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'Mobile cash transactions the surest source of revenues'

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

NATIONAL Assembly Speaker Job Ndogai yesterday sought to defend the legislature for endorsing hefty levies on mobile money transactions saying there were no alternatives.

Speaking here at a meeting that brought together various political leaders and the regional authorities to discuss development strategies, Ndogai said mobile money transfer platforms are the only sure source of money to finance the ongoing and new development projects.

"Those of you who are opposed to the new levy should show us the alternative sources of getting money," he said.

The Kongwa MP said that the House in its wisdom introduced the levy with good intentions of ensuring that by 2025, Tanzanians in all corners of the country get access to essential services such as water, electricity, roads, dispensaries and classrooms.

"That is why we MPs chose mobile money because we know there is enough money there that can enable us to easily carry out these projects," he said.

The government last month amended the Electronic and Postal Communications Act (CAP 306) by imposing a levy on mobile money transactions, depending on the amount sent and withdrawn, in an effort to raise revenue collections by 1.254trn/- to partly finance the 36.68trn/- budget for the 2021/2022 financial year.

The levy became legally-binding after the legislature approved the 2021 Finance Act and the Appropriations Act.

However, when its enforcement begun mid this month, there was an uproar all over the country as users complained not over the levy per se but the amount of money deducted.

A rough calculation of the charges indicate that sending 1m/- to someone and having the money withdrawn will cost a total of 31,000/- if all the current and new charges are added up.

After complaints and criticism from different quarters, Finance and Planning minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba said mid-week that President Samia Suluhu Hassan had heard people's complaints against the new charges and that she had instructed the ministry to work on the matter.

Excited opposers are promoting other transaction mechanisms, favouring banks and personal conveyance to obviate the sharply accentuated deductions.

NCCR, ACT-Wazalendo unite on Mbowe's fate

By Guardian Reporter

TWO opposition parties, NCCR-Mageuzi and ACT-Wazalendo, want the police to unconditionally release Chadema national chairman Freeman Mbowe and 15 other cadres being held in custody.

A joint statement released yesterday, signed by NCCR-Mageuzi national chairman James Mbatia and ACT-Wazalendo party leader Zitto Kabwe said the arrest of Chadema cadres on Wednesday was conducted in contravention with the mother law and legislation on political parties.

"The arrest of the leaders because of a conference that was organized by Chadema is unacceptable in any democratic and just society," they declared.

Freedom of assembly is guaranteed by article 20 (1) of the 1977 Constitution and section II of the Political Parties Act, they stated, asserting on behalf of the two political parties that the police force must "immediately and unconditionally release Chadema members and leaders including Mbowe."

The two leaders appealed to supporters of democ-

The arrest of the leaders because of a conference that was organized by Chadema is unacceptable in any democratic and just society

ocracy to condemn the arrest of the leaders which they said "eroded efforts being made to achieve national cohesion," urging the government and top political leaders to sit with the opposition to discuss the best ways of conducting politics without animosity," the statement intoned, insisting that "it is time for political dialogue."

A police statement on Thursday said that Mbowe was being held for questioning in relation to suspicions of involvement in 'terrorism activities and a plot to kill national leaders.'

Chadema officials said Mbowe was snatched from his hotel room in Mwanza post midnight Tuesday, hours before the start of a conference to agitate for a new constitution, with police admitted on Thursday to be holding 15 Chadema cadres arrested early Wednesday.

Regional Police Commander Ramadhani Ng'anzi told reporters that the national chairman was immediately taken to Dar es Salaam for interrogation in relation to a separate criminal investigation.

On Monday, Mbowe announced at a press conference that the party was to hold a conference on Wednesday to deliberate on matters to do with the new constitution.

Hours after Mbowe's proclamation, Mwanza regional commissioner Robert Gabriel announced the banning all meetings except religious congregations



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi gifts visiting former British Prime Minister Tony Blair a carved wooden 'Zanzibar' door as a souvenir shortly after talks at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House.

Govt bans gatherings with Covid-19 spread

By Getrude Mbago

THE government has banned unnecessary gatherings, directing regional and district authorities across the country to strongly act and take serious measures to curb the spread of the third wave of Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr Dorothy Gwajima, the minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, issued the directive in Dar es Salaam yesterday at

a press conference, urging members of the public to support the fight.

She however urged those holding essential gatherings to take precautions to avoid the spread of the disease, noting that unnecessary gatherings that are henceforth banned are entertainment events such as music performances, discos or large groups watching football.

Dr Gwajima said that there are some reckless leaders who have remained mum despite a surge in cases of the dis-

ease in their areas.

"Failing to adhere to precautionary measures has continued to contribute to the increase in the number of hospitalised patients. As of July 21 (Wednesday this week) in healthcare facilities across the country there were 682 patients suffering from Covid-19," she stated.

She said by yesterday 176 new patients of the disease were reported to have

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Zanzibar in mass vaccination drive

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR has officially launched mass vaccination with the Chinese made Sinovac jab with Health, Social Welfare, Gender and Children minister Nasser Ahmed Mazrui, becoming the first public official to be inoculated.

The mass rollout comes in the wake of an earlier effort with an unspecified vaccine delivery

which prioritized health workers and at a slightly earlier period, inoculating those wishing to make the annual pilgrimage to the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, with all these efforts being carried out with the Sinovac vaccine.

Presiding over the launch here on Thursday at the Lumumba Covid-19 testing and treatment centre, the minister sought build people's confidence in the jab,



saying it is safe, approved by the World Health Organization and endorsed by the government of Zanzibar.

Another vaccine consignment is expected to be delivered after two weeks, with the Zanzibar government expecting to receive a total of 100,000 doses of the Covid-19 vaccine as assistance from the Chinese authorities.

Zanzibar Second Vice President

Hemed Suleiman Abdullah made this affirmation when receiving documents for the delivery from the Chinese Consul in Zanzibar Zhang Zhisheng.

The VP said the SINOVAC vaccines arriving in Zanzibar shortly will be handed over to the Health

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Govt bans gatherings with Covid-19 spread

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been hospitalized in various facilities, "so we need to wake up all of us and fight this disease without affecting our daily economic activities."

The fight against Covid-19 should not be left to the government, she stated, underlining that this is an area which needs coordinated efforts to contain the spread of infections.

"Public officers should fulfill their obligations in this war," she emphasised, pointing out that the government will not tolerate leaders who will be found thwarting efforts to fight the disease by not fulfilling their duties. This includes promoting and educating people on preventive measures in various communities country-wide.

She also cautioned on excessive packing of passengers in commuter buses saying that public officials ought to control this situation so as to enhance the protection of passengers while on transit, urging the public not to ignore the Covid-19 preventive measures meant to curb infections.

"Despite the surge in Covid-19 cases, the majority of the people are yet to take the disease seriously by not taking precautions including wearing face masks and washing hands. This has been

contributed to by reckless leaders who do not take action to ensure that the public knows well the danger of the disease. And this should be done without raising fear or panic," she said.

The government is today expected to release a schedule on how Tanzanians will access the first phase of Covid-19 jabs as it rolls out a mass vaccination campaign.

"We will start with priority groups including elders and frontline workers. We expect to reach a minimum of 60 percent of Tanzanians in a sequence of phases in the campaign," the minister stated.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan has cautioned that Covid-19 is an ever present health challenge, so people must take precautions as recommended by experts.

Last month, when addressing members of the Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) in Dar es Salaam, President Samia said that the disease was widespread and must be fought.

"In my recent tour of Mwananyamala Regional Referral Hospital (in Dar es Salaam), I went to one of the wards and the doctor there told me that the patients had difficulties in breathing," she had stated, indicating that the doctor was avoiding to use the c-word, coronavirus.

NCCR, ACT-Wazalendo unite on Mbowe's fate

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"as a containment measure against Covid-19."

Heavily armed police closed a section of the road heading to a venue where the agitation conference was to take place with of

ficers questioning all individuals heading to the facility.

As early as 6am, the Bwiru-Kitangiri junction was cordoned off with yellow tape as police officers armed with guns, teargas, dogs and pepper spray trucks manned the area, sealing off chances of the conference taking place.

Sixteen civilians killed in eastern DRC ambush

KINSHASA

ATTACKERS in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have killed at least 16 civilians as they were returning from a weekly market, according to a report citing medical and local sources.

The ambush on Thursday evening occurred on a highway between the towns of Maimoya and Chani-chani, some 40km (25 miles) from the city of Beni in North Kivu province.

Jerome Munyambethe, head of the hospital in the town of Oicha, told the AFP news agency that six women and a child - all of whom were shot - were among the victims.

"We have 16 bodies in the hospital morgue," said Nicolas Kikuku, town mayor, adding that

nine others who were wounded had been taken to the hospital for treatment.

Fighters belonging to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) - the deadliest of an estimated 122 armed groups in the mineral-rich eastern DRC, many of them a legacy of two regional wars from 1996 to 2003 - carry out frequent attacks in the Oicha region.

"The ambush is the work of ADF roaming the area. They also fired a rocket," said Lewis Saliboko, a representative of grassroots groups in Oicha.

"It's the ADF enemy which yet again has attacked peace-loving people," said Kikuku.

The ADF, which first appeared in western Uganda before making its base in the eastern DRC in the mid-1990s, does not claim responsibility for attacks.



Dr Dorothy Gwajima (L), Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister, updates journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on Covid-19 infections in the country. Right is the Health ministry's Director of Prevention Services, Dr Leonard Subi. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Zanzibar in mass vaccination drive

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ministry to proceed with inoculation arrangements for priority workers and others who shall seek to be vaccinated.

Consul Zhang said China was all set to assist Zanzibar against the pandemic as the vaccine is WHO approved, meanwhile as China is ready to continue the good relations existing with Zanzibar by investing in the industrial sector to spur economic growth.

The vaccination effort is expect-

ed to boost tourism arrivals which have been rising since June, rising to 20,416, as compared to 9,280 in March.

Abdulrauf Ramadhani Abeid, the head of government statistics here said here yesterday that France was leading in Europe for arrivals of tourists in Zanzibar.

He said a total of 11,588 European visitors entered the Isles in June, where France led by sending in 2,232 tourists, followed by Poland with 2,101 tourists.

Visitors who came to Zanzibar by sea through the port of Malindi numbered 5,152 and those who came by air were 15,264, around three quarters of the total. The quasi totality of the visitors came for vacation while a few came to visit their relatives and an even smaller number came for business, the statistician noted.

Dr Estella Ngoma, a lecturer at State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) said the big number of French tourists was due to France easing travel restrictions for those wishing to trav-

el abroad, in the wake of an ongoing vaccination campaign all over the European Union.

Dr Abdulla Mohammed Juma, executive secretary for the Zanzibar Tourist Commission said the commission has shifted its strategy in regard to the tourism market, as in the past the Isles relied from tourists coming from Europe.

The shift in strategy was were bearing fruit as visitations from other continents was on a rising trend, he added.



Nurse Arafah Abdulhakim administers a corona vaccine on Nassor Ahmed Mazrui (R), Zanzibar's Health, Social Welfare, the Elderly, Gender and Children minister, at Lumumba Covid-19 testing centre in Zanzibar on Thursday. Photo: Rahima Suleiman

Over 40 million agribusiness entrepreneurs in agricultural value chain have benefited from 1.08 trillion/- loan under PASS Trust

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

OVER 40 million agribusiness entrepreneurs in the agricultural value chain have benefited from a 1.08trillion/- loan under the PASS Trust credit guarantee scheme since it was launched 20 years ago.

Implemented by the Private Agricultural Sector Support (PASS) Trust, the credit scheme also receives support from various financial institutions in the country.

This was said by PASS business development manager Hamisi Moni during the seminar here saying that the organization has facilitated the entrepreneurs to access

the funds and thus supporting improvement of their businesses.

"Among the 46 million total beneficiaries, direct beneficiaries are 1.6 million agribusiness entrepreneurs because some of the loan applicants are organizations or cooperative unions which can have over 50,000 members," he said.

He said that through its Credit Guarantee Scheme, PASS has enabled the creation of at least 2.5 million jobs through support to a number of agricultural projects that have benefited a total of 1.6 agribusiness entrepreneurs in Tanzania.

"Our contribution in the agricultural sec-

tor Financing is immense because without our credit guarantee, many entrepreneurs will not access financing and loans from banks and therefore will not be able to increase and improve their production. So, PASS ensures that we play our role as a link with financial institutions and ensure they secure funds for agricultural development," he said.

According to him, working with various financial institutions in the country, PASS has continued to significantly contribute towards the growth of the agricultural sector in Tanzania by providing credit guarantee to agribusiness entrepreneurs who other-

wise would not get credit.

He said in the entire agricultural value chain, PASS beneficiaries are drawn from farmer groups, Saccos, cooperatives, farmers' associations, companies, individuals and women groups involved in agribusiness activities.

Singida Regional Commissioner (RC) Dr Bilinith Mahenge commended PASS for investing heavily to support farmers in the country.

"The government will continue encouraging banks and financial institutions to reduce interest rates in loans offered to farmers so as to bring relief and stimulate

investment in the agriculture sector," he said.

Some of the farmers however raised fears of the delay in supplying farming inputs, something which threatens development of the sector.

"We have been facing challenges when the farming season approaches, suppliers of farming inputs have been delaying the essential tools which affect our activities. Some of the farmers have been ending up using outdated seeds and fertilizers thus getting little harvests," said Rajabu Mkumbu, one of the farmers in Singida.

PM instructs CBT to look for reliable cashew nut markets

By Guardian Reporter, Lindi

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has instructed the Cashewnut Board of Tanzania (CBT) to make sure it looks for reliable markets for the crop that offer good prices to benefit farmers.

He also called on the Board to supervise the conduct in the establishment of small and large cashew nuts processing factories in all areas producing areas of the crop to do away with buying raw cashew nuts.

Majaliwa gave the directives here on Thursday when speaking to Regional Commissioners of Lindi, Coast, Mtwara and Ruvuma regions, the Cooperatives Registrar, officials from cashew nuts cooperative unions at a meeting that discussed the availability of cashew nuts farm inputs.

He said the new Board he unveiled should be accountable in ensuring the increase of the crop's production and if it

fails, the government will not hesitate to dissolve it. He said the Board is supposed to set up a special calendar that shows all steps for implementation in regard to the crop's production, starting from farms preparation up to harvesting level.

He stressed that expertise had to be adhered to in the farming process that aims to increase production benefits.

He also called on the Board to make sure farm inputs including quality seedlings and pesticides are easily available.

The PM further directed CBT to have in place strategies to provide education to farmers on better farming practices, adding "Use special vehicles to visit farmers in their areas to educate them."

For his part, Deputy Agriculture Minister Hussein Bashe said already the process to facilitate cooperative unions to start cashewnuts processing has begun and that in this season, TANECU has received a loan from CRDB Bank to enable processing 2,500 tonnes of cashewnuts.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa (3rd-L) checks newly acquired desks at Chikoko Primary School in Ruangwa District yesterday. Photo: PMO

Policy framework, other stakeholders call for strategic plan for development of agriculture

By Henry Mwangonde

AGRICULTURE stakeholders have highlighted the need for strong budget allocation, investments in infrastructure and streamlining policies to improve the entire food system.

Speaking at a national food system summit dialogue in Dar es Salaam, Neema Lugangira who is a Member of Parliament and food security champion said more budget allocation, improving infrastructure, policy and food systems will increase the sector's contribution to the GDP.

"More financing is everything but it is also important to invest in infrastructure that enables agriculture to flourish such as irrigation, rural roads and crop protection," she said.

Lugangira, who is also the Chief Executive Officer of Agri Thamani Agricultural Institute, said policies and guidelines on agriculture should improve in tandem with looking at the entire food system from farming, storage, preparation

and eating.

She said there are a lot of things that leave questions after the Tanzania Food Drugs Agency (TFDA) was dissolved and food control was transferred to Tanzania Bureau Standards (TBS).

According to her food security should be taken seriously because food was like medicine and should be monitored with high sensitivity.

Dr Honest Kesi who is the Director of the Food Security Department Ministry of Agriculture said in 10 conferences held in different parts of the country they noticed that the people harvest a small amount that does not match the cost spent in agriculture and livestock.

It was also noted at the conference that there are major marketing challenges, post-harvest crop losses that reach 40 percent but also pesticide education in agriculture and animal husbandry has not yet reached many.

"There is a drug that should be put in the plant or used in livestock but in humans it is toxic if its conditions are not observed," he said.

United Nations Environment Program Representative Clara Makenya said there was a great need to focus on the relationship between environmental protection and the entire food system.

"It is important to know whether pesticides used in agriculture have any effect on the environment, human health so as not to affect the workforce.

With agriculture impacting the environment even production is declining thus affecting the economy," said Makenya.

Tanzania faces many food security challenges exist, including weak rural-urban food supply linkages, an inadequate food import budget and production constraints on the smallholder farming sector.

But the country has done well to achieve broad self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs to date, but rapid urbanization will pose a severe future challenge as regards food security, particularly for the disadvantaged poorer people of the towns and cities in terms of food affordability, stability and food safety.



Ramadhani Mtindasi (with stick), projects director with the Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority (Dawasa), briefs Water deputy minister Maryprisca Mahundi (2nd-L) yesterday on the implementation of a water project in Kigamboni District. The work includes the construction of a 15 million-litre water storage tank. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

COVID-19: EABC calls for EAC coordinated approach

By Alima Nkwong, HMC

THE East African Business Council (EABC) has called for a coordinated approach on COVID-19 measures as a means to persuade East Africa Community (EAC) economic recovery and growth.

Speaking during the 80th Board Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, EABC Chairman Nicholas Nesbitt said, EAC bloc should urgently work to attract international investors and embark on joint regional investments in the vaccine manufacturing industry for larger pool of capital resources, expertise and market

"Low access to vaccines, slow vaccine roll-out and potentially high cost of vaccinations risk holding

back the recovery of EAC economies" he said while stating that the EAC Gross Domestic Product growth has been projected at 3.5% in 2021 and 4.7% in 2022 (AfDB, 2021).

The Board directed the EABC Secretariat to champion advocacy on the adoption of open skies and One Network Area in order to reduce the cost of doing business in the region.

"Open Skies attract regional tourism and improve consolidation of EAC exports to overseas markets such as horticulture. This is critical to support the resilience and recovery of tourism, hospitality and transport sectors highly impacted by the pandemic." He encouraged Chairman Nesbitt also appreciated

the deep political commitment and goodwill of the EAC Heads of State to partner with the East African private sector to drive economic growth and prosperity.

On his part, EABC CEO John Bosco Kalisa underscored that EABC has embarked on a regional SMEs platform to champion advocacy on access to markets, finance and roll out business development services to support resilience and expansion of SMEs across EAC borders and continental market of 1.3 billion consumers.

Kalisa stated that monitoring and quick elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers is important to facilitate cross-border trade and investment.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFQ Title: **Consultancy Opportunity**
 RFQ number: 2020-07-01
 Date of Solicitation: 24th July 2021
 Closing Date: Friday 30th July 2021, 2pm (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania)
 Submission Date and time: 30th July 2021
 Questions and Clarifications Due by 28th July 2021
 Estimated Delivery/ Performance Date: 30th September 2021.

Pact is the promise of a better tomorrow for communities challenged by poverty and marginalization. We serve these communities because we envision a world where everyone owns their future. To do this, we build systemic solutions in partnership with local organizations, businesses, and governments that create sustainable and resilient communities where those we serve are heard, capable, and vibrant. On the ground in nearly 40 countries, Pact's integrated adaptive approach is shaping the future of international development.

Objective of the assignment

The primary goal of this Grants and Contracts consultancy is to provide surge support to Pact Tanzania's Grants and Contracts Team, specifically with sub awards, as the Kizazi Kipya project closes out, and the ACHIEVE project ramps up.

Kizazi Kipya: Closing Out December 31, 2021

The Pact-led USAID Kizazi Kipya project aims to enable more Tanzanian orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and youth to use age-appropriate HIV and social welfare services for improved care, health, nutrition, education, protection, livelihoods, and psychosocial wellbeing. In 81 councils across 24 regions, the project promotes client-centered services tailored to OVC, youth, and their caregivers. By partnering with 45 local organizations, Kizazi Kipya has supported the operationalization of family-centered case management, reaching over 1,000,000 vulnerable Tanzanians. The project has been implemented since June 2016 and it is getting to an end December 2016.

ACHIEVE: Ramping up FY22

ACHIEVE is a five-year, USAID-funded global cooperative agreement with the dual objectives of attaining and sustaining HIV epidemic control among at-risk and hard to reach pregnant and breastfeeding (PBF) women, infants, children, and youth, as well as to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS and prevent HIV transmission among these populations; and supporting the transition of prime funding and implementation to capable local partners in order to meet the PEPFAR goal of 70% of funding to local partners.

ACHIEVE is funded by USAID in Tanzania to implement a four-year activity (October 2020 to April 2024) which aims: (1) to improve national- and community-level social welfare systems in order to sustain support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and families affected by HIV and (2) to strengthen the capacity of local organizations to deliver OVC services and DREAMS interventions for AGYW 9-14 years.

Scope of Work

Kizazi Kipya

1. With the guidance from Senior Grants, Contracts and Compliance Manager, support development and execution of close out plans for each sub awardee.
2. Reconcile in kind grants and prepare in kind grant certifications, obtain concurrence from sub awardees on the in-kind grant's certifications.
3. Review and updating of existing grants files according to the available checklist.
4. Track monthly progress updates on CSO's close out process including final reports updates.
5. Documents and follow up from sub awardees annual VAT reporting.
6. Make follow up on pending deliverables under review by Pact team and ensure reviews are completed in time and feedback is shared with CSO's.

- Interested candidates should request for the full Terms of Reference through email to procurementTZ@pactworld.org before 28th July 2021.

Interested, eligible candidate should deliver their proposal to:

The Tender Committee
 Pact Tanzania
 74 Uporoto Street, Victoria
 P. O. Box 6348, Dar es salaam, Tanzania
 Or email procurementTZ@pactworld.org

All proposals must be enclosed in a plain sealed envelope. The following information is required in your proposal. The deadline is 11am EAT Friday 30th July 2021.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Quoted price in for each item or service specified in Tanzanian Shillings. This price should be inclusive of delivery, and taxes, if applicable |
| 2 | Validity period of offer (Offer should be valid for at least 45 days). |
| 3 | Credit Payment Term: Pact is preferable payment with 1-month credit, after delivery of goods. |
| 4 | Indicate of delivery duration in weeks to complete the task after PO issue. |
| 5 | Your quotation must be on official letter head with authorized signature and stamp. |
| 6 | Specifications of the required service as per the ToR is fully addressed. |

Please note:

1. Late or incomplete bids will not be accepted.
2. The quote that complies with all the specifications/requirements and offers the lowest price, as well as all other evaluation criteria indicated in the TOR, shall be selected.
3. Pact may cancel solicitation and not award.
4. Pact may reject any or all responses received.
5. Issuance of request for quotes does not constitute a contract commitment by Pact.
6. Pact reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on offeror failure to follow the solicitation instructions.
7. Pact reserves the right to waive minor proposal deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.
8. Pact will be contacting all offerors to confirm contact person, address and that the proposal was submitted for this solicitation.



