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## Uganda in extensive testing of MPs, their staff over Covid-19

KAMPALA

UGANDA has begun systematic testing of its 426 legislators and their staff for the new coronavirus, a parliamentary spokesperson has declared.

Uganda has officially recorded 1,051 cases and zero deaths since March, but MPs requested the tests due to the nature of their work which involves meeting many people, parliamentary acting head of communications Helen Kawesa (pictured) said.

She denied reports that an MP had been admitted to hospital with the virus, after a lawmaker wrote on twitter that one of his colleagues was ill.

"The medical screening of MPs for Covid-19 began this morning (Thursday). After MPs are screened, parliamentary staff will follow," she elaborated.

Parliament has no information that one MP tested positive for Covid-19 and is in hospital, she said.

On top of its official cases, Uganda has

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# JPM names new top officials as more eye parliamentary seats



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa speaks at Buhari Mosque in Ruangwa District, Lindi Region, moments after prayers yesterday. Photo: PMO

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT John Magufuli yesterday appointed a number of government executives in what appears to be the filling of vacancies left by civil servants leaving their current positions to seek political positions in late October's General Election.

The Directorate of Presidential Communications said in a statement at the Chamwino State House in Dodoma that the president has appointed Dr Jumanne Fhika as Njombe regional commissioner, replacing Christopher ole Sendeka - who has just picked up nomination forms to vie for the Simanjiro parliamentary seat.

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On July 14th CCM opened doors for interested cadres to collect nomination forms to vie for parliamentary and councilorship seats, an exercise that was formally closed yesterday at 4:00pm

## May, June see tourists trickling into Zanzibar

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

JUST a month and a half after Zanzibar authorities announced the reopening of tourism activities, a total of 273 tourists have entered the Isles.

The activities were shut down on March 20 following the outbreak of Covid-19. Early June, Zanzibar opened tourism activities to normal for both charter and scheduled flights.



Almost all the tourists booked their stay in the Isles for eight days

flights.

An expert in the office of the Zanzibar Chief Statistician, Raya Mohammed Mahfoudh made this affirmation when briefing journalists on the flow of tourists, noting that about 173 visitors last month, nearly half from Europe.

About 52 per cent of tourists arriving at the Isles last month passed through the Amaan Abeid Karume International

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## Membe mum after receiving ACT-Wazalendo party forms

By Henry Mwangonde

FORMER Foreign Affairs minister Bernard Membe yesterday collected forms for nomination to run for the Union presidency on the opposition Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo) ticket in the General Election slated for late October.

Membe (pictured) was handed the forms by ACT-Wazalendo Secretary General Ado Shaibu at the party's head office at Kijitonyama in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam.

However, the former minister would not be drawn into addressing the media after collecting the forms, promising to speak and outline his agenda when returning the forms next week.

"My decision to pick up presidential



nomination forms follows a request by ACT-Wazalendo party members that I should contest the Union presidency," he stated.

Membe was for most of this year suspended from the ruling party, with his membership later formally withdrawn - but only after he returned his CCM membership card, ready to jump ship.

Joining ACT-Wazalendo on Thursday, he asked other opposition parties to join hands with his new party ahead of the coming elections.

He appealed to opposition parties to unite and form a strong coalition to challenge the ruling CCM in the polls, declaring that the opposition was a big force and time was ripe to come together and form a strong coalition

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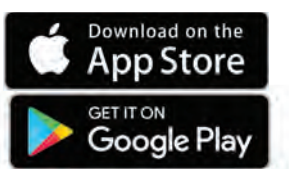
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## JPM names new top officials as more eye parliamentary seats

FROM PAGE 1

Prior to the appointment, Dr Fhika worked at the President's Office and is a former senior official in some of Tanzania's diplomatic missions abroad.

Dr Aloyce Nzuki becomes Permanent Secretary in the National Resources and Tourism ministry, taking over from Prof Adolf Mkenda. Dr Nzuki was until the new appointment Deputy Permanent Secretary in the same ministry.

Prof Mkenda has collected nomination forms to vie for the Rombo parliamentary seat in Kilimanjaro Region. For the past five years, the seat was held by Joseph Selasini of Chadema, who recently shifted to NCCR-Mageuzi.

President Magufuli has also named Anthony Sanga as Permanent Secretary in the Water ministry. Before the appointment, Sanga was Deputy Permanent Secretary. He replaces Prof Kitila Mkumbo, who is seeking nomination as the CCM flag-bearer for the Dar es Salaam's Ubungo constituency parliamentary seat.

Also appointed is Dr Allan Kijazi, who becomes Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Natural Resources and Tourism ministry in the place of Dr Nzuki and shall continue serving as Conservation Commissioner for the Tanzania National Parks (TAN-APA).

President Magufuli has further appointed Nadhifa Kemikimba as Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Water ministry, replacing Sanga. Kemikimba was the director for water supply and sanitation in the same ministry.

He has also appointed Fadhili Juma as Geita district commissioner in Geita Region. Juma was CCM regional chairman for Lindi and replaces Josephat Maganga, recently appointed Dodoma district commissioner.

Maganga fills the position left vacant by Patrobas Katambi, who has picked up nomination forms to vie for the Shinyanga Urban parliament-

tary seat.

Also appointed is Dr Seif Shekilage - as Songwe regional administrative secretary (RAS), replacing David Kafulila - until the appointment serving as Maswa district commissioner in Simiyu Region.

Mussa Chogelo has been named Ilala district commissioner, taking over from Sophia Mjema. Chogelo was earlier a senior officer in the President's Office.

Aswege Kaminyonge becomes Maswa DC, replacing Dr Shekilage. Kaminyonge was a senior officer at the Mbarali District Council in Mbeya Region.

Carolious Misungwi becomes Kalamba district commissioner in Rukwa Region, replacing Julieth Binyura. Misungwi previously worked at the office of the Controller and Auditor General (CAG).

President Magufuli has also appointed Dr Athumani Kihamia as Rombo district commissioner in Kilimanjaro Region in the place of Agnes Hokororo. Dr Kihamia is a former Director of Elections at the National Electoral Commission, later moving to the President's office.

Lainie Kamendu is the new District Executive Director (DED) for Kilolo in Iringa Region, replacing Aloyce Kwezi. Kamendu was earlier a treasurer with the Moshi Municipal Council in Kilimanjaro Region.

George Mkuchika, Minister of State, President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance), has meanwhile appointed Hanan Bafagil as Arusha District administrative secretary, replacing Daving Kihenzile. Earlier, Bafagil was a divisional executive officer in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam region. The appointees are expected to be sworn in at the Chamwino State House today.

On July 14 CCM opened the doors to interested cadres to collect nomination forms to vie for parliamentary and (ward) councillorship seats, the deadline being 4:00 p.m. yesterday.



Primary schools pupils on their way to school, as found at some spot in Dar es Salaam's Tegeta suburb earlier this week. The photo tells more than enough about the risk they face, particularly given the poor state of roads in the particular area. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msalay.

## Membe mum after receiving ACT-Wazalendo party forms

FROM PAGE 1

able to remove CCM from power "because the way is clear".

Already, ACT-Wazalendo national chairman Seif Shariff Hamad has collected nomination forms to vie for the Zanzibar presidency, the sixth time for him since 1995.

The race for Union presidency started early this month with the CCM national congress endorsing President John Magufuli as its candidate.

Dr Magufuli meanwhile retained Samia Suluhu Hassan as his running-mate, describing her as hard-working and respectful.

The ruling party also picked Defence and National Service minister Dr Hussein Mwinyi as its presidential candidate for Zanzibar.

Chadema cadres who have picked up nomination forms to run for the presidency are Dr Maryrose Mjige, former

Singida East lawmaker Tundu Lissu and ex-Singida North MP Lazaro Nyalandu.

Lissu, who is the party's national vice chairman, became the first cadre of the main opposition party to pick up presidential nomination forms through his agent, David Jumbe - the 2015 Chadema candidate for the Singida North constituency parliamentary seat.

The newly amended law on political parties requires the

parties to first agree on areas of cooperation before such agreements are submitted to the Registrar of Political Parties not later than the end of August.

The law obliges parties planning to form coalitions to submit to the registrar cooperation agreements endorsed by members through constitutionally recognized meetings of individual parties three months before the General

Election.

Parties wishing to form alliances after the general elections have to submit such agreement to the registrar two weeks after the polls.

The law provides that such agreements should be submitted by authorised persons and must contain specific matters of cooperation, while the status of individual parties should be maintained as per their registration.

## Uganda in extensive testing of MPs, their staff over Covid-19

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also tested and refused entry to nearly 1,500 truck drivers from neighbouring countries, testing positive for the virus.

There are now more than over 600,000 confirmed cases of coronavirus across the continent, with a number of African countries imposing a range of prevention and containment measures against the pandemic.

Recent data by the John Hopkins University and the Africa Center for Disease Control on Covid-19 in Africa, the breakdown remains fluid as countries confirm cases as and when.

As of May 13, every African country had recorded an infection, the last being Lesotho. The two institutions said lately that Africa had a total of 663,953 confirmed cases, with active cases placed at 306,176 while recoveries reached 343,418 despite 14,359 people having lost their lives by official records since its outbreak in the continent.



Police Commissioner of Operations and Training Liberatus Sabas (L, saluting) arrives in Iringa municipality yesterday to assess the readiness of police officers in Iringa Region ahead of late October's General Election. Photo: Tanzania Police

## May, June see tourists trickling into Zanzibar

FROM PAGE 1

Airport and 48 percent arrived by sea, with similar proportions being registered for gender. About 52.4 percent were men and 47.6 percent women.

The number included women under the age of 15 years (3.3 percent) and elders aged 65 years and above who accounted for 2.9 percent.

"Almost all the tourists booked their stay in the Isles for eight days," he said.

Dr Stella Ngoma, an Economics lecturer at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) said the reactivation of the tourism sector would further boost Isles economic growth, which substantially relies on tourism.

Dr Ngoma was optimistic that more tourists will flock to the Isles in the coming months, with the continuous decrease in the number Covid-19 cases not only in Zanzibar but in many other countries including Italy, the leading country in the number of tourists visiting Zanzibar.

She however noted that as the global economy will continue to be hit by the pandemic for the coming months, Zanzibar will also be affected as it is part of the world.

Tourism is Zanzibar's largest economic sector and essential for local socioeconomic stability. World Bank data shows that tourism is now a significant source of income in Zanzibar's economy and its largest source of foreign exchange.

In 2018, the sector con-

tributed an estimated 28 percent to the islands' GDP and 82 percent of its foreign exchange earnings, while the industry is a major foreign exchange source for Tanzania as a whole, accounting for about 17 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Announcing the reopening of tourism activities early June, Zanzibar Minister of Information, Tourism and Heritage Mahmud Thabit Kombo said all travelers to Zanzibar should hold medical health insurance and they should follow strict guidelines on the prevention of Covid-19 set by Zanzibar health authorities.

Arriving travelers will undergo screening at entry points and those found with symptoms will be sent to a designated isolation center for further tests.

The government reopened the tourism sector in May, a move that was welcomed by many in the industry.

Tabling budget proposals for the 2020/2021 financial year, Natural Resources and Tourism minister, Dr Khamis Kigwangalla told the National Assembly that the number of tourists anticipated to visit Tanzania during the year is likely to dwindle on account of the Covid-19 pandemic.

About 1.9m tourists were expected visited the country this year but up to the air travel suspension about 437,000 had visited the country, he said.

About 623,000 people are employed in the provision of services in the tourism industry, the minister noted.

## PCCB issues alert on funding of political parties in elections

By Guardian Reporter

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) has cautioned against business people funding political parties and candidates vying for various posts in the coming General Election.

"I am aware of some aspirants of various posts who are being financially supported by business moguls during election campaigns, these people provide support to candidates

with expectations of benefiting from them once voted into power," said the PCCB director general, Brigadier General John Mbungu.

He made the remarks when opening a seminar for election stakeholders in Dar es Salaam yesterday. The seminar was meant to discuss on how to combat corruption during the October general elections.

He attributed corruption with the high cost of elections whereas some business

persons take advantage to finance campaigns with the view of benefiting from successful candidates.

General Mbungu said that such incidents contribute into some government officials making policy decisions that benefit the minority of Tanzanians.

"Some aspirants with good financial muscles use money to bribe voters to elect them. Let us discuss on how we can combat such incidents in the com-

ing elections. President John Magufuli has already promised a free and fair election," he noted.

He said that when President Magufuli dissolved the 11th Parliament in Dodoma on June 26th, he insisted on stakeholders to avoid involving in corruption during the general elections.

"We are determined on this, since even the country's constitution directs public institutions and other organs to

curb corruption," said General Mbungu adding bribe may have adverse effects in elections.

"Apart from resulting into conflicts during elections, corruption affects the country's economic development plans due to limited transparency in decision making and lack of good governance," he explained. He said when there is corruption citizens lose confidence with the government organs.



# 'SIDO issued 281.5bn/- in loans to 156 small-scale entrepreneurs'

By Guardian Correspondent

THE Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) in Dodoma Region has in the 2019/2020 fiscal year issued a total of 281.5bn/- in loans to 156 small-scale entrepreneurs (SMEs) to support them to improve their businesses and investments

Addressing journalists here,

regional loans officer Justine Kahemela said the funds also benefited eight small-scale industries which in-turn produced employment opportunities to young Tanzanians.

"A number of SMEs working in the field of small-scale industries, agriculture and livestock keeping benefited from the loans and are now reaping big from their investments," he said.

He called on other SMEs to uti-

lize the opportunity and don't hesitate to apply for the loans so as to improve their businesses.

According to him, SIDO can provide loans starting from 8m/- to 500m/- depending on the capacity of the project.

"SIDO is also implementing a programme in collaboration with various stakeholders such as the Vocational Educational Training Authority (VETA), Azania Bank, National economic

Empowerment Council (NEEC) and the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) to empower SMEs and capacitate with soft loans," Kahemela said.

He further said: "The loans issued to the public show that they have expanded their projects and created more than 128 direct formal jobs, increased incomes, and eventually helped entrepreneurs to meet their daily basic necessities as well as

paying for their children's education and thus reducing the level of poverty."

He urged the public to continue seeking for expertise services from the organization in the areas of technology, industries, business plan and development as well as market and financial investments.

For his part, SIDO regional business development officer, Crispin Kapanga said that Dodo-

ma region has several business and investment opportunities waiting for well committed people to reap them.

Sempheo Manogni, manager for SIDO in Dodoma said that the organization will continue educating the public on the importance of using the organization's services for their development. The Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) is a parastatal organiza-

tion which was established by the Act of Parliament No. 28 of 1973. The organization is mandated to plan, coordinate, promote and offer every form of services to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The responsibility of the organization includes facilitating entrepreneurship development and offering extension services, promotes technology development and industrialization,



Arusha regional commissioner Iddi Kimanta (in tie) has a word in his office on Thursday with Arusha-Kilimanjaro Bus Owners Association leaders. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

## US gov't strengthens health systems to end the HIV epidemic in Tanzania

By Guardian Reporter

REPRESENTATIVES from the US government and Tanzania participated in a virtual conference where they discussed achievements and next steps for health systems strengthening in the country, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Community Health and Systems Strengthening Program (CHSSP).

The USAID Community Health and Social Welfare Systems Strengthening Program (CHSSP) used a systems strengthening approach in line with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief goals to assist the Government of Tanzania to control the HIV epidemic.

A six-year \$ 36 million activity, CHSSP trained over 18,000 community case workers, and built the capacity of 49 local civil society organizations. CHSSP also revitalized thousands of local government community structures across the country to be better able to identify most at-risk populations, get them tested, link them into care, and retain them on treatment.

As a result of these interventions, the activity reached over 1 million individuals in 106 councils of Tanzania to receive HIV testing, of which 90 percent who tested positive were started on HIV treatment. Over 700,000 vulnerable children and their families are now linked to life saving health and social welfare services.

These are tangible results that directly contribute towards the 90-90-90 goals to ending the HIV epidemic (90 percent of all people living with HIV will know their status; 90 percent of all people diagnosed with HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy; 90 percent of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression).

During the virtual closeout conference, USAID Mission Director to Tanzania, Andrew Karas, said: "The United States stands with the people of Tanzania in their commitment to continue to build local community health systems and to end the spread of HIV. With continued partnership and collaboration in prevention, care, and treatment alike, we will achieve the goal of an AIDS-free generation."

Tanzania has 1.4 million people affected by HIV and the government wants 90 percent of the country's population to know their status, whereas currently it is only 62 percent who know their status.

It is estimated that over 3000 patients died in sub-Saharan Africa on a daily basis due to HIV in 2015.

Ten countries in Africa carry 80 per cent of the total HIV burden, namely South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Zambia.



**Tanzania has 1.4 million people affected by HIV and the government wants 90 percent of the country's**



Kilimanjaro Regional Police Commander Emmanuel Lukula shows journalists in Moshi municipality yesterday what he said were some of the 15 bags stuffed with cannabis weighing 379 kilograms intercepted by law-enforcement agents before being transported across the Tanzanian border on a Moshi-Holili bus. Photo: Correspondent James Lanka

# Police impound 379 kgs of marijuana

By Correspondent James Lanka,

Moshi

POLICE in Kilimanjaro Region have impounded 379kgs of marijuana hidden in a small commuter bus which was en-route to the Holili border from Moshi.

The Kilimanjaro Regional Police Commander (RPC) ACP Emmanuel Lukula confirmed the incident, saying that on July 16, this year, police officers arrested a Toyota Hiace with registration number T 802 AFZ loaded with 15 sacks of marijuana weighting 379kgs at Kilema road along the Arusha-Dar-es-salaam

highway.

"While on duty along the Arusha-Dar-es-Salaam highway at Kilema road area, police found the illegal products in the bus. They immediately arrested the driver Moses Swai Palanjo (44), a mechanic, and resident of USA river in Arusha Region.

He said that "during interrogations, the driver admitted that he was transporting the narcotics (marijuana) from Moshi to the neighboring country of Kenya through illegal routes popularly known as 'panya routes.'" Apart from marijuana, northern regions of Kilimanjaro, Tanga, Arusha and

Manyara are reported as one of the routes used to transport narcotics such as khat. Kenya, one of the EAC member states, allows production, selling, and use of khat, while in Tanzania the government has banned khat and it is in the list of illegal drugs like cocaine and heroin.

Among communities from these areas, khat chewing has a history as a social custom dating back hundreds of years. Khat contains a monoamine alkaloid called cathinone, an amphetamine-like stimulant, which is said to cause excitement, loss of appetite and euphoria.

Presenting the 2019 drugs control report in the National

Assembly, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office for Labour, Youths and Employment Anthony Mavunde, said the government has made remarkable progress in controlling smuggling of illicit drugs into the country.

Mavunde said despite the progress, there are still some people engaging in the business calling upon citizens and private institutions join the government's initiatives in fighting against the illegal business.

Mavunde said in the year that ended December 2019, the use of drugs and drugs business continued to

be a shocking problem in the country. He said most of the people used cannabis as well as the number of those using treatment herbs that originated from drug such as Tramadol, Ketamine and Valium increased.

According to the World Drug Report 2019, an approximately 271million person which is equivalent to 5.5 percent of people aged between 15 and 64 were subjected to drugs in 2017.

In 1980, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified khat as an unhealthy drug that can produce mild-to-moderate psychological dependence (less than to-

bacco or alcohol), although WHO does not consider khat to be seriously addictive.

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## Ministry of Water gives Iringa Urban water supply body six months to fix challenges facing Ismani residents

By Guardian Reporter, Iringa

THE Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Water Anthony Sanga, has issued six weeks ultimatum to the Iringa Urban Water Supply Agency (IRUWASA) and the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) to address water shortages facing residents in Ismani division, Iringa Rural.

He made the directives on Thursday when he visited the area and expressed dissatisfaction on the progress of the construction work.

Speaking, the deputy PS didn't agree with the experts' explanation that the multi-billion project is scheduled to be completed in June 2021.

"I don't agree with your proposal that people will start getting water next year after the whole project is completed. I have seen the water situation here at Ismani is not good, we cannot wait until the water tank is completed, we have to think outside the box and come up with alternative ways to ensure that we supply the essential service to the people within the next few months," Eng Sanga stressed.

Eng Sanga noted that as per the ministry's directives, all water projects should be completed in time so as to provide steady water services to the public who have suffered for years due to lack of water supply.

"I know that the expenses to bring water to Ismani costs 600m/-, let me assure you that by July 20, the ministry will dish out 200m/- to ensure that the project implantation goes faster, so start preparing yourself for the race, water pipes should be purchased and installed immediately," Eng Sanga told the authorities.

IRUWASA technical manager Eng Fabian Maganga assured the deputy PS that they are going to implement all the directives on time to enable steady water supply in Ismani division.

According to him, the implementation of the general Kilolo-Ismani project will cost 9.27bn/- and commenced on April 15, 2020.

"So far, the ministry has issued 450m/- to implement the project and the work has started, a total of 58,821 residents in 29 villages are set to benefit from the project. This involves 24 villages of Ismani division and five villages of Kilolo," he said.

He said that the project fetches water from Ruaha River which has plenty of water to serve the communities in all villages.

Reports show that, only 57 percent of Tanzania's population has access to an improved source of safe water, and only 34 percent of Tanzania's population has access to improved sanitation. Under these circumstances, the poor, particularly women and girls spend a significant amount of time travelling some distance to collect water.



**I know that the expenses to bring water to Ismani costs 600m/-, let me assure you that by July 20, the ministry will dish out 200m/- to ensure**





Chunya district commissioner Samwel Jeremiah (2nd-L) symbolically presents to Songwe district executive director Faudhia Hamidu 350 corrugated iron roofing sheets donated by NMB Bank Plc on Thursday in support of the construction of a secondary school and a dispensary in Songwe Region. Looking on (2nd-R) is NMB southern highlands zone manager Straton Chilongola. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## UNDP applauds Tanzania for progress in status of economy

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE United Nations Development Population (UNDP) has applauded the government for efforts that made Tanzania attain the middle income economy, saying if maintained the country might realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) before 2030.

Speaking during the event to hand over Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment to the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG), UNDP Resident Representative, Christine Musisi the country is likely to make more economic steps ahead.

"It is worth noting that the government is doing a lot to move the country forward and has made Tanzania reach the middle income economy, and let us hope that the country can realize the SDGs much on time" she said.

According to the UNDP boss, Tanzania is one of the few countries that have recorded remarkable economic growth in the past few years.

On the donation to CHRAGG, she said that UNDP appreciate the mandate of the commission, promising continued support to increase the institution's effectiveness, transparency and public education and awareness on human rights issues.

The UNDP boss noted that the commission has developed strong collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs), terming it a good step towards improved public awareness on human rights.

"We recognize that CHRAGG has only six offices countrywide, thus the need for more equipment to let it have more office to reach more people in the country is quite vital" she said, adding that her organization is ready to continue supporting the commission.

The World Bank has categorized Tanzania as a lower-middle income country after the country made economic reforms, including making consistent plans and taking hard decisions aimed at improving its economic development. "Discipline in financial expenditure and the prevailing peace and tranquility also helped the country to earn the middle income status from the World Bank," Hassan Abbasi, the chief government spokesperson told a news conference here.

Abbasi spoke after the World Bank on Wednesday declared Tanzania a middle income country, a goal that has been achieved five years ahead of the country's schedule.

He said other values that made the east African nation to earn the middle income status included the reinforcement of the leadership ethics, the implementation of flagship projects and investment in human development.

Tanzania last year recorded an economic growth of seven percent, making the country one of the fastest growing economies in Africa.

Tanzania is the second largest economy in East Africa and becomes the second East African Community member state to achieve the middle-income status after Kenya.

## BRAC Tanzania roots for hand washing in schools even post Covid-19

By Correspondent George Sembony, Tanga

A Non-governmental organization—BRAC Tanzania has called for continuation of the hand washing practices in schools to protect children from various infectious diseases.

The call was made by BRAC Tanzania Country Director, Fordson Kafweku when handing over 12 hand washing facilities worth 14m/- to be distributed to 12 primary schools in the Tanga Region. The primary schools that will

benefit from the donation are Kwakaheza, Pongwe Bweni, Gofu Juu, Mafuriko, Mkombozi, Makorora, Komezi, Martin Shamba, Rubawa, Kisimatui, Mpirani and Kwanjeka.

Kafweku who lauded Tanzania on how it handled the Covid-19 pandemic said there was a need to continue cultivating the habits that encourage cleanliness among children to protect them from diseases.

"The Covid-19 scare seems to have been contained, thanks to the good strategies by the govern-

ment. We need to take steps to maintain hand washing practices as a part of the general cleanliness habit that is essential in protecting children's health," Kafweku said.

The Region's Education Officer (primary education), Khalifa Shemahonge who represented the City Director, Daudi Mayeji said the hand washing equipment are still relevant and essential because of the need to continue maintaining the hand washing habit, especially among school children.

Shemahonge thanked BRAC Tanzania for considering to protect school children saying the organization has been an important development partner in education especially early childhood education, which is not in the official system.

He said the organization also supports training for girls who missed chances to continue with secondary education due to various reasons, including pregnancies.

The EELAY Project Manager for Tanga Region, Manoah Wil-

liam said they have implementing projects on broader education, empowerment and life-skills for adolescent girls and young children since 2015.

The project is being executed in several schools in Tanga city and Korogwe District. It targets girls between the age of 15 and 24 years who are assisted to continue with secondary school education. The children are those from poor families.

He said that 1,000 children are receiving early childhood education in 35 designated study centres that have been established at existing public primary schools in the Region.

The organization's Communications Manager, Emma Mbagu said the organization also provides financial credit services.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training issued guidelines before the schools were reopened on June 29th 2020 whereas it insisted on school managements to ensure availability of WASH facilities at entrance gates, classes, offices, libraries dormitories, dining hall

and washrooms to curb spread of Covid-19.

The WASH facilities refer to the provision of water, sanitation, waste management, hygiene and environmental cleaning.

