemic inequities. Nikole Hannah-Jones has broken down what is owed Black Americans for centuries of racism.

The team at the Marshall Project, working with the Associated Press, has embarked on the task of chronicling all those who have contracted the coronavirus while in prison - ninety thousand so far - as lawyers argue for the early release of incarcerated people.

For *CJR Columbia Journalism Review*, Betsy Morais and Alexandria Neason have argued in a brilliant two-part (so far) essay that these stories connect to every facet of American life, and form the basis of the campaigns. The election of the president need not be siloed into a narrative about superficial campaign machinations.

The American people are living on the edge of death and economic despair. Those are the stakes of the 2020 election, one whose integrity is in jeopardy thanks to the hypocrisies of Silicon Valley and the influence of foreign (and domestic) actors, on top of voter suppression - by online disinformation campaigns and simpler means.

The press must look past the campaign coverage that was and embrace its role as a safeguard of democracy. We have to tell the whole story of the American experience, not merely the horse race of candidates for high office. That's the only way journalism can regain its rightful place as a trusted institution.

Kyle Pope is the editor in chief and publisher of the Columbia Journalism Review.

Climate change projected to increase seasonal East African rainfall - study

By Special Correspondent

SEASONAL rainfall is expected to rise significantly in East Africa over the next few decades in response to increased greenhouse gases, according to research led by The University of Texas at Austin.

The study, published in *Climate Dynamics*, used high-resolution simulations to find that the amount of precipitation during the rainy season known as the "short rains" could double by the end of the century, continuing a trend that has already been observed in recent years. The season known as the "long rains" on the other hand, is expected to remain stable according to the new projections. These results are in contrast to previous analyses that associated global warming with drier conditions that occurred earlier this century.

"There are two East African rainy seasons with different sensitivities to greenhouse gases," said Kerry Cook, a professor in the Jackson School of Geosciences' Department of Geological Sciences. "Our paper shows that the short rains will continue to increase—in fact, flooding and locust infestations are already occurring—and that there is no drying trend for the long rains."

Both the transportation of water vapor by atmospheric circulation and the distribution of rain are sensitive to differences between ocean and land temperatures. These differences occur because oceans warm and cool more slowly than the land due to differences in heat capacity. When

the short rains develop, typically with a peak in November, the southern hemisphere circulation is in a summer pattern, with high pressure over the ocean and low pressure over land in the subtropics, setting up a circulation pattern that funnels more moisture over East Africa. It is this rainy season that is more sensitive to greenhouse-gas induced climate change.

The region's long rains, on the other hand, appear to be less sensitive to greenhouse gas forcing. This season occurs from March through May, peaking near the northern hemisphere's spring equinox, when continental low pressures are centered over the equator.

The newly published simulations have a 30 kilometer resolution that resolves the complex East African topography, and more accurately represent currently observed rainfall amounts and seasonality than coarser resolution global models. Simulations of rainfall through 2050 are consistent with currently observed rainfall amounts and seasonality. These results show that the pattern of the long rains is not changing. But the short rains are increasing: rainfall in November over East Africa will increase by about one-third by 2050 and double by 2100.

"This research will allow people to plan ahead in East Africa," said Cook. "But future work will need to see how additional rainfall will be delivered because, if it is as intense as in the current observations and continues to impact agriculture, developing infrastructure will be important."



Africa must help more women to embrace technology

By James Muiga

THE digital economy is crucial in today's world. It's a pillar on which world economies hedge their future. Unfortunately, women in Africa's informal sector have very low exposure and access to digital services.

Due to the developing state of all African countries, a majority of the female population lives in rural areas. Lack of education, poverty, mobility restrictions and limited

exposure are some of the hurdles that curtail the realization of benefits associated with harnessing digital technology for Africa's women. Yet digitalization has the potential to uplift their socioeconomic life.

Traditionally, business and career opportunities have been biased against women in Africa. In some communities, they are seen as homemakers, and the economy is not structured in a way that creates equal opportunities for

them.

Access to digital technology will provide immense opportunities for women. According to the Global System for Mobile Communications, a globally accepted standard for cellular communication, only 26 percent of women in Kenya can afford and use mobile internet.

In Tanzania, the figure is 17 percent; while in Mozambique it is 9 percent; Cote d'Ivoire, 28 percent; South Africa, 54 percent; and Ni-

geria, 35 percent.

In order to bridge this inequality in Africa, young girls should be encouraged to enroll for studies related to information and communications technology. Information is power, and women are losing out because they are traditionally predisposed to be excluded from the ICT space. Since education levels are low for many women across the continent, simple tasks such as how to create an email account are difficult. Digital literacy

should be an integral part of the effort. This would impart knowledge on how to set up email accounts and social media accounts.

The use of social media to advertise formal or informal businesses, display goods and services online, and interact with other women online will open up markets that can't be accessed through traditional channels.

In addition, empowering women through digital financial inclusion will have a positive impact on

the continent's economic productivity. Women need tailor-made financial access based on the irregular income rhythms most of them have in rural settings.

Many of the conventional financial access avenues become a hurdle when racing toward digital inclusion of Africa's women. Access to simple credit solutions will enable them to acquire digital access gadgets, such as smartphones, tablets and computers,

by paying small amounts over a

period of time. This has been observed in Kenya, where a majority of consumers of mobile-based digital loans were women who borrow daily and use the funds as capital for goods they sell in fresh produce markets.

They pay back the loans at the end of the day and reinvest part of the profits the following day. Refining and replicating such models across Africa would emancipate women from poverty and empower their communities.



Industrialisation remains at the core of the SADC integration agenda

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

SMOOTH flow of trade in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region has been linked with development of SADC Guidelines on Harmonisation and Facilitation of Cross Border Transport Operations during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This was revealed recently by the outgoing Chairman of the SADC Council of Ministers and Tanzania's Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Prof Palamagamba John Kabudi during the opening ceremony of the council's virtual conference.

Prof Kabudi stated that during Tanzania's tenure as Chair, the post-2020 agenda was finalized, culminating in the draft SADC Vision 2050 and Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-30 blueprints that are all in line with the continental developmental Agenda 2063.

He noted that industrialisation remains at the core of the SADC integration agenda premised on the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063.

Professor Kabudi stated that the current Covid-19 crisis provided SADC with an opportunity to advance industrialization, economic diversification and intra-regional trade as new economies and industries emerge.

The Minister called for greater integration and creation of enabling environments that nurture and promote business development.

Incoming Chair of Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique Veronica Dlhovo, noted the positive strides made by SADC through regional integration programmes and the development of the post-2020 development agenda.

She expressed concern over the acts of terrorism and violence currently affecting the region and called for concerted efforts in addressing challenges to ensure regional security and sustainable development.

SADC Executive Secretary Dr. Stergomena Tax noted the milestones recorded by SADC such as the signing of the Protocol on Industry and the commissioning of 3,595 megawatts of electricity by countries in the region, a boost to the power pool.

Dr Tax commended Member States for the difficult decisions and rigorous measures put in place to mitigate the spread of Covid-19, reduce human suffering and minimize damage to SADC economies.

She hailed countries in the region that continued to uphold SADC democratic principles through peaceful and successful elections and peaceful transfer of power.

Dr Tax informed the meeting that SADC had

developed the SADC Vision 2050 and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2020-2030) that will define the post-2020 agenda anchored on industrial development and market integration; infrastructure development in support of regional integration; and social and human capital development.

The Council of Ministers paid glowing tribute to Mzee Benjamin Mkapa, former President of Tanzania and former SADC Chairperson (from 2003 to 2004), who passed away on 23rd July, 2020.

The Council of Ministers virtual meeting is being held in preparation for the 40th Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government which is scheduled for Monday, 17th August, 2020.

The Summit will be held virtually under the theme "SADC: 40 Years Building Peace and Security and Promoting Development and Resilience in the Face of Global Challenges".

The regional body is also commemorating 40 years of its existence since its founding in Lusaka on 1st April, 1980. This anniversary is being celebrated under the theme "40 Years of Promoting Peace, Regional Integration and Sustainable Development".

SADC is guided by its vision of "A reputable, efficient and responsive enabler of Regional Integration and Sustainable Development".

Agro-ecology agendas are trapping African farmers in poverty

By Mark Lynas

RATHER than helping to address food insecurity, the agro-ecological agenda may in fact be trapping African farmers in poverty.

That's the finding of the first continent-wide meta-analysis of conservation agriculture experiments in Africa, and it threatens to completely up-end the dominant paradigm around agro-ecology.

In recent years, agro-ecology has come to be seen as a virtual panacea in sub-Saharan Africa. Aid agencies, churches, development NGOs and United Nations

agencies all now tie their support for resource-poor farmers to an explicitly agro-ecological agenda.

NGOs are keen to offer anecdotal evidence for how these approaches can help smallholder farmers in Africa. Yet scientifically rigorous empirical evidence for the benefits of agro-ecology – also termed "conservation agriculture" – has so far been lacking.

Until now, with the publication of a paper titled "Limits of conservation agriculture to overcome low crop yields in sub-Saharan Africa" in the peer-reviewed journal *Nature Food*.

Scientists, who analyzed 933 observations across 16 countries

in sub-Saharan Africa comparing conservation agriculture with conventional cropping, found that agro-ecological approaches do not substantially improve productivity and do not therefore help address the food insecurity of smallholder farmers.

This is not because conventional tillage-based farming is better than conservation agriculture – in fact, as these results show, they are equally bad – but because the advocates for agro-ecology also tend to push an ideological agenda that rejects scientific innovations such as biotechnology, hybrid seeds, mechanization, irrigation and other tools that might more reliably increase

productivity for smallholder farmers in Africa.

The study authors, led by Marc Corbeels, a specialist in sustainable intensification based at CIMMYT in Nairobi, Kenya, found that conservation agriculture did not improve yields in cotton, cowpea, rice, sorghum or soybean. Maize yields did show a 4 percent increase, but only if glyphosate pre-emergence herbicide treatments were applied, something which is strictly forbidden by agro-ecology advocates.

In practice therefore, agro-ecology is likely to have no benefits at all to most farmers in Africa.

In fact, it could even have negative effects. This is primarily be-

cause soil improvements from conservation agriculture require the use of crop residues as mulches. In dry conditions these can help retain moisture in the ground by reducing evaporation. However, crop residues are much more valuable to smallholder farmers as fodder for cattle and other livestock animals, which produce meat, milk and manure and are therefore much more important for safeguarding food security than a slight increase in maize yield. In the arid conditions of much of sub-Saharan Africa, there is simply no spare biomass to use in conservation agriculture.

This is not to say that no-till sys-

tems have no benefits anywhere in the world. In fact, reduced or conservation tillage approaches have been widely adopted across North and South America, where they help to reduce soil erosion, conserve moisture and sequester carbon. Indeed, most of the carbon benefits of genetically modified crops – which removed 24 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2016 – arise because herbicide tolerance traits allow farmers to adopt no-till practices.

These benefits, however, arise in capital-intensive mechanized systems, not in the subsistence agriculture that is mainly practiced in Africa. Without the use of

herbicides, farmers in Africa adopting no-till have to weed by hand, a physically demanding task often performed in intense heat. Hand-weeding is also often seen as a woman's task, aggravating gender inequality.

Discussing the new *Nature Food* paper, Katrien Descheemaeker from Wageningen University in the Netherlands (who was not involved in the study) writes: "The findings of Corbeels and colleagues refute the claims that CA [conservation agriculture] would substantially improve food security of smallholders in an environmentally and socially sustainable way."

Climate change impacts: The present is scary and the future is uncertain

By Guardian Correspondent

WHEN Octavius Kihaga, a small farmer of Mwala village in Kilombero District started preparing his rice farm in early October last year, he set mind on finishing the job in time so that when the rainy season started in November he would be ready for planting. But that was not to be; the rainy season started in mid-October when more than half of the three hectare farm was still full of grass and shrubs. The season that had unusually heavy rains, pounded until May this year, sending panic among farmers of an imminent food shortage. There were those who had not prepared their farms and could therefore not plant, there were also farmers who had cultivated their farms but could also not plant as the paddies were flooded. But there were a few farmers who managed to plant but their crops were washed away by severe floods.

According to the Tanzania Meteorological Agency, the heavy rains that most of the country experienced could not be attributed to any season; they could not be attributed to either the short rainy season or the long rainy season and they were most probably an impact of climate change.

"The only farmers who have managed to harvest a small crop are those whose farms are on high ground; many farms in the valley have turned into swamps due to the heavy rains and subsequent floods," says Kihaga.

A similar calamity befell many farmers in Kilombero District in 2014 when heavy rains poured in July, a time when the rice crop is ripe and ready for harvest. Some farmers started harvesting their crop in June that year but were yet to put their crop in stores. A good part of the harvest was destroyed. As if that was not enough, in October when farmers were readying their farms for the planting season, another unexpected round of heavy rains hit the district, flooding most of the farmland. In some parts the swamps thus created never dried and farmers lost their land. Again the two incidents were attributed to climate change.

"But this year the situation has been different; it is worse and we have never seen anything like this before," says Bonaventure Mpole, a farmer at Mngeta Village in Kilombero District.

Mpole is a Land rights Monitor trained by HakiArdhi, a land rights research and resources institution based in Dar es Salaam. His voluntary work includes, among other



things, to educate villagers on their right to own land and protect it as well as to enlighten them on climate change impacts and how to adapt and build resilience.