Awadh Juma Haji (L), Police Commander for Zanzibar's Urban West Region, briefs Home Affairs deputy minister Khamis Hamza Chilo (R) at Madema Police Station in Zanzibar yesterday. The deputy minister, who was on a routine tour, called upon all those whose motorcycles were lying at police stations for various reasons to follow laid down procedures and collect them, thus easing congestion at the stations. Photo: Home Affairs ministry

More than 330,000 children homeless in Mozambique conflict

MAPUTO

MORE than 732,000 people have been displaced by violence with more than 335,000 children made homeless in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province due to terror attacks, the UN's refugee agency, UNHCR, has said.

They make up almost half of the number of those forced to flee.

Thousands of families have sought refuge in the provinces of Nampula, Niassa and Zambezia due to the insecurity.

The UNHCR says more needs to be done to help these people but some of them are hard to reach.

"Despite the efforts of the authorities and the humanitarian community, the needs of the displaced considerably outweighs the capacity for assistance available from the government and humanitarian agencies." It said in a statement.

The majority of those displaced do not have identification documents hindering their access to services and their freedom of movement.

Ministry implements strategy to improve production of wine

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

THE Ministry of agriculture has started to implement directives from Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa to improve production of grapes and wine sectors in the country.

The Dodoma-based initiative has started with a special exercise to identify all grape farmers in the region as well as their cultivation acreages.

Director of crop development, Nyasebwa Chimagu yesterday

told The Guardian that at least 300,000 farmers have already been registered, and the exercise was continue to reach out to more farmers.

He said the focus was to ensure the farmers are empowered to adopt better agronomic practices and improved technologies with an eye to improve production and productivity in the cultivation of the prestigious economic cash crop.

"Being the hub for grapes cultivation in the country, farmers in Dodoma are yet to fully use

the available endowed opportunity for the production of crop due to several challenges," he explained.

He added that the program will also do a number of realistic initiatives in assisting the farmers to start producing bulk juices in order to attain additional value chain of their produce.

"Most of wine processing factories are currently preferring to purchase bulk juices instead of branches of grapes," he observed.

Apart from that, Nyasebwa explained that, under the initiative, the plan is to see the farmers are entering into profitable contract farming with wine making industries in order to realize more deserved profits.

Head of the centre, Dr Cornel Masawe, said Tanzania is the only country in the world with friendly weather which supports grapes to grow in two seasons within a year, an advantage which if used profitably will play great role in fetch-

ing the country good profits.

Moreover, he said even scientific research has so far proved that grapes grown in Tanzania (Dodoma) are more wine-worthy, in terms of good taste and aroma, than all other grown in the rest part of the world hence a need for the government to inject the sector with enough funds.

As part of the center's efforts to spur performance of the sector, he said, TARI is in process to introduce into the country at least 13 new wine

grape varieties from South Africa. He named the varieties to be imported, which is a mixture of red and white grafted scions, as well as root stocks as Pinotage, Cabinet Sauvignon, Syrah, Merlot, Durif and Carignan, Chardonnay, Chenin Black, Semillon, Ramsey, R99, R110 and S04.

In further efforts to boost the wine sector, Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) has injected TARI-Makutupora Center with at least 297.906m/- for general

renovation of the Centre's laboratory. Upon its completion, Dr. Masawe said, the laboratory will play a paramount role in empowering local wine producers to bottle more high-quality wine varieties.

"The other program we plan in the near future is conduction of a series of theoretical and practical training to impart grapes farmers and extension officers with key knowledge on how to grow the prestigious cash crops," he unveiled.

ALAF donates roofing sheets

By Getrude Mbago

FORMER President Dr Jakaya Kikwete yesterday received 160 roofing sheets worth 20m/- donated by ALAF Tanzania so as to support construction of a church in Iringa Diocese of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT).

Speaking during the handover event in Dar es Salaam, Dr Kikwete hailed ALAF for its contribution in the country's development especially in improving people's settlements.

"I remember I came here (ALAF) many years ago even before I became a minister to survey the production of roofing sheets, this company is doing a very great job in supporting the government's zeal to fight against poverty by enabling people to live in decent houses," he said.

According to him, after he was requested by the ELCT-Iringa diocese to support the construction of the church, he then decided to engage ALAF on the matter who later agreed to extend their support to the church.

"And we are here today to receive the donation, I am very happy and I call on you to continue doing the best to serve our people. My plea is for other people to continue bringing their contribution to the church to enable the completion of the construction of the holy house of God," he said.

Rev. Blaston Gaville, ELCT Bishop of Iringa Diocese commended

ALAF for donating the roofing sheets which are going to support the construction of the church in the diocese.

"We appreciate Dr Kikwete for seeking the support from ALAF and today we are receiving the roofing sheets, we are very happy and we will continue praying for him to stay healthy so that more people can receive help through him," he said.

ALAF Tanzania chief executive officer Ashish Mistry said the company has donated the roofing sheets to the church after being requested by the former president and it will continue extending its support to support various community initiatives.

"This is also part of the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR), we have been supporting communities in various areas including education, health, water and construction," he said.

Mistry said the company is committed to delivering value for money to its customers, by offering not just products, but also quality roofing and building solutions.

ALAF Tanzania is part of SAFAL groups of Companies, leading producer of steel roofing and related products in the country.

The company graduated to use Aluminum-Zinc steel coating technology in 2010, thus manufacturing roof sheeting that offers a much longer service life than traditional zinc coated (so called "galvanized") steel.



Dr Angeline Mabula, Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development deputy minister, exchanges greetings with Mohamed Kidume (97) of Mikindani Old Town during her ongoing visit to Mtwara Region yesterday. Kidume is said to be one of the people who once hosted Mwalimu Julius Nyerere during the days of Tanganyika's independence movement. Photo: Correspondent Munir Shemweta

Minister urges leaders to embark on land tours

By Guardian Correspondent

DEPUTY Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development, Dr Angeline Mabula has urged government executives in the lands department to participate in leader's tours so as to respond to queries raised by wananchi.

"When top government leaders visit your area you must be

present to provide clarifications on various issues raised by citizens. This will help us in making decisions," said the deputy minister.

She made the remarks during her meeting with officials from the lands department in Mtwara Region on Friday whereas she urged them to come up a database for all the land disputes.

"With such a register it would be easily for leaders to understand the progress reached in dealing with certain disputes. Sometimes leaders receive complaints on similar land disputes in every visit," she added.

She wanted all the district authorities to start conducting public education to sensitize people to pay land levies. She said such programmes can be

conducted through the media such as radios and televisions.

Mabula said plans are underway to introduce a levy collection competition that will include all the districts in the region, a move she said would help to boost revenues generated from the lands sector.

She said civil servants in the land department must be part of solutions instead of fuelling

land conflicts. She said some dishonest servants have been contributing into increased disputes due to double allocation of land plots.

The Deputy Minister noted that the ministry has been working closely with the district authorities in providing support in surveying and formalization of land plots. She however said that the districts are responsible

for land use planning in their respective areas. She said the ministry is not supposed to be part of land use planning at district level, but it is forced to take part in the exercise because some district have used the provided funds for land use planning and surveying for other activities.

According to her, each of the district received between 200m/- and 300m/- from the

central government.

One of the Mtwara residents, Sheikh Nurdin Abdalaah Mangaji who owns some 8,704 hectares of land at the Shangani West area requested the Deputy Minister to assist him in processing a tax relief saying he previously failed to pay land levies because he was yet to be provided with land ownership documents.



Tanzania Horticultural Association managing director Jacqueline Mkindi (2nd-R) briefs Arusha regional commissioner John Mongella (L) yesterday on the exportation of flower buds, as the RC made an inspection tour of vegetable, flower, fruit and spice farms in Arumeru District. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

Challenges still exist in national plan of action against GBV - PS

By Guardian Reporter

THE National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children (MTAKUWWA) Secretariat yesterday submitted its implementation report for the period of July 2020 to February 2021 to the Executive Committee monitoring the plan.

Speaking yesterday in Morogoro after submission of the report, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health (Community Development Division), Dr John Jingu said in addition to the achievements attained there have been challenges needing solution in order to fully implement the plan.

The secretariat, incorporating officials from various sectoral ministries said many aims and plans have been implemented with some needing more work before the end of the five-year MTAKUWWA mandate.

Dr Jingu said joint efforts are needed to make sure solutions are obtained right from the

family to national level and cited the issue of poverty, superstitious beliefs and foreign culture being the main causes of some of gender based violence incidents in the community.

He added that Tanzania has been witnessing the incidents of GBV and child abuse increasing in the community hence the plan helps in adding efforts in the fight against these acts in collaboration with members of the public and various stakeholders.

Some of the stakeholders who participated at the meeting said MTAKUWWA needs to be widely advertised and more education to be provided to the community to enable it get in-depth understanding to attain its intended targets.

Participants of the MTAKUWWA meeting included officials from the ministries of Health, Education, Science and Technology, Legal and Constitutional affairs, Regional Administration and Local Government and various non-governmental institutions.

Namthamini Campaign aims to reach 5,000 school girls in rural areas with sanitary pads

By Alima Nkwong, HMC

REACHING 5,000 underprivileged school girls with sanitary pads in rural areas in Tanzania is the objective of a project directed to fight school absenteeism of the girl child during their monthly menstrual flow.

These young girls turn to miss school for 3 to 7 days a month which is approximately 60 days a year due to the biological phenomenon they themselves did not chose.

This could be disadvantageous for the girl as once they return to class they cannot concentrate or easily catch up with

lessons which might probably affect by a great deal their academic results.

For this purpose the project is tilted at collecting sanitary towels from different donors so as to provide to this group of persons who find themselves in economic hardship that do not permit them to purchase these goods of high necessity.

This campaign captioned "Namthamini Campaign" has been coordinated for the past five years now by the East Africa Television of the IPP Media outlet and their last outreach for the year 2020 was in Kisarawe district where they left smiles on

the faces of many young school girls. The project manager of "Namthamini Campaign" Evelyn Michael Ngalo, said due to other challenges like the Covid-19 pandemic there couldn't continue but reassured that this year the campaign will take another brighter tune as it will be in collaboration with Flaviana Matata Foundation.

The Flaviana Matata Foundation is known for its numerous projects of pad donation to young underprivileged girls in different regions which make it easier to identify the targeted individuals and hence more bountiful impact to the com-

munity. The partnership was officiated on the 28th of May, a day which is usually observed globally as the world menstrual day targeting to reach 5000 school girls this year as from August in different regions like Kigoma, Simiyu, Mara, Geita and Mtwara.

She said the challenge is this girls do not have the necessary economic to afford this sanitary towels which to them is of high cost and as a result they find themselves using unhygienic materials like "kanga" to cloth themselves so that they might not get stained with the blood.

"It is very sad to know that these girls cut out non recommended materials like kanga to cloth themselves while at school and when they get back home in the evening they wash these cloths and still use it another time" she intoned.

She also stressed that this is a very unhygienic practice because menstrual blood has a lot of things which cannot be seen with the naked eyes and can lead to other infection if ignored.

Ngalo said when they go to these regions they do not only donate the pads but they make sure they also give them education about their menstrual

health, and how to take care of themselves during their monthly flow so as to feel confident. "As we all know when you educate a woman you also educate the society so this is very important so that we can keep all of our girls in schools," she emphasized.

She also mentioned that during her numerous missions so far to different schools she noticed that most of the girls do not get education on how to take care of themselves in school adding that even if in some cases they are taught but they are not effectively practicing what they have been taught.

"Follow up especially in this

case is very important because at this stage the young girls are still learning how to properly take care of herself and if ignored will lead to larger consequences in the future," she advised.

She further insisted that teachers most especially the female teacher should not assume that the girls were taught from home or shouldn't shy away from talking about this issue with the girls while stating that this at times cause the girls to find themselves learning from their friends who do not also know how to appropriately take care of themselves.

RC Mtaka urges MCB to come up with new ways to assist teachers

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

DODOMA Regional commissioner Anthony Mtaka has called on Mwalimu Commercial Bank (MCB) to come up with a new way that will assist teachers in the country access low interest loans to do away with punishing loans.

He made the remarks here yesterday when launching the bank's newly established "Teachers and Entrepreneurship" to provide entrepreneurial loans to teachers.

He said teachers have been living in hardship due to the kind of loans they get that are tied with difficult conditions.

"You, as a banking institution for teachers, should come up with something different to other financial institutions, by providing loans to enable them engage in various economic activities," said RC Mtaka.

He said it reached a situation whereby teachers surrendered their ATM cards to financial institutions and when salaries are credited they are promptly deducted.

He said MCB is supposed to ensure it becomes a different entity that will attract teachers to join.

He said when he was Simiyu Regional Commissioner, he used to receive cases of teachers running away from their work stations due to debts, the situation that adversely affect their professionalism.

MCB Chief Executive Officer, Richard Makungwa said they have concentrated

in providing financial services in the education sector including teachers' colleges, teachers, schools, education institutions, the education ministry, as well as the Ministry for Regional Administration and Local government.

"Mwalimu Commercial Bank had prepared a long term strategy to improve innovative services in reaching our customers," Makungwa said.

However, he said one of the areas given priority is to have products that directly aim at teachers' needs in their economic advancement.

"In efforts to support government's determination to develop the industrial sector and the economy in general, we have established a new product called "Teachers and Entrepreneurship" that aims to enable teachers, public servants and the community in general to engage in entrepreneurial activities," he added.

You, as a banking institution for teachers, should come up with something different to other financial institutions, by providing loans to enable them



Shinyanga regional commissioner Dr Philemon Sengati addresses residents of Shinyanga District's Nyallongo gold mining site yesterday shortly before presenting mining licences to nine groups. Photo: Correspondent Anthony Ishengoma

World Vision constructs modern honey processing factory in Monduli

By Guardian Correspondent Arusha

WORLD Vision Tanzania has constructed a modern honey processing factory in Monduli District, Arusha Region, a move which is aimed to add value and increase productivity of bee products.

Speaking during the launching of the factory here, director of World Vision Tanzania Nesserian Mollel said the construction of the plant has been facilitated by a Stuart Phipps family from the United States (US) so as to promote bee keeping and fight poverty in the country.

"If well utilized, beekeeping opportunities can transform the lives of majority of people as they will be able to get income from selling honey and other bee products," he said.

"The project is implanted at a cost of 350m/- through the support of the family through World Vision Tanzania. Our priority is to support underprivileged Tanzanians especially children to overcome various challenges and improve their lives," he said.

He noted that beekeeping in Tanzania is still a nascent industry for rewarding investment thus calling upon Tan-

zanians to chip in and start bee keeping projects.

Mollel said the launch of the plant will draw a number of villagers in bee keeping thus lifting their lives and at the same time conserving the environment.

In his remarks, Monduli District Commissioner (DC) Frank Mwaishumbe commended the donors for extending their support to help poor people to overcome their situation through beekeeping.

He directed the district's experts to provide closer support to the project and ensure that beneficiaries achieve the intended goals of overcoming poverty.

"I want to see more people benefit through this factory, so make sure you work closely with the farmers, capacitating them with skills that will enable them produce quality honey and other bee products to sell in the local and international market," Mwaishumbe told the district's experts.

He said the factory has capacity to produce 1000kg of quality honey per day and will benefit citizens in the villages of Monduli (Arusha) and Babati in Manyara Region.

Beneficiaries hailed the project saying that it has come at the right time where the majority of the farmers will benefit heavily and thus transform their lives.



A Dodoma resident washes his hands at the entrance of the city's Majengo main market yesterday, but with most of the taps defective. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

Morogoro RC irked by thefts of medicines at health centres

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

HEALTH workers in Morogoro Region have been called to stop the theft of medicines issued by the government for health centres and sell them to private people, saying the practice is against public service ethics and a crime by law.

The call was made here yesterday by the Morogoro Regional Commissioner, Martine Shigella at the half-yearly meeting convened to discuss the Nutrition Agreement with the improved Community Health Fund (iCHF).

He said in recent days there were reports of acts of theft of drugs in Kilombero and Mvomero districts which saw some of their officials facing legal action.

He said in the circumstances there was the need to strengthen the system in issuing drugs to health centres to ensure better health service to the community as the government was spending a lot of money to import medicines.

The RC also called on Defence and Security Committees to obtain reports on drugs deliveries to the health centres to control theft.

In regard to public response to join iCHF, he said it was still small contributed by poor services provided at health centres, the situation that discourages members of the pub-

lic to join the fund.

Meanwhile, Shigella called on education officials in the region's local councils to see how to introduce the nutrition subject in schools, just like other additional subjects to fight stunting in children.

He said if students, right from primary schools are taught, food diets will spur the community with understanding for better nutrition.

"Morogoro is among regions that produce ample food crops, fruits and vegetables hence there is no reason to have children suffering malnutrition," he said.

Earlier, submitting his report on iCHF, the Fund's Regional Coordinator Elisia Mtesigwa said so far only 9.4 per cent of all residents had joined the fund while the target is to reach 30 per cent by 2025.

Mtesigwa said the main challenge is that many people have little understanding on the health insurance fund and the type of health services they can get, with many of them complaining of poor services after joining.

However, he said as of now they will continue educating the people on the fund's benefits with the aim of realising the government's target to reach 30 per cent of the people by 2025.

PCCB warns public on people masquerading as bureau officials

By Guardian Correspondent,

Kibaha

PREVENTION and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Coast Region has called on the people to be alert on fraudsters imperson-

ating as bureau officials.

Coast Region PCCB Head Suzana Raymond issued the alert here before newsmen yesterday when submitting the alert her three-month report of the bureau's activities.

Suzana said there are peo-

ple who have received phone calls from people believed to be fraudsters requiring them to report to PCCB offices, but when they do so, they find out there were no such official summons for them.

"Members of the public are

called on to be alert with people impersonating as PCCB officers, when you receive such phone calls, immediately call our number to make sure we know of the call before they switch off their phones," she said.

She said these people, after making such phone calls, they switch off their phones hence it is difficult to trace them.

She said they were still working on these complaints and so far only one suspect

has been nabbed and his case is in court.

She said in the period of three months beginning April this year they received 127 complaints, and 57 investigations were continuing whilst 70 did not concern the bu-

reau.

She said during the period 15 cases were in various courts in the region while six were ruled upon with the republic winning and the accused ordered to pay fine or face prison sentences.



Tanga regional commissioner Adam Malima (2nd-L) checks a map of Tanga city on Thursday during a visit to a plot under dispute. The others include the city's mayor, Abdulrahman Shiloo (L), and acting Tanga regional Lands commissioner Tumaini Gwakisa (2nd-R). Photo: Correspondent Hamida Kamchalla

Punish all those who ignore to adhere to Covid-19 prevention measures, govt told

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE Medical Association of Tanzania (MAT) has called on the government to come up with strong measures to punish those who ignore to adhere to the Covid-19 prevention measures that are meant to contain the spread of the deadly disease.

According to him, despite the surging of Covid-19 cases, majority of people are yet to take the disease seriously by not taking precautions including wearing face masks and washing hands.

MAT President Dr Shadrack Mwaibambe told The Guardian in an interview that despite regular government alerts about the pandemic, there has been a little response from the community.

He said at the moment when infection rates are reported to have increased, it was time to take measures to prevent people from a new wave of infection.

"Authorities have given out directives including the head of state, therefore, there is no other way we can protect our people from the infection," he said.

"Enforcement is now needed instead of waiting on people to take precaution or not voluntarily, according to the speed of transmission it might be too late,"

he said.

He said the government must state clearly that no one will be allowed to board in public transport or enter in public places such as markets and social gatherings without wearing a mask," he added.

Dr Mwaibambe said the health practitioners and officials have already alerted the public about the new third wave but no one has taken action against it.

The president pointed out that likewise in the last phase, there was also a need to come up two weeks face mask wearing campaign.

"The community is already aware of the pandemic but disagrees for some reasons including negative perception. Therefore, the government must stand firm against those who disagree," he noted.

On June 26, this year, President Samia Suluhu Hassan said that Covid-19 is a real health challenge at present, calling upon Tanzanians to take precautions recommended by experts.

She said that when addressing members of the Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) in Dar es Salaam, that health experts had briefed her that the disease is widespread and must be fought.

Millions facing hunger, thousands flee their homes as drought ravages southern Angola

By Guardian Correspondent

MILLIONS of people in southern Angola are facing an existential threat as drought aggravated by climate change continues to ravage the region, Amnesty International said yesterday.

The organization highlighted how the creation of commercial cattle ranches on community land has driven pastoralist communities from their land since the end of the civil war in 2002 - a shift which left huge sections of the population food insecure and paved the way for a humanitarian crisis as the acute drought persists for over three years when drought struck over three years ago.

As food and water grow increasingly scarce, thousands have fled their homes and sought refuge in neighbouring Namibia.

Deprose Muchena, Amnesty International's Director for East and Southern Africa said: "Millions of people in southern Angola are on the brink of starvation, caught between the devastating effects of climate change and the land diversion to commercial cattle farming."

Muchena added: "This drought - the worst in 40 years - has torn through traditional communities who had been struggling to survive since they were dispossessed of vast swathes of grazing land. The Angolan govern-

ment must take responsibility for its own role in this dire situation, and ensure reparations to affected communities, and to take immediate steps to address food insecurity in the rural areas of Cunene and Huíla provinces."

He said the situation in southern Angola is a stark reminder that climate change is already causing suffering and death.

"The international community, particularly wealthier states and those most responsible for the climate crisis, must take immediate action to fulfil their human rights obligations by urgently reducing emissions, and providing the necessary financial and technical assistance

to the government and local civil society to support impacted communities," said Muchena.

"In addition, Angolan authorities must stop diverting land away from traditional communities in the rural areas of Cunene and Huíla provinces. They must ensure that those responsible for the granting of communal grazing land to commercial farmers are held accountable," Muchena noted.

Angolans living in the Cunene and Huíla provinces have been especially hard hit by the persistent drought.

The 2020/21 rainy season was abnormally dry, meaning the situation is likely to get far worse in the coming months.

According to the World Food Program (WFP), the lack of rainfall in the period between November 2020 and January 2021 has already caused the worst drought in the last 40 years.

The drought has made the lives of traditional pastoralist communities very difficult and hunger has driven thousands across the Namibian border since the start of March 2021, according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The IFRC reported that Namibian local authorities had recorded a total of 894 Angolan nationals in the Omusati and Kunene regions by March 2021. On 14 March 2021, the

Namibian Broadcasting Corporation reported that large numbers of pastoralist families from Huíla and Cunene provinces had abandoned their homes to seek refuge in northern Namibia.

In May 2021, Angolan NGOs reported that over 7,000 Angolans, mainly women with children and young people, had fled to Namibia, and the number is still rising. Angolan NGOs have referred to those who are fleeing to Namibia as "climate refugees", to attract attention to the fact that the drought and the lack of resources in southern Angola are pushing them to migrate to Namibia as a desperate measure to survive.