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

Covid-19 is characterized by mild symptoms including a runny nose, sore throat, cough, and fever. Illness can be more severe for some people and can lead to

## ICTR President, several other officials salute ICC on Day of International Criminal Justice

By Guardian Reporter

TOGETHER with International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) President Vagn Joensen, Theodor Meron in his capacity as both ICTY and MICT President sent a letter to International Criminal Court (ICC) President Song yesterday offering their congratulations on the Day of International Criminal Justice, a day that commemorates the adoption of the Rome Statute on 17 July 1998.

In their letter, President Meron and President Joensen said that today's commemoration offers an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of international criminal justice in the last twenty years, including the establishment of the ICC, ad hoc international courts and the hybrid criminal courts.

"Together these courts—including those over which the two of us preside—have helped to transform the political and legal landscape. Calling senior political and military leaders to account for their acts before courts of law is increasingly the expectation, rather than the exception. This is a heartening development, and one to be both acknowledged and lauded," the letter stated.

In concluding their letter, they noted that the Day of International Criminal Justice also serves as a reminder that there is still work to be done at both national and international levels "to bring an end to impunity and, more importantly, to prevent the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in the first place."

In marking the International Criminal Justice Day, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT) has called upon the world to advocate for international criminal justice.

"We call upon the international community to support an effective and fair inter-

national criminal justice system according to which no one is above the law," read the statement.

It said: "On this symbolic day we wish to emphasise that international criminal justice is more important than ever, to both the international community and victims of mass atrocity crimes. As we reflect on the state of international criminal justice, we must also remember the horrific events that galvanised the international community in the mid-1990s: the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the genocide in Srebrenica."

The three Principals of the IRMCT said that in recent years, there has been a turn towards new accountability mechanisms and domestic proceedings, also as a result of the pioneering work of the ad hoc Tribunals.

"With the rise of new technologies, mass atrocity crimes become more visible. The future lies in a combination of different justice models, and also the efforts of domestic or hybrid courts to follow up on our valuable legacy," the statement reads.

According to them, the International Criminal Justice Day should be marked by paying tributes to the victims of injustice and witnesses worldwide. The victims were courageous to stand up against injustice and come forward to tell their stories. Stories of being beaten, tortured, sexually assaulted, or forced from their homes. Stories of watching family members, loved ones, or neighbours being subject to various terrible crimes.

"We salute all the witnesses who, often at great personal sacrifice, put their trust in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the Mechanism and found the words to describe these unspeakable experiences so that justice could be served. The archives of these Tribunals, under the management of the Mechanism, ensure that their stories will not be forgotten and their voices will be heard by generations to come." It stated.



Preparations for the construction of Mzingo River Bridge in Dar es Salaam's Kitunda suburb well under way, as captured by Correspondent Jumanne Juma's roving camera yesterday. Photo:

## Sub-Saharan Africa M&A transactions total US\$10.3 billion in H1 2020

By Tarek Fleihan

REFINITIV yesterday released the 2020 first half investment banking analysis for the sub-Saharan Africa. According to the report, investment banking fees in sub-Saharan Africa reached an estimated US\$64.5 million during the second quarter of 2020, half the value recorded during the first quarter of 2020 and the lowest quarterly total since Q1 2012.

Refinitiv is a global provider of financial market data and infrastructure. The company was founded in 2018. It is jointly owned by Blackstone Group LP which has a 55 per cent stake and Thomson Reuters which owns 45 per cent. The company has an annual turnover of \$6bn with more than 40,000 client companies in 190 countries.

Around US\$196.1 million worth

of fees were earned in the region during the first half of 2020, down 27 per cent from last year and a six-year low with fee declines recorded across M&A advisory, debt capital markets underwriting, and syndicated lending.

Debt capital markets underwriting fees declined 45 per cent to US\$26.2 million, marking the lowest first half year total for bond fees in the region since 2016.

Advisory fees earned from completed M&A transactions generated US\$43.4 million, down 50 per cent year-on-year to the lowest first half level since 2005, while syndicated lending fees fell 36 per cent to a six-year low of US\$71.5 million. Equity capital markets underwriting fees increased 164 per cent year-on-year to US\$55.1 million.

Government & Agency fees accounted for 26 per cent of total

investment banking fees earned in the region during the first half of 2020, up from 14 per cent during the same period last year.

South Africa generated the most fees in the region during the first six months of the year, a total of US\$108.4 million accounting for 55 per cent, followed by Nigeria with 13 per cent. JP Morgan earned the most investment banking fees in the region during the first six months of 2020, a total of US\$23.1 million or an 11.8 per cent share of the total fee pool.

As for Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A), the value of announced M&A transactions with any Sub-Saharan African involvement reached US\$10.3 billion during the first six months of 2020, 44 per cent less than the value recorded during the same period in 2019, and a two-year low.

The number of deals declined 18 per cent over the same period. After just US\$424.5 million worth of deals were recorded in April, marking the lowest monthly M&A total since October 2005, activity increased for two consecutive months to reach US\$3.0 billion in June, a nine-month high.

Deals with a Sub-Saharan African target declined 76 per cent by value to an eighteen-year low of US\$3.2 billion, as domestic M&A within the region declined 71 per cent from last year and the combined value of inbound M&A deals reached just US\$1.2 billion, the lowest first-half level in more than two decades.

The largest deal involving a sub-Saharan African target was announced at the end of May - Afrimat's US\$644.3 million acquisition of South African mine operator Unicorn Capital Partners.



## New Dar upcountry bus terminal 75 pc complete

By Guardian Reporter

THE construction of the new modern upcountry Mbezi Bus Terminal of the new upcountry buses terminal in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam has now reached 75 percent.

Dar es Salaam city council director, Sipora Liana said that construction of the terminal which will be done in two phases has so far cost 20bn/- adding that contractors are now roofing the passenger lounge that is located on the first storey. Upon completion the project will cost of US \$ 22m

She said that completion of the terminal complex will solve inconveniences experienced by passengers from touts.

"Passengers don't like touts, when the terminal is completed there won't be such a problem as no one except travelling passengers will be allowed to get into the terminal," she added.

Liana added that the terminal will also have a dispensary, pharmacies and a shopping mall which will also provide banking services.

"We will ensure presence of all financial transaction services for passengers, there will also be restaurants and low cost hostels for passengers needing them," Liana added.

She further said the second phase will include a petrol station, a carwash a police station, gardens, children's playground and five star hotels.

The project is being undertaken in two phases and when completed will be able to accommodate over 3000 buses a day.

The modern Mbezi Bus Terminal will be bigger and spacious therefore eliminating congestion completely. Commuters and traders will also benefit greatly due to the high number of buses that the terminal will serve.



**We will ensure presence of all financial transaction services for passengers, there will also be restaurants and low cost hostels for passengers needing them**



BRAC-Tanzania managing director Fordson Kafweku (R) briefs Tanga City primary school education officer Khalifa Shemahonge on washing items worth 14.1m/- shortly after the company donated them in Tanga on Thursday for distribution to 24 primary schools based in the city and in Korogwe District. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon

## Tanzania-Kenya one-stop border post, symbol of East African integration

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

NAFTALI Elude Mzota, a driver for the Impala Shuttle Company in Tanzania, has been driving between Tanzania and Kenya for over 23 years. Asked about the difficulties of crossing the border, Mzota sighs.

"Customs clearance used to be a real challenge here, because there were two borders. You had to go through at the

Tanzanian immigration office, and then repeat the exercise on the Kenyan side. It used to take between one and a half and two hours," he said, smiling.

Mzota added: "That's all changed now. When passengers arrive, it doesn't matter which side they come from, a single checkpoint does all the administration and they are able to carry on across the border."

The land border between

these two East African countries now has just a single border post. This project, the One-Stop Border Post, was set up at Namanga, a town of 16,000 inhabitants that straddles Longido District in Tanzania and Kenya's Kajiado County in Kenya.

By cutting the crossing time to a maximum of half an hour, the One-Stop Border Post project has boosted trade and tourism between Kenya and Tanzania.

To set up the border post, the African Development Bank in 2007 approved \$ 185 million in funding, of which \$ 108 million went to Kenya and \$ 77 million to Tanzania. The Bank co-financed the project with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

"Thanks to the new crossing point, road traffic has increased," said Edward Wilson Lyimo, the owner for more than

20 years of a hotel on the Tanzanian side of Namanga.

Lyimo said that businesses have become profitable noting the new crossing has really helped.

"Now, we can do business in both countries," said Lyimo.

The development has boosted the regional economy by streamlining, along with improved roads, the movement of people and goods across the

border.

Kenneth Bagamuhunda, Director General, Customs and Trade of the East African Community (EAC) said: "The idea now is to reproduce this initiative on other borders, such as that with Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Zambia."

The African Development Bank's is working to support regional integration, cross-border

trade, tourism, the socio-economic development of the region and poverty reduction.

The One-Stop Border Post project is also advancing regional cooperation, facilitating cross-border dialogue and the signing of treaties between EAC member countries.

It supports the ongoing work of the Facilitation of Cross-Border Movements Committee, set up in 1998 by the EAC Commis-

## Unearth GBV incidents, journalists urged

By Getrude Mbago

MEDIA practitioners have been urged to invest heavily in unearthing, writing and reporting Gender Based Violence (GBV) incidences in communities, a move which will contribute immensely to the reduction of the actions in the country.

Speaking during a tele-media conference recently, the director of the country's Transformative and Integrative Build Out for All (TIBA), Malcela Lungu said that there are several violence acts which are yet to be unearthed and reported.

He stressed that the role of journalists is to be the instrument of change by writing or reporting on GBV issues, help people and authorities to make informed decisions about what is going on in their societies.

"We see that journalists have a very important role in raising awareness, so by using much of their efforts to unearth acts of harm will increase awareness to the public and thus enable them to act whenever they come across any kind of harm. The move will also facilitate authorities to take tough decisions on the acts," she said.

She noted that there are several people in under-served communities who are starving of violence but they do not know what to do and where to go due to lack of accurate information and education.

According to her, the media can continue educating the public on the types of violence and their impacts so as to enable the public to take immediate measures when someone faces the challenge.

Lungu further urged all groups of people in the country to wake up and stop hiding violence acts for the benefit of the whole community.

"We should all together, everyone in his/her position stand up, condemn and speak out about violence acts, and this is where we can help those who are living a difficult life due to violence. Men have to also join the race, because I believe that there are some good number of men who do not support the actions," she added.

She however said that in order to accelerate the fight against violence, the organisation implemented a project which is aimed to increase male participation in the GBV war.

She said that the programme involved visiting various coffee hubs where usually men meet to among other things have cups of drinks, discuss and share views on various issues including violence and gender equality.

"Use of coffee hubs is the first approach being used in Tanzania and I am sure that it will transform men's perception about gender and will also produce male champions who will be in forefront campaigning for gender equality and fight against violence," she noted.

Lungu further said that discrimination and violence was not only confined to women but children as well thus needed intensive efforts to fight it as it had adversely impacted the community and the country as whole.



A drainage system along downtown Dar es Salaam's Samora Avenue undergoes repair earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## Special seats crucial for experience gaining before vying in constituencies - WiLDAF

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

POLITICAL parties in the country have been advised to provide more chances to young women to vie for special seats in the Parliament so as to enable them gain more experience and be able to compete independently in constituencies.

The advice was given over the weekend in Dar es Salaam by founder chairperson of Women in Law and Development Africa (WiLDAF), Monica Mhoja during the three-day seminar to empower women who are expected to vie for different posts in this year's General Election slated for October.

The seminar was organised by WiLDAF and funded by African Women Development

Fund (AWDF).

According to Mhoja, the special seats should not be given to the same person for several years because doing so denies other women with vibrant ideas and vision to miss the chance to present their ideas in the National Assembly.

She said that special seats should only be temporary for women to gain experience so that they can be able to go and compete in constituencies. "There are some people who have taken these special seats as their permanent positions, we should now give space to young women politicians to get experience through special seats," she said.

She further advised women who get a chance to enter in parliament through spe-

cial seats to make sure that they have a special agenda which is of public interest especially regarding women's affairs and supervise the agenda throughout the five years of parliament sessions.

Mhulo noted that women also have legal rights to vie for any leadership position from grassroots to national level, what is needed is for them to decide and be ready to contest.

She said that political parties are the major gatekeepers in determining which candidates have qualifications to vie for election. They play a critical role in enabling or blocking women's participation in decision-making processes, so they must ensure they increase the number of young women in those positions. For her part, WiLDAF Director, Anna

Kulaya said the major objective of the three-day seminar was to impart knowledge and skills to facilitators who are going to teach fellow women across the country who are expected to vie for different posts in this year's election.

"We give them skills so that they go and teach women's aspirant of different posts in the coming election. We need women's aspirants to know how to behave in politics and how to construct agenda in decision making levels," she said.

According to her, during the seminar, women were taught several issues including the meaning of campaigns and why are they important during elections and steps that someone should take during the campaigns.





Women in Law and Development Africa (WILDAF) Tanzania director Anna Kulaya speaks at a three-day workshop held in Dar es Salaam on Thursday, the thrust being on the empowering of women expected to take part in various decision-making capacities in the October General Election. It was organised by WILDAF in collaboration with the African Women Development. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

## CHF working on complaints from members - coordinator

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE coordinator of the improved model of Community Health Fund (CHF) in Dodoma Patrick Sebyiga has said the fund is working on various inconveniences affecting its members including lack of drugs.

Sebyiga was speaking to this paper about people's awareness in joining the fund.

He said among the complaints registered especially in rural areas includes lack of medicines in health centres, but whoever pays in cash gets the medicines.

"This is a challenge which we have started working on to find a permanent solution, but members have to understand that drugs are being delivered to the hospitals in phases, after every three months. It is possible that people to go to hospitals when the drugs have been used up," he said.

He called upon Dodoma residents to join the fund to be certain of treatment at low cost.

"The government has put in place procedures for those who are not in the official health fund systems, small traders, including street food vendors, motorcycle drivers and students to join the fund as it is designed to be of great assistance to them," he added.

He added: "It costs people a lot of money to pay for medical treatment from pockets. May I call upon city residents to massively register with the fund because it is only

30,000/- per six people per year."

CHF was established under the law – Cap 409 of Tanzania Laws (2002 issue) that enables a household, a family or an individual person to contribute towards medical cost before they fall sick.

The government is striving to expand health insurance coverage to at least 50 percent of the population in the efforts to achieve the Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

NHIF being an established and effective health financing option, a pioneer of Health Insurance in Tanzania resolved to undertake various interventions since 2001 to date in order to ensure improved access.

The improvements have not only benefited the members but also the wide network of accredited health service providers and the general population at large.



**The government has put in place procedures for those who are not in the official health fund systems, small traders, including street food vendors, motorcycle drivers and students to join**

## New chemical could potentially lead to cure for neglected tropical diseases

By Emily Henderson

SCIENTISTS say they are a step closer to developing a drug to kill the trypanosome parasite that causes human African trypanosomiasis, otherwise known as sleeping sickness, paving the way for a potential cure.

The University of York researchers deciphered the mechanism by which the compound, known as ABI works. ABI was

identified by researchers at the Novartis Institute for Tropical Diseases and similar compounds have been developed as an anti-cancer drug by the company.

The researchers found that ABI blocks the division of the parasite by interfering with the function of an essential enzyme in a structure called the kinetochore. The way in which the compound kills the parasite is different

from the way it kills cancer cells, such that the breakthrough could potentially lead to a cure being found for the neglected tropical disease and others including Chagas disease.

Our goal is to identify unique biology in the parasite; that is the first step in the development of safe and effective new drugs to treat devastating neglected tropical diseases.

This academic and industrial partnership has allowed us to achieve that goal and to start on the road to developing a new drug." The work is part of an ongoing research project which in 2016 identified another chemical compound that had the potential to kill three parasites that cause Leishmaniasis, African trypanosomiasis and Chagas disease.

As a result, a drug is now in clinical trials as a treatment for visceral leishmaniasis. The teams at York and Novartis then

began the search for a new chemical that could have better prospects of being developed into an effective treatment for African trypanosomiasis. This latest study is the result of that work.

Dr Manuel Saldivia, lead scientist on the project from the Department of Biology, and who is now a staff scientist at Novartis said: "Some of the most exciting discoveries in science came from using trypanosomes as a model organism. Their divergent biology is also an attractive open door for drug hunters. Because of its therapeutic

potential, our work provides a chemical tool to shed light onto one of the most fascinating events during life: cell division." Human African Trypanosomiasis is a devastating neglected tropical disease caused by the *Trypanosoma brucei* parasite transmitted by infected tsetse flies. It threatens millions of people in sub-Saharan Africa.

Chagas disease - or American trypanosomiasis - is caused by the *Trypanosoma cruzi* parasite. It can cause the heart and digestive system to become enlarged, which can be deadly. Chagas mostly af-

fects people in Latin America, but has now spread to other continents.

Leishmaniasis is caused by infection with *Leishmania* parasites and is spread by the bite of sandflies and is found in the Americas, Africa and Asia.

The research is in collaboration with scientists from the Novartis Institute for Tropical Diseases in California, the University of Glasgow and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. The research was funded by the Wellcome Trust.

## Rwanda reopens places of worship amid lockdowns

KIGALI

PLACES of worship across Rwanda are allowed to reopen but with strict virus control measures according to a cabinet meeting on July 15 led by President Paul Kagame.

A statement from the prime minister's office said the places of worship may open subject to clearance by local authorities. Places of social gatherings including schools were shut across the country on March 14th, same day the country confirmed its index case.

"Worshippers will now have to undergo registration and maintain 1.5m physical distance. All congregants must wear masks, public wearing of masks is obligatory. Offerings must not be given in cash", read the statement.

Children under the age of 12 will not be allowed in.

Schools, however, will remain closed until September. All traders for reopened businesses are required to accept digital payments as alternative form of pay-

ment. Civil marriages must not exceed 15 participants.

Borders remain closed except for exempted service or repatriations. Government announced that airspace will be reopened on August 1. Mass gatherings - public or private - are prohibited, gaming activities and bar operations remain prohibited.

The interior ministry on July 15 ordered re-imposition of a lockdown in selected areas in the south-west after a rise in coronavirus cases.

Movement restrictions were subsequently announced for Nyamasheke and Nyamagabe districts - including in a refugee camp which hosts thousands of Congolese, the BBC Africa LIVE page reported. Already areas in the capital Kigali were also put on lockdown last week due to rising cases.

Rwanda has a total of 1,435 confirmed cases, 679 active cases, and 752 recoveries. The country has recorded 4 deaths while the number of people tested countrywide is 194,802.



**Borders remain closed except for exempted service or repatriations. Government announced that airspace will be reopened on August 1. Mass gatherings - public or private - are prohibited, gaming activities and bar operations remain pro-**



Arusha Regional Medical Officer Dr Wedson Sichawe pictured in Arusha city on Thursday opening a one-day seminar aimed at raising the awareness of journalists based in Arusha, Manyara, Kilimanjaro and Tanga regions on the importance of administering various vaccines on 14-year-olds. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

## Tunduru authorities set to build modern cattle dips worth 405m/-

By Beatrice Philemon

AUTHORITIES in Tunduru District, Ruvuma Region are set to build nine modern cattle dips worth 405m/- to protect livestock against diseases.

Tunduru Livestock Officer Faraji Swale said recently that the cattle dips will be constructed in the villages of Mischela, Mkwela, Tinginya, Liwangula, Twendembele and Malaika Muhesi because are the main areas that have huge live-

stock population.

"The ministry has already given us funds for the construction work including 195kg of grasses which will be planted in the new grazing plots to help livestock keepers have enough pasture to feed their cattle," he said.

He said that the main goal is to ensure there is no shortage of grasses for grazing livestock across the district as well as prevent them from invading and grazing their livestock inside villages' forest re-

serves. Swale said that the government has also agreed to construct three Charco dams worth 150m/- for livestock keepers in Tunduru district.

"In a bid to keep livestock keepers from invading the village forest reserve and farms for cattle grazing, so far the district has allocated a total of 279 new grazing plots fit for livestock grazing. Among those plots, 191 plots have been offered to the livestock keepers as grazing areas while the remaining 81 are

still waiting for livestock keepers," he said. According to him, currently the district has 279 livestock keepers and about 62,357 cattle. Majority of livestock keepers in Tunduru district are from Mbeya and Morogoro Region.

"Lack of water and pastures are the main factors causing livestock keepers to shift from one area to another that in turn increases the livestock population within the district," he noted. Swale said that Tunduru district is the first district to allocate grazing plots in the country.

He thanked the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries for dishing out the funds and called upon livestock keepers to make good use of the dips and grazing plots.

The officer further said the extension officers have started to educate pastoralists on how to plant grasses within their respective grazing areas as well as work in partnership to construct cattle dips to reduce conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers.

Also they train them on watering

grass to get enough grasses to feed their cattle and other issues.

Highlighting on other plans, he said the district has set aside 120m/- to purchase grasses, for animal identification and registration, office's activities and monitoring and evaluation of new grazing plots. "It has set aside 30m/- for cattle dips renovation as well as purchase vaccines to prevent Lumpy skin disease (LSD), tick-borne disease, Newcastle disease and contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP)," he added.

According to him, since 2018 to date, no grazing permit has been issued to livestock keepers because they don't have enough land to accommodate more livestock keepers. "Right now all livestock keepers willing to stay in Tunduru district for livestock keeping activities are required to go to the District Commissioner to obtain grazing permit. All permits will be issued by DC to prevent conflicts between farmers and pastoralists," he added.



## Covid-19 threatens to set aid to education back by six years, warns UNESCO

By Special Correspondent

A NEW policy paper by UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report shows that total aid to education reached its highest ever levels in 2018, the latest available year.

However, it estimates that global aid is likely to decline by up to US\$2 billion from 2018 to 2022 as a result of recession caused by Covid-19, entailing a 12% drop in international support for education.

This means that without new measures, aid to education would only reach 2018 levels in 2024, which poses a serious threat to the recovery of education from the unprecedented disruption caused by the pandemic.

"Just as aid to education seemed to have recovered its lost momentum, the Covid-19 pandemic threatens to take us back several years," cautions UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay (pictured).

"Faced with the havoc wreaked by the pandemic, aid to education will arguably be more important than ever before. Countries will need additional funding to respond to the pandemic and education must be prioritized both in terms of aid and domestic allocations to avoid a setback to our global edu-

cation goal, SDG 4." Aid to education in 2018 reached a record US\$15.6 billion, an increase of 9% from the previous year. From one year to the next, aid rose by 6% for basic education, 7% for secondary education and 12% for post-secondary education, providing each with the highest amount of aid ever recorded.

Despite these increases, more effective aid to the sector was required: Only US\$7.4 billion, or 47% of aid to education, went to basic and secondary education in low- and lower-middle-income countries, the two sub-sectors and two country groups perceived as most in need.

In assessing the impact of Covid-19, the Global Report estimates that the pandemic is likely to have a more damaging impact than the financial crisis of 2007-8 as the recession affecting the top ten bilateral donors for education is expected to be more than twice as severe.

If current national spending levels on education as a percentage of GDP were maintained, national funding for education would decrease by USD 296 billion in 2020, further aggravating the situation, according to UNESCO estimates.

Manos Antoninis, Director of the GEM Re-

port says: "An estimated US\$8 trillion has been committed to pandemic responses by governments so far, helping secure their health systems and economies. But prospects for aid are linked to the impact of the crisis on donor budgets. Previous financial crises have impacted the allocation of aid for several years after the crises were over. We should therefore not underestimate the ricochet effect this pandemic could have on social services for years to come."

The paper assesses the impact of the Global Partnership for Education, the fundraising platform for the sector, showing that there is currently a lag of about three years between grant approval and disbursement. The amount it disbursed in 2019 fell back to 2010 levels. In 2018, Global Partnership for Education aid made up 6.7% of total aid to basic education in low- and lower-middle-income countries, down from a high of 11.4% in 2014. Three donor policy responses will be key over the next 12 months. First, the Covid-19 pandemic is also an education crisis. The share of education in total aid must be protected. Second, as countries need additional funding for Covid-19 responses that were previously not programmed, it is necessary to ensure flex-



ibility in support so that existing programmes can be restructured and realigned to help countries ensure that Covid-19 is only a temporary setback. Third, obstacles in the implementation

of traditional bilateral aid programmes may provide a chance for bilateral donors to consolidate fragmented aid efforts, shifting a larger portion through multilateral channels.

## Amid biting drought, sisters in Zambia fend off hunger with organic farming

CHILANGA, Zambia

UNDER the scorching sun on the outskirts of this town located 15 miles south of the capital, Lusaka, a group of religious sisters has slowly been practicing organic farming amid a biting drought that has affected millions of residents and their livestock countrywide.

The Daughters of the Redeemer are determined to find solutions to severe drought that has affected the southern African nation over the past few years, resulting in crops failing and livestock losing their grazing grounds.

On their 15 acres, sisters practice organic farming, which excludes all synthetic chemical inputs. The farm bears a variety of indigenous vegetables, fruits, cabbage, kale, maize, tomatoes, onions, beans and livestock that

includes chickens.

All surplus produce is used to feed hundreds of children under the age of 7 who attend early childhood education in the school run by the sisters. They also distribute food to hungry and vulnerable families and sell the remaining produce to consumers at local markets.

"We now have a solution to the drought problem in this country," said Sr. Christine Singini, noting that the practice provides protection from the global food crisis. "We used to rely on food donations during the dry season to feed hundreds of children attending school and neighboring families."

The landlocked country with a population of nearly 18 million is facing one of its first droughts in decades caused by dwindling rainfall, and an estimated 2.3 million people are on the brink of

starvation, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The majority of people in Zambia are farmers who depend on subsistence and small-scale agriculture for their food security and incomes. In recent years, these farmers have seen food prices rise due to the effects of climate change and poor harvests, making it even more difficult for them to feed their families.

Driving through the rough terrain in rural villages of southern and western parts of the country, one cannot fail to notice the effects of drought. Crops have withered as women and girls through the road carrying plastic jerry cans in search of water. Hungry children with anemic eyes and swollen bellies sleep helplessly on the floors inside their huts. The animals lie prone,

exhausted and starving. Bees swarm around a flower as they suckle its last drops of nectar.