"Most significantly, some people have permanently lost their farms because the areas have turned into rivers or permanent swamps. A new permanent river cuts across my farm and I have now lost ownership of land and subsequently the right to use. You cannot claim rights on something that does not exist," he says.

"Even for farms that have turned into permanent swamps, the owners cannot claim ownership of the swamps because these have become part of the ecosystem and therefore public property," he adds.

There is looming food shortage. Some farmers have turned to dry season farming so they can grow maize, cassava and potatoes but this is only possible for those who still own land. Farmers whose land has been occupied by rivers and swamps have to rent for between 100,000/- and 150,000/- per hectare, which is way too expensive for most of them.

Ironically, the price of maize seeds has shot up to 14,000 per 2kg pack from 8,000/- . This is similar to the price of 20kg of maize grain.

"One has to decide whether to buy seeds or a tin of maize to feed the family," notes Mpole, adding that a

farmer needs 8kg to 10kg of seeds to plant on one hectare, which translates to about 112,000/- -140,000/-.

"This is damn expensive for small farmers. On the other hand, a bag of rice sells at between 70,000/- and 80,000/- and bearing in mind that most of the people have had a poor crop of rice, it would be suicidal for a farmer to sell up to two bags of rice so as to buy enough maize seed for one hectare," he explains.

Apparently rice is an important crop for inhabitants of Kilombero District as it serves both as food and cash crop. A farmer expects to sell rice so as to meet other needs; a poor rice crop has an impact on food security and economic wellbeing at family level.

However the farmers are not being battered by impacts of climate change hands down. Whereas the farming season usually starts in November and ends in February, farmers now think of starting the season in August so that the planting season begins in October, to rhyme with the beginning of the "new" rainy season in order to avoid a repeat of last season's disaster.

"But that is a big gamble. Climate change is unpredictable," says Richard Nehemiah of Chita village in Kilombero District.

"Unfortunately there is no support from district government in terms of subsidized prices of maize seed or cassava and potato cuttings.

Neither are there any plans to provide land to those who have lost through climate change. People are ready to undertake dry season farming but current prices of seeds are prohibitive," he explains.

In Zanzibar farmers have also lost land and the right to use it due to a different impact of climate change; rising sea levels. "This is quite a big problem but it is being downplayed. About 140 areas have been severely affected by rising sea levels and people have lost ownership of land, homes and livestock," says Soud Jumah, Executive Director of Zanzibar Climate Change Association.

Kibele, Tumbatu and Uziare among areas where farmers have had to abandon their farms as flooding sea water has made agriculture not viable. Some residents of Jozani area are likely to lose more land and research indicates that Pemba Island could be hard hit in the near future as more areas are being submerged in sea water even when the tide is low. "This is true picture of climate chaos and ecological breakdown," says Jumah.

Not many people know that they risk losing ownership of land and the right to use it due to climate change. This calls for campaigns to raise awareness and education in order to equip communities with the capacity to adapt. "There are various community projects focusing on planting, conserving and protecting mangroves. Mangrove forests help to break strong waves and flooding," explains Jumah.

There is no doubt that climate change has impacts on land ownership and land rights. Individuals, villages and whole countries have suffered from loss of land due to climate change. "When there is persistent severe drought, degradation and desertification, land loses its residence to support plant and human life and becomes useless. At this stage ownership and rights become invalid," says Dr. Sixbert Mwanga, Executive Director of Climate Action Tanzania (CAN-Tz).

Loss of ownership and rights is also lost through land grabbing where people are forced to manipulate owners to sell land because the former have lost land as a

result of climate change. Some of them are known as investors. Even when such investors compensate the locals, the latter lose ownership and rights.

"But we have also witnessed migration of pastoralists from north and central Tanzania to parts of Iringa, Morogoro, Lindi, Mtwara, Coast and Ruvuma regions, among others. These have been forced to move because they have lost ownership of grazing land to climate change. So nature robs communities of the right to own and use land. In some cases those who are thus affected in turn take away the ownership and rights of others," explains Dr. Mwanga.

The question is whether land owners know they could lose ownership and rights through climate change. "Most of them are aware of the impacts of climate change but they have limited knowledge. However they see the impacts, not the cause and evidence of the cause, but absence of evidence is not absence of effect," he says.

According to Dr. Mwanga there are several ways to address the problem. For loss of ownership occasioned by natural disasters the best redress comes from local efforts that are directed at conserving and protecting land. This has recorded success in some places inhabited by the Masai. "But in order for these efforts to be effective there must be a merger of traditional wisdom and modern science, with the use of indigenous knowledge and practice being given prominence," he says.

It is also crucial for government to protect land owners and their rights by putting in place stiff conditions for investors with the aim of protecting tenure rights and averting loss of ownership and land rights.

"Let it be made clear to land migrants that the right to live anywhere in the country does not confer the right to destroy the environment in one area and move to another to do similar damage, rather it sets out the obligation to conserve and manage the land. Land use plans could go a long way towards limiting loss of ownership and rights, but these must be made in a participatory manner and their implementation effectively enforced.

A lawyer specializing on land issues at LANDESA, Masalu Luhula argues that the absence of climate change policy accounts, to a great extent, for failure to address loss of land ownership and rights arising from climate change impacts. "Tanzania doesn't have a climate change policy. In 2012 the Directorate of Environment in the Vice President's Office developed a five years National Climate Change Strategy that, however, does not respond to these challenges. As such there is no instrument to address loss of land ownership and rights arising from climate change and neither is there any that addresses climate change loss and damage in general," he says.

The Tanzania National Climate Change Strategy aims to enhance the technical, institutional and individual capacity of the country to address the impacts of climate change but it is not specific on loss of land ownership and land rights although it covers adaptation and mitigation.

Rwanda introduced their Environment and Climate Change Policy in 2003 and revised it in June last year so that it fits into the country's medium-term National Strategy for Transformation and long-term Vision 2050. The new policy addresses climate change issues by drawing on the latest science and research to guide how climate change should be incorporated into cross government planning.

"It is important for the Tanzania government to consider redress for loss of land ownership and rights to land owners particularly those in the rural areas. This may include policy reforms that support communities to be resilient and adaptive," says Luhula.

Ramaphosa reacts to internal pressure on Zimbabwe

By Ringisai Chikohomero

PRESIDENT Cyril Ramaphosa's special envoys arrived in Zimbabwe on 10 August and returned to South Africa the next day, leaving the situation as it was before - with very little hope of change. Renowned journalist Hopewell Chin'ono and opposition activist Jacob Ngarhume are still in prison, corruption continues unabated and the Zimbabwean government is as arrogant as ever.

The envoys snubbed the political opposition - cancelling a meeting with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)-Alliance at the last minute. Zimbabwean citizens are now perplexed as they try to decipher what South Africa's envoys came to do.

It seems the show was over before it even started. For a brief moment there was hope that South Africa's government would call out the Mnangagwa administration on human rights violations. This followed weeks of sustained one-person protests (due to COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings) and Twitter campaigns against the arrests of prominent journalists and opposition activists, and a general dependency over the state of the country.

Ramaphosa's government for the first time referred publicly to human rights concerns in Zimbabwe in a series of tweets by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. This is a marked departure from previous interventions where the department either avoided making any pronouncements on Zimbabwe, or issued a lukewarm statement bordering on solidarity with that country's government.

In a marked departure from the past, Pretoria referred publicly to human rights concerns in Zimbabwe

The African National Congress (ANC), through secretary-general Ace Magashule, also came out strongly saying developments in Zimbabwe were 'uncalled for.' Such a bold response from the ANC is unheard of since the crisis in Zimbabwe started over two decades ago.

Even at the height of gross human rights abuses and political strife - such as the 2008 run-off, the 2018 post-elect

tion violence and the brutal January 2019 crackdown on protests - South Africa has always opted for quiet diplomacy and brotherhood. It has never outright condemned the excesses of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).

The #Zimbabweanlivesmatter movement has now apparently moved South African opposition parties to push the ANC government to act. The social media campaign by the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and its leader Julius Malema clearly hit the right chord.

The EFF called on Ramaphosa to rein in President Emmerson Mnangagwa with a threat to march to the Zimbabwean High Commission and push South Africa's president to revoke the high commissioner's credentials. So the dispatch of envoys could be seen as a response to EFF threats rather than a genuine desire to uncover the truth about developments in Zimbabwe, and find solutions to the long-running crisis.

ZANU-PF's corruption, patronage and clientelism are unlikely to be resolved through talks

In diplomacy, the message is as good as the envoy who carries it. The composition and mandate of South Africa's delegation is instructive in this regard. While former speaker of Parliament Baleka Mbete is a high-ranking ANC member, she doesn't have the political clout to be taken seriously by ZANU-PF, nor the gravitas and integrity to be respected by Zimbabweans in general. Mbete is seen as friendly with the Zimbabwean president and unlikely to be forthright with him.

Former minister Sydney Mufamadi is an expert negotiator who took part in Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) talks, but he has a blighted history of snubbing the Zimbabwean opposition.

With the pair as envoys, the mission was ill-fated even before it set off. The Mufamadi delegation snubbed the opposition and civil society that alerted the South Africa government to the crisis in the first place. For many Zimbabweans this diplomatic dispatch seemed more like a public relations exercise than a genuine attempt to find solutions.



Was it South Africa's political opposition, rather than the plight of Zimbabweans, that pushed Pretoria to respond? File photo

What is Pretoria's diplomatic endgame? It seems unlikely that the South African envoys had a mandate to gather facts, as they left without engaging with anyone but Mnangagwa. There is also no clarity about a definitive action plan to resolve Zimbabwe's evolving crisis by Ramaphosa's government.

Instead of sending envoys, Ramaphosa should put Zimbabwe back on the SADC agenda

Will South Africa's recent interest in Zimbabwe's problems lead to talks? Negotiation has been touted as key to resolving everything that's wrong in the country. But on what basis would talks be held, and what might the

agenda and outcomes be for antagonists bent on annihilating each other?

Corruption, patronage and clientelism are the lifeblood of ZANU-PF. These problems are unlikely to be resolved through talks. Plus ZANU-PF has no appetite for negotiation. It has a clear electoral mandate from the 2018 elections, and will play that hand to the end. There are no real incentives for the party to reform itself out of power and approaching ZANU-PF with kid gloves will only play into its narrative.

At the same time, the Zimbabwean situation cannot be the sole responsibility of South Africa to resolve. The

Southern African Development Community (SADC) should lead a collective and unified response. For as long as SADC remains silent, South Africa's hands are tied and ZANU-PF will continue down its wayward path.

Instead of sending envoys, Ramaphosa should galvanise a regional response by putting Zimbabwe back on the SADC agenda. At the very least this would send a clear message that member states will be held to account for human rights violations and that the regional bloc is watching.

BUSINESS

RECOMMENDATION

Healthy reasons to get smoothies

KIGALI

When it comes to health benefits, smoothies are always a better option than juice, nutritionists say. This is so because juice often lacks the pulp of fruits and vegetables. In addition, peeling fruits or vegetables before putting them into a juicer makes them prone to germs and oxidation.

Dietitians recommend that for the most nutritious and filling smoothies, some of the healthiest ingredients include dark, leafy greens such as spinach and kale. Cruciferous veggies (like broccoli and Brussels sprouts), nuts, nut butter and seeds are also great ingredients. Also, yoghurt, milk, berries, or other fruits are healthy additions. Rene Tabaro, a nutritionist at King Faisal Hospital, says that smoothies consist of many ingredients, thus containing all the goodness.

"Ensure you have an assortment of vegetables and fruits, and some protein to keep it balanced," he says. He adds that water, milk or non-dairy products are good for the liquid base. He, however, warns that added sugar in smoothies is not recommended as it ruins the essence of a healthy smoothie.

Benefits

Tabaro says that taking smoothies can help prevent dehydration. About 70 per cent of the body is water; therefore, he says having smoothies as breakfast is a great way to replenish the loss of water in the body. Aside from that, smoothies can as well help control cravings.

He explains that smoothies are full of nutrients and flavour. They are an essential part of breakfast as they provide a power-packed start for the day. "Protein along with many other nutrients calms food cravings and keeps one away from eating junk food,"

he adds.

Also, Tabaro says smoothies can aid in digestion, especially green smoothies that contain a lot of leafy vegetables, as they add essential vitamins and minerals. "The fibre supplied by these drinks multiplies the benefits of having a delicious breakfast," he says.

He further cites that smoothies are also a source of antioxidants. This, Tabaro says, can be achieved by adding green tea powder to make the smoothies rich in antioxidants, and these will help prevent a lot of diseases. According to Claudine Uwajeneza, a Kigali-based nutritionist, high blood sugar and diabetes are the most common lifestyle diseases that affect many people around the world.

She says that people who have imbalanced sugar levels in their blood are prone to several complications. Thus, she notes, having a breakfast rich in nutrients but low in calories can make things better. "Smoothies with fresh fruits and vegetables are apt choices as they make one feel full without increasing sugar intake," she says.

Uwajeneza says that smoothies can help one lose excess body weight without skipping meals. Several health reports published worldwide suggest that foods like cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower, are helpful in fighting cancer. Smoothies made from these ingredients prove really helpful in preventing cancer growth.

On the other hand, Uwajeneza says hormones play a large role in regulating our day-to-day functions. However, any imbalance in their respective levels can lead to grave repercussions. Moreover, a hormonal imbalance can invite several health hazards. Therefore, to keep your hormones working smoothly, she says, a refreshing smoothie is all one needs.



