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National Pg 2
Z'bar installs temperature scanners



National Pg 3
Danish embassy provides 1.6bn/- funds



National Pg 4
WHO: Efforts to end financial barriers



National Pg 6
RC hails Islamic banking services



Kenya, Tanzania abolish investors' permits, visas

Ministers to sort out snags without seeking high-level authorisation



President Samia Suluhu Hassan addresses a joint sitting of the National Assembly and the Senate in Nairobi during her two-day state visit to Kenya yesterday. Photo: State House

By Correspondent James Kandoya and Alima Nkwong

VISITING President Samia Suluhu Hassan and host leader Uhuru Kenyatta agreed to iron out challenges between the neighbouring countries, high-level consultations without seeking permits from the respective heads of state. In remarks to a high level business forum the two leaders noted that trade opportunities between the two countries have not been fully exploited. Trade volume between the two countries had actually declined slightly over the past half decade, from KSh60.4bn in 2012 to KSh47.5bn in 2018. President Samia asserted that trade prospects can be improved and development made more dynamic if they integrate further, with business leaders touting greater foreign investment opportunities and size of investments when the regional market has few or no barriers at

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Ban on live species exports: TWEA asks to meet Samia

By Henry Mwangonde

EXPORTERS of live animals – a business that has been suspended indefinitely since 2016 – are now seeking an audience with President Samia Suluhu Hassan for intervention on the matter saying their families have continually suffered following the business interruption.

Tanzania Wildlife Exporters Association (TWEA) secretary, Adam Waryoba said yesterday that since the ban on the business, behind the scene discussions with officials of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism have been held to find a lasting solution to the problem, to no avail.

Before the suspension, exporters had the mandate to collect and export pet species available in open areas - which is two thirds of the total area of the country - and not from protected areas which covers one third of the country's land surface.

"We have been hit hard by the ban. We believe the president will hear our cry and lift this ban on exportation of wildlife because we depend on that to earn our living," he said.

Species that are usually exported include

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...as Uhuru orders clearing of maize stranded at border

By Guardian Reporter

KENYAN President Uhuru Kenyatta yesterday ordered the relevant authorities to remove barriers that have prevented the flow of grain trade at the border for over a month.

Addressing a high-level business forum in the company of President Samia Suluhu Hassan in Nairobi, the president asked the cabinet secretary (minister) for Agriculture to make sure that the maize carrying trucks that have stranded at border points are cleared in two weeks.

"I know you intend to have a meeting in four weeks time but there are things that cannot wait any longer. So make sure in the coming two weeks all maize at the border is

“Samia you have no reason to fear to lead this nation because you have been mentored well by Magufuli and there's nothing that you don't know

cleared," he directed.

The Kenyan leader said that sometimes Tanzanians get a hard time when they want to do business in Kenya because of various protocols, elaborating that he wants to set a good environment for investors from Tanzania to invest in Kenya.

"From now on you can come and invest here without asking for work permits and business visas as long as you follow the country's laws," he declared.

He also asked the (minister) for Health to clear cars from Tanzania that are stranded at border points of Holili and Namanga.

"If the issue is Covid-19 why don't

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Samia meets with UN special envoy

Plays for EU removal of Burundi sanctions

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan yesterday held talks with Ambassador Xia Huang, special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region, where they both expressed commitment to enhance security and protect the prevailing peace.

Presidential communications director Gerson Msigwa said in a



statement yesterday that the talks were held at the president's hotel suite in Nairobi, where she was completing a two day state visit to Kenya.

Ambassador Huang (pictured) said that the United Nations "banks on President Samia's leadership towards developing Tanzanians and spearheading agendas of the Great Lakes Region in ensuring social and

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President Samia Suluhu Hassan in talks with special special envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the Great Lakes Region ambassador Xia Huang in Nairobi, Kenya yesterday. Photo: State House

Entertainer Teddy Mapunda passes on

By Guardian Reporter

ENTERTAINER and media stakeholder Teddy Mapunda (pictured) passed away Tuesday night at 11pm after sudden illness while answering a telephone call several hours after participating at an Iftar with press colleagues at the Serena Hotel in the city.

Husband Nestor Mapunda told the media yesterday that Teddy had a diabetes problem which sharply rose as she went to answer a telephone call, where she collapsed and lost consciousness.

She was rushed to the nearby Aga Khan Hospital when doctors expressed inability to resuscitate her from the condition upon making initial examinations.



Usiah Nkhoma, a veteran media personality who was close to Teddy, said they held the party to congratulate the new Mwananchi Communications Ltd managing director Bakari Machumu, by holding an Iftar dinner.

It was in the course of conversations that the deceased rose to answer a telephone call whereupon her health condition suddenly deteriorated, leading to her collapsing and losing consciousness, she added

Samia meets with UN special envoy

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economic development.”

The special envoy acknowledged Tanzania's great support to the UN especially in peace keeping efforts and enhancing security in various war torn areas on the eastern part of Africa.

The UN will continue to work with Tanzania in peace building by economic development and enhancing welfare, he stated.

He also conveyed condolences of UN Secretary-General António Guterres to President Samia following the demise of former president John Magufuli, and congratulated President Samia for assuming the presidency, lauding the fact that she was the first woman to become president of this country and in the entire East Africa region.

President Samia pledged that the government will continue to work closely with the UN towards preserving peace in the Great Lakes Region.

She was emphatic that Tanzania will continue to embrace democracy and that the country is safe, appealing to the UN to continue supporting peace keeping efforts in the zone, and urging the UN to convince the European Union (EU) to remove sanctions on Burundi, imposed since 2015.

In October 2020, the Council of the European Union extended for an additional year the sanctions upon a number of political leaders and state officials, having frozen government financing back in 2015.

The reason was a political crisis arising from the move by the president, the late Pierre Nkurunziza deciding to seek a third term and throwing the country into turmoil, as the opposition saw the move as a violation of the Arusha peace deal that brought President Nkurunziza to office in 2005.

Before the suspension, EU member states contributed close to 50 percent of the country's annual budget, officials noted.

Ban on live species exports: TWEA asks to meet Samia

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birds where they export 207 species out of 1,100 species available in the country, with four species of primates which disturb farming activities, he said.

With reptiles, 94 species are slated for export while amphibians and especially frogs have around 305 species exported, under the protocols that have never been rescinded in law since the ban was imposed.

In total about 430 species approved by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) are earmarked for export, he specified.

Most of their customers have shifted to other exporting countries like Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) following the ban, he stated.

TWEA has on several occasions complained of incurring losses amounting to billions of shillings from battling lawsuits in foreign courts from their clients who decided to sue after an agreement between the two sides to deliver the animals in a

given timeframe was breached.

The government banned transportation of all live animals outside the country in March 2016 until proper procedures were made to ensure only approved animals were transported.

The decision sparked anger among exporters who complained that the ban was a surprise decision to them as it was made a month or so after they were handed annual licenses to operate.

They said that Tanzania has painted a bad image in a business full of competition that involves various countries including DRC, Zambia and scored of others as it will take time to restore the trust of customers.

Exporters were given a one year license to export live wild animals on the first of January 2016, and then in its announcement two months later the government cited irregularities in the way the business was conducted. The various live species are sold to zoos in the United States, Europe and various Asian countries.



A cross section of business community members of Kenya listen to President Samia Suluhu Hassan addressing them in Nairobi yesterday. Photo: State House

...as Uhuru orders clearing of maize stranded at border

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the ministers of Health meet and discuss how they will handle the tests so that the exercise doesn't hinder business activities. If they get tested in Tanzania and they come with certificates allow them to travel in Kenya because this is among issues we have agreed with my sister President Samia," he affirmed.

The visiting president pledged to cement historical brotherly ties and friendship between Tanzania and Kenya, asserting that the two countries need to set up sound policies to build strong economies and intensify cooperation.

She made the remarks at a state banquet hosted in her honour by President Kenyatta and First Lady Margaret Kenyatta late Tuesday evening, dedicating her term as president to strengthening cooperation

between the two countries.

"Investments from Kenya to Tanzania are in good shape. We have about 513 Kenyan companies in Tanzania but from Tanzania to Kenya we have only 30 companies. Now when I go back I will urge more Tanzanian investors to come in and set shop in Kenya so that we can improve on our economies," she told the gathering.

She said that in secluded talks with the host president, they agreed on the need to create a conducive environment for the private sector to thrive and participate fully in fostering economic development.

They also announced agreeing to and signing a deal to build a natural gas pipeline from Dar es Salaam to Mombasa, apart from enhancing cooperation in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

She expressed Tanzania's great

psychological proximity to Kenya, intense social and family ties between the two peoples, and extensive economic links that are harmed by the spirit of competition that has often coloured leaders' perception of ties between the two countries.

She said President Kenyatta promised to extend an invitation to her to visit Kenya soon after her being sworn in, and rapidly followed up with sending an emissary to formally hand in that request.

The president similarly acknowledged encouragement from President Kenyatta at the funeral of the late president John Magufuli.

"Samia you have no reason to fear to lead this nation because you have been mentored well by Magufuli and there's nothing that you don't know," the visiting leader recalled in an emotional tone.

Kenya, Tanzania to end investors' permits, visas

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all.

"We need to work on a conducive environment by creating efficient courts, harmonize tax regimes, work on the investment climate and better legislation," she said, noting that Kenya can benefit from Tanzania's rich mineral sector while Tanzania can borrow from Kenya's thriving technology sector.

The visiting leader said her government was conducting a series of changes aimed at improving the business and investment environment, including more rapid provision of work permits, curbing regulatory graft and establishing industrial parks.

Acknowledging the importance of cross border trade, she said existing trade hurdles need to be solved to facilitate more trade, elaborating that Tanzania is ready to receive entrepreneurs from Kenya, as the doors are open for partnerships.

The Tanzanian National Business Council needs to identify strategic areas for investment where they can form partnerships with Kenyan investors to implement them, she stated.

"Tanzania is more than ready to pave the way for cooperation. Let us cooperate and do business," she emphasised, underlining that development can only be realized when countries work together.

The bilateral relationship existing is the cornerstone for economic and social development of the two countries, she stated, expressing hopes for a vibrant investment pace given infrastructural facilitation like the standard gauge railway, roads and airports meant to create a favorable environment for investors.

Kenyatta said the country was ready to work with Tanzania to unlock potentials of the private sector and promote investment.

Kenya was ready to receive investors from Tanzania, he said, insisting that Tanzanians are free

to invest in Kenya without visas and work permits. They only need to observe the country's laws and regulations, he stated.

He also directed health ministers of both countries to work out impediments to acceptance of COVID-19 certificates, saying this kind of roadblock was a non-tariff barrier to trade.

Prof Kitila Mkumbo, the minister for Industry and Trade said the government wants people to trade smoothly. "We promise to work on your directives to find a solution to issues constraining trade between Tanzania and Kenya."

Kenyan Minister for Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development, Betty Maina promised to submit a report on steps reached in consultation with her Tanzanian counterpart.

The private sector represented by the East African Business Council noted the decline in intra EAC trade due to several barriers to trade, investment and movement of persons.

"There's a need to embrace digitalisation particularly in moving goods and services across the EA region and harmonizing the tax regimes. We also need to strengthen the EAC Secretariat," said Nick Nesbit, the EABC chairman.

He also underscored the need to promote value addition in manufacturing and diversification of farm products and the elimination of non-tariff barriers (NTBs), which will go a long way towards increasing intra-EAC trade.

"We must increase our ability to move outside the region as well promoting regional business operations," he said.

Ministers from the two countries are expected to meet before the end of the month to finalise accords on areas of agreement set out by the two presidents and in the high level business forum, and in the visiting leader's address to both chambers of the Kenyan legislature.

Zanzibar installs special body temperature scanners at airports

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE government has installed special body temperature scanners at the Malindi port and Abeid Amani Karume airport to enhance screening of travellers to reduce the spread of respiratory diseases including coronavirus.

Zanzibar Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children, Nassor Ahmed Mazrui said this yesterday when responding to a question from Special Seats Member of the House of Representative, Fatma Ramadhan Mandoba.

In his question, Mazrui was concerned that despite the government efforts to control the spread of COVID-19, the body temperature testing machines installed at the airport and Malindi port were not used.

Responding, the minister informed that following limited space at the Abeid Amani

Karume airport and Malindi port, the fixed machines have been damaged frequently thus forcing the officers to use the portable body temperature scanners.

"We were informed by experts that the installed machines are located near the exit gates, this makes them sense the outside temperature, the thing that affects body temperature testing," said the minister.

He said the government through the health ministry and Zanzibar Airports Authority (ZAA) will continue repairing the machines to ensure provision of intended services at airports. He said the government has also procured two new body temperature scanners to be installed at the airport.

Mazrui informed members of the House of Representative that the portable body temperature scanners currently used at the airport do not test COVID-19 infections.



Zanzibar minister of State in the First Vice President's Office Dr. Saada Mkuya Salum (L) presents a Certificate of Appreciation to an official of the Commission for Drug Control, after her tenure of office. Looking on is deputy commissioner of Police Kheriyangu Mgeni Khamis. The farewell event was held in Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Rahma Suleiman

Govt issues new directives on all livestock weighing

By Correspondent Felix Andrew

THE government will soon introduce a system to ensure that all cattle are sold according to the weights instead of estimation as done in most auctions and other areas.

This was said by Dodoma Regional Assistant Administrative Secretary Aziza Mumba when opening a training for traders and entrepreneurs aimed to impart knowledge on correct measurement which was organized by Weights and Measures Agency (WMA).

Speaking on behalf of Dodoma Regional Commissioner Dr. Binilith Mahenge, Mumba urged them to ensure that the weighing scale is correct.

"I urge local government authorities to areas where there are markets or auctions to make sure that they install correct weight scales because the government is in a process to ensure that all cattle are sold after weighing instead of guessing."

She said when the community will adhere to the measurements, its significance will be seen by whole stakeholders including producers and users since the value of money.

"This is most important since all parties will benefit with the correct measurement," she added.

She said the seminar will enable traders and industrialists to understand clearly the issue of adherence to the correct measurement.

According to her, the government through various campaigns has been conducting inspection to ensure that citizens and all stakeholders adhere to the measurement due to its importance for development of our country.

She added that they have been receiving complaints regarding

misuse of measurements done by some untrust traders in the Regional through WMA, but they have been insisting on the correct use.

Acting Chief Executive Officer of WMA, Stella Kahwa, said the main role of the agency is to protect a consumer through correct use of measurement.

"Therefore our main task is to verify the measurements and ensure that they are used correctly adding that they also have an obligation to make sure that all products are packaged properly in order to access international markets," she said.

She said WMA is a member of the World Measurement Organisation, the agency is supposed to issue guidelines to the local producers to enable them compete at internal and foreign markets. "We use these seminars to educate packagers and various producers and now we are in Dodoma and other areas where we sensitized them on similar training aimed at industrialization drive."

Speaking at the event the Acting WMA Manager for Dodoma Region Karim Zuberi the seminar would help traders in the area to ensure that they stick to correct measurement.

He said they intend to shun away from the use of incorrect measurement from regional to local authority level in the near future.

Zuberi said from now onwards they would be conducting impromptu visit to all areas to make sure that all traders use correct measurement for the benefit of all.

Earlier the Chairperson of Dodoma Women Entrepreneurs Asuna Baya thanked WMA for organizing the training saying it would help them.

She said the training would enable them to change and shun away from use of ordinary measurement

Danish embassy provides 1.6bn/- funds for country's sustainable development

By Guardian Reporter

THE Danish Embassy in Tanzania has provided the Foundation for Civil Society (FCS) with additional funds totaling 1.6bn/- for the country's sustainable development.

The money makes a total of 4.4bn/- from the Danish embassy sponsorship to FCS that has been granted via Danish International Development Association (DANIDA).

Denmark's ambassador to Tanzania Mette Nørgaard Dissing-Spandet signed the agreement with FCS managing director Francis Kiwanga yesterday in Dar es Salaam.

Kiwanga said the money

received will enable FCS to continue providing subsidies to aimed at empowering civil societies in the country.

"FCS will provide 7bn/- to 130 civil society organisations countrywide for projects in both sides of the Union," he added.

He said the subsidy intends to make government authorities to be more responsive and accountable, better provision of social services to the people in health, water and agriculture.

He also said the money will assist the fight against gender based violence, child abuse and those in vulnerable groups.

"The funds will assist in the procurement of justice in regard to land for women and will assist

projects that aim to instill peace and solve conflicts," he added.

He said the projects were important in strengthening civil society organisations in the country to contribute in the national development.

He said Denmark has been assisting FCS to improve the lives of millions of Tanzanians, especially those in rural areas and for fringe groups, adding that last year various projects were implemented in Tanzania's various regions.

Kiwanga said the projects reached over 350,000 people, out of whom 50.4 per cent were men and 49.6 women.

"our projects on women land right have enabled more

than 3,400 women all over the country to get their customary title deeds for ownership of more than 4,575 acres of land valued at approximately 17bn/-.

For his part Ambassador Dissing-Spandet said the sponsorship was part of an offer from Denmark to develop good governance and human rights, to bring about social and economic revolution in improving the lives of Tanzanians. "We are glad to enhance our cooperation with FCS. FCS has been long time champion in strengthening Tanzania's civil societies. Our cooperation to enable the people to increase the voice for democratic governance as well as improving their lives," said the Danish envoy.

TANAPA conducts awareness programme for primary and secondary schools heads

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

THE Tanzania national Parks Authority (TANAPA) has established a programme for training of primary and secondary schools heads as well as other teachers surrounding Kitulo and Katavi National Parks aimed at providing them with education on good neighbourliness and the importance of protecting the parks for benefit of the current and future generations.

This was disclosed early this week by the country's Assistant Conservation Commissioner Godwell Ole Meing'ataki at the training seminar for the teachers of schools surrounding Kitulo and Katavi National Parks.

He said they decided to establish the programme after seeing that students still do not recognize the benefits of the national parks, hence through their teachers they can recognize the importance for their protection.

He said a total of 12 primary, and 13 secondary schools from Mbeya, Njombe and Katavi Regions have benefitted from the training on various issues of conservation.

He said the programme which as for now is in draft will bring positive awakening as it directly

impacts those targeted, in particular students who would be good ambassadors for their parents and the community in general.

For his part, the Assistant Conservation Commissioner who is also the Head of Kitulo National Park Theodora Aloyce said the programme will expand the knowledge among students on the importance of conservation.