However, it is not just Zambia. More than 45 million people in southern Africa are facing severe food shortage following successive years of drought and flooding. Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Angola, Malawi and Namibia are facing the consequences of drought, according to the United Nations World Food Program.

"WFP is fighting big and complex humanitarian battles on several fronts at the start of 2020," said David Beasley, executive director of the program. "In some countries, we are seeing conflict and instability combine with climate extremes to force people from their homes, farms and places of work. In others, climate shocks are occurring alongside economic collapse and leaving millions on the brink of

destitution and hunger."

The Daughters of the Redeemer sisters do not rely on rainfall to farm due to shifting weather patterns. After drilling a borehole, they installed an irrigation system that has given their crops a lifeline. Even with temperatures soaring to nearly 38 degrees Celsius, 100 Fahrenheit, the lush green healthy crop of maize and vegetables stands firm.

"We do not rely on rainfall to farm," said Singini, who oversees the operations of the farm, which began in 2017. Most farmers here are not able to grow crops when the rain doesn't fall as expected. "For us here, we are able to plant and harvest crops all year round because we use irrigation to water our crops and get better yield."

Since synthetic fertilizers have long-term negative effects on the environment, sisters have

switched to organic fertilizers that are safer and cause no pollution.

During the Green Revolution, a period in the second half of the 20th century when the productivity of global agriculture increased drastically as a result of new advances, many farmers moved away from traditional farming methods and turned to chemical fertilizers, hybrid seeds, herbicides and pesticides, all of which promised increased yields and enhanced productivity.

While this system, also known as conventional farming, does deliver high production levels, it also pollutes air and water bodies, contributes to climate change and depletes soil fertility. The practice, experts said, has led to serious health problems of obesity and diet-related disease. It has also contributed to a range

of respiratory conditions, causing suffocation and even death in severe cases.

"Food safety is important as we strive to achieve food security," said Dr. Peter Mokaya, an independent public health consultant and executive director of Organic Consumers Alliance, an advocacy group for organic agriculture. "The use of chemical fertilizers to improve farm yields continues to degrade our lands and in some cases is leading to a situation where lands are affected by advanced degradation, posing a danger to the food we eat."

Singini said organic farming was critical to achieving food security in Zambia and other African countries. On their farm, they keep cows, goats and chickens that provide manure that they use for planting their vegetables and maize.

## Public, private lending mash-up offers hope to virus-hit African firms

By Tom Arnold

BLENDED finance, a mix of public and private capital, is set to boom in Africa to meet funding demand from businesses cash-strapped in the wake of COVID-19 and as investors seek safeguards against financial risks.

Africa has been hit hard by the pandemic, pushing it into its first recession in 25 years and likely to drag 27 million people in the sub-Saharan region alone into extreme poverty.

Businesses across the continent have struggled as banks and other financiers have slashed lending at a time when companies facing plummeting revenues need cash to pay suppliers.

Blended finance, which gained traction in recent years to help governments respond to long-term challenges such as climate change and food security, is helping fill the void.

Proponents such as the World Bank's private sector investment arm IFC and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have in the past helped mobilise up to \$50 billion for Africa, more than a third of the global market.

But with the continent facing an estimated \$44 billion fiscal gap, such funding is being used to help fix short-term challenges, like trade finance for medical supplies or working capital to keep businesses afloat.

For example, the IFC says it is allocating twice as much funding to blended finance as in recent years.

"What we're seeing is a tremendous amount of demand from distributors for some sort of working finance to help their customers," said John Simon, founding partner of U.S.-based TOTAL Impact Capital, which aims to invest for social good.

TOTAL Impact Capital and another firm, Cardano Development, aim to harness blended finance in countries including Kenya to help buy thousands of pharmaceutical sales invoices where goods have already been delivered.

By advancing only a portion of the invoice value, with the balance paid at collection, the investment ensures returns for investors, while alleviating cash flows for the companies by shortening payment cycles, said Nico de Nijs CEO of IMFact, a company set up by the pair.

Demand has surged in the pandemic's aftermath, said Lade Araba, Africa managing director for Convergence, a global network for blended finance, noting more interest from institutional investors such as pension funds and insurance companies.

Comparing the demand in 2020 to spikes after the 2008-9 financial crisis and in 2015, she said many of the deals involved loans which offered more generous and flexible terms than those from a bank or institutional investor.

Calculating returns for blended finance can be tricky. As they involve a "concessional funder", returns for private investors were often limited by the need to avoid the perception of subsidising private profits, said Simon.

Araba said such funding attracted private investment by either transferring risks to soft loan providers or providing an additional risk premium - and a more attractive upside - for



## Disrupted health service in LDCs to see increase in HIV, TB, and malaria deaths due to covid-19 crisis

By Guardian Reporter

SCIENTISTS have predicted a surge in HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria deaths in low- and middle-income countries due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but add that this toll can be reduced by prioritising the most critical services, such as timely diagnosis and treatment for these diseases.

According to the modeling study, published in the journal The Lancet Global Health, low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) could see HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria deaths increase by as much as 10, 20, and 36 percents respectively over the next five years due to the disruption of health services caused by the pandemic.

However, the researchers, including those from Imperial College London in the UK, said maintaining core services for HIV, TB, and malaria could largely mitigate the broader health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

They explained that these services spe-

cifically include maintaining access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV, timely TB diagnosis and treatment, and early resumption of the distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets (LLINs) for preventing mosquito-borne malaria spread.

The scientists also cautioned that their study aimed to quantify the potential scale of the impact of COVID-19 and to guide how it could be minimised, rather than provide precise estimates.

"The COVID-19 pandemic and actions taken in response to it could undo the some of the advances made against major diseases such as HIV, TB, and malaria over the past two decades, compounding the burden caused by the pandemic directly," said study co-author Timothy Hallett from Imperial College London.

"In countries with a high malaria burden and large HIV and TB epidemics, even short-term disruptions could have devastating consequences for the millions of people who depend on programmes to control

and treat these diseases," Hallett said.

However, he added that the knock-on impact of the pandemic could be largely avoided by maintaining core services and continuing preventative measures.

Based on the results, the researchers said well managed, long-term suppression measures could avert the most COVID-19 deaths.

But if these interventions are not well managed, they could cause people to stay away from hospitals and clinics and force public health programmes to be cancelled, leading to a large spike in deaths from other major infectious diseases that had been coming under control, the scientists explained.

In the research, Hallett and his team assumed a basic reproductive number  $R_0$  -- which is the average number of people each individual with the coronavirus is likely to infect -- as 3 to develop four different policy response scenarios to the pandemic. These, according to the scientists, are 'no

action', 'mitigation' -- which represents a 45 percent reduction in  $R_0$  for 6 months using interventions such as physical distancing-- 'suppression-lift' with a 75 percent reduction in  $R_0$  for 2 months, or 'suppression' which is a 75 percent reduction in  $R_0$  for 1 year.

Then using models simulating the spread of HIV, TB, and malaria they estimated the additional impact on health that could be caused in different settings, either by COVID-19 interventions limiting routine programme activities or due to pandemic overburdening the health system.

The findings, according to the researchers, suggest that the impact of the pandemic varies according to the extent to which interventions against COVID-19 cause long disruptions to activities. They said it also depends on how successfully those measures reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and avoid the health system being overwhelmed.



SATURDAY 18 JULY 2020

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

## Mandela Day : Why his legacy will live forever

**N**ELSON Mandela International Day (or Mandela Day) is an annual international day in honour of Nelson Mandela, celebrated each year on 18 July, Mandela's birthday. The day was officially declared by the United Nations in November 2009, with the first UN Mandela Day held on 18 July 2010. However, other groups began celebrating Mandela Day on 18 July 2009.

On 27 April 2009, the 46664 concerts and the Nelson Mandela Foundation invited the global community to join them in support of an official Mandela Day. Mandela Day is not meant as a public holiday, but as a day to honour the legacy of Nelson Mandela, South Africa's former President, and his values, through volunteering and community service.

Mandela Day is a global call to action that celebrates the idea that each individual has the power to transform the world, the ability to make an impact.

The Mandela Day campaign message is:

"Nelson Mandela has fought for social justice for 67 years. "We would be honoured if such a day can serve to bring together people around the world to fight poverty and promote peace, reconciliation and cultural diversity," according to a statement issued on Mandela's behalf.

The Resolution also recognizes Mandela's values and his dedication to the service of humanity in: conflict resolution; race relations; promotion and protection of human rights; reconciliation; gender equality and the rights of children and other vulnerable groups; the fight against poverty; the promotion of social justice. The resolution acknowledges his contribution to the struggle for democracy internationally and the promotion of a culture of peace throughout the world.

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela born on

18 July 1918 - 5 December 2013) was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader and philanthropist who served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999. He was the country's first black head of state and the first elected in a fully representative democratic election. His government focused on dismantling the legacy of apartheid by tackling institutionalised racism and fostering racial reconciliation. Ideologically an African nationalist and socialist, he served as the president of the African National Congress (ANC) party from 1991 to 1997.

A Xhosa, Mandela was born to the Thembu royal family in Mvezo, Union of South Africa. He studied law at the University of Fort Hare and the University of Witwatersrand before working as a lawyer in Johannesburg. There he became involved in anti-colonial and African nationalist politics, joining the ANC in 1943 and co-founding its Youth League in 1944. After the National Party's white-only government established apartheid, a system of racial segregation that privileged whites, he and the ANC committed themselves to its overthrow. Mandela was appointed President of the ANC's Transvaal branch, rising to prominence for his involvement in the 1952 Defiance Campaign and the 1955 Congress of the People. He was repeatedly arrested for seditious activities and was unsuccessfully prosecuted in the 1956 Treason Trial. Influenced by Marxism, he secretly joined the banned South African Communist Party (SACP). Although initially committed to non-violent protest, in association with the SACP he co-founded the militant Umkhonto we Sizwe in 1961 and led a sabotage campaign against the government. He was arrested and imprisoned in 1962, and subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment for conspiring to overthrow the state following the Rivonia Trial.

## The impact of crisis is all down to global educational inequality

**E**DUCATIONAL inequality is the unequal distribution of academic resources, including but not limited to: school funding, qualified and experienced teachers, books, and technologies to socially excluded communities. These communities tend to be historically disadvantaged and oppressed. More times than not, individuals belonging to these marginalised groups are also denied access to the schools with abundant resources. Inequality leads to major differences in the educational success or efficiency of these individuals and ultimately suppresses social and economic mobility.

In addition to academic performance, attainment of learning objectives, acquisition of desired skills and competencies, satisfaction, persistence, and post-college performance should all be measured and accounted for when determining the educational success of individuals. Scholars argue that academic achievement is only the direct result of attaining learning objectives and acquiring desired skills and competencies. To accurately measure educational efficacy, it is imperative to separate academic achievement because it captures only a student's performance ability and not necessarily their learning or ability to effectively use what they have learned.

Much of educational inequality is attributed to economic disparities that often falls along racial lines and much modern conversation about educational equity conflates the two, showing how they are inseparable from residential location and, more recently, language. Educational inequality between white students and minority students continues to perpetuate social and economic inequality.

Throughout the world, there have been continuous attempts to reform education at all levels. With different causes that are deeply rooted in history, society, and culture, this inequality is difficult to eradicate. Although difficult, education is vital to society's movement forward. It promotes citizenship, identity, equality of opportunity and social inclusion, social cohesion as well as economic growth and employment and for these reasons, equality is widely promoted.

Unequal educational outcomes are attributed to several variables, including family of origin, gender, and social class. Achievement, earnings, health status, and political participation also contribute to educational inequality within the United States and other countries.

Nearly 260 million children had no access to schooling in 2018, the United Nations education agency said in a report that blamed poverty and discrimination for educational inequalities that are being exacerbated by the coronavirus outbreak.

Children from poorer communities as well as girls, the disabled, immigrants and ethnic minorities were at a distinct educational disadvantage in many countries, the UN's Paris-based education body UNESCO said.

In 2018, "258 million children and youth were entirely excluded from education, with poverty as the main obstacle to access," the report found.

This represented 17 per cent of all school-age children, most of them in south and central Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

The disparities worsened with the arrival of the coronavirus crisis, which saw over 90 per cent of the global student population affected by school closures, the report said.

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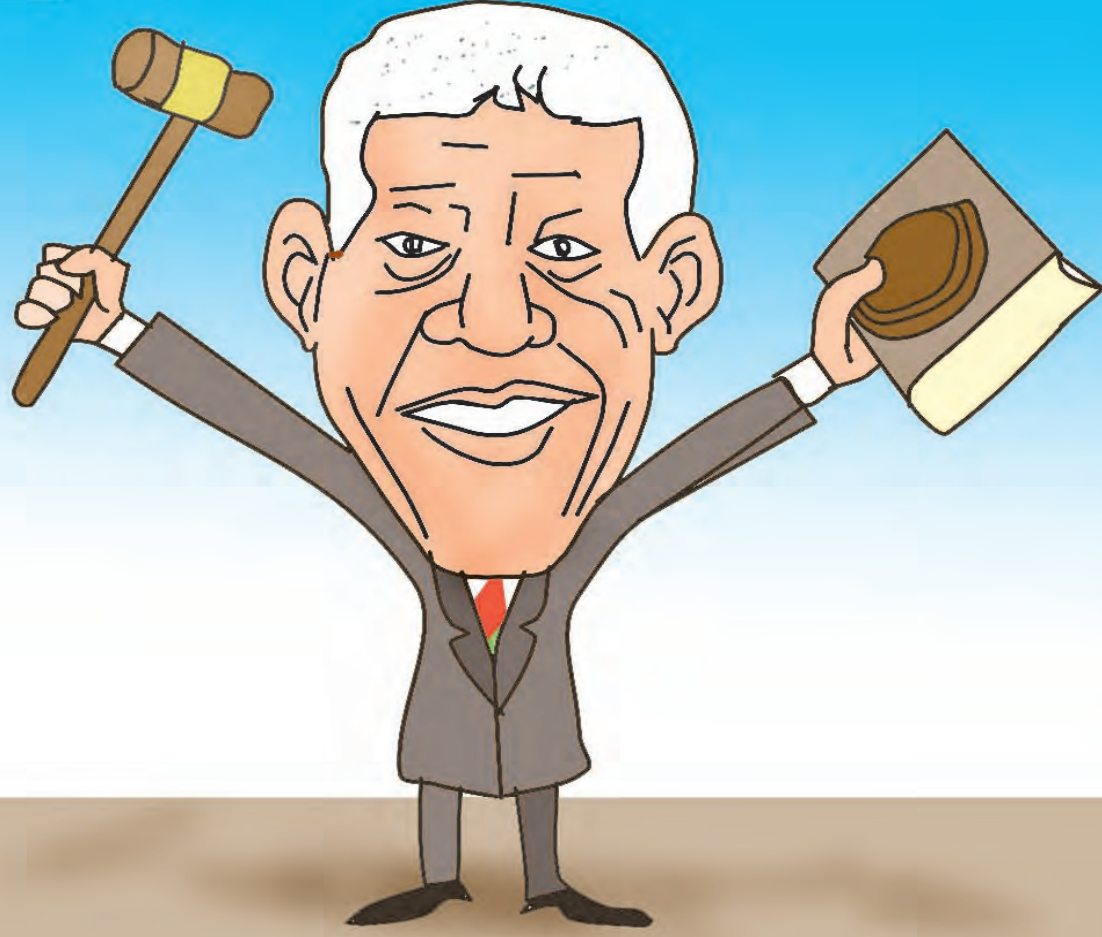
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# COVID-19 threatens sexual health of Africa's women

By Evelyn Samba

**MORE** HIV-infected and unwanted pregnant women in Africa are feared by Evelyn Samba from the German Foundation for World Population. States invested too little in their healthcare. Fatal in the corona crisis:

With around 500,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases across the continent (as of July 11, 2020), Africa does not appear to have been hit as hard by the pandemic as other regions of the world. However, the numbers could be higher, as many governments on the continent lack the materials and resources to test for the virus.

Many African governments have put in place measures to shore up their economies and to cushion their citizens from a downturn in earnings. However, discussions about the effect of COVID-19 on other aspects of life, such as reproductive healthcare, and the well-being of women and girls at risk of gender-based violence, have been largely neglected.

This has already had dire effects on reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health in Africa.

The disruption to access to sexual and reproductive health services in Africa is putting pregnant women and their families at increased risk. And this isn't just a short-term problem.

More unsafe births, less access to contraceptives and increased risk of contracting sexually transmitted disease also have long-term impacts on women, their families and societies.

In Zimbabwe, the number of caesarean sections performed decreased by 42%, and in April only 15% of births took place with skilled health attendants compared to last year. Access to contraceptives in many areas has decreased by 90%. In some parts of Kenya, only a quarter of pregnant women were able to go to antenatal clinics.

**Access to public health services is vital**

Millions of Africans depend on public health institutions for reproductive health. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in a report found that in times of crisis, reproductive health needs are likely to be overlooked. But even during the COVID-19



pandemic, African governments need to keep providing reproductive healthcare services.

That means, at the very minimum, the public health sector must be able to address complications of pregnancy and delivery, the transmission of sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS, adolescent sexual and reproductive health concerns, and ensure access to condoms and other contraceptives.

Midwives need to be able to visit women and information campaigns need to continue even when everyone wears a face mask. And even during the pandemic, African women, and their partners, need to have a satisfying and safe sex life - and be able to choose if and when they want to have children.

If that is not ensured, countries across Africa are likely to see an increase in sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, increased unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions as well as

a rise in maternal and neonatal deaths. Even before the pandemic, many

**More focus on reproductive health needs**

African governments were struggling with these issues. Many also did not manage to meet funding requirements for health - including sexual and reproductive healthcare.

Despite progress over the years, many African women and girls are still unable to enjoy their reproductive rights. Far too many women do not have access to modern contraceptives, too many adolescents and young people are getting pregnant and getting infected with HIV.

Maternal deaths are still unacceptably high. Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 66% of the estimated global maternal deaths in 2017.

Improvements achieved over decades are now at stake if we do not pay attention to reproductive

healthcare amid the pandemic.

The silver lining is that we have commitment from the highest political office on reproductive healthcare. At the Nairobi Summit the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD +25) in 2019, African governments committed to provide much needed family planning information and services, to end preventable maternal deaths and maternal injuries, as well as stopping sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices.

As African governments reorganize public health systems to respond to COVID-19, decision makers need to keep in mind that, at the same time, it is also imperative to provide adequate funding to meet the reproductive healthcare needs of African women and their partners.

Evelyn Samba is the Kenya country director of the German Foundation for World Population (DSW). The NGO works in several African countries and in Europe on sustainable and rights-based population development issues. One of its main focuses is ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services for women and young people.



# Many arguments relating to coronavirus misrepresent the complexities of society

By Gideon M-K; Health Nerd

There is so much coronavirus research coming out every day that it's hard to keep track of even a tiny bit of it, never mind everything. The same is true for Covid-19 news - there's just so much new information that it's hard to stay up to date with it all, no matter how hard you might try.

It's a bit like fighting a raging wildfire using your SuperSoaker 300. It's never going to work, and you'll eventually get burned.

One problem that keeps coming up is something that every scientist knows but which can be very counter-intuitive: the ecological fallacy.

This is present in arguments both for and against masks. It has undermined much of the discussion about vitamin D and coronavirus, and it's just generally a problem for many of the points made in the media about Covid-19.

So what is the ecological fallacy, and why is it a problem? Let's dig in.

## Endlessly Ecological

While it may sound like biology, the ecological fallacy is actually about large populations rather than the biophysical environment. It is so simple and yet such an easy trap that pretty much everyone has fallen into it at one point or another.

The basic idea of the fallacy is this: you cannot directly infer the properties of individuals from the average of a group. Sounds complicated, but what that means is that if you measure something about lots of people - say, height - you can't take the average measurement as an indication of any particular person's status.

There's a really simple example of this to do with means, or averages. Imagine that you've got two groups of ten people, A and B. Group A has an average height of 170 cm, and group B has an average height of 168 cm. If you randomly select one person from each group, who is



more likely to be taller: someone from group A or B?

The intuitive reaction is to say that someone from A is going to be taller - because the mean height is higher there. However, this is not necessarily true. You can have a mean height of 170 cm caused by two 200 cm giants and eight 162.5 cm people, and a mean of 168 cm with six 170

cm people and four 165 cm people.

In this case, 80 per cent of group A is shorter than everyone in group B, which means that you'll almost always get a taller person in group B if you pick randomly. In other words, the average of a group isn't always representative of the individuals.

That's the ecological fallacy in a nutshell. There are dozens of examples, many of them to do with countries and states. It commonly pops up in nutritional epidemiology - if we do a study and find that people who eat vegetarian diets are more likely to be depressed, it actually tells us very little about an individual vegetarian and their risk of depression.

Similarly, even though people who eat more red meat tend to be less healthy, we can't necessarily say that at an individual level eating more red meat is a good or bad thing.

## Fallacies and Covid-19

So how much does this affect coronavirus evidence in the news? It turns out, quite a lot. While headlines abound about countries with more vitamin D doing better, we still have very little idea about whether vitamin D actually does anything for people with the disease.

Similarly, the number of stories about why you should wear masks that come down to a study comparing one region where people wore masks and one where they didn't is almost endless at this point.

If it was as easy as comparing two places and drawing a conclusion about a single policy, we would've had an answer months ago. Instead, we are still seeing daily debates about masks in the news, because this stuff is pretty complex.

And the issues don't stop there. Have you heard that lockdowns are good because death rates are lower in one place than in another? Have you heard that they are bad with almost the same argument used?

Both of these are examples of the

ecological fallacy, where people are aggregating both deaths and pandemic responses at a country level, without acknowledging that individual areas within nations have very different pandemic experiences and this might be important in interpreting their overall result.

A very common example of this was the death rate per million when used at the start of the coronavirus pandemic. This was very misleading, because it always made big countries look good (they had lots of coronavirus but, thanks to the dynamics of exponential growth, not many infections per capita).

Now that we've progressed to a later stage of Covid-19, it's becoming clear that those places that looked really good on the deaths/million scale may actually have been doing badly all this time. Aggregating at the population level made it seem like some places weren't in trouble, even though they had a worrying explosion of cases.

The point here is not that we cannot draw any conclusions about Covid-19 from country-level data. Rather, it's that these comparisons are complex and can be misleading.

It may seem intuitive to say that, if masks appear to reduce an area's increase in Covid-19 cases by 40 per cent then it will do the same for your risk of the disease, while that's simply not true.

Ultimately, drawing individual conclusions from these broad strokes is incredibly difficult, and people spend decades learning how to do it. The ecological fallacy is just one issue in our interpretation of coronavirus evidence, but it does crop up often.

Next time you read a headline, before you open or adjust your life, have a think about whether it actually has much meaning to you. It might just be another example of the ecological fallacy.

A dispatch by epidemiologist and writer Gideon M-K; Health Nerd.

# Gross interference in Hong Kong affairs doomed to fail

The White House signed the so-called "Hong Kong Autonomy Act" into law on July 14, local time, regardless of the solemn representations from the Chinese side.

China strongly condemns and opposes such gross interference in Hong Kong affairs and China's internal affairs, as the U.S. maliciously denigrating the national security legislation for Hong Kong and threatening to impose sanctions on China, has seriously violated international law and the basic norms underpinning international relations.

No matter how external elements try to exert pressure, it cannot shake China's resolution and will to safeguard sovereignty and security and uphold Hong Kong's stability and prosperity. The U.S. attempts to thwart implementation of the Law on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) are doomed to fail.

The so-called "Hong Kong Autonomy Act" is an evil act fabricated by some U.S. politicians. Boasting "responsibility" and "obligation", they are indeed grossly trampling on international law and the basic norms underpinning international relations. They turn a blind eye to facts and calls white black, revealing their ignorance of and prejudice against the "one country, two systems" principle.

The so-called "rights" and "freedoms" in the "Hong Kong Autonomy Act" exposed American hypocrisy. The radical violent crimes taking place in Hong Kong threaten the life and property safety of the Hong Kong residents, and are way beyond the boundary and limits of the legal freedoms and rights. However, some U.S. politicians called these practices "a beautiful sight to behold" and blatantly supported the anti-China forces.

When China is implementing the national security law in Hong Kong which targets a very narrow category of criminal acts and activities that endanger national security and protects the safety and rights and freedoms the vast majority of the Hong Kong residents enjoy in accordance with the law, the U.S. is fanning up the so-called "rights" and "freedoms."

What lies behind is only an evil heart. Recently, over 70 countries voiced support to China's adoption of the Law on Safeguarding National Security in the HKSAR at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), opposing the interference in China's domestic affairs in the name of human rights. A young representative from the HKSAR to the UNHRC also voiced opposition to the anti-China forces in Hong Kong. The aspiration of Hong Kong residents, as well as the call for justice from the international society are solemn condemnation against U.S. wrong deeds.

China is firmly determined in safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests, implementing "one country, two systems" fully and faithfully, and opposing foreign interference in Hong Kong affairs. Practices will prove that the Law on Safeguarding National Security in the HKSAR will offer solid institutional guarantee for Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability.

China urges the U.S. to understand the situation, obey international laws and norms underpinning international relations, and stop any form of intervention in Hong Kong affairs and China's domestic affairs. China is resolute to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests, and will react strongly to the U.S. wrong deeds.

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seriously challenged the limits of the principle.

By making and implementing the national security law in Hong Kong, China has provided strong institutional and legal guarantee for the long-term stability of the "one country, two systems" principle. The legislation is an effective remedy to Hong Kong's governance, and will be sure to bring orders back to the special administrative region.

Based on the ignorance of and prejudice on the "one country, two systems" principle and its practices, the U.S. made the so-called "Hong Kong Autonomy Act" and tried to stop China from implementing the national security law. What it does is to realize its evil intentions in the name of law, which seriously violates international law and justice.

The so-called "rights" and "freedoms" in the "Hong Kong Autonomy Act" exposed American hypocrisy. The radical violent crimes taking place in Hong Kong threaten the life and property safety of the Hong Kong residents, and are way beyond the boundary and limits of the legal freedoms and rights. However, some U.S. politicians called these practices "a beautiful sight to behold" and blatantly supported the anti-China forces.