The situation in Huíla

and Cunene provinces was precarious even before the drought. Food insecurity has increased partly due to the diversion of communal grazing land to commercial farmers, which has been happening over the past two decades after the civil war.

In 2019, Amnesty International exposed how the Angolan government had diverted communal grazing land in the Gambos to commercial cattle farmers without due process.

Amnesty International visited traditional pastoral communities in Gambos municipality, Huíla province in 2018 and 2019. Researchers saw the struggle to produce food first-hand, and documented, for instance, the adverse im-



Elibaraka Joseph (R), a smallholder farmer from Karatu District in Arusha Region, pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday briefing visitors at the ongoing Food Systems Summit 2021 in Dar es Salaam on a variety of 'traditional' crop seeds. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

RC bans public gatherings to curb spread of Covid-19

By Correspondent Friday Simbaya, Iringa

IRINGA Regional Commissioner Queen Sendiga has banned all public gatherings, a move aimed at controlling the spread of Covid-19.

Addressing journalists at her office on Wednesday, Sendiga said the action based on the fact that the world is currently facing the threat of Covid-19 third wave and that Iringa is not an exception.

Sendiga urged citizens in the region to continue adhering to directives issued by health practitioners such as proper hand washing, wearing face masks, social distancing, and avoid gatherings to mitigate the spread of the deadly Covid-19 virus.

On public transport, Sendiga urged commuter bus operators to ensure level seat as well as insisting on every passenger entering the buses, drivers and conductors to wear face masks.

The RC noted that there are Covid-19 patients in the region and that residents are advised to seek proper medication whenever they experience some of the disease symptoms which include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss

of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, vomiting and diarrhea.

Former Member of Parliament for Iringa Urban constituency Rev Peter Msigwa has however challenged the RC's statement insisting President Samia Suluhu Hassan has not announced a lockdown. Medical Officer In-charge at the Iringa Regional Referral Hospital, Dr Alfred Mwakalebela said the situation in the region is not terrible although there are some patients dying from the disease. Without mentioning the number of admitted patients, Dr Mwakalebela called upon the public to continue protecting themselves from the disease.

On regions that have so far succumbed to the third wave of Covid-19 by recording a number of patients, she listed Kagera, Arusha, Mwanza, Dar es Salaam and the administrative capital Dodoma.

Former Member of Parliament for Iringa Urban constituency Rev Peter Msigwa has however challenged the RC's statement insisting President Samia Suluhu

Implement drowning prevention programmes, WHO says

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) has called on Tanzania to implement Drowning Prevention Programming in line with World health Organisation (WHO) recommended interventions.

Social Determinants of Health at the World Health Organisation Dr David Meddings briefed journalists in a virtual conference ahead of World Drowning Prevention Day to be marked on

July 25 this year that drowning deaths are preventable therefore it was necessary to take action.

In his presentation entitled Drowning: "The silent epidemic" he highlighted the need for urgent, coordinated and multi-sectoral action on proven measures to control drowning related deaths.

He said the measures are promoting drowning prevention, public awareness and behavior-change campaigns by encouraging intention of drowning preven-

tion within existing disaster risk reduction programmes.

The expert said Tanzania has an average mortality rate of 5.8 per 100,000 deaths noting that in Lake Victoria alone the drowning mortality rate was 217 per 100,000 deaths.

He noted that 0.8 percent of deaths were due to drowning, noting that for fishermen in Lake Victoria, the drowning mortality rate was 1416 per 100,000.

He said in Lake Zone communities, drowning mortal-

ity is higher than malaria, tuberculosis and Human Immune Virus (HIV) adding that drowning deaths recorded in the country are 12 times higher than in the United Kingdom.

"Authorities should install barriers controlling access to waters, provide safe space far away from water for pre-school children, with capable child care," he suggested.

"Also teach school-aged children basic swimming, train bystanders in safe res-

cue and resuscitation," he added.

He said globally drowning has caused 2.5 million deaths in the last decade where over half of deaths are among those under 30 and over 90 deaths in less middle income countries.

In 2019, it was estimated that 236,000 people died from drowning, making drowning a major public health problem worldwide where injuries accounted for almost 8 percent of total global mortality.

Furthermore, drowning is the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury death, accounting for 7 percent of all injury-related deaths.

There is need to ensure enactment and effective enforcement of water safety laws, across all relevant sectors, in particular in the areas of health, education, transportation and disaster risk reduction.

The global burden of death from drowning is felt in all economies and regions, however; low- and

middle-income countries account for over 90 percent of unintentional drowning deaths.

The World Drowning Prevention Day, was declared in April 2021 by General Assembly resolution, and will now be held annually on 25 July every year.

This global advocacy event serves as an opportunity to highlight the tragic and profound impact of drowning on families and communities and to offer life-saving solutions to prevent it.

Malawi registers unprecedented livestock sector growth in a year

LILONGWE

THE Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, Lobin Lowe, has disclosed that the livestock sector has registered an unprecedented growth for the past year.

Lowe states that this year's Agriculture Production Estimate Survey indicates that the country has registered an increase in all species of animals, with local chickens registering the highest increase of 28.4 percent from 176, 810, 939 to 227, 140, 227 chickens.

According to the survey, Malawi has 9, 312, 073 pigs, 729, 107 guinea pigs, 2, 785, 288 guinea fowls, 3,719,461 ducks and 3, 458, 230 rabbits, representing an 11 percent increase, respectively.

On the other hand, sheep has registered over a six percent increase now at 373, 715 while pigeons and turkeys have registered over 4 percent increase and are now pegged at 10, 494, 914 and 380, 602, respectively.

For the cattle anchors, the increase table stands at a 3.4 percent and are now at 1, 959, 101 cattle from 1, 893, 971 for last farming season.

"This year has really been a good year where God has given us successes in many spheres of agriculture. As we are preparing to give out 60, 000 goats under AIP [Affordable Input Programme] to 30, 000 farming households in Chikwawa and Nsanje in June only, a total of 237 goats were passed-on to next level beneficiary as follows: 97 goats to 33 farmers in Chitipa District, 20 goats in Nkhatabay District, 120 goats in Kasungu ADD

[Agricultural Development Division]," said Lowe.

He said another total of 120 goats were procured by Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA) and distributed to farmers in Nkhotakota District.

The minister added that last month, the ministry vaccinated a total of 2, 297, 027 chickens against Newcastle Disease (NCD), 622, 641 chickens against Infectious Bursal (Gumboro Disease), 473, 484 chickens against Fowl Pox, 7, 166 dogs against rabies and 833 cattle against Black Quarter (BQ).

The ministry also conducted meat inspection in approved abattoirs and designated slaughter places across the country in its quest to ensure wholesome meat is sold to the general public.

"A total of 89, 525 carcasses were inspected (4, 195 bovines, 48, 437 goats, 583 sheep and 36, 310 pigs). Fellow Malawians, note that a total of 1, 097, 681 animals were dewormed (78, 530 cattle, 169, 128 goats, 10, 130 sheep, 154, 263 pigs and 685, 630 chickens). The activity was conducted to control internal parasites. On the other hand, a total of 1, 041, 884 animals (179, 579 cattle, 220, 593 goats, 5, 002 sheep, 92, 147 pigs and 544, 563 chickens) were treated for various disorders," wrote Lowe.

He further disclosed that last month, dairy farmers in Milk Bulking Groups (MBGs) in Blantyre and Lilongwe ADDs produced 3, 103,320 litres of milk and formally sold 3, 052, 362 litres at an average price of K200 per litre from which they realized K610, 472, 400.



Agricultural officer Digna Massawe addresses residents of Kisimiri Juu in Arumeru District yesterday on the benefits of growing pyrethrum. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

Rwanda to roll out immunisation campaign targeting children

By Alice Kagina

THE Ministry of Health through Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), plans to carry out an extensive catch-up immunisation campaign targeting children who have missed out on basic childhood vaccinations during lockdown.

In Rwanda, the number of children vaccinated for BCG, Penta3 and Polio3 was lower than expected in 2020 according to a report by World Group Bank on Rwanda economic update of January 2021.

This was mainly attributed to Covid-19 related restrictions that affected mobility since the virus was first reported in Rwanda early last year.

According to figures from RBC, uptake of Penta3 and Polio3 vaccines experienced a decline of 10 per cent in May, 10 per cent in June and it came down to 4 per cent in July 2020 while the BCG vaccine, given at birth, followed a similar pattern with declines during March-May 2020 (highest in May at 15 per cent).

From January to June

2021 nationwide, Dr Hassan Sibomana, Director of vaccine programmes unit at RBC, says "above 80% for all antigens were covered with exception of only Polio 0 given at birth. However, there are variations among districts, with 11 districts recording a coverage of DTP3 below 80%."

World Health Organisation and UNICEF indicated in a recent report that 23 million children globally missed out on basic vaccines through routine immunisation services in 2020 which is 3.7 million more than in 2019.

This being the latest worldwide childhood immunisation figures to reflect global service disruptions due to Covid-19.

"In some countries, clinics have been closed or hours reduced, while people may have been reluctant to seek healthcare because of fear of transmission or have experienced challenges reaching services due to lockdown measures and transportation disruptions," it entailed.

To tackle this, Dr Sibomana said, even though vaccination services are among essential public health ac-

tivities that have continued to be provided, complying with Covid-19 prevention measures, "there is a planned vaccination campaign in this year which will cover the gap of half or fully unvaccinated children during the lockdown."

"When a child receives any additional dose, it is always an opportunity to boost the immune system, reason for organizing vaccination campaigns," he added.

He also encourages parents and caregivers to respect child vaccination calendars and health centers to con-

tinue providing vaccination services in order to prevent cases of Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPDs) and even possible epidemics.

At birth, a child is given BCG and Polio 0 vaccines, at 6 weeks and 9 weeks, they receive DTP HepB Hib, Pneumococcus, Polio and Rotavirus. When the child gets to 14 weeks, DTP_HepB_Hib, Pneumococcus, Polio, IPV vaccines are given.

At nine months and 14 months, a child is given Measles and Rubella (MR) vaccine. With many resources and personnel diverted to sup-

port the Covid-19 response, officials noted disruptions to immunization service provision in many parts of the world.

"We all need to work together to help countries both defeat Covid-19, by ensuring global, equitable access to vaccines, and get routine immunization programmes back on track," said Dr Seth Berkley, Chief Executive of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

"The future health and wellbeing of millions of children and their communities across the globe depends on it."

The Guardian

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SATURDAY 24 JULY 2021

**Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995**

Now it's time to invest in girls and young women even more

Close to \$40 billion was pledged in new investments, as well as ambitious policy and programme commitments from governments, civil society and others, to help fuel a new global five-year action plan to accelerate true gender parity, by 2026.

"The Generation Equality Forum marks a positive, historic shift in power and perspective", said Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women.

The Forum has been held at a critical moment, as the world assesses the disproportionate and damaging impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls.

Gender equality advocates took the opportunity to press for gender-responsive stimulus and recovery plans to ensure that women and girls are not left behind as the world re-builds.

The \$40 billion in investments represent a major step-change in resourcing for women's and girls' rights, as lack of financing has been a major reason for slow progress in advancing gender equality and in enacting the women's rights agenda of the milestone 1995 Beijing Conference, according to UN Women??.

Governments and public sector institutions have committed to \$21 billion spending on gender equality investments, the private sector \$13 billion and philanthropy \$4.5 billion. UN entities, international and regional organizations committed an aggregate of \$1.3 billion.

"The Forum's ecosystem of partners - and the investments, commitments and energy they are bringing to confront the greatest barriers to gender equality - will ensure faster progress for the world's women and girls than we have seen before", said the head of UN Women.

Many organisations have made strong policy and program commitments, including 440 civil society organizations and 94 youth-led organizations.

Hosting the event, the French Ambassador and Secretary-General of the Forum, Delphine O, said it had "reversed the priorities on the international agenda and made gender equality, for too long underestimated, a long-term issue for the international community, along with climate, education and health. France will continue to be at the forefront to accelerate gender equality progress".

UN Women Goodwill Ambassador, Anne Hathaway, gave her personal commitment to "continue to be a global advocate for the legal and policy changes that will empower both women and men to begin the equal distribution of care responsibilities that will help change our world".

Former US ambassador to the UN Samantha Power, who now heads the US international development agency, USAID, offered "a simple message, informed by decades of evidence: if you want peace in this world, trust women to deliver it".

African Union Goodwill Ambassador on Ending Child Marriage, Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, said: "This week, I relived the experience of 1995, when I was a young women's rights activist at the Beijing Conference... Now it's time to invest in girls and young women even more - for resources to reach rural and marginalized communities, for technology for public good and available to all, and for Member States' greater accountability to human rights of women and girls".

Blair visit marks solidarity, but not a feast of solutions

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has lately had occasion to discuss various issues with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair who, inter alia, promised to help Tanzania secure Covid-19 vaccines. In a different situation that would have been more than salutary, but at the moment it is a rather faint shade of hope as the current variant of the virus restores infection susceptibility even upon those who had already received a jab or two, as vaccination is usually done in stages. In that case efforts from this and other sources will help with preliminary rollout, but as with the rest of the world, a lot of learning awaits ahead.

The former premier said he would connect Tanzania with vaccine manufacturers, where as in South Africa an arrangement can be made with a local equipped facility where prepared vaccine can be filled and sealed, rolled out and distributed locally.

This is an assignment that the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change would scarcely have expected to fulfill at the start, as its name suggests a vocation of preoccupation with socioeconomic and political issues, not with health or combating pandemics, but 'man knoweth not' what lies in fate. Thus all major private foundations have to streamline Covid-19 reactions.

That sort of blending is what characterized the overall view given as to the discussions between the president the former UK premier, as the institute focuses on government advisory practices, which aims at taking up priorities of the host government with models or objectives set out by the institute.

It is a matter of what critical 'governance technologies' are needed, and these differ by temperament of those who start such foundations, as with individual experts.

Former World Bank chief economist, ex-head of economic advisers panel in the Clinton White House, Prof Joseph Stiglitz, was here for an annual workshop during the fifth phase presidency. His emphasis was vibrant tax collection and its judicious developmental use.

At the continental level the most important such advisory institution is the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which focuses on democratic elections and peaceful handing over of power, with recent debates conducted in one or two global media if African leaders need to be promised millions of dollars from the Sudanese billionaire in order to govern well. The jury is still out on the matter but there is a chance it may actually encourage a few to think of such award while being committed to good governance, as an extra reward. The late Dr Kofi Annan devoted his final years and his foundation to the Africa green revolution quest, while some have unclear mandates, like foundations devoted to Mwalimu Nyerere and Nelson Mandela.

Noticeably, the global change entity is currently working in 16 African countries to help governments implement certain priorities, altered for the past year and half in the wake of the Covid-19 challenge.

As Tony Blair was also the UK prime minister from the Labour Party who modernised it considerably such that the growth zeal was no longer a monopoly of the Conservatives, he is someone with some experience of changing from a dominant socialist-directed economy.

That may not be a big debate in the country at the moment, but President Samia still has to sort out the breadth of reforms needed for stability to be assured.

Even if they didn't discuss the matter directly, what they conversed could help in sorting it out.

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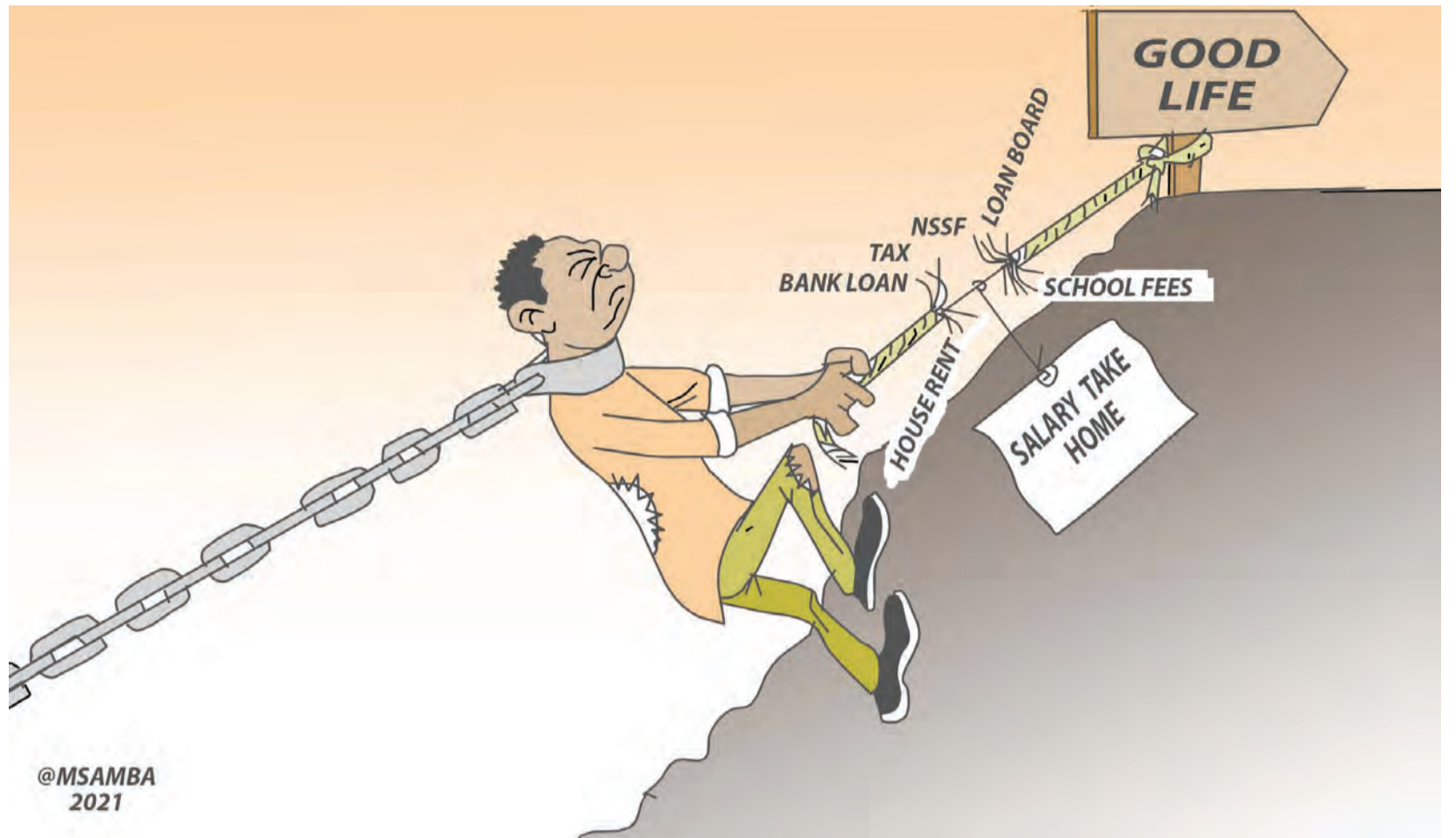
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Failing city health services another burden for Harare

By Special Correspondent

THE continuing decline of Harare City Council, which has already seen the central Government having to declare urban roads a state of disaster so it can legally start fixing them, has now extended to the even more crucial health network with its 15 clinics operating on skeleton staff.

This is besides the exceptionally intermittent garbage collection, the everlasting problems with water supply, the multiple staff problems at the top level and a general lack of direction.

But easily the largest single problem now facing most residents of the city is the decline in the primary health system following the resignation of around 300 health staff in recent months according to the council's own figures, and this decline at a time when demand for health services is rising with the Covid-19 third wave looming over the city.

Harare used to have little difficulty staffing its health department, offering salaries at least as good as any in the public sector plus all the advantages of big-city life and services.

Generally speaking any vacancy could be filled in minutes from a waiting list of nurses either already living in the city for family reasons or more than happy to move into town.

No longer. The private sector is growing with the Covid-19 demands, so can pick and choose whom it wants from experienced public sector staff.

The Ministry of Health and Child Care has been making some serious progress on fixing up its hospitals, bringing staff levels up to full establishment and offering modest but frequent salary increments along with transport and other perks that at least make conditions tolerable, if not what staff are pressing for.

And even with global travel hammered back there is still a flow of trained Zimbabwean health professionals to greener pastures in some other countries, as Zimbabwe continues to train for emigration.

Instead of Harare having more applications than vacancies at any one time, the council has a growing number of vacancies without applications to fill them.

The reasons for the exodus are easy to find.

The council still owes arrears of salaries to many, salaries and conditions of service have fallen behind Government levels, according to nurses, plus rising costs of transport with the regular doubling of Zupco fares that can now easily absorb a quarter of a health worker's salary unless they are fortunate to live within a short walk of their work station, something that is rather difficult in the peculiar spread out city plan of the capital city coupled with an acute housing shortage



that makes moving with the job near impossible.

The best solution that the council can come up with is to find other people to pay the bills. Some major polyclinics are remaining functional because donors have stepped in with support.

The plan by the central Government to take over local authority nursing salaries as part of the section of the National Development Strategy to upgrade public health services is seen by the council as a life-saving measure.

This financial morass is despite the dramatic increase in consultation fees late last year to US\$5 or the local equivalent, now around \$430.

That was justified as necessary to provide and maintain what was described as a "first class" public health system in the city.

The problems are not internal to the city health department. It is generally agreed that in some respects the department stands out in municipal service.

For a start its director is the only department head not on remand for corruption related activities, and he has even had the modesty to turn down the offer, made a result of his honesty, of appointment as acting town clerk.

But the director cannot run a "first class" service without the required money and administrative back-up, and there the council has fallen down, badly.

It is much the same with its other services.

Even with most directors now away from work while they wait for the criminal justice system to convict or clear them, there are competent technical staff in post, although administration is ropey.

And more critically the central direction of a functioning city council is for all practical purposes totally missing.

It seems incredible that the richest area of Zimbabwe, and one that holds a high proportion of the top professional, technical and business leadership of Zimbabwe cannot put together a city council that is competent and, what seems to have been another major problem, honest.

Part of the problem is that the opposition refuses to take the city seriously.

While it has obtained majority support in the city for close on two decades, it has regarded the city council as a convenient place to nominate the totally useless, something that the last two mayors who managed to serve full terms were very critical about.

Abusing electoral support to provide an income, from attendance allowances, to unskilled and unemployable friends of party leaders is hardly a way of showing you can run a country.

But perhaps they cannot find anyone else.

We have now reached the stage

where most city residents want the central Government to step in and take over more and more of the local Government functions, the central Government under the Second Republic having been fixing its own national systems step by step.

But it is difficult for central Government to take over what are supposed to be self-governing municipalities and it seems absurd that a city with so many resources cannot run itself properly.

Covid-19 has prevented the by-elections that were needed when the opposition meltdown created a bunch of vacancies as councillors were recalled, to which have been added a bunch on suspension once they were placed on remand.