Makete District Commissioner Veronica Kessy appealed to TANAPA wardens at Kitulo National Park to continue providing education on conservation to the people surrounding the national parks instead of using undue force to wound people said to invade park areas.

She said there have been many complaints from the people around Kitulo National Park area being beaten by TANAPA wardens without first seeking their explanation for being in the park.



A total of 12 primary, and 13 secondary schools from Mbeya, Njombe and Katavi Regions have benefitted from the training on various issues of conservation



Speaker of National Assembly Job Ndugai (3rd R) leads legislators at an iftar organised by CRDB Bank Plc held at Parliamentary grounds in Dodoma on Tuesday. In attendance were also CRDB Board chairman Dr Ally Laay (4th R) and CRDB Bank managing director Abdulmajid Nsekela. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

CONDUCTING SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND MAINSTREAMING OF DISABILITY PROGRAMMING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH LIVING AND WORKING ON THE STREETS IN SIX CITIES IN TANZANIA

- 1. Background and project description**

Railway Children Africa is a Non- Governmental Organisation (NGO) registered in Tanzania working to support Children and Youth Working and Living in the Street (CYWLS).

Under the USAID Kizazi Kipya Project, RCA is implementing programming for children and youth living and working on the streets (CYLWS) to ensure the needs of these hard-to-reach children and youth are well addressed. RCA's focus is on improving and expanding services for CYLWS by building frontline workers skills and knowledge in implementing evidence-based methodologies and advocating for a professional and well-resourced social service workforce. Under this grant, RCA provides training and technical support to six CLWS CSOs implementing the CYLWS component in 12 urban councils in the six major cities in Tanzania (Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Arusha, Dodoma, Iringa, and Mbeya). Overall, the project aims to increase access to health, education, and ES services for about 8,700 CYLWS over the life of the project.
- 2. Purpose of the situational analysis**

Railway Children Africa would like invites interested, competent, registered, and reputable individual consultant or company to submit their EOI to conduct the situation analysis that shall provide an overview of a gender-based and disability situation of the children living and working on the streets (CLWS) in Tanzania.
- 3. Geographical scope**

The consultant will have to cover two cities among the six cities in which the CLWS component is being implemented. Data collection from the selected regions will involve speaking to CLWS, project staff and LGA's.
- 4. Timeframe**

The assignment will be for 26 six days from the date of signing the agreement.
- 5. Required Experience**

 - Previous experience in development of analytical reports and policy documents related to child protection, gender, children & youth, preferably experience with preparation of a Situation Analysis. Solid experience in conducting participatory research methodology, including with children.
 - Profound knowledge of gender and human rights-based approach to programming and understanding and knowledge of the Tanzania social policy context.
 - Excellent report writing and good communication skills in English.
- 6. Application Requirements**

Interested applicant should request a full ToR to m.gatama@railwaychildren.or.tz and deadline for receiving TOR request is 21st May 2021.

WE FIGHT FOR CHILDREN
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Project facilitators urged to conduct evaluation review

By Guardian Reporter

PROJECT facilitators have been urged to conduct an evaluation review to determine if there are any successes or challenges in the projects they coordinate so that they can address them.

Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Vice President Mohammed Khamis Abdullah made the remark on Monday when opening the training session for 'Monitoring and Evaluation, Accounting and Supply Systems' to the facilitators of district councils implementing the reversing degradation trends and increasing food security in degraded ecosystems of semi-arid areas of Tanzania (LDFS) held in Singida.

He said even if the project's finances are well managed by accountants, and procurement of equipment and services is well managed by officials, procurement is still necessary to monitor and evaluate the implementation of project activities.

"Monitoring and evaluation work is very important in the implementation of any project one identifies the key indicators of the project whether the implementation of the project is going well or not and helps to identify challenges for its implementation early in order to make the necessary adjustments, therefore, it is important that the monitoring and evaluation work is done professionally so that value for money (for money) can be seen," he insisted.

In addition, the Deputy Permanent Secretary reminded the participants that the effectiveness and positive results of this project cannot be achieved if there is no effective financial management and therefore the implementation may not be carried out to the required

standards.

He added that accounting is an important cadre in project financial management who will assist in advising and managing the proper use of project funds so the training will help them gain knowledge that will enable them to manage funds effectively to achieve the intended goals in project implementation.

LDFS Project Coordinator Joseph Kihaule said the project, which began in 2017, aims to look at how climate change affects production, especially in arid areas.

He also said the project will help improve agricultural ecosystems that will enable increased food production and contribute to improving the environment in the respective district councils.

At the same time the coordinator noted that through the project there will be sustainable management of ecosystems that contribute to providing essential production services in the areas of land, water, forestry, biodiversity for the purpose of improving production.

"The project aims to lead 9,000 hectares out of which 3,000 hectares should be used for conservation agriculture and environmentally friendly and sustainable land management; 4,000 hectares of degraded land will be converted and used to improve grazing lands; 2,000 will also be used for biodiversity conservation and forestry" said Kihaule.

This project is being implemented in four regions of Tanzania Mainland and one region in Tanzania islands. The regions are Dodoma in Kondoa, Tabora in Nzega district, Mwanza in Magu district Singida in Mkalama district and in Zanzibar is implemented in the North Pemba region.



NMB Bank Plc senior insurance manager Catherine Joshua presses a button to announce the lucky winner of 7th of 'Bong' la Mpango' draw held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Left is Gaming Board inspector Elibariki Sengasenga and NMB Bank customer service officer Neema Kazaviyo. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

WHO calls for collaborative efforts to overcome financial barriers

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) has called for collaborative efforts among countries to overcome structural and financial barriers that hinder people from systematically washing their hands at critical times.

In her message on the Hand Hygiene Day WHO regional director for Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti said the day which is celebrated on 5th May every year is important because frequent hand washing is one of the key ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In doing this, the global health

organization said Public-private partnerships and investments will be crucial to expand and maintain infrastructure for safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

Dr Moeti said hand hygiene also contributes to preventing other diseases, such as diarrhoea and cholera. In turn, it helps to combat antimicrobial resistance, because reducing infections also reduces the need for antibiotics and the risk of their improper use.

"This year's theme is 'achieving hand hygiene at the point of care' where patients, health workers and treatment come together. Hand hygiene is an integral part of patient safety and the provision of

quality care," she said.

She however, many obstacles remain to practicing frequent hand hygiene.

The official said in communities across Africa, WHO and estimate that fewer than one in three households have a handwashing facility with soap and water.

"On average, it takes over 30 minutes to collect water in rural areas, and this burden often falls on women and children. It is vital that structural and financial barriers are overcome, so that more people can systematically wash their hands at critical times," she pointed out.

According to her, as of 2019, half

the health-care facilities in sub-Saharan Africa did not have basic water services.

"Water and soap or alcohol-based handrub were available in 84-percent of hospitals compared to 69-percent of clinics and other facilities. Overall only half the health-care facilities in sub-Saharan Africa had alcohol-based hand rub at points of care," she said.

She advised that in building back better after COVID-19, good practices around hand hygiene need to be sustained and dramatically expanded to improve well-being in African countries.



Rural Water Supply and Sanitation technicians in Musoma District, Mara Region Andrew Kamanga (C) and Jonathan Nkumbi launch water and sanitation access project around Lake Victoria yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Dr Mwinyi prepared an iftar for residents of Pemba north region

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi on Tuesday joined with residents of North Pemba Region for the Ramadhan iftar he had prepared for them, the traditional practice by Zanzibar leaders which he had decided to develop.

The iftar took place at Wete's House of Representatives Hall and attended by government officials, religious and political leaders as well as other various groups representing the public.

Dr Mwinyi said there has been a tradition by national leaders that during the Holy Month of Ramadhan, they prepare the iftar for the people in their areas, saying it was a good tradition which he has decided to develop.

He thanked all the people who attended the iftar whose aim is to be together with the people during the Holy Month.

He said in continuing with the tradition, on Wednesday (yesterday) he expected to take iftar with residents of Pemba

South Region.

Giving a word of thanks on behalf of residents, Sheikh Hamad Hassan Bakari from Micheweni praised President Mwinyi for the invitation and prayed for him to lead the isles in peace.

For her part Zanzibar First Lady Miriam Mwinyi separately joined with other women national leaders in the special iftar for the Pemba North Region residents.

Meanwhile President Mwinyi joined with other Muslims for the 'tarweh prayers' at Ibadhi Mtemani Mosque after which he greeted conveyed his greetings, saying he was a believer of peace and understands that development cannot be achieved without peace.

He said as for now Zanzibar has managed to form a government of national unity, hence what remained was to work together for the Isles' development. He also used the occasion to appeal to the Mosque's leaders to continue praying for him to enable him implement his pledges in bringing development to Zanzibar.

JUMAZA strengthens defence team in the case against Z'bar liquor board

By Guardian Correspondent, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR prominent advocate Rajab Abdallah has been incorporated to the defence side in the case filed by the Zanzibar Council of Imams (JUMAZA) against Zanzibar Alcoholic Drinks Control and Advisory Board following the latter's issuance of licences to

eight firms to import alcoholic drinks instead of three as provided for under the 2020 law on alcoholic drinks.

JUMAZA is now being represented by two advocates, Shehe Omar and Rajab Abdallah as the case now reaches a critical stage before decision on June 2 this year presided Zanzibar High Court Judge Rabia Hussein

Mohamed.

JUMAZA's executive Secretary Ali Amour said the JUMAZA Board decided to bring in an additional advocate to strengthen its legal arguments in the High Court, saying the case was very crucial to them.

He said JUMAZA filed Zanzibar High Court Case No 3 of 2021 against the Zanzibar Alcoholic

Drinks Control and Advisory Board after it violated act no 9 of 2020.

He said JUMAZA has decided to file the case following violation of Sections 28(k) and 33(l) of the Zanzibar Alcohol Control Act (No 9 of 2020).

"Licenses for the import of alcoholic drinks will be given to not more than three importers

on laid down conditions, including the importer must be a Zanzibari, must be a tax payer, must have a warehouse and vehicle(s) for distribution,' he added.

He said the Zanzibar Alcoholic Drinks Control and Advisory Board has failed to respect Section 28(k) of the Act that has set a condition for bars to be

more than 1,000 metres away from areas with basic social services including schools, health centres, mosques, churches, madrassas markets or bus stands.

The presiding Judge Rabia Hussein Mohamed said the case will be heard through written submissions before judgement on June 2 this year.

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AGA KHAN FOUNDATION

**THE COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CARE PROJECT-TCCP
TERMS OF REFERENCE
GENDER ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER STRATEGY**

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is a private, non-denominational, international development agency promoting creative and effective solutions to selected problems that impede social and economic development in parts of Africa and Asia. AKF-Tanzania is part of the AKF-East Africa regional structure that supports programmes in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. In Tanzania, AKF is managing a robust and expanding portfolio of multi-sectorial initiatives that includes programmes in inclusive economic development, health, nutrition, early childhood development, education and civil society strengthening.

AKF is looking for well qualified professional to provide consultancy services in the development of the social and behaviour change communication strategies for its new health project The Comprehensive Cancer Care Project is a four-year evidence-based project aimed at reducing the burden of cancer morbidity and mortality in all the 13 districts of Dar es Salaam and Mwanza in Tanzania. The project is led by the Aga Khan Health Services Tanzania (AKHST) together with its partners that include Aga Khan Foundation Tanzania (AKFT), Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI), Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH), Bugando Medical Centre (BMC), President's Office Regional and Local Government (PO-RALG), and Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC) with technical support from Institut Curie. The four-year project (January 2020- December 2023) has been funded by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) €10M and Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) €3.3M totalling €13.3M.

The project aims to address the challenges throughout the continuum of cancer care by implementing an innovative public-private partnership that aims at strengthening and expanding the quality, access and capacity of cancer care services in the country. The project has four major objectives that include: improving and expanding existing oncology infrastructure, building the capacity of staff of the participating institutions, strengthening community cancer awareness and engagement and developing joint research agenda and partnership among the project partners. It will be a source of learning for future programming and investments and will inform policy makers and strategic planners on cancer care. The project is expected to directly benefit approximately 1.7 million people and work with 100 health facilities at all levels in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza regions.

Scope and Objectives of the assignment**Rationale**

The gender assessment is intended to provide TCCP project staff with detailed information about the key gender issues within the context of the two project implementation areas of Dar es Salaam and Mwanza Regions. Specifically, a focus on gender equality examines how differences in power relations result in differential risks, vulnerabilities, and outcomes in health for men and women. The TCCP gender assessment will support the project to analyze the local context, identify factors that may influence the project's potential to mainstream gender equality, guide gender integration into the project activities, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and understand the gender roles, responsibilities, and inequalities in the health sector in the project sites.

TCCP project team, and partner organisations, will use the gender assessment and the gender strategy as part of project implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this gender assessment is to provide clarification on the gendered dimensions of access to and control over resources, decision-making, social norms and perceptions and practices related to access and use of cancer services in target communities in Tanzania. Its objective is to support TCCP to deliver gender-responsive interventions and ensure the equal benefit of male and female beneficiaries.

The specific questions to be answered from this assessment are:

1. How does women's access to and control over resources and decision-making influence their ability to access and use cancer services?
2. How do social and gender norms around cancers care affect women's access to and use of cancer services?

3. How are (or can) communities and health facilities addressing gender inequalities in decision-making and participation?

Expected timeline:

1. The consultants shall commence the work immediately upon signing contract and we expect to spend 60 days for the task with a possibility of extension of the period without adding extra cost unless otherwise discussed and agreed.
2. A detailed timeline, work plan and draft outline should be submitted within 5 days after signing the contract.

Deliverables & payment distribution:

Payments of total budget will be processed upon delivery of the following product along with invoice:

1. Detailed timeline, work plan and draft report outline (30%)
2. First draft report (30%)
3. Final approved report (40%)
4. Detailed gender strategy

Qualifications:

1. Have masters in Gender, Social Work, Anthropology, public health or a related field.
2. Minimum three years of research experience in conducting gender assessments and developing gender strategy.
3. Minimum 3 years of experience collecting primary data and field work. Experience in health projects will be added advantage.
4. Demonstrated ability to write high quality, methodologically sound, analytical papers in English
5. Solid communication skills and sensitivity to the target group- sensitivity to gender, disadvantaged groups and diversity.
6. Excellent oral and written communication skills in English and Kiswahili.

Applicants should submit brief (no more than 5-7 pages in total, excluding attachments) proposals in **English**, and should include the following:

1. Capability Statement: a description of experience of the individual consultants/consulting organization with the subject matter, including a description of similar experiences by identifying references (organization/agency, contact person, telephone/email contact information, deliverables, etc.) and a CV for each member of the consulting team. Only the individual(s) whose CVs are included in the proposal are authorized to carry out the assignment.
2. Technical Proposal: a description of how the objectives and deliverables outlined in this assignment will be met (including approach and methodology, timeframe, priorities, role of each consultant, etc.).
3. Financial Proposal: in separate document, detailed break-down of all estimated costs in Tanzania Shillings, including estimated days of days in the field, enumerators cost, study approval review costs, consultancy costs and all other consultancy related costs. Please note that all costs should be included in the total sum, no additional payments will be made outside of the total budget.
4. Links to work samples demonstrating most relevant previous works.

ADMINISTRATION, REPORTING AND COORDINATION

The consultant will be contracted through Aga Khan Foundation Tanzania. The consultant will report to the Program Manager Health-Aga Khan Foundation-Tanzania.

Application Deadline: complete applications should be sent to akftzprocurement@akfea.org and Cc: david.siso@akdn.org on or before 24th May 2021. **The shortlisted candidates will be invited to participate in a call to further present and clarify their ideas- Female consultants are encouraged to apply.**

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The Aga Khan Foundation is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (www.akdn.org).



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION

**THE COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CARE PROJECT-TCCP
TERMS OF REFERENCE
THE CANCER CARE PROJECT KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE (KAP) STUDY**

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is a private, non-denominational, international development agency promoting creative and effective solutions to selected problems that impede social and economic development in parts of Africa and Asia. AKF-Tanzania is part of the AKF-East Africa regional structure that supports programmes in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. In Tanzania, AKF is managing a robust and expanding portfolio of multi-sectorial initiatives that includes programmes in inclusive economic development, health, nutrition, early childhood development, education and civil society strengthening.

AKF is looking for well qualified professional to provide consultancy services in conducting a KAP study for its new health project The Comprehensive Cancer Care Project (TCCP). TCCP is a four-year evidence-based project aimed at reducing the burden of cancer morbidity and mortality in all the 13 districts of Dar es Salaam and Mwanza in Tanzania. The project is led by the Aga Khan Health Services Tanzania (AKHST) together with its partners that include Aga Khan Foundation Tanzania (AKFT), Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI), Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH), Bugando Medical Centre (BMC), President's Office Regional and Local Government (PO-RALG), and Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC) with technical support from Institut Curie. The four-year project (January 2020- December 2023) has been funded by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) €10M and Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) €3.3M totalling €13.3M.

The project aims to address the challenges throughout the continuum of cancer care by implementing an innovative public-private partnership that aims at strengthening and expanding the quality, access and capacity of cancer care services in the country. The project has four major objectives that include: improving and expanding existing oncology infrastructure, building the capacity of staff of the participating institutions, strengthening community cancer awareness and engagement and developing joint research agenda and partnership among the project partners. It will be a source of learning for future programming and investments and will inform policy makers and strategic planners on cancer care. The project is expected to directly benefit approximately 1.7 million people and work with 100 health facilities at all levels in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza regions.

Rationale

The overall objective of the assignment is to conduct a base-line assessment including Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey within the TCCP target communities. The assessment is also to provide a baseline data and rationale for targets to be achieved in the course of the project planning and implementation.

Specific objective of the assignment is:

- Measure the level of knowledge of the targeted communities on issues related to cancers.
- Determine the cancer related issues practices.
- Identify knowledge gaps, cultural beliefs or behavioural patterns and practices that create barriers to cancer care related practises.
- Collect baseline values for project indicators- the indicators include.
 - a) % of women/men who are aware that screening exists for cancers (disaggregate by type)
 - b) % of women/men who are satisfied with cancer care services at target hospitals
 - c) % of women and men who know signs and symptoms of cancer (disaggregate by sex, age group, type of cancer)
 - d) % of women/men visited by a CHWs to discuss cancer related topics (disaggregate by age group)

Specific Tasks of the consultant during the assessment:

- Submit a report which will include an interpretation of the tasks and methodologies which will be used in the KAP study.
- Secure necessary ethical approvals for the study.
- Develop appropriate tools and instruments for gathering information preferably by using ODK.
- Conduct a desk review relevant to the survey.
- Conduct KAP survey: Train data enumerators and ensure quality of data being collected on daily basis.
- Undertake consultations with key

stakeholders and conduct field data collection.