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# The SDGs, COVID-19 and the Global South: Insights from Sustainable Development Report 2020

PARIS/NEW YORK

Covid-19 has claimed more than 550,000 lives and disrupted the entire world, sparing no region. As of July 2020, the number of daily new confirmed cases and deaths due to COVID-19 are growing rapidly in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially in Brazil and Mexico but also in many African countries as well as India. As highlighted in a recent article, these numbers are likely underestimated given the reduced testing capacity in many low and middle-income countries.

The Effective Reproduction Rate (ERR), defined as the average number of infections that an infected individual transmits to susceptible individuals, is above 1 in many African and Latin American countries and in India. An ERR of less than 1 signifies effective suppression, while an ERR above 1 signifies ongoing epidemic conditions. Countries in the Asia-Pacific, such as Taiwan or Vietnam, have largely suppressed the virus, although they must remain vigilant.

Covid-19 has especially affected the achievement of the SDGs, and has produced many negative short-term impacts on most SDGs. For instance, an estimated 71 million people are expected to be pushed back into extreme poverty in 2020. These negative impacts are amplified in low-income countries and vulnerable population groups, especially in the Global South. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted nearly everyone globally, poor and vulnerable populations, including low-skilled workers and refugees, are suffering far more in terms of lost lives, vulnerability to infection, declining incomes, and unemployment.

## Before COVID-19, the world was making progress on the SDGs

One of the major findings of this year's Sustainable Development Report (SDR2020) is that before the COVID-19 outbreak, the world was making progress towards the SDGs. Although no country was on track to achieve the SDGs, the evolution of the SDG Index scores (included in the Sustainable Development Report) between 2010 and 2019 suggests some convergence, with regions and income groups that had lower SDG Index scores in 2010 progressing faster. Due to time lags in

data generation and reporting, these results represent the situation before COVID-19. In particular, areas of the Global South, including sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean made significant progress during the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) period (2000-2015) and also showed progress on the SDGs. However, of all United Nations regions, East and South Asia demonstrated the most progress on the SDGs.

The report also highlighted significant disparities in progress across the goals and countries. For example, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Cambodia improved the most on the SDGs, while Venezuela, Zimbabwe, and the Republic of the Congo regressed the most.

## Five key measures for international cooperation

Globalisation facilitates the rapid spread of viruses around the world. At the same time, concerted international action by policymakers, the private sector, civil society, and the scientific community can accelerate the identification of solutions.

The current crisis, including hostilities among major powers, raises the spectre of global conflict instead of global cooperation. It was Charles Kindleberger's thesis in 1929-1939 that the Great Depression was so severe because there was no global leader (or "hegemon") and no adequate cooperation among the major powers. The result, he argued, was a breakdown of the global monetary and trading system that paved the way to Nazi Germany and World War II.

The SDR2020 proposes five key global cooperation measures to address the health and economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis:

1. Disseminate best practices rapidly. The world urgently needs to learn from and to emulate the strategies for fighting COVID-19 adopted in the East Asia and the Pacific regions. The World Health Organisation (WHO) should facilitate rapid dissemination of best practices. This is one of the objectives of the newly created Lancet Commission on COVID-19 chaired by SDSN President and leading economist, Jeffrey Sachs.
2. Strengthen financing mechanisms for developing countries. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was created for global crises like this one. It needs ample firepower, including far greater latitude to extend credits, either under ex-



Face masks hanging on window bars in Havana, Cuba. Protective face masks are mandatory in public places in most Latin American countries to reduce COVID-19 infections, but part of the population does not use them. Cases and deaths due to COVID-19 are growing rapidly in Latin America and the Caribbean. File photo

isting facilities or through a new issuance of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs). Private creditors will need to refinance or capitalise on debts falling due.

3. Address hunger hotspots. We need global support for the lead United Nations agencies, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and the World Food Programme (WFP), so that they can best fight impending hunger crises and food insecurity.

4. Ensure social protection. As part of any comprehensive response to the pandemic, governments should promote new instruments of social protection. This includes the new Global Fund for Social Protection that was proposed to address SDG 1 (No Poverty) even before the pandemic, and is now needed even more so.

5. Promote new drugs and vaccines. Financing research and development (R&D) for COVID-19 drugs and vaccines is an urgent global public good. Without global cooperation, R&D will be inadequate and duplicative. And when breakthroughs are achieved, they will in turn require global cooperation to ensure mass uptake. The Global Fund and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, are two exemplary institutions that serve as historical precedents for what will be needed for the

rapid uptake of new drugs and vaccines and how to lead the effort on the ground.

Timely data is also a critical component of overcoming COVID-19. The SDR2020 underscores the need for more timely and disaggregated data in many parts of the world, especially the Global South, to track and address the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 on different population groups. SDSN in partnership with Esri and National Geographic, recently launched a new platform, SDGs Today, with real-time and timely data for the SDGs. All datasets are updated regularly (at least annually), and they have each been curated and validated by SDSN's Thematic Research Network on Data and Statistics (TReNDS).

As we move forward, the priority of every government must be to continue to contain and suppress the virus. As COVID-19 continues to infect a growing number of people in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and South Asia, strengthening public health systems and providing access to personal protective equipment and large-scale testing is essential in the absence of a treatment or vaccine. Furthermore, international solidarity and partnerships are critical to address and prevent health, economic, and humanitarian crises and to avoid major setbacks on the SDGs in the short and long-term.

China is firmly determined in safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests, implementing

People's Daily



# Solutions to disadvantages to women entrepreneurs in post-COVID-19 era

ABIDJAN

**W**OMEN-LED businesses are more vulnerable to closure than those led by men in the era of the novel coronavirus, chiefly owing to women's limited access to finance, shifts in consumer behaviour, and the increase in women's household care responsibilities as a result of extended lockdowns.

All across Africa, the coronavirus pandemic is wreaking economic havoc and hitting women the hardest, with women-led small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) at greater risk of closure as they tend to be smaller and on - average - operate in lower profit margin, service-based industries.

These and other important findings of a new policy brief highlighting policy solutions to support women-led businesses in Africa in a post-Covid-19 world were released during a webinar organised this Wednesday by the African Development Bank's Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) programme, working with UN Women and ImpactHER.

"The compilation and analysis of real-time data are crucial as Africa responds to the pandemic. The surveying of women-led businesses from across sectors and industries provides opportunity to have targeted interventions aimed at keeping these vital contributors to African economies afloat," said AFAWA coordinator Esther Dassinou.

The brief was entitled "Transformative policy solutions to support women-led businesses in Africa in a post-Covid-19 world". It contained results of an ImpactHER survey of more than 1,300 women-owned SMEs in 30 African countries on the impact of the pandemic on their businesses.

Over 200 participants participated in the virtual webinar, which was moderated by UN Women's Elena Ruiz, Women's Economic Empowerment Regional Policy Advisor for West



and Central Africa.

"The policy brief and the discussion have put on the table strategies that work for women entrepreneurs in the region. We hope this will contribute to make sure that women entrepreneurs and women-led businesses are at the centre of Covid-19 recovery plans, and to help governments and other actors build a post-Covid economy that challenges, rather than reproduces, gender inequalities," Ruiz noted.

Panelists at Wednesday's seminar were Ada Udechukwu, Head of Women's Banking at Access Bank, Nigeria; Efe Ukala, Founder of ImpactHER; Sylvia Natukunda, Founder & CEO of Uganda's yoghurt company Farm Reap; Kosi Yankey, Executive Director of the National Board for Small-Scale Industries in Ghana; and Dr Boutheina Ben Yaghlane Ben Sli-

mane, Director General, Caisse of Deposits & Consignments in Tunisia.

They shared government, private sector and banking perspectives on how women-led businesses in tourism, trade, retail, hospitality, education, personal care and similar sectors have suffered as result of Covid-19, and offered recommendations for immediate, short- and medium-term solutions to mitigate the impact on the businesses.

"ImpactHER commissioned the survey to allow it to provide practical solutions to women-led businesses," Efe Ukala, its founder, said, adding: "So far, ImpactHER has offered resilience training, custom business advisory services including financial forecasting, valuation, company restructuring, rebranding, etc., technology tools such as e-commerce websites which are critical to ensure

the viability of women entrepreneurs in a post-Covid era."

ImpactHER has provided such support to over 3,000 women entrepreneurs in over 25 African countries, Ukala noted further.

The panelists also showcased solutions in action, such as the African Development Bank's (AfDB) recent approval of a loan of 264 million euros to help support the Moroccan government in mitigating the health and socio-economic crisis brought on by the pandemic.

Parts of the funding will go towards mobilising financial resources for women-owned enterprises whose cash flow has deteriorated owing to declining activity.

Through Bank Al-Maghrib, women-owned SMEs will have access to guarantees that cover 95 per cent of the credit amount and enables banks to rapidly put together exceptional overdrafts to finance the target companies' operating capital needs.

"The fight against the (Covid-19) pandemic requires public and private sector involvement to enhance women entrepreneurs' ability to bounce back from the crisis. Efforts such as the one in Morocco as well as Tunisia and Ghana, should be replicated throughout the continent,"

AFAWA's Dassinou said.

The discussions also showed how Covid-19 not only potentially exacerbates already existing inequalities between men and women but also has led to other hurdles for women. These include limited access to finance, key networks and information, skills gaps as well as limited control over assets that they can leverage to obtain financing.

"The AFAWA initiative's collaboration with UN Women and ImpactHER to provide solutions has great potential to influence policy," Vanessa Mounzar, Bank Director for Gender, Women

AFAWA is an AfDB-led initiative which aims to reduce the USD 42 billion gender gap in access to finance and unleash women's entrepreneurial capacity across the continent.

Its holistic approach focuses on three pillars: access to finance; technical assistance to financial institutions as well as women entrepreneurs; and policy dialogue to reform the legal and regulatory frameworks affecting women businesses.

Through AFAWA, AfDB will aim to unlock up to USD 5 billion in the next five to six years for women entrepreneurs in Africa.

For its part, ImpactHER is an impact-driven organisation that focuses on bridging the USD 42 billion financing gap for women-owned SMEs in Africa.

The organisation achieves its mission by helping African women business owners access institutional capital for their businesses, scale their businesses while also helping them tackle business operational challenges, access new markets through the use of technology, and become investor-ready.

With a community of over 35,000 African women-led SME across 55 African countries, ImpactHER has trained - at no fee - over 8,000 African women entrepreneurs in 48 African countries, on a pro bono basis, on how to run successful businesses and become investor-ready.

ImpactHER's intervention has launched thousands of African women-led businesses online, helped African women access new foreign markets, and connected African women-led SMEs to institutional capital.

Meanwhile, UN Women is grounded in the vision of equality as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. It works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

Across Africa, UN Women supports women entrepreneurs and women-led businesses as a priority intervention to achieve women's economic empowerment.

• AfDB

## World poverty: We have come so far...but all so much further to go

SEATTLE, Washington

**T**HE United Nations' first Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is "No poverty," the most important because almost half the world, 46%, lives on less than \$5.50 a day according to the World Bank. But world attention has turned away from poverty. Why?

In 2004, I founded NGOabroad to link people's skills to humanity's challenges. Most people coming to me to volunteer believe that the most important issue in the world today is the Syrian refugee crisis; that Syrian refugees are those suffering the most and see this as THE humanitarian crisis of our time. I say, "What about Yemen? What about Sudan? ...Five million Syrians fled but 3.4 billion people struggle to meet their basic needs."

Our focus is on what the news covers and what is dramatic or traumatic

The slow grind of poverty - what Amartya Sen, Nobel prize winning economist originally from India, calls "unfreedoms" - are more dispiriting than barrel bombs. Based on my conversations with Congolese refugee women, not being able to feed your children in the "lean months" is harder than all the rapes Congolese women suffered.

So why is the world turning its eyes away from poverty?

**1. Many people in North America or Europe see fighting poverty as hopeless.**

Donald Trump's "shithole countries" comment was the epitome of this point of view.

We need to shift how we present poverty and emphasize the strides which have been made. People want to be part of a winning team. The Gap-minder Institute does hilarious TED talks asserting that chimps more accurately answer questions about world poverty than people! We are operating on stereotypes, not facts. The truth is we are doing better than we think. We have made huge strides: 2 billion people have moved out of extreme poverty

in the last 25 years reports the UN.

**From pathos to possibility**

We must switch from a negative image and instead promote the image of what the world would look like if everyone is thriving. This will attract more people to the cause. We've been doing it backwards.

**2. People have tried in the past or joined in some effort and feel it didn't help.**

a. Jubilee 2000. Many idealistic people, myself included, jumped on-board the Jubilee 2000 movement to "Make poverty history" by forgiving the IMF debts of 35 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries hoping monies would be redirected to health and education. Sigh, it was not a panacea. Only half the HIPC are meeting MDG health and education targets. Some of those countries are now in debt again.

We need a sustained, forever-learning-and-tweaking approach to assist countries rather than "slam-dunk-done." One of the lessons of debt forgiveness: would it help to balance budgets and tackle corruption? Autocrats live like kings while their people starve.

One of the positive results of the Make Poverty History campaign: I believe that it changed the ethos of the World Bank. Amartya Sen was invited to deliver his "Development as Freedom" lecture.

Jim Yong Kim, who with Paul Farmer founded the pro-poor organization, Partners in Health, was appointed President of the World Bank injecting pro-poor priorities into World Bank programs.

**b. Microfinance.**

Muhammad Yunus who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his work in microfinance inspired business schools to teach microfinance and MFI's (microfinance institutions) were launched. I was heartened when so many people wanted to help people out of poverty. But did it work?

I talked to many MFI's all over the

world to create NGOabroad's microfinance volunteer programs. About half the MFI directors said they struggled with staying solvent if their micro-entrepreneurs did not pay back their loans. Equally important, do micro-loans help people move out of poverty? My observation of MF programs is that you must teach entrepreneurship skills and mentor micro-entrepreneurs to ensure success.

We need to nurture solutions over time as a farmer would: planting seeds, weeding and watering

**3. Shift to good news and solution focus as it empowers.** Rather than more news coverage about the problem of world poverty or SDGs, we need to put more emphasis on the solutions. E.g. from 2008 to 2015 the headline could have read "Number of people in extreme poverty fell by 192,000 since yesterday."

**4. We need to celebrate achievements:**

- Brazil's Bolsa Família and Mexico's Progresa program which provide cash transfers to the poor IF the children are going to school and getting vaccinated have been hailed as innovative successes.

- Rwanda is lauded for their \$1/year health insurance; incorporating tech and courting foreign investors. Rwanda emphasizes self-reliance and the empowerment of their people.

**5. People need hopeful models and solutions which have worked to vanquish poverty**

- Liberation Theology - pro-poor Catholic movement in Latin America
- Gandhi's influence rippled through South Asia for decades
- BRAC in Bangladesh
- Gawad Kalinga in Philippines began with work in the slums
- Ashesi University in Ghana teaching entrepreneurship
- African School of Economics in Benin

**6. We need to create people-centered governments that care about**



their citizens and will develop programs which help move people out of poverty. To move out of poverty people need a voice in matters which affect their daily lives.

**7. We need models of places which have improved quality of life**

- Kerala, India: high literacy rates and quality of life; engaged citizens
- Botswana was seen as a success story; not borrowing from IMF; their diamond profits ploughed back into health and education programs; and balancing their budget
- Costa Rica decided in the 1930's to not have an army and instead fund health and education. They were in the vanguard of women having the right to vote. They have a health care system that Americans flock to for medical and dental vacations.

When viewed from the top down, people say things are horrible. However if you ask local people, they are very hopeful and engaged. Common citizens and grassroots organizations are circumventing the obstacles.

When the SDG's were launched, the United Nations emphasized that "For the goals to be reached, everyone needs to do their part: governments, the private sector, civil society and people like you."

If we look past the poster of the stereotypical emaciated woman, behind that is a vibrant community of people collaborating to tackle poverty. We have a long way to go, but all over the world people are moving forward. When the people lead, the leaders will follow.



## Boom in exports is threatening to put Madagascar mud crabs in hot water, according to several CSOs

By Malavika Vyawahare

FOR crab fishers on the western coast of Madagascar, where incomes are less than a thirtieth of those in the U.S, the Lunar New Year brings some cheer. Demand spikes for live mud crabs, considered a delicacy in China, and so does the price the crustaceans fetch.

This hunger for live crabs is fueling a boom in Madagascar's crab exports, now valued at nearly \$10 million a year. But a recent decision by the Malagasy government to grant permits to export live mud crabs exclusively to five Chinese companies has sparked controversy and highlighted the country's struggle to sustainably manage an overexploited fishery.

The agriculture and fisheries ministry granted the permits in April to Santi Import-Export, Dragon de la Mer, Ocean Export, Drakk Company, and Mapro-Sud, but the decision came to light recently through local media reports.

Civil society organizations like Southern African Regional Non-State Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture (SANSFA) Madagascar and the National Network of Women in Fisheries in Madagascar (RENAFEP) say the move harms local fishers and businesses. They are demanding the ministry cancel the permits.

Issuing export permits to foreign companies will exacerbate the problem of unsustainable fishing, SANSFA and RENAFEP said in a statement. In the short term, the export demand pushes up prices and leads to more harvesting; in the long term, a rush to satisfy overseas demand threatens the sustainability of the local fisheries, the groups said.

The two organizations also alleged that the five companies are owned by a single individual. Mongabay was unable to independently verify the claim.



The fourth-largest island in the world is blessed with a coastline of 4,828 kilometers (3,000 miles). Around 1.5 million Malagasy people rely directly on fisheries to make a living. Fisheries don't just provide jobs; they also provide food, and crabs are an important part of the Malagasy diet.

But today, about half of Madagascar's crab catch is exported, and the export sector is dominated by foreign companies. In consultations held last year, ministry officials agreed to recommendations that domestic companies be given preference over outsiders in the crab fisheries sector.

The role of foreign players in the fisheries industry has often attracted scrutiny in Madagascar. Mongabay reported on opaque fisheries deals between Madagascar and the European Union, and Asian countries. More recently, a secretive \$2.7 billion agreement between a Chinese private enterprise and a private Malagasy association inked in 2018 and touted as the

biggest ever investment in Madagascar's fisheries sector sank amid protests from local fishers.

The current controversy is limited to the right to export live crabs, but has also raised concerns about its impact on Malagasy fishers and exporters. The permits allow the Chinese companies to export 100 tons of live crabs every week, effectively shutting out local competition because the export quota was fixed at 4,250 tons per year in 2015.

Involving more Malagasy operators would not guarantee more sustainable management of crab catches, but it could benefit communities more, some argue. "Chinese companies exploit the resource, they do so in an unsustainable way," said Lalaina Rakotonaivo, small-scale fishery officer at WWF.

Conservationists like Rakotonaivo say they hope Malagasy companies will work with local communities to restore mangroves and raise awareness about sustainable practices. That's

something, he added, Chinese companies do not do. "We want the government to give preference to national export companies because we hope that they will help build the local economy," he said.

For some, the opposition to the permits is rooted in resentment that coastal communities work to restore habitats and bear the brunt of fishing closures and restriction – efforts that yield long-term benefits, but for which outsiders reap the rewards.

Mud crabs (*Scylla serrata*) live in mangroves that line the western coast of Madagascar. Their habitat has shrunk over the years, even as demand for crab meat has grown. The island lost more than 55,000 hectares (136,000 acres) of mangroves between 1990 and 2010, a study estimated, a fifth of the country's mangrove cover. Tropical trees that make up a mangrove thrive in salty, coastal environments.

In Madagascar, people chop them down for fuelwood, heating and construction. In some areas, entire patches of mangroves have given way to rice fields.

Their loss has squeezed nursery grounds for crabs and shrimp, two of Madagascar's most valuable fishery exports. Mangrove restoration projects offer a glimmer of hope. An analysis done by WWF Madagascar found that though mangroves are still disappearing in Madagascar, the rate of net loss appears to have slowed since 2015, with restoration efforts showing results.

Most of the fisheries catch, including mud crabs, is produced by traditional fishing. Local fishers capture mud crabs with rudimentary fishing gear such as handlines, or simply snare them from burrows using hooks mounted on sticks.

France, which colonized Madagascar from 1896 till 1946, is one of the biggest importers of its mud crabs. In Europe, mud crabs can sell for almost 15 times the price in Malagasy markets. A majority of the exports are of frozen crabs, but demand for live crabs is rising. Big live crabs can sell for twice as much per unit weight as frozen crabs.

The demand for live crabs swelled in 2012 when live exports to China opened up. The value of crab exports has grown manifold since. It has also led to increased extraction. Annual crab catch was about 2,000 tons in 2010, but had risen to 6,650 tons by 2018, official records show.

Floundering efforts to regulate crab fishery  
Crab fisheries are overexploited in Madagascar, according to the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). After the export demand surged, the government introduced management measures in 2015, enacting fisheries closures, imposing a minimum size requirement of 11 centimeters (4.3 inches) to exclude juveniles and prohibiting capture of egg-bearing females and soft-shell crabs. The regulations also banned the cutting and sale of mangrove timber.

## COVID-19 disrupts Africa's seed supply, threatening food security

By Joseph Gakpo

THE global pandemic has made it difficult for some African seed companies to produce and import sufficient quantities of quality certified seeds, prompting fears about food security.

A labor shortage, border closures and restrictions on movements have contributed to the challenges that some companies are facing as they struggle to get quality seeds to farmers as the planting season kicks in across the continent.

The situation is raising fears that farm productivity will decline and threaten food security, as seed shortages are predicted for most staple crops.

"COVID-19 came at a time when a lot of the seed companies were preparing to clean their seeds, or preparing to import," Augusta Nyamadi Clottey, executive secretary of the National Seed Trade Association of Ghana (NASTAG), explained.

"The lockdown came in March. And we were supposed to start planting in March. Most of the seeds we were expecting from outside have not come in."

Ghana imports a lot of its improved vegetable and other seeds, as well as other agricultural inputs, from Europe, Asia and America. These products are now more expensive to bring in because borders have been closed to commercial flights.

"Now, instead of passenger flight, you have to rent a flight," Clottey said. "And that is adding to the cost. Cost difference is about 15 to 20 percent. Unfortunately, the seed company has to bear all this cost. It means profit margins are decreasing, production cost is increasing."

Even local seed companies that produce certified seeds for sale to farmers are struggling to get labor to operate smoothly because of COVID-19.

"Most companies who were cleaning their seeds use labor.

The final thing is done by human beings. And because of lockdown, and with COVID, they are not getting people to do the cleaning. Even picking seeds in the field is a challenge. So, if we are not careful, quality may be compromised at a point in time," she said in a webinar session on the impact of COVID-19 on the seed industry that was organized by the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa.

"In Upper East Region, one company uses 150 women to do the final cleaning of the seed," she added. "Now they are getting only 25 people. Labor is a real challenge. Most of the laborers in the south come from the north and cannot come down south now because of COVID. Most of those in the north come from across the border, Burkina Faso, but are unable to come from across the border now to work because border is closed."

Several other parts of Africa are facing challenges with pro-

ducing quality seeds for farmers as a result of the pandemic. Quoting forecasts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other sub-regional bodies, CORAF – an association of national agricultural and research organizations of 22 West and Central African countries – predicts COVID will cause a shortfall of certified seeds of various staple crops for the 2020 cropping season across the sub-region. Crops to be affected include maize, sorghum, millet, cowpea and groundnuts.

Cowpea, for example, is a popular food high in protein which is consumed by about 200 million people in Africa. Demand for certified cowpea seeds for the 2020 crop season in Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Cape Verde and Gambia is projected at 150,000 metric tons. But CORAF projects only 2,800 metric tons of certified cowpea

seeds will be available for the 2020 cropping season in these countries because of COVID-19. There is also shortage in certified groundnut seeds. The Sahel Region of West Africa needs 250,000 metric tons of certified groundnut seeds for the 2020 crop season. But only 5,000 metric tons are projected to be available.

In 12 West African countries, including Benin, Guinea, Gambia, Senegal and Cape Verde, less than 10,000 metric tons of certified sorghum and millet seeds will be available in the 2020 cropping season, falling far short of a projected demand of 100,000 metric tons, according to CORAF. And although these countries will need 200,000 metric tons of certified maize seeds, only 70,000 metric tons will be available during the current cropping season.

"Unless swift action is taken to facilitate producers' access

to seeds and other inputs, the disruptions caused by COVID-19 will inevitably lead to a decrease in agricultural production due to the unavailability of required quality seeds to plant at the right time," CORAF cautions. "Concerted effort should be made to ensure the availability and access to certified seeds of major staple food crops in the ECOWAS and Sahel region to avert the looming consequences of the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on agricultural production."

"It is a universal truism that quality seeds exert profound influence on agricultural productivity, enhancing yield sometimes by as much as 20 to 25 percent, or even more, if deployed in the context of an improved input package," Joseph Wobil, chairman of Ghana's National Seed Council, observed. "We had been making very good progress until this year. The introduction of the

pandemic into West Africa has changed the ball game and really disturbed smooth sailing into large scale seed production."

The African Seed Trade Association, the continental mother association of seed sector actors, has called for concerted efforts to ensure quality and improved seeds reach farmers in a timely manner, despite the pandemic.

"The movement of seed within country and across borders should not be affected, considering that coronaviruses have poor survivability on surfaces, and it is highly improbable that coronaviruses can survive international transport," Justin Rakotoarisoana, secretary general of the association, said in a statement copied to Alliance for Science. "This is especially true for shipments of seed handled by professional seed companies that already respect strict sanitary, phytosanitary and hygienic handling protocol."

## COVID-19 pandemic induces surges in poaching in Uganda

By Dina Fine Maron

NIGHT after night, men infiltrate the forests blanketing northwestern Uganda. They come by boat, paddling east across Lake Albert in canoes made from hollowed out trees, before creeping into the lush undergrowth of the country's largest protected area, Murchison Falls National Park.