Presumably the continued meltdown of council functions will see residents actually looking at the CVs of council candidates when they get a chance to vote and this provides an opportunity for the competent to put forward their names.

Voters need to be less worried about the nominating party and be far more worried about who the best person is, and if necessary start looking around their wards to find people who have made their mark in other sectors who might be willing to put in the few hours a week a decent councillor is expected to devote to the job.

SPECIAL INTERVIEW - II

What fate for vaccine firms if criticisms by 'anti-vaxxers' were validated?

JAN JEKIELEK, executive producer, senior editor and host of New York's Epoch Times' American Thought Leaders Programme on NTD Television, interviews mRNA vaccine pioneer/inventor Dr Robert Malone on what would happen to the vaccine enterprise - meaning paediatric vaccines, the fundamental bedrocks of public health - if criticisms by those labelled anti-vaxxers were validated. [Now, anti-vaxxers are people who believe that vaccines are unsafe and infringe on their rights. They typically deny the existence or validity of the science supporting the use of vaccines in the general population.] This includes questions surrounding the Covid-19 vaccines and repurposed drugs, as well as the bioethics of experimental vaccines.

Jan Jekielek: Now I have about 15 questions for you. But let's start with this one. You give this example that when it comes to the adverse effects, it could be just what would have happened normally. Wouldn't some rigorous data collection around this actually help elucidate the situation?

Dr Robert Malone: If we had done things more rigorously from the get-go, we would be in a totally different situation in terms of reassuring the public.

Q: Can we start right now?

A: That could be done. I've suggested to some philanthropic people that they could implement trial registry structure. There are some that are starting to grope towards that, basically.

Q: What is that exactly?

A: So a trial registry is one type of clinical trial. We talk about double-blind, randomised, controlled prospective trials. You can also do more data collection type trials.

Ideally, you ask that people register at the time they received the agent, and then you implement a system. There are a lot of different ways. It can be a call centre, it can be electronic, or it can be on your cell phone. There are a lot of different types of systems to follow up with those people and inquire about whether or not they're experiencing any symptoms; those kinds of things.

So instead of a purely voluntary offering of: "I've experienced this, or my patient has experienced that, or Aunt Mary said this", which is where we're at right now, you have something that's a lot more structured. People are identified, they're put into some sort of a data collection tool, and then they're followed over time.

That is possible. Basically, that is what the Scandinavian countries do, because of the structure of their socialised medicine. Often, in these kinds of situations, we end up with the best data coming from Finland, Norway and Scandinavia because of the rigour with which their socialised medicine system captures the data.

We had hoped to have a rigorous data set from Israel. The CDC and FDA had been very comforted by what they thought was a rigorous data set from Israel and the ability of the Israeli government-related epidemiologic monitoring people to data-mine that database and identify signals.

The cardiac events in the adolescent population were actually first identified by an Oracle biostatistician working with people at the FDA that are outside of all this. That was data mining from the various publicly available databases. He identified it, and notified the CDC. They identified it, then tracked it. They notified the Israelis, and then the Israelis were able to verify that they saw that signal in their database too. And how could this happen?

The statistics of how you query these databases is not trivial because you can't just ask everything under the sun: "Is anything related?" You'll end up with so much statistical noise. If you set a 95 per cent confidence interval, 5 per cent of all hits are going to be false.



So you end up with this massive amount of false information and false linkages. Somehow you have to pick the signal from the noise within that. So that's the problem. The fact that they hadn't detected something gave reassurance up until this case. Now we're in a different world, and we're relying on the Dutch and the Norwegians and others.

Q: You mentioned the Israeli data and the Dutch data. I have to ask you about this because they intersect in this relatively new paper that has come out, which I understand is actually potentially being withdrawn. Maybe I'll get you to comment on that. Basically this paper is about the safety of Covid-19 vaccinations, and that we should rethink the policy. In their abstract they say that for three deaths prevented by vaccination, we have to accept two inflicted by vaccination, and that the conclusion is to rethink policy.

A: Yes. So, we call it a risk-benefit ratio - and who gets to the core of all of this is typically The Advisory Committee on Immunisation Practices (ACIP) of the CDC. The truth is that the world is looking to the United States for all of this stuff in a significant way - that is, including the World Health Organisation.

Typically, ACIP would be evaluating risk-benefit ratio for a new vaccine in a rigorous way, using quality-adjusted life years. This is an actuarial table tool that the insurance industry uses. You can understand why the insurance industry would want to do it right because that's how they make their nickel.

So that has been adapted for public health purposes and typically that kind of a tool is used to make a risk-benefit, formal calculation for each population, stratified special populations. Those are adults, elderly adolescents, children, infants, pregnant women, and the immunosuppressed, typically. And you would do this calculation for each of those groups.

And then the ACIP would come out with a recommendation saying this vaccine is good to be used in the elderly. It's pretty compelling in this case with these vaccines that even though there are adverse events, their risk of Covid-19 death or significant disease is pretty high. So that's an easy one to say YES to.

Adolescents, in contrast, have a very, very low probability of disease or death from Covid-19. We were just talking about a non-trivial level of adverse cardiac events. That calculation doesn't come out looking so good.

As for the paper you're referring to, let me give you some history. We were talking about me being deleted from LinkedIn. One of the things that's happened over the last week is that the authors of that paper sent it to me and said: "Robert, what do you think about this? Can you give some feedback on this?" So I posted it without editorial comment on LinkedIn and Twitter, and it generated a lot of discussion. Obviously, a lot of people were pretty alarmed by that, as you've just read. It brought out some academics who felt that they needed to react strongly against this paper and come out and say: "No, this can't possibly be true. This must be a statistical overstatement or a mis-analysis."

It generated a whole lot of pushback from a subset of academics. Then people who were responding to that LinkedIn post decided that they would write to these academics, and write directly to the journal and say: "This should be withdrawn."

So that's how that cascade happened. The journal has now placed a note on the manuscript that it's now being re-reviewed, even though it's already been through peer review once.

The essence of their concerns to my eye - and like I said, I'm not a full biostatistician, I know enough to talk to them - the essence of their concern seems to be this same issue of a database where the relatedness between the reported event and the vaccine is not determined.

In many cases, it's not determinable. But these conclusions in that paper are drawn in such a way that those academics feel very strongly that they are inappropriate because the database didn't establish unequivocal linkage between the event and causation from the vaccine.

This is always the case with these types of databases. And you have to word the findings carefully and say: "We have deaths that are temporarily associated or associated in some way, but not necessarily causative", because you can't determine causation very well, retrospectively, particularly if you can't review the patient's chart.

So that is a great example. I like to call it the academic thought police, and this is the self-appointed academic thought police. This has become a major problem throughout the whole sector. There are lots of academics that feel that it is their mission to block publication of papers that might compromise in some way the vaccine mission.

This is part of why it has become so hard to publish anything about repurposed drugs because of perception, and I think it's probably valid. You can watch people when they talk about Ivermectin.

There's a cohort of people that would rather take a drug than take a vaccine, a prophylactic drug. And if a drug is available for outpatient use that minimises the risk of hospitalisation disease, and death, then the risk-benefit ratio calculations for the vaccines become even more tenuous. And so I think that is what is underlying a lot of this.

Narration: The paper we talked about, entitled: "The Safety of Covid-19 Vaccinations - We Should Rethink the Policy", had undergone the standard process of peer review.

Q: It's pretty fascinating. I had a guest on recently: Victor Davis Hanson. He was talking about the Platonic "noble lie". This was one of our topics. This is almost like a preemptive, because the point is that we don't know in a lot of cases what the answer is. But there are certain types of information that you're just not allowed to access.

A: Yes.

Q: Right?

A: Yes. And I've never experienced this before. It is reinforced by the social media platforms. And just to illustrate the point -

one of the things that are a little bit heart-breaking is that I get these calls from patients that are just distraught, and crying.

If you are somebody who has experienced symptoms after receiving vaccine - I'm saying that carefully, I'm not saying those are related, I'm not judging that - but imagine a mother who has had a cascade of symptoms. She's now debilitated. Perhaps she's worried about her ability to conceive because she's had menstrual alterations and things like that.

So she's had this cascade of events, and she is surrounded by friends, family and social contacts that all believe that the vaccines are fully safe, and she must be crazy. It can't possibly be that there's any relationship between vaccine acceptance uptake and her symptoms.

So let's say this person goes on Facebook and joins the Facebook group that's being created for people that believed they've had symptoms that have been triggered by vaccines. There's a group there. They build up to about 150,000 people. Facebook deletes them.

Now the practical implication for this cohort of people that believe that they've had a post-vaccination syndrome, whether or not they did, is that they're getting all kinds of social messaging from the top of the government on down that these are perfectly safe vaccines. They couldn't have had the symptoms that they're experiencing.

They're getting that from all the people around them. They're not even able to communicate on social media with others. They're all isolated, of course, and prevented from discussing what their symptoms are, as opposed to somebody else's symptoms. It is the ultimate gas-lighting, and for these people, it is profoundly depressing.

[Gaslighting is a form of psychological abuse where a person or group makes someone question their sanity, perception of reality, or memories OR a form of abuse that causes someone to doubt their sanity or perceptions. It usually takes place in relationships and social interactions where there is a power imbalance. A person experiencing gaslighting may become confused, withdrawn, anxious, or defensive about the abusive person's behaviour.]

Can you appreciate what I'm saying? As a physician, I feel this is fundamentally wrong. We're compromising not only people's physical health. We can argue whether their symptoms were related or not related - that's the essence of this complaint against this paper - it can't be proven with this type of database.

But these people - these patients - had symptoms. They've experienced something, and they're not able to get any resolution. They're told that it's all in their head, that they're crazy. That's not right.

The consequences of what we're doing socially right now in this context is driven by fear. We're driving ourselves a little bit mad with our fear over this pathogen.

Now I've had Covid-19. I've had long Covid-19, and it has changed my body. I don't have the exercise tolerance I used to have. But I didn't die, and I'm 61. I'm in a moderate risk group, but we fear it almost like the Africans feared Ebola in the West African outbreak. It's driving us to compromise some of our fundamentals, including this censorship initiative.

I don't know what that looks like on the other side. Eventually, we're going to get through this, but it's impacting on society in profound ways. This censorship of information, those experiencing it, including myself, are profoundly disturbed by what we're seeing, and its long-term meanings.

Q: One of the things that really strike me when I think about this stuff is when you shut off areas of inquiry or the opportunity to have an open discussion about this question that you mentioned, that actually breeds the creation of all sorts of conspiracy theories from wherever, and whatever political side, because people just don't know. They know that what they're seeing doesn't look right. There's only one narrative.

A: They've experienced something, their friends have experienced something, and yet they're told they couldn't have. And I agree. So I posted something on my old LinkedIn account that's now deleted, that went viral for LinkedIn. It had done 25,000 likes, which for LinkedIn is a big deal. I got almost 6,000 people, but usually, there's about 2,000 people on my LinkedIn feed.

So this went viral. I posed the question: "What will happen to public trust in the public health system if it turns out that ivermectin is safe and has therapeutic benefit and the vaccines turn out to not be perfectly safe?" It generated a blizzard of responses.

Now I elected not to add the third leg to that stool, which is the controversy about the laboratory leak hypothesis, which is another example that was shut down very hard and censored. Now it has come to the fore that there is some merit to that, as demonstrated by the current president (Joe Biden) seeking clear investigation on that.

If any two or three of those come to pass, and I think there's a chance all three will, in my opinion, that's just my opinion - where do we go from there in terms of public trust in the world public health system? I don't know the answer. What I got back from people with this open-ended question was a lot of folks saying: "We can't trust the government anymore. We can't trust the World Health Organisation."

I've had a fear from the get-go with project Warp Speed in the vaccine development enterprise, as a vaccinologist. I had spent my whole career in vaccines. I literally invented mRNAs vaccine technology when I was 28. Before that, I was involved in AIDS vaccine development at UC Davis (University of California, Davis) - a public land-grant research university near Davis, California. My whole life, since 1983, has been focused on vaccines.

My fear has been with rushing this through, we would end up with problems. How can you not end up with problems if you cut corners and rush these things, particularly the safety issues? What would happen to the entire vaccine enterprise and paediatric vaccines, the fundamental bedrocks of public health.

If we basically validate the criticisms of those that have been labelled anti-vaxxers - and that's kind of a pejorative over-simplification too, that term - we're labelling and excluding a whole block of debate and discussion by labelling it that way.

But what if this validates what they're saying about pharma (pharmaceutical industry) and the FDA and the government playing fast and loose with lives with vaccines? I'm having people write me saying: "I'm not going to vaccinate my children anymore. I can't believe in this, this whole enterprise."

There was an interesting statistic I heard the other day on the Highwire when I was interviewed there. The baseline self-identified anti-vaxxer historically has been about 3 per cent of the population. According to them in the latest survey, it has bumped up to 40 per cent of the population self-identifying as anti-vaxxer.

Where does that go, shutting down the information in this discussion by locking me out of LinkedIn, because I have been carefully, responsibly, raising concerns and questions and trying to engage in discussion?

I'm bona fide. You can't say that I'm not an expert. Maybe some say I am the expert. But when you block my ability to communicate, let alone all the others that have contacted me saying: "Hey, I can't even say the things that you've been saying, so speak for me, now they don't even have me as a voice. That's profoundly disturbing. We can't get to scientific truth if we can't discuss things."

• This is a three-part piece. We ran the first part in yesterday's issue. To be continued. - Editor.

China, Africa to strengthen cooperation in protecting world heritage

By Wan Yu

A FIVE-YEAR plan was preliminarily formed to boost capacity building for China and Africa regarding world heritage conservation and management at a side event of the ongoing 44th session of the World Heritage Committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that kicked off on July 16 in Fuzhou, capital of south-east China's Fujian province.

The plan is aimed at establishing platforms for more direct exchange of knowledge between Chinese and African experts and scholars in the field of world heritage as well as custodians of world heritage sites so that the two sides can intensify exchange and sharing of experience, jointly carry out capacity building activities, and elevate the level of world heritage protection and management together.

The side event, which took place on July 19 under the theme of "Capacity Building for World Heritage Conservation and Management - Towards Future Cooperation Between Africa and China", was attended by more than 150 people, including officials from the UNESCO, representatives of international organizations, and Chinese and African experts and scholars.

Before formulating the five-year plan, participants in the event reviewed the fruits of cooperation between China and Africa in the field of world heritage since 2019, and discussed the current situation of capacity building concerning the conservation and manage-

ment of world heritage in Africa and China.

As the home of the world-famous Great Pyramids and the Sphinx, the lofty Mount Kilimanjaro on savannas, and the amazing ancient stone towers of the Great Zimbabwe ruins shrouded in forests, Africa is a continent endowed with rich and colorful natural and cultural resources. However, due to multiple factors, including social and economic development, Africa has long lagged behind other regions of the world in applying for UNESCO World Heritage status, as well as the management and protection of its world heritage.

There are 12 countries in Africa that still don't have any heritage recognized as world heritage by the UNESCO, and 22 of the 53 properties included on the List of World Heritage in danger by the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO are located in Africa, according to Souayibou Varissou, executive director of the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF).

At the side event, Varissou called for increasing financial support for the AWHF to improve Africa's capability to protect world heritage.

The 44th session of the World Heritage Committee tries to give priority to Africa in policy formulation, capacity building, international aid, and upstream procedures, in a bid to enhance the representativeness and improve the balance of world heritage, said Tian Xuejun, director of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and also chairman of the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

Upholding the idea of the China-



Photo taken on June 13, 2020, shows a traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) doctor explaining TCM acupuncture and moxibustion to a group of visitors led by Edwin Limo, counselor of the Embassy of Kenya in China at Sanxitang Pharmacy, a time-honored TCM pharmacy in east China's Zhejiang province. Acupuncture and moxibustion of TCM was listed as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage on Nov. 16, 2010. File photo

Africa community with a shared future, China attaches great importance to its cooperation with Africa in protecting world heritage, held the UNESCO-Africa-China Forum on World Heritage Capacity Building and Cooperation, and supports efforts to carry out training in risk management and protection of world heritage for custodians of world heritage sites in African countries including Uganda, Benin, and Tanzania, Tian said.

Greater efforts need to be made and more strength pooled to put into practice UNESCO's Global Priority Africa resolution, which demonstrates the status and role of African countries in the cause of world heritage protection, Tian stressed, adding that China will continue supporting African countries in protecting world heritage, assist with talent cultivation in developing countries, and carry out talent cultivation programs for world heritage protection.

Africa urgently needs to strengthen capacity building regarding application for UNESCO World Heritage status, and the management and monitoring of world heritage, said Mechthild Rössler, director of UNESCO World Heritage Center.

Rössler thanked China for its tremendous efforts to help protect world heritage in Africa through platforms of UNESCO, and is looking forward

to more new results of the cooperation between China and Africa in world heritage protection.

World heritage in Africa is an integral and distinctive part of the world heritage system, said Lyu Zhou, director of the National Heritage Center of Tsinghua University as well as a professor of the School of Architecture of Tsinghua University.

World heritage in Africa is underrepresented on the existing UNESCO World Heritage List, which not only needs Africa to constantly enhance capacity building concerning application for UNESCO World Heritage status, but also requires the world to realize more deeply the uniqueness of Africa's history and culture, Lyu said.

An identification and interpretation system that accords with the characteristics of Africa's world heritage should be established to demonstrate the cultural value of the world heritage in Africa, Lyu added.

Muhammad Juma, chief of the Africa Unit of the UNESCO World Heritage Center, gave a systematic introduction to capacity building efforts in Africa at the side event, and pointed out that capacity building in the future should be oriented to the needs of management organizations of world heritage sites, people who work in the field of world heritage, stakeholders in relevant communities, and researchers of colleges, universities, and research institutes.

Juma also invited China to share its experience in applying for UNESCO World Heritage status and protection and management of world heritage.

People's Daily

THE LAW & YOU

What if you plead 'ignorance of law' during trial?

By Telesphor Magobe

FROM conversations you have listened to or taken part in - or from books you have read - you will likely have come across the aphorism: 'Ignorance of the law is no excuse'.

If you are a lay person you may not know what it really means for you to plead ignorance of the law during a trial.

What you must know is that the law doesn't favour any person who pleads ignorance of it because, to be on the safe side, you must know the laws you are subject to.

As a legal principle, 'Ignorance of the law is no excuse' was established by the Court of King's Bench's decision in *Bilbie v Lumley* (1802).

Adjudicating on this seminal case, Lord Ellenborough CJ (as he then was) said: "Every man must be taken to be cognisant of the law; otherwise there is no saying to what extent the excuse of ignorance might not be car-

ried. It would be argued in almost every case."

Although the aphorism evolved from a Latin maxim: *Ignorantia legis neminem excusat*, it originated from ancient Roman law and was later adopted into English common law. It is now used as a common law principle in many jurisdictions across the world, including in Tanzania.

Section 8 of the Penal Code (Chapter 16 of the Laws of Tanzania) states: "Ignorance of the law does not afford any excuse for any act or omission which would otherwise constitute an offence unless knowledge of the law by the offender is expressly declared to be an element of the offence."

This provision simply means that knowledge of the law is presumed to all persons who are subject to it and, for ignorance of the law to be an excuse, the law must explicitly express that the offender's knowledge of it is itself an offence.

On the one hand, it is im-



possible for all persons to know all laws and regulations because they are just too many of

them to be known by a lay person, and they keep changing all the time.

On the other hand, if igno-

rance of the law were an excuse for liability, no person would plead guilty to any offence he or she would have committed, but would rather plead ignorance of the law. Then, this would have stifled the course of justice.

Imagine what kind of life we would have witnessed if ignorance of the law were sufficient defence for civil or criminal liability. Practically no person would have been sued for committing any criminal offence or, indeed, any civil wrong for omitting any statutory duty.

Just imagine all the reckless drivers you may come across and who cause fatal accidents and if they are charged with reckless driving, and if they would have simply pleaded ignorance of the law and be found not guilty of the traffic offences they would have committed and then be acquitted!

Then, think of the victims of reckless driving - those either killed or seriously injured and incapacitated for the rest of their lives in road crashes!

There wouldn't be justice at all if guilty persons were let free after just pleading ignorance of the law even if they knew full well that what they did was prohibited by law.

Consequently, all civil and criminal cases complained about would have meant nothing in the eyes of the law.

However, the fact that ignorance of the law is no excuse for civil or criminal liability, then a person committing a civil wrong or a criminal offence, whether he or she knows it or not would be liable.

While in criminal cases the burden of proof is on the prosecution to prove the commission of the offence beyond reasonable doubt, in civil cases the burden of proof shifts to the complainant, who has to prove it by a preponderance of evidence. Remember this: 'he who claims must prove'.

Laypersons may not be aware of all this and that is why they could be innocent but, just because they are ignorant of the law, they end up losing easily in a case.

Therefore, it is the weight of evidence - not the plea of ignorance of the law - that exonerates a person from civil

or criminal liability.

However, in *Cheek v United States* (1991), the US Supreme Court held that "a defendant's ignorance of federal tax laws is an excuse to the crime of non-payment of income taxes."

Again, in *States v Murdock* (1993), ignorance of the law was raised as a defence when it comes to the crime of non-payment of income taxes. So, in some jurisdictions there are exceptions to the rule.

But in the context of Tanzania, one will lose nothing by developing a culture of knowing the laws one is subject to. Just take interest in it and you will know it little by little.

It will most likely cost you if you are ignorant of the laws you are subject to. So, think about it and seek to know the laws you are subject to, lest you become a victim of ignorance of the law!

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CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

| MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME | TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME | WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME | THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME | FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME | SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME | SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| 05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS HALI HALISI 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO) | 05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO) | 05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO) | 05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS MALUMBANO YA HOJA 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO) | 05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS KIPIMA JOTO 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO) | 07:30-10:00HRS DK 90 DUNIANI 10:00-11:00HRS KADOGO 11:00-13:00HRS BONGO HITS 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS ZAIDI YA UMJUAVYO 16:00-18:00HRS ALIYEVUMA 18:00-21:00HRS BUZUKI TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO) | 07:00-09:00HRS HABARI NA MATUKIO YA WIKI 09:00-11:00HRS THE SUNDAY 11:00-13:00HRS TOP 20 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CAPITAL MICHEZONI 16:00-18:00HRS UKURASA WA MBELE 18:00-21:00HRS JIACHIE 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-01:00HRS LADHA LAINI 01:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO) |

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Agritech challenge 2021 to benefit smallholder farmers from across Asia and Africa

By Special Correspondent

In an effort to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa, a new initiative was launched on Thursday to facilitate implementation of innovative agri-tech solutions to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission - NITI Aayog, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rabo Foundation launched the

Challenge 2021 is aimed at helping address the issues faced by smallholder farmers around productivity, climate change and supply chain as well as working alongside International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Bayer as partners.

"As we look to the recovery phase, it is critical that the global financial architecture intensifies its support to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically in frontier markets," said UNCDF Executive Secretary Preeti Sinha.