Smoothies.

OUTSTANDING

Tanzania among top ten countries in Africa to have dream safari holidays

HARARE

Wondering which country in Africa offers the best safari experience? There are 54 countries in Africa but there are 10 top destinations that dominate safari tourism on the continent. Each country offers something unique for wildlife travellers.

Botswana

Botswana is arguably one of the finest safari destinations in Africa, and also one of the most expensive. The country works on a low-density tourism model which ultimately comes with a high price tag. But it's worth every cent. Botswana attracts adventure travellers with a yearning to escape to pristine wilderness regions that are unfenced, wild and unspoiled by safari crowds.

Botswana is endowed with incredible natural diversity and is home to a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most famous safari destinations in Africa, the glorious Okavango Delta. It's also home to the lesser known but equally spectacular Chobe National Park. If you can't get to the Serengeti for the annual wildebeest migration, the zebra migration in Chobe is just as impressive. Read more about Botswana Safaris.

Kenya

Kenya is home to the iconic Maasai Mara National Park; one of the 7 Natural Wonders of Africa and world-renowned for its breathtaking vistas, pristine wilderness and of course, its legendary mass migration of wildebeest, zebra and gazelle during the Great Migration. Without doubt, the Maasai Mara is at the top of every wildlife lover's safari bucket list but it isn't the only



The magnificent Ngorongoro Crater is among the favourite destinations by global safari travellers.

reason Kenya is regarded as the ultimate safari destinations in Africa.

There's Lake Nakuru, home to more than a million flamingoes in season; Amboseli National Park, lying in the shadow of the mighty Mount Kilimanjaro; Tsavo East National Park, one of the largest protected wilderness areas in East Africa... and so the list goes on and on. Kenya offers adventure travellers the quintessential safari experience in wilderness regions that are simply heavenly.

Mozambique

After decades of civil war which saw poaching escalate at an alarming rate and wildlife numbers decimated, Mozambique is back in contention as a premier safari destination in southern Africa. Government and international intervention is driving world-acclaimed wildlife conservation programmes and embattled wilderness regions have been restored to their former glory.

The top two safari destinations in Mozambique are Limpopo National Park in the south and Gorongosa National Park in the north. They

are hidden gems that attract intrepid wildlife travellers happy to venture off the beaten path for an exceptional safari experience. Combine a safari tour of Mozambique with a magical holiday on the coast and you'll have the best 'bush and beach' holiday.

Namibia

Namibia offers ardent wildlife lovers and birders a unique safari experience in a country that's renowned for its vast desert landscapes and fascinating biodiversity. Despite being covered by the oldest desert in the world, the Namib Desert, the wealth of animal and plant species in the country is remarkable.

The iconic Etosha National Park in Namibia is simply spectacular. Other regions such as the mysterious Skeleton Coast and the breathtakingly beautiful Sossusvlei and Damaraland are equally impressive. If you have a yearning to escape to one of the most remote and isolated corners of southern Africa where animals have adapted to the harshest environment on the continent, then a safari tour of Namibia is the perfect choice for you.

Rwanda

Thirty years after Rwanda made international headlines for the horrific genocide that took place, the country has taken massive strides to boost its tourism and welcome wildlife travellers back to iconic rainforest regions such as Volcanoes National Park, acclaimed as the finest place on Earth for gorilla and chimpanzee trekking. However, Rwanda has a lot more to offer adventure travellers than its sought-after populations of primates.

Nyungwe National Park offers a safari experience of a different kind. Exploring the dense rainforest region, you'll discover Rwanda's unique collection of animal, plant and bird species. For a more traditional Big 5 safari experience, you'll love the little-known but quite spectacular Akagera National Park.

South Africa

South Africa is the safari capital of southern Africa. The country offers wildlife and nature lovers a vast array of safari destinations; from the iconic Kruger National Park and world-famous private nature reserves such as Londolozi, MalaMala and Sabi

Sands in the north to private game reserves like Pilanesberg and Madikwe located closer to the capital city and untouched wilderness areas in the Cape and the magnificent Garden Route. Read more about Kruger Park Tours and Safaris.

A safari tour to South Africa's favourite reserves is highly affordable on the current exchange rate and less expensive generally because the national parks and game reserves are more accessible than those found in Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania.

Safari travellers also have a vast choice of accommodation in South Africa; ranging from budget-friendly bush camps and self-catering bungalows and guest houses to ultra-luxury safari lodges and luxury safari tents. The choice of places to stay and things to do on a safari holiday in South Africa are endless. View special rates for Kruger Park Safaris.

Tanzania

Tanzania is without doubt one of the best safari destinations in Africa. The splendid Serengeti is world-famous not only for the Great Migration but also for its awe-inspiring beauty, natural diversity and iconic landmarks such as the Ngorongoro Crater and Mount Kilimanjaro. Combine a holiday in the magical Zanzibar Archipelago with a safari tour of Tanzania and you'll have the 'bush and beach' holiday of your dreams.

The Serengeti is the gold standard of wildlife experiences and a safari destination on every traveller's bucket list. However, don't forget wilderness regions in Tanzania that are off the beaten track and a lot less crowded in season. This includes the magnificent Tarangire, Lake Manyara, Mahale and Mikumi national parks.

ACTIVISM

Woman who leads 40 engineers and developers defends the teaching of girls about tech bravery

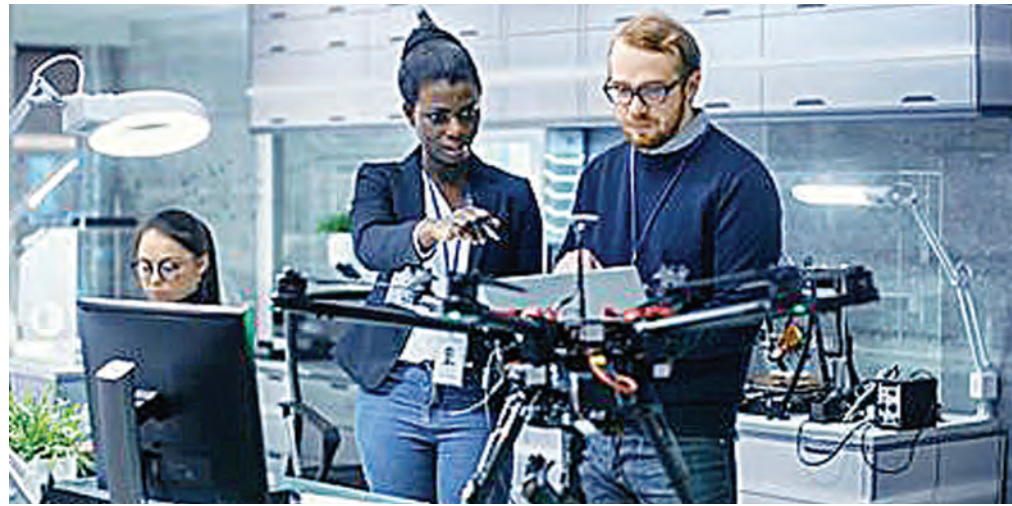
JOHANNESBURG

Marzanne Collin's journey into the tech space was a zig-zag one, she says. She studied BCom Economics and Mathematical Statistics without a clear idea of what she wanted to do with it. She just knew she liked numbers and analytical reasoning.

Her first role was that of a project administrator - the note taker, the person setting up meetings, ordering catering, sorting out logistics. She struggled with why she was given this role despite having an Honours degree in Mathematical Statistics and being awarded top Honours student in the entire BCom faculty for her year.

"The young men who joined at the same time were given roles in process mapping and analytics. Yet I was assigned to the administrator role. Years later, I think back to this time - yes, this was gender bias, but I learned so much from this role," she says.

"I learned foundational skills,



Marzanne Collin at work.

but I also learned that it will be tougher to be a woman in this space and that I need to stand up for what I want. I approached leaders to discuss my aspirations to do more than just the administrative work, and they gave me the opportunity. I learned how to ask for what I want!"

Marzanne was exposed to large-scale technology

programmes when she worked at Accenture Consulting after having completed her studies. "From there, I went into data analytics roles, operational roles and entrepreneurship. I completed my MBA at IE Business School in Madrid - and learned that South Africa has the most exciting opportunities to make a real difference," she says.

She adds that South Africa has a unique set of social challenges due to its history, but at the same time the country has incredible talent and creativity. "Through all of this, I learned about the value of problem-solving, analytical reasoning, spotting opportunities, taking the initiative and leading people. I also learned about the role

technology can play in enabling processes and people. And it is this combination of roles that led me into the tech space - understanding the intersection of leading people and using tech to solve problems."

At Harambee, her goal is to direct and empower her team to scale a technology platform that will provide solutions for unemployed youth in South Africa. "In partnership with government and the private sector, this inclusive platform recommends content, resources and opportunities to young people," Marzanne says.

"It's like Netflix for young work seekers searching for a job. Depending on who they are and where they are, the platform will recommend what is on offer for them to be more employable and job ready. It's more than just a jobs board. It's a network for young people to stay engaged, connected and informed as they navigate their journeys into the world of work."

ALERT

Chicken wings from Brazil test positive for coronavirus

SHENZHEN

A sample of frozen chicken wings imported from Brazil has tested positive for the novel coronavirus in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, authorities said Thursday, August 13, while announcing the latest reports of con-

taminated imported food products.

According to a press notice released by the Chinese local government, the infected poultry was discovered in the city of Shenzhen during routine screenings of imported meat and seafood carried out since June.

Following the incident however, Shenzhen health authorities imme-

diately traced and tested people who might have come into contact with the product, and all results came back negative; all related products in stock have been sealed off and tested negative, the statement added.

In response, the Brazilian Association of Animal Protein (ABPA) said in a statement that it is analysing the incident

and reiterated that "there is no scientific evidence that meat transmits the virus."

"It is not yet clear when the packaging was contaminated, and whether it occurred during the export transportation process," ABPA added. On Wednesday, China also reported that the coronavirus was found on packages of shrimp shipped in from Ecuador.

The World Health Organisation says it is "highly unlikely that people can contract Covid-19 from food or food packaging." The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cited the same sentiments saying that the risk of infection by the virus from food products, food packaging, or bags is "thought to be very low." Both health organizations

point out that the coronavirus spreads mostly person to person through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. Chinese authorities have increased screening of imported meat and seafood products since June, when a coronavirus outbreak in Beijing emerged from the city's largest wholesale food market.

PASSION

‘I turned my 3 acres into a small Eden’

NAIROBI

Muthoni Karanja was gifted three acres of land by her father-in-law in Limuru. She turned the land into an organic vegetable farm, a petting area that houses rabbits, chickens, and pigs which provide the farm with manure, a picnic spot, and a spa. She named it La Ferme.

“I wanted to make sure that what I was putting on the table for my children and my family was organic, and that I knew where it was coming from,” she says. La Ferme is now a sustainable, organic, a multi-purpose place that is more than just a farm.

From its neatly trimmed hedges lined with rosemary and marigolds to rows of crops sprouting with romaine lettuce, savoy cabbage, beetroots, and many more vegetables. From a garden centre adjacent to flower beds to a petting area that houses rabbits, chickens, and pigs which provide the farm with manure. To the children’s playground complete with a swing set to the levelled out, partitioned land that is set to become a spa that will use ingredients sourced from the farm.

“I want people to come here and have an experience. I want all their five senses to be stimulated at La Ferme,” says Muthoni. To the naked eye, the farm may appear to be upscale, but for Muthoni, it is four years of labour and love.

Farm spa
When she started growing organic food for her family, the idea morphed into full-fledged farming to accommodate the requests she was getting from people interested in buying fruits and vegetables. After bumper harvests, Muthoni asked herself “what more can I do with what I already have?”

That is where the idea to open a farm shop, farm spa, petting area, farm-to-table restaurant and intimate events ground came from. However, to do all of this, she had to start from ground zero.



Muthoni Karanja's Garden of Eden.

“I had to do a lot of research seeing that I don’t have a background in agriculture. I read a lot. I started watching farming videos on YouTube and following farmers on different social media sites,” says Muthoni who ran an interior design company before venturing into agripreneurship.

“I knew for sure that what I needed to do first is build fertile, healthy soil.” She was able to cultivate healthy soil through underground piping for irrigation and incorporating the compost, green manure, and animal manure into the soil. “I’ve now started adding ash, bone-meal, and banana leaves into the compost as part of my organic amendments. We also do companion planting on the farm, which is why you’ll see rosemary hedges and marigolds around the perimeter of the crops to deter pests.”

From her petting area, her pigs give her manure that is repurposed in the soil and the urine from the rabbits is used as fertiliser. In addition to building healthy, fertile soil, Muthoni wanted to ensure that she was creating an

ecosystem that would attract bees.

“For every third bite of food you eat, it is because a bee has pollinated it, so it was very important for us to plant flowers that attract bees. It was very important for me to cultivate an ecosystem where each part of the farm works in perfect harmony with one another.”

Beyond the farm lies a forest that borders Ngecha Road, where Muthoni is enhancing her land’s biological diversity by planting indigenous trees such as the Mukui, Mukue, and Muiri trees, which help filter the air, attract rain and can be utilised for medicinal purposes.