They quickly unload their cargo—cheap wire snares and deadly steel traps repurposed from old car parts. The latter, made locally in Uganda and across the border in Democratic Republic of the Congo, require little skill to use. They're also powerful enough to snap the leg of an antelope, giraffe, or lion. Animals pinned to the ground may die from a combination of blood loss, dehydration, and starvation. The devices are indiscriminate—they snag any animal that stumbles into

them. Authorities believe that thousands of these illegal devices have been hidden within Murchison and Uganda's nine other national parks since the coronavirus lockdown began in mid-March and flatlined the wildlife tourism industry. The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) recorded 367 poaching incidents in the parks between February and May of this year, more than double the number during the same period in 2019, says Charles Tumwesigye, the agency's deputy director of field operations. And those numbers likely underestimate the problem, because dead animals and traps may be whisked away before authorities detect the activity.

Tourism is a central pillar of Uganda's economy, bringing in more than a billion dollars a year, and wildlife tourism, in partic-



ular, creates thousands of jobs. But the sudden loss of visitors in the parks, where their presence helps deter poachers, has hampered ranger operations. Without tourists, Tumwesigye says, it's easier for poachers to monitor the comings and goings of rangers and make a move the moment they leave an area. Tourism also financed all the anti-poaching work. "With staff not sure of whether they will continue getting salary without tourism, I think the morale and zeal to combat poaching went low," he says. The lockdown also has led some people to believe—incorrectly—that rangers are no longer patrolling parks, emboldening them to poach animals, he adds.

For the most part, Tumwesigye says, locals struggling to feed their families in the wake of tourism's collapse are the ones setting traps. It doesn't appear to be related to the organized criminal networks that drive commercial-scale poaching for elephant ivory, rhino horn, and other lucrative wildlife parts. These local people mean to catch antelopes and wild boars to provide bushmeat to sell or eat themselves.

Yet lions, giraffes, and even one silverback gorilla have been recent casualties. Only about a thousand mountain gorillas remain on the planet, and more than half live in Uganda. The country has only about 300 lions and 2,000 gi-

raffes. Such low numbers make the loss of each animal serious, says Paul Funston, lion program director and Southern Africa regional director for Panthera, the global wild cat conservation organization—"especially adult lionesses and cow giraffes," he says, "as they are key to future population trends."

Pandemic-related poaching is only the latest setback for Uganda's wildlife. Many of the country's animals died between the 1960s and 1990s when a coup, a war with neighboring Tanzania, and a six-year civil war fueled poaching and kept visitors out of parks. Elephant numbers dropped from an estimated 30,000 to 2,000, and giraffe numbers by 90 percent. Lions likely also declined. In recent decades, though, Uganda's expansion of its wildlife tourism industry has also allowed it to finance anti-poaching efforts.

In June, UWA rangers and partner groups fanned out across a swath of Murchison on a two-day patrol. In an area once popular with tourists, they discovered traps with seven dead giraffes in them, says Michael Keigwin, founder of the nonprofit Uganda Conservation Foundation, which assisted UWA's rangers. "We found five in one day and two in the next, all in one area," he says. "It's very sad."

A particular concern now in Mur-

chison and some other national parks is the safety of lions. Before the pandemic, cattle herders sometimes illegally poisoned lions in retaliation for their preying on livestock, Tumwesigye says. But what he's seeing now is different.

On May 16, a lion with several body parts missing was found in Queen Elizabeth National Park. Details are scarce, but in several African countries, lion heads, tails, and paws are used in traditional medicine, called muti, because of their association with prosperity or good luck. Poaching for lion muti has increased in South Africa since 2016, and now Tumwesigye and his team are investigating whether that's happening in Uganda as well.

Other lions known to live in Queen Elizabeth National Park are missing from their usual home areas, says Ludwig Siefert, a wildlife veterinarian and team leader of the Uganda Carnivore Program, a nonprofit that researches and monitors the country's large carnivores, including lions, leopards and hyenas. And at least four lions have been found trapped in snares in Murchison during the past few months, according to Tumwesigye. The lions were set free and likely survived, he says. "Lions, as social species, usually survive even with most debilitating injuries as long as they can benefit from the social group," Siefert says.



# What experts think Covid-19 may have done to my brain...

By Jessica Firger

**M**Y stove burners were filthy. I had put off cleaning them for close to five weeks, but cleaning falls to the bottom of a to-do list when you live alone and have to convalesce in a pandemic.

It was the first week of May, and my acute textbook Covid-19 symptoms - fever, chest pain and shortness of breath - had gone away weeks ago. Now I was standing in my kitchen, grateful to be putting my life back together again though there was one part of me that definitely hadn't recovered yet.

I finished dinner and grabbed the scrubbing sponge to chip away at the layers of crud on the stove. I had just put the kettle on to boil moments before, but the way my mind was working it could have been years ago that I'd decided to make tea.

When I consider just how close I was to moving the kettle over to put my hand in an open flame and pick up a searing-hot burner grate, my body still shakes. But at that point, a month after recovering from Covid-19, it was my reality. My brain was broken. This had been going on for close to two weeks.

There was the time I walked from my bedroom to the bathroom and, out of habit, washed my hands immediately (and quite thoroughly!) but then forgot to have a short call of nature.

Or the times when a text from a friend would appear on my phone screen and I'd have no idea what she was talking about, even though I'd written to her just a few seconds earlier and she was responding to me.

One Sunday morning, a friend was over. We were making breakfast, and I cracked the eggs into the carton rather than the bowl: the kind of mistake you call a "senior moment", but only when you are actually a senior. "Are you okay?" he asked me. I laughed it off and said I didn't know. Was I?

I had other lingering neurological symptoms as well. I was still putting far too much pepper in my food because, otherwise, it didn't taste like much.

Sometimes there was ringing in my ears. My entire body ached, and I was so fatigued that it felt like I was training for a triathlon.

There were also migraines every single day that started midmorning and didn't go away until I eventually fell asleep (if I was even able to sleep at all). My brain felt too large for my skull. Some nights the throbbing was so intense it was as if my brain contained a second heart.

All of my symptoms added up to what doctors are beginning to define as a "post-Covid syndrome". Many of the features of this illness can look similar to chronic fatigue syndrome, which was seen in some patients after the SARS outbreak.

Headache, fatigue, malaise, cognitive slowing or dysfunction ("brain fog"), dizziness, loss of smell and taste, and muscle aches are some of the most commonly reported lingering symptoms from the coronavirus that may endure - or even emerge - weeks



and months after an acute Covid-19 infection.

## Doctors in the dark

Doctors still don't know what causes some people to experience long-lasting neurological symptoms from the novel coronavirus. Experts say these symptoms are either precipitated by the virus crossing the brain-blood barrier or by some immune-mediated response in the body - or a combination of both.

"When the virus gets to the brain through the nerve endings, for example, what ends up happening is that there's a viral attack on the brain, but there's also an immune reaction," says Siddhartha Nadkarni, MD, assistant professor of neurology and psychiatry at NYU Langone, and my doctor at the NYU Langone Comprehensive Epilepsy Centre.

Nadkarni elaborates: "There's an inflammatory state that can cause more widespread injury to the brain. Once the virus is gone, that inflammatory state takes a little time to sort of die down."

"On top of that, you also need time for recovery. When the brain is injured it usually takes longer for those networks to get back online and recover," notes the expert, adding that it also doesn't help that, in general, the brain is much slower to heal than other parts of the body.

My own experience as a patient was perhaps complicated by the fact that I have an existing neurological condition. I've lived with epilepsy for nearly my entire life. In adulthood, the epilepsy has mostly consisted of focal seizures where I do not lose consciousness, and until I got Covid-19 in early April, I was seizure-free for close to ten

years. The first seizure happened at the very end of March, the day before I began to run a fever from the coronavirus. I was sitting on my couch, typing away at my laptop, when suddenly my heart began to flutter like I had run up a flight of stairs.

Next, I felt like I needed to gasp for air, something akin to an asthma attack. Anxiety flooded my body, the kind sometimes described in medical literature as a "sense of impending doom". The whole episode ended with the back of my head aching like someone had whacked me with a blunt object. It had been so long since I had a focal seizure that I didn't realise that this was what had occurred.

Instead, I went about my day, and later headed out to the grocery store. But when I arrived, I couldn't recall what I needed. I stared at the display of Domino sugar bags near the entrance until I remembered that I was there to buy half-and-half.

The next morning, I felt like I had the world's worst hangover accompanied by a fever. I wished I could blame the wine I had the night before, but it was evident to me that I had Covid-19.

I was sick at the point when New York City was still rationing tests so I couldn't get swabbed. Besides, why did I need to stand on a long line with other sick people in the cold to get an answer I already knew? (Later on, I did get an antibody test that was positive.)

So, all I had were my instincts and the advice of my primary care physician over several telemedicine appointments to help me through two of the worst weeks of my life.

## Medical rollercoaster ride

Covid-19 is a bit of a medical roller-

coaster ride. You feel awful, then you feel better, then you feel even more awful and then you slowly recuperate - this is a disease trajectory that's been observed and documented in some research.

I had all the symptoms in the book but, thankfully I never needed to physically take myself to the hospital or a doctor. It hurt to breathe in, my body ached and I would wake up completely drenched with sweat.

However, years from now what I'll probably remember most about my Covid-19 experience is the migraine-induced insomnia made worse by the endless ambulance sirens and wondering if I would need one to come and get me.

During one of those sleepless nights, a few days after I first became ill, I was reading about a new study - a case series out of Wuhan, China, that described the neurological symptoms of 214 patients who were hospitalised with severe Covid-19 infection.

The landmark paper, published in JAMA Neurology, reported that more than one-third of the patients had neurological symptoms including dizziness, headache, altered consciousness, impaired taste and smell, neuropathy and seizures.

Of course, since that study, more research has emerged that identifies a link between Covid-19 and incidences of stroke, encephalitis, seizures, neuropathy and encephalopathy. In one of the very most recent studies, conducted by researchers in the UK and published in the Lancet Psychiatry, 39 of the 125 hospitalised patients had altered mental status due to encephalitis and encephalopathy.

Still, we don't know much yet about why these symptoms endure for some long after the rest of the body has recovered. This is, in part, because SARS-CoV-2 was identified only a little more than six months ago.

However, when it comes to the natural history of pathogens, SARS-CoV-2 is actually not unlike most other viruses in its potential to shake up the central

nervous system in its human host, even possibly after acute infection. These neurological and psychiatric sequelae are well recorded in medical literature but possibly less so by popular history.

(A sequela is a pathological condition resulting from a disease, injury, therapy or other trauma. Typically, a sequela is a chronic condition that is a complication which follows a more acute condition. It is different from, but is a consequence of, the first condition.)

During the 1918 influenza pandemic, doctors noted that viral infection was often followed by diseases of the central nervous system, especially psychiatric illness known as influenza psychosis with symptoms that were similar to schizophrenia or dementia.

Patients also suffered from encephalitis lethargica ("sleeping sickness"). Some patients of the more recent Middle Eastern Respiratory Virus (MERS) outbreak had encephalopathy, Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS), and other neuromuscular and demyelinating conditions. And polio, Zika, measles and HIV are other viruses that can have neurological manifestations that may endure but don't necessarily occur in every patient with that particular virus.

## No uniform response to viruses

There's a lot of heterogeneity in the ways human hosts respond to viruses. Some people have kidney problems, some people have mostly lung problems, some people have no symptoms, and some people end up in the ICU.

This is according to Serena Spudich, MD, chief of neuroinfectious diseases and global neurology at Yale University School of Medicine, who notes further: "If you have a chronic underlying neurological condition there is a higher risk that if you get Covid - there may be some unmasking of that or some worsening of symptoms."

"I actually think epilepsy is a perfect example: someone who has a seizure disorder that's well-controlled when

everything else is fine is probably at risk of having breakthrough seizures or more severe seizures in the setting of having Covid," Spudich adds.

This brings us back to my own case study. From what we know so far, seizures appear to be a less common neurological symptom of Covid-19. However, according to Nadkarni, the virus likely lowered my seizure threshold and made me more vulnerable to breakthrough seizures.

In fact, without the protection of my regular anti-seizure medication, it is very possible that I would have faced a more serious generalised seizure and lost consciousness.

I may have had more serious cognitive symptoms and even some associated neuropsychiatric symptoms such as psychosis or delirium during or after the virus. Really, we just don't know.

"If you already have a vulnerable brain it would be possible to believe that this virus would affect you more," says Nadkarni, adding: "My patients that have had TBIs (traumatic brain injuries), for example, I tell them they should assume that they're on that list."

A recent MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan of my brain, ordered by Nadkarni and conducted nearly two months after my onset of Covid-19 symptoms, showed some subtle abnormalities when comparing it to my last such scan in 2011, which served as a baseline.

Specifically, the new MRI showed subtle structural abnormalities in both hippocampi, according to Nadkarni. The hippocampus is part of the temporal lobe, and it is the area of the brain associated with memory function: in particular, declarative memory. It is also a location in the brain where partial seizures tend to arise and where focal seizures tend to arise (mine have).

Interestingly enough, this area of the brain is the same neighbourhood as the entorhinal cortex, which is where the brain processes smell - which could explain why olfaction is affected in some people with Covid-19.

This area is also close to the amygdala, which could give us a window into why literature is reporting patients with emotional lability. "I think it all makes sense anatomically, actually," Nadkarni says.

My MRI findings do check out with the symptoms of memory problems and seizures which I experienced during and after the virus. I rode them out, just like I did the virus, and finally made a full recovery.

According to Nadkarni, the hippocampal changes may be related to the seizures I had while sick, but they could also be simply related to having epilepsy. And there's yet another possibility: the MRI findings could be an overreading of a scan and overdiagnosis due to the fact that image quality has vastly improved even over the last five years.

It's hard to know, and even a follow-up MRI in six months will never address all of these questions. In this pandemic, I certainly won't be the last patient without all of the answers.

**A dispatch first published in Element, a new Medium publication about health and wellness. Jessica Firger is a health journalist.**



## THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 110 00--

In this puzzle you have no clues, only a list of words that all fit into the grid. The Guardian have given you a head start

**CLUES:** Across  
 1. Tanzania's Capital  
 2. Nation created in 1948  
 3. Christian festival celebrating the resurrection of Christ  
 4. turn away  
 5. Second largest city in Tanzania  
 6. mischievous person  
 7. skilful  
 8. large round citrus fruit  
 9. sell goods by going from place to place  
 10. utter words

**Down:**  
 1. images seen while you sleep  
 2. a place far away  
 3. the mixture of gases surrounding the earth  
 4. personal, secret  
 5. beloved  
 6. consisting protein that is produced by a living organism  
 7. an off break bowled with an apparent leg-break action  
 8. a surface which is higher on one side than the other  
 9. keep away from someone  
 10. demonstrate by evidence  
 11. a donkey

**SOLUTIONS**

**WORD-FIT**  
 R E A D Y S C O P E F A R M E R R A  
 E I T L A A R A L E A S E  
 S H A R A S A M E I S L A N D P K  
 I E A Y A H P D L O I L E R  
 S N A K E I R A Q A N Y O N E A M  
 M A S T E R E A S T Y M E D D L E A  
 G I T A R K I P C L A N E I O N S  
 T A N A P A I L P P L A N T A T I O N S  
 I C F R O S T I O E R I E A A  
 M A S H E R H A Y L A G T A C E T G  
 F O W L N O N E Y T I S U E



## BUSINESS

## DIVERSITY

## Tommy Hilfiger to commit \$5m annually to advance representation in fashion industry



Sibani Mngadi, spokesperson for the South African alcohol industry.

## RESISTANCE

## S.Africa's alcohol industry requests renewed ban on data informing

## JOHANNESBURG

Stakeholders in South Africa's alcohol industry are requesting the research data that informed the recent reinstatement of the ban on sales and distribution of alcohol during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Based on the South African Medical Research Council's (SAMRC) recommendations, the Government came to the sudden decision to stop all business operations across the alcohol industry. Sibani Mngadi, spokesperson for the South African alcohol industry, said the decision undermines the overall supply chain logistics and puts at risk almost a million jobs supported by the industry.

In a statement on behalf of the industry - including manufacturers, the National Liquor Traders Council, South African Liquor Brandowners Association (SALBA), the Beer Association of South Africa (BASA), Vinpro and the Liquor Traders Association of South Africa (LTASA) - Mngadi said that Professor Charles Parry, head of the SAMRC's Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drug Research Unit made several claims about the benefit of the new ban in preserving a certain number of hospital beds as well as providing financial savings to the public health sector.

The alcohol industry has written to the Medical Research Council (MRC) requesting the data used to decide to prohibit the formal sale and distribution of alcohol with immediate effect, as of midnight on Sunday, 12 July. Mngadi said that access to the data will enable the industry and any other interested parties to understand better how these indicated conclusions and assumptions were arrived at.

Designing sustainable, targeted interventions

"We agree with SAMRC President Dr Glenda Gray that there should be a national alcohol policy and an endeavour to promote responsible drinking," the statement said. Mngadi continued, "We have offered to help set up a national multi-stakeholder forum with Government and civil society focusing on identifying and prioritising problem areas - based on research and credible current data - and jointly designing interventions targeting these key areas with enhanced current programmes and new measurable and evidence-based initiatives. "More importantly, the suggested SAMRC data may assist us in designing and implementing the sustainable, targeted interventions to reduce alcohol harm that we are currently working on."

## NEW YORK

On 31 May 2020, U.S. designer Tommy Hilfiger called for bold change in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, stating: "What's happening is not okay. We need action."

"What is happening to Black communities in the U.S. and around the world has no place in our society," says Tommy Hilfiger. "The fact that it has continued to exist in our industry - overtly and systemically - is unacceptable."

We are far behind where we should be in achieving diverse representation. It shouldn't have taken us this long to acknowledge that, but we are determined and committed to changing it going forward. We will be intentional, fearless and unwavering in the actions we take. Through the People's Place Program, we will use our platform to create opportunities and stand up for what is right."

After taking time to listen, reflect and discuss, the PVH Corp-owned Tommy Hilfiger brand's next step in this journey is to commit an initial minimum of \$5 million in annual funding for the next three years towards a three-pillared platform with the mission of advancing minority representation in fashion, and beyond.

More specifically, it will prioritise the representation of black, indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC) within the fashion and creative industries. Centering around partnerships, career access and industry leadership, the program seeks to achieve consistent, long-term change.

Zendaya named Tommy Hilfiger's global ambassador

Zendaya has revealed she feels "empowered" to collaborate with the prestigious brand and create a "Tommy X Zendaya" spring 2019 capsule collection that will be available to purchase in February. Alright, but we've seen many press-baiting promises to aggrieved black people over the past few weeks, so what makes Tommy's one any different? Or any more credible?

In recent times, the Tommy Hilfiger brand has opened both its heart and purse to those most vulnerable in the face of the Covid-19 crisis with parent company PVH Corp committing \$2 million towards the Covid-19 Solidarity Response Fund, in addition to other funds to support frontline



Zendaya Coleman and Tommy Hilfiger.

medical workers, the fight against food insecurity, supply chain and industry relief and community resiliency.

Tommy is also a friend of the environment. Earlier this year, they revealed two footwear styles designed using recycled apple skin fiber - a bio-based leather alternative derived from the apple farming industry's waste. This leather alternative was another means of building on to Tommy Hilfiger's ongoing journey to create fashion that welcomes all and wastes nothing.

Keeping to the rhythm of welcoming all then, is it surprising that they're also dancing to the passionate tune of the #BlackLivesMatter movement? Hardly. Although whenever race and Tommy Hilfiger are brought up in the same sentence, those 1996 racism claims resurface.

However, in 2007 the U.S. fashion maven put the rumours to bed on Oprah's hot seat. In 2012, he tackled the stain on his brand's reputation once again in a WWD interview. Fashionista recalls

Tommy saying, "It hurt for a long period of time, not from a business standpoint, because our business doubled in that time. It went from \$1 billion to \$2 billion in that time. But it hurt here [placing hand on his heart]. It really made me believe someone was out for me. We really never found the source but hope that at some point in time people will realise it was just a nasty rumour."

It would be a shame if this had turned out to be, in fact, true given how much support Tommy Hilfiger has garnered globally from back people and POC. Not to mention the fact that their global ambassador, Zendaya Coleman, is a woman of colour. And boy, do black and POC people wear Tommy well. Now that we have that out of the way for just one more time - what exactly does the new Tommy Hilfiger pledge entail?

Tommy Hilfiger will enhance its diverse talent pipeline, focusing on purpose-led collaborations that specifically increase minority visibility and partner with organisations and creative peers whose

mission is to advance BIPOC representation and equity in the fashion industry.

To advance representation of minority communities within the fashion and creative industries, the brand will use its knowledge and resources to ensure career opportunities by providing access to information or physical materials, specialist advice, industry introductions and more.

Industry leadership To increase representation at every level, Tommy Hilfiger will commit to independent, industry-wide analyses of diversity, equity and inclusion in the fashion industry, and will work towards creating concrete action plans to use internally that can also be shared with the broader fashion industry.

The program takes its name from Tommy Hilfiger's first store, which opened in 1969 in Hilfiger's hometown of Elmira, New York. At only 18 years old, Tommy created the People's Place as a dedicated space for people from all walks of life to come together to enjoy art, music, fashion and pop culture. Shaped by the cultural revolution of the 1960s, the original store fostered an exchange of ideas, encouraged authentic self-expression and challenged social norms. It is in this spirit that the new People's Place Program has been founded and will continue to expand.

"As a company, we haven't done enough," says Martijn Hagman, CEO of Tommy Hilfiger Global and PVH Europe. "But we are determined to do better. We are taking immediate action to ensure that BIPOC communities in the fashion industry feel represented, heard and equally welcome to their seat at the table. The People's Place journey starts now with a dedicated internal governance structure that will drive and report regularly on the long-term objectives of the platform. This is a firm commitment and first step in a long journey for what the People's Place Program can

achieve."

Tommy Hilfiger is building a governance structure to oversee the People's Place Program and ensure its success. Senior leadership will be appointed to direct the program, accelerate its growth internally and externally, and maintain focus on transparency through regular reporting on progress and impact made. The People's Place Program team is currently engaging in discussions with industry peers and partners who can help advance the platform mission and maximise impact throughout the fashion landscape.

PVH Corp and its entire brand portfolio is taking a stand against racism. PVH will use its resources and the platforms for Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Izod, Van Heusen, Arrow, Warner's, Olga, True & Co. and Geoffrey Beene to help end racial inequality. The PVH Foundation donated \$100,000 to each of The NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, which supports racial justice through advocacy, impact litigation and education, and The National Urban League, a historic civil rights organisation dedicated to economic empowerment, equality and social justice. During the month of June, The PVH Foundation further matched 100 percent of charitable donations made by associates globally to organizations supporting racial justice.

As part of the PVH family, Tommy Hilfiger will also be making immediate internal strides to become a more informed, less biased organisation with a strong sense of belonging. To address shortcomings in its internal BIPOC representation, the company has launched a Comprehensive Action Plan as the starting point in its journey to further address discrimination, injustice, inequality and racism. The Comprehensive Action Plan will shape how the company moves closer to reflecting the diversity of its consumer base.

## TECHPRENEURS

## How social media influencers make money

## KIGALI

Did you know that Ariana Grande, Kylie Jenner and Cristiano Ronaldo can make about \$1 million on a sponsored posts on Instagram?

Social media influencers are creating a new class of celebrity and turning it into a revenue stream. Though they may not come from the entertainment industry many of them have thousands and even millions of fans and some of them have found a way to translate those massive followings into a fortune.

In Rwanda, social influencing is also fast becoming a popular revenue stream. The beauty of internet is that there are no boundaries allowing influencers on social media to have a

global market. Making money on social media is a business choice.

John Migambi made that choice two years ago. He first made his appearance on Facebook in 2014 and joined Instagram and Twitter later in 2018. He decided to make money out of his ever raising social media community in 2019.

"Internet and social media in particular offer a wide range of opportunities that only requires commitment. To me, every contact and connection on internet is an opportunity to earn more money," he said. Migambi makes approximately Rwf500, 000 every month and the amount is on the rise. Below are one of the ways Migambi and others make money on social media.

## Advertising/sponsored content

In Migambi's case, he now works with 400 business owners who pay him to advertise their products on his social media platforms. His advertisement can be seen by over 15,000 of followers and more on different platforms. Generally, sponsored content on social media is familiar to most audiences, brands, and creators by now, and it remains one of the top ways in which influencers make money.

With product placement, reviews, event coverage, and more, influencers partner with brands to promote brand awareness as well as specific products and services through social media in exchange for payment or products.

For instance, influencer marketing or

sponsored content on Instagram alone was valued as a \$2 billion industry by 2019. Successful influencers might also make money by striking out on their own, forming their own companies, merchandise, apps, and more.

You will come across social media users who leverage on their platforms and grow fans clients for different kinds of businesses such as fitness, eBooks, among others. Creating a strong personal brand is also one of beneficial ways to generate money on social media. Investors, employers and different opportunities can be on anyone's feed and social media influencers willing to make money know how to leverage on them.

## RESTRICTIONS

## Passengers from 12 countries for Covid-19 tests before boarding Emirates

## DUBAI

Travellers flying to Dubai with Emirates from Sudan and Nigeria need to show negative Covid-19 test results before being allowed to board flights.

The Dubai airline has added the two African countries to a list of 10 existing destinations from which travellers must

prove they are coronavirus-free before flying. Each passenger must produce a negative test certificate that has been issued by an approved laboratory, as specified by UAE authorities, in order to be accepted on to the flight by Emirates staff.

In Nigeria, there are about 50 approved clinics designated by the UAE in

several states across the country. In Sudan, travellers can take their test at Alya Hospital, Royal Care Hospital, Fadhell Hospital or Stak Laboratory.

A complete list of approved UAE clinics can be found on the Emirates website. All certificates must be issued no more than 96 hours before departure to be accepted by Emirates.

Which destinations are included in Emirates' testing rules?

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sudan, Tanzania, and USA: Dallas Fort Worth (DFW), Houston (IAH), Los Angeles (LAX), San Francisco (SFO), Fort Lauderdale (FLL) and Orlando (MCO), including passen-

gers originating from California, Florida and Texas connecting to an Emirates flight to Dubai. Commercial flights to Dubai were grounded in March as part of efforts to limit the spread of Covid-19, but Emirates is rebuilding its network as travel restrictions ease.