- Process and analyze the data, write, and submit a draft report of the survey.
- Present Preliminary findings to the project implementation team
- Present the draft report of the findings in a stakeholder forum for comments and feedback.
- Revise and submit a final copy of the survey report including recommendations for the health campaigns including tailor-based messages for the community.

Expected timeline:

1. The consultants shall commence the work immediately upon signing contract and we expect to spend 60 days for the task with a possibility of extension of the period without adding extra cost unless otherwise discussed and agreed.
2. A detailed timeline, work plan and draft outline should be submitted within 5 days after signing the contract.

Deliverables & payment distribution:

Payments of total budget will be processed upon delivery of the following product along with invoice:

1. Detailed timeline, work plan and draft report outline (30%)
2. First draft report (30%)
3. Final approved report (40%)

Qualifications:

1. Have master's in public health, behavioral studies, social studies or other related field.
2. Minimum of five years of research experience in conducting KAP studies.
3. Minimum three years of experience collecting primary data and field work. Experience in health projects will be added advantage.
4. Demonstrated ability to write high quality, methodologically sound, analytical papers in English.
5. Solid communication skills and sensitivity to the target group- sensitivity to gender, disadvantaged groups, and diversity.
6. Excellent oral and written communication skills in English and Kiswahili.

Applicants should submit brief (no more than 5-7 pages in total, excluding attachments) proposals in **English**, and should include the following:

1. Capability Statement: a description of experience of the individual consultants/consulting organization with the subject matter, including a description of similar experiences by identifying references (organization/agency, contact person, telephone/email contact information, deliverables, etc.) and a CV for each member of the consulting team. Only the individual(s) whose CVs are included in the proposal are authorized to carry out the assignment.
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SUA Mizengo Pinda Campus to become hub for spreading modern farming technologies

By Guardian Correspondent, Katavi

THE government plans to make the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Mizengo Pinda Campus at Mlele in Katavi Region to be the hub for spreading better technologies in farming, livestock keeping, beekeeping and tourism to farmers in the country to ensure the nation benefits from these sectors.

SUA Mizengo Pinda Campus Board Chairman, who is also the Director of the Uyole Centre of Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI-Uyole), Dr Tulole Bucheyeki said they aim to make sure the campus become the hub for better farming technologies to be distributed to other areas in the country.

He said the technologies will concentrate in improving beekeeping and environmental preservation as well as integrating other technologies which he claimed they will make sure the university's needs are attained to improve the country's agricultural sector.

"We have come here to Katavi to discuss on how we can make this campus that was established last year with me as its board chairman become an example to be emulated in producing modern technologies that would assist in beekeeping as well as preserving the environment and benefit farmers in the Southern Highlands regions," said Dr Bucheyeki.

SUA Mizengo Pinda Campus Principal Prof George Mwamengele said apart from its being a national university, its aim is to assist members of the community surrounding it to ensure they get modern farming education and technology.

Some of the students at the campus including Anitha Lyaka said her dream is to get knowledge

that would enable her to go and assist the community on better farming practices.

She said they have been provided with extension services education and the use of various farming technologies as well as how to assist farmers whenever they get problems in regard to their crops.

Another student, Silas Nanyala said the community still use traditional farming practices hence the education to be provided to him at the campus will assist him to educate farmers to abandon old farming practices and instead use modern technologies to harvest more crops.



We have come here to Katavi to discuss on how we can make this campus that was established last year with me as its board chairman become an example to be emulated in producing modern technologies that would assist in beekeeping as well as preserving the environment and benefit farmers in the Southern Highlands regions



Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority workers unblock a sewage drain along Morogoro in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

ARUSHA Regional Commissioner Idd Kimanta has praised Kenya Commercial bank (KCB) for being among good taxpayers contributing to the national economy since the bank's inception in the country 25 years ago.

He also said KCB was the first bank in the country to provide Islamic banking services through its "Sahil" outlet.

Speaking here on Tuesday this week during the Ramadhan iftar prepared by KCB for various stakeholders in Kilimanjaro and Arusha regions aimed at introducing its Islamic banking

Arusha RC commends KCB for offering Islamic banking services

services, Kimanta said the bank has been in Arusha for 21 years and two branches in the region.

"The government highly praises you as you have been among good taxpayers contributing to our country's economy," he said.

The RC said the KCB move to provide Islamic banking services has shown the way for others to follow suit, even though some of them tried only to end along the way.

He advised Muslims to open bank account with the 'Sahil'

branch for Islamic banking services.

For his part, KCB's Head for Marketing, Public Relations and Communication Christina Manyere said they have organized the iftar to introduce to their customers the bank's products including Islamic banking services.

She said every year KCB organizes iftar in different regions all aimed to mobilise the society to return to Allah.

"We appeal to all Muslims to

come and open bank accounts with us, not only for trade, but on the manner to please God by following Islamic teachings and traditions," she said.

The Head of KCB retail customers Abdul Juma said apart from various services they provide including Islamic banking services, KCB also provides various assistance to the community including paying for education, for women, youth, orphans and other people in vulnerable groups.



MV Mwanza christened 'Hapa Kazi tu' which is being rehabilitated by Ges Entec firm based in South Korea is now 74 per cent complete. The motor vessel will be completed next year. Works and Transport minister Dr Leonard Chamuriho (not pictured) inspected ongoing work progress on Tuesday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

'Building of MV Mwanza to be completed next year'

By Guardian Reporter

WORKS and Transport Minister Dr Leonard Chamuriho has said the building of MV Mwanza "Hapa Kazi Tu" that is currently 74 per cent complete will be completed later this year.

The minister made the remarks in Mwanza yesterday when inspecting the building of the modern ship undertaken by Gas Ente, a South Korean firm

working together with Kaang Nam Corporation and Suma JKT.

He said the building of the ship is among four big ship building/refurbishing projects by Marine Services Company Limited (MSCL) under the Works and Transport ministry.

"Other projects being implemented include the refurbishing of the MV New Victoria, construction of MV

Butiama and a barge whose work has been completed," he said.

Meanwhile Chamuriho said the ministry plans to develop other projects in lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa including the refurbishing of the aged MV Liemba on Lake Tanganyika.

For his part MV Mwanza building supervisor Eng Vitus Mapunda said construction work has employed more than 180

workers in various cadres and when completed it would create many job opportunities in the country.

MSCL Acting Chief Executive Officer Philemon Bagambilana said the company is set to provide quality water transport services in Lake Nyasa, Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika as well as expanding transport services in the Indian Ocean.

Z'bar government to reduce bureaucracy on investment issues

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE Zanzibar government says it has already succeeded to make the Zanzibar Investment Promotion Authority (ZIPA) to become one huge investment centre to deal with all important issues in regard to Zanzibar investment projects aimed at reducing bureaucracy.

The remarks were made yesterday by the Zanzibar Second Vice President Hemed Suleiman Abdalla, when tabling 2021/22 Budget estimates for his office in the House of Representatives.

He said the government has taken the step aimed at improving the environment while dealing with investment issues for various projects in a speedy way.

He mentioned some of the institutions that have been brought under one roof under ZIPA as including revenue collection institutions - the Zanzibar Revenue Board (ZRB) and Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA).

He cited other institutions as the Immigration Department, Building Supervisory Committee and the Environment Commission that deals in the issuance endorsements for projects' permits.

He said having one investment centre will significantly reduce bureaucracy for investors had that existed requiring them to take long periods to finalise procedures for permits of their projects.

He said with one investment

centre the time taken will be reduced from three weeks to one week.

"In attaining these aims ZIPA has already installed a network system that connects all these institutions, the step that will also control government revenue," he said.

He also said the Zanzibar government plans to make Pemba island a special area for investment and the work planned as for now is to install essential infrastructures including provision of safe and clean water, electricity and tarmac roads so as to easily reach investment areas.

He said the government also plans to make amendments to the Investment Act No. 11 of 2018 that will put in place a conducive environment and remove deficiencies in regard to investment in Pemba.

The second vice president admitted that so far investment of economic projects in Pemba is not well developed including failure to develop the free economic areas at Micheweni.



In attaining these aims ZIPA has already installed a network system that connects all these institutions, the step that will also control government revenue

EWURA announces hike in fuel prices

By Guardian Reporter

THE Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) has announced an increase in fuel prices that went into effect yesterday.

Acting Director General of EWURA, Engineer Godfrey Chibulunje, made the statement here yesterday as part of the authority's procedure to announce the price limit for petroleum products in the country every Wednesday of the month.

"Retail and wholesale prices of petroleum, diesel and kerosene received through the Port of Dar es Salaam have increased compared to the previous issue of April 7, 2021," he said.

He explained that for this month retail prices have increased by 46/- per liter equivalent to 2.17 percent (petrol), 43/- per liter equivalent to 2.13 percent (diesel) and 94/- per liter equivalent to 5.02 percent (kerosene).

Similarly, compared to last month's edition, prices have increased by 45.97/- per liter equivalent to 2.3 percent (petrol), 42.40/- per liter equivalent to 2.27 percent (diesel) and 93.3/- per liter equivalent to 5.38 percent (kerosene)," he said.

He noted that wholesale and retail prices for petroleum and diesel fuel in the Northern Regions (Tanga, Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Manyara) have increased compared to the prices offered in April.

"In May 2021, retail prices of petrol and diesel have increased by 90/- per liter of petrol equivalent to 4.2 percent and 174/- per liter of diesel equivalent to 8.61 percent, compared to last month's edition, wholesale prices of petrol and diesel have increased by 90.2/-

per liter of petrol and 173.71/- per liter of diesel," he said.

However, he said the prices of kerosene remain unchanged and will continue to be those announced last month.

"This is because, as of April 2021 no shipment of kerosene was received through the port of Tanga," he said, adding that retail and wholesale prices for petroleum and diesel products in the Southern Regions—Mtwara, Lindi, and Ruvuma have increased compared to the prices offered in April 2021.

"In May 2021, retail prices for petroleum and diesel have increased by 147/- per liter and 42/- per liter respectively, compared to last month's edition, prices have increased by 146.37/- per liter and 41.78/- per liter," he said.

The director cited the reason for the change in prices as a result of changes in oil prices in the world market and transportation costs (BPS Premium).



Retail and wholesale prices of petroleum, diesel and kerosene received through the Port of Dar es Salaam have increased compared to the previous issue of April 7, 2021



Chang'ombe flyover construction at the junction of Nyerere /Kawawa road in Dar es Salaam is going on under Chinese contractors to ease traffic jam as captured yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

NHC set to finalise construction of 400 houses in Dodoma

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE National Housing Corporation is set to finalise construction of 400 houses out of the 1,000 expected to accommodate civil servants shifting to the capital Dodoma.

The agency has also reduced the costs for the houses whereby

now it is sold between 59m/- to 99m/- according to NHC Director-General Dr Maulid Banyani.

Dr Banyani made the remarks at Iyumbu area Chamwino district in the region when he toured the project adding that the project will ease accommodation challenges facing civil servants after the government decision to move to Dodoma.

"To ensure the construction of many residential houses to house workers we have been given a loan amounting to 20bn/- by the government to construct houses which will be rent or sold to them," he said.

He said the second phase will include construction of 325 houses at Mahoma and Chamwino and the second phase will be to construct 275 in two to

three years.

"We expect to use 71bn/- in constructing all the 1,000 houses, the first 100 houses at Chamwino will be sold while the remaining 300 will be rent at a low price," he said.

He called on Tanzanians to make use of the chance and buy the houses because they have been constructed at the highest standards.



Majita primary school pupils in Musoma District, Mara region draw water moments after the launch of rural water and sanitation project at Bukima village yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Reporter

MEMBER of CCM Central Committee Kassim Majaliwa has called upon residents of Muhambwe Constituency in Kibondo District to vote for Dr Florence Samizi to become their Member of Parliament in the coming by-election saying he was the one able to bring development to them.

"The election does not need political fanaticism or much showing off but needs great thought to get the leader who will be in the front line to serve you, and speak on your behalf anywhere and no one else is able to do that than Dr Samizi," Majaliwa said.

Vote for CCM candidate, Majaliwa advises Muhambwe constituents

Majaliwa, who is also the country's Prime Minister made the remarks on Tuesday this week in Kibondo district, Kigoma region when addressing Muhambwe Constituency residents at the launch of CCM's election campaign rally at Kibondo Town stadium.

He said if they vote for Dr Samizi they will make easy the constituency's development activities including the construction of various infrastructures including those on

health and roads.

He said the phase VI Government led by President Samia Suluhu Hassan has set aside more than 1bn/- to refurbish Kibondo District Hospital to ensure residents get better health services.

He said the government has allocated huge funds for implementing various development projects in the constituency, hence vote for Dr Samizi, saying she was the one to coordinate the projects.

For his part, the Kasulu Rural MP Augustino vuma appealed to Muhambwe constituents to elect Dr Samizi because she is a leader who listens and is the one who can work together with them to solve challenges facing them.

For her part CCM candidate for Muhambwe Constituency Dr Florence Samizi used the occasion to appeal to the constituents to vote for her as she is ready to work together with them for their development.

Female journalists challenged to unlock their full potential

By Correspondent Devota Mwachang'a, Nairobi

FEMALE journalists have been challenged to ensure self-determination, know their purpose and unlock their full potential to be able to deliver the best to the society.

Journalists, as purpose driven individuals need to develop integrity to gain dignity and courage when taking charge of their personal destinies.

This was said recently in Nairobi by Njeri Kabeberi, facilitator of a seven days training for 16 female journalists from Tanzania and Kenya organized by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.

Kabeberi said journalists, especially women should know their vision, develop skills and add value to their work.

"I have realised that we are not moving in the same direction where we are made to move in. By knowing our purpose, journalists and other professionals should deliver the best," said Kabeberi.

Kabeberi added: "People are educated but are not exposed enough; it is important to develop our innate skills."

Interim Project Director with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Veni Swai said they have decided to work with the media to make sure the society gets the right information to enable them make decisions.

According to her, the foundation decided to give female journalists a chance to let them recognise their place and opportunity so they can take it.

"Women in the media are going through various cases. They are passing through trauma but no

one looks after them. This is our second project after the pilot project which brought together women in media from Tanzania, Kenya and Zimbabwe," said Swai.

A participant from Tanzania, Joyce Shebe who is the Chairman of Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) called upon the foundation to continue providing training to journalists since they help in opening people's mind, thus enabling them to overcome life and work challenges.

Shebe commended the foundation for the good topics covered during the training especially the one that talked on how female journalists can balance between work and family matters.

Toepista Nabusoba, senior producer at Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) said: "I have attended many workshops, but this was one of its kind. What I learned here has helped me to rediscover my inner strengths and values as a female journalist."



I have realised that we are not moving in the same direction where we are made to move in. By knowing our purpose, journalists and other professionals should deliver the best

THURSDAY 6 MAY, 2021

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

We should strengthen our reading practices

There is much more that can be done to improve reading culture in Tanzania. Perhaps the future lies in the grassroots organisations that are working hard to develop and sustain it. Many studies have been done to explore the reading culture as it exists today in Tanzania with an eye towards factors that contribute to reading culture and how they have manifested within Tanzanian society. Researches have revealed that there was a relative absence of reading culture among Tanzanians and that the factors influencing this state of reading were multiple and varied.

To better understand the reading culture, or lack thereof, it is also important to examine how libraries, literacy, publishing, and the book industry have all played a historical role in shaping the culture.

These factors as well as cultural barriers should be explored in order to illuminate reading practices in Tanzania. Ideas around reading as resistance and grassroots organisations as agents of change ought also to be discussed towards a critique of hegemonic systems and conversation around community building.

While there have been some studies that assessed the current state of libraries, book industry, and reading, much of that work was conducted in the 1970s and 1980s, with very little published in recent years that matches their depth and breadth. This broad examination of reading culture looks closely at the influence of these entities on the information behaviour and practice of Tanzanians through a lens that privileges African critical thought.

Very few studies exist that tell us about contemporary reading culture in Tanzania and the obstacles that keep Tanzanians from reading. While some may disagree whether there is or is not a national reading culture, the general consensus is that there are significant barriers to overcome in order for Tanzanians to strengthen their reading practices. Reading is often an indicator for and impactor of other things such as literacy, education, recreation, etc. which signifies the importance of understanding the culture and how it affects the community.

Libraries, publishers, booksellers, organisations, schools, and more are all vital in strengthening Tanzania's reading culture and all have a role to play to ensure that reading is more than a task to be undertaken for higher education. In the end, promoting reading culture for leisure and pleasure will have a long-term positive affect on education which can only benefit the nation.

But it is important to examine how the country got where it is and what can be done to make the necessary changes that will transform reading culture for the betterment of Tanzania and its people.

World Book Day, also known as World Book and Copyright Day, or International Day of the Book, is an annual event organised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to promote reading, publishing, and copyright. The first World Book Day was celebrated on 23 April in 1995, and continues to be recognized on that day. A related event in the United Kingdom and Ireland is observed in March.

Unabated malaria fight in country's hotspots

In Tanzania, over 95 per cent of the 55 million people are at risk for malaria infection. The disease is responsible for more than one-third of deaths among children under the age of 5 years and for up to one-fifth of deaths among pregnant women. Due to huge geographical variance in malaria prevalence, Tanzania is taking differentiated control strategies.

The National Malaria Control Programme has divided the country into small units where different combinations of interventions are used to accelerate malaria elimination.

On one hand, areas with very low risk, measures are taken on a case-by-case basis depending on malaria surveillance outcome. On the other hand, areas with high malaria transmission risk such as southern Tanzania are getting intensified surveillance, curative, preventive and control interventions to reduce the disease burden.

The stratification of malaria burden in the country and tailoring of the response has been made possible by using malaria infection rate data taken weekly from the routine health management information system at health facilities along with vector surveillance results.