Initially, Muthoni says she struggled to find her footing in selling her organic produce to big-market buyers. Her struggles even had her contemplating whether she should undo all the hard work she put into cultivating healthy, organic soil by pumping her land full of pesticides and fertiliser just so that she could make a living, but she says “my conscience just couldn’t allow it.”

Eventually, her market found her and these days, she even sells her produce to Beyond Fruits. Of

La Ferme’s four years in operation, Muthoni reflects on how she has been able to invest in her farm without draining her pockets.

“I honestly cannot tell you how much money I have spent on the farm because it’s been a continuous process of investing and paying employees, but one thing I can say is that I have never dipped into my savings and I have never taken out a loan to finance La Ferme,” she says. Her farm employs three full-time workers, with day labourers who help pick up some work from time to time.

Upcoming restaurant

For the upcoming restaurant, Muthoni is working with a chef to curate a rotating, seasonal menu with fruits and vegetables directly picked and plucked from the farm. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, plans to accommodate a fully-staffed restaurant and guests on the farm have been brought to a halt.

But La Ferme is currently offering an alternative; an outdoor dining experience in the form of farm-to-table picnic lunches. Guests get to enjoy a bowl of warm, creamy

butternut squash from this season’s harvest or a fresh, crisp plate of salad while enjoying views of weed-free raised beds. Underscoring La Ferme’s culture of sustainability and eco-friendly practices, the picnic packages include food and beverages sourced from the farm, and others from the community nearby.

For instance, the cheese basket is from Brown’s Cheese, a nearby factory in Tigoni, the meat is from grass-fed cows and pasture-raised chicken reared in Mount Kenya slopes, and the craft beer is from 254 Brewing Company located in Kikuyu. Muthoni also packages the food and drinks in biodegradable containers sourced from Ecstasy, an eco-friendly local company.

“Other than raising my children and having a family, I have to say that this has been the second most fulfilling thing that I have ever done,” says Muthoni as she admires the fruits of her labour. “Putting something in the ground and watching it grow... feeding people and knowing that you’re feeding them with something wholesome is quite fulfilling,” she says.

GRAND-CORRUPTION

Gigaba bought fancy suits in cash soon after visiting Guptas, state capture inquiry hears

JOHANNESBURG

Some of the tailored suits worn by former Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba were paid for in cash believed to be received from the Guptas, his former protector and driver told the commission of inquiry into state capture on Thursday afternoon.

The witness, whose identity was not revealed, told the inquiry headed by Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo that he was in June 2013 seconded from Transnet to join Gigaba’s security detail. He escorted the then-minister on trips to the Gupta’s expansive compound in Saxonwold, Johannesburg, about six to seven times between July and December 2013. The visits were unscheduled and Gigaba instructed him to not record them, as would have been the norm on an official trip.

“At some point the minister would carry a large sum of cash with him ... one day I was with the minister when he opened the boot of his official vehicle to take out money to buy lunch for us. Inside the boot there was a bag which he opened, and there was a bundle of cash in it, in R200 notes,” said the witness, who gave evidence off-site. Evidence leader Paul Pretorius asked if he knew where the money came from. He responded that he couldn’t tell at the time.

“But as we made some more visits I connected the dots to say the money came from the Saxonwold residence.” “We would go to the Guptas and then to Sandton ... he used to pay cash for his tailored suits,” he said.

The witness also stated that when the minister ate at restaurants, he often paid in cash. Gigaba was appointed minister of Public Enterprises in October 2010, a portfolio which oversees the state-owned companies. He held the position until 2014.

The witness told the inquiry that he was once part of a convoy that drove to the Gupta compound and Gigaba quickly jumped out of the car and got inside the residence. On one occasion he saw Brian Molefe, Eskom’s former acting CEO Matshele Koko, and Ben Ngubane, former Eskom chairperson, within the premises.

Former president Jacob Zuma’s convoy was once also seen leaving the premises, he said. Gigaba has not yet testified before the commission.



Malusi Gigaba in a fancy suit with wife, Norma.

PESSIMISM

Kilimo Fresh wins \$50,000 equity investment at MEST Africa Challenge

By Guardian Reporter

LOCAL start-up Kilimo Fresh, a digital distributor of fresh produce to hotels, restaurants, supermarkets, institutions, wholesalers, and export markets has been named the winner of the MEST Africa Challenge, winning US\$50,000 in equity investment.

Kilimo Fresh beat peers from Ethiopia, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Ghana, Tanzania, Senegal, Nigeria and South Africa which were selected to take part in the MEST Africa Challenge, run by Pan-African training programme, seed fund, incubator, and hub MEST Africa.

“The challenge, which last year had three winners, offered the winning company US\$50,000 in equity investment, plus access to Microsoft support, coaching, and a continent-wide network of start-up hubs,”

MEST Africa said in a statement.

After a virtual pitch event held today on August 12th, Tanzania’s Kilimo Fresh was named the winner. The start-up is developing digital farming solutions, and will now benefit from MEST support and funding, the statement.

Kilimo Fresh is a local business to business produce distribution platform that links small holder farmers and produce buyers to fair and reliable market. The company leverages mobile technology to increase income to farmers by linking them directly to the market as well as mobile technology to eliminate food waste. The company provides these farmers and vendors ready access to market and better prices for their goods.

In the statement, MEST Africa said the finalists were chosen after a three-month-long search for Africa’s emerging tech entrepreneurs from

nine emerging markets including Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sénégal, South Africa, and Tanzania.

“The pitch competition offers startups impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic much-needed investment and support during a time of great uncertainty. To ensure the safety of the MEST community all of the country pitch competitions will be virtual, giving local and global audiences front row access to the Africa-wide pitch competition,” the statement noted.

Participating entrepreneurs took part in country-wide pitch competitions where they pitched virtually to a panel of expert judges with finalists from each country qualifying to compete on a global stage in front of entrepreneurs, investors, corporate partners and ecosystem players.

DIGITISATION

First-ever online Basa Awards partnered by Hollard

CAPE TOWN

Business and Arts South Africa (Basa), in partnership with Hollard, is calling for entries for its 2020 Awards. The move to an entirely digital platform for the first time ever this year, sees the event reinvigorated and reimagined.

“What hasn’t changed is the commitment of both Basa and Hollard to encourage excellence and innovation in the arts, as well as promote those mutually-bene-

ficial partnerships between business and the arts,” comments Basa head of marketing, Savannah Feeke-Fortune. “The Awards always strive to shine a spotlight on the diverse and imaginative relationships forged between the business partner and the creative projects, events and initiatives. The 2020 iteration is dedicated to its mandate of identifying artistic best practice, as well as recognising and celebrating these partnerships,” she explains.

This assurance is echoed in Awards’ partner, Hollard’s continued support of the Awards. Heidi Brauer, Hollard’s chief marketing officer, notes: “Partnerships and the arts are in our DNA, which is why we are so excited to work with Basa again, during one of the most unprecedented times in our global history. Our purpose is to enable more people to create and secure a better future. This year, our support for Basa is not only at an awards sponsor-

ship level, but we are passionate about ensuring that artists are able to continue creating and thus earning a livelihood. This is why we have donated a portion of the costs that would have been spent on this year’s event, directly to the artists via the Basa Supporting Grants programme, so that they are able to keep working on their craft and to also provide for their families.”

All creative mediums will be considered, including music,

visual arts, dance, theatre, physical performance, architecture, fashion and design, as well as any other form of arts, culture and creativity. Where sponsorship of a project, event or organisation has been shared, each of sponsoring companies is eligible to enter. This year, Basa has introduced a streamlined, two-step application process, as follows: Phase 1: Submission of an expression of interest letter, from which eligible applications will be invited

continue; Phase 2: Those short-listed from Phase 1 will be invited to complete an application via Basa’s new online platform; and The Phase 1 submission deadline is Thursday, 27 August 2020. The finalists and winners in each category will be announced in November, the dates for which will be confirmed closer to the time.

Basa will recognise work done in 2019 and award partnerships in the following seven categories: Community development;

recognises business support for arts and culture projects enhancing their communities, whether through education, skills development, contributing to livelihoods or employment, tourism, or other growth opportunities in the community; and SMME: awarded for vital support given to the arts by a micro, small or medium enterprise with up to 200 hundred full-time employees and an annual turnover of no more than R10m.

WORLD

Washington's WHO line rejected in Europe

LONDON

A MOVE by some European nations to quit talks on global health reform have sent out a clear message to Washington that the European Union is prepared for the World Health Organization, or WHO, to run without the United States, analysts have said.

The agency is headed for a major shake-up, but attempts by the United States to dominate the negotiations after its decision to pull out of the international health agency have prompted France and Germany to leave the talks, according to Reuters.

The US, which holds the rotating G7 presidency this year, had hoped to carve out a common road map for a sweeping overhaul of the WHO in September, two months before the US presidential election.

Christopher Bovis, a law professor at the University of Hull, speaking about the pullout, said: "The withdrawal of France and Germany from the talks of the reform agenda is a diplomatic message to the USA, in advance of the G7 trade preparations during the au-

turn of 2020.

"Put simply, the EU is prepared for the WHO functioning without US membership and funding, and it wants to make this clear to the G7 and G20 Groups, plus the United Nations." US President Donald Trump formally began the withdrawal process in early July, accusing the WHO of being under the influence of China in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

Experts said that the US withdrawal from the WHO appeared politically motivated, with the imminent elections driven short-termism as the propelling force.

New governance blueprint

"Undoubtedly, the WHO needs reform and a new governance blueprint, but the sheer political manipulation of international organizations by the US administration has eroded any goodwill on the part of the EU and its member states, as well as China," Bovis said.

"At a time when the world needs leadership and guidance on health issues, politics should not play any part in the planning."



This photograph taken on July 3, 2020, shows a sign of the World Health Organization (WHO) at their headquarters in Geneva, amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, caused by the novel coronavirus. (AFP)

Andrew Caaney, senior associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute, an independent think tank, said: "It would be much better to investigate jointly what areas need reform, what lessons can be learned from the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and what the WHO will need to do in future, in a spirit of partnership and cooperation with other countries."

"All organizations have failings and the WHO is no exception but there are strengths, too."

Karol Sikora, dean of medicine at Buckingham University, echoed Caaney's views, saying: "The WHO badly needs reform, and there's no other organization that can take up its role."

"The pandemic has shown that disease recognizes no borders. We desperately need an international body that commands respect, is effective and forward looking," Sikora said.

Washington's departure from the WHO with the cessation of its majority funding from 2021 has triggered the G7 reform agenda with propos-

als for the governance, structure and funding of an international organization dealing with world health issues.

The German and French health ministries last week confirmed to Reuters that the two countries were opposed to Washington leading the talks after it announced plans to leave the WHO. And an Italian health ministry spokesperson said that work on the reform document was still under way, but Rome's position was in line with Paris and Berlin.

Speaking about the EU alliance, Bovis said, "The EU and its member states, including France and Germany and Italy have a common position for the WHO reforms. And the EU alliance will antagonize the US during the current G7 round of trade talks, and prompt China to resume a greater role in the WHO."

He believes China will seriously consider stepping into such a lead position, amid the current state of its relations with the US. **Agencies**

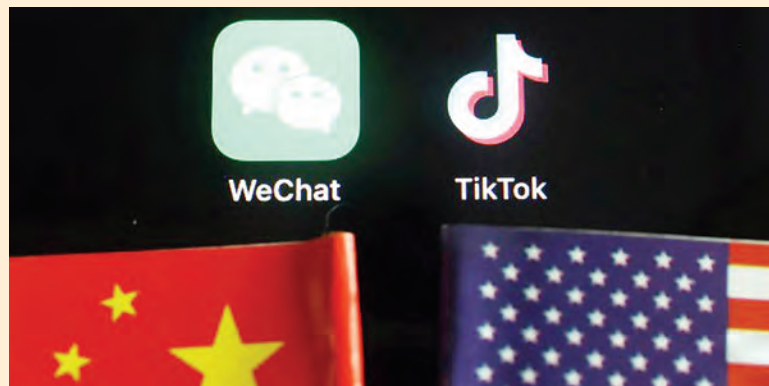
US efforts to contain China with 'New Cold War' trap opposed

LJUBLJANA

CHINA firmly opposes US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's remarks against China during his visit to Slovenia, the Chinese Embassy in Slovenia said in a statement on Thursday criticizing US attempts to create a "New Cold War."

Slovenia and the United States signed a so-called joint declaration on security of 5G networks during Pompeo's visit.

On the issue of the 5G security, the United States "violates the principles of the market economy and abuses the concept of national security to implement discriminatory and exclusive policies," the embas-



sy's statement reads.

The embassy noted that the US had made "presumptions of guilt" against Chinese companies without being able to provide any evidence, and it "uses the power of the state

machine to suppress Chinese companies."

"The attempt by the United States to create a 'New Cold War' trap and to form cliques to contain China will not succeed, nor will it be in

anyone's interest," the Chinese embassy said. "We advise some US politicians to stop spreading political viruses, stop slandering China with words and deeds, and stop interfering in China's internal affairs."

"The Slovenian side has made it clear to the Chinese side that the declaration is not against China or Chinese companies. We expect the Slovenian side to honor its commitments, and to continue to provide an open, fair, just and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese companies," the Chinese embassy added.

Milan Brglez, member of the European Parliament and the member of leadership of Slovenian So-

cial Democratic Party said he was worried that the signing of the declaration could worsen relations

"The signing of a political declaration on 5G security between Slovenian Foreign Minister Logar and US Secretary of State Pompeo does not follow Slovenia's interests. There is even a possibility that signing of this political statement would become legally binding for Slovenia, as a unilateral legal transaction," Brglez said.