Tourists can now travel to Dubai, and Emirates has announced the resump-

tion of flights to more than 50 destinations across six continents. The Dubai airline has also introduced its A380 super-jumbo back into service. The world's largest passenger jet is now flying from Dubai to London and Paris, and will begin operating to Amsterdam from August 1.



## CAUTION

# Harvard professor denounces coconut oil as pure poison

## CAPE TOWN

The untimely demise of coconut oil as the be-all and end-all of all health and cosmetic concerns reminds one of the sudden downward spiral of Nicki Minaj's career - once hailed a queen in her field, but reached a point where attempting to defend some of the controversies surrounding her would make you the bad guy instead.

Coconut oil has had a similar career trajectory - it gave us what we thought were some of the greatest beauty hits circa 2013, earned itself regular features in the natural hair movement and in the kitchen, until some experts started calling its bluff by 2018. With regards to clean eating, a Harvard professor and epidemiologist Dr Karin Michels, rejected the hype around coconut oil, declaring that it is "one of the worst things you can eat."

The cosmetic industry isn't speaking to me

Beauty blogger Jackie Aina believes the cosmetic industry isn't doing enough for women of colour. The former-makeup artist has more than one million YouTube subscribers. She believes it's harder for men and women to get hold of the right products.

The Guardian reports that Karin denounced coconut oil as "pure poison" in a lecture titled "Coconut oil and other nutritional errors" at the University of Freiburg. Dr Karin's reasons for likening coconut oil to pure poison are based on the fact that "coconut oil contains more than 80% saturated fat, more than twice the amount found in lard, and 60% more than is found in beef dripping."

As a result, Dr Karin warns that the



Virgin coconut oil bottles.

"high proportion of saturated fat in coconut oil [is known] to raise levels of so-called LDL cholesterol, and so the risk of cardiovascular disease." Not all coconut oil is created equal. One must check which brands they are buying.

The skin debate

While this may be specific to food and the ingestion of coconut oil, it does not make this natural product exempt from being potentially harmful when used topically too. Over and above the fact that the "you are what you eat" adage im-

plies that our diet often has an effect on our skin too, using coconut oil as a face moisturiser therefore also has its pros and cons - one of the most widely acknowledged cons being that it clogs your pores.

However, if you were already aiming for the bin, hold that thought because Cape Town-based dermatologist Dr Nomphele Gantsho has a few surprisingly good things to say about the darling of multi-purpose oils. She says people with acne can use coconut oil on their skin.

"Coconut oil is high in lauric acid,

which helps kill the bacteria that cause acne. Because it consists primarily of short and medium chain fatty acids, coconut oil is also absorbed easily through the skin and provides moisture without leaving your skin feeling greasy," Dr Nomphele explains, adding that "applying coconut oil to the skin can kill acne-causing bacteria as it is anti-inflammatory."

More good news from Dr Nomphele

She says that coconut oil may be also be linked to other skin ben-

efits, "including reducing inflammation, keeping skin moisturised and helping heal wounds." Lastly, this dermatologist confirms that coconut oil is "safe to use on babies and for people with sensitive skin. If at all any allergic reaction occurs, it is not related to tree nut allergies, but probably sensitivity to any one of the fatty acids in the oil." But with that said, she warns that "not all coconut oil is created equal. One must check which brands they are buying."

What about hair?

With regards to natural hair care, many natural hair vloggers have reached the conclusion that coconut oil is not a one size fits all solution. In a video titled "Why I Stopped Using Coconut Oil", natural hair YouTuber Napatural85 shares how her scalp and hair reacted to coconut oil, also adding that it made her hair brittle.

In the video, she puts out the disclaimer that this was just her experience of it and that it may not always be the case for everyone. However, this vlogger also advises you stop using coconut oil when you notice that your hair is falling out.

But besides scalp sensitivity to coconut oil, it's not all bad for hair as it sometimes can be for skin - it just depends on how your curl formulation reacts to it not only in its pure form, but to products that contain coconut oil too.

## MERGER

# Kenyan, Nigerian online baby shops merge for growth

## NAIROBI

A Kenyan online shop for baby products has merged with its Nigerian counterpart as they seek a piece of East and West African market.

MumsVillage and Nigeria's BabyBliss, both specialising in mother and child care products, have merged into a new entity dubbed Bliss. MumsVillage currently features parenting advice and guide as well as an online shop for baby products including diapers, wipes, baby gear, toys, books and feeding accessories.

"I'm excited to lead this new entity into meeting the changing needs of African women and showing that they are indeed a market that cannot be ignored," said Isis Nyong'o, the CEO of MumsVillage.

"Bliss Group will leverage on our networks, learnings and reach to convert the financial opportunity that exists into reality by delivering not just greater shareholder value for our investors, but looking to build a real powerhouse with women at the helm." The firms will ride on increased growth of e-commerce in both markets as women increasingly turn to buying products online.

Kenya's e-commerce market is estimated to Sh107 billion (\$1.003 billion) sales this year while Nigeria's will rake in Sh489 billion (\$4.556 billion). "The BabyBliss vision has always been Pan-African, this opportunity sets us on a course to actualising that with increased momentum," said Jjika Nwobi, BabyBliss Nigeria CEO.

MumsVillage online shop has products such as Aveeno, Avent, Cussons Baby, Johnson and Johnson, Fisher Price, Huggies, Lifebouy, Pampers and Tommee Tippee. The e-commerce space in Kenya has been on an upward trajectory with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development E-commerce index placing Nairobi at position 88, up from 87.

## ESCAPE

# Rich travellers escape to the wilderness

## NAIROBI

For almost four months, Kenyans had shelved their holiday plans due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. But with the relaxation of the rules, a few people have started booking vacations in destinations where they are unlikely to come into contact with another human - except for their drivers, guides, chefs and butlers and their families or friends.

These groups of daring travellers eager to hit the road and ease the sense of being trapped at home want to wake up to the roaring of lions as the sun comes up and elephants emerge from the forest, away from the fears of contracting coronavirus.

These socially distant safaris in Maasai Mara, for instance, are being priced slightly lower than before, when Covid-19 shut down travel. "We've opened Porini Mara Camp situated in Ol Kinyei Conservancy in Maasai Mara, and are receiving guests," said Mohanjeet Brar, the director of Gamewatchers Safaris & Porini Camps in an interview with BDLife.

By last week, two families had made reservations in the six tents camp which sits on 18,700 acres of land. The camp says they have also started receiving August holiday booking inquiries from international travellers.

"People are tired of being home and want to experience nature and take a break from life," Mohanjeet said. Gamewatchers Safaris runs ten lodges, alongside Porini Mara Camp, located in different parts of Kenya, and they hope to open them in one week. However,



William Odhiambo, the general manager of Mahali Mzuri.

Porini's Nairobi tented camp, located inside the national park, has been receiving guests, with the nine tents fully booked most weekends.

"We've tested our staff for coronavirus, have been inspected by the county health officials, and reorganised how we work to maintain hygiene," Mohanjeet said. Once booked, guests are sent a health and safety protocol document.

"We expect them to wear masks throughout, their temperatures will be checked and baggage sanitised before entering the camp," he said. The lodge will offer two meal times allowing guests and staff to social distance. For these wilderness destinations, bush walks, day and night game drives and sundowners are still part of the itinerary.

Tourism jobs

The reopening of the tented camps

will see locals in Maasai Mara, Laikipia and Samburu who had lost their livelihoods when tourists stopped coming, start earning income from the lodges located in the private wildlife conservancies.

Last year, Porini Camp employed over 240 community members and paid about Sh150 million to the conservation communities they partner with. "I remain extremely positive that we will bounce back better and stronger," Mohanjeet said.

Alfred Korir, the owner of Zebra Plains Mara Camp has also reopened with a hope that the sector will sputter to life sooner rather than later. At the moment, he is operating at half the bed capacity in line with the guidelines and set up outdoor food serving stations with tables placed at six feet apart. "I'm adopting a wait-and-see attitude because the local

borders may be opened but the international visitors need some assurance from their governments before they come," Alfred says.

The European Union has asked its citizens to shelve travelling plans to Africa and the local clientele is too small to sustain tourism. Some foreign tourists are too cautious, and they refuse to travel until a coronavirus vaccine is available, or at least until things are more stable. Zebra Plains is welcoming only weekend vacationers for now. So far, the lodge has received three bookings. Alfred says most inquiries from locals are for August.

To cater for the price-sensitive domestic market, he has had to reduce charges even if August is the most crowded and expensive time, which sees thousands of tourists travel to experience the massive movement of wildebeest and accompanying predators from Serengeti in Tanzania to Maasai Mara.

Sh1.2 million a night  
"We have had to reduce the charges to Sh12,000 from Sh20,000 a night," he said, adding that he is also lucky that his landlords have also halved the land rates. Most of the tented camp owners in Maasai Mara lease land from locals and pay an annual rent.

Globally, the high-end travel is likely to pick up first because the well-heeled travellers can afford to pay for coronavirus testing for staff and extra space where they buy out the whole property, especially those secluded in remote locations.

At Zebra Plains, for instance, Alfred has set up self-catering tents and family villas within the camp. "These are for those yearning for exclusivity and minimal contact with people, save for the ones they came with. Designed like a single-dwelling house, guests can cook and clean for themselves," he adds.

Mahali Mzuri, a luxurious tented camp owned by Sir Richard Branson is also opening its doors in August, just in time for the wildebeest migration. The camp in Olare Motorogi Conservancy in Maasai Mara will charge Sh47,500 per person and Sh1.2 million per

night for groups buying out the 12 tents.

"We have always remained optimistic that we may be able to open this summer and we are thrilled to open just in time for the annual Great Migration. Guests can even stay at camp while working from home on a longer stay basis with the peace and serenity of the Kenyan bush, and the thrill of a game drive when it's time to pack up work at the end of the day," said William Odhiambo, the general manager of Mahali Mzuri.

John Kinaro, a director of Keshi Tours is also anticipating a huge influx of people travelling outside of Nairobi. Keshi Tours had been curating travel itineraries for international customers but it has recorded an increase in demand from locals.

"Since the first weekend of May until today, I've been taking 24 people per weekend on a tour of the Nairobi National Park. The domestic market has enabled tour agents to keep the lights on," says the 35-year old, adding that most of his customers have been young families.

With reduced human traffic in the parks, he says, the trips have been memorable because animals have come out from hiding due to fewer distractions. "Just last weekend, we spotted ten lions, a heard of rhinos and group of giraffes in all their magnificence," he says. When the ban lifted, people are making inquiries, wanting to travel outside Nairobi. International customers are also rescheduling their visits.

"For now, Maasai Mara is the most popular destination. People want to avoid social interactions. Unfortunately, Mombasa isn't a favourite because it is hard to control the people one interacts with, even in an exclusive hotel," he says.

Domestic air travel is also on a rebound. Safarilink Aviation says bookings for picking up, following the resumption of domestic air travel on Wednesday. "Our Coast flights and Mara are especially busy heading into the weekend," the airline said.

## GENEROSITY

# Standard Chartered supports Smile Foundation with 25,000 N95 face masks

## JOHANNESBURG

In support of South Africa's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Standard Chartered has donated 25,000 N95 face masks to the Smile Foundation to help ensure the health and safety of frontline and healthcare workers. Worth around R4m, the masks will go to hospitals in the four provinces most impacted by Covid-19, namely the Western Cape, Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

"We recognise that communities in South Africa and around the world need all the support that can be garnered to fight this pandemic. We also acknowledge the impressive effort and sacrifice that healthcare professionals have put into the fight against the coronavirus so far and will continue to do into the future," says Kweku Bedu-Addo, CEO Standard Chartered South Africa and Southern Africa.

Various organisations are facing challenges surrounding the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect healthcare workers who are on the forefront fighting the pandemic.

Smile Foundation CEO Hedley Lewis says, "We are honoured to partner with Standard Chartered Bank to protect and support the medical heroes and heroines on the frontline. With immense gratitude, we thank them on behalf of all of the doctors, nurses and medical personnel who are supporting South Africans while risking their own lives to overcome this pandemic. This collaboration is a true private/public partnership made possible because of the CoronaCare Cause, which is fundraising to support the vulnerable in our communities."







## WORLD

## Outbreak strains US universities' finances

NEW YORK

UNIVERSITIES in the United States are losing millions of dollars after having to reduce the number of students on campus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading many of them to refuse refunds for tuition fees or dormitories.

In mid-March, colleges throughout the country closed dorms and dining halls and moved classes online to halt the spread of the novel coronavirus. Some schools issued refunds for housing costs, others did not.

This week, Harvard University announced that it will limit the number of students on campus to 40 percent of capacity when its term begins on Sept 2.

All 1,650 first-year students can live on its campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, but they are being encouraged to study remotely. Annual tuition fees for Harvard are US\$49,653. Room and board cost US\$17,682 in 2019.

A spokesman for Harvard said in a statement: "We're not advocating that students come to campus."

Princeton, Stanford, Johns Hopkins and other top universities also announced reopening plans this week. Most will hold classes online.

Princeton is inviting students back to campus in stages. It is also offering a 10 percent discount on full-year undergraduate tuition.

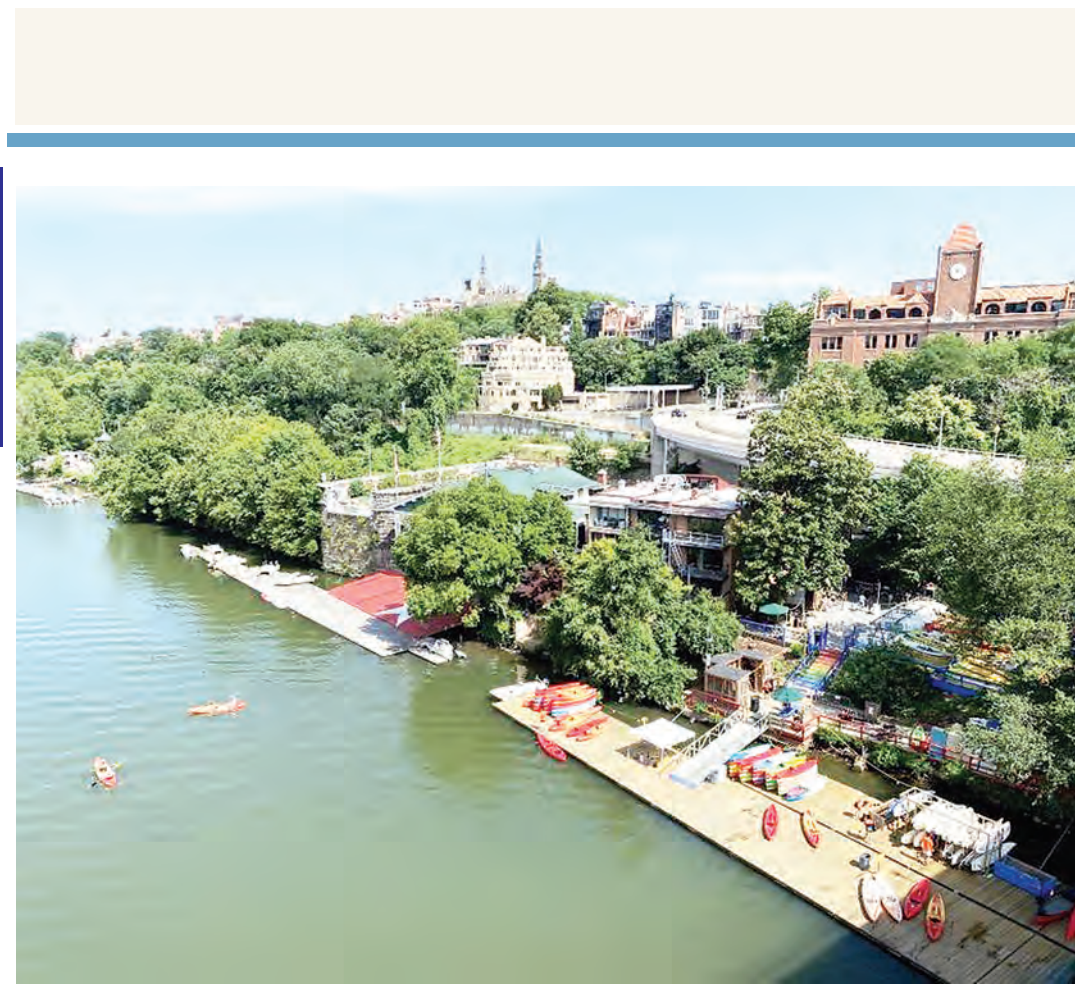
The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act provided US\$14 billion to colleges to help them offset housing and dining refunds, but the loss and uncertainty over revenue generated by housing and tuition fees have caused major disruptions to the US\$700 billion-a-year higher education industry.

In Louisiana, colleges and universities will refund US\$24 million to students whose courses were interrupted by the pandemic. Louisiana State University will issue US\$4.4 million, the University of Louisiana in Lafayette will give back US\$3.8 million, and Southern University in Baton Rouge will issue US\$3.5 million in refunds.

## Collective decision

Jim Henderson, president of a system that oversees the University of New Orleans and other schools, told local newspaper The Advocate: "It was more of a collective decision for us. We all agreed we needed to do something."

California State Northridge and Cali-



A general view of Georgetown with Georgetown University (background) is seen in Washington DC next to the Potomac River where people are kayaking on July 12, 2020. (AFP)

fornia State University, Los Angeles, will offer refunds to students for housing up to the start of the fall semester.

University of California, Los Angeles, or UCLA, deadline for refunds is when the dorms' contract term begins. And students at the University of Southern California had until Wednesday this week to cancel housing.

The University of California, Irvine, will allow students to cancel before Sept 1 to get a refund.

University of California President Janet Napolitano said in a statement: "UC has already lost hundreds of millions in housing and dining revenue."

Meanwhile, the University of Maryland said it also plans to significantly cut down on the number of students on campus. Out of its 30,762 undergraduates, about 12,600 will stay on campus.

Ryan Baker, professor of education at the University of Pennsylvania, said the pandemic has transformed university study for both students and teachers.

Baker said: "A lot of instructors in higher education are very attached to a traditional model of lectures and tests or lecture environments that they can't replicate in an online setting because it's just really hard to have a discussion with over 15 people on Zoom compared to in a classroom."

Elsewhere, several universities have hastily rewritten housing policies to ensure that they are not liable for refunds if students cannot use dorms.

The University of South Florida now requires students to sign a yearlong housing contract that absolves the school of liability.

## Egyptian president vows not to stand idle on threats to Egyptian, Libyan security

CAIRO

EGYPT'S President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi vowed on Thursday that Egypt will not stand idle in the face of any direct threats to the security of Egypt and Libya.

Sisi's made the remarks during his meeting with Libyan tribal leaders who arrived in Cairo on Wednesday to discuss the security situation in the war-torn country, the Egyptian Presidency said in a statement.

"As soon as Egypt interferes in Libya, the military scene will be changed quickly and decisively," Sisi (pictured) was quoted as saying. He added that the main objective of the Egyptian efforts at all levels for Libya is to support the free will of the Libyan people to achieve a better future for the country and future generations.

The tribesmen, who are allied to the eastern-based Libyan National Army (LNA) led by commander Khalifa Haftar, "have authorized the president and Egyptian army to intervene in Libya to protect its sovereignty," the statement added.

This mandate came in line with the eastern-based Libya parliament's request for Egypt to intervene in the Libyan conflict to counter what it called "a Turkish occupation."

Turkey has sided with the UN-backed Libyan government based in the capital Tripoli. Earlier in June, Sisi called for a ceasefire in Libya, citing that Egypt had received "direct threats from terrorist militias and mercenaries supported by foreign countries."

Tensions have been recently escalating between the two warring parties in Libya, the LNA and the Government of National Accord in Tripoli led by Fayez al-Serraj, and between the countries backing each side. **Agencies**

## Russian health minister, US ambassador discuss COVID-19 pandemic, vaccines

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN Health Minister Mikhail Murashko and US Ambassador to Russia John Sullivan have held a working meeting to discuss the novel coronavirus pandemic and efforts to develop a vaccine against the disease, the Russian Health Ministry's press service said.

The sides discussed the novel coronavirus infection's spread in Russia and the United States, peculiarities of the situation in certain regions of the two countries and issues of providing timely and professional assistance to novel coronavirus patients.

The Russian health minister suggested holding a video conference of experts from the two states to share experience.

The sides also discussed the development of novel coronavirus vaccines and other medicines to prevent and treat infectious diseases in Russia and the United States.

"Although the novel coronavirus mortality in Russia is low, every human life matters to us, and we would like to increase our knowledge to make those figures even lower," the statement quoted Murashko as saying.

The sides also thanked each other for humanitarian assistance. In April, Russia sent a batch of medical goods to the US, and afterwards, the US delivered a batch of 200 ventilators to Russia.

"The US ambassador expressed his gratitude to the Russian side for providing medical equipment at the initial stages of the novel coronavirus outbreak in the United States. <...> Mikhail Murashko, in turn, thanked the American colleagues for the batch of lung ventilators, which had been donated to Russia and will be used in Russian regions," the statement says. **Agencies**



Xinhua

## Mandela's daughter laid to rest in Johannesburg

JOHANNESBURG

ZINDZI Mandela, South Africa's Ambassador to Denmark and daughter of Nelson and Winnie Mandela, was laid to rest next to her mother's burial place at Fourways Memorial Park in Johannesburg North yesterday.

Zindzi's son Zondwa said his mother's legacy will leave on: "My mother was clear that it is important to celebrate who we are. We will continue her work. She was diversified, kind and loving and

true to herself."

"We are happy to have given her a beautiful and celebratory send off. I can't describe the feeling, it's been an unfortunate loss," he said.

African National Congress (ANC) senior member Jeff Radebe represented the party at the ceremony.

He said Zindzi was a leader. "Even though she was the daughter of one of our iconic leaders, Nelson Mandela, she was a leader in her own right. The speech she delivered in 1985 in Soweto reso-



nates not only true to South Africans but to people around the world. It is a sad day."

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) leader Julius Malema who is a close family member also graced the ceremony.

Malema said it was difficult to accept Zindzi's passing.

"We are shattered. We are in disbelief but there is nothing we can do. She was fearless. She spoke her mind. When they threatened to fire her, I was like you can't threaten Zindzi Mandela," he said.

Xinhua

## COVID-19 pandemic stunts socio-economic progress in LatAm as cases surge above 2 mln in Brazil

MEXICO CITY

FOUR countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, one of the last regions hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, have ranked among the world's top 10 countries in terms of confirmed cases.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Brazil ranks second, only after the United States and with its case tally surpassing 2 million on Thursday. It was followed by Peru, Chile and Mexico at the regional level, each with over 300,000 cases.

Arguably, geographic location gives Latin America an advantage – time to prepare before the arrival of the pandemic, but a lack of effective synergy, regional development disparity as well as poverty undermined their head start, leading to catastrophic health crises and economic downturns that may take years to tide over, say experts.

REGIONAL EPICENTER

On March 11, a 57-year-old woman hospitalized in Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city, tested positive for the coronavirus. One day later, she was dead – Brazil's first documented COVID-19 fatality.

In the ensuing four months, the disease claimed over 76,000 lives and infected more than 2 million in the country, according to the Health Ministry. Among those infected was President Jair Bolsonaro, who tested positive on July 7.

Brazil's prosperous and industrialized southeast coast, home to Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro states, has become the epicenter in the country, while the virus has spread to poorer inland regions short of resources to tackle such a health emergency.

COVID-19 has reached 96.4 percent of Brazil's municipalities with no sign of slowing down, according to the ministry.

Observers believe the true scale of the epidemic in Brazil is much larger, given under-reporting in remote ar-



A medic performs health check for an indigenous woman in the Surucucu region of Alto Alegre, Roraima state, Brazil, on July 1, 2020. (Xinhua)

reas, asymptomatic infections and the lack of testing.

The actual tally may be "three or five times higher," Brazilian infectious disease expert Ana Lucia Reis told Xinhua.

Outbreaks in Peru and Chile, ranking second and third respectively in cases in the region, appeared to have plateaued, with more than 330,000 cases and over 12,000 deaths in the former and more than 320,000 cases and over 7,000 deaths in the latter.

Both countries are trying to reopen their economies and contain the pandemic simultaneously by moving from a nationwide lockdown to localized restrictions wherever transmission rates remain high.

Additionally, Mexico has reported over 317,000 cases and 37,000-plus deaths. President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador this week delivered good news, saying only nine of the country's 32 states had rising caseload, whereas the rest had pla-

teaued or were decreasing.

To re-energize the economy, Mexico has adopted a dashboard system signalling which cities can exit from lockdowns. Most areas remain in orange alert – meaning the chances of infection are still high, but with preventive and social distancing measures, businesses such as hair salons and restaurants can partially resume operations.

## LACK OF EFFICIENT SYNERGY

Blessed with a comparative longer period to prepare itself for the epidemic, it has still been hit so hard.

Many experts cited poor planning and the absence of effective synergy among governments at various levels as the main reason.

Bernardo Vargafitig, a senior professor at the University of Sao Paulo's Institute of Biomedical Sciences, believes that lack of standardized guidelines nationwide has made matters worse.

Xinhua

## Chinese local governments take timely measures to evacuate public from flood-hit regions

HEAVY rain has been hitting the area spanning the east of China's southwestern region to the mid-stream and downstream areas of the Yangtze River since June, resulting in floods and landslides that seriously threatened the safety of the public. Timely evacuation of the public is one of the most effective measures to guarantee the safety of the people.

Panping village in Shimen county, Nanbei township, Changde of central China's Hunan province was hit by a huge downpour at the end of the last month. When villager Chen Jinlan had just tidied up his kitchen after lunch, Party chief of Nanbei township Qin Hao and Party secretary of the village

Xu Bo came to him and persuaded him to move to another place to take shelter from the rain. "The rain will keep pouring these days, and it is warned that there might be landslides in Leijiashan Mountain," the two Party cadres told Chen.