She added that the UNCDF has a unique role to play in supporting innovative solutions that can support those most at risk of being left behind, notably small-holder farmers in last mile markets.

"Digital transformation can be a key enabler for driving recovery and resilience," Sinha highlighted.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), agriculture employs more than one billion people across the globe. In addition, more than 50% of micro, small and medium enterprises in emerging economies are also engaged in agriculture.

A large number of the people employed in agriculture are smallholder farmers who own less than 2 hectares of land, yet constitute 82% of total agriculture landholding. Nearly 50% of this farmland is in lower-middle-income or low-income countries. In terms of production, smallholders play an important role in driving agricultural productivity, as they are responsible for more than 50-60% of agriculture produced in these countries.

Arindom Datta, Executive Director, Rural and Development Banking/Advisory, Rabobank stated that while agriculture is a lifeline in many developing countries, it is also a high-risk sector.

"It is subject to unpredictable factors from prices, policies, diseases, to



erratic weather and climate change. The Agritech Challenge is aligned with our focus on innovations in addition to traditional approaches to help develop a more self-reliant and shock responsive agriculture ecosystem that can address food security issues and also benefit smallholder farmers," he said.

As per FAO, about 113 million people worldwide were already suffering from severe acute food insecurity before the Covid-19 pandemic. This figure is estimated to have dramatically increased in 2020-2021 with the World Food Programme (WFP) estimating 272 million

people are at risk of becoming acutely food insecure.

Through this challenge, UNCDF will also enable cross-border collaborations among emerging markets across India, Indonesia, Malawi, Malaysia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia.

Stressing on the significance of startups and the innovation ecosystem, Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog said that Indian startups will have a lion's share in the technology export market globally over time. "Indian startups leverage their tech and data capabilities to provide solutions for the next billion people of the world and

shall prove to be globally relevant in the coming years. This initiative is an important step in that direction," he added.

Over the course of the Agritech Challenge, the participants will get access to industry and market linkages, investors and mentorship to help them expand to their chosen international market.

The Challenge will work towards helping the participants build and test their solution in the new market, as part of UNCDF's work under the Global Centre for Financial Health, with subsequent support on scaling the solution as well.

AfDB approves \$20 million loan to support Covid-19 recovery

ABIDJAN

THE Board of Directors of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) has approved a \$20 million flexible loan to finance Seychelles' governance and economic reforms support program to help drive the nation's macroeconomic stability and recovery from Covid-19 in the medium-term.

The government program aims to deepen reforms introduced through the Bank's Covid-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Program, approved in June 2020 for \$10 million.

These reforms are expected to advance fiscal sustainability, improve the business environment and Seychelles' climate change and environmental resilience.

Seychelles' Minister for Finance, Trade, Investment and Economic Planning, Naadir Hassan thanked the bank for being a trusted partner in the country's development.

"The facility comes at an opportune time and will provide much-needed relief given the economic hardship we are faced with in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. It will help the government meet

the current budgetary financing gap and help achieve economic development targets as we steer the country on the path to recovery and debt sustainability," Hassan said.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has devastated the tourism sector, which contributes about 25% of GDP and accounts for the largest share of total employment," said Nnenna Nwabufu, Director General of the Bank Group's East Africa Regional Development and Business Delivery Office.

She noted that on the same day

the loan was approved, the IMF and the Seychelles government reached a staff-level agreement for a \$107 million arrangement under the Fund's Extended Fund Facility, which underscores the timeliness of the Bank's intervention and the strength of the partnership between the Bank and the IMF.

The Bank's financing will complement funds from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in support of reforms that will benefit Seychelles' private sector, dominated by small

enterprises.

The operation will positively impact women and the youth, while creating employment and equal opportunities. The global downturn emanating from the Covid-19 pandemic has unfavorably impacted Seychelles' economy, in spite of government interventions.

The pandemic has severely impacted Seychelles' macroeconomic performance.

The country's real GDP growth, which averaged 4.2 per cent between 2016 and 2019 contracted by 12.9 per cent in 2020.

The overall fiscal deficit of between -1.4% and 0.7% of GDP in the 2016-2019 period widened to -19.5% in 2020, while public debt that stood at 62.3% of GDP at end-2018, is now projected at 87.7% by the end of 2021, according to the Bank's appraisal report.

The Bank's approved and ongoing portfolio in Seychelles as at July 2021 comprises five operations in the public sector totalling \$45.7 million.

Of these 53% are in the water supply and sanitation sector, and 47% in the multi-sector.

Warming climate means scientists may have overcounted bonobos, says study

KINSHASA

THERE may be far fewer bonobos in the wild than recent surveys have predicted, a new study concludes.

Population surveys of bonobos (*Pan paniscus*) rely not on counting individual apes, but on counting the nests the apes leave behind in the forest, seen as a reliable population indicator.

However with a changing climate leading to hotter, drier weather, the researchers discovered that nests are lasting much longer than they did a few decades ago, leading to a potential over calculation of bonobo numbers.

The study investigates the effects of climate change in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), but the authors say the implications of these findings go beyond the field site.

As Barbara Fruth, senior author and group leader at the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior (MPIAB) said: 'you can apply this to all great apes' as nest counts are a common tool used by researchers all over the world.

The researchers calculated that in recent years, the time it takes for nests to decompose has extended by 17 days. Scientists say this is partly explained by a rise in mean temperatures and a decline in rainfall, both of which increase the time nests remain visible. These findings were drawn from a long-term study of climatic data collected over 15 years (2003 to 2018) and the close observation of 1,511 bonobo nests, from creation to disappearance, in the DRC. The consequence of this, the authors say, is potential inaccuracies in population estimates for all great ape species.

"We have formulas to calculate great ape numbers from nest counts and what we need to know is how fast these nests decompose in order to integrate this into our formulas," Fruth stated.

Failure to account for these changes could lead to the estimation of "higher or lower numbers of bonobos, or other great apes, than we actually have," Fruth said. It could lead to the overestimation of population density by up to 60% in the wild, impacting species survival plan programs, IUCN classifications, and sponsorship grants for further investigations, Fruth said.

Bonobos, found only in the DRC, are unique from other great ape species because of their female-dominated social system, comparatively peaceful relations, remarkable sexual behavior, and extensive food sharing.

These study's findings raise serious concerns about the plight of the species, currently listed as endangered on the IUCN Red List.

Fruth has studied bonobos in the wild since 1990, a species she says "it



was absolutely necessary to investigate."

"We went out there 30 years ago to study their social system. We were interested in the species because they are so different from what we know, not only from great apes but from mammals in general," she says. "If you are year after year in an area in this remote forest studying bonobos then, of course, conservation becomes a critical part that you have to investigate."

Nahoko Tokuyama, assistant professor at the Center for International Collaboration and Advanced Studies in Primatology (CICASP) and the Primate Research Institute at Kyoto University, who was not involved in the study, said the findings "warn us that global climate change jeopardizes the life of bonobos, not only because of the change of their habitats such as fruiting season or fruit availability, but by making us overesti-

mate the number of bonobos that live in the forest."

"Researchers and conservationists were aware that the nest decomposition time varies between field sites and seasons according to the rainfall, but it is shocking to know that the decomposition time has become this much longer – what was previously 87.5 days is now 1077 days – in a single site in these 15 years," Tokuyama said.

"Of course, the danger is not the prolongation of nest life," Fruth said. "It rather is a symptom for a change, signifying climate change has reached the central Congo Basin." This study serves to demonstrate that "something is going on and we have to do everything in our hands, particularly in the industrialized world, to stop emissions, to reach the goals of the climate convention, but also to stop the decline of habitats buffering emissions."

Israel re-joins African Union as an observer

ADDIS ABABA

FOR the first time since 2002, Israel's ambassador to Ethiopia, Aleleign Admasu presented his credentials as observer to the African Union.

The African Union is the largest and most important organization on the African continent whose members are the 55 countries in Africa.

Foreign Minister Yair Lapid stated: "This is a day of celebration for Israel-Africa relations. This diplomatic achievement is the result of consistent work by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its African Division and Israeli embassies on the continent. This corrects the anomaly that has existed for almost two decades and is an important part of strengthening the fabric of Israel's foreign relations. It will help us strengthen our activities on the African continent and with the member states of the organization."

Israel has relations with 46 countries in Africa, and has wide ranging partnerships and joint cooperation in many different fields including trade and aid. In recent years, Israel has renewed its diplomatic ties with Chad and Guinea, and Sudan, following its joining the Abraham Accords, also announced the normalization of relations with Israel.

Following the formal establishment of Israel's observer status with the African Union, the parties will be able to cooperate, among other things, in the fight against Corona and the prevention of the spread of extremist terrorism throughout the continent

Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) to host the virtual 2021 US-Africa 3-days business summit

Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) will hold the 13th U.S.-Africa Business Summit virtually on July 27-29 to build sustainable partnerships and opportunities between key government and private sector decision-makers across America and the African continent. With participation from over 2,000 U.S. and African business executives and government leaders, this year's CCA Summit will give your organization a seat at the table in building new pathways to strengthen the economic partnership between the United States and Africa.

While much of the world's attention has been focused on responding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the outlines of the post-COVID future are emerging. African countries have largely weathered the economic and health challenges better than expected, and have implemented a number of innovative solutions to replace disrupted global supply chains, rapidly expand access to digital platforms and e-commerce, enhance the role women play in their economies, and reshape their financial sectors to deal with debt issues. African countries have continued to reshape their trade and investment environment with the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement - the largest free trade area ever created under the World Trade Organization. African countries have also continued to negotiate economic partnerships with foreign partners, including from Europe and China. This, and the business opportunities across key sectors in Africa, mean that it is time to explore new pathways to a stronger U.S.-African economic partnership.

This year's U.S.-Africa Business Summit will feature senior U.S. Government officials as they explain the Biden Administration's priorities for Africa, including details of new programs to support development in the Information Communications Technology sector, environmentally smart infrastructure and sustainable energy, and what to expect on trade and investment, including prospects for the U.S.-Kenya Free Trade Agreement, updates on Prosper Africa and the future of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). African leaders will update participants on the latest developments in AfCFTA, including a preview of what to expect as African countries move to Phase II of this landmark trade and investment agreement this fall. They will also showcase how Africa's energy sector is evolving to meet the need for rapid increases in electricity generation that balances concerns on climate change and meets the demands of the world market. The Summit will also highlight

new ways that women are being economically empowered, highlight what is new on entrepreneurship and foreshadow what to expect on post-COVID tourism and the creative industries. There will also be focused sessions on doing business in some of Africa's most dynamic markets.

CCA
Heads of State, Vice Presidents, and Prime Ministers from nine African nations attended the Corporate Council on Africa's 12th U.S.-Africa Business Summit in Maputo, Mozambique on June 18-21.

This year's Business Summit will also feature high-level sessions on the health sector, including a discussion with the companies leading the world's campaign against COVID-19 and U.S. and African government leaders outlining what to expect on vaccine roll out and laying the groundwork for stronger health partnerships. Sessions will also feature CCA's U.S.-Africa Health Security and Resilience Initiative, which is creating more effective partnerships on Universal Health Care, Disease Management, and Trade and Investment in health products and services.

ABOUT THE U.S.-AFRICA BUSINESS SUMMIT

Since its inception in 1997, the CCA U.S.-Africa Business Summit has been the essential conference for connecting American and African businesses and staying ahead of the curve on critical developments in key sectors, including agribusiness, energy, health, infrastructure, trade facilitation, ICT and finance. Summit participants will network virtually with key private sector and government officials, explore new business opportunities, visit virtual exhibition booths to meet potential business partners, and forge new business deals. The Summit also serves as an opportunity to shape and advocate for effective U.S.-Africa trade and investment policies.

CCA has hosted more than 50 U.S. and African Heads of State and over 15,000 participants at its Business Summits. Visit the U.S.-Africa Business Summit Website Here for more details on highlights from past conferences.

ABOUT CORPORATE COUNCIL ON AFRICA (CCA)

Corporate Council on Africa is the leading U.S. business association focused solely on connecting business interests between the United States and Africa. CCA uniquely represents a broad cross section of member companies from small and medium size businesses to multinationals as well as U.S. and African firms. Learn more at www.corporatecouncilonafrika.com

Nigeria going through its worst unemployment crisis



By Ndubuisi Francis and Emmanuel Addeh

Nigeria is currently going through one of its worst unemployment crises in recent times, a new report by the World Bank has stated.

The multilateral institution also noted that the socio-economic challenges facing Nigerians in the last 10 years have led to an astronomical increase in the number of citizens seeking asylum and refugee status in other countries.

This is as the World Bank, in a separate report, has estimated that about 4,000 Nigerian children were made orphans by the COVID-19 pandemic between March 2020 and July 2021.

The report, which expressed concern about the country's rising unemployment situation was published by the Washington-based institution with support from the Korea World Bank Partnership Facility (KWPF) and the Rapid Social Response (RSR) trust funds.

In the report titled: 'Of Roads

Less Travelled: Assessing the Potential for Migration to Provide Overseas Jobs for Nigeria's Youth', the World Bank further estimated that there were 2.1 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria in 2020 alone.

World Bank, however, blamed a combination of rising unemployment, booming demographics, and unfulfilled aspirations as resulting in increasing pressure on young Nigerians to migrate in search of gainful employment overseas. In addition, the Washington-based institution disclosed that the number of international migrants from Nigeria has increased threefold since 1990, growing from 446,806 in 1990 to 1,438,331 in 2019.

It explained that despite this trend, the share of international migrants as a proportion to Nigeria's population has remained largely constant, increasingly slightly from 0.5 per cent in 1990 to 0.7 per cent in 2019.

According to the bank, recent rise in irregular migration notwithstanding, the share of interna-

tional migrants in Nigeria's population was much lower compared to the shares in Sub-Saharan Africa and globally.

The data showed that the number has risen by over 1,380 per cent in the years between 2010 and 2019, indicating that in comparison, the number of persons coming into Nigeria from outside has been relatively stagnant in the decade under consideration.

"An important trend that is observed in the data is the rise in the number of refugees and asylum seekers from Nigeria. The share of refugees and asylum seekers from Nigeria has increased drastically in the last decade, growing from 27,557 in 2010 to 408,078 in 2019," it stated.

It noted that although the country was reaping dividends from the success of its citizens in the diaspora, which was put at five per cent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019, when it comes to the discourse on international migration, the narrative has not been palatable.

"Nigeria is facing one of the

most acute jobless crises in recent times. Between 2014 and 2020, Nigeria's working age population grew from 102 million to 122 million, growing at an average rate of approximately 3 per cent per year.

"Similarly, Nigeria's active labour force population, that is, those willing and able to work among the working age population, grew from 73 million in 2014 to 90 million in 2018, adding 17.5 million new entrants to Nigeria's active labour force.

"Since 2018, however, the active labour force population has dramatically decreased to around 70 million—lower than the level in 2014—while the number of Nigerians who are in the working-age population but not active in the labour force has increased from 29 million to 52 million between 2014 and 2020.

"The expanding working-age population combined with scarce domestic employment opportunities is creating high rates of unemployment, particularly for Nigeria's youth," the World Bank report noted.

Singapore firm to establish 200mw solar power plant

By Business Writer

A company based in Singapore, AF Power Pte Ltd, is working on investing in a 200MW solar power plant in the country, according to a joint press release by the company and the Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency (ZIDA).

AF Power is an independent power producer based in Singapore with group companies also involved in agriculture, mining, and oil and gas exploration in Africa.

The first phase of the solar power plant project will see AF Power invest in a 50MW Solar Plant in Umuza near Bulawayo in Matabeleland North by 2022.

Construction is expected to begin before the end of this year, according to Jonathan Chalk, AF Pow-



er's business development executive and the country head of Zimbabwe.

There is, however, commitment by AF Power to invest in a total 200MW of solar power over the next three years, reads part of the statement released on Wednesday.

Away from the power project, Chalk said AF Power is also facilitating a virtual workshop between ZIDA and the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE).

The workshop is aimed at sharing Singapore's ex-

perience and long journey in investment promotion, economic zone development and operations with ZIDA and the Republic of Zimbabwe, he said.

"The Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE) is an agency formed by the Ministry of Trade and

Industry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore to respond effectively to the many foreign requests and to tap on Singapore's development experience.

"SCE's primary role is to serve as the focal point of access for foreign parties interested in adopting Singapore's public sector expertise for their development journey," said Mr Chalk in a speech at the signing of a cooperation agreement between SCE and ZIDA.

The cooperation agreement was described by ZIDA CEO Douglas Munatsi as an "historic day" and an "apprenticeship with the best in the game".

The collaboration between SCE and ZIDA is expected to result in sharing experience in investment promotion, special economic zone development and capacity building.

We can prevent the bankruptcy of the sacred: Dare we try?

New York

The UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) came to a conclusion on July 15th. Another HLPF, another series of declaration, and commitments and concerns articulated by governments.

All of which are besieged by the combined pandemics of institutional and systemic failures, increasing violence, global warming which has already led to the deaths of species and humans, and of course, Covid-19 and the utter shame of only the rich getting vaccinated.

And the results of this High Level

Political Forum?

Not the dramatic changes that our planetary existence cries for. Not even the radical introspection about each of the governance and civic responsibilities attested to by various human rights and humanitarian catastrophes in almost every corner of the world. In fact, the HLPF, like so many other summits and consultations between and among governments, has ended with more of the same.

But who am I to challenge or hold accountable? What have I done to try to make an iota of difference?

I ask myself that as a human

being, as a citizen, as a woman, as a person of faith, as many other things. But most importantly, as the person elected to serve the world's largest multi-faith leadership and grassroots organization. I ask as a person who has devoted over 30 years of studying and working in and on the intersections of religion with international development, democratization, governance and human rights.

Remember when good governance and democratization were such buzz words? Remember when human rights was not just what the United States tried to claim

was critical to its foreign policy, while it was aiding and abetting the same regimes and groups that abused them liberally, and fighting for the triumph of liberalism against communism (which was not supposed to care much for any of those ideals)?

Remember when NGOs sprouted left, right and center, ostensibly committed to realizing good governance, human rights and the attainment of democracy, so that proposals to international development and foreign policy donor entities were replete with "building" and "strengthening civil

society"?

And remember the days when "truth and reconciliation" were what the South African bloodless transition from apartheid to democracy, represented (as opposed to the painful turmoil we see in the same country and in most countries around the world)?

Can we claim, with a straight face - let alone with any data to back this up - that we now have a world where human rights, democracy and good governance reign supreme - or even reign at all in most parts of the world?

If we can claim that, the entire Sus-

tainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) before them, and countless Treatise, Conventions, Agreements, Resolutions, not to mention NGOs, academic centers and disciplines, policy think tanks, evidence gatherers and reams of research, etc., might have been a bit unnecessary - to say the least?

Unless of course, we would maintain that democracy and good governance were not meant to ensure a world where every single form of inequality and inequity, where war and violence, where epidemics and a pandemic - run rampant?

JOHANNESBURG

S. Africa unrest hits 40,000 businesses, government says

At least 40,000 South African businesses were looted, burnt or vandalised during widespread rioting that broke out after the jailing of ex-president Jacob Zuma, the government said Tuesday.

Hundreds of shopping centres and warehouses in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province were ransacked beginning on July 9.

The rampage later spread to Johannesburg, inflicting a devastating blow to an economy already battered by the coronavirus.

Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, minister in President Cyril Ramaphosa's office, told reporters that "40,000 businesses were affected" in KZN.

The total losses to the national economy are estimated to be 50 billion rand (\$3.4 billion), according to a government statement.

In KZN, 161 malls and a similar number of liquor outlets and distributors were "extensively damaged", Ntshavheni said.

More than 200 shopping centres and 100 malls were looted or burnt, while at least 1,400 ATMs were damaged and 300 banks and post offices vandalised in the southeastern province.

Meanwhile a total of 90 pharmacies were destroyed "beyond revival" as the country grapples with a brutal coronavirus third wave.



Ramaphosa told business leaders Tuesday that "there is virtually no part of the economy that has not been affected by the violence".

Damage to businesses is still being assessed in Gauteng province, which includes the economic hub of

Johannesburg, Ntshavheni said. KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng are South Africa's most populous provinces and account for half of the country's GDP.

Ramaphosa has admitted that his government was "not

sufficiently" prepared for violence and that security forces could have responded quicker.

The violence has abated after claiming 215 lives, the government said, with no incident reported over the past 24 hours.

At least 200 of more than 2,500 suspects have appeared in court for looting and public violence.

The unrest erupted after Zuma began serving a 15-month jail term for snubbing a corruption inquiry.

Life after looting: 'God left South Africa long ago'

By Tshabalira Lebakeng

With shops and malls looted and empty, the real struggle to survive begins. Tshabalira Lebakeng is a journalist who lives in Orlando. This is his account of trying to find food last week after the violence and looting stopped.

"I'm sorry Sir to tell you that our tests say you are diabetic." That's what the nurse at Diepkloof clinic told me in 2018. That changed everything about how I have to eat. I have to eat healthy food. No more amagwinya or fried eggs.

On Wednesday after the looting, I woke up. The streets were quiet. Maybe people had food and were cooking. Or maybe they were hiding.

I took my diabetic meds with boiled carrots and potatoes and tea for breakfast.

But I noticed I'm running out of food. I had two carrots, an onion, some pumpkin and a half packet of brown flour left. I had some money in the bank from writing my story, but I didn't have cash.

So I took myself to the Engen garage at Orlando, 1.5km away. There was a tuckshop and an ATM machine at the garage. My plan was to get some money and buy some food. On the way to the garage, I noticed all the tuckshops on the street were closed. I passed a Shoprite, my low price shop to get food but it had been vandalised. The doors were all open and the shelves were completely empty.

Before I got to the garage, I passed two freezing old ladies with their shopping bags. They wore big coats and scarves with warm hats. They asked me if I knew if the post office was open. They needed to get their Sassa social grants. I told them nothing seemed open. No banks, no shops, no post office.

The one old lady looked at me and said: "My son, this is the end of South Africa. I don't know what I am going to do with my grandchildren. Their mother left them with me. I don't know where she is in this world. Now at my age, I'm suffering."

She looked at me crossly. "You see what you are doing with your girlfriends and then they go away when they have babies and leave them with me. I can't enjoy my pension. I have to share my Sassa money with the grandchildren. I don't know what to give my grandkids to eat. I need my Sassa money today."

I told her, "Me too. I'm in the street hoping to get lucky and find something myself."

Meatco eyes DRC, Ghana for northern beef

By Lazarus Amukeshu and Nghinomenwa Erastus

In a quest to secure a market for the northern livestock farmers, the national meat company, Meatco, is exploring new markets in Ghana and the DRC.

It is doing so through a subsidiary, Meatco's Meatco Northern Communal Area (Pty) Ltd which is headed by Kingsley Kwenani.

Kwenani was appointed last year, and his move to create a market for northern farmers in other areas of Africa comes at a time when the African Development Bank (AfDB) has launched an Africa-wide livestock investment master plan.