Local newspaper Vecer said that Pompeo's visit entails a price to pay, which will further harm Slovenia's reputation among European core countries.

Xinhua

'Inexplicable' mistakes loosed virus from Sydney cruise ship

By Bloomberg

AN inquiry into why hundreds of passengers were allowed to disembark a coronavirus-stricken cruise ship berthed in Sydney earlier this year has blasted Australian health authorities for failing to conduct tests and isolate the infected.

At the time, the Ruby Princess was the single biggest vector of infection in Australia, linked to hundreds of cases and 28 deaths.

After docking in Sydney on March 19, some 2,647 passengers were allowed to disembark, even as dozens of people on board suffered flu-like symptoms. With the first infections confirmed the next day, state and federal authorities blamed each other for the lapse, and health authorities raced to track down passengers who had dispersed across Australia and boarded overseas flights.

A special commission of inquiry, appointed by the New South Wales

state government, handed down its findings on Friday. The 320-page report is a catalogue of errors, including allowing disembarked passengers to travel interstate instead of making them isolate for 14 days.

An expert panel formed by the New South Wales health department should have noticed a spike in the number of passengers with acute respiratory illness or flu-like symptoms, and its decision to classify the ship as "low risk" was "as inexplicable as it is unjustifiable," the inquiry found.

State Premier Gladys Berejiklian, who was given the report Friday, said she released it immediately in the "interests of transparency" and would respond early next week.

Sister Ship

The decision to allow passengers to disembark was made despite growing global concern about virus cases on cruise ships. The infec-



Ruby Princess belonging to cruise ship company Princess Cruises, departs Sydney Harbour with no passengers and only crew on board as it passes the Opera House sails on March 19, 2020 in Sydney, Australia. (File photo)

tion of more than 700 people on the Diamond Princess, also operated by Princess Cruises, showed how quickly the virus could spread while it was berthed off Japan in February.

The Ruby Princess was linked to an outbreak in Australia's island state of Tasmania that led to the closure of a major hospital, and 8 fatalities in the US Of the 1,682 Australian passengers on board, 663

contracted Covid-19, as well as 191 crew members. The inquiry said the total number of people infected may never be known because about one-third of passengers were international guests who returned overseas.

The inquiry heard testimony from Princess Cruises employees and executives, health officials and infected passengers. A separate criminal probe is underway, though no charges have been laid.

Commissioner Bret Walker outlined multiple failings and a lack of communication between government departments during what he termed a "sorry episode."

NSW Health and the cruise ship operator should have ensured that vessels were aware of a new definition of what constituted a suspect case of COVID-19. By the time the ship docked, 120 people fell into that category and should have been isolated in cabins. **Agencies**

Moon to focus on victims in 'comfort women' dispute with Japan

CHEONAN



SOUTH Korea's President Moon Jae-in vowed yesterday to spotlight the plight of South Korea's last few surviving "comfort women", as those forced to work in Japan's wartime brothels are known, in efforts to resolve a dispute with its neighbour over the thorny issue.

The comments figured in a recorded message to a 100-strong gathering of activists, government officials, and others in the city of Cheonan to commemorate the victims of Japanese wartime sexual violence.

It was the third such memorial day, instituted by Moon's government in 2018, after effectively abandoning a 2015 pact between Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Moon's predecessor that had aimed for compensation for the women and an apology.

"The most important principle of resolving the problem is 'victim-centrism'," Moon, who has called the deal flawed for failing to fully reflect the desires of the survivors, said in Friday's remarks.

The event was held on a smaller scale than some in the past, hit by worries over the spread of the coronavirus, recent heavy rain, and a finance scandal in the activist community.

Lee Yong-soo, one of those prominent among the surviving comfort women, whose numbers have dwindled to just 17 now, urged survivors not to lose heart over the scandal.

"Don't be angry," said Lee, speaking from a wheelchair. "There are people who are making efforts to resolve the (comfort women) issue. Please keep them healthy and give them happiness."

Lee, who has accused the longtime leader of an activist group of politically and financially exploiting victims, called for a halt to its weekly protest rallies outside the Japanese embassy in Seoul.

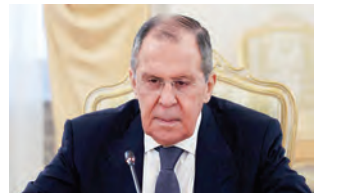
The group's former leader, Yoon Mi-hyang, has denied any wrongdoing but apologized for causing controversy.

Ties between Seoul and Tokyo have long been strained by disputes dating from Japan's 1910-1945 colonial rule over the Korea peninsula.

Last year Japan put curbs on exports of high-tech materials to South Korea after a court in its neighbour ordered Japanese firms to pay compensation to Koreans forced to work for them during the war.

Date of UN Security Council's P5 summit yet to be set, preparations underway - Lavrov

MOSCOW



THE date of the summit of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (P5) is yet to be set, preparations for the event are still under way, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in an interview with the Argumenty i Fakty newspaper published on Wednesday.

"We are currently working on aspects of the forthcoming event. There is no exact date so far," Lavrov said.

According to the minister, Russia is determined to achieve practical results rather than hold the meeting as soon as possible.

"The summit - with a solid foundation of the UN Charter - will allow launching a serious and direct conversation of the leaders on principles of interaction in global affairs and ways to solve the humanity's most pressing problems, and move closer to agreeing common rules of conduct, including with an aim to preserve global peace and prevent a large-scale military confrontation," he said. **Agencies**

France declares Paris, Marseille as high-risk COVID-19 zones

PARIS

THE French government yesterday declared Paris and Marseille and its surrounding area high-risk zones for the coronavirus, granting authorities there powers to impose localised curbs to contain the spread of the disease.

The decree gives local authorities the power to limit the circulation of people and vehicles, to restrict the access to public transport and air travel, to limit the access to public buildings and to close some establishments where there is a high risk of infection.

France's health situation is worsening and the virus is circulating faster, Health Agency chief Jerome Salomon said on France Inter. Salomon said the number of cases was increasing due to more tests but also because the population wasn't applying social-distancing rules as thoroughly. He said cases are increasing across age groups, with a prevalence in Paris and Marseilles.

The decree comes a day after France reported more than 2,500 fresh infections for the second day in a row on Thursday, levels last seen in mid-April when the country was in the middle of one of Europe's strictest lockdowns. **Agencies**

THE 23rd Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF) was held from July 25 to August 2 in Shanghai, with both online and offline activities, which marked a major innovation in the history of the event.

This year's SIFF highlighted the theme "reunion" on its poster, indicating that the film industry is trying its best to ensure the reunion between audiences and movies and boost confidence in the industry.

Movie theaters in low-risk areas across China have reopened since July 20, when the tickets for the 23rd SIFF were released. Since movie fans have been eager to enjoy a movie in a cinema for so long, all the tickets were

Shanghai International Film Festival held after COVID-19 delay

immediately sold out.

According to relevant requirements for epidemic prevention and control, audiences were asked to have their body temperature taken and recorded before entering the auditoriums and wear face masks the whole time during the screening.

A 15-minute opening ceremony of the 23rd SIFF was held on the morning of July 25, followed by a summit of the Chinese film industry.

The SIFF is the only A-category international film festival in China. This year's event has had a huge influence on the film indus-

try at home and abroad, boosting morale and pooling strength for the resumption of work and production in China's film industry.

Activities of this year's SIFF were adjusted to China's regulations on epidemic prevention and control, cancelling certain activities that involve congregation, such as the red carpet and award presentation ceremony.

The event recognized the outstanding achievements of Chinese and foreign film industry during the past year by announcing the titles of the officially selected movies.

A number of Chinese and foreign heavyweights in the film industry were also invited to give lectures and communicate with filmmakers via online platforms during the 23rd SIFF.

Over the past decades, the film panorama section of the SIFF has won wide praise from movie fans across the country. This year's panorama section of the SIFF once again witnessed great enthusiasm of audiences since the tickets were made available.

The 23rd SIFF innovated its film panorama section, showing movies in auditoriums, outdoors, and on online platforms, for the

attendance per show must not exceed 30 percent, according to a document on the resumption of business in movie theaters during the normalized epidemic prevention and control released by China Film Administration.

The movies shown outdoors were all provided for audiences for free based on real-name reservations. Besides, strict epidemic prevention and control measures were taken to ensure people's safety at all sites screening movies outdoors.

The number of seats at each site was restricted to 100, and audiences were asked to keep a dis-

distance of at least one meter from each other. Besides, body temperatures and health QR codes of the audiences were checked before they entered the sites.

All the movie screening sites prepared anti-epidemic supplies such as disinfectant, hand sanitizer, alcohol cotton balls, non-contact thermometers, face masks, and disposable gloves.

The 23rd SIFF and the 26th Shanghai TV Festival (STVF), which was held from August 3 to 7 in Shanghai, made joint efforts to facilitate the exhibition of works as well as communication and negotiations between exhib-

itors by sharing online platforms with each other for the first time, helping Chinese and foreign companies and organizations in the film and television industry take part in the two events in a more efficient and convenient way. Last year, the SIFF and the STVF were joined by a total of 580 exhibitors.

Although it was announced late, the online market for films and TV programs launched as part of the 23rd SIFF and the 26th STVF attracted more than 700 exhibitors from five continents in less than ten days, with the proportion of overseas exhibitors surpassing 50 percent for the first time in history. **People's Daily**

US economic recovery at risk as Trump's executive orders fall short of what's needed

WASHINGTON

U.S. economic recovery is facing significant risks as Congress remains deadlocked over the COVID-19 relief bill and President Donald Trump's recent executive orders fall well short of what is needed to boost recovery, economists said.

As negotiations between Republican and Democratic lawmakers stalled over the new relief bill, Trump on Saturday bypassed Congress to sign four executive orders to extend certain pandemic relief.

These orders included extending extra unemployment benefits through the end of the year at a reduced level of 400 U.S. dollars per week, instead of the 600 dollars approved by Congress in late March.

The other three actions Trump signed include a memorandum to defer certain payroll tax obligations, a memorandum to defer student loan payments and an executive order to reinstate the federal moratorium on evictions.

"A closer look at these orders suggests they will have at best marginal economic benefits even if fully implemented, which is questionable given

the legality of the orders and the likely court challenges," Mark Zandi, chief economist of Moody's Analytics, wrote in an analysis earlier this week.

Zandi estimated that these orders could provide just over 400 billion dollars in total relief, but the U.S. economy needs a fiscal aid package costing at least 1.5 trillion dollars to avoid falling back into recession, based on simulations of Moody's macroeconomic model.

"The gap between what the president has ordered -- if fully implemented -- and what is needed, and that even the Trump administration acknowledges can't be met without an act of Congress, includes substantial federal aid to state and local governments to fill in their budget holes," he said.

Tim Duy, professor of the University of Oregon, said that the only potentially meaningful part of these executive orders is extension of unemployment benefits, but it "has a limited lifespan and may never really get off the ground."

"For the moment at least we need to recognize that the economy has lost a key part of support and still faces a dire need for state and local aid,"



People walk by a closed store in Georgetown of Washington D.C., the United States, May 26, 2020. (Xinhua)

Duy wrote Monday in a blog post.

After rebounding strongly in May and June, U.S. economic activity began to slow in July as some states paused their reopening plans or re-imposed restrictions on some activities due to the resurgence of COVID-19 cases.

"The resurgence in COVID-19 cases and subsequent pullback in activity

have already begun. Delays to aid by Congress will exacerbate the slowdown in August," said Diane Swonk, chief economist at Grant Thornton, a major accounting firm.

"After that, much depends on our ability to ramp up testing, tracking, social distancing and masking to dampen the blow of a second wave. If we don't stop the freight train of

infections, the economy will crash again," she said.

The impasse in Congress over the renewal of the expiring programs that mitigated the economic impact of the pandemic threatens to undo the stimulus effect of the programs and exacerbate the economic damage from the lockdown, according to a study released by the Peterson Institute for International Economics on Wednesday.

"U.S. policymakers should at least maintain the earlier levels of income support to prevent further induced economic damage. In the current depressed state of the economy, destimulation is a very poor policy choice," the study said.

Eric Rosengren, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, on Wednesday also warned that limited or inconsistent efforts by U.S. states to contain the pandemic will likely prolong the economic recession.

"Limited or inconsistent efforts by states to control the virus based on public health guidance are not only placing citizens at unnecessary risk of severe illness and possible death -- but are also likely to prolong the economic downturn," he said. **Xinhua**

Washington furnished no proof of Russia's alleged collusion with the Taliban -- diplomat

MOSCOW

THE US failed to provide facts confirming alleged ties between Russian intelligence services and the Taliban movement even after Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov had requested this in a phone call with US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told a briefing on Thursday.

"In a telephone conversation of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and the US secretary of state on July 13, the US side indeed raised the issue of alleged collusion of Russian intelligence services with the Taliban fighters whom they [Russian intelligence] allegedly incite to make sorties against US military in Afghanistan," Zakharova (pictured) said.

"The Russian side's answer was as follows - the Russian foreign minister described these statements as dishonest speculations having nothing to do with reality. He also asked the US side to produce evidence that Washington had on hands, which was not provided as usual," the diplomat stressed.