Public health education campaigns are also being carried out through events such as football derbies where people are advised on how to curb infections by properly using long lasting insecticide treated nets and seeking prompt and proper malaria treatment. Tanzania has case-study project co-funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates

Foundation and the Chinese government and implemented by Ifakara Health Institute, a Tanzanian government agency, and the National Malaria Control Programme.

World Malaria Day is an international observance commemorated every year on 25 April and recognises global efforts to control malaria. Globally, 3.3 billion people in 106 countries are at risk of malaria. In 2012, malaria caused an estimated 627,000 deaths, mostly among African children. Asia, Latin America, and to a lesser extent the Middle East and parts of Europe are also affected.

World Malaria Day sprang out of the efforts taking place across the African continent to commemorate Africa Malaria Day. WMD is one of 11 official global public health campaigns currently marked by the World Health Organisation (WHO), along with World Health Day, World Blood Donor Day, World Immunisation Week, World Antimicrobial Awareness Week, World Patient Safety Day, World Tuberculosis Day, World Chagas Disease Day, World No Tobacco Day, World Hepatitis Day and World AIDS Day.[3]

According to the most recent World Malaria Report, the global tally of malaria reached 429,000 malaria deaths and 212 million new cases in 2015. The rate of new malaria cases fell by 21 per cent globally between 2010 and 2015, and malaria death rates fell by 29 per cent in the same period. In sub-Saharan Africa, case incidence and death rates fell by 21 per cent and 31 per cent, respectively.

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By Damilola Agbalajobi

There are few women in political and leadership spaces in Nigeria. Currently only seven out of 109 senators and 22 of the 360 House of Representatives members are women. Ogechi Ekeanyanwu, from The Conversation Africa, asked Damilola Agbalajobi, political scientist and gender specialist, to explain the lack of representation, why it matters and how to remedy it.

Why are women so poorly represented in leadership positions?

There are multiple factors. Some are related to the political party systems and structures. For instance, the high cost of politics prevents women from standing for positions. Often women don't have enough money to pay for the mandatory expression of interest and nomination forms required by political parties to run for positions on their platforms. In addition, election campaign costs are exorbitant. So poor access to education means poor access to gainful employment. Unpaid labour burdens, unequal inheritance rights and outright discrimination also mean that women are less likely to be able to afford to follow through the process of getting leadership positions.

There are also societal factors that impede women's representation. They include cultural or religious norms

By Eugenia Shevchenko, Lotte-Marie

Brouwer and Minji Kwag

The lockdowns and illnesses brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic have dramatically increased the need to care for children, the elderly and the sick. And in societies where gender inequality and biased norms persist, most of this burden has fallen on women, many of whom have had to leave their regular jobs with no idea of when they can return.

Actually, the pandemic has merely exacerbated the existing stereotypes about the role of women, who are reflexively expected to take care of their family members, house chores, and myriad other daily domestic tasks that are unpaid but vital to households, communities and economies.

Funded by the European Union, UN Women's WeEmpowerAsia programme is responding to this chronic issue with the launch of the 'UN Women Care Accelerator,' an online group training and incubating programme for female entrepreneurs and businesses led

Nigeria has few women in politics: Here's why, and what to do about it

surrounding marriage, indigeneship - a concept that recognises only ethnic groups native to a particular state - and the structures that portray women as subordinate to men.

Even educated women face hindrances. They encounter gender stereotypes that assign leadership to men, sexual assault, pay gaps and unpaid labour, including child care and housework, placing them at a disadvantage.

There is also a lack of political will and effective government action.

The media give poor coverage to female candidates. It's not the same as the coverage men get. Women candidates are often subjected to gender related electoral violence, threats and hate speech because of the perception that women want to get what is traditionally men's.

Why is representation of women in politics important?

As about half of the population are women, their participation will create a balance of power between genders. This is an indicator of development in any society. Over the years, I've witnessed a rise in the number of women serving in elected and appointed political position, the world over. But that is not the case for Nigerian women.

The full and equitable

participation of women in public life is essential to building and sustaining strong, vibrant democracies. When women are not participating in politics, it's less likely that policies will benefit them. Women need to participate to bring attention to issues that uniquely affect them, and to change attitudes towards gender.

Why have attempts to get more women into leadership positions failed?

Policies, protocols, conventions and quota systems are rooted in the concept of compensatory justice: compensating specific individuals who were wronged or marginalised. But there are polarising reactions to affirmative action.

Some people argue that it is a systematic way of achieving both equality and reparation, without force. Others feel it undermines the democratic concept of equality of opportunity and argue that women should be given a chance to compete equally with men. These polarising schools of thought limit the efficiency of protocols, conventions and quota systems as ways to get women into leadership.

Also, customary laws often clash with the goals of protocols and conventions.

Can quota systems work?

Countries like Rwanda and

South Africa have used a quota system to pave the way for women representation in politics. In Rwanda, over 50% of political positions are held by women. Affirmative action or a quota system provides role models. Seeing women in positions of power can encourage others to confidently aspire to leadership positions.

Affirmative action also promotes diversity and increases opportunities for a disadvantaged group. It can decrease the potential for conflict as members of society begin to find themselves at the same level, politically, economically and socially.

How can the problem of representation be solved?

First, training is crucial. Women need training in the fundamentals of politics. They need to understand grassroots politics and start from there. When people are unknown at the grassroots, they aren't successful.

Another way is networking and mentoring. Women also need to see that politics is not all dirty. They need to see governance as what affects every member of a society.

Legislative changes are needed too and that is where affirmative action comes in. A quota system that reserves a fraction of electoral positions for women can be legislated.

UN Women launches new programme to foster economic participation in care industry

by or supporting women in the care industry. The programme aims to create jobs and income for women by supporting new, creative solutions in the care sector - thus turning the unjust burden into economic opportunities for them.

Over a period of six months starting June 1, selected candidates from Asia and the Pacific will be provided with tailor-made training; paired with mentors; and connected with potential investors, partners and experts to develop and scale up their business models. Seedstars, an investment holding company, and Bopinc, a social enterprise, will co-lead the training, exchange and mentorship.

"Innovation will be crucial to address this 'care emergency' and turn the unjust burden into economic opportunities, boosting the number of women who lead and participate in business," underscored Katja Freiwald, Regional Programme Manager of WeEmpowerAsia.

Even before the pandemic,

women in the Asia-Pacific did on average 4 times as much unpaid care work as men did each day - in some countries up to 11 times more, according to a 2018 report by Asian Development Bank and UN Women. This has widened the gender gap in earnings and prevented women from fully participating in the economy.

In 2019, the labour force participation rate among men aged 15 and above was 76 per cent in East Asia and the Pacific, compared to 58.8 percent among women of the same age group. It was the only region in the world where women's labour force participation had been decreasing even before the pandemic.

As UN Women's leading partner and donor, the EU has highlighted the importance of women's economic empowerment and a more equal sharing of care responsibilities in its Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025: "women and men in all their diversity should have equal opportunities to thrive and be economically independent;

women and men should equally share caring and financial responsibilities."

"It's about time we recognize the important role care work plays in our society. We must pay attention to the industry as a whole and empower entrepreneurs in the care sector by providing more growth opportunities. As a public-private sector partnership, we should prioritize investment in care work for a more equal and gender-inclusive economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic," said Anurag Maloo, Head of Partnerships (Asia-Pacific) at Seedstars.

"Our initial research has shown an emergence of innovative business models that can (partly) address unpaid care work and acceleration of these innovative models is required to ensure they can grow and be replicated," said Emile Schmitz, Managing Director at Bopinc. "UN Women's Care Accelerator is a great opportunity to bring entrepreneurs together and jointly scale entrepreneurial solutions to unpaid care work."

NGOs mustn't be surprised when govt cracks

By Isidore Guvamombe

I am not a regular imbibber but once in a while I go into a decent bar for an hour of two, just to catch up.

And just last week, I popped into a hotel bar, seeking decency, social distance and a bit of catching up.

A long-time friend of mine was surprised to see me there and he forgot about all this Covid-19 restrictions and jumped into a huge hug. I smelt malt!

He works for an NGO and he ordered for me, my usual Coke, which I had the pleasure to receive. I chugged it with a bit of discomfort as, I knew he would start his usual anti-Government ranting.

If fact, it was not going to be new because every time I meet him with some people, he does not forget to tell them that I am a Zanu-PF sympathiser. Depending on his mood, he at time tell them: "This is Mr Zanu PF himself!"

Before I chugged my second sip, he shouted on top of his voice, going ballistic about the 2023 elections and how the NGO world was already working with the opposition to dislodge Zanu PF.

"This time, we are getting good money from our sponsors. Our proposals are already done and we are running with strengthening of democratic institutions because that is where Zanu PF, always beats us."

The fad of our time is that the US has ascribed itself the right to police the world, through an array of NGOs and goes on to sanction, with impunity, any country that does not tow its line of thinking.

Little Zimbabwe is one such victim, sanctioned for daring to liberate its majority black people and empower them with land that they had been deprived of by a minority white Rhodesian government.

The painful narrative of my es-



tranged friend is that the NGOs are being sponsored by US and its allies to force the Zanu PF Government to reform itself out of power. As he explained the reforms, it was clear he was talking about all institutions that he thought would give advantage to the opposition and bring down Zanu PF. So democracy to him and those of his ilk, is anything that removes Zanu PF from power. Nothing less!

His sipped his malt while I chugged my coke, again and again, and... boy, ooh, boy, he never stopped. The more the beer got into his mouth and obvious to his mind, the more he let the cat out of the bag.

"We know your Government wants to deregister many NGOs. The Americans, George Soros Foundation, and Osisa, even NDI are aware of that so we will register more NGOs so that even

if you deregister more than half, we will remain with a big number still. These organisations have already budgeted for 2023, no matter what your Government does," he continued.

I decided to leave but not without giving a parting shot.

I chugged my Coke, placed the glass on the table looked at him and said: "And you are proudly a Zimbabwean horse, working for Americans and their allies against your own country, just for money? My foot!"

I had incensed him and he yelled and shouted at me, as I walked out.

The NGO sector, this huge monster that claims to be the beginning and the end of human rights, justice, good governance, democracy and accountability, but instead has caused untold anxiety and suffering of many people in this country either through

commission or omission.

Most of the NGOs in Zimbabwe have failed to keep on the lane they registered for, and the desperate and gullible detractors of the country, led by the US, have been swallowing the NGOs lies hook, line and sinker and giving little everyone else who claims to be an NGOs, money as long as they believe, it will help remove the Zanu PF government from power.

The anti-Government NGO world has become a conveyor belt for money for many political thugs and fraudsters in Zimbabwe, whom one day, the US and its allies will be sad to discover.

The US and its allies have spent millions of dollars in what they call democratic forces in Zimbabwe in particular and other countries deemed errant, but unbeknown to US and its allies, it

has become a money spinning venture. The result are less important that the money the NGO fraudsters pocket.

So, the practice of controlling NGOs that are financed from abroad is widely used in different countries all over the world.

It is so significant that some of the countries even take radical measures such as banning them at legislative level.

Zimbabwe has been different and too tolerant of some nonsensical NGOs. Well, Zimbabwe is an interesting country! There is a multifarious array of NGOs that religiously claim to represent us in our broad totality.

This villager is biting the bullet here and will not apologise.

In all the cases, these NGOs in Zimbabwe are funded from abroad by countries and individuals with their sinister motives and, unfortunately being in Africa, the majority of NGOs are funded by former colonial masters or individuals and institutions that have a direct link with the colonial master or colonial thinking and promotion of white supremacy.

Their story is not a Zimbabwean story, but a European narrative or an American, a story that sees things through Western European eyes, never a village perspective.

The European narrative is dangled as a carrot to our gullible people until they go for it hook, line and sinker, then regurgitate the story, again and again, even against themselves.

Right now our people have forfeited their right to benefit from teeming wildlife, because NGOs have campaigned against it.

Their homes, their crop fields, their gardens and even people have lost limp and life from wildlife attacks.

These NGOs are also in mining, in investment and deep into politics.

They are all over.

For instance, when Cecil the Lion was killed in Hwange, we saw outsiders mourning more than the bereaved. It was a European story, the villagers

whose cattle were killed systematically by Cecil for more than a decade, were never given a voice.

The money raised by Cecil's death was given to the NGO community and not the villagers who endured long exposure to Cecil's deadly canines, who lost their livestock and suffered discomfort. So who benefited?

Today, Zimbabwe is sitting on more than 70 tonnes of ivory that it cannot sell, because animal rights NGOs have made it impossible for the country to trade in ivory yet. If sold, that ivory could have generated revenue for wildlife conservation.

Now, through false information provided by NGOs, Western countries have banned the importation of elephant and lion trophies from producer countries such as Zimbabwe.

The US, has banned trophies hunted from Zimbabwe from entering the its soil and the European Union. Parliament is lobbying for the ban of wildlife trophies in Europe supported by a coterie of NGOs and some African countries with no wildlife to talk about.

Zimbabwe and many other countries should seriously consider working on a legislative and executional framework to protect its sovereignty and independence from foreign intervention, via NGOs. Most NGOs have done more harm than good to this country.

Zimbabwe will not be the first to do this: The first law on NGOs in the US (the Foreign Agency Registration Act) was enacted in 1938.

The law on Lobbyism, adopted in 1995, toughened control over NGOs who are lobbying for foreign governments' interests against the USA.

In India, Israel, Ethiopia, Egypt and Algeria, among others, things are even worse as control of NGOs has been tightened since 2011.

By their actions, these NGOs have invited the wrath of many reasonable people and the Government and they must not be surprised if the Government of Zimbabwe starts cracking the whip.

Young women leaders in Malawi are ready to build back better from COVID-19

BY Special Correspondent

Thelma Kalu is a young feminist and an active member of the Young Feminist Network of Malawi. She is currently the Project Coordinator of the Spotlight Initiative project under Plan International, Malawi. In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, Thelma attended the launch of the Malawi Chapter of the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) and was excited about the growth of a movement that was enthusiastically embracing young African women. Supported by the Spotlight Initiative, the AWLN network comprises over 500 African women across generations and sectors.

COVID-19 related movement restrictions and funding reductions have hampered women's rights organizations at the exact time they are most needed. AWLN and other such organizations act as essential service providers and advocates, and must be immediately strengthened to pave the way for a more equal post-COVID future.

What are the most pressing challenges that young women face in your community?

Young women in Malawi face many challenges that arise from the feminization of poverty and gender discrimination in all areas of development. Cultural practices, beliefs, social norms and gender stereotypes trigger gender discrimination and gender-based violence. The lack of women in leadership positions fuels these challenges.

Despite an increasing number of initiatives to support women's movements, the participation of young women remains limited in these movements and in other areas of development, due to age, location, socioeconomic status, lack of experience and educational background. To a great extent, most women's movements have only targeted specific classes in urban areas, leaving out rural areas, where the majority of young women live.

What did you learn from the AWLN



launch?

The launch of the network gave me high hopes of a new era where young women can fulfil their passion to be great leaders, and play an active role in changing the country, especially as pertains to ending violence against women and girls. We need to ensure that our generation of young women can meaningfully contribute to policy changes and economic development. The Malawi chapter

can help achieve the objectives of AWLN and strengthen more grassroots networks through the Spotlight Initiative to reach remote areas of the country.

Thelma Kalu and fellow activists celebrate the launch of the Malawi Chapter of the African Women Leaders Network. Photo: UN Women/Faith Mvula

Why is the Malawi chapter of AWLN relevant to young women today?

Establishing sub-country chapters to advance women's issues paves the way for more meaningful and inclusive participation for both young men and women. This will boost professional and career development for many in response to Africa's needs. This is what many young women have longed for. The chapter also harmonizes women's movements that have for too long worked in segments. This is an opportunity to interact with women advocates who

are dedicating their time to ending violence against women and girls in Malawi. In unity, greater things can be achieved.

How has the pandemic impacted the women's movement in Malawi, and what can be done to address those impacts?

The pandemic has decelerated the efforts of the women's movement, but there has also been growing violence against women, and an increase in teenage pregnancies and child marriage. With

the drastic increase of gender-based violence, growing poverty is increasing women's vulnerability and limiting their access to essential services - women's movements have felt the pressure.

On the positive side, solidarity among women's movements has strengthened. With social and mental pressures increasing, digital spaces have encouraged dialogue, peer support, and discussions on feasible solutions to deal with the crisis. Additionally, we have seen women in Malawi coming together to demand justice for victims of sexual and intimate partner violence, which escalated during the pandemic.

However, this approach has excluded women who don't have access to digital spaces, and there has been limited access to safe spaces, particularly for women in remote and rural areas. More efforts need to be directed to creating intersectional spaces so as to not leave anyone behind.

What can be done to ensure women's voices are better heard and their issues are better addressed?

There is a need for inclusiveness. It's time all stakeholders prioritized our voices. Patriarchal societies and male-dominated systems of government need to look closely at how they can include women in decision-making. We can all help raise women's voices and advance women's rights through programmes like the Spotlight Initiative. We request civil society to create pathways of collaboration and capacity-building for young women leaders.

And to my fellow young women, may we never feel too small to meaningfully participate, demand our rights and take the lead in all stages of development, from the grassroots to national level. We all have a voice.

Five months after bilateral talks: Nigerians' shops remain shut in Ghana

By Hamisu Kabir Matazu, Sunday Michael Ogbu

Five months after a series of bilateral talks between the Nigerian government and authorities in Ghana aimed at addressing the nearly a decade-long controversy that led to the closure of Nigerian traders' shops in Ghana, the issues have not been resolved.

Dozens of shops belonging to Nigerians are still under lock and key, while most of the owners are stranded. Some of them said they beg to feed even as many of them remain reluctant to come back home despite a window created by the federal government to facilitate their safe return.

The centre of the lingering controversy was a \$1 million levy imposed on Nigerian traders and other foreign investors to pay Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), before the shops would be opened.

The conditions set by the Ghanaian authorities had triggered a debate in Nigeria and within the African sub-region, which many considered as a breach of ECOWAS' trade protocols.

After receiving a formal complaint from its citizens, the Nigerian government set up a ministerial committee to find a lasting solution to the plight of the traders but it appeared not much has been achieved.

The committee was made up of representatives of the ministries of Interior, Trade and Investment, Foreign Affairs and the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM).

After a meeting with a delegation of the Nigerian traders, the committee resolved to engage the Ghanaian government in every way possible to end the crisis, with a promise to evacuate any trader who may wish to return home.