Changde Natural Resources and Planning Bureau detected the risk of geological hazards in Leijiashan Mountain, where Panping village locates during the flood season last year, and a high-precision warning system based on Beidou satellites was installed to ensure safety of the region.

The system spotted abnormal monitoring data on June 24, forecasting a high risk of sudden geo-

logical disasters in the following days. The warning of the system helped successfully evacuate 20 people from 6 households in the caution area on the same day.

The system issued its third alarm at 2:11 pm on June 6, and just within three hours, a landslide occurred. "Fortunately, no one was hurt in this disaster," Qin told People's Daily.

Wang Zhangli, head of the Department of Flood and Drought Disaster Prevention under China's Ministry of Water Resources introduced that precise forecast wins valuable time for relocation. At present, the ministry is working in shifts to analyze forecasts so it can timely inform relevant regions and

offer support for decision-making. In addition, the forecast is also delivered to emergency departments for better preparation of emergency response and rescue activities.

At 7:40 pm, July 12, the embankment of a river near Ligang village, Sanjiao township in east China's Jiangxi province was breached. After receiving a phone call from the township government at 8:00 pm, Peng Tanggen, director of Ligang village immediately led four village cadres to mobilize the villagers to evacuate. In 8 hours, all 1,600 villagers from over 300 households were relocated to a higher place.

"We must deliver the information on disasters to everyone as soon as we receive it," said Wang.

Migrant workers and tourists are most likely to be neglected in the notification, and to eliminate potential risks, the Ministry of Water Resources enhanced its cooperation with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, and launched a public warning service together with three major telecommunication carriers. Besides, in rural areas where floods may cut down electricity and communication, counties, townships and villages are requested to be equipped with not only broadcast facilities, but also loudspeakers and drums for timely receiving and sending emergency messages.

Jiangxi Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China

and the People's Government of Jiangxi Province demanded that relocation sites shall offer food and water, beds, relevant materials, showers, and medical service. Besides, order should also be maintained at these sites to enhance coordination and standardize management.

In addition, emergency departments shall ensure material supply, and health departments must establish medical service stations for epidemic prevention and control. Public security offices should strengthen their work at the relocation sites, and food supervision department should strengthen monitoring of food safety around these sites.

To cope with the floods, east China's Anhui province issued an emergency notice on July 11, raising clear requests for the construction of relocation sites.

According to the Department of Emergency Management of central China's Hubei province, as of 3:00 pm, July 13, the province has relocated over 320,000 people since it entered the early-summer rainy season.

By combining centralized and separate relocation, local governments across China are making every effort to ensure the basic needs of the people in disaster-hit areas.

People's Daily



# Biden facing pressure within party as running mate search enters final phase

## WASHINGTON

DEMOCRATIC presidential candidate Joe Biden is facing pressure from contending groups inside his party as he prepares to interview a shortlist of women for the most important hire of his political career: his running mate.

Biden, who committed to choosing a woman for the job he held for eight years under President Barack Obama, said this week he expected the background vetting process to conclude around July 24. He would then interview each finalist before making a decision, expected by early August.

The selection of the vice presidential candidate has taken on outsized importance this year, reflecting the desperation to defeat Republican President Donald Trump among Democrats, who have agonized over which candidate would give Biden the biggest boost in the Nov. 3 election.

Biden leads in national and battleground-state opinion polls as voters fault Trump for his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, the subsequent economic recession and race relations.

Adding to the weight of Biden's choice, he would be 78 at his January inauguration, making him the oldest U.S. president and setting up his vice president as an early front-runner for the 2024 race should he serve only one term.

"There's a lot of attention on this for a number of reasons, not least of which that Vice President Biden is 77 years old," former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said.

Reid, who has had several conversations about the topic with Biden, said the list narrowed in recent weeks but remained fairly large.

The women under serious consideration include Senators Kamala Harris, Elizabeth Warren and Tammy Duckworth; U.S. Representatives Val Demings and Karen Bass; former U.S. national security adviser Susan Rice; New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan

Grisham; and Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, according to interviews with Democratic officials.

Harris cemented herself early as a favorite after dropping her presidential bid, particularly among top fundraisers, who have Biden's ear and tend to be more centrist. Online betting site PredictIt puts her odds of being picked at 41%, far higher than any of the other candidates on the list.

The Biden campaign declined to comment on the search.

In making his choice, Biden has to balance many factors, including ideology, race and ethnicity, as well as candidates' ability to raise money, create enthusiasm and fulfill the traditional vice presidential "attack dog" role by going after Trump.

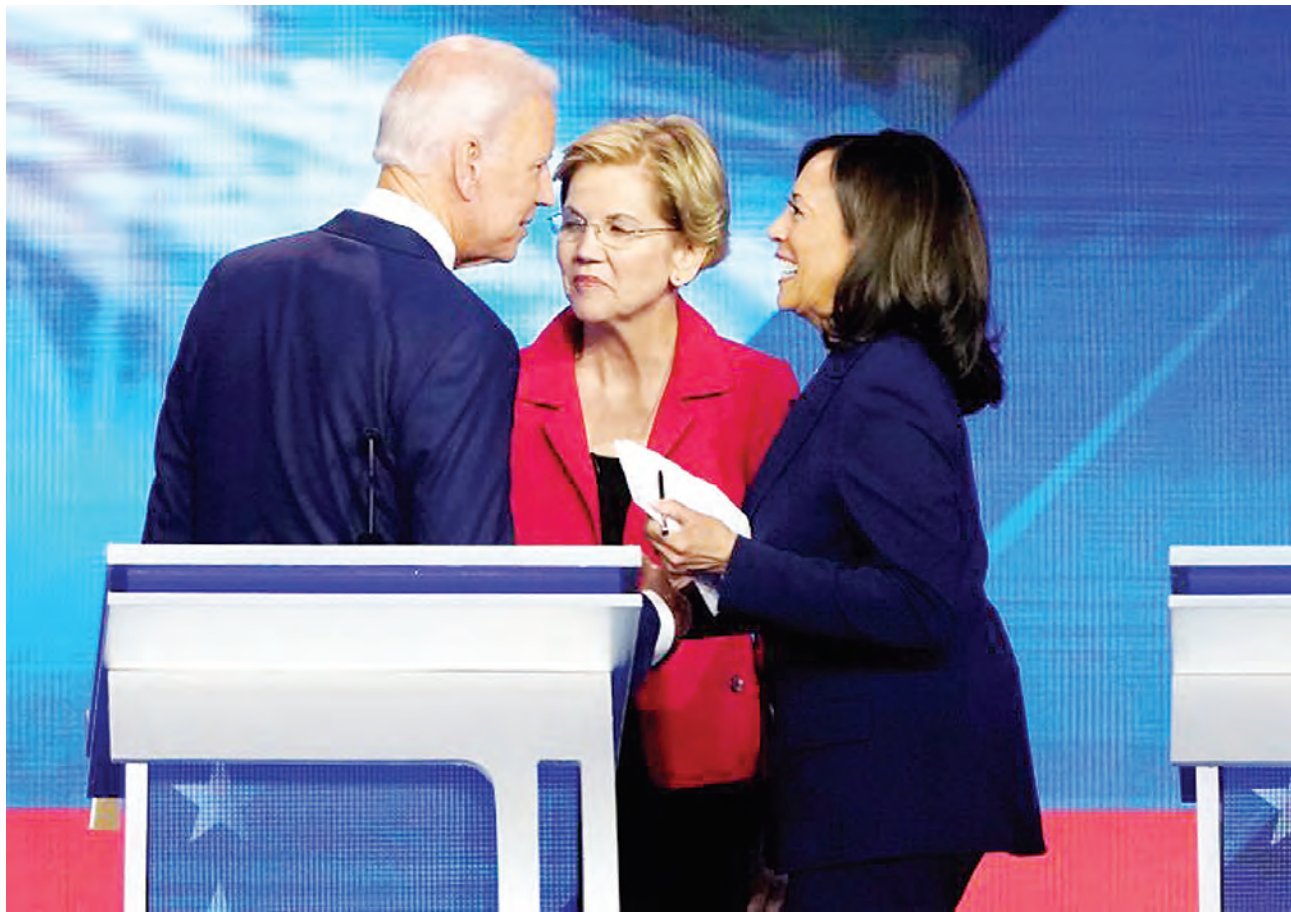
Alex Heckler, a member of Biden's national finance committee who backs Harris as running mate, said the ideal candidate given Trump's "bogus" allegations about Biden's lack of mental stamina would be someone who could attack Trump's shortcomings and be qualified to serve as president if needed.

## MOUNTING CALLS FOR BLACK RUNNING MATE

Perhaps the biggest question facing Biden is whether to select a Black woman following national protests over racial injustice following the police killing of George Floyd, an African American, in Minneapolis. Warren is the only white candidate on the shortlist, which includes five Black women as well as Grisham, who is Latina, and Duckworth, who is an Asian American.

"As I am witnessing what is happening in this country right now, I am more convinced than ever that Joe Biden needs a Black woman as his vice presidential candidate," said LaTosha Brown, a co-founder of the advocacy group Black Voters Matter.

Leah Daughtry, a Democratic official who ran the 2008 convention that nominated Obama, the country's



Former Vice President Joe Biden talks with Senator Elizabeth Warren (C) and Senator Kamala Harris (R) after the conclusion of the 2020 Democratic U.S. presidential debate in Houston, Texas, U.S. September 12, 2019. (File photo)

first Black president, has also lobbied Biden and top campaign officials like Anita Dunn to pick a Black woman.

"Nominating a Black woman will get you the enthusiasm that Joe Biden is going to need to run a successful race in this pandemic environment," she said.

Left-wing activists mounted a campaign to support Warren, who they argue would help unite the party's liberal faction behind the more moderate Biden and whose commitment to "big structural change" could address the country's deepening health and economic crises.

Some progressive Black advocates pointed to Warren's attention to racial inequity in crafting her policy

platform as a presidential contender, while noting that Harris' background as a prosecutor in California and Demings' as a police chief in Florida might make them less appealing to criminal justice activists.

"Representation is important; it's just not sufficient," said Maurice Mitchell, executive director of the liberal Working Families Party. Mitchell said he planned to make the case for Warren directly to Biden or his senior aides during an expected sit-down soon.

Among the other potential picks, Grisham could boost Latino turnout in key Sun Belt states like Arizona and Florida, which the campaign regards as an area Biden needs to shore up.

Duckworth, a military veteran who lost her legs in combat, would give the ticket a compelling personal narrative and help bolster the campaign's national security credentials.

Some advisers harbor doubts about whether Harris' ambition for higher office might upstage Biden's message. But Keith Williams, chairman of the Democratic Black Caucus in Michigan, a battleground state Trump narrowly won in 2016, said he told the Biden campaign that Harris was hands down the best option.

"She's been on the world stage. She has acquitted herself in the debates," he said. "She is the most likely choice that they should go with."

Agencies

## Peskov says 'got lucky' to become Putin's spokesman

### MOSCOW

KREMLIN spokesman Dmitry Peskov believes that he "got lucky" with his career, he said in an interview for Avtoradio.

"I've got lucky in my life to become the spokesman of Russian President Vladimir Putin," he said. "Because to become a spokesman of the, in my opinion, the most brilliant state figure in the world, the most influential incumbent state figure in the world is, of course, a big luck."

It is a unique opportunity to learn every day, not from books, but from real life; a unique opportunity to feel in the middle of processes that are vital not only



for our country, but for the entire world; and, at the same time, to bear my own share of responsibility, which is not small, too."

Peskov revealed that there is no such thing as creative freedom at this post, as well as at his previous occupations.

"I do not know what the creative freedom is at all, because I came to the [presidential] administration from the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs, I came back from our embassy in Ankara," he said. "The embassy life, which I entered in the Soviet Union, is characterized, probably, by even less freedom than the work in the administration," Peskov added.

"Freedom is what I have now," the spokesman said. "It is not a burden. It is a job of a state employee."

Speaking about his state service, Peskov noted that the word "bureaucrat" has acquired a negative meaning.

"This is not true; [a bureaucrat] is a state employee, who works for the state," he said. "The state hires me, pays me my salary, and I work."

Agencies

## Abe faces anger over tourism aid as Tokyo cases hit record

### TOKYO

THE Japanese government is facing potentially damaging blowback after excluding Tokyo residents from a multi-billion dollar campaign aimed at reviving domestic tourism, even as the capital on Friday reported a record number of new COVID-19 cases.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's US\$16 billion "Go To" tourism campaign was intended to promote travel across the country, but officials agreed on Thursday to exclude Tokyo because of the resurgence in infections there.

Tokyo Governor Yuriko

Koike reported 293 new cases yesterday, a fresh daily record after the city recorded 286 cases a day earlier.

Abe (pictured) has borne the brunt of the negative reaction to Tokyo's exclusion from the travel subsidy programme, adding to growing criticisms of his handling of the crisis that analysts said could erode his support.

"What makes you think that business trips or commuting won't spread the coronavirus?"



Do you think it's fair to exclude Tokyoites from a campaign that's using taxpayers money?" said opposition lawmaker Ren Ho on Friday morning in a tweet addressed to Abe.

The hashtag #TokyoExcluded was trending on Twitter yesterday, amassing almost 100,000 tweets.

Tourism Minister Kazuyoshi Akaba said the decision to exclude Tokyo residents from receiving a 50 percent government subsidy for domestic trips was "heart-breaking." The subsidy, which kicks in from July 22, will also not be available for anybody travelling to Tokyo.

Agencies

## Nigerian student studying in China enjoys rewarding volunteer work in COVID-19 fight

"THE novel coronavirus is the common enemy of the world. I want to do what I can to protect my university and schoolmate," said Umunnah Obinna Ifeanyi Gentle, a Nigerian student studying in Liaoning Technical University (LNTU) in northeast China's Liaoning province.

The young man, who is a first-year postgraduate student majoring in communication engineering in LNTU, has worked as a volunteer to help his university with epidemic prevention and control efforts after the outbreak of the COVID-19.

Since China has taken nationwide efforts to fight the COVID-19 epidemic, the School of International Education of LNTU promptly formulated an epidemic prevention and control work plan, arranging staff members and teachers to watch over the dormitories of international students to guard against infection 24 hours a day.

In an effort to better communicate with international students during the COVID-19 fight, the university issued a notice on recruiting volunteers for epidemic prevention and control. Umunnah Obinna Ifeanyi Gentle, who has given himself the Chinese name of Wen He after he came to China, was the first one responding.

LNTU has more than 100 international students from 23 countries. Every day, Wen needed to take and record body temperatures of these



Wen He (R) takes body temperature of a staff member.

students twice. Besides, he also distributed among them anti-epidemic materials provided by the university, such as gloves and masks, disinfected dormitories, and regularly learned the students' demand for supplies so as to arrange centralized purchase for them.

Wen's volunteer work didn't go well at the beginning, for some students thought certain epidemic prevention and control measures affected their study and daily life, Wen said, disclosing that once he had a fight with a Bangladeshi student named Li Taiyang (Md Abdulah Al Sadiq) over taking body temperature.

He named himself Wen He, which means mild and gentle in Chinese, because he wanted to remind himself of staying calm, according to Wen. Therefore, he didn't give up and continued to work hard in the

face of these difficulties.

When some students showed concerns about the epidemic situation, he encouraged them to face the difficult time with an optimistic mindset, Wen said.

Wen shares the latest information about epidemic prevention and control with his fellow schoolmates every day, and tells them interesting stories about his travels in China and famous tourist attractions he had visited, said the young man who sometimes also cooks for them.

As the man made earnest efforts to help protect international students from the virus, Wen's volunteer work received more and more recognition and understanding.

Learning that Wen is about to move to another campus of the university in the next semester, Li Taiyang, a Bangladesh student who had quarreled with him over

prevention measures, now doesn't want him to leave.

He told Wen that he and other students would visit him often at the new campus, and asked Wen to stop by and visit his old friends frequently.

A few days ago on his birthday, Wen received many birthday wishes on messenger app WeChat from his schoolmates, which deeply touched him.

Wen said what he did was simple, and he was fulfilled that everyone was so supportive and cooperative for his work.

Wen always shares the stories about China's COVID-19 fight with his family and friends in Nigeria. When a friend of his wondered how China was able to build a hospital with more than 1,000 beds within ten days, Wen forwarded video clips showing the construction of the hospital he received from a Nigerian friend working in the virus-hit Hubei province, Wen told people's Daily, adding that his friend marveled at the Chinese speed.

China's COVID-19 fight has been without doubt a good example to countries in the world, Wen noted.

Wen studies Chinese every day. He plans to start a course on Chinese culture when he returns to Nigeria, so as to help more college students there learn more about China and visit the country to see its rapid development.

People's Daily

## China slams US over curb on tech visas

BEIJING slammed Washington on Thursday for attacking Chinese telecommunications equipment provider Huawei and deciding to impose visa restrictions on certain employees of Huawei and other Chinese tech companies.

"As an outstanding private company, Huawei's only fault is that it's Chinese," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said at a daily news conference.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who announced the visa restrictions on Wednesday, has talked repeatedly over the past month about "clean" companies and countries that exclude Huawei from their 5G networks.

Instead of anything to do with "cleanliness", what the United States has done is a "dirty trick" and "dirty play", Hua (pictured) said on Thursday.

Huawei has offered services to more than 170 countries, none of which has provided any evidence that its products posed a security threat or had back doors that allow interference, Hua said.

Huawei established a cybersecurity evaluation center in the United Kingdom for the UK to assess its products. The company also said it is willing to sign backdoor-free contracts with all countries.

"Can any US company ... do as Huawei did?" Hua asked, adding that the US "has long been carrying out indiscriminate and illegal surveillance on governments, companies and individuals in other countries, including its allies".

The US has been defaming and attacking Huawei out of a strong ideological bias and is rallying its allies in its attempt to besiege the company, she said.

Responding to Pompeo's attack on human rights conditions in China's Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region and his claims that Huawei provides "material support to regimes engaging



in human rights abuses", Hua said such accusations constitute "the biggest lie of the century". As many as 56 ethnic groups live in harmony in China, where 850 million people have been lifted out of poverty, she said.

China also became the second-largest economy without resorting to warfare, colonialism or slavery, contributing more than 30 percent of global economic growth for over a decade, she said.

In contrast, the US, which "suffers racial discrimination everywhere", decimated its Native American population and has waged "groundless wars" in countries such as Iraq, Libya, Syria and Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the UK lost its independence in making its own decisions when it chose to ban Huawei from its 5G network, Hua said, adding that the decision will cost the UK more than it will gain.

Huawei has created tens of thousands of jobs in the UK over two decades and contributed to the country's telecommunications infrastructure, she said, adding that London should listen carefully to reasonable voices and make a choice that complies with its long-term and fundamental interests.

Agencies

## Uighurs under fire from the Dragon

A NEW relation about the exploitation of Uighur Muslims was made in March this by the Australian strategic Policy Institute (ASPI).

The ASPI published a report claiming that at least 80,000 Uighurs had been subjected to do "forced labour" in factories across China supplying to 83 global brands. The report identified a network of at least 27 factories in nine Chinese provinces where more than 80,000 Uighurs from Xinjiang had been transferred.

When confronted, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said "Those studying in vocational centres have all graduated and are employed with the help of our government. They now live a happy life". This is perhaps the next phase of the ongoing crackdown in Xinjiang where more than a million Uighurs have been detained under the guise of "Vocational Training Centre".

It seems China is not content with oppressing only the living Uighurs as it has not spared even the dead from the community. It has demolished more than 100 Uighur graveyards in what human rights groups described as an escalation of the communist regime's campaign to destroy the Muslim minority's culture.

Satellite images show that burial sites in western Xinjiang province have been wiped out with some turned into car parks and playgrounds. Aziz Isa Elkun, a Uighur poet who fled the region more than 20 years ago and now lives in London, said he had "visited his father's grave on Google Earth for nearly two years after he died."

But one day an updated satellite image showed the cemetery a had been replaced with a field. Sophie Richardson, China Director at Human Rights Watch, says, "Authorities in Beijing and Urumqi don't seem content tormenting Truckic Muslim alive today- it appears their hostility to that community also extends to the dead".

Another shocking aspect of the repressive measure in Xinjiang is the harvesting of organs from Uighur Muslim. The China Tribunal, an independent global group initiated by the International Coalition to End Transplant Abuse in China accused China of harvesting organs from persecuted minority groups.

Hamid Sabi, a lawyer for the Tribunal, claimed that Beijing was taking hearts, kidneys, lungs and skin from minority groups, including Uighur Muslims. He underlined that it involved hundreds of thousands of victims and termed it as one of the worst mass atrocities of the century.

Whenever questioned, china has always officially responded by saying that the Xinjiang issue is not about ethnicity, religion or human rights rather it is about fighting violence, terrorism and extremism.

But time and again reports on human rights violations in the region have validated the contrary. It is high time the suffering of the Uighurs in Xinjiang ended and Chinese leadership held accountable for the injustice.

Agencies



## James Harden returns as NBA looks at creating home-court advantage

BY DAN WOIKE, LA TIMES

JAMES Harden's quarantine beard is, well, his normal beard.

The Houston Rockets guard, one of the NBA's toughest defensive assignments and the league's best scorer, had just finished with his first practice with the Rockets on Thursday after a late arrival to the Disney World campus when a hint of excitement crept through the forest of hair that grows on his face.

The Rockets are scheduled for three scrimmages and eight seeding games, but for Harden and most of the teams in Orlando, the real tests start in mid-August when the playoffs begin. With no travel or hostile crowds, the playing field has been leveled.

"It's like home-court advantage? There's no home-court advantage," Harden said on a video conference call Thursday. "Everybody doesn't have any fans. It's you versus us and we'll just have to figure it out. ... For us, it's about getting into shape and making sure our offense and defense are crisp and we're all on the same page. We'll play anybody."

While home-court advantage cannot be replicated when none of the teams are actually playing on their home courts in a bubble environment, "home" teams will still have some familiar touches.

On Wednesday, Dallas coach Rick Carlisle took a peek inside of one of the playing

venues on the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex.

"Well, there's going to be fans in the stands. It's just not going to be ... it's going to be virtual fans," Carlisle told reporters. "There are going to be digital boards all over the arenas. There are going to be home team sounds. ... It's really going to be a compelling situation."

The home team sounds for the Lakers? Ideally, it'll be just like a Staples Center home game, organ included.

"I expect to be very similar to a game – without fans – if that makes sense. I do think that you'll have some crowd noise. They've talked about it," Lakers forward Jared Dudley said. "I'm expecting a Lakers chant, the music when we come out for our intros, how it has the (organ), the different vibe, different stuff during the game."

People with knowledge of the situation said final details are still being planned out for the full game-day experience. League executives inside the Orlando bubble are expecting a walk-through in the upcoming days. While some Randy Newman here for the Lakers and some "Dos Minutos" there for the Miami Heat are nice touches, they're certainly not worth going all out for during those eight seeding games.

Boston Celtics coach Brad Stevens said those seeding games can provide his team an opportunity to start to rebuild and move toward the postseason with as much going right as possible.



Tiger Woods watches his shot from the third tee during the first round of the Memorial golf tournament, Thursday, July 16, 2020, in Dublin, Ohio. (AP Photo)

## Tiger spotty in return to PGA Tour

DUBLIN, OHIO

TIGER Woods made his return to the PGA Tour on Thursday, and there certainly was a different feel while he shot a 1-under-par 71 at the Memorial Tournament in Dublin, Ohio.

No fans were on the course at Woods' first tournament since mid-February, so there were fewer obstacles for Woods to dodge.

"It's certainly different around here with some of the walks," Woods said after the round. "But you get from point A to point B very directly. I hadn't felt this ever here. Usually I'm meandering roundabout, so it was a good feeling."

Woods' round was a bit spotty -- leaving him with a mix of good and bad feelings.

He knocked in four birdies, including one on 18 to end his round. But Woods also had three bogeys, which sabotaged his chances of nearing the lead. He is tied for 18th and trails leader Tony Finau by five shots.

"I was very pleased the way I drove it, (and) my feel for my irons," said Woods, who averaged 305 yards on his drives. "I just didn't quite hit the putts hard enough. Most of my putts were dying, didn't quite have enough oomph to it."

Woods said he felt rusty while terming the effort as a good start. He said his training has him ready for the event, and he also acknowledged that the butterflies were churning prior to the round.

"I was certainly feeling the edginess and nervousness and anxiousness of playing, and getting out there and feeling something I hadn't felt in a while," said Woods, "and it felt good."

REUTERS

## Singida United's shocking 2019/20 season

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL MWEBE

SINGIDA United are 20 points behind 19th placed Mbao FC in this season's Vodacom Premier League. They have only taken seven points at home all season. They have conceded 69 goals.

They scored just 20 goals. They are on a six-match losing streak. They were relegated with eight games to go.

The opening day defeat to Mwadui FC was swiftly followed by defeat at Namungo FC (2-0), punctuated with two draws against Ndanda FC (1-1) and Mbao FC (0-0), and 1-0 loss to Alliance FC. Two points and a goal difference of -4 after five games did not bode well.

It took Singida United until November to win their first league game of the season, a 1-0 away triumph over Mbeya City FC at the 12th attempt.

With only three more rounds to the end of the season, Singida United are the worst individual teams to have ever graced the Vodacom Premier League.

The team has faced lots of challenges on and off the pitch but unfortunately for their fans, no amount of statistical massaging can do anything about this team's position in the rundown of the worst sides in Vodacom Premier League history.

Top flight promotion was earned in 2017/18. They conducted what appeared to be some good off-season business, retaining the core of their side while adding some experienced squad players from Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The likes of Tafadzwa Kutinyu, Elisha Muroiwa and Wisdom Mutasa were bought from Zimbabwe, Ugandan international fullback Shafiq Batambuze, Rwandan international Michael Rusheshangonga and Danny Usengimana were also captured.

Though they finished in a respectable fifth position, the warning signs were perhaps already there in the form of payment delays and high turnover of players. By the end of season, all the key players departed as the team, which had spent the better part of the season denying emerging

reports of financial challenges, finally accepted things had to change.