"Moreover, Sergey Lavrov emphasized that the Russian side was interested in the US presence in Afghanistan, among other things within the context of preventing militants from moving to Central Asian countries," she added.

The New York Times wrote on June 26 that a Russian military intelligence unit had offered bounties to Taliban militants to kill US troops in Afghanistan.

"The intelligence finding was briefed to President Trump, and the White House's National Security Council discussed the problem at an interagency meeting in late March, the officials said," the newspaper wrote.



UN chief welcomes suspension of West Bank annexation

UNITED NATIONS

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday welcomed an agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), under which Israel will suspend its plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, said his spokesman on Thursday.

The joint statement by US President Donald Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan suspends Israeli annexation plans over parts of the occupied West Bank, something the secretary-general has consistently called for, said Stephane Dujarric, the spokesman, in a statement.

"The secretary-general

welcomes this agreement, hoping it will create an opportunity for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to re-engage in meaningful negotiations that will realize a two-state solution in line with relevant UN resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements," it said.

Annexation would effectively close the door for a renewal of negotiations and destroy the prospect of a viable Palestinian state and the two-state solution, it noted.

Peace in the Middle East is more important than ever as the region confronts the grave threats of COVID-19 and radicalization. The secretary-general will continue to work with all sides to open further possibilities for dialogue, peace



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

and stability, said the statement.

US Democratic Presidential candidate Joe Biden hailed the deal as a historic step toward a more stable Middle East, warning he would not support Israel's annexation of Jewish settlements if he wins the White House in November.

"The UAE and Israel's decision to normalize relations is hugely good news," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Twitter. British Foreign minister Dominic Raab said it was "time for direct talks between the Palestinians and Israel, the only route to lasting peace."

France welcomes the normalization of diplomatic relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Thursday.

Jordan said that the deal could push forward stalled peace negotiations if it succeeds in prodding Israel to accept a Palestinian state on land that Israel had occupied in the 1967 Arab-

Israeli War.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi also welcomed the deal, said on Twitter that he values the efforts of those in charge of the deal to achieve prosperity and stability for the region.

The Gulf state of Oman said on Friday it supported the UAE's decision to normalize ties with Israel, saying it hoped the accord would contribute to a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace in the Middle East.

Turkey said that history will not forget and never forgive the "hypocritical behaviour" of the UAE in agreeing a deal with Israel to normalise relations.

Trump and Netanyahu announced separately on Thursday that Israel and the UAE have agreed to establish diplomatic ties. The agreement is in return for Israel's suspension of its annexation plans indefinitely.

The agreement would make the UAE the first Gulf state to normalize relations with Israel. **Agencies**

Hainan sees significant rise in offshore duty-free shopping after policy upgrade

CHINA'S island province Hainan attained 222 billion yuan (\$317.45 million) from duty-free shopping between July 21 to 27, up 234.19 percent from the same period last year, said China's General Administration of Customs, about a month after the province made its sixth adjustment to its duty-free policy.

During the period, 281,000 tourists bought duty-free products on the island, 42.71 percent more than those from a year ago.

The unprecedented policy adjustment ignited a wave of offshore duty-free shopping in the province. The tax-free shopping quota for travelers has been raised to 100,000 yuan per person each year, and the 8,000-yuan duty-free cap for a single item is also cancelled. Besides, the number of categories with a single-purchase quantity limit is significantly reduced.

As Hainan is transforming itself into a high-level free trade port, the offshore duty-free policy is releasing new vitality, taking the province a step closer to its goal



Customers shop at a duty-free store in Riyue Plaza of Haikou, capital of Hainan Province on July 30. (File photo)

of becoming an international tourism and consumption center.

"The policy adjustment significantly drove the sales of luxury watches, jewelries, mobile phones and liquors," said Xie Zhiyong, general manager of Hainan Duty-free Co., who attributed the sales rise to the competitive prices. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, the company has offered huge discounts and attracted overseas consumption back home.

Xie's point echoed with the statistics recently released by Hainan

Provincial Bureau of Statistics which suggested an evident pick-up in the province's consumption market in the second quarter this year. In the first six months of 2020, Hainan recorded 8.57 billion yuan in duty-free shopping by tourists, up 30.7 percent from a year ago. Nearly 2.3 billion yuan was achieved in June, representing a year-on-year growth of 235 percent.

Though significant adjustment has been made to the duty-free policy, many tourists still complained about the inadequate

categories and brands of offshore duty-free products.

"The per capita consumption stood at around 7,800 yuan 27 days after the policy adjustment, which is far less than the per capita annual tax-free shopping quota of 100,000 yuan," said Liu Feng, director of the Research Center for Free Trade Port with Chinese Characteristics of Hainan Normal University. Liu said more entities need to be encouraged to compete in the business, expand their purchasing and sales channels, and increase the number of brands and categories.

Relevant departments of Hainan issued a joint declaration on July 10, announcing that they were selecting new business entities for offshore duty-free shopping through market-oriented competition, such as bid invitation. It would help build an encouraging and competitive environment to promote the backflow of overseas consumption. Service, brands and categories are key areas where duty-free shops shall make efforts, Xie said. **People's Daily**

Biden campaign raises \$48 million in 48 hours after naming Kamala Harris as VP choice

WASHINGTON

THE campaign of Democratic presidential contender Joe Biden has raised \$48 million in the 48 hours since he named U.S. Senator Kamala Harris the Democratic vice presidential nominee, a campaign spokesman told Reuters late on Thursday.

Biden, a former vice president himself, on Tuesday picked Harris as his choice for VP, making her the first Black woman on a major-party U.S. presidential ticket.

With social unrest over racial injustice rocking the country for months since the death in custody of an African-American man, George Floyd - after a police officer knelt on his neck for about nine minutes - Biden was under pressure to select a Black woman as his running mate.

Harris, a 55-year-old senator from California who made her own run for the White House, is also the first Asian-American on a major presidential ticket. Her



parents were immigrants, her mother from India and her father from Jamaica.

She became only the second Black female U.S. senator in history when elected in 2016 and will be relied on to help mobilize African-Americans, the Democratic Party's most loyal constituency.

Four years ago, the first dip in Black voter turnout in 20 years contributed to Democrat Hillary Clinton's upset loss to Donald Trump in the presidential election.

Harris, a former prosecutor and state attorney general in California, is known for her sometimes aggressive questioning style in the Senate. **Agencies**

As a presidential candidate, she took Biden to task in a nationally televised debate over his past stances on mandatory busing for students as a means to desegregate schools.

The choice of a running mate has added significance for Biden, 77, who would be the oldest person to become president if he is elected.

His age has led to speculation he will serve only one term, making Harris a potential top contender for the Democratic nomination in 2024.

Biden and groups affiliated to his campaign had raised \$140 million in July

KENYA

IT had taken Michael Njau two years to build a name as a photographer of repute in Nairobi, Kenya's capital city. The young man says he started small but had built a name as an events photographer who covered weddings and parties as well as social and corporate gatherings.

However, with pandemic restrictions bringing a halt to gatherings and events, Njau found himself out of business and with reduced income.

"The closure of clubs and restrictions on events has eaten away a huge chunk of our market. In my business, for instance, I had been planning to expand by buying equipment like lenses which don't come cheap, but with no business such plans are put on hold."

Njau is a beneficiary of the Kazi

Mtaani program, a government program launched early this year and funded by the World Bank, which aims to give young people a source of income. The program is geared at integrating jobless Kenyans in urban hygiene and sanitation works across informal settlements.

The first phase ran between April and July as a pilot program and focused on select settlements in eight counties. Following the success of the first phase, the government launched a second phase in July.

When he learnt about the program, Njau did not waste time enrolling and he is currently one of the team leaders of a cluster of 20 young people working in Nairobi's Umoja Estate.

Kenya finds way to keep young engaged



A woman with a face mask walks past graffiti that promotes hand washing and wearing face masks as preventive measures against the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus, in Kibera, Nairobi, on Aug 13, 2020. (AFP)

Effective initiative

"I find the Kazi Mtaani program to be a good initiative because it has enabled me to substitute my income. Most of us currently working here would have been idle at home were it not for the program," Njau said.

While announcing the commencement of the second phase in July, Charles Hinga, Kenya's principal secretary in the State Department of Housing and Urban Development, said that the program will see more than 270,000 Kenyans engaged in more community and infrastructure development projects.

"The objective of the Kazi Mtaani program is to provide a form of social protection for workers whose

prospects for daily or casual work have been disrupted by the containment policies put in place to limit the spread of COVID-19. This benefit cannot be overlooked as it is essential to the resilience of informal settlement dwellers during this time and after," Hinga said.

According to Njau, the program has been a blessing in more than one ways. In addition to giving many residents some income, the program has been a good deterrent from crime and delinquent behavior because most of those engaged have either lost their jobs or are at home due to school closures and form a very vulnerable group.

Agencies

SPORT

Azam FC confirms contract extension for winger Selemani



Azam FC winger, Iddi Selemani 'Nado'.

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL MWEBE

AZAM FC officials have confirmed that 25-year-old winger, Iddi Selemani 'Nado', has signed a new contract which will see him remain at the club until 2022.

The winger, who had entered the final 12 months of his previous deal, is regarded as one of the club's key players.

He was signed from Mbeya City FC as a free agent at the beginning of the just ended campaign.

Selemani had a good season, playing 34 matches and scoring seven goals, while assisting four across all competitions for Azam FC.

The club confirmed the news on their official website, writing: "Winger Iddi Selemani 'Nado', today has put pen to paper on a new one-year contract extension to stay on the team. The contract extension allows him to remain at Azam Complex until 2022."

Azam have been one of the busy teams in the transfer window with six signings.

New arrivals include Tanzanian goalkeeper, David Kissu Mapigano, a previously Kenya's Gor Mahia's keeper, Awesu Awesu

(Kagera Sugar), Ally Niyonzima (Rwanda's Rayon Sport), Ismail Aziz (Prisons), Ayoub Lyanga (Coastal Union) and Emmanuel Charles from Mbao FC.

On Tuesday, Azam were also boosted with news that midfielder Salum Abubakary 'Sure Boy' had committed to the club despite interest from Yanga who were reported to have tabled an offer that was rejected by the club.

They have retained a core of their squad that finished third in the Premier League with 70 points, 18 points fewer than champions, Simba SC, and two points behind second-placed Yanga.

Azam FC also failed to defend the Federation Cup after being bundled out by Simba in the semi final stage.

They consequently missed out on a ticket to represent the country in the CAF Confederation Cup next season.

Last week, the 2013/14 Premier League champions became the first team to start pre-season training as they look to put behind the disappointment of the last three campaigns.

Namungo FC announces arrival of more players

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL MWEBE

NAMUNGO FC officials have disclosed the team have acquired their third signing ahead of the new season with the arrival of bustling Ghanaian striker Stephen Sey on a two-year contract.

The 25-year-old was on Thursday announced as Namungo FC's latest acquisition, signalling the club's intent on holding sway in the coming season.

Sey who scored six league goals for relegated Singida United is seen as a direct replacement for club top scorer, Reliants Lusajo.

Lusajo guided the team to the top flight and had a good season with 16 goals across all competitions for Namungo.

The towering forward, though, has left the club after failing to agree to a new deal. He is rumoured to be on the verge of signing for Yanga.



Namungo FC newly signed midfielder, Abdulhalim Humud.

"We have completed the transfer of Stephen Sey from Singida United, on a two-year contract," the club said through its official accounts.

Namungo have embarked on a rebuilding exercise during the off-season and also announced the arrival of veteran midfielder

Abdulhalim Humud from Mtibwa Sugar on a two-year deal.

Humud who has played for various sides including Simba SC and Azam FC is expected to add experience to coach Thierry Hitimana squad that will represent Tanzania in the CAF Confederation Cup next season.

Namungo FC booked a continental ticket after reaching the final of this season's Federation Cup.

Despite losing 2-1 to Simba in the Federation Cup final, held in Rukwa last month, Namungo FC qualified for CAF Confederation Cup since Simba had won the Premier League and are eligible to play in the CAF Champions League.

Last week, they confirmed the arrival of former Lipuli FC midfielder Fredy Tangalu on a two-year deal while also releasing 11 players.

The club is expected to sign more players as the transfer window is open till end of August before the top-flight kicks off the season on September 6.

However, before the season gets underway, Namungo FC will have a date with Premier League champions Simba in the season opener, Community Shield clash, in Arusha on August 29, 2020.

Dar set to celebrate World Squash day October

BY CORRESPONDENT JOSEPH MCHEKADONA

TANZANIA has lined up a number of activities to celebrate World Squash Day in at Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club (DGC) in October.

Secretary General for National Squash and Racquets Association (TSRA), Marwa Busigara, said the World Squash Day will be held on 10 October 2020 and the country will host a number of activities at DGC.

He said the event will help to re-launch the game when events take place across the globe as the day will help to create some outstanding events aimed at welcoming players back to the game and help to attract a new generation of players to the courts.

Busigara stopped short of men-

tioning the activities lined up for the event, saying it is too early.

He, however, hinted that it will be akin to a campaign for seeing to it squash is held in Tokyo Olympics, which was held six years ago, named 'Back the Bid 2020'.

"We will join the rest of the globe to celebrate World Squash Day in October, we have lined up a number of activities, but for now it's too early to disclose them but it will be like the campaign which was done six years ago, aiming at seeing squash at the 2020 Olympics where we had games and press conference," he said.