The plan is to strengthen the agriculture sector, particularly the livestock sub-sector whose true potential remains untapped, said the bank.

The northern livestock subsector has limited economic development and remains a contributor to persistent poverty and deteriorating food and nutrition security across the continent, the bank's opening statement of the master plan reads.

Meatco has been Namibia's poster child bringing in billions over the years by selling beef to European markets mainly.

The cattle for these markets have, however, been mainly those south of the redline.

Over the years, northern farmers have complained about this exclusion, saying it has hindered their ability to scale up and also partake in the lucrative beef export markets which farmers south of the red line enjoy.

The data show that although Meatco bought over 154 770 cattle for slaughter during the past two years, only 2 394 were from the northern communal areas.



This is despite the region having an estimated 1.6 million cattle, the state-owned enterprise said in its 2020/21 financial report.

Exporting to other parts of Africa appears to be the solution, says Kwenani.

Namibian beef is considered to be the best in sub-Saharan Africa and if the African markets are explored, it would lead to the company finding a lasting solution for these farmers, the company said in its recently released annual report.

The northern farmers were not excluded without cause, it is said. The lack of mechanisms to minimise the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the NCA has systematically prevented northern farmers from accessing lucrative

markets.

To enable market access, the beef from the NCA will be subjected to the Commodity Base Trade (CBT) Protocols that would allow its sale south of the veterinary cordon fence and the new African markets, explained Meatco.

Meatco's NCA subsidiary quarantined 540 animals for 30 days in preparation for the first slaughter at the Katima Mulilo abattoir early last month.

The abattoir is set to slaughter 55 to 60 animals per day. The cattle would be quarantined for a month and then slaughtered under CBT protocols.

The CBT approach requires that all animals going through an export abattoir be thoroughly checked,

said Kwenani.

They should then go through a 30-day quarantine as required by Namibia's Directorate of Veterinary Services.

"This is to ensure that symptoms of foot-mouth-disease (FMD) or any other disease are identified during the

quarantine period and then checked again before slaughter," he said.

After slaughter, the carcasses go through maturation for 24 hours at 2 to 3 degrees, as an additional measure to detect diseases.

"The final stage requires carcasses to be deboned and de-glanded for the marketing in any market that accepts meat from an FMD zone," Kwenani stated

This includes south of the red line and any other markets, he added.

Exports to the new African markets are expected to start by next month, after the Katima Mulilo abattoir has been audited and Namibia has been issued export permits by the authorities in these new regional markets.

Currently, the country is not only going through a restocking phase, but a pricing war is fully on between operators of export abattoirs and producers.

Producers feel they are not being paid enough for their cattle, with some producers threatening to start their own abattoirs.

Meatco was directed by the government to open the Katima Mulilo and Rundu abattoirs.

Bricks, mortar and mielie meal- not more words

By Mark Heywood

Because people don't believe the politicians' words, they will only be assuaged if they can see and taste that change is coming.

Mark my words, the choice is stark: either change within the law or eventually accept that chaos will come and it will happen outside it; give something substantial now, or lose everything later. To quote Ian Goldin: "The pandemic has shown that it is much less costly to stop a crisis than to

respond to one that is raging."

One of the commonest refrains heard from poor people interviewed by the media in the aftermath of the great non-insurrection was that they no longer trust the words and promises of politicians, including the President. They feel left behind, the victims of nepotism, favouritism, party patronage - all polite societies' preferred ways of looting. In this respect, it doesn't matter who you are or how many times you say "Ubuntu" or "Nelson Mandela", you won't be believed.

Unfortunately for them, speaking at the

annual Nelson Mandela Memorial Lecture on Sunday, President Cyril Ramaphosa mainly only had more words to offer. This is unlikely to staunch the haemorrhage of our bleeding rainbow. The most concrete he got was when he spoke about a Basic Income Grant (BIG), which he talked about approvingly and said "will validate our people and show that some serious consideration is being given to their lives"; a BIG "in many ways will also speak to what Nelson Mandela stood for... caring for the people of our country."

But - for the uninitiated, let us remind you - we have had two decades of BIG talk. What, we should ask, is the plan and the timeframe to introduce a BIG?

Because people don't believe the politicians' words, they will only be assuaged if they can see and taste that change is coming. It's wrong to expect trust in an amorphous Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan based on last Tuesday's trickle-down economics. The instinct of ordinary people, who are on the receiving end of economic theory,

can tell you that. The old economics is shattered and incapable of meeting the modern challenges. The sooner Ramaphosa understands that the sooner we can move on.

At the end of World War 2, to rebuild from the devastation of the bombed cities and factories, Europe, with financial assistance from the US, embarked on a massive Marshall Plan to rescue society. It worked. Big business should note that the rationale for this plan was self-interest: in large part to stave off the threat of communism.

Vaccines delayed are vaccines denied

By Jonatan Konafino and Shubha Nagesh

“Vaccine equity is the challenge of our time,” Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), told the gathering in opening remarks. “And we are failing” at a special ministerial meeting of the Economic and Social Council.

Earlier, G7 leaders wrote a letter of support declaring that wealthier countries should pay the cost to vaccinate low and middle income countries.

Globally, indiscriminate inequity exists in the procurement and distribution of vaccines, which has hit the countries in Asia and Africa the most. According to the World Health Organization, among the 832 million vaccine doses that have been administered, 82% have gone to high- or upper-middle-income countries, while only 0.2% have been shipped to low-income countries.

The United States announced that it would donate 500 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine to COVAX to supply COVID vaccine doses to countries in need. In addition, several countries pledged support to a waiver to intellectual property restrictions, which could allow countries to produce the vaccine generically to amplify production and supply.

While these are essential steps in the right direction, a global system in which poor countries are unable to develop and produce their own vaccines to match their demand is not sustainable; particularly when faced by potential future pandemics.

Stringent measures, with global solidarity and commitment to build global vaccine equity and ensure the last person gets the vaccine in rich and poor countries alike before the next global health crisis hits is the need of the hour. This is a time when internationalism wins over nationalism, and globalism works better than local.

Globally, indiscriminate inequity exists in the procurement and distribution of vaccines, which has hit the countries in Asia and Africa the most. According to the World Health Organization, among the 832 million vaccine doses that have been administered, 82% have gone to high- or upper-middle-income countries, while only 0.2%

have been shipped to low-income countries.

According to a United Nations report, in high-income countries alone, 1 in 4 people have been vaccinated, a ratio that drops precipitously to 1 in 500 in low-income countries.

This inequitable vaccine access is rooted in the power, influence and the control of few rich countries who have determined vaccine allocation. Early on, despite COVAX's commitment to vaccinate the world's population, Western countries developed vaccines separately, in bulk, more than what was necessary, hoarded and vaccinated all, including their young people, who are considered less at risk.

Citizens of low income countries faced shortage, even those who were at risk for COVID-19. As a result, many countries have been left behind.

In the Global South, countries have welcomed and celebrated the 'noble' decision of rich countries to donate overstocked vaccines. However, we must take a step back to understand why countries need donations in the first place.

Our struggle to access vaccines is not a consequence of our present shortcomings but of our long histories—many of which are burdened with the legacy of violent colonialism. If poor countries need to rely on donated vaccines, it's a sign that the global health system is not working. Global Health has failed in this Pandemic.

It's not just about purchasing doses. A painful history of unequal power relations has shifted resources out of low- and middle-income countries to their high-income counterparts.

We are working against a persistent lack of support for the infrastructure that allows countries in the Global South to independently drive scientific development. Moreover, our material resources and human capital have supported northern economies for decades.

This is exacerbated by the problem of brain drain, in which talent is pulled from low- and middle-income countries to their high-income counterparts, perpetuating dependence and inequities. For example, it is estimated that researchers working internationally from low-income countries



produce 10 times more patents than their compatriots at home.

Scientific and health sovereignty are strategic drivers of equitable access to health.

Rich countries are often lauded for aid and donations-

progress can be made when we move from charity to rights-based models.

To sustain development efforts, international cooperation and collaboration that allows what countries need is international cooperation

that enhances local capacity and expertise, enables country infrastructure and retains the talent to generate innovation at home is crucial. It's about Human Rights, Social Justice and Equity.

In the short term, develop-

ing countries need to be able to produce vaccines and access them equitably. This includes relaxing the World Trade Organization's Trade Related Access to International Property Rights to enable countries to produce vaccines on site.

In the long term, international collaboration across nations is urgent. For example, the Sputnik-V vaccine program in Argentina involves cooperation between the Gamaleya Institute, the Russian Investment Fund and a national pharmaceutical, Richmond Lab, to develop and produce vaccines for Argentina and the southern cone. This type of cooperation is strategic to expand vaccine production and enhance technology investment in developing countries.

Regional cooperation will strengthen the health and technology sectors in developing countries. During the last few months, AstraZeneca vaccines have been produced between Argentina, which produces the active substance of the product and Mexico, which subsequently completes and bottles doses.

COVID is a global threat today. There will be more, severe threats in future. As we move forward, let the lesson from the crisis not go in vain. Together, in solidarity, we can each do our bit to advance our shared vision of an equitable world. It has taken extraordinary drive to develop the vaccine. Reimagining Global Health should be about the deliberate intention to get this vaccine to the last person.



| ITV | | THURSDAY 22 April | | SATURDAY 24 April | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|--------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| SUNDAY 18 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:00 Habari 8:00 Al Jazeera 09:00 Watoto Wetu 10:00 Isidingo 11:40 Movie rpt: Nzowa 14:00 Tamasha la Michezo 15:30 Mwangaza 16:30 ITV Top 10 17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Maphishi 18:30 Matukio ya wiki 19:30 Igizo: Mtego 20:00 Habari 21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko 21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Reflexology 21:15 Mizengwe 21:35 Mjue Zaidi 22:15 Bongo Movie: Laana 00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin | 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 9:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu rpt 10:30 Jungu kuu rpt 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 The Base rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Afya ya jamii 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 DWTW: Kesho leo rpt 13:30 Shika Bamba rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:10 Yu wapi 18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt 18:30 Uchumi na biashara 19:00 Jarida la wanawake 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Reflexology 21:10 Kipindi Maalum: Tanzania Yetu 21:40 Chetu ni chetu 22:30 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 23:00 Habari 23:30 Chetu ni chetu 23:45 The Base 00:45 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTW | 23:30 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTW | THURSDAY 22 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 9:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 9:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto 10:30 Shamba lulu rpt 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 The Base rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Ijue sheria rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: TMDA 13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanzania Yetu 13:55 Habari za saa 14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Maphishi rpt 18:30 Jagina 19:00 Usafiri wako 19:30 Habari 20:00 Habari 21:00 Malumbano ya hoja 23:00 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTW | 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTW | SATURDAY 24 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:00 Habari 8:00 Al Jazeera 9:00 Watoto wetu 10:00 Shika Bamba 5 10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt 11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt 12:15 Korean drama rpt: Jumong 13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe 16:20 Igizo: Mtego 17:00 Shamsam za Pwani 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Korean drama: Jumong 19:00 Jungu Kuu 19:30 Shika Bamba 20:00 Habari 21:00 Art and lifestyle 21:30 ITV TOP 10 22:10 Isidingo rpt 00:30 DWTW | 17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt 17:45 Bundesliga kick off 18:15 Capchat rpt 19:15 Mizengwe 19:30 The Decor 20:00 Korean Drama: Iris 21:00 Out n' About 21:30 Movie: Grindstone Road (tape no:5593) 23:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love 01:00 Al Jazeera |
| MONDAY 19 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 9:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 ITV Top 10 rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera News 12:30 Mtego rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Mjue Zaidi 13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:10 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:10 Aibu yako rpt 18:15 Maphishi 18:45 Kesho leo 19:00 Afya ya Jamii 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:05 Dakika 45 22:00 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTW | WEDNESDAY 21 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 9:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto Wetu rpt 10:30 Uchumi na biashara rpt 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 The Base rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Dakika 45 rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Maphishi 18:30 Ijue Sheria 19:00 Kipindi Maalum: TMDA 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco 21:30 Kipindi Maalum: 22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 23:00 Habari | FRIDAY 23 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 9:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 9:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu rpt 10:30 Usafiri wako rpt 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 The Base rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanesco 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Jagina rpt 13:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 15:00 Meza Huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base (DJ Show) 17:30 Kisilam 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Mjue Zaidi rpt 19:00 Shamba lulu 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:05 Kipima Joto | SUNDAY 25 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:00 Habari 8:00 Al Jazeera 09:00 Watoto Wetu 10:00 Isidingo 11:40 Movie rpt: Laana 14:00 Tamasha la Michezo 15:30 Mwangaza 16:30 ITV Top 10 17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Maphishi 18:30 Matukio ya wiki 19:30 Igizo: Mtego 20:00 Habari 21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko 21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Reflexology 21:15 Mizengwe 21:35 Mjue Zaidi 22:15 Bongo Movie: Who's Back 00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin | 08:00 Al Jazeera 09:00 Rev rpt 09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt 10:00 Culinary delight rpt 10:30 Innovation rpt 11:00 Out n'about rpt 11:30 Sports Gazette rpt 12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt 12:30 Eco@Africa rpt 13:00B usiness edition rpt 13:30 Korean Drama rpt: The slave hunter 14:30 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death | |
| TUESDAY 20 April | 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo | MONDAY 19 April | 06:00 Al Jazeera 07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio) 09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio) 13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio) 16:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love 16:30 Tanzania Yetu rpt 17:00 Eco@Africa rpt 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 The Décor rpt 19:30 Shamba lulu 20:00 Series: Beats of Love 20:45 The Monday Agenda 21:30 Capital Prime News 22:00 Kipima Joto 00:00 Al Jazeera | SAT 17 April | 08:00 Al Jazeera 09:00 Rev rpt 09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt 10:00 Culinary delight rpt 10:30 Innovation rpt 11:00 Out n'about rpt 11:30 Sports Gazette rpt 12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt 12:30 Eco@Africa rpt 13:00B usiness edition rpt 13:30 Korean Drama rpt: The slave hunter 14:30 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death | Tues 20 April | 06:00 Al Jazeera 07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio) 09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio) 13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death 16:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love 16:30 Capchat rpt 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 Innovation 19:30 Jagina rpt 20:00 Series: Beats of Love | | |

National Assembly denies telecoms space on election matters

By Okoh Aihe

WHEN the Senate President, Senator Ahmed Lawan, wakes up in the future to look at the history books, his name will be written in infamy. Reason being that at a time the country was drunken with violence and looked for good leadership to take momentous decisions, members of the National Assembly which he led, had inverted reasoning as they buried their heads in obloquy and insouciant irresponsibility.

The case of the Senate President is particularly goring because he is too superficial in cogitation to understand how desperately Nigeria needs help. Days prior, before the vote on the Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill, 2021, whose major beef was the electronic transmission of election results, Lawan complained bitterly that his phone was swamped with 900 SMS in one day. What absolute flappedoodle and indecorous psychobabble from a guy whose bills are paid by the very voters he is leading his team at the National Assembly to castrate with premeditated deceit.

They still managed to flash a smile to wish away that moment of national embarrassment oozing out on the floor of the

National Assembly, explaining that the process may be revisited in the future to enrich the Act as development unfolds. They couldn't also reason that the show of shame which some Nigerians had prayed shouldn't happen, in order to redeem some of the Senators of their last shred of humanity, could throw the country in such a spiral that even that future they envisaged might not show up at all.

But that was not their problem. Two things were at stake: the future of the country which desired transparent elections and the political future of some of the law makers at the National Assembly. In the two chambers - House of Representatives and the Senate, a majority of the law makers chose their political future, never for once thinking that they need a stable polity first, before their political future.

Anyway, no degenerate thinks of the other person except his safety. This writer is one of those who believe that quite a number of the lawmakers at the National Assembly didn't get there through healthy means. They rigged their way in but we are too sanctimonious as a people to confront the truth and point this at their faces.

WORLD

'Pingdemic' grips Britain as fears of food shortages grow

WASHINGTON

BRITISH supermarkets said on Thursday that some products were in short supply and petrol stations had been forced to close after the official health app told hundreds of thousands of workers to isolate following contact with someone with COVID-19.

British newspapers carried front-page pictures of empty shelves in supermarkets, declaring a "pingdemic".

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng told Sky News the government was "very concerned" about the situation but that he did not recognise the network's characterisation of "bare" supermarket shelves.

With cases rising to nearly 50,000 day in the United Kingdom, hundreds of thousands of people have been advised - or "pinged" - by the National Health Service's contact-tracing app to isolate for 10 days.

The drastic reduction in staffing that has resulted has sown chaos through sectors as diverse as food supplies, haulage, supermarkets, hospitality, manufacturing and media. To avoid disruption, many people have deleted the app from their phones.

Sainsbury's, Britain's second largest grocer, said customers may not be able to find the ex-

act product they want.

"Large quantities of products are being delivered to stores daily and our colleagues are focused on getting them onto the shelves as quickly as they can," a spokesperson said.

Retailer Iceland said it had closed a number of stores due to staff shortages. BP said it had to temporarily close a handful of petrol stations due to a lack of fuel, with a shortage of HGV drivers exacerbated by COVID-19 isolations.

Reuters reporters found plenty of food in shops, though there were some shortages of specific products such as bottled water, soft drinks, salad and meat.

One meat industry body said on Wednesday that food supply chains were "right on the edge of failing" as absences related to COVID-19 had aggravated an already-critical shortage of labour. [read more](#)

Official data showed the app had told nearly 620,000 people to isolate in England and Wales in the week up to July 14.

WHO

While previous months saw a decreasing number of COVID-19 worldwide, the trend has changed this month with last week witnessing a 12 percent increase in infections, the World



Shoppers choose products from partially filled shelves in a supermarket at Nine Elms, south London on Thursday. AFP

Health Organization (WHO) reported Wednesday, adding that deaths and spread of variants were also on the rise.

A total of 3.4 million new cases had been confirmed last week, during which an approximate average of 490,000 cases were identified each day, compared with 400,000 cases the week before. This confirms that the coronavirus is spreading faster in the world, the WHO said in its weekly update.

Last week, Indonesia, the United Kingdom and Brazil were the most affected places with 350,273, 296,447 and 287,610 cases, respectively, the WHO said.

If the virus continues to spread at this rate, the global number of COVID-19 cases could reach 200 million in the next three weeks, the WHO warned.

Furthermore, new deaths are also increasing, with 57,000 deaths reported last week as the death toll of the coronavirus has reached well over four million people.

Variants are continuing their progression, as the Alpha variant was seen in 180 countries, territories or areas, and 13 new countries, territories or areas reported cases of the Delta variant. **Agencies**

Africa's COVID-19 3rd wave at crossroads - WHO official

BRAZZAVILLE

AFRICA'S third wave of COVID-19 pandemic is at a crossroads, a World Health Organization (WHO) official said on Thursday at an online press conference.

As the rate of new cases fell by less than two percent over the past week, driven by a sharp drop in South Africa, 21 countries are experiencing a resurgence, three more than last

week, warned Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa. "Let's be under no illusions, Africa's third wave is absolutely not over. The small step forward offers hope and inspiration but must not mask the big picture for Africa," she noted.

Africa continues to lag behind in terms of the COVID-19 vaccination, Moeti said, explaining that only about 1.5 percent of the continent's population are fully vaccinated so far.

"African countries must go all out and speed up their vaccine rollouts by 5 to 6 times if they are to get all these doses into arms and fully vaccinate the most vulnerable 10 percent of their people by the end of September," she said.

"Vaccines are key to saving lives and blunting the pandemic, but we must remain focused on controlling the disease until vaccination coverage is increased," Moeti said.

Moeti noted that a gradual easing of vaccine supply constraints in the continent will boost efforts to tame a third wave of COVID-19 infections fuelled by variants and easing of containment measures.

She said that about 60 million doses are set to arrive in Africa in the coming weeks including donations from several countries and purchases through the COVAX facility. Moeti said that over half a bil-

lion doses procured through the COVAX facility are expected to arrive in Africa this year, adding that the continent must vaccinate 21 million doses every week in order to reach the 10 percent target by September.

Moeti said African countries should prioritize upgrading cold chain infrastructure, training of health workers and community education in order to boost vaccine uptake. **Agencies**

Ex-UN rights boss to head probe into Israel, Hamas alleged crimes

DUBAI

Former United Nations human rights chief Navi Pillay will head an international commission of inquiry into alleged crimes committed during the latest conflict between Israel and the Islamist group Hamas in Gaza, the UN's Human Rights Council said in a statement on Thursday.

The council agreed in late May to open the investigation with a broad mandate to cover allegations not just in Gaza and the Israeli-occupied West Bank, but also in Israel during hostilities that were halted by a May 21 ceasefire.

At least 250 Palestinians and 13 people in Israel were killed in the fierce fighting, which saw Gaza militants fire rockets towards Israeli cities and Israel

carry out air strikes across the coastal enclave.

Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, told the council at the time that deadly Israeli strikes on Gaza might constitute war crimes and that Hamas had violated international humanitarian law by firing rockets into Israel.

Israel on Thursday reiterated its rejection of the probe.

"Not surprisingly, the purpose of this mechanism is to find Israeli violations, while whitewashing the crimes committed by Hamas, a terrorist organization in the Gaza Strip," Israel's mission to the U.N. in Geneva said in a statement.

"As Israel announced immediately following the special session, it cannot and will not cooperate with such an investi-



Palestinians inspect damaged houses that were hit in early morning Israeli airstrikes, in Gaza City, May 17, 2021. AP

gation," it said.

Pillay, a former South African judge who served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2008-2014, will lead the three-person panel

also composed of Indian expert Miloon Kothari and Australian expert Chris Sidoti, the Human Rights Council statement said.

The investigators, who have been asked to try to identify

those responsible for violations with a view to ensure they are held accountable, are due to present their first report in June 2022. **Agencies**

China urges tracing COVID-19 origin in multiple countries

BEIJING

CHINA hopes that the World Health Organization (WHO) will treat the novel coronavirus origin-tracing work as a scientific issue, get rid of political interference, and actively and prudently promote tracing work continuously in multiple countries and regions around the globe, said a senior official of the National Health Commission (NHC) Thursday.

What was done in the first stage of origin tracing, especially by those that have reached a clear conclusion, should not be repeated, said Zeng Yixin, deputy head of the NHC. Zeng made the remarks at a press conference on the novel coronavirus origin-tracing work held by the State Council Information Office in Beijing.

What should be carried out is the origin tracing of early cases, molecular epidemiology, and intermediary hosts in multiple countries and regions based on extensive consultations among WHO member states, Zeng said.

According to an agreement between China and the WHO in July 2020, a WHO team comprising international experts arrived in Wuhan on Jan. 14. They formed a joint body with Chinese experts for the Chinese part of the global study on the origins of the novel coronavirus, he said.

The team studied a massive amount of epidemic-related data and visited nine facilities, including Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital, Huanan seafood market, and the Wuhan Institute of Virology, under the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The team conducted extensive exchanges with local medical workers, lab researchers, scientists, and market managers. They also interviewed social workers, community workers, residents, and patients who had recovered, Zeng said.