40 more shops closed after talks. The President of the Nigerian Traders Union in Ghana, Mr Chukwuemeka Nnaji, said in a telephone interview with Daily Trust



that Ghanaian authorities closed forty more shops after the bilateral talks. According to him, Ghanaian authorities made the closure a week to Ghana's general elections.

"To be precise, it happened on November 30, 2020; one week to Ghanaian election. I returned from Nigeria then. As I arrived in Ghana, they came and locked up my shop, and 40 other shops.

"Those shops were different from what I reported months ago to the ministerial committee in Nigeria. Till date, all the shops are locked up.

"The update now is that Nigerians' shops are still closed and the authorities are warming up to close more," he said.

Nnaji said during his delegations' meeting with the ministerial committee, they were assured that Nigerian and Ghanaian governments would negotiate with a view to finding a lasting solution to the problem.

On whether the government is making efforts to return some of the stranded Nigerian traders, he said, "If the only option Nigeria has is to evacuate us from Ghana, I

think it's well and good because we must leave Ghana for a reason and that reason is that Ghanaians don't want us to trade in their country. We have not committed any sin. We have registered our businesses and we are paying taxes.

"Ghana is not like Nigeria; here, we pay taxes in millions of naira equivalent. Last year, they gave me an 11,000 Ghana cedis estimate, almost a million naira. A working permit is \$500 while a resident permit is \$400.

"Ghana's law does not stop foreigners from trading. There is nowhere the law says that, but they just formed it (a new rule) and are using it to colour us blue. And, I'm surprised that the government of Nana Akufo-Addo is supporting such things."

On the impact of the intervention by the ECOWAS parliament, he said, "Back in 2010, ECOWAS came and told Ghanaian officials that they do not have the right to sack Nigerian traders because we have the same citizenship as ECOWAS member states. But Ghanaians don't care about that."

Also speaking, the Sec-

retary General of the Nigeria Union of Traders Association, Ghana (NUTAG), Comrade Evaristus Chukwuduruo Nwankwo, said: "The update on our situation here in Ghana is that the local traders are unrelenting in their agenda of chasing Nigerian traders away from Ghana, especially where they seem to have any little competition.

"As we speak, the over 250 shops locked on December 2, 2019, July 2020 and December 2020 have not been opened. In fact, some landlords who are working with GUTA have forcefully taken some shops back even when rents have not expired."

"Our members are now beggars" Speaking on the living conditions of his members since 2019, Nwankwo said: "A lot of people have turned to beggars. We have lost a few of them who could not afford to manage their underlying sicknesses like diabetes.

"The Charge de Affair at the High Commission of Nigeria in Accra, Madam Esther Arewa, sent her widow's mite in cash and kind to us and we are grateful to her. It was her personal donation and not from the government of Nigeria I must emphasise."

President of NUTAG, Chukwuemeka Nnaji, also said their shops have remained closed months after the visit of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Femi Gba-

jabiamila, followed by the stopover made by Vice President Yemi Osinbajo.

"Currently, Ghanaian traders are asking for our shops so they can take over. Many of our members have lost their shops.

"We left Abuja with high hopes and extensive assurance that things will be better, but six months after, Ghanaian authorities continue to close more shops."

When contacted on the position of the government on the plight of traders in Ghana, the spokesman for the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), Abdulrahman Balogun, said the ministerial committee set up is working closely with the traders.

Balogun said that after the traders met the ministerial committee last December, the federal government promised to facilitate the return of those willing to come back to Nigeria.

"It's about four months now, but the traders are yet to take the offer," he said.

Flashback on bilateral talks

Daily Trust recalled that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama, had last year summoned Ghana's Chargé d'Affaires to Nigeria, Ms Iva Denoo, with whom he discussed the closure of the Nigerian-owned shops in Accra with a view to addressing the issue.

Onyeama described the action taken by the Ghanaian authorities as politically motivated. But his Ghanaian counterpart, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, countered his allegation, insisting that the crack-down was on illegal foreign retail businesses in Ghana.

Botchwey, described in a tweet by Onyeama, tagging Ghana's policy on retail business as a politically motivated move as 'most unfortunate'.

She said the Ghanaian government did not target any particular nationality in the exercise. "Countries sometimes take tough decisions in order to enforce their laws, just as Nigeria took a decision to shut its borders to prevent smuggling, despite its impact on ECOWAS member countries," she had said.

Also, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Femi Gbajabamila, and the current Speaker of the Ghanaian Parliament, Mr Albert Bagbin, had had a zoom meeting on April 2, 2021, in a bid to find lasting solutions to the trade dispute involving the Nigerian traders in Ghana.

Gbajabamila updated his counterpart on his visit to Ghana towards the end of 2020 in an effort to douse tensions and extract commitments from the Ghanaian government over the trade dispute.

"I look forward to working with you. There are a lot of issues for both our countries that I think through parliamentary diplomacy and back-channel discussions, we can resolve for the people of both countries.

"I'm sure you are aware of a couple of them, including the relationship between Ghana and Nigeria in terms of our traders and residents over there and yours over here too," he had said.

Gbajabamila said there are two issues that are critical in this moment like the relationship between Ghana and the Nigerian traders and the issue of CoSAP and many more issues as they go along.

On his part, Bagbin said he welcomed the idea of having a better relationship with the Nigerian Parliament and that he was ready to reciprocate the Nigerian Speaker's visit so that they would discuss issues.

"I am sure other African countries are looking up to Ghana and Nigeria to show the way and I'm sure that with your immense experience and what I have gone through over 19 good years in parliamentary diplomacy, I am sure that there will be nothing that we will not be able to surmount."

Strained Nigeria, Ghana diplomatic relationship

Apart from the \$1m levy by the Ghanaian authority that has put Nigerian traders in trouble, many analysts look at seizure of Nigeria mission property that breached the Vienna Convention and incessant hostilities towards Nigerians as a sort of retaliation.

By Special Correspondent

Among the economic development concepts for Zimbabwe is to make more use of our own natural resources, processing these for higher value products.

If at the same time the resource is a renewable resource now largely going to waste, the processing has to be done in remote areas desperate for reasonable industrial and semi-industrial jobs, and can provide at least seasonal income to local communities, then a lot of boxes are ticked when it comes to assessing the value.

The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, originally split off to run or oversee colleges and universities, had its remit expanded dramatically in the Second Republic to use the research opportunities that a major investment in higher education automatically generates and apply these.

Hence it is now the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, a mouthful, but a name that makes clear the need for much research to move out of ivory towers and to generate practical applications.

At the same time we created a number of other research bodies, with the necessary degree of independence since few civil servants and politicians are really equipped to direct the nuts and bolts of innovative research, but know that if there is an enabling environment then smart scientists and technicians can look for and develop a lot of good ideas.

And if there are good ties to

Applying tech to local resources way to go



private business then a lot of that development can be pushed into commercial exploitation.

The two marula fruit processing plants now being built in Rutenga are an ultimate example of all boxes being ticked.

Everyone knows the tree, *Sclerocarya birrea*. It grows everywhere in the open brachystegia woodlands that cover most of Zimbabwe except the very far south and southwest.

It is not the most attractive indigenous tree, with its small leaves, bare branches in winter, and somewhat untidy appearance, so is rarely planted in gardens or parks.

But it is the principle indigenous fruit tree, producing a large quantity of fruit in the first few months of each year.

Rural communities have for thousands of years been gathering this fruit for home consumption in season, and even making a local brew from it.

There is a strong suspicion that as settled pastoral and farming communities arose, people deliberately expanded the range of the tree by planting seeds near their settled communities, in the reasonable expectation that they would have fruit available in a few years.

But commercial exploitation has been minimal. You can find the odd bucket of fruit for sale on roadsides, and some city vendors will sell the odd cupful, but most of the harvest rots on the ground. Rodents like the seeds.

The National Biotechnology Authority has obviously been

struck by the wasted resource and has done a lot of research. This has seen the pilot processing plant, now almost finished, being built in Rutenga.

But the initial research and the development or adaptation of industrial-scale processing methods is sufficiently advanced that a private Indian company, Parrogate, is sufficiently impressed to have started building its own factory next door.

Now doubt the commercial investor chose that site since it has the research work being done on tap, as it were, and can access results, and have any problems that might arise solved, very quickly and easily.

That sort of interactive relationship between scientists, engineers and business is some-

thing the parent ministry has been expanded to achieve.

Already this year's harvest is being bought. The marula harvest is easy to gather. When the fruits are mature they fall off the branches, but are still green and unripe needing to ripen on the ground in the wild or in more protected places when humans intervene.

This means that anyone with an hour or two to spare and a basket or a bucket can gather the crop in the season. No one has to do anything athletic at the end of a ladder or climb trees.

Once there is a commercial market nearby, then obviously many rural families are happy to extend their gathering, and this is already happening in the Rutenga area with the pilot plant buying and ripening the fruit.

That is already pumping money into some very poor households. And now industrial jobs, in the area, are being created.

Research workers reckon there are a wide variety of products that can be made from the fruit and from the seed, including some fairly valuable oils from the seed.

The basic idea, as with all seasonal crops, is to do the initial processing when the crop is available and then spend the rest of the year doing the more advanced processing.

One interesting possibility is developing mukumbi, the traditional brew most communities make and drink in the season, the drinking done within days of brewing.

Technically it is a wine, rather than a brew, but no one has ever done much experimentation to see if modern wine-making technologies and specialist yeasts, maturation and bottling will produce a quality product.

Presumably the National Biotechnology Authority has been thinking about this. And it is worth

the effort, since markets are always on the lookout for something new, and high value products can be developed.

Rum started off as a way of using the waste from sugar refining in the West Indies, was a cheap plonk for workers and sailors but now is a fancy product marketed around the world.

Tequila was originally a local peasant brew in a very poor part of Mexico, until some smart Mexican business people reckoned there was a market for a quality version. And perhaps the ultimate was the experimentation done on the thin, sour and cheap wines made from the only grape varieties that would grow on the chalky soils of north-eastern France.

That systematic experimentation, done so legend has it by the only educated people in the area, the monks, created the double fermentation processes that now produce champagne, named after what was once a poor region.

All three drinks were developed by applied technical research on what was thought to be an unpromising raw material.

Should the Rutenga factories work well, and there is no reason to think that they will not, obviously other areas can come into the new industry.

Most people involved, the gatherers, will not be full-time, but every addition to household income, especially when no equipment or inputs are needed, makes farming households richer and more secure and most families could use a bit of cash at the start of the school year before the main field crops are harvested and sold.

The National Biotechnology Authority has clearly been doing its job and it is this sort of application of science and technology to local resources that will, step-by-step, push Zimbabwe forward.

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

Allianz completes acquisition of majority stake in Jubilee General Insurance, Kenya

ALLIANZ, one of the world's leading insurers and asset managers has become the majority shareholder in Jubilee General Insurance Limited in Kenya.

This follows the acquisition of a 66percent stake in the company, representing 1,522,622 ordinary shares, from Jubilee Holdings Limited (JHL), East Africa's largest insurance group who are retaining a 34 percent shareholding in the company.

The acquisition follows the execution of an agreement signed on September 29, 2020, whereby Allianz agreed to acquire the majority shareholding in the short-term general (property and casualty) insurance business operations of JHL in five countries in Africa, namely, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Mauritius.

Following this acquisition, Jubilee General Insurance Limited in Kenya is now a company of the Allianz Group and upon completion of corporate filings will operate as "Jubilee Allianz General Insurance Limited".

The transaction is Allianz's second direct investment in the country, after establishing Allianz Insurance Company of Kenya Limited as a green field operation in 2014. "Alone and together with the recent acquisitions in leading African markets of Nigeria and Morocco, this transaction is a reflection of Allianz's long-term commitment to Africa and fits with our ambition to gain leadership positions in key markets in the continent", stated Coenraad Vrolijk, Allianz Africa Regional CEO.

The two companies of Allianz in Kenya, Allianz Insurance Company of Kenya Limited and Jubilee Allianz Insurance Limited will continue to operate separately until their operations are consolidated into Jubilee Allianz General Insurance Limited, which is subject to regulatory approval.

"All contracts issued by the two companies remain valid and we will continue to honor our commitments and deliver the quality of service that Allianz is known for globally," commented Nandini Wilcke, the Regional Head of Mergers & Acquisitions for Allianz Africa. "This transaction gives us a bigger platform to offer Allianz's wide range of insurance products, from simple digital products to flexible corporate solutions," added Coenraad Vrolijk.

Nizar Juma, Chairman of JHL stated: "We



Allianz regional CEO, Coenraad Vrolijk (L), shares a light moment with German ambassador to Kenya, Somalia, Seychelles and UN in Nairobi, Annett Gunther (C) and chairman of Jubilee Holdings Ltd, Nizar Juma (R) at the official announcement of the Allianz - Jubilee partnership in Nairobi on Tuesday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

are pleased to embark on the first step of our strategic partnership with Allianz, which will support Jubilee's ambition to increase insurance awareness and accessibility across East Africa by providing

innovative, affordable and technically advanced property and casualty insurance products to consumers across the region."

This is a historic development for the Jubilee Group and through this partnership,

Jubilee and Allianz aim to jointly expand and broaden insurance markets across East Africa, leveraging Jubilee insurance's deep regional knowledge, extensive networks and brand reputation with the global

expertise and capacity of the Allianz Group. Allianz and JHL will continue to work together to finalize the acquisitions for the businesses in Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi and Mauritius.

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

'Back to school after delivery' policy opens new chapter for early pregnancy victims in Z'bar

A 15-year-old Asha Ali Mohamed dropped out of school two years ago in Magharibi B Unguja District, Zanzibar. She is a Form Two drop-out who at that tender age is already a single mother and has to bear the heavy responsibility of raising her one-year-old child on her own.

She feels shy as everybody seems to point finger at her as the pregnant girl is seen by the community as having made a serious mistake regardless of the circumstances in which she found the situation because even a student who has been raped and becomes pregnant is given the same painful sentence as when she was raped or more.

Like many teenagers, Asha was oblivious to the consequences of engaging in a premarital sexual relationship at such a young age.

"You never think this could happen to you, the only good out of all this is that I have my baby," she says, adding:

"It is true that the law allows me to go back to school to continue with my studies, but I fail because I feel ashamed and hurt when I see society pointing a finger at me to curse me because I am pregnant."

Another thing that bothered her was that even if she decided to go back to school she would not be able to study due to the stress caused by her pregnancy.

She also says the economic situation in her family is poor and therefore she has to struggle outside of school to get something to help her raise her son.

At the moment she ekes a living venturing in petty trade, saying that she has no choice since no one besides her parents is willing to assist her and the father of the child has since been elusive.

Asha is one of many schoolgirls in Zanzibar who get pregnancies at their tender age and their education dreams end in thin air.

Kurthum Yahya Issa is another victim of early pregnancy, but she is one of the few students who were fortunate enough to return to her studies after giving birth and successfully completed her Form Six, and she stated that it was not an easy task even to be able to continue her studies.

She also became pregnant when she was in Form Two and after delivering she managed to go on with her studies.

"I got pregnant when I was raped by a neighbor who has run away and his whereabouts are still unknown, but I thank my parents for comforting me, encouraging me to continue my studies and take responsibility for raising my children," Kurthum recounts.

Registrar at the Institute of Public Administration (IPA), Mshauri Abdullah Khamis, says statistics show that some students who become pregnant while studying are afraid to return due to stigma in society and even schools.

She says that the willingness of the elderly to counsel their children well during pregnancy will



greatly help the victims to return to school so that they can use their talents and achieve their goals.

"It's important for the community to stop stigma and encourage pregnant students to return to school so that the country has a wider scope to find professionals," says Mshauri when presenting an evaluation report about 'Back to School after Delivery' policy which allows girl students to continue with studies after delivery at the education stakeholders' meeting.

According to her, there is a need to educate parents on how they can handle pregnancy-related issues on school children, rather than isolating them or forcing them into early marriages.

"It is also important to look for factors that led them to get pregnant at that tender age so that we come up with strategies that would address the challenge," she says.

Education and Vocational Training minister Simai Mohammed Said urges directors and heads of departments in the ministry to ensure they provide education to the public on the importance of returning to school all victims of early pregnancy soon after birth.

He says it's the responsibility of the officials to spread the awareness to all communities around them, urging members of the public to stop discriminating against pregnant school girls as "they also aim to be patriotic professionals in their country."

"Parents should also do away from facilitating early marriage after these girls get pregnant. They should stop isolating them and instead, be at the forefront of defending their rights so that they would return to school and fulfill their dreams," he says. UNESCO Zanzibar Education and Health Sector Project Officer, Hasina Salum Bukheit, says the Ministry of Education in its policy has provided an opportunity to return to studies for students experiencing various problems, including pregnancy.

Specialist in Maternal and Child Health at Mnamojoja Referral Hospital, Ummukulthum Omar Hamad calls on parents and guardians to protect their children against sexually transmitted diseases at an early age as doing so will also help them to avoid situations that could endanger their health.

She says children engage in sexual activity without realizing the effects they may have, including early pregnancy, side effects during childbirth, and contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/Aids. She emphasized the need for students to be built up psychologically early in school because many students undermine their academic goals by engaging in such activities prematurely.

In the year 2005, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (RGZ) enacted a law called Spinsters and Single Parent Children Protection Act Number 4 of 2005 that allows girls who fall pregnant while in primary and secondary schools to continue with their studies after delivery (MoEVT- Zanzibar, 2014). The law was meant to ensure that both girls and boys have equal rights as well as opportunities to education regardless of their sex, ethnicity and socio-economic status and secondly, that early pregnancy does not strip off girls educational potentials that can be realized.

Police ask 'witch-doctors' in Malawi for help against attacks on 'albinos'

By Gladys Chinga

“This would help to provide more protection to people with albinism.”

In an unprecedented manner, police in the northern tip of Malawi have gone on their bended knees and asked traditional herbalists and witchdoctors to help them in the fight against the incessant attacks on people with albinism.

Chitipa Police Station Officer, Dan Sowden in a desperate attempt to end the ongoing ritual killings and egregious human rights violations of the worst kind instigated specifically against people with albinism in the district and the country as a whole has asked traditional healers to work hand in hand with the police.