World Squash Federation (WSF) said the prediction of World Squash Day founder, Alan Thatcher, who is determined to help clubs and federations move

out of lockdown with a campaign aimed at renewed growth.

Thatcher is reported to have said that it has been a difficult time for everyone in the game, affecting clubs, ordinary players and professionals just the same.

"We have seen some incredible things on social media during the lockdown, with squash enthusiasts creating temporary courts in their back gardens, garages and basements, and we intend to leverage this passion for our sport to gain massive traction for World Squash Day," he disclosed.

"Despite the absence of tournaments, Professional Squash Association (PSA) members have continued to entertain us all on social media with their lockdown training videos, trick shots and podcasts."

Meanwhile, the TSRA Secre-

tary General said they are waiting for complete renovations of DGC squash courts before they resume bell tournaments.

Recently, Busigara said eight players are attending training to prepare for the resumption of the games which were suspended due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Of the eight players, he disclosed, three are from Zanzibar while the remaining are based in Mainland Tanzania.

Busigara, who is one of Mainland Tanzania-based players, mentioned the players from Zanzibar as Issa Matiku, Zablon Lopa, Nuhu Maalim and Philemon Osarya.

He noted Samael Lakhani, Hamisi Sama, Raul Dilesh and Mwynimvua Kondo are the rest of Mainland Tanzania players.



Dar es Salaam squash players pose for picture prior to participating in training in the city recently to prepare for domestic tournaments.

Lillard, Blazers escape Nets, advance to play-in series

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FLA.

WITH the season threatening to slip away, Damian Lillard decided it was time to shoot, even though he was so far his foot was touching the logo near midcourt.

A few minutes later, he flung his body to the floor near the same spot, coming up with a steal that was the biggest defensive play of the game.

Lillard did it all to give Portland a spot in the NBA's first play-in series, scoring 42 points to help the Trail Blazers escape with a 134-133 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Thursday night.

"The urgency, the energy, the pace, everything, just felt like something was on the line," Lillard said.

The Trail Blazers secured the No. 8 seed in the Western Conference



Portland Trail Blazers' Damian Lillard, left, falls while chasing the ball against Brooklyn Nets' Caris LeVert during the second half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Aug. 13, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. (AP Photo)

only after Brooklyn's Caris LeVert, who scored 37 points, missed a jumper just before time expired. Portland will play ninth-seeded Memphis on Sat-

urday. If the Grizzlies win, the deciding game would be Sunday.

The winner of the play-in series gets the final spot in the West and a first-round

series against the Los Angeles Lakers.

Portland came into the day in eighth place, but would have fallen out of playoff position with a loss,

thanks to victories earlier Thursday by Memphis and Phoenix. Had the Blazers lost, the Suns would have inched ahead of them into ninth.

But Lillard wouldn't let the Blazers fall, following his games of 51 and 61 points in the previous two games not only with more sensational scoring but also with a huge defensive play.

He chased down LeVert for a steal with Portland clinging to a two-point lead with 1:12 to play, setting up CJ McCollum's free throws that made it 134-130. LeVert came back with a three-point play and had a chance to win it after Carmelo Anthony missed a 3-pointer, but his jumper was off.

Unlike the Grizzlies and Suns, who romped in their afternoon games, the Blaz-

ers needed to go all the way to the wire to beat the Nets. Portland scored 73 points in the first half, but led by only six after Brooklyn shot 59%.

LeVert then scored 10 points in the first five minutes of the third quarter, part of what became a 17-3 run as Brooklyn turned an eight-point deficit into a 91-85 lead. A 3-pointer by Luwawu-Cabarrot extended the lead to 102-92 with 1:46 left in the period and the Nets took a 104-97 advantage to the fourth.

Lillard then hit a couple of 3s - one with a foot touching the logo near midcourt - during a 12-4 surge that wiped out a seven-point deficit and put Portland back on top 112-111.

"Honestly the roll that he's been on, we were missing some shots and

that's Dame," Blazers coach Terry Stotts said about Lillard's decision to launch from 36 feet with the Nets trying to force the ball out of his hands as soon as he crossed midcourt.

Brooklyn would later go back on top by five before the Portland pulled it out.

McCollum had 25 points and Jusuf Nurkic had 22 points and 10 rebounds for the Blazers, who went 6-2 in the seeding games.

Joe Harris and Timothe Luwawu-Cabarrot each scored 19 points for the Nets, who finished 5-3. They were already locked into a first-round series with defending champion Toronto but played their starters as if they needed the win.

"Like I said, we played a great eight games but now it's time to really lock in," LeVert said.

Meanwhile, with their season on the line, Jonas Valanciunas and Ja Morant teamed up to make history and keep the Memphis Grizzlies' playoff hopes alive.

Valanciunas and Morant had triple-doubles, Dillon Brooks scored 31 points and the Grizzlies beat the Milwaukee Bucks 119-106 on Thursday to wrap up a spot in the play-in tournament that will determine the eighth and final seed in the Western Conference playoffs.

This marked the first time in franchise history that two Grizzlies had triple-doubles in a game. The team effort helped the Grizzlies bounce back after losing six of their first seven games since the NBA returned from a 4 1/2-month layoff.

AP

Man City look to Lisbon as best shot for Champions League glory

BY KIERAN CANNING

Manchester City finally have a marquee victory in the knockout stages of the Champions League after seeing off Real Madrid to reach the last eight, but they want much more in Lisbon over the next week with Pep Guardiola insisting they cannot be satisfied by beating the 13-time winners.

"We're here to try and win the Champions League," said Guardiola in a markedly different tone to the one he has struck in previous seasons when claiming City were not ready to be crowned champions of Europe despite dominating the Premier League.

"If we think that (beating Real) is enough we will show how small we are. If you want to win you have to beat the big clubs."

It took City eight seasons in the Champions League to beat a former winner over two legs, but disposing of Madrid both home and away, pre and post football's shutdown for coronavirus showed a maturity and ability to handle pressure situations that Guardiola's men have lacked in previous Champions League campaigns.

A clash with Lyon, who finished seventh in the curtailed 2019/20 Ligue 1 season, offers further reason for City to be optimistic.

But in the past three seasons since Guardiola arrived in Manchester, City have contrived to crash out despite being heavily favoured against Monaco, Liverpool and Tottenham.

"I just spoke with the scouting department about Lyon and they told me to be alert," warned Guardiola after Lyon shocked Juventus in the last 16.

The French side also showed what they are capable of in taking four points from a possible six against City in the group stages of last season's Champions League.

However, the enormous financial gap between the clubs is highlighted by the fact that Lyon have to routinely sell their prized assets with Nabil Fekir, Tanguy Ndombele and Ferland Mendy all departing last summer, while City have

the resources to keep throwing money at the dream of winning the Champions League.

Deposed as champions of England by Liverpool, City have already begun strengthening for next season with the signings of Ferran Torres and Nathan Ake, but it is the next week in the Portuguese capital that could present the club's best ever chance of Champions League glory.

One of Guardiola's former clubs, Barcelona or Bayern Munich, will lie in wait for the winner between City and Lyon, but they are the only two former winners left in the competition.

Guardiola has often bemoaned the lack of atmosphere at the Etihad for big European nights compared the cauldrons of the Camp Nou, Anfield or Santiago Bernabeu, but a behind closed doors environment for all remaining games negates that disadvantage.

Bar Sergio Agüero's absence, City also have a clean bill of health and have been building towards the latter stages of the Champions League ever since football's return from a three-month shutdown in June with Liverpool already out of sight in the Premier League.

Defensive problems could still prove their undoing as they did in losing nine times in the Premier League this season.

Converted midfielder Fernandinho is starting at centre-back at 35, while doubts remain over who Guardiola will trust at left-back when Benjamin Mendy returns from suspension for the quarter-finals.

However, much of the damage to City's title defence was done prior to centre-back Aymeric Laporte's return from injury.

Further forward Kevin De Bruyne underlined his claim to be the world's best midfielder against Madrid, while the Spanish champions struggled to contain Raheem Sterling and Gabriel Jesus.

City undoubtedly have the talent, now they also believe it is their time in the Champions League.

AFP

Arsenal investigate £72m Pepe transfer

LONDON

ARSENAL'S efforts to streamline and improve their operations has extended to an internal investigation into whether they overpaid for £72m club-record signing Nicolas Pepe.

Sources have told ESPN the deal has been re-examined as part of the wider recruitment overhaul which led to the departures of a host of scouts including Francis Cagigao, Brian McDermott and Brian Clark as well as several more senior employees based throughout Europe.

Pepe ended his debut season in England with eight goals and 10 assists across all competitions; a satisfactory return despite some inconsistent form. There is said to be no sense of regret at signing the 25-year-old but many people within the game were surprised at the size of the fee Arsenal paid to Lille, especially coming from a club where finances are notoriously tight.

The Gunners paid £20m up front but have committed a further £52m over the next five years, the first instalment of which is due this summer. The depth of that commitment has led to a review of the scouting reports and negotiating process which led to such a big

deal being sanctioned.

Pepe attracted interest from a number of Europe's top clubs after impressing in Ligue 1 but sources have told ESPN that individuals working for other clubs who became involved in preliminary talks with Lille were taken back by the amount Arsenal eventually paid.

Technical director Edu joined the club three weeks before Pepe signed for Arsenal -- he held up Pepe's shirt with the winger at his unveiling -- but the bulk of the work on the deal had already been done. Former head coach Unai Emery has previously stated he preferred to sign Wilfried Zaha but Crystal Palace wanted the majority of a similar fee up front and Arsenal opted for Pepe instead.

Edu has led a drive to overhaul Arsenal's recruitment at all levels -- Ty Gooden, Arsenal's leading scout in France, has also been released -- in the belief that a global network is less important than data-driven analysis and forging relationships with key agents.

With COVID-19 a contributing factor to 55 non-playing staff redundancies and further pressure on a modest summer transfer budget, Edu is determined to make every penny count.

(Agencies)

English soccer announces congested schedule due to pandemic

LONDON

BIG changes have been made to the English soccer schedule in a congested and shorter season because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Replays in the FA Cup have been scrapped "to assist in easing pressure on" the tight program, the Football Association said on Thursday.

In the English League Cup, two-leg semifinals have been replaced by a single match in January. Also, the first four rounds are scheduled to take place on consecutive weeks in September.

None of the traditional midweek dates are available in October and November which are given entirely to UEFA's club and national-team competitions.

AP

'Proud' Leipzig boss Nagelsmann relishing facing ex-mentor, PSG coach Tuchel

LISBON

RB Leipzig boss Julian Nagelsmann says he is relishing facing former mentor and Paris Saint Germain coach Thomas Tuchel in the Champions League semi-finals following his side's stunning win over Atletico Madrid.

Leipzig, who were only founded in 2009, booked a semi-final berth at their first attempt in the knock-out stages when US midfielder Tyler Adams hit an 88th-minute winner.

It sealed the Germans' win after a Joao Felix penalty for Atletico had cancelled out Dani Olmo's header for Leipzig early in the second half.

Leipzig now face PSG next Tuesday, also in Lisbon, for a place in the August 23 final.

It was PSG's German coach Tuchel, 46, who gave Nagelsmann his first break at Augsburg 12 years ago as a scout which saw him then become a coach.

"They are a top team with a top trainer," said the 33-year-old Nagelsmann, whose playing career was ended in 2008 by a knee injury.

"I have often played (as a coach) against him (Tuchel) but rarely won.

"That should change now. I would also be satisfied with a bad game if we win," Nagelsmann added.

When coach of his former club Hoffenheim, Nagelsmann lost twice and drew against Tuchel, who was then in charge of Borussia Dortmund in the Bundesliga between 2016 and 2017. Nagelsmann was full of praise for PSG, who came back against Atalanta on Wednesday to win after scoring two late goals.

"They are a team full of stars," Nagelsmann added, referring to Neymar and fellow PSG forward Kylian Mbappe.

"You could see yesterday at the end what quality they have.

"Angel di Maria is coming back,



Leipzig's Tyler Adams scores his side's second goal during the Champions League quarterfinal match between RB Leipzig and Atletico Madrid at the Jose Alvalade stadium in Lisbon, Portugal, Thursday, Aug. 13, 2020. (AP)

Mbappe will be fit enough to play from the beginning.

"It's clear that we need another top performance to get into the final."

- Mental strength -

Nagelsmann's Leipzig held their nerve after Felix equalised before Adams came off the bench to seal the winner after superb work in the build-up by left-back Angelino and midfielder Marcel Sabitzer.

"I was getting ready for extra-time and thinking about who I would bring on, so I am happy that I didn't have to do that," added Nagelsmann.

"I couldn't believe we scored that beautiful goal.

"We had trained for the situation when we went 1-0 up, but things didn't work out exactly.

"The boys sorted things out for themselves and showed how mentally

strong they are, so I am really proud of them."

This is the first time Leipzig have made the knock-out stages of the Champions League and having already beaten Tottenham in the last 16, they want to make more are history.

Their captain Yussuf Poulsen, 26, who joined in 2013-14 when Leipzig were in Germany's third division, acknowledged the magnitude of the achievement for the eastern Germany club backed by energy drinks firm Red Bull.

"This is a story that you couldn't have written better," said the Denmark striker.

"It is a great day, a great moment, we have to enjoy it, then have a better game in the semi-finals in five days."

Poulsen said Nagels-

mann's meticulous preparations had been a key.