Singida United defender, Kazungu Mashauri (back), challenges Azam FC forward, Obrey Chirwa, in a Vodacom Premier League clash, which took place in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF AZAM FC

reports of financial challenges, finally accepted things had to change.

At the start of the 2018/19 season, the team was forced to live within their means. Several sponsors abandoned them. The recruitment process was done without the usual flamboyance witnessed in the first season.

The team struggled but top flight status was maintained with a 13th place finish in the expanded league. This was the beginning of the end for Singida United. They looked doomed.

This campaign has seen Singida United take the risky approach of signing players through trials and it ultimately proved costly. From the off, they simply never looked capable of competing in the top flight.

The amount of money they spent was perhaps their main downfall. However, fellow financially challenged sides Ndanda

FC, Lipuli FC and Mbao FC spent similarly paltry sums but are still fighting for their lives in the top flight, unlike Singida United who are setting all bad records this season.

As it stands, Singida United are about to break all the bad records we have seen in the league in the last 11 seasons.

With three wins to date, they are set to record the fewest in a season. Last season African Lyon were relegated with a point tally of 23 which Singida United are unlikely to reach. In the 2017/18 season Njombe Mji were the worst side but still managed four wins and ended with 22 points despite having played eight less matches.

Singida United have lost 26 matches which is already the league record for most defeats in a season. They have shipped in 69 goals which is also a record

for most goals conceded in a 38-game season, the list goes on and on. It is a campaign that will go down as one of the worst.

One positive for Singida United is the fact that they have stuck with Burundian head coach Ramadhan Nsanurwimo through to the bitter end – while the likes of Mbao FC and Alliance FC had their seasons saved by new bosses.

Interestingly, two out of three wins for Nsanurwimo this season have been against his immediate team, Mbeya City FC who let him go at the end of last campaign.

If Mbeya City FC go down then it would be fair to say Nsanurwimo will be directly responsible for relegating two teams. How else do a football fan explain Mbeya City FC gifted Singida United six of their 15 points in 2019/20?

## SportPesa Jackpot winner gets cash prize

BY GUARDIAN REPORTER

SPORTS betting firm, SportPesa Tanzania, yesterday handed over 288,974,720/- in cash prize to Dar es Salaam resident, Jamal Khalifan Abdallah, who had emerged as the SportPesa Jackpot winner.

Jackpot is one of the betting games held by the sports betting firm.

This is the fourth phase that the

SportPesa Jackpot has got winner from Ilala District in the city.

The district's three other residents as well laid their hands on the prize money through taking part in the game.

Abdallah, aged 26, won the cash prize once he placed right bets on 13 matches for the Jackpot game.

SportPesa Tanzania's Director of Administration and Compliance, Tarimba Abbas, stated Abdallah won the Jackpot once he

placed right bets on 13 matches, which were held last weekend.

"SportPesa has already handed over more than 1.8bn/- to four Jackpot winners that had placed right bets on 13 matches. Since we started operating in Tanzania on May, 2017 the Jackpot and bonus winners have raked in over 8.2bn/-.

He said: "We are happy we have for over three years changed various Tanzanians' lives and make

the millionaires' family bigger.

"SportPesa is a company, which follows all procedures in seeing to it all laws set by the Gaming Board of Tanzania are fully followed, including paying taxes. The taxes paid by all of the Jackpot winners the firm got since 2017 amount to over 1.6bn/-.

"I appeal to Tanzanians and sports enthusiasts SportPesa is here to entertain them particularly in soccer matches betting and a participant, who wins, gets his prize money after the matches' conclusion."

Abdallah said: "I did not expect I will win, considering I had placed over 10 bets, for that matter I had expected to win bonus.

"I will not use this cash, I will instead deposit it in my bank account for some time, whilst thinking of what I should do. It is a lot of money and plenty of calmness is needed.

"I'm an entrepreneur, for that matter I will, via this win, manage to meet my vital needs.

"I have paid 57,794,944/- in taxes to the government and the remainder of the money is over 231m/-. I will take 10 per cent of it to offer support for orphans.

"I'm an enthusiastic Young Africans SC fan and I'm happy SportPesa have surprised me by bringing me Yanga players to witness the hand over ceremony."

Gaming Board of Tanzania's representatives Humoud Abdul and Masoud Yasur closely witnessed the occasion with a view to seeing to it all procedures and regulations set by the board are followed.



SportPesa Tanzania's Director of Administration and Compliance, Tarimba Abbas (L), hands over a dummy cheque of 288,974,720/- to Dar es Salaam resident, Jamal Khalifan Abdallah, yesterday. Abdallah was presented with the cash prize after he had placed right bets on 13 matches last weekend and emerged as SportPesa Jackpot winner. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SPORTPESA TANZANIA



## Zidane silences the doubters by bringing Real Madrid back to life

MADRID

FEW expected Zinedine Zidane to leave Real Madrid and even fewer expected him to come back as coach.

And yet almost 500 days later, he has won the La Liga title, without fuss, without even the improvements he was promised.

On Thursday, in an empty Alfredo di Stefano Stadium at Real Madrid's training ground, he hoisted another trophy, his second in La Liga and 11th overall as coach.

Zidane currently wins a trophy every 19 games on average and while three Champions League titles out of three was historic, this might be his most impressive yet.

When he was reappointed in March last year, Madrid president Florentino Perez said Zidane had come again to launch "a glorious new era".

But standing next to him was Madrid's third coach of the season, taking over a team 12 points behind Barcelona, having just been knocked out and outplayed by Ajax in the Champions League.

Most thought it was a mistake, the coach that had gone out on the highest of highs returning to a team in tatters.

Cristiano Ronaldo was gone and it seemed those that remained had lost the hunger. "We will change things, for sure, and for the years to come," Zidane said.

Change, though, would have to wait and then it never really came at all. Zidane saw out a miserable 11 games of last season where performances grew worse not better.

Anticipation of a summer overhaul increased as Madrid's newspapers published polls revelling in which of the world's best players should arrive.

Kylian Mbappe or Neymar? "I would like them both," said Perez. Zidane did not want them all but there was one he desperately wanted, Manchester United's Paul Pogba, who he was convinced could change everything.

Yet Pogba stayed put and so too did Gareth Bale, who Zidane was assured would be sold. "It would be best for everyone," he said.

Hazard did sign, for 100 million euros, but arrived overweight and then got injured, the opening sequence of his nightmare first year in Spain.

Instead of a sparkling new era, Zidane was handed more of the same but when the inevitable questions came about broken promises, he refused to stoke the fire.

"The decisions that are up to me are on the pitch," he said.

The trouble was those were no better. Draws against Valladolid and Villarreal were followed by humiliation in Paris. Defeat by Real Mallorca in October left Zidane on the brink of the sack.

"I know how this works," said Zidane, with Jose Mourinho ready, but perhaps that jolted the players, who beat Galatasaray 1-0 and began to turn the tide.

Zidane escaped and grew bolder. Fede Valverde came into his midfield and proved the catalyst for change, the Uruguayan bringing dynamism and chaos to an all-too-predictable midfield.

"He's amazing," said Kroos. "I love this player."

The defence tightened too, conceding nine goals during a crucial run of 21 games unbeaten either side of Christmas.

Ferland Mendy proved a more reliable alternative to Marcelo at left-back while in goal, Thibaut Courtois blossomed.

"Even as someone who prefers exciting, attacking football, the defence is the most important thing right now," Zidane said.

In attack, he trusted two young Brazilians, Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo, and between them,

Karim Benzema found arguably the best form of his entire career. "My job is to transmit a sense of calm in the difficult moments," he said. "To be quiet, patient and positive."

That ability to exude confidence and diffuse pressure appeared even more valuable as Barcelona descended into turmoil and sacked Ernesto Valverde, the coach that at least kept the team happy, and winning.

And when the coronavirus pandemic hit, Madrid's players reacted better, coming back revitalised, more determined than ever that an 11-match sprint would end with a trophy.

"After lockdown there was something very particular," said Zidane on Wednesday. "I could see it in training. The players wanted something."

Zidane had a bigger squad than Barcelona's but his willingness to rotate became key.

Tournaments have also been his strength and perhaps he rekindled that mentality. With no time for training, the message was simple: Win.

In that sense, Zidane has silenced the doubters, even if it remains to be seen whether he can rebuild a team or replicate his success elsewhere.

But just as this Madrid were a mess without him, with him they are celebrating again.

Few expected him there but Zidane was right in his first press conference. "Change is for the future," he said. "The important thing is I'm back."

Meanwhile, Real Madrid president Florentino Perez described Zinedine Zidane as a "blessing from heaven" after he delivered the club their 34th La Liga title on Thursday.

Perez also said he believes Sergio Ramos will end his career at Madrid, despite uncertainty over the 34-year-old's future, with his contract due to expire next year.

Madrid defeated Villarreal 2-1 at the empty Alfredo di Stefano Stadium to secure the victory they needed to clinch the title from Barcelona with one game left to play.

The trophy is Zidane's 11th after 209 games in charge of Real Madrid.

"He has won a trophy every 19 games," said Perez. "He is a blessing from heaven and hopefully he will be with us for a long time. People can criticise him as much as they want as long as he continues to win titles."

On Ramos, Perez said: "I am sure Ramos will end his career at Madrid. Everyone should stay calm. He is more than a captain to us, he has led the team with enormous character."

Ramos said he would like to retire with the newly-crowned Spanish champions. "Whatever the president wants," he said.

"It doesn't depend on me, I'm really happy here, everyone knows that and I'd like to end my career here."

"I'm happy and calm, I don't think there will be any problems on my side or from the club, let's hope I can retire here."

Ramos has scored five goals since the restart as Madrid won 10 games out of 10 to put Barcelona out of sight.

"I'm not too expressive," Zidane said. "But inside, I am very happy. I always told you the league wasn't yet won but today it is, so you can see my most beautiful smile. Today we can be happy."

Zidane has now won La Liga twice as a coach, adding another title to the one Madrid secured under him in 2017.

"The first one was phenomenal but this one has a particular flavour," he said. "After two months at home, we returned, we prepared ourselves in a different way. And we won a league, which is the most difficult thing to win. It comes from a lot of sacrifice."

AFP

## Man City resume hostilities with Arsenal, Man Utd eye Chelsea clean sweep in FA Cup semis

LONDON

THE cavernous setting of an empty Wembley stadium will play host to two FA Cup semi-finals this weekend as holders Manchester City face Arsenal in a week when old animosities between the clubs were flamed, while Chelsea and Manchester United switch focus from their battle for a place in next season's Champions League.

City and Arsenal are first up on Saturday (1845 GMT) as the Gunners attempt to spring a surprise for the second time in a week after downing English champions Liverpool 2-1 on Wednesday.

That an Arsenal victory would be considered a shock says it all about the way City have overtaken one of English football's traditional superpowers over the past decade.

Only once in the past 10 years have Arsenal finished above City in the table and Pep Guardiola's men have won the past seven meetings between the two by a combined score of 20-2. Arsenal cannot come close to matching Abu Dhabi-backed City's resources, especially as they now face a fourth straight season without Champions League riches after 19 consecutive years in European football's elite competition under Arsene Wenger.

Guardiola made reference to the legendary former Arsenal boss after City overturned a two-season ban by UEFA from European competitions for alleged breaches of Financial Fair Play in the Court of Arbitration for Sport this week.



Manchester United have already beaten Chelsea three times this season (AFP Photo)

"I know that for elite clubs, respectful clubs like Liverpool, Man United and especially Arsenal, it is uncomfortable us being here," said Guardiola. "But they have to understand we deserve to be here."

Mikel Arteta played his part in back-to-back league titles for City in the past two seasons as Guardiola's assistant, but now has the tough task of beating his former boss.

Beating Liverpool was a perfect confidence booster, but victory came thanks to two uncharacteristic errors from Virgil van Dijk and Alisson Becker as Jurgen Klopp's men camped

inside their half for much of the match with nearly 70 percent possession and 24 shots to Arsenal's three.

"The gap is enormous but the gap in many areas we cannot improve in two months," Arteta said of closing the chasm to Liverpool. "The gap between the accountability, the energy, commitment and fight of the two teams is now equal and before it wasn't like this."

Arsenal need to bridge a similar gap against a City side that has been in ominous form since a 3-0 win when the sides last met on the first night of the Premier League's restart last

month.

Guardiola even had the luxury of resting Kevin De Bruyne, Raheem Sterling, Riyad Mahrez and Aymeric Laporte from the start of Wednesday's 2-1 win over Bournemouth, while Arteta has bemoaned the "crazy minutes" his key players have amassed in recent weeks.

Solskjaer, Lampard eye silverware

On Sunday (1700GMT), there is a second clash between Manchester and London as United look to complete a clean sweep against Chelsea this season having won three previous meetings between the

sides this season.

United are on a 19-game unbeaten run in all competitions and will be confident of reaching the final with the in-form front three of Marcus Rashford, Anthony Martial and Mason Greenwood perfectly set up to expose Chelsea's defensive flaws on the counter-attack.

Chelsea have already bolstered their attacking options ahead of next season with the signings of Timo Werner and Hakim Ziyech and look set to be the biggest Premier League spenders in the close season.

United and Chelsea look the most likely candidates if the two-horse race for the title between City and Liverpool in recent years is to be expanded next term.

However, doubts remain over whether Solskjaer and Frank Lampard are the men to lead each club back to winning league titles up against coaches of the calibre of Guardiola and Klopp.

For both, winning a trophy would be the perfect way to build momentum into next season, leaving plenty to play for even if no fans can be present at Wembley.

AFP

## Arteta must bring Arsenal out of Man City's shadow

BY JAMES OLLEY, SENIOR WRITER, ESPN FC

MIKEL Arteta is perhaps the perfect man to try to drag Arsenal out of Manchester City's shadow, given he is embarking on the same journey in his own managerial career. The Gunners face City in an FA Cup semifinal at Wembley on Saturday (stream LIVE on ESPN+ at 2:45 p.m. ET in the U.S.) having not won any of their previous seven meetings, dating back to the last time they met in the world's oldest cup competition.

It was at the semifinal stage in April 2017 that Arsene Wenger's Arsenal edged past a City side yet to complete a full season under Pep Guardiola, flanked in the dugout by Arteta, then his right-hand man. The Gunners booked their place in the final with a 2-1 extra-time win that still stands as an atypical Arsenal performance: they sat deep, counter-attacked with precision, physically outlasted their opponents and won the tactical battle.

Yet, just as with their subsequent win against Chelsea in the final that year, beating City was not a landmark moment heralding Arsenal's resurgence but an unexpected flicker of light from the dying embers of Wenger's regime. The same afflictions that cost both the Frenchman and his successor Unai Emery their jobs are now Arteta's problems. And with neat symmetry, a similar FA Cup path stands before him with City first and then Chelsea or Manchester United in the final.

Winning the FA Cup would not make up for missing out on Champions League qualification. But it offers an insurance policy for reaching the Europa League and also a chance to validate the methodology of a head coach looking to instigate significant, permanent change during his first season in management. Doing so by defeating his coaching mentor would embolden Arteta no end for the challenges ahead.

Arteta spoke this week about the big gap between Arsenal and the top sides, something that has been borne out in results against City of late. They have been soundly beaten on each of their previous seven meetings, losing by three goals on four occasions and only scoring twice. In six of those games, City have scored at least once inside the first 20 minutes. Twice, Arsenal were breached inside the first two minutes.

The inferiority complex is palpable.



Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta and Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola remain close friends. (Agencies)

City quickly look to impose themselves against any opposition, and obviously Arsenal have plenty of company in finding themselves overwhelmed on occasion, but Arteta is seeking to alter what Wenger often described as a "mental block" against the big teams. After all, the Gunners' away record against the top sides remains appalling for a team with Champions League aspirations. Since January 2015, they have played away at the traditional 'Big Six' 26 times without success. Only once have they kept a clean sheet.

That January five years ago marked a 2-0 victory at City which appeared to herald a long-overdue change in mentality from Wenger. The open, expansive style which made him a revolutionary in England was replaced with a pragmatic, savvy

counter-attack approach which helped Arsenal pick City off in a manner they had been on the receiving end of umpteen times before.

Their 2017 FA Cup triumph offered similar hope of regeneration but for slightly different reasons, as Wenger retained a back-three system used for the first time in 20 years earlier that week at Middlesbrough and the Gunners showed unusual resolve to ride out City's pressure to finish the stronger in extra-time. Both proved to be false dawns as Arsenal reverted to type, a mould Wenger was unable to break.

Emery's appointment was designed to shatter the cyclical failings and it was therefore unfortunate for him that City were his first competitive opponents. Noticeably, Emery did not compromise, insisting on playing out from the back

and taking risks from the outset. They lost 2-0. By the end of his tenure, the Spaniard's approach was incomprehensible given dramatic changes to tactics and personnel from week to week.

Arteta wants to implement his own possession-based style but it felt significant that, unlike Emery, he was prepared to compromise that longer-term vision with a specific, defensive-minded tactical approach tailored to the opposition against Liverpool on Wednesday. There were almost too many surprises to mention, but Arsenal operated at one time or another with split strikers, a back five out of possession and a cameo for Joe Willock at centre-forward. Arsenal sought to press Liverpool into errors. Surprisingly, Virgil van Dijk and Alisson obliged. A contain and counter approach which saw the Gunners camped in their own half for long periods, registering three shots to Liverpool's 24, is clearly not a recipe for long-term success.

But Arteta firstly has to galvanise Arsenal, bring them together in a common cause and, frankly, extract a consistently high work-rate which has been absent in previous years. Arteta

summed up how short-term gains can help bridge the gap.

"You only need to look at the difference between the two teams and the gap is enormous," he said. "The gap in many areas, we cannot improve it in two months but the gap between the accountability, the energy, the commitment and the fight of the two teams is equal."

"Before it was not like this and I am very proud of that. The rest will take some time but at least we've got it now and my message to the players is with that, we can create something."

Recreating that level of effort, application and discipline consistently remains Arsenal's biggest challenge.

"I will forgive if the players cannot get it right, but not if they do not try hard," is a quote attributed to Pep Guardiola from his time as Barcelona boss but his disciple Arteta feels precisely the same way.

Arteta continues to have nothing but praise for Guardiola, even retaining a sufficient depth of feeling to be one of the few managers to defend Manchester City when their two-year ban from European football was overturned on Monday.

Gwiji by David Chikoko





# SPORT

**Arteta must bring Arsenal out of Man City's shadow**

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

## Gymkhana cricketers out to tighten grip on 2020 Nasser League top spot

By Guardian Reporter

Gymkhana Club's cricketers will be eager to tighten their grip on the 2020 Kazim Nasser Memorial League (KNML) Division A's top spot when they entertain General Petroleum (GP) squad at the former's venue in Dar es Salaam tomorrow.

The hosts are leading the rest of the clubs in the division, having won their opening clash to collect two points.

They trounced Strikers A by 10 wickets in a clash, which was played at the oval at the end of June.

Gymkhana have, for that matter, recorded a net run rate of 7.0890, notching 69 runs and leaking 68 runs to stay top.

They will though need to deploy all skills at their disposal tomorrow, considering they will take on a GP side, which is eager to regroup and turn into serious contenders after losing their opening match.

Gymkhana's newly signed all-rounders, Zamoyoni Ramadhan and Nassor Zahor, will have a tricky task of showcasing scintillating displays and playing key part in helping their team come out with crucial two points.

The GP team had a frustrating start to their campaign, suffering a humiliating 116-run loss to Aces A at the oval on July 7.

Hard hitters, Zafar Khan, and Zahid Abbas, will have a seemingly daunting task of putting solid performance for GP team and see to it the club comes out victorious against a much improved Gymkhana outfit.

Victory for Gymkhana will see them collect four points and open a two-point margin with second-placed Aces A, who will not be in action in the day.

In the KNML's Division B, Malabar Cricket Club (MCC) will confront Strikers B in a duel, which will be held at Leaders Club venue the same day in the morning.

The clash will be an opportunity for MCC to come out victorious and prove they have what it takes to turn into a feared club in the division.

They opened the tournament on a wrong foot, losing to Estim by 71 runs early this month.

In the division's other fixture, Patel Brotherhood outfit will face Estim Club at the Leaders Club venue in the afternoon.

Estim cricketers are expected to come out firing on all cylinders, seeking victory over their opponents and keeping on enjoying the division's top spot.

Should Estim down Patel Brotherhood, the division leaders will set up two-point margin with second-placed Lions Cricket Club.

In The KNML's Division C fixture, Annadil Seifee are set to lock horns with Tamil Nadu Sports Club at the former's venue the same day.

In Sunday's other fixture, Dar Black Panthers will confront Lions Castilla at Annadil Burhani oval in a Division C clash, to be played in the afternoon.

The Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC)-organized league is held annually in memory of Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Event and Tournament Manager, Kazim Nasser, who passed away in the city in 2015.

The KNML's Division A has sides locking horns in 50-over clashes, whereas Divisions A1 and B sides play 30-over duels.

The Division C is the tournament's fourth tier, which has participating teams battling it out in T20 formatted games.

## VPL relegation-threatened sides now braced for tough assignments



JKT Tanzania defender, Damas Makwaya (L), dribbles past Singida United player when the two outfits locked horns in a Vodacom Premier League clash, which took place at Jamhuri Stadium in Dodoma recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

**V**ODACOM Premier League relegation-threatened sides, Mtibwa Sugar, KMC FC, Ndanda FC, Mbeya City FC, Mwadui FC and Alliance FC have very tough rides over this weekend when they face tough opposition in the fight to try and escape relegation.

With only three rounds of matches to go, none of the bottom eight teams have the luxury of dropping points in a season where four outfits will be directly relegated to the First Division League (FDL) and two more going for the relegation/promo-

tion playoffs with FDL sides. The relegation battle is too close to call as 19th placed Mbao FC and 11th placed Prisons are separated by six points. As it stands three more sides will join Singida United who were relegated a fortnight ago. Perching at position 12 of the 20-team league table with 43 points from 35 matches, KMC FC, last year's team of the moment, have a tough away tie against 13th placed Mtibwa Sugar at Gairo Stadium in Morogoro today

afternoon.

Dar es Salaam's KMC FC have surprisingly struggled this time around though they caused a stir last season in which they ended an enviable fourth position.

A win for KMC FC who have struggled on the road will see them hit the 47-point mark and virtually guarantee them top flight status.

Victory for the home side, who find themselves in an unfamiliar territory, will ease their tension with the assurance of two more

home games.

In Mtwara, hosts Ndanda FC and Mbeya City FC will meet for a relegation six-pointer at the Nangwanda Sijaona Stadium.

With the two teams separated by just a point, victory will go a long way to securing either side's safety in the top flight while a loss could prove too costly for Ndanda FC who will have the unenviable task of playing their last two matches away from the comfort of home ground.

On Sunday, 19th placed Mbao FC who are on a six-game winning streak will hope to keep their good fortunes going as they take on an unpredictable JKT Tanzania outfit in Dodoma.

Mbao FC kept their hopes of survival alive with a dramatic 3-2 victory against Simba SC to stay within touching distance of fellow relegation candidates.

Despite their mini-revival under head coach Fred Felix 'Minziro', Mbao FC have to win their three remaining matches to have any chance of remaining in top flight football next season.

Lipuli FC will host a wounded Azam FC at Samora Stadium in Iringa. It is not an easy match for either side, considering Lipuli FC are still in the relegation battle while Azam FC are in contention for the first runners-up spot.

Alliance FC, who were denied maximum points on Tuesday after conceding a last minute goal against hosts JKT Tanzania in Dodoma, face an uphill task of avoiding defeat against Simba SC who will be looking to bounce back from Thursday's shock loss to Mbao FC.

Other matches for this weekend are Biashara United vs Coastal United at Karume Stadium in Musoma, Kagera Sugar vs Polisi Tanzania at Kaitaba Stadium in Bukoba.

The weekend will further have fixtures including the Ruvu Shooting vs Singida United at Mabatini Stadium in Coast Region today and Namungo FC vs Prisons at Majaliwa Stadium in Lindi the same day.

## Minziro delighted with Mbao FC after shock victory over Simba SC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

MBAO FC head coach, Fred Felix 'Minziro', was delighted with his side's performance after they had secured a shock 3-2 victory over Vodacom Premier League champions Simba SC in Dar es Salaam on Thursday night to keep their slim hopes of survival alive.

The Mwanza-based side closed to within three points of the city's other outfit Alliance FC, who are occupying the final spot above the relegation zone, following the victory over Simba.

Goals by Rajabu Rashid, Waziri Junior and Jordan John steered Mbao FC to the win.

Meddie Kagere and Miraji Athumani were on the scoresheet for Simba.

Speaking after the game, Minziro said: "I am very delighted, as I said earlier, Simba are a big team, they have a great side and that is the truth. When you meet a side like this one you are always under high pressure."

"Of course we did not change our tactical approach, we came to attack as we have done in our four games in Mwanza. We knew Simba are superior



Simba SC defender, Erasto Nyoni (R), tussles for an aerial ball with Mbao FC forward, Ndaki Robert, when the clubs locked horns in a Vodacom Premier League clash, played at National Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Thursday, whilst Mbao FC forward, Waziri Junior (L), and Simba SC defender, Yusuf Milipili, look on. Mbao FC won 3-2. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

but we had no choice but to attack."

"Had we either lost or drawn our fate would have been sealed. Attack was our only option. We are happy with the results."

"Simba rotation made the game more difficult, they used players who were well rested and gave us a hard time. I can't say that we were better than Simba but rather we managed to use counter attack that delivered us goals," the coach disclosed.

"We are still in it, this is our fifth victory but we are still down but fighting. I have a trip to Dodoma where we need to battle against JKT Tanzania."

Mbao FC will now have to win their three remaining matches to retain their top flight status. They are on 38 points, just three points below safety.

On Sunday Mbao FC will look to extend their unbeaten run to six games when they take on JKT Tanzania at the Jamhuri Stadium in Dodoma.

Under head coach Minziro, they have been transformed into an organised and solid outfit.

Minziro has got the best out of striker Waziri Junior Shemtembo, who has netted 12 goals this season in the league.

He is, in the process, one of the league's hottest attackers since the restart last month.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

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