Sowden made the call last week during a meeting with herbalists and witchdoctors at Chitipa Boma where he expressed a growing concern and explained that there is a general outcry that herbalists and witchdoctors are suspected to be involved in attacks on people with albinism, hence the need to include them in efforts to end the vice.

He said: “We have established that it could be that those who are involved in the vice are not perhaps the real herbalists or genuine witchdoctors but may be some unscrupulous people with evil motives just posing and impersonating as herbalists and witchdoctors.”

“We know for a fact that both herbalists and witchdoctors exists to help people in a traditional way to solve traditional related problems and not to harm anyone and for that reason, we have therefore resolved that the herbalists and witchdoctors should be ambassadors and in the forefront to provide protection to people with albinism by reporting anyone who approaches them on issues to do with people with albinism.”

The police officer in-charge who is responsible for all security in the district called upon herbalists (and



witchdoctors) in the district to be more organised and get licenses so that people could easily identify and report anyone falsely pretending to be a traditional healer.

President for Northern Region Traditional Healers, Edward Kayange said: “As herbalists, we are ready to work with the police in order to completely eradicate violence and discrimination against people with albinism. “We will make sure that all traditional healers have certificates from one body to avoid confusion amongst ourselves. We will form committees which will be working hand in hand with the police and chiefs to report anyone involved in the malpractice,” he pointed out.

Chairperson for Chitipa District Association of People with Albinism, Mabvuto Lwanga said it was a step in the right direc-

tion for herbalists and witchdoctors alike to be working with the police.

“This is a good development. I am very optimistic that this would help to provide more protection to people with albinism,” said Lwanga.

The law in Malawi, however, does not recognise witchcraft although traditional healers and witchdoctors are allowed to practice their trade.

People with albinism are born with lighter than normal skin, hair and eye colour, making them sensitive to the sun and bright light and in some communities, especially among the African people they are attacked or even killed for their body parts which is erroneously believed to possess magical powers.

Since 2014 more than 200 cases of killings, attacks and other human rights violations

against persons with albinism have been reported in the Southern African landlocked nation.

According to United Nations (UN) human rights experts despite various moves to support people with albinism, the continued attacks demonstrate that the Government needs to redouble its efforts to end the ongoing atrocities.

UN's Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism, Ikponwosa Ero said: “We call on the Government of Malawi to urgently address the root causes of these attacks and to strengthen nationwide campaigns to raise awareness, conduct robust investigations and prosecutions in all cases, increase protection for

victims, and finance and implement all necessary measures.”

Ero is on record having said that some witchcraft practices result in “serious human violations” such as torture, murder, discrimination and exclusion, including banishment from communities.

Maria Jose Torres, UN Resident Coordinator in Malawi says that the UN remains concerned about continued attacks against persons with albinism.

“We call on the government of Malawi to engage an extra gear in the fight against attacks on persons with albinism. We need to do more to ensure that this comes to a complete end.

Habiba Osman, Executive Secretary for Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC) said in an interview with Nyasa Times that the ongoing attacks on persons with albinism is a chilling reminder that Malawi as a country needs to do more to protect people with albinism because they are not safe.

“These attacks on persons with albinism is largely fuelled by a culture of impunity. The government must tighten the noose on anyone suspected to have committed this heinous crime. Persons with albinism like anyone else are protected by the law,” said Osman.

Before being elected president, Malawi leader, Dr. Lazarus Chakwera rode on a wave that if elected, he would make sure that attacks on people with albinism will be put to an end.

“When I become president, anyone found killing, abducting or discriminating against any person with albinism will be dealt severely and face the long arm of the law.”

A recent Amnesty International (AI) report observes that the rate at which cases are concluded in Malawi is slow compared to other crime investigations.

There are approximately about 10,000 persons with albinism in Malawi.

By Dirk Kotze

South African president Cyril Ramaphosa's testimony before a commission investigating state capture and corruption under his predecessor highlights the extent to which his presidency is mired in the mess left by former president Jacob Zuma.

Corruption and abuse of state organs became so widespread on Zuma's watch that it has become equated to the capture of the state.

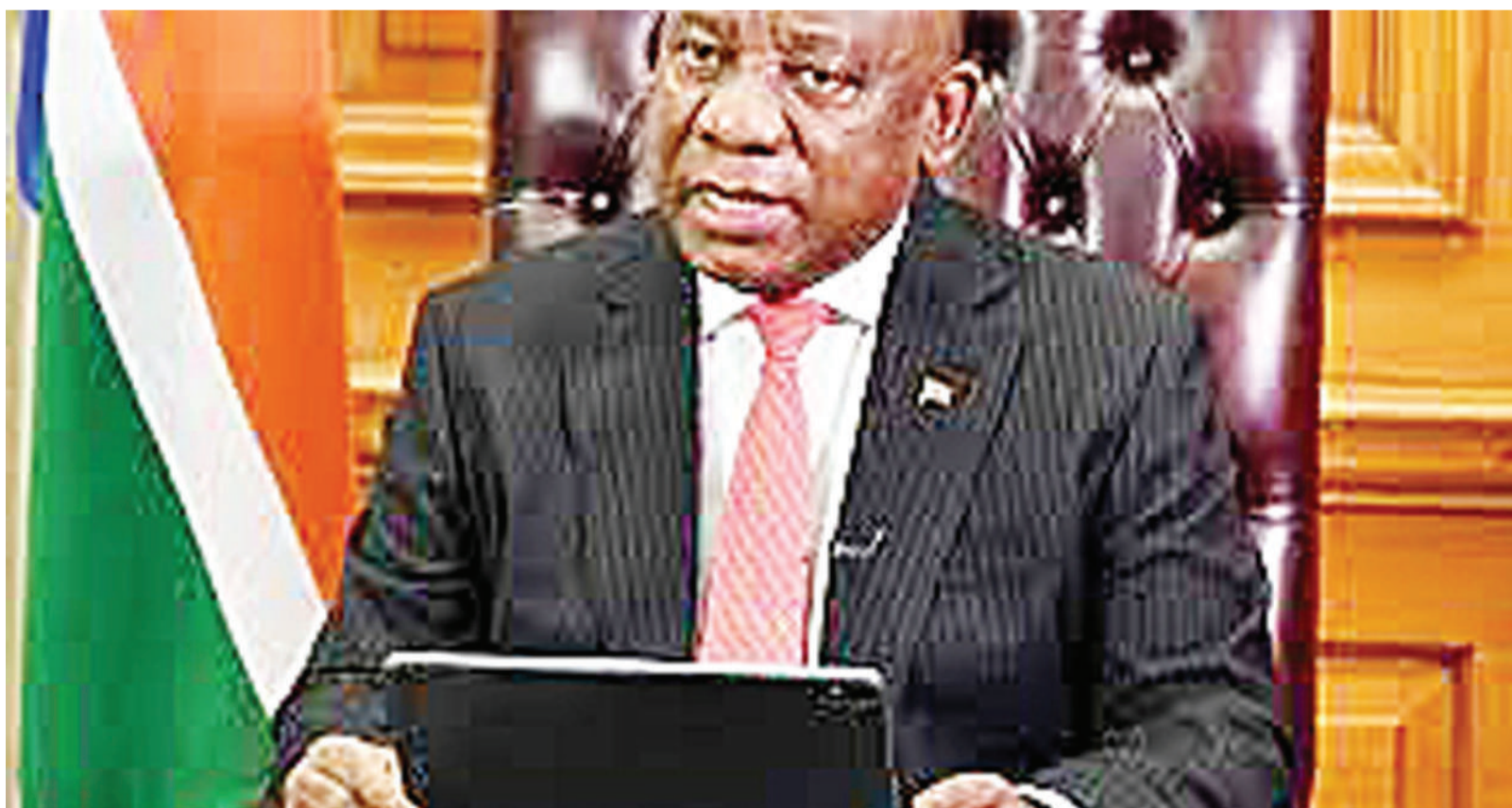
During his presidential term since February 2018, Ramaphosa's main challenge has been to unwind and dislodge the Zuma legacy.

This legacy also includes a polarised governing party, the African National Congress (ANC), which he leads. The party is divided by factional contestations following three national conferences starting in 2007, an economy in decline since 2009 and the ANC's electoral decline since 2006. State institutions and capacity are locked in a downward spiral.

When he became president, Ramaphosa responded to these challenges by calling for a “new dawn”, especially in economic terms. Before 2007 the country's GDP growth rate was about 5%. After the 2008 economic crisis, and at the start of the Zuma years, it declined to 3% and to 1% by 2015.

Recessions and sovereign credit downgradings followed. In response, Ramaphosa concentrated on public infrastructure as a catalyst for foreign direct investments and growth. Social compacts between the private and public sectors and master plans for particular sectors, such as sugar, poultry, steel and the automotive industry, became the means for moving away from a state-centred economic paradigm to a mixed one of private co-responsibility.

Ramaphosa has chosen a path of patience and limiting risks - but is it working?



But the outbreak of COVID-19 delayed most of it.

Though already more than three years into his administration, it is not yet possible to reach final conclusions about Ramaphosa's impact as a president. Unlike most politicians but typical of a negotiator, he has not put his plans on the table for public scrutiny.

A difficult task

The period for which Ramaphosa will find it difficult to account was his term as deputy president to Zuma. The reason is that he deputised at the height of the state cap-

ture era - corruption and the re-purposing of state organs for private gain. Though no claim is made that he benefited from it, he should have been aware of the media exposés.

He saw how the Save South Africa campaign against state capture developed into a public groundswell, and he was part of the parliamentary caucus which did not support no-confidence motions against President Zuma.

Ramaphosa appeared on the Zuma “slate” at the 2012 ANC National Conference as deputy presidential candidate against other party stalwarts Mathews Phosa

and Tokyo Sexwale. He succeeded Kgalema Motlanthe, who, as Zuma's deputy in the first term, is in an equally awkward position to explain his role.

If the Zondo Commission into allegations of state capture is to engage in frank talk, Ramaphosa will have to explain why he and so many others in the ANC did not publicly challenge the state capture practices.

Managing COVID-19

Ramaphosa's agenda has been radically changed by the COVID-19 pandemic, for which no world

leader can claim to have prepared. His economic “new dawn” had to be converted into a reconstruction and recovery plan.

His first term will, therefore, be remembered as a period of crisis management.

While the COVID-19 crisis is ostensibly a health one, the lockdown regulations transformed it into an economic crisis and a public credibility headache. Ramaphosa's leadership in terms of unequivocal and consistent messages to the public was a source of confidence for many. The national leaders of other nations were much more inconsis-

ent with their messages.

But the president could not resolve two complex matters. The first is that his government opted for a formal state of disaster with very strict lockdown regulations, following the example of most other states. The dilemma he could not address was that such a lockdown was only sustainable if the government had the financial means for temporary relief measures. Otherwise, the economy would be harmed.

He also could not resolve differences in approach between him and cabinet ministers, who implemented the regulations in an illogical and draconian manner. The public and opposition parties now blame him for the lockdown's negative impact.

Ramaphosa can claim credit for a more assertive Africa policy, especially as chairperson of the African Union. He took the lead to develop a multilateral, continental COVID-19 response plan which ameliorated the narrow, nationalist politics of many states.

An indirect approach

Ramaphosa is judged by many as weak in dealing with the ANC's divisions and his political opponents. This is a direct result of the fact that he won the leadership of the governing party with a slender majority in 2017. The existence of an equally strong faction opposed to him, and aligned to Zuma, made his position in the party precarious, and limited his options. He could not take the bold actions needed to tackle poor governance, combat corruption and fix the ailing economy.

His approach in the last three years can be summarised as an indirect one which limits his risks and requires patience and tactical moves. But these are not always clear to the public. This means that the test of its success will only be in the eventual outcome.



CRDB, NHIF partner to offer farmers, interest free Afya Premium Loans

By The Banker Reporter

MILLIONS of smallholder farmers in the country who have no medical insurance cover can now heave a sigh of relief after CRDB Bank Plc and National Health Insurance Fund signed an agreement to enable them get interest free Afya Premium Loans.

Announcing their partnership in Dar es Salaam mid this week, CRDB Group CEO and Managing Director, Abdulmajid Nsekela and NHIF Director General, Bernard Konga said the deal will allow both individuals or families with premium payment of between 50,000/- and 76,800 for individuals and 355,200/- for a family of six with two parents.

"The loan size will depend upon premium amount whereby for an adult it will be 76,800/- while a child will pay 50,400/-," Nsekela said while noting that the loan will also be free from any other fees although it will be repaid during harvest when farmers are liquid.

He pointed out that the CRDB and NHIF deal is aimed at supporting government efforts for a universal



CRDB Group CEO and managing director, Abdulmajid Nsekela (R) and NHIF director general, Bernard Konga exchanging contract documents after signing an agreement to offer health insurance coverage to smallholder farmers in the country at an event held in Dar es Salaam this week. Photo courtesy of CRDB.

health coverage which has disenfranchised rural farmers who have no cash to make lamp-size premium payments.

The CRDB chief further noted that farmers can also get a six member family health cover for a year by paying 355,200/- which

will cover four children and two parents. "Our goal is to back state efforts to improve access to quality health services by the public as per President Samia Suluhu Hassan's directives," he added saying the deal will later be extended to other groups of

people.

"We have started with farmers because they constitute the largest and most important group of those who have no health insurance cover," Nsekela noted while emphasising that healthy farmers also mean a

food secure country.

In remarks after the signing ceremony, NHIF's Konga seconded Nsekela's observation that the arrangement will enable millions of smallholder farmers get access to reliable quality health services throughout the year.

"The main objective of this agreement is to ensure that farmers are certain of their health status because of access to treatment when sick during anytime of the year. For NHIF this is an important milestone because we continue to improve the fund's capacity to offer coverage to the wider population," he said.

The NHIF chief urged farmers and their cooperative groups to seize the opportunity and make sure that their families are covered throughout the year so that farming activities should not be disrupted which may expose the country to food insecurity.

MTN Nigeria issues 100 billion naira bond - CFO

ABUJA

MTN Nigeria has issued a 100 billion naira fixed rate bond in the first quarter of 2021, due in seven years, under a 200 billion naira bond programme to refinance existing debt and support network expansion. Yields in Nigeria are at historic lows after the central bank cut rates twice last year to lower borrowing costs for the government, creating opportunities for firms to sell debt at more attractive rates.

According to CFO Modupe Kadri, it issued debt to optimise its funding costs. Kadri said MTN was looking to repatriate \$250m in outstanding dividend to the group and is hopeful of getting substantial amounts through interventions with authorities. He said the company has been funding capex via foreign trade lines. Dollar shortages have plagued Nigeria, which is battling stagflation, frustrating businesses and foreign investors seeking to repatriate funds abroad.

"Our priorities for 2021 remain unchanged, which is to achieve double-digit revenue growth," new chief executive Karl Toriola said. The telcoms firm said on Friday its first-quarter pretax profit rose 33.9% and that it has registered 35 million subscribers, around half of its base, under a Nigerian government directive to tighten SIM registration.

about \$8 250 in the fourth quarter, according to Capital Economics.

Commodity price swings have a significant impact on the cost of living since they can encompass the price of fuels, power, food and construction projects. They also help shape terms of trade, exchange rates and ultimately the politics of commodity-dependent nations like Russia, Brazil and Chile.

"The surge in commodity prices over the past year now guarantees higher goods price inflation this summer," IHS Markit Ltd. said in a report on April 29. "During the next few months, even top-line consumer price inflation in countries such as the United States will rise to rates not seen in nearly ten years."

Commodities jump to highest since 2011 on rebound from virus

NEW YORK

Commodities jumped to their highest in almost a decade as a rebound in the world's largest economies stokes demand for metals, food and energy, while poor weather harms crops and transportation bottlenecks curb supplies.

The Bloomberg Commodity Spot Index, which tracks prices for 23 raw materials, rose 0.8% Tuesday to its highest since 2011. The gauge has climbed more than 70% since reaching a four-year low in March of last year.

With some major economies emerging from the pandemic, metals are rising as manufacturing picks up, and the return of motorists to the roads is boosting energy prices. Meanwhile, crops like corn, wheat and sugar have surged as dryness hurts plants in Brazil, the US and Europe, while China gobbles up supplies. Hedge funds have been raising their bullish wagers on commodities, signalling a renewed inflationary bet.

The soaring cost of raw materials are raising the prices of everything from homes to food to toilet paper and diapers and stoking fears of inflation around the world. US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, a former chair of the



Some of the leading commodities.

Federal Reserve, said in a broadcast interview earlier Tuesday that interest rates may have to rise to ensure the economy doesn't "overheat" – though she later said she wasn't predicting rate increases and didn't anticipate a bout of persistently higher inflation.

"There's definitely optimism for an improving economic outlook

to lead to acceleration of demand," Greg Sharenow, a portfolio manager at Pacific Investment Management Co., said in an interview. The futures curves for several commodities are pointing to tight supplies, he added.

The US and China are recovering fast from the pandemic, stoking demand for more cars, electronics and infrastructure. Ford Motor

Co. expects a \$2.5 billion impact from commodity costs in the last three quarters of the year, coming from steel, aluminum and precious metals.

President Joe Biden's \$2.25 trillion infrastructure package and bets that more aggressive climate pledges will accelerate the proliferation of solar panels, wind

turbines and electric vehicles are also driving gains and raising fears about a metal shortages.

Commodities may jump another 13.5% in six months, with oil reaching \$80 a barrel and copper reaching \$11 000 a ton, Goldman Sachs Group Inc. said April 28 in a report. Crude is expected to see the biggest-ever increase in demand over the next six months as the vaccination rollout boosts mobility, according to Goldman.

But while commodities are hot, it's not necessarily the start of another supercycle – an extended period during which prices are well above their long-term trend. The magnitude of demand growth over the next years shouldn't be the same as when China's rapid industrialization drove the last supercycle in the first decade of the century, and ample spare capacity should keep a lid on energy prices, Oxford Economic's Stephen Hare said in a report in April.

The world will begin to rotate into services from goods as workers go back to offices, reducing demand for metals to make home electronics and kitchen appliances, according to analysts at JPMorgan Chase & Co. Iron-ore, which recently touched a record, could pull back about 20% from current levels by year-end, and copper, which last month topped \$10,000 a metric ton, will drop to

Ghana's SEC labels crypto transactions illegal

ACCRA

Ghana's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) recently warned people to avoid cryptocurrency transactions of any form. In the warning, the regulator reiterated that "cryptocurrencies are illegal in the country and are not regulated by the commission hence Ghanaians should stay away from them."