Among the outcomes of the joint study, a coronavirus highly similar to the novel coronavirus in gene sequences was found in bats and pangolins. But the similarity is not enough to make it a direct ancestor of the novel coronavirus.

The experts identified four hypotheses for the source of transmission of the novel coronavirus to the human population, including a direct zoonotic spillover, cold-chain food, an intermediary host species, and a laboratory-related incident.

The joint study said that a laboratory incident is "extremely unlikely" as the cause of COVID-19.

It said introduction through an intermediary host species is "the most likely" passway.

If any country needs further study on laboratory-related sources, Chinese experts suggest going to nations with labs similar to the one in Wuhan, which haven't been investigated. This way, they could learn more about possible leakage problems, said Liang Wannian, the team leader from the Chinese side of the group.

Liang added that in the joint study, Chinese experts showed foreign experts the data from 174 early cases, worked with them on analyzing the information, and came to the conclusion together.

To protect the patients' privacy, Chinese experts did not provide raw data to foreign experts. The latter expressed understanding and said that it was an international practice, he added.

Liang suggested that animals should be a significant focus of origin-tracing work.

Chinese scientists have done a lot of work on animal-related virus origin tracing. They conducted comprehensive tests on the food markets and farms in Wuhan, collecting more than 38,000 samples of livestock and poultry and more than 41,000 samples of wild animals obtained from 2018 to 2020 countrywide. No positive samples were in either antigens or antibodies, Liang said.

Chinese scientists also collected many bat samples and researched them extensively, but no novel coronavirus was isolated from the samples. There are many widely distributed bat species worldwide, and global scientists should research bats in other countries and regions, Liang said.

It is also valuable to study wild animals that could be possible intermediate hosts, such as pangolins, cats, and martens, he added.

Chinese scientists also paid much attention to the role of cold chains in the transmission of the virus, said Wang Chen, president of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and Peking Union Medical College.

They found a close connection between some patients' infections and their exposure to cold chain goods. On the surfaces of these goods, they also detected the existence of live viruses, said Wang.

It has been proved that viruses survive and remain infectious for longer in cold and dry environments. Therefore, the evidence chain of transmissions by cold chains is relatively substantial.

Wang suggested that cold chains should be a significant clue in ongoing virus origin tracing. **Xinhua**

BEIJING 2022 Winter Olympics started its 200-day countdown on Monday.

By July 17, 53 of 57 Winter Olympic projects in both Beijing and Yanqing competition zones have been completed, and the remaining four projects are expected to be completed this year. The ecological restoration project of the Yanqing competition zone was completed at the end of June, which turned natural landscape into ecology-friendly competition venues.

Eight competition venues in the two competition zones were completed at the end of 2020, and their supporting facilities have all met requirements in the testing and opera-

200-day countdown starts for Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

tional stages and are ready for test events. The venues have passed an all-round examination of corresponding international sports organizations.

Seven of the nine non-competition venues have been completed. So far, the Winter Olympic Village and National Convention Center Phase II, or the Main Media Center (MMC) for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics have been delivered to the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The "Ice Jar" comprehensive training center was also completed and has gone through acceptance

inspection.

The National Convention Center Phase II is the largest newly constructed project in the Beijing competition zone. It will receive over 3,000 journalists and around 12,000 broadcasters during the Winter Olympic Games. The steel-structured building, covered by 2,376 curtain wall units in the shape of a huge mythical bird, showcases a design concept of harmonious coexistence between architecture and nature.

As the last project of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics to break ground, the construction and

renovation of the National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest, started on July 4, and will be completed in October this year.

The ecological restoration project of the Yanqing competition zone, commencing in 2015, had the longest period of construction among all projects for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. A total of 2.14 million square meters of ecological restoration has been completed.

According to Yu Dequan, deputy director of Beijing Major Projects Construction Headquarters Office, the Yanqing competition zone, with

the highest altitude of 2,198 meters, faced the most difficulties in construction among all the three competition zones. When the project just started, there was no water supply, road, power supply or communication network in the competition zone. The ecological restoration was even more difficult than building a new venue, Yu said.

To protect the environment on Xiaohaituo Mountain, where the Alpine skiing, bobsleigh and skeleton and luge events will be held, the Yanqing competition zone has always taken ecological conservation as the first priority. Before

the restoration project was implemented, a background investigation of the ecological environment was jointly conducted by the forestry, environment and ecology experts. They tailored protection plans for every tree on the mountain based on how much impact it shoulders from the construction. So far, in-situ protection has been done for 313 trees, and 24,272 have been transplanted to a nearby protection base covering nearly 300 mu, or 20 hectares of land. About 91 percent of the transplanted trees survived. In addition, 11,027 shrubs have been transplanted and are now taken

good care of by professional organizations.

The National Speed Skating Oval is the only newly constructed venue hosting ice events for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. With a novel design, the venue features high construction difficulty and application of new technologies. It is the first large venue in China to massively employ domestically produced high-vanadium sealing strands, and around its exterior there are "flowing ribbons" made up of 3,360 pieces of glass. Introducing carbon dioxide refrigerants for ice-making, the venue boasts an ice surface of around 12,000 square meters, the largest in Asia. **People's Daily**

Slandering China, hiding from truth -- Washington's dangerous tactics to hinder anti-virus fight

BEIJING

ALTHOUGH the COVID-19 origin tracing is a serious scientific issue that requires cooperation of global scientists, U.S. politicians have been unscrupulously selling conspiracy theories to smear China and hamper global anti-virus efforts.

However, when it comes to the call for opening Fort Detrick, the infamous U.S. military biological laboratory, to let international experts access relevant information, those politicians remain silent and try to avoid the issue.

Last month, a group of Chinese netizens drafted a joint open letter to ask the World Health Organization (WHO) to investigate the Fort Detrick lab.

So far, over 750,000 Chinese netizens have signed the letter, and the number of co-signers continues to soar.

The Fort Detrick lab, which is located in the U.S. state of Maryland, was briefly shut down in 2019 after an inspection by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The lab claimed that the reason for its shutdown was "ongoing infrastructure issues with wastewater decontamination."

However, many in the world have since then doubted the U.S. explanation. In the open letter to the WHO, the co-signers pointed out that there had been a leakage incident in the Fort Detrick lab in the autumn of 2019 right before the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic.

"However, detailed information had been withheld by the U.S. under excuses of national security," the letter said. On many occasions,

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian has called for a thorough probe into the origin of the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States, the reasons and parties to be held accountable for the poor performance of the United States in epidemic containment, and problems existing in Fort Detrick and over 200 U.S. bio-labs overseas.

"These actions initiated by the public and media in fact have raised those questions long hovering over the mind of all, which the United States has kept in dark," Zhao said.

"Here are questions for the United States to answer: What is the link between Fort Detrick and the unexplained outbreaks of respiratory disease including EVALI?"

Why hasn't the United States invited the WHO in for an investigation into Fort Detrick? Why can't origins study be conducted in the United States just as in China?

The United States should show transparency and tell as much as they know about all the questions and respond to the concerns of the outside world," Zhao said.

In January this year, international experts from the WHO and Chinese experts formed a joint team and conducted joint research for 28 days in China.

On March 30, the WHO issued a joint report, which came to clear conclusions and provided science-based recommendations for the next-phase global origins study.

It concluded that lab leak is extremely unlikely, and recommended conducting further research around earlier cases globally and further understanding the role of cold chains and frozen foods in the transmission of the virus. Rather



People walk past a mobile COVID-19 testing site on a street in New York, the United States, on July 20, 2021. Xinhua

than respecting and upholding the conclusions and recommendations of the report, U.S. politicians have since then stepped up their smear campaign against China.

To justify their groundless accusations against China, some even suggested that since there is no substantial evidence supporting the nature origin of COVID-19, the so-called lab leak theory deserves consideration.

Those people should keep in mind that research is usually a plodding, tedious process and the probe into the origins of COVID-19 might take years.

In fact, as noted even by U.S. media including The New Republic, scientists have spent about 13 years determining the origin of the SARS epidemic, and the origin of Ebola

has not been determined yet, although the disease has caused epidemics since the 1970s.

By spreading the conspiracy theories as the pandemic continues to wreak havoc in the United States, those U.S. politicians are endangering the U.S. own efforts to fight the coronavirus.

Though the U.S. administration is scrambling to push forward its goal of vaccinating as many Americans as possible, The New Yorker recently warned that the country was "losing Americans to a war that could already have ended."

"Six months after the COVID vaccines became available, more than forty per cent of American adults have not been fully vaccinated," the U.S. magazine noted, quoting studies by the U.S. CDC as saying that

"nearly all COVID-19 deaths in the United States are now avoidable."

As noted by The Chicago Sun-Times, "hundreds of millions of people around the world are begging for more vaccines."

Yet millions of Americans continue, against all reason and the best scientific evidence, to refuse the shot."

The Boston Herald reported recently that COVID-19 cases in the United States had leapt 47.5 percent in recent weeks, adding that among the big risks to Americans right now are "unvaccinated health care workers."

With U.S. politicians fueling conspiracy theories amid the ravaging COVID-19 pandemic, it is not hard to imagine the resistance to science by the U.S. public. Xinhua

'Stop spouting such drivel': Diplomat slams Ukrainian foreign minister's Black Sea remarks

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova has excoriated remarks by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmitry Kuleba who claimed that Russia can turn the Black Sea into its internal lake, as nothing but as nonsense.

According to Zakharova, Kuleba said that he knew how to prevent Moscow "from turning the Black Sea into its inner lake."

He alleged that Russia could divide the sea into two halves and "would begin to control its zone completely." "I know how to do that too."

The sooner Kuleba stops spouting such drivel, the sooner the lake will again become a sea, both halves of which will connect," Zakharova wrote on her Telegram channel on Wednesday. Kuleba earlier commented on the outcome of Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky's visit to Georgia, saying that Kiev could come up with proposals to counter Russia in the Black Sea, and that these initiatives are being hashed over with Georgia, Moldova and NATO members.

According to the top Ukrainian diplomat, "if the Black Sea countries and NATO members plus Ukraine, Georgia - and a place for Moldova can be found in that mechanism as well - do not team up, Russia will turn the Black Sea into its inner lake, split it into two halves and start to dominate its zone completely." Agencies

Respecting science and defending justice are what people want in COVID-19 origin tracing

As of July 19 (Beijing time), 55 countries had sent letters to Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), expressing their support for the WHO's report on a joint study with China on the tracing of COVID-19 origins and calling on the international community to respect science and resist political manipulation in the COVID-19 origin tracing.

The voices of justice from these countries, in stark contrast to the attempt of the U.S. and a small number of countries to resort to political manipulation, oppose science, and distort facts in the origin tracing, have fully demonstrated that the international community generally sides with justice and the truth.

For some time, a handful of countries led by the U.S. have become increasingly bold-faced in stigmatizing acts of other countries regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, labeling the virus, and politicizing the COVID-19 origin tracing.

While turning a blind eye to the results of the cooperation among scientists from many countries and hyping up the theory that the virus escaped from a Chinese lab, these countries openly made intelligence agencies lead the virus origin tracing and exhausted all means to defame China.

As a result of the unhealthy trend, some scientists who researched into the virus origins in the spirit of science and made objective and fair remarks on the topic have been subjected to political pressure, verbal abuse and even



Photo taken on May 20, 2021 shows the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Xinhua

threats for no reason, which is a betrayal of the spirit of science as well as a blasphemy against civilization.

Foreign scientists and experts have concluded that the "lab-leak" theory has no scientific basis at all and remarked that they have no doubt about the natural origin of the novel coronavirus, which are consistent with the results of WHO's report on a joint study with China and are indisputably scientific and authoritative.

The reason why the U.S. determines to stand opposite the majority of countries and spread the "lab leak" theory is that it wants to scapegoat China for its incompetence in handling the pandemic, thus smearing China and containing its development.

The ulterior motive of the U.S. has become quite clear for many people in the international community who have fair and objective stance on relevant issues.

Vincent Racaniello, a professor of microbiology and immunology at the Columbia University in the City of New

York, said in an interview that the former U.S. administration wanted to hype up the issue of COVID-19 origins study because it meant to politicize the issue and was "not thinking about the science".

Helga Zepp-LaRouche, President of the Schiller Institute, a U.S. think tank, noted that to accuse China of making the novel coronavirus is a malicious effort and an old trick by the West to smear China.

By bending their efforts to political manipulation, the U.S. and a small number of other countries have hampered international cooperation in virus origin tracing, undermined global unity in fighting the pandemic, and sullied fairness and justice.

More and more people have stepped up to support science and facts and safeguard fairness and justice.

In February 2020, 24 medical experts issued a joint statement on The Lancet, a weekly peer-reviewed general medical journal, to condemn conspiracy theories related to the novel coronavirus and

support China. Recently, they published a joint statement again on the medical journal, in which they refuted the "lab leak" theory and stressed that more recent, peer-reviewed studies strongly suggest that COVID-19 has a natural origin.

Massimo Galli, head of the Infectious Diseases Unit at the University of Milan-affiliated Luigi Sacco Hospital in Milan, Italy, said at a committee for social affairs of the Chamber of Deputies of the country that the coronavirus is an unknown virus with no signs of genome engineering inside.

Virus origin tracing is a long-term task. An increasing number of scientific researches have shown that the epidemic broke out in many places across the world. Considering the reality, the WHO-led next stage of virus origin tracing investigations should be carried out in different regions with a global vision.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) of the U.S. recently published a new study which analyzed more than 24,000 stored blood samples contributed by participants across all 50 states during the first three months of 2020, and concluded that the virus that causes COVID-19 was present in the U.S. as far back as December 2019, weeks before the first officially reported cases on January 19, 2020. However, the U.S. government requested the NIH to terminate the study using the excuse that it has distracted virus origin tracing in China and is detrimental to the national security of the U.S.

People's Daily

'Wisdom' not 'weakness': Lavrov warns Russia against unilateral concessions to the West

MOSCOW

THE experience of Russia's relations with the West in recent decades shows that any unilateral concessions made by Moscow will be seen as weakness, and new unacceptable demands will follow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said yesterday.

He recalled that in a difficult geopolitical situation, which "requires both steadfastness and wisdom" in developing one's policy, certain voices that call for the need "to achieve reconciliation with the West on its terms" could be heard.

"I am confident, and nothing but confident, given the experience we already have from the 1980s and the early 1990s, that any unilateral concessions made by us will only be regarded as weakness."

Our partners know how to do that. Afterwards, they put forward more and more unacceptable demands," he said at a webinar on Russia's foreign policy.

"That is why we will pursue an independent, nationally-oriented foreign policy, that is, a pragmatic foreign policy. We will not take into consideration any threats and ultimatums, except that we will stand firm against them."

Arms race

Russia will not allow any-



one to drag itself into a new, costly arms race, Lavrov stressed.

"While strengthening our sovereignty and doing whatever is necessary to maintain the security of the country and its citizens, we will not slide into self-isolation or confrontation, let me stress that once again, and we will not allow anyone to drag Russia into a new, costly arms race, and some opposition members inside the country frighten us with that," he said.

According to the nation's top diplomat, Russia has everything it needs to protect

itself, and it is open to cooperation with other countries on an equal basis.

"Let me emphasize once again that we will always promote a unifying agenda based on international law and the UN's core role," he said. "We will be ready for cooperation with everyone without exception, who demonstrate reciprocal willingness on the basis of equality and mutual respect."

The fact that this approach is shared by the overwhelming majority of countries across the globe gives us strength and confidence."

Agencies

NAPLES

Where's the money? Climate activists ask G20 as talks drift

ENVIRONMENT and energy ministers from the Group of 20 rich nations were making little progress on Thursday on how to reach climate goals, officials said, with a cluster of countries resisting any firm commitments.

The G20 meeting in Naples is discussing the natural environment on Thursday, and energy and climate change on Friday, and diplomats have struggled for days to find common ground to put together joint statements on both topics.

"The texts are getting weaker and weaker," said one official familiar with the talks being chaired by

Italy, which holds the rotating, annual presidency of the G20.

A fourth draft of the environment statement seen by Reuters on Wednesday showed a lack of clear policy plans and was still full of brackets around phrases that remained to be agreed.

The G20 meeting is seen as a key intermediate stage ahead of global climate talks known as COP 26 to be held in Glasgow in November.

The urgency of climate action has been brought home this month by deadly floods in Europe, fires in the United States and sweltering temperatures in Siberia, but countries remain at odds on how to pay for costly policies to reduce global warming.

Brazil, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia were among countries continuing to resist attempts by the Italian presidency to beef up the language in the G20 state-

ments, officials said.

"It looks like there will be a complete lack of any commitments on money," said Oscar Soria of the U.S.-based online activist group Avaaz.

"The north is telling the south 'we need to protect the environment' and the south is saying 'we need money for that', and the Italian presidency isn't proving very good at getting everyone on the same page," he said.

Developed countries agreed at the United Nations in 2009 to together contribute \$100 billion each year by 2020 in climate finance to poorer countries, many of whom are grappling with rising seas, storms and droughts made worse by climate change.

However, that target has yet to be met.

Barring last-minute progress, it looks unlikely the Naples G20 gathering will

make reference to the \$100 billion or make any other firm financial commitments.

"The tragic weather-related events we have witnessed these past months and even days prove our climate system is suffering severe disruption," Italy's Ecological Transition Minister Roberto Cingolani said, opening Thursday's talks.

Cingolani, who frequently warns of the costs of

fighting climate change, said unless the financial system became aligned with the needs of sustainable development there will be "catastrophic consequences" for future generations.



It looks like there will be a complete lack of any commitments on money," said Oscar Soria of the U.S.-based online activist



John Tegete

Coach John Tegete now counsels Yanga

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

VETERAN football coach, John Tegete, has disclosed he has been monitoring Vodacom Premier League giants, Yanga, and found that the team needs to carefully register four competent foreign players.

Tegete said Yanga needs to rope in a keeper, central defender, and two ace strikers, all foreign players from top clubs in the continent.

He said if Yanga opts for such a move, the club will next season boast of lining up the best squad that will do well in both Premier League and CAF Champions League.

He noted: "I feel Yanga needs to only sign only four players from top outfits in Africa, I believe they will lift the top flight's silverware next season if they will do so."

He said: "Yanga needs to be very careful during this time when they are signing players, they should not rush to sign a player, aiming at outbidding other clubs."

"They should be calm with a view to roping in good players that will help

the team achieve success," the tactician disclosed.

Yanga has so far signed right-back Shaban Djuma from DR Congo's AS Vita and the former are in talks with the DR Congo club's forward, Fiston Mayele, seeking to rope him in.

The Mainland Premier League side reached Kigoma on Thursday for the Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) final against rivals Simba SC.

The two clubs will face off in the clash, slated to take place at Lake Tanganyika Stadium in the region on Sunday.

Yanga left Dar es Salaam by plane, arriving first in Kigoma, as Simba SC was still in Dar es Salaam.

This will be the fourth game the two outfits take on each other in all tournaments this season.

They have faced each other in two Mainland Premier League games, which had Yanga coming out victorious in one and the other ending in a draw.

Yanga cruised to a 4-3 victory over Simba in this year's Mapinduzi Cup final in Zanzibar by penalty shootout.

Pamba SC out to stun Coastal Union in playoff

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

MWANZA's Pamba SC will be keen on landing promotion to the next season's Mainland Premier League as they lock horns with Coastal Union in the return leg of the top flight's relegation/promotion playoffs at Mkwakwani Stadium in Tanga today.

The teams drew 2-2 in the first leg match, which took place at Nyamagana Stadium in Mwanza on Wednesday.

Pamba SC, made up of 25 players, six technical bench officials, and four team leaders, arrived at Mwanza airport two days ago and headed to Tanga via Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA).

The outfit was set to take a car from Kilimanjaro to transport them to Tanga.

Mwanza's Regional Administrative Secretary, Ngussa Samike, bade Pamba SC farewell, noting he was optimistic they will win promotion to the Premier League.

Samike pointed out that it is a shame for Mwanza to have no representative in the domestic top-flight.

The official was adamant the city

will continue supporting Pamba SC and other sides, including Toto Africans, Mbao FC, and Alliance FC.

Samike, who opted out of revealing the support they provided to Pamba SC, pointed out they have ensured that the club's players get their dues.

The official noted they have also done their best to facilitate Pamba SC's participation in the playoffs.

Samike stated Mwanza has high hopes that the outfit will emerge victoriously.

Jamal Abdul, the region's soccer stakeholder, promised the players that the team's stakeholders are prepared in every way to ensure that incentives are in place for the players if they emerge victorious away to Coastal Union.

"I urge you to go and bring victory, I promise you you will be happy, we assure you that you will be happy, we and all other stakeholders are prepared to ensure you achieve success" Abdul told Pamba SC players.

Pamba SC will face Coastal Union in the return leg of playoffs, seeking to land a place in the Premier League next season.

Turiani Girls outplay Mashujaa Girls in TCA Dar es Salaam U-18 Girls tournament

By Guardian Reporter

TURIANI Girls cricket outfit commanded a 24-run win over Mashujaa Girls side as this season's Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Dar es Salaam U-18 Girls Tournament gathered pace last weekend.

After getting a chance to start batting, Turiani Girls went on to notch 70 runs, losing seven wickets in 20 overs.

Asha Mohamed, one of the batters that opened the innings, ended as the batter with a two-digit figure as the squad had to depend much on 37 extras that Mashujaa Girls squad's bowling unit gave away.

The fellow opener, Yusra Abdi, ended one run short of a two-digit figure, with her stint being brought to an end by the opponents' Jasmin Idd.

They kept on dropping wicket succession in the latter stages, with none of the remaining batters reaching two-digit scores.

Low order batters, Husna Ishbei and Zuhura Juma, ended the innings with the bat in hand, as Zuhura posted five runs not out, Husna notched three runs not out.

Swaum Mwalami, who also came on late, was six runs short of a two-digit figure, turning into one of Zulfa Idd's victims.

Mashujaa Girls' Esther William went for a catch to dismiss Swaum from delivery by Zulfa.

Zulfa was moreover responsible for the other batter Rahma Hassan's dismissal.

Jasmin ended with the best bowling figure when Mashujaa Girls were bowling, she posted three wickets in four overs.

She was ably assisted by Pili Juma as the latter notched two wickets in two overs.

Mashujaa Girls, in response,



Kigoma Primary School's girls' cricket squad and coach, Abdulrahman Akida, pose for a photo after completing a recent junior development program's tournament, known as 'Chanzo Kriketi', held in Dar es Salaam.

could not mount a successful chase, they ended posting 46 runs for the loss of eight wickets in 20 overs.

Their chase got off to the worst start, given the openers, Esther and Zulfa, and Jasmin, who came on at number three, were dismissed within the first five overs.

Neither of the openers could reach two-digit figures, as Esther was dismissed by Turiani Girls outfit's Zaina Mohamed, having scored one run.