"We were just well prepared, everyone knew what to do," he said.

"But we also had some players on the pitch who were not playing Champions League for the first time," he added after Leipzig bowed out in the group stages in 2017-18.

"If we'd played a game like that two years ago, it might have turned out differently."

Meanwhile, Diego Simeone said Atletico Madrid were weighed down by the pressure and intensity of a long season as they crashed out of the Champions League on Thursday against Leipzig.

Leipzig will play Paris Saint-Germain in the semi-finals on Tuesday after Tyler Adams' deflected shot in the 88th minute earned

them a shock 2-1 victory in Lisbon.

Atletico's Joao Felix had earlier scored a penalty to cancel out Dani Olmo's opener.

Defeat ends a disappointing season for Atletico, who finished third in La Liga, 17 points behind Real Madrid.

"We didn't have that physical sharpness or rhythm," said Simeone afterwards.

"At the end of a season with so much pressure, so much need to get into the Champions League, and the need to integrate new players.

"We came with a lot of hope. The feeling is a lot of bitterness but I know the players gave everything. They gave it their all."

Questions will be asked about Simeone's future and his ability to turn this Atletico side into winners again, while sticking to his defensive style of play.

"I have nothing to say to anyone about what we did this season. It's a good season, third in La Liga, quarter-finalists in Champions League," Simeone said.

"Next season will be tough, very tough."

Simeone admitted Leipzig were the better team and deserved to go through to the semis.

"They were better, faster," he added. "We gave everything and we leave with dignity, with an opponent who deserves their victory."

AFP

By ousting Madrid, Man City's rotten Champions League luck changed

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

FOR a club that has endured some agonising luck in the Champions League over the years, Manchester City will feel that they hit the jackpot on the night that Pep Guardiola's team qualified for the quarterfinals by sending Real Madrid crashing out of the competition with a 2-1 victory Friday.

Not only did City bring an end to Zinedine Zidane's incredible run of success in the tournament with Real -- this was the first time Zidane had suffered an elimination from the Champions League as coach -- Guardiola's players walked off the pitch at the Etihad Stadium to be greeted by the news that Cristiano Ronaldo and Juventus will not be blocking their path to European glory in the final-eight tournament in Lisbon next week following their shock exit at the hands of Lyon in Turin, Italy.

City ended the hopes of one juggernaut (Real) themselves, but Lyon removed another in the shape of Juve, and that is only good news for Guardiola and his team. Lyon will be no pushover at Estadio Jose Alvalade next Saturday -- the French club beat City at the Etihad in last season's group stage before earning a 2-2 draw at home -- but after comfortably dispatching Real in this delayed round-of-16 tie, City will travel to Lisbon knowing that they have arguably their best-ever chance to win the Champions League for the first time.

Guardiola, unsurprisingly, insisted that his team cannot be complacent against Lyon after this victory.

"It is one step," Guardiola said. "If we think that is enough, we will show how small we are. If you want to win, you have to beat the big clubs, but we are here to try and win the Champions League.

"I just spoke with the scouting department [about Lyon] and they told me to be alert. We have eight days to prepare for it. We will enjoy it and then after we will think about Lyon."

This City side still have their flaws, but in victory against Real, they showed a growing maturity in this competition that enabled them to



Manchester City head to the Champions League quarter-finals in Lisbon in confident mood after beating Real Madrid. (Agencies)

overcome their defensive frailties and the absence of injured striker Sergio Aguero.

Yes, City were 2-1 up from the first leg in the Santiago Bernabeu, but Zidane's Real remain a team packed with Champions League-winning experience and the likes of Luka Modric, Toni Kroos, Raphael Varane and Karim Benzema have seen it and done it far more often than their opposite numbers in blue shirts. But aside from

Benzema, whose stunning first-half header gave Real hope of progression, the rest were outrun and out-thought by City. Eden Hazard was another high-profile disappointment for Real, with the former Chelsea forward barely touching the ball before being substituted midway through the second half.

This performance by City highlighted how they have grown into this competition and no longer feel intimidated by illustrious

opposition. They dominated possession and the tempo of the game, with Guardiola's forwards buzzing around Real's defenders to force the mistakes that led to both goals -- Varane was the guilty Real player on both occasions -- while in midfield, City refused to allow Real to play through middle, forcing them to attempt to cross aimless balls into the penalty area that were largely dealt with by Ederson.

The absence of supporters inside the stadium due to the strict COVID-19 protocols in place denied this game the atmosphere that it deserved. In normal times, it would have been a night that would have gone down in the annals of City's history. It still will, but fans will sadly be unable to talk about the night that their team truly came of age in Europe by beating Real Madrid.

This victory will nevertheless give City the belief that they can now go all the way.

Since being eliminated by Real at the semifinal

stage under Manuel Pellegrini in 2016, City have seen their Champions League hopes ended by Monaco, Liverpool and Tottenham during Guardiola's reign, but they have now sent Real out, so none of the remaining teams will worry City. Lyon will be concerned about stopping Raheem Sterling and Gabriel Jesus from adding to the goals they scored against Real, while they must also find a way to nullify the threat of Kevin De Bruyne. And if City get past Rudi Garcia's team, a likely semifinal against either Bayern Munich or Barcelona will see them go into that game on an equal footing with one of Europe's most prestigious clubs.

After beating Real, City are just three wins from lifting the European Cup, so they are tantalisingly close. And this time, they look ready to win it.

"The players will go to Portugal to try to make the next step," Guardiola said. "We know exactly what team we beat."

(Agencies)

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

'Proud' Leipzig boss Nagelsmann relishing facing ex-mentor, PSG coach Tuchel

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

5 EATV MONDAY

TONIGHT @ 9:00

UJENZI

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
14:00 Wanawake Live (r)
14:30 Bongo Hills
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Copa Coca-Cola (r)
16:00 Akili & Me (r)
16:30 #HSHATAG
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 5SPORTS LIVE
22:30 Bongo Hills

TONIGHT @ 9:00

UJENZI

Tonight on EATV
Find out how using glass blocks from Canghui Traders Limited can improve your home decor

And Tanfix Quality Choice has an innovative solution for wall fungus

It's all on Ujenzi at 9PM

eastafrica RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Simba Kings cricketers now inch closer to 2020 APL semis



Simba Kings' cricketers pose for picture after playing one of the 2020 Advanced Players League (APL) clashes in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TCA

By Guardian Reporter

SIMBA Kings cricketers have taken a significant step closer to a place in the 2020 Advanced Players League (APL) last year after trouncing Tembo Stars by 45 runs in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

Much as they came out victorious in the yesterday clash, Simba Kings' qualification for the last four hinges on Buffalo Blasters conceding loss to Royal Rhinos in the other encounter, which was to be played later the same day.

Should Buffalo Blasters lose to Royal Rhinos, Simba Kings will, for that matter, make certain of their participation in the last four, thanks to having a better net run rate.

Simba Kings were put in to start batting in the

yesterday clash by Tembo Stars after the latter had won toss and chose to bowl.

Top order batsmen then made the most of the innings, with Simba racing to 142 runs for eight wickets in 20 overs.

Openers, Ivan Ismail and Mohammad Ali, were at their best at the crease after recording 38 runs and 30 runs respectively to have their side get off to a goos start.

The youthful Ismail showcased his aggressiveness, cracking three fours and a six, his fellow opener blasted three boundaries.

Well drilled all rounder Issa Kikasi and equally experienced team mate, Zafar Khan, helped the outfit boost the quest for an

imposing figure, posting 23 runs and 16 runs respectively.

Simba Kings' attempt to amass a rather bigger total was though dealt a blow later, given the squad suffered a batting collapse.

There was hardly a batsman who managed to chip in with meaningful contribution, as far as the rest of the side's batting order was concerned.

Gokul Das ended two runs short of two digits' figure, nailing one boundary, much as he returned with bat in hand.

Tembo Stars bowlers, Ally Mpeka and Nisar Ahmed, ended with two wickets apiece in their respective bowling spells.

Mpeka leaked 27 runs in four

overs, Ahmed leaked 36 runs in four overs.

Chasing 143 runs to come out with a victory happened to be a daunting task for Tembo Stars, given they were, in response, skittled for 97 runs with three balls left.

Opening batsmen, Abbas Adamjee and Abhik Patwa, gave Tembo Stars a slight hope, recording 20 runs and 15 runs respectively.

They were pegged back with an early exit of promising all rounder, Nassoro Zahoro, as he could manage nine runs, nailing a four, and was then caught by Simba Kings' wicket keeper, Issa Kikasi, from Salmini Yusuph's bowling.

Youthful Dharmin Parmar and experienced all rounder, Adil Kassam, slightly boosted the chase with 18 runs and 10 runs respectively.

Tembo Stars's hopes for successful chase were later shattered, given the squad dropped wickets at regular interval.

Ali wound up his scintillating showing for Simba Kings, in which he posted three wickets, leaking 11 runs in 3.3 overs.

Khan piled misery on Tembo Stars, given he took two wickets and leaked 15 runs in four overs.

Tembo Stars, in this case, are set to take part in Saturday's second last four match, dubbed Eliminator, bringing together third-placed side and a club which will end fourth.

Buffalo Blasters were required to notch victory over Royal Rhinos yesterday, if the former are to ascertain their qualification for the Eliminator.

The 2020 APL favourites, Twiga Titans, have sailed through to the first of the last four, known as Qualifier 1, given they have secured victory in four outings.

Twiga Titans had progressed to the last four after notching a comprehensive seven-wicket victory over Chui Challengers in the city a day back.

The Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA)-organized league, which will climax on Sunday this week, takes place with a view to raising the standard of the sport at the domestic level.

Six franchises are participating in the T20-formatted showdown. The outfits are Simba Kings, Chui Challengers, Royal Rhinos, Twiga Titans, Tembo Stars and Buffalo Blasters.

ECB considering cost-cutting move away from Lord's

LONDON

ENGLISH cricket has received a significant boost with the news that Australia are set to confirm their limited-overs tour in September.

Confirmation of the tour, which will see the sides play three ODIs and three T20Is, means England's men's team should be able to fulfil all 18 international fixtures which were scheduled ahead of the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, the ECB should be able to avoid the bleakest financial predictions that were made ahead of the season.

Significant challenges remain, however. The ECB management recently warned the first-class counties that the next broadcast deal could be worth up to 50% less than the current deal - due, in part, to less competition in the market - meaning a period of cost-cutting is inevitable.

ESPNcricinfo understands that among the options being considered is a partial move away from Lord's as an administrative base and a move away from Loughborough as a performance base. While it is understood that the ECB is given a relatively favourable rental agreement at Lord's by the MCC, there is ongoing consideration towards moving to less expensive offices elsewhere.

This possibility has been considered previously. This time, however, there is not only a financial incentive but a growing view that a game intent on becoming more inclusive for all aspects of society might benefit from a move away from St John's Wood, the suburb of London where Lord's is situated, which is one of the most expensive and exclusive parts of the country.

Thought will also be given to moving away from the National Cricket Performance Centre in Loughborough. While the centre has outstanding facilities, there are suggestions it is largely replicating those offered at various other major grounds.

Edgbaston, which is about to embark on the next stage of its redevelopment, is one location that is sure to be considered as an alternative for both the administrative and the performance set-ups. In the next few weeks, building work will begin at the ground on new residential and commercial premises which could easily be fitted as required by the ECB. Emirates Old Trafford is also likely to be considered.

The most likely conclusion at this stage is that ECB could set up hubs in different areas of the country in order both to cut costs and to improve its relationships with the counties. While a complete move from London is unlikely, it does seem the ECB will follow other major companies - such as Channel 4, the BBC and HSBC - in moving away from the capital.

AGENCIES

Yanga set to launch 'Wananchi Week' in Dodoma next week

By Correspondent Faustine Feliciane

YANGA management has stated the outfit will launch a week of charity activities held by the club, popularly known as 'Wananchi Week', in Dodoma on August 22.

The club had earlier set to launch the 'Wananchi Week' in the region on August 15, only to opt to push the launch back.

Yanga opted to reach the decision as, as disclosed by the side's officials, the club had other activities which are to be held within the mentioned date.

Yanga's vice-chairman, Fredrick Mwakalebela, affirmed the side's commitment to launch the 'Wananchi Week' in the region, noting each of the activities will be held as planned.

The 'Wananchi Week' climax is expected to take place in Dar es Salaam.

Several activities have been arranged for the week, involving the club's officials, members, players and fans.

"We will launch the 'Wananchi Week' in Dodoma, we had earlier set out to launch the week on August 15 but now we have arranged the



Yanga

new date, time table for other activities right up to the climax will be released," he disclosed.

Yanga, besides other activities, are set to introduce the outfit's newly recruited players, set to feature for side in the coming season, to their fans.

The outfit's information officer, Hassan Bumbuli, had previously quashed rumours that the change of the 'Wananchi Week' launch's date had aimed at giving room for the charity activities' week, held by their age old rivals Simba SC, known as 'Simba Week'.

Simba Week had officially started yesterday.

Bumbuli noted Ynga have opted to push the launch back as a result of tight schedule of activities.

"We do not fear any side, Simba are hosting the 'Simba Week' for

their supporters, as it is the case for us, therefore we cannot fear them," Bumbuli noted.

"There is tight schedule activities. We had set out to give the week the respect it deserves, given Yanga are a soccer big gun."

Flexibles by David Chikoko