In remarks made during an interview, Paul Ababio, the Deputy Director-General of the (SEC) asserts that "there are risks associated with cryptocurrencies and people have lost funds to such transactions." However, despite issuing the warning, Ababio does hint that his organization might eventually decide to regulate the

crypto space.

Bank of Ghana does not treat it as a form of payment, it is not a legal tender but we will be engaging further to come out with frameworks. However, until that happens, the regulator urges Ghanaians to "desist from participating (in cryptocurrency transactions)."

In the meantime, Ababio reveals that "the commission is forming a fintech round table as part of its master plan to look into some of these innovations and the approach to take." However, he cautions that this is still a work in progress.

A number of countries in Africa are leading the race when it comes to the global adoption of crypto assets. Aside from places like Nigeria and South Africa, Ghana is one of

the top countries in Africa with rising peer-to-peer crypto trade volumes.

Ghana's government has noticed the adoption and the SEC has witnessed ostensible stories of citizens losing funds. The SEC official also took time to explain why the regulator has undertaken to study cryptos further. He said:

"There are clear risks to the nature of it. People have lost their keys and they can no longer access their funds so it is something that we are studying." While Ababio has promised "some action on that front", he still fails to give the exact timeframe within which "the commission is expected to come out with a final decision on the matter."



Paul Ababio, Ghana's Deputy Director-General of the SEC.

CEOrt chief applauds govt's move to embrace ICT drive

By The Banker Reporter

THE government's decision to highlight Information Communication Technology as a vital tool for development in its Five Year Development Plan covering 2020/21 to 2025/26 aligns well with the private sector's priorities.

CEO Round-table Chairman, Sanjay Rughani said in Dar es Salaam this week during a monthly members' engagement via Zoom webinar which was also attended by ICT Minister, Dr Faustine Ndugulile, that the government's commitment to work with the forum to revolutionize the industry in the country is encouraging.

"I believe in the government's commitment to fast-track the ICT sector in our country because we have just seen this following the establishment of this new Ministry under Minister Faustine Ndugulile," Rughani said.

He pointed out that CEOrt members are certain that with establishment of the new ICT Ministry, the journey towards a digital world in business will be accelerated. "The internet has become a basic need for the growth of our economy. In the banking sector, we want to increase the customer base from the 10 percent that we are now covering. The Telecommunications sector is ahead of us by 70 percent, we can't afford to be far from it," Rughani



CEO Round-table Chairman, Sanjay Rughani speaking at a past event. File photo.

who is also Standard Chartered Bank Tanzania Limited's CEO, argued. "Therefore, we must work hand in hand with the government, key stakeholders and the people to fully grow the digital banking sector. Kazi lazima iendelee," he added.

Speaking during the conference, Dr Ndugulile explained how significant is the development of the ICT industry to the country's economic growth. He reiterated government's commitment under President Mama Samia Suluhu Hassan, to invest in ICT infrastructure.

"We understand the significance

of the private sector in our country hence we will continue to collaborate with the CEO Round-table to catalyze the implementation of technological advancements in the country," he noted.

Dr Ndugulile stated that connectivity is a right of everyone and therefore, the government will work with the private sector to increase investments in infrastructure but also manpower training and equipment purchasing.

"My Ministry will lobby relentlessly to eliminate oppressive legislation, taxes and other regulations in this

sector, plus reshuffling my Ministry's departments and its institutions to resemble our shared commitment," he pledged while noting that ICT growth is critical to rapid growth of gross domestic product.

Founded in 2000, the CEOrt of Tanzania is a policy dialogue forum bringing together over 150 chief executives of leading companies in Tanzania. The CEOrt fosters close cooperation between the public and private sectors with the view of accelerating expansion and growth of the economy in a sustainable manner.

SA's trade surplus grows to R52.77bn in March

PRETORIA

South Africa recorded its largest trade surplus on record in March, data showed on Friday, with sales of commodities and minerals rising sharply as global demand driven by the economic recovery from the coronavirus continued.

South Africa's trade surplus widened to R52.77bn rand in March from a revised surplus of R31.22bn in February, the South African Revenue Service said. The surplus was the widest on record, topping the record seen in June last year and well above a market forecast of R25bn.

Exports increased by 28.9% on a month-on-month basis to R168.29bn, while imports rose 16.3% to R115.52bn, the revenue Service said. Sales in the precious metals and stones category climbed 41% in the month, followed by a 22% jump in mineral exports and 32% increase in vehicle exports.

Some analysts are predicting that the current boom in commodity prices may be the beginning of a commodities supercycle, like the one seen in the early 2000s, driven by the release of pent-up demand, especially from China.

Global gold, platinum and copper prices have hit record highs in 2021. The first two are among South Africa's chief exports. "South Africa now surprises with what may be the most positive trade print versus consensus in the history of this series," said Razia Khan, chief Africa economist at Standard Chartered Bank.

"It would be wrong to attribute this to a weak economy. Given our expectations of firm PGM prices, the good news is likely here to stay. This should provide significant support to the rand," Khan said. The rally in global commodity prices saw South Africa collect more tax revenue than expected, easing pressure on an economy that was in recession before Covid-19 struck, and in 2020 suffered its biggest slump in a century.

NEWSINDEPTH

FCC seeking stakeholders' views on KCB acquisition of BancABC

BY FRANCIS KAJUBI

STAKEHOLDERS' views on the proposed acquisition of Africa Banking Corporation (BancABC) by Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) are being solicited by Fair Competitions Commission before endorsing the deal.

In a public notice published in the local media since last week, FCC said on November 25th 2020, KCB Group Plc entered into share purchase agreement with BancABC Tanzania whereby the Kenyan bank intends to acquire all shares in the latter.

FCC stated that pursuant to rules 35-42 of the competition rules of 2018, it has begun a review and investigation of the intended

acquisition with a view to examine if it will likely harm competition.

"Pursuant to rule 49 read together with rule 41(6) of the competition rules 2018, parties both legal and natural who deem themselves as having sufficient interest in this merger, or, if the merger is not objected to, it will have or is likely to have a material effect on their interest, are invited to submit their interests, objections or information," the FCC public notice said.

The commission said BancABC Tanzania is a private limited liability company incorporated on Mainland Tanzania but also licensed by Bank of Tanzania to undertake commercial banking business. "The petitioners are hereby notified to

submit their petitions with a view to assist the commission in reaching a just and reasonable decision with regard to the intended merger," the FCC notice added.

The public notice further asserted that all such petitioners, shall notify the commission by way of written submissions within 14 days since last week. Submission of the said petition should be accompanied by a duly filled FCC form.

The acquiring firm, KCB Group Plc, is the holding company of several banking and other financial services subsidiaries established in East African Community. In Tanzania, the acquiring firm is active through wholly owned subsidiary, KCB Bank Tanzania Limited.



FCC Director General, Dr John Mduma.

Treasury brings back 20pc tax on betting

NAIROBI

The Treasury is seeking to reintroduce excise duty on betting at a rate of 20 percent of the amount staked, a move that could see punters contribute billions of shillings to the exchequer annually.

The tax was introduced in 2019 but was removed in July last year through amendments to the Finance Act 2020 following lobbying by betting firms. Treasury Cabinet Secretary Ukur Yatani initially vowed to bring back the tax within six months. "Excise duty on betting shall be twenty percent of the amount wagered or staked," says the Finance Bill 2021.

If enacted into law, the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) will take Sh20 out of every Sh100 wagered regardless of whether the punter wins or loses. It will expand the list of taxes levied on the betting industry and punters.

Betting firms are currently required to withhold 20 percent of winnings and remit the same to the taxman. This means that if one wins Sh10,000, he or she will receive Sh8,000 as the KRA takes Sh2,000. The betting companies themselves are taxed on the gross gaming revenue - turnover minus winnings paid out - at a rate of 15 percent. They also pay corporate tax on profits at a rate of 30 percent.

The reintroduction of the excise tax is set to erode the firms' revenues and hurt their firms' profitability. With a smaller revenue base from which to pay the turnover tax and

deduct other expenses like technology and payroll, betting firms' earnings look set to take a major hit.

The excise tax reinforces the government's view that the betting industry has harmed a major part of the population, especially the youth, and must be tamed through taxation and other regulations. "Following various consultations and in line with the government's commitment on mitigating against the social vices associated with betting activities, the National Treasury and Planning will be proposing to the National Assembly, the reintroduction of the excise duty on betting within the next six months," Mr Yatani said in a statement on July 2, 2020 following the removal of the levy.

The scale of betting craze came to light last year when Pevans East Africa - which operated under the popular SportPesa brand - disclosed that it recorded revenues of Sh150 billion in 2018 alone. This indicates that the excise tax alone could earn the KRA a conservative Sh30 billion annually. The taxman could rake in more than Sh40 billion annually from all the taxes levied on punters and betting firms. Pevans ceased operations in October 2019 following the KRA's demand that it pays tax amounting to Sh15 billion. The taxman has adjusted the figure to a staggering Sh95 billion.

The SportPesa brand was, however, brought back in October last year under a new company called Milestone Games Limited. The owners of Milestone, including Ronald Karauri, controversially made moves to transfer the SportPesa brand from Pevans



Treasury Cabinet Secretary, Ukur Yatani.

where they also hold shares. The transfer of the brand was not authorised by the board of Pevans, according to Paul Ndung'u who owns a 17 percent shareholding and claims he was left out of the transaction.

It is not clear whether Milestone's financial performance has matched

or exceeded that of Pevans. Milestone has, however, faced many challenges, including battles with the Betting Control and Licensing Board (BCLB) and Airtel Kenya, which has refused to assign it short codes and paybill numbers.

Sports betting is popular among the youth, some of whom

fund their addiction by taking loans from banks and digital lenders. There have also been reports of punters committing suicide after losing all their money. Churches have been at the forefront of lobbying the government to rein in the betting craze.

It remains to be seen whether

Parliament will allow Mr Yatani to reintroduce the excise tax, with betting firms once again expected to lobby lawmakers to defeat the proposed amendment. The Executive, which has had its way on even more controversial tax hikes, was blindsided by the removal of the excise tax on betting last year.

Infinity, Letshego Bank launch venture on mortgage financing

By The Banker Reporter

LETSHEGO Bank Tanzania has ventured into mortgage financing business thanks to an agreement reached with Infinity Real Estate Dodoma this week.

Under the agreement, Letshego Bank will be providing financing to customers in the country who do business with Infinity Real Estate Dodoma in buying through cash and instalment. The deal means that thousands of customers who need to buy or acquire property can now do so at affordable rates through mortgage funding.

Speaking during the launch in Dodoma this week, Infinity Real Estate Business Development Manager, Lulu Nzalalila said the agreement will ensure more customers access professional services offered by her company on how to acquire property.

"Most people think that professional services from a real estate company like ours are expensive but this is not the case, this new development will cater for different clients with different income levels who will be advised accordingly when they apply for the funding," Nzalalila said during the signing ceremony that was done by the real estate company's Managing Director, Tumaini Mtei and the Letshego Bank's Commercial Director, Dr Goodluck Meena.



Letshego Bank's commercial director, Dr Godluck Meena (L) and Infinity Real Estate Dodoma's managing director, Tumaini Mtei exchanging documents after signing a joint venture agreement which will enable customers to get mortgage loan. The event was held in Dodoma mid this week. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

She said among other things, projects to be financed by the bank include; construction of a new house, finishing and renovation of existing houses. "A lot of people have land but they lack finances to develop and put up something, through this agreement, we will offer different packages that will cut across different income levels," Nzalalila added.

She further added that the repayment arrangement will also be fair to customers so that as many

people as possible own homes and property. The Infinity Real Estate Dodoma's Business Development Manager noted that the agreement will ensure that customers access different solutions like building materials that are pocket friendly.

"We want to complement government efforts in ensuring that most Tanzanians own property as this will help them get more income and also become creditworthy to financial institutions," she explained while

urging Tanzanians to embrace professionals in acquiring and erecting residential houses and commercial complexes.

Speaking at the event, Letshego Bank's Business Development Manager, Ruth Mpangala said they are delighted to be in the joint venture agreement with Infinity Real Estate Dodoma and urged the public to take advantage of the agreement and get financing for their projects.

"This is a great initiative and as Letshego Bank, we will ensure that our clients get the best services by ensuring that the repayment arrangements will be favourable across all income levels consumers," Mpangala said adding that being the new capital, Dodoma's residents should seize the opportunity.

She said one of the main conditions to get the loans is that one should have a reliable source of income in order to be able to service the loans which come in different amounts as per the borrower's ability to repay.

"We have different levels of loans and repayment schedules to meet any customer needs," she added while noting that qualifying clients must be associated with Infinity Real Estate. Infinity Real Estate Dodoma has been in existence for almost three years now and has more than 300 beneficiaries so far.

Six major issues in central bank report that MPs want addressed

KIGALI

Members of Parliament have highlighted the major issues that need attention in order to support the rebound of the economy from the coronavirus challenges.

The issues were highlighted during Plenary Sitting of the Chamber of Deputies held virtually on Tuesday, May 4. The session was convened to adopt the assessment of the 2019/2020 National Bank of Rwanda report by the Standing Committee on Economy and Trade. Here are six of the issues:

According to MP Théogène Munyangayo, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economy and Trade, in line with their Central Bank's report analysis, insurance premiums continue to rise, mainly for fire and motor insurance.

Munyangayo recommended that the central bank, the insurance sector regulator, as well as the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, should give a guideline

on premiums. "The focus should be put on increasing the insurance categories [and number of policy holders] instead of raising the fees," he said.

Low levels of loans that go to agriculture and livestock Although agriculture is one of the most important sectors to contributed 25 per cent to the country's Gross Economic Product in 2019/2020, it has been observed that it receives limited funding from financial institutions, thus hurting its productivity.

He said that the agriculture sector grew by two per cent in 2019/2020, which is lower than 4.4 per cent in the previous financial year. Yet, the fourth Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA4) - which runs from 2018 to 2024 targets an annual average growth rate of 10 per cent annually. "The low agriculture and livestock productivity is attributed to farming that is highly reliant on rain-fed agriculture and low investment to the sector."

High cost of energy to

run agricultural activities

Munyangayo added that there is an issue of high cost of electricity used to power agricultural activities such as irrigation. "The electricity tariff for irrigation projects is high, at Rwf126 a kilowatt, compared to Rwf94 per a kilowatt charged on power use in large factories," he said.

This is one of the factors that increase the cost of production and food prices. MPs requested the Ministry of Infrastructure to review the prices for energy used to power agriculture and livestock projects, especially irrigation.

Some 27 million coffee trees are too old, need replacement

Another issue in the agriculture sector, Munyangayo said, is that 27 million of 99 million coffee trees in Rwanda are old - they were planted over 30 years ago. This, he said, affects the productivity of this cash crop.

Coffee trees are classified as old when they are at least 30 years old. The Plenary session requested the Ministry of Agriculture



MP Théogène Munyangayo, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economy and Trade.

and Animal Resources to indicate the sustainable roadmap to replace old coffee plantations.

The MPs also due to the Covid-19 pandemic effects, there were signs that some of the borrowers will not be able to repay loans they got from banks and other financial institutions. The 2020 FinScope report, Munyangayo said, indicated that about 33 per cent of the borrower were distressed.

"Through the assessment, the Committee learnt that most of them (borrowers) were still working with their creditors so that they restructure their loan agreement such as through extending the repayment period," he observed, adding that others will be helped through the Covid-19 economic recovery fund that the Government set up.

Many businesses are unable to access Covid-19 recovery fund

BANKING & FINANCE

MP Munyangayo said though the Government established the Covid-19 recovery fund, in which it had invested Rwf100 billion, Rwf73.5 billion had already been used until June 2020. This means that Rwf26.5 billion had not yet been used. That issue, he said, was caused by the fact that some businesspeople did not meet the set criteria to be eligible for the financing.

However, Munyangayo said,

there are business businesses that said that the criteria is strict, which prevented them from accessing the funding, citing those involved in vegetable and fruits, as well as public transport. The Committee found out that the responsible institutions should work with the private sector to review the criteria to access the Covid-19 economic recovery Fund.

African sovereign wealth funds double down on governance to power growth and prosperity

JOHANNESBURG

A new study covering 11 African countries shows that most have a sovereign wealth fund or are in the process of establishing one, and are seeking to attract private capital from international investors to meet the continent's unique set of challenges: a shortage of domestic and international investment, a widespread lack of trust in institutions, and huge economic development needs.

The report, by the International Forum of Sovereign Wealth Funds (IFSWF) and Franklin Templeton, identifies three key challenges to which Africa's sovereign wealth funds are taking a similar approach:

Governance

For Africa's sovereign wealth funds, robust, independent governance is key to attracting private capital. If they are going to attract co-investors, it is essential that international private investors see these funds as peers with aligned interests. Similarly, independence and transparency are essential to building public trust, particularly where the perception of government institutions is largely unfavourable.

For African sovereign wealth funds ensuring that they have a material, and measurable, impact on the lives of their people builds legitimacy at home, an imperative made more important by the Covid-19 pandemic. To attract large international investors, Africa's sovereign wealth funds are seeking to collaborate to create projects at a financial and social scale that will have a significant impact on the lives of their citizens.

Environment

Rather than adopting the widely accepted approach to implementing environmental, social and governance frameworks, many African sovereign wealth funds are focusing on solving the problems caused by climate change, such as food and energy security, which can drive conflict and ill-health. This approach enables them to have a direct bearing on the everyday lives of their people.

"Africa has become a focus for the planning and creation of new state-owned investors. But these funds are distinct from the resource-rich funds that made up the early wave of their peers. This research shines a much-needed light on a new and innovative sovereign wealth fund model in Africa, which we hope will assist the funds' collaboration and help their potential co-investors understand them better," says Duncan Bonfield, IFSWF chief executive.

"The current global macro environment poses challenges for global asset owners, especially Africa's sovereign wealth funds, which are a distinctive group of state-owned investors. They continue to evolve to address the continent's unique set of challenges and remain focused on attracting capital into their respective domestic economies," Sandeep Singh, regional head of central & eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa and head - Islamic business at Franklin Templeton.

Crypto mania sends Dogecoin soaring, crashes Robinhood token trading

NEW YORK

Animal spirits are alive and well in the cryptocurrency world, with the frenzy sending Dogecoin surging more than 50% again and crashing Robinhood's trading app.

Other so-called altcoins also took off, with Dash spiking 35% over a 24-hour period through midday in Asia Wednesday and Ethereum Classic rising almost 50%. In the world of DeFi, tokens such as Force DAO and Tierion surged more than 1 000% on Tuesday, according to CoinMarketCap.com data. Meanwhile, Robinhood said it resolved earlier issues with crypto trading on its platform.

"You have money looking for a home and this is one of those areas of the market where there is speculation happening, there is significant appreciation happen-

ing in a short period of time," said Chad Oviatt, director of investment management at Huntington Private Bank. "You get that excitement there."

The rallies defied easy explanation and continued a trend that's seen the value of all digital tokens surge past \$2.3 trillion. Doge, created as a joke in 2013, has been used in marketing gimmicks - the latest by the Oakland A's baseball team, which offered two seats to games this week for 100 Dogecoin. The Gemini crypto exchange backed by Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss said it now supports Doge, and will soon enable trading of it.

Dogecoin's red-hot advance from around 0.002 cents a year ago - when it was worth about \$300 million - has captured the



Rising Dogecoin cryptocurrency.

interest of many on Wall Street. It's even caught the attention of the Federal Reserve - the central bank's chairman last week answered "some of the asset prices are high" when asked if things like

GameStop Corp.'s and Dogecoin's supercharged rallies created threats to financial stability.

As a sign of Dogecoin's rising popularity, the Robinhood app is among the top 10 downloads at the Apple App Store. Meanwhile, Coinbase Global, the largest US crypto exchange - which doesn't offer Doge trading - saw its shares fall 4.6% Tuesday, its lowest close since its market debut last month. "It's pretty amazing that something that started out as a joke has become so popular," said Matt Maley, chief market strategist for Miller Tabak + Co.

Though interest in digital assets has picked up in recent months as more traditional firms who were long hesitant to the crypto space warm up to cryptocurrencies, it's alternative coins that have

captured the most attention in recent days. Bitcoin has taken a backseat following record-setting rallies from Ether and Doge, wrote Edward Moya, senior market analyst at Oanda.

"The Dogecoin bubble should have popped by now, but institutional interest is trying to take advantage of this momentum and that could support another push higher," he said in a note. "Dogecoin is surging because many cryptocurrency traders do not want to miss out on any buzz that stems from Elon Musk's hosting of Saturday Night Live."

Elsewhere, a new Ether ETF trading in Canada called the CI Galaxy Ethereum ETF (ETHX) broke its record volume on Tuesday. It's up more than 20% in the first two days of the week. Bitcoin fell a third

day on Tuesday. It was up 0.2% to \$54 865 as of 12:05 p.m. in Hong Kong on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, many - including famed crypto investor Mike Novogratz - have warned that the rallies could be unsustainable. Novogratz, chief executive officer of Galaxy Digital Holdings, said recently he'd be "very, very worried" were one of his friends to invest in Doge.

"It seems that investors are careening from one hot dot to another, like a pinball game," said Mike Bailey, director of research at FBB Capital Partners. "My sense is this speculative wave will suffer the same fate as the GME and other Robinhood 'flash-in-the-pan' stocks. Cryptocurrencies may have become a new asset class, like precious metals, but surges such as these seem unsustainable."

WORLD

COVID scare at G7 meeting after Indian delegates test positive

LONDON

INDIA'S entire delegation to the Group of Seven summit in London is

self-isolating after two of its members tested positive for COVID-19, the British government said yesterday.

"Two delegates tested positive so the



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken attends a press conference with India's Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar following a bilateral meeting in London on Monday, during the G7 foreign ministers meeting. (PHOTO AFP)

entire delegation is now self-isolating," a British official said.

"The meeting had been enabled by a strict set of COVID protocols, including daily testing of all delegates," the British official said. Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar did not test positive for the virus, Sky News reporter Joe Pike said on Twitter. Jaishankar was pictured meeting British interior minister Priti Patel on Tuesday.

The delegation will be attempting

to meet virtually, Pike added.

The Indian High Commission in London did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Earlier, British vaccines minister Nadhim Zahawi said he was unaware of a report that delegates from G7 countries were self-isolating because of a COVID-19 scare.

India is not a G7 member but was invited by Britain to this week's summit, along with Australia, South Africa and South Korea.

Agencies

Blinken: US not in new cold war with China

WASHINGTON

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has rejected claims that Washington is entering a new cold war with Beijing, days after former veteran diplomat Henry Kissinger warned that failure to resolve US-China tensions may cause that scenario to develop between the two powers.

"I resist putting labels on most relationships, including this one, because it's complex," Blinken said on Tuesday when he was asked if he would describe the current situation in US-China relations as a new cold war.

"And when I look at the relationship, I see adversarial aspects. I see competitive aspects. I see cooperative aspects – all three," he said in an interview with the Financial Times in London, according to transcripts released by the State Department.

Blinken continued to say that whatever the aspect, the US has to be able to engage China from "a position of strength", "actually working with allies and partners",

"leaning in and engaging in the vast array of multilateral and international organizations" and "investing in ourselves".

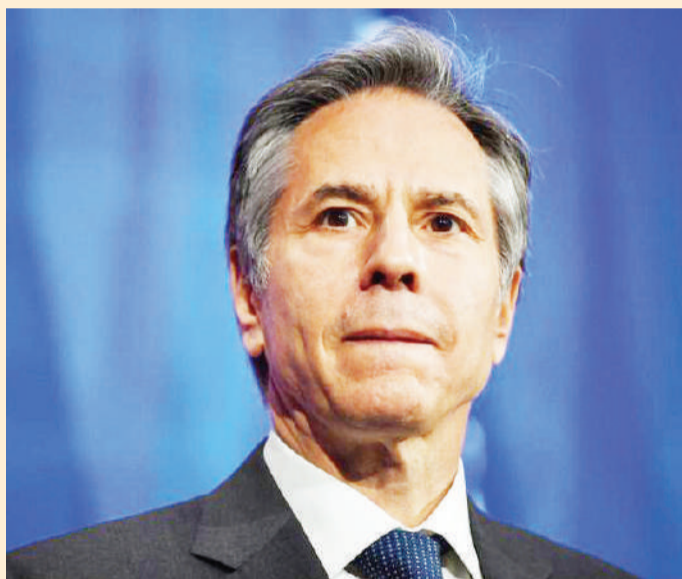
Beijing has rejected Washington's assumption of a "position of strength" in its approach to China.

Speaking to Blinken in their first face-to-face meeting in Alaska on March 18, China's top diplomat Yang Jiechi said, "In front of the Chinese side, the United States does not have the qualification to say that it wants to speak to China from a position of strength."

"The US side was not even qualified to say such things even 20 years or 30 years back, because this is not the way to deal with the Chinese people," Yang said.

Speaking on Tuesday, Blinken also said the US recognized that countries have complicated ties and it would not force them to take sides.

"We're not asking countries to choose. We recognize that countries have complicated relationships, including with China, including economic relationships. And the issue is



not that those need to be cut off or ended," he said.

The relationship between the world's top two economies has plunged to the lowest point over the past few years, and three months into the Biden administration, their relations have yet to improve as President Joe Biden has largely continued many of his predecessor's confrontational policies toward China though he also has sought de-escalation.

Strains with China are "the

biggest problem for America, the biggest problem for the world", said Henry Kissinger, whose secret visit to China half a century ago helped thaw decades of ice between Washington and Beijing and paved the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations.

"Because if we can't solve that, then the risk is that all over the world a kind of cold war will develop between China and the United States," the 97-year-old former US secretary of state said at the

McCain Institute's Sedona Forum on global issues on Friday.

Kissinger said that countries have developed technology that is beyond what anybody imagined even 70 years ago.

"And now, to the nuclear issue is added the high-tech issue, which in the field of artificial intelligence, in its essence is based on the fact that man becomes a partner of machines and that machines can develop their own judgment," he said.

"For the first time in human history, humanity has the capacity to extinguish itself in a finite period of time," Kissinger said.

Kissinger said the US "must be in constant dialogue with China" and make clear what the red lines are, while at the same time negotiate "avoidable conflicts and where possible, cooperative efforts".

"This is the complex task we have. Nobody has yet succeeded doing it completely," he said. "But that is the essence of the relationship, that's the challenge the administration now has."

Xinhua

COVID-19 lockdown rebel wins Madrid regional election

MADRID

MADRID'S conservative regional leader won a landslide re-election on Tuesday, propelled to victory by her refusal to close down bars and shops during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hundreds of flag-waving supporters gathered outside the People's Party (PP) headquarters, chanting "Freedom! Freedom!" as preliminary results showed regional leader Isabel Diaz Ayuso more than doubled her score from a previous election in 2019.

"Freedom" was Ayuso's campaign motto, as she banked on her loose COVID-19 strategy to appeal to voters tired of restrictions imposed to fight the pandemic.

"Freedom has won," PP leader Pablo Casado, beaming, told supporters. Voters "trusted (Ayuso's) handling of the pandemic." "Freedom, always, always," an emotional Ayuso said.

Critics accuse Ayuso (pictured) of neglecting health services while looking after business. But she won the support of many Madrid residents by refusing to close bars and restaurants to help curb the pandemic.

The Madrid region, home to seven million of Spain's 47 million people, recorded 343 COVID-19 cases per 100,000 in the last 14 days on Tuesday against a national average of 213. Occupancy of intensive-care units is the highest in Spain, at 44 percent.



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Far-right support?

Ayuso fell just shy of winning enough seats to rule the region without support from any other party, according to preliminary results with 92 percent of votes accounted for, which showed her obtaining 65 seats, from 30 in 2019. Final results are expected later in the evening.

The PP has controlled the capital region for the past 26 years and the convincing win could give it impetus at a national level. In the national parliament, PP is the second-biggest party after the ruling Socialists.

The far-right Vox party, which went from 12 seats to around 13, according to the preliminary results, said it would back Ayuso in the 136-seat regional assembly.

bly.

"During the next two years our votes will be decisive for everything," regional leader Rocio Monasterio told supporters.

Vox was already backing the outgoing coalition between PP and the centre-right Ciudadanos. Monasterio did not say if she would this time demand that her party be part of the regional government.

Ciudadanos collapsed, winning no seats at all, compared with the 26 it achieved two years ago, according to the preliminary results.

Official results kept trickling in and confirmation of the winner should come in the next few hours.

Agencies

Nearly 20 million more people hit by food crises in 2020

NEARLY 20 million more people faced food crises last year amid armed conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic and weather extremes, and the outlook for this year is again grim, according to a report by the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC).

The humanitarian agency, set up in 2016 by the European Union and United Nations, also warned that acute food insecurity has continued to worsen since 2017, the first year of its annual report into food crises.

"We must do everything we can to end this vicious cycle. There is no place for famine and starvation in the 21st century," said UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres.

He added that conflict and hunger need to be tackled jointly, as they reinforce one another.

Defined as any lack of food that threatens lives, livelihoods or both, acute food insecurity at crisis levels or worse impacted at least 155 million people last year, the highest number in the report's five-year existence.

It warned the situation is not expected to improve this year, driven first and foremost by conflict, but with containment measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic an exacerbating factor.

Two out of three people affected by food crises last year were in Africa, though other parts of the world were not spared, with Yemen, Afghanistan, Syria and Haiti among the 10 worst hit locations last year.

In Burkina Faso, South Sudan and Yemen, 133,000 people were in the most severe or "catastrophe" phase of food insecurity, requiring urgent action to avert widespread death and a total collapse of livelihoods.

"While conflict continues to displace people, disrupt livelihoods and damage economies, the COVID-19 pandemic (has) exacerbated pre-existing drivers of fragility, hitting the most economically vulnerable households particularly hard," the report said.

Agencies

Russian envoy explains Moscow's retaliation against Brussels sanctions

BRUSSELS

RUSSIA'S permanent representative to the European Union, Vladimir Chizhov, has provided explanations to the European Commission and the European External Action Service regarding Moscow's measures taken in retaliation against Brussels' unilateral actions and stressed the importance of improving bilateral relations, as follows from a statement released by Russia's permanent mission at the EU on Monday.

"On Monday, there was a meeting between Russia's permanent representative to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, on the one hand, and Secretary-General of the European External Action Service Stefano Sannino and European Commission's Secretary-General Ylva Johansson, on the other hand," the statement runs.

"Ambassador Vladimir Chizhov provided additional explanations regarding the measures Russia introduced on April 30, 2021 in retaliation against the European Union's unilateral decisions. The importance was stressed of diplomatic actions to straighten out the current unhealthy situation in the dialogue between Moscow and Brussels. The Russian side reaffirmed its readiness for this work," the diplomatic mission said.

The Russian mission said that the current condition of Russia-EU relations was discussed and its participants "expressed regret over the trend towards their worsening that grew stronger lately."

Earlier, the EU's External Action Service issued a statement expressing condemnation and rejection of Russia's actions. Brussels argued that Russia's counter-sanctions against the EU were "entirely groundless" and the cumulative effect of these sanctions, alongside the expulsion of Czech diplomats and measures that Russia had taken against unfriendly states would cause further complications in the EU's relations with Russia.

Earlier, EEAS spokesman Peter Stano said that the EU foreign ministers would discuss relations with Russia in Brussels on May 10. Also, this issue will be on the agenda of the G7 foreign ministers' meeting in London on May 3-5.

On April 30, the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a statement containing a list of citizens of EU member-states prohibited from entering Russia.

Among the eight officials on this list are the European Parliament's President David Sassoli, the EU Commissioner for Values and Transparency Vera Jourova, Berlin's Chief State Prosecutor Jorg Raupach, and head of the laboratory of chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear safety at the Research Institute for Total Defense of Sweden Osa Scott.

Agencies

Lavrov to discuss ways to improve Middle East situation with

MOSCOW

YESTERDAY, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will meet with his Palestinian counterpart Riyad al-Maliki, who earlier arrived to the Russian capital on an official visit.

The Palestinian foreign minister's last visit to Moscow took place in 2019, when he attended the 5th session of the Russian-Arab cooperation forum on the ministerial level. His visit's agenda focused on Israeli-Palestinian settlement.

The Middle Eastern peace process will dominate the upcoming talks as well. According to Russian Foreign Ministry's official spokeswoman, Ma-

ria Zakharova, Lavrov and Maliki will pay special attention to issues of restoring Palestinian unity.

"There will also be a thorough discussion of the prospects for stepping up international efforts to support the Middle East peace process."

The two officials will review in detail efforts being made by the Quartet of international mediators and ways of implementing the Russian proposal for working out the parameters of a ministerial meeting to be held by the four mediators and inviting some Arab countries to take part in its work," she said.

Moscow has repeatedly stressed its readiness to assist the Israeli-Pal-

estianian settlement along with other members of the Quartet, through a direct dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians and on the universally accepted basis of the international law. Among other things, during the January 26 UN Security Council open debates the Russian top diplomat suggested holding a ministerial meeting involving Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia this spring or summer.

In March, Russia confirmed its readiness to act as a mediator in direct talks and suggested Moscow as a possible venue. Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi, who arrived to the Russian capital for talks with

Lavrov in mid-March, told TASS in an interview that his country would definitely consider the possibility, but it depends on the parliamentary election set to be held in Palestine in May.

"At the end of the day, the problem is not about getting us together - the distance between Jerusalem and Ramallah is 10 miles. It's about achieving progress. Our solution is to start changing the existing situation by helping to reinforce trust. This is what we should start with," the minister said.

General elections in Palestine

The general elections in Palestine, which were once again postponed in-

definitely a short while ago, are likely to be discussed by the two ministers.

Palestinian territories haven't had any elections since 2006 even though the presidential and parliamentary mandates have long expired.

The vote was scheduled for the second half of May, but Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas announced on April 30 that it would be postponed until it is guaranteed that East Jerusalem residents can take part.

The Palestinian leader said Israel had refused to allow an election campaign in East Jerusalem, and called upon the international community to put pressure on the Jewish state.

Bilateral ties

Since the start of the year, Moscow and Ramallah stepped up their social and economic cooperation. On January 11, the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) announced that Russia's Sputnik V anti-coronavirus vaccine had been registered by the Ministry of Health of the State of Palestine. The vaccine was registered under the emergency use authorization procedure without additional clinical trials in the country. The first batch was delivered on February 4. However, according to European media reports, the vaccination campaign was postponed due to delayed deliveries.

Agencies

'Megaphone diplomacy' hurts trust

CHINA said on Tuesday that megaphone diplomacy can only undermine mutual trust rather than change reality after Philippine Foreign Minister Teodoro Locsin demanded in an expletive-laced Twitter message that China's vessels get away from Huangyan island.

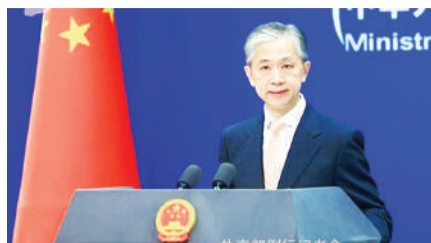
The Philippine Foreign Ministry also issued a statement on Monday protesting the Chinese Coast Guard conducting maritime patrols and training exercises in the vicinity of the island.

Huangyan island is China's territory and its adjacent waters are under China's jurisdiction, Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said in a statement, adding that he hopes that a certain Philippine official will mind basic manners and act in ways that suit his status.

China urged the Philippines to respect its sovereignty and jurisdiction, and stop taking actions that may complicate the situation around Huangyan island and its adjacent waters, Wang said.

In televised remarks on Monday night, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said that "China remains to be our benefactor. Just because we have a conflict with China does not mean to say that we have to be rude and disrespectful."

Locsin on Tuesday apologized to State Councilor and Foreign Minister



Wang Yi regarding his swearing message.

It is a consensus that the differences and disputes between China and the Philippines on some issues should not affect the overall friendship and cooperation, Wang said.

China has always been and will remain committed to properly handling differences and advancing cooperation with the Philippines through friendly consultation, he said.

He added that Beijing will continue to provide assistance within its capacity to Manila in its efforts to fight the epidemic and resume economic development.

So far, China has donated 1 million doses of vaccine to assist the Philippines and exported another 2.5 million doses of vaccine to the country, according to Huang Xilian, Chinese ambassador to the Philippines.

China and the Philippines