Zulfa went out for a golden duck, as she was dismissed by

Turiani Girls' Nadhifa Abdallah.

Pendo Japhet, slotted in at the top order, was the batter with most runs, given she posted six runs.

Pendo's efforts to help her side keep alive hopes of getting down to a successful chase were thwarted by Zuhura.

Zaina Mohamed and Rahma Hassan played a pivotal role in Turiani Girls' successful efforts to keep Mashujaa Girls' batting unit in check.

Zaina notched two wickets, as was the case for Rahma,

with the former bowling one over, the latter had a four-over spell.

Chasing 71 runs to come out victorious had, for Mashujaa Girls, turned out to be a tall order, particularly after Pendo's dismissal in the 18th over, with the outfit reaching 45 runs.

Much as Mashujaa Girls had succumbed to the loss, the squad had consolation in the best player of the tie's prize, which went to Jasmin, given she had impressive bowling statistics.

Special Band now postpones launch

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

VETERAN Tanzanian dance music artist, Mwinjuma Muumin, has revealed his new troupe Special Band's launch, which was scheduled for September this year, has been postponed.

Muumin disclosed the postponement has been brought about by reasons he stopped short of making them public, adding the troupe's artists are keeping on rehearsing.

"We had planned to officially launch our troupe in September, we would have launched two albums at a go, but there are reasons which have forced us to postpone the event," the musician noted.

Muumin revealed the troupe, since January this year, composed a song every month and managed to prepare six tracks making one album.

The songs include 'Yatima Mzee', 'Mwanangu', 'Fenesi' and 'Kwa Mpalange Sihami'.

The artist stated: "Early in June, we had brought forth one of our songs, titled 'Mkongwa wa Tembo', at our show known as 'White Party', all we are left with is doing all we can to help dance music regain its glory domestically."

Muumin, further, stated collaborating with various Bongo Flava artists, as well as artists from other



Dance music artist, Mwinjuma Muumin, in action at one of his past shows. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT SABATO KASIKA

countries, in his troupe's tracks features in his plans.

The vocalist revealed the move gears towards seeing to it his troupe's songs have various melodies.

Muumin stated: "I'm keen on collaborating with artists including Ugandan, Joseph Mayanja 'Jose Chameleone', in songs we will compose later on and other Tanzanian artists, including

Zuhura Othman Soud 'Zuchu', and Faustina Charles 'Nandy'."

The artist disclosed currently dance music has gone through lots of changes, for that matter, Special Band needs to

adapt to the changes.

The vocalist was adamant they are ought to go for the approach if they need to keep on winning more fans, ranging from youths to adults.



Griezmann's been good for Barcelona since a huge-money move, but the club's dire financial circumstances mean they're willing to let him walk. How did things get here? (Agencies)

Barca's efforts to push Griezmann back to Atletico show how dire their finances are

By Sid Lowe, ESPN Spain writer

"ANYTHING can happen in football," said the Atletico Madrid president, Enrique Cerezo. Even Barcelona following up their decision to let a striker go to Atletico Madrid for free, pay a chunk of his salary and help them win the league by... well, letting a striker go to Atletico Madrid for free, paying a chunk of his salary and helping them win the league.

OK, so Atletico may not win the league next season, and they may not even get the deal done -- in fact, it looks pretty difficult right now -- but FC Barcelona really are talking to them this summer about allowing Antoine Griezmann to go back to the Wanda Metropolitan and for nothing. And doing this two years after paying €125m for him, which in turn was a year after he had very publicly turned them down.

Not just allowing him to go back, in fact: obliging him to.

On Monday afternoon, Barcelona opened discussions about doing a swap deal for midfielder Saul Niguez -- although officially they would end up being two separate deals. It may not happen. Barcelona do not want to cover any of Griezmann's salary, understood to be in the region of €20m. Atletico do not want the deal to cost them, and have intimated that they're not so bothered: they could walk away any time, leaving him and them stuck.

Which may be a tactic, of course. It probably is. But that it has come to this.

That Barcelona have become so desperate, in such dire financial circumstances, that they're trying to force Griezmann to the door, aware now that it's almost impossible for them to keep him and Lionel Messi.

That after everything Griezmann has done, everything he has been and still could be, there is not a queue of clubs building outside, all desperate to get him, huge wads of cash waving at Barcelona.

That Atletico stand alone, ready to twist Barcelona's arm or walk away.

And that Griezmann would go back, happily. Like others before him, incidentally. It's funny how it goes.

Well, sort of happily. And it is not like the choice would be his alone. It is not that Griezmann wants to leave Barcelona for Atletico, either; it is that if he has to leave Barcelona, Atletico is an attractive alternative. It's a club he knows and a manager (Diego Simeone) who backs him; even Profe Ortega, the fitness coach who likes to see the sweat and vomit flow freely from his players, doesn't scare him. In fact, the way things have been the last couple of years, he might well welcome that work.

But Griezmann did not seek this solution, Barcelona did. If it really is a solution.

For all the doubts around Griezmann over the past couple of years at Camp Nou -- that lingering feeling that he never quite fit, that this was never quite his place, that in truth he probably shouldn't have come in the first place and that he cost too much -- the reasons that Barcelona are so keen to move him on are not so much footballing as financial.

Right now, they can't afford to pay their players: savings have to be made, sales secured. Griezmann may not be the highest earner at the club or even in the top three, but his departure would clear around €20m off their wage bill. Just as importantly, there are still almost €80m still to be amortized on his contract. His departure would help them ease that financial pressure and at a time that -- and let's say this again -- they cannot afford to pay their players and the league will not even let them sign them up.

Stuck with a squad high on salaries and low on the desire to depart, Griezmann is one of the few players they can move. And yet even he doesn't have his pick of clubs, even at a time when it looks very much like he would turn up for free. Is there seriously no-one else out there that sees what a bargain this could be?

It's curious. When he joined Barcelona two years ago, there may have been just one attacking player in the world that did what he did. There was a reason that his transfer fee was €125m, a reason why Barcelona were prepared to go back to him even after he had rejected them the year before -- live on television. Problem was, that one player was about to be on the same team as him.

Mane, Salah, Sterling and Lewandowski among players providing contract conundrums

By Mark Ogden, Senior Writer, ESPN FC

WHAT do Mohamed Salah, Raheem Sterling, N'Golo Kante, Robert Lewandowski, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Jordan Henderson all have in common? They have reached the key moment in their contracts when they find out how important they really are to their clubs.

As my ESPN colleague Gab Marcotti wrote this week, there is an array of star-studded talent, including Paul Pogba, Kylian Mbappe and Cristiano Ronaldo, now less than 12 months away from becoming free agents if they fail to agree to new contracts before July 2022.

Speculation about the future of these players is likely to dominate the headlines over the next year, but the most significant stage in football contracts has become the two-year countdown; it's when the balance of power between player and club is evenly split. It becomes a staring contest, and one side has to blink. It's when commitment has to be shown by at least one side; otherwise, the message is clear that one or both parties have different plans.

"Deciding what to do with players in the final two years of their contracts is now the biggest headache for all clubs," a senior club official told ESPN. "It's not about which players you sign -- it's about which you want to keep and whether the financial figures stack up."

"If a player is 30 and has two years left on his contract, it's a nightmare for the club, especially if he is a big player, because you either commit to a new deal that may run until he is 34 or 35 and worry about what kind of value you will get towards the end of it, or you let him go and worry again about him embarrassing you at his new club."

"You don't want to let a player go too soon -- just look what Luis Suarez did for Atletico Madrid [winning La Liga] after leaving Barcelona last season -- but then you don't want an old player on big wages who you can't get rid of."

Liverpool, often held up as a model club when it comes to recruitment and contract management, have a remarkable 13 players in the final two years of their existing deals, and they have some big issues to address. Those players include Salah, Henderson, Sadio Mane, Roberto Firmino, Fabinho, Virgil van Dijk, Naby Keita and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain.

The likes of Keita and Oxlade-Chamberlain are unlikely to be given new deals this summer because of their sporadic appearances last season. Both may yet be allowed to leave, with their transfer value much higher this summer than it will be in a year's time.

At 27, Fabinho is young enough to be pretty much guaranteed a new



Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane both have contracts that expire in the summer of 2023. (Agencies)

contract because of his age and importance to Jurgen Klopp's team, but Salah, Mane and Firmino are all 29, Van Dijk is 30 and yet to play competitively after almost a year out with a cruciate ligament injury, while Henderson, who missed 15 games since February with a groin injury, is 31.

Salah, Mane, Firmino, Van Dijk and Henderson have all been crucial cogs in Liverpool's recent successes, but the dilemma facing Klopp and sporting director Michael Edwards is deciding how long they will continue to contribute to that level.

Handing them all new contracts exposes Liverpool to that problem of a group of players ageing together on big deals. They would also have a much lower market value. But if they fail to receive contract extensions this summer, the players may feel as though their days are numbered.

Henderson's frustration has emerged this week, with reports suggesting the club captain could leave if he isn't offered a new contract. Perhaps it is a tactic on the player's part to test the water and gauge their intentions, but at 31 and with a patchy fitness record over the past 12 months, Henderson is likely to be disappointed if he expects a new deal right now. Though Liverpool are also wary of Henderson following the route of Georginio Wijnaldum, who joined Paris Saint-Germain for nothing upon the expiry of his deal this month.

Liverpool aren't the only club exposed to the dangers of players entering the final two years of their contracts.

Arsenal have nine players, including star striker Aubameyang. At 32, it would be a surprise if Arsenal would even consider an extension to his deal, but can they risk him becoming unsettled and distracted by a diminishing contract? Hector Bellerin, Bernd Lenno, Granit Xhaka and William are all in the same position. Youngster Emile Smith Rowe signed a new long-term deal on Thursday so at least Arsenal have strengthened their position there, but they have plenty to figure out over the next few months.

Sterling's situation at Manchester City is an example of a player hold-

ing virtually all of the best cards. The England forward is approaching his peak years and has seen his value and reputation rise after an impressive performances at Euro 2020, which saw him named in the team of the tournament after scoring three goals. He will be only 28 when his Etihad contract expires and able to move to any top club as a free agent, so City may already be regretting not extending his deal sooner. Instead, they focused on securing Kevin De Bruyne to a long-term deal, but Sterling is now in a much stronger position and able to pretty much name his terms.

Leroy Sane was allowed to move to Bayern Munich for €49m last year to avoid a high-value player leaving for free, and Sterling will be in the same position within 12 months if they are unable to thrash out a new contract. Riyad Mahrez, Gabriel Jesus, Ilkay Gundogan, Benjamin Mendy and Zack Steffen are in the same position, but none of these players have the strength of position that Sterling enjoys, either because of their age or reduced status as first-team regulars and profile.

Chelsea have seven players, including Kante and Jorginho, whose situation is similar to Henderson's at Liverpool due to their ages -- 30 and 29, respectively. Spurs, meanwhile, have just four players with two years to run, including the 29-year-old Son Heung-Min.

With Harry Kane's future yet to be resolved, Spurs may have to give Son a longer deal than they'd normally consider for a 29-year-old in order to avoid losing both players in the space of 12 months. At 32 and 31, respectively, Toby Alderweireld and Moussa Sissoko are less likely to be offered new deals.

The picture is different at Manchester United. Marcus Rashford, Luke Shaw, David de Gea and Fred are among nine with two years to run, but the club has the option of a further 12 months on each of their contracts, which insulates them.

Still, if they don't move quickly to extend Rashford's contract, United risk creating a headache down the line. At 23, like Sterling, Rashford holds all the aces and he may be assessing United's ambitions and trophy-winning prospects before committing the best

years of his career to the club.

At the other end of the age scale, Bayern have big decisions to make on Lewandowski (32), Manuel Neuer (35) and Thomas Muller (31). Three club legends who have delivered incredible success to Bayern, but moving them on this summer or next is much more likely than a new deal for any of them. But Bayern need to pick their moment. Lewandowski, for instance, could score the goals to win another club the Champions League.

Sergio Busquets (33) and Toni Kroos (31) are problems for Barcelona and Real Madrid, respectively, but Real must also decide what to do with the 22-year-old Martin Odegaard now that he has returned from his loan spell at Arsenal.

Making the right decision on two-year countdown players is an issue that even the biggest clubs struggle to grapple with, and it, along with the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, might explain why this transfer window has been so slow to get going.

Dealing with internal issues is the priority and some players may feel as though they are being edged out, while some clubs will feel powerless to persuade a star youngster to sign for the long term. And that's why the two-year countdown is the most important stage for all players and clubs.

Meanwhile, Barcelona's drive to reduce their wage bill has hit a significant obstacle as they struggle to make room to register their new signings and Lionel Messi's new contract, various sources told ESPN. The club must reduce their outgoings to ensure they comply with La Liga's spending limits next season. If they can't, they risk not being able to register Messi's new contract or new signings Memphis Depay, Sergio Aguero, Eric Garcia and Emerson Royal.

Barca have until the end of the transfer window on Aug. 31 to submit Messi's deal and their new signings to La Liga, but internally they want everything resolved before Aug. 15, when they kick off their league season at home to Real Sociedad. League president Javier Tebas has said he will not relax the rules for Barcelona, and a failure to get their finances in order could see Messi, if he signs the five-year deal revealed by ESPN last week, unable to play until at

least January, as happened with Getafe midfielder Pedro Leon in 2014.

Barca managed to move on several youngsters and fringe players earlier in the transfer window, including United States international Konrad de la Fuente's move to Marseille, but they are struggling to get rid of the big earners. The club have also failed to agree to terms on a pay cut with long-serving players Sergio Busquets, Jordi Alba and Sergi Roberto. Sources said director of football Mateu Alemany has spoken with the trio's agents, but none have shown an appetite to cut their earnings to help the club yet. Busquets earns around €16 million a year at the club, while Alba is on €13m and Roberto €10.5m.

ESPN previously explained that the quickest way to make those savings was through Antoine Griezmann, but talks for the forward to return to Atletico Madrid have stalled. Barca and Atletico had been in negotiations over a swap deal, which would see midfielder Saul Niguez move in the other direction to Camp Nou, but they cannot agree on player valuations.

Griezmann, who would fancy a move back to Atletico over a Premier League switch, according to ESPN sources, doesn't want to take a hit on his salary of around €35m a year, which means Barca may have to contribute to his wages in order to push any deal through. They did something similar when Luis Suarez left for Atletico Madrid last summer.

Miralem Pjanic and Samuel Umtiti have been told they don't have a future at the club but neither are close to leaving yet. Like Griezmann, Pjanic, who is drawing interest from Italy, doesn't want to take a wage cut. Sources say none of the clubs who want the Bosnian midfielder can match his earnings.

Philippe Coutinho, who earns around €24m annually, and Neto (€6.5m) are two other candidates to leave this summer, but they could end up staying. Barca don't want to take a big hit on the €142m they paid Liverpool for Coutinho in 2018, as revealed by ESPN, and coach Ronald Koeman is wary of letting Neto go with first-choice goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen out injured. -- Sam Marsden and Moises Llorens

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Mane, Salah, Sterling and Lewandowski among players providing contract conundrums

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Azam FC, Yanga confirmed for 2021 CECAFA Kagame Cup



Tanzania's Azam FC's keeper, Razak Abalora (2nd R), challenges Uganda's KCCA FC's attacker when the two sides locked horns in the 2019 CECAFA Kagame Cup tournament's final, which took place in Rwanda. AGENCIES

Le Messenger Ngozi (Burundi), APR (Rwanda), Tusker (Kenya), and Uganda's duo of KCCA and Express.

There will be two pools with four clubs in each group. The eight clubs that have confirmed participation include, Yanga, Azam FC (Tanzania), Altabara (South Sudan), Le Messenger Ngozi (Burundi).

The list as well includes APR (Rwanda), Express, KCCA (Uganda), Tusker (Kenya), KMKM (Zanzibar), and Big Bullets (Malawi).

Simba SC is the most successful club in this tournament having lifted the title six times.

The tournament was first played in 1967 with Abaluhya FC of Kenya overcoming Simba SC 2-0 in the final.

Last year the tournament did not take place after the COVID-19 pandemic affected most sporting activities including football.

Defending champions, KCCA FC, beat Azam FC in the final to lift the Kagame Cup in Rwanda in 2019.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

MAINLAND Tanzania will be represented by two clubs at the 2021 CECAFA Kagame Cup tournament.

Vodacom Premier League Champions, Simba SC, which reached the quarterfinal stage of the 2020/21 CAF Champions League, will miss the regional competition for yet to be revealed reasons.

The Council of East and Central Africa Football Associations (CECAFA) has confirmed that the regional

inter-club competition will take place in Dar es Salaam from August 1-15.

The tournament that is bankrolled by Rwanda's President, Paul Kagame, returns after a two-year break.

Auka Gecheo, the CECAFA Executive Director, said the draw for the regional tournament played between the top clubs will be conducted

on July 27.

Gecheo confirmed that the Malawi Premier League side, Big Bullets FC, will take part in the tournament as a guest team.

"This tournament will help our teams in the region prepare for the CAF competitions that start in September. We shall also have a guest team from Malawi to

spice up the tournament," Gecheo said.

Uganda will be represented by the KCCA FC, the tournament's defending champions, and the 2020/2021 Uganda Premier League champions, Express FC.

The tournament will have eight clubs, Altabara Juba (South Sudan), Yanga (Tanzania), Azam FC (Tanzania),

Simba SC opts out of 2021 CECAFA Kagame Cup

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

The Council of East and Central African Football Associations (CECAFA) has confirmed that Simba SC will not take part in the 2021 CECAFA Kagame Cup, which will be held from August 1-15 in Dar es Salaam.

The host country will be represented by Yanga and Azam FC, who completed the 2020/21 Vodacom Premier League season in second and third place, respectively, while Simba SC, which reached the quarterfinals of the CAF 2020/21 CAF Champions League, will not take part.

There is no official reason given by Simba SC not to be involved in Kagame Cup.

In an earlier statement, Simba SC and Biashara United were reportedly involved as part of the competition.

While Yanga will participate in the next season's CAF Champions League, Azam FC will represent Tanzania in the CAF Confederation Cup.



Simba SC players participate in training in Dar es Salaam recently to prepare for the Vodacom Premier League. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

This season's Kagame Cup is set to give them a platform to test themselves against other regional clubs.

The CECAFA Executive Director, Auka Gecheo, said the competition's draw will be conducted on July 27.

The showdown is

geared towards helping participants prepare for CAF competitions.

"This tournament will help our teams in the region prepare for the CAF competitions that start in September.

We shall also have a guest team from Malawi to spice up the tournament," Gecheo said.

Gecheo added: "This tournament will help our teams in this region prepare for the CAF tournaments which will start in September."

"We will also have a foreign team from Malawi to promote the tournament," the official noted.

Uganda will be represented by KCCA FC, the showdown's defending champions, and champions of the Uganda Premier League 2020/21, Express FC.

Kenya's CAF Champions League representatives have confirmed

they will be part of the August competition.

Gecheo confirmed that Malawi's Premier League side, Big Bullets FC, will take part in the tournament.

The KCCA FC defeated Azam FC in the Kagame Cup's final in 2019 and won the trophy.

Last year the tournament did not take place after the COVID-19 pandemic affected many sports activities, including soccer.

Teams certified to participate in Kagame Cup 2021 are Yanga, Azam FC (Tanzania), Altabara FC (South Sudan), Le Messenger Ngozi (Burundi), APR (Rwanda), Express FC, KCCA FC (Uganda), Tusker FC (Kenya), KMKM SC (Zanzibar), and Big Bullets FC (Malawi).

The regional club competition will begin just after the completion of the CECAFA U-23 Challenge Cup, which is taking place in the northern city of Ethiopia, Bahir Dar.

Uganda will be represented by KCCA FC, the showdown's defending champions, and champions of the Uganda Premier League 2020/21, Express FC.

Kenya's CAF Champions League representatives have confirmed

TAMISEMI Queens wallop Arusha Police in First Division Netball League

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

DODOMA's TAMISEMI Queens commanded a 62-24 win over Arusha Police team in this season's First Division Netball League match at Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium in Arusha on Wednesday.

In what turned out to be a pulsating clash, TAMISEMI Queens had led 14-5 in the first quarter, the second quarter had the squad leading 27-12.

In the third quarter, TAMISEMI Queens kept on dominating the proceedings, given the side boasted of a 48-17 lead.

Sophia Komba of TAMISEMI Queens was voted as the clash's best player for her stellar performance.

Sophia executed good passes and helped TAMISEMI Queens come out victorious.

Arusha Police side's players, led by Julieth Martin (Goal Defender) and Eva Jimmy (Goal Keeper) were forced to step up so they could prevent their team from succumbing to a humiliating defeat.

Lilian Jovin (Goal Shooter) and Aziza Itonye (Goal Attacker) netted TAMISEMI Queens' goals, while Arusha Police's goals were scored by players Diana Dickson (Goal Shooter) and Jenipha Saning'o (Goal Attacker).

Speaking immediately after the game, TAMISEMI Queens' assistant captain, Sophia, said the game was good as her team was well prepared to post the victory.

The Dodoma outfit's coach, Maimuna Kitete, said her team has come to make its presence felt, noting the outfit does not fear any of the opponents in the tournament.

The tactician stated for them, every match is a final and the side's players are looking forward to putting solid showing in other fixtures.

In the First Division Netball League's previous fixtures, Morogoro Prisons beating Immigration 39-38, JKT Mbeni walloped Arusha Police 66-23, Smart beat Union 38-26.

Mgulani JKT defeated Ihumwa Dream Team 40-26, and JKT Mbeni hammered Arusha 97-21.

The league is to resume tomorrow with a match between TAMISEMI Queens and Ihumwa Dream Team.

The day will, moreover, have Arusha Police coming up against Eagle Queens, Morogoro Prisons taking on NVRF Queens.

A total of 12 women's outfits and four men's outfits are participating in the league.

Simba SC, Yanga fans head to Kigoma by train

By Correspondent James Kandoya

AFTER a long preparation, football fans left Dar es Salaam by train to Kigoma yesterday to watch this season's Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) final pitting Yanga against Simba SC, which will take place tomorrow.

Tanzania Railway Corporation

(TRC) Managing Director, Masanja Kadogosa, told reporters at Dar es Salaam station that the trip is organized by the corporation in collaboration with a domestic media outlet, Cloud Media Group (CMG).

Kadogosa said apart from the match, the trip is also meant to promote tourism, adding that passengers will have time to enjoy nature on their way

to Kigoma.

He said on the way, the passenger will also get a chance to see the ongoing construction of the standard gauge railway at Kilosa section.

"TRC is facilitating safe and reliable transport to our customers and the fans," he said.

According to him, the train will return to Dar es Salaam on July 25

soon after the match is over.

He said TRC had arranged 14 coaches' deluxe trains to carry passengers to and from Kigoma region while the passengers enjoy nature.

The train will have entertainment including music from various solo artists, food, and drinks.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

Mathematics
 Maths is Maths
 Maths = Maths
 Maths - Maths = 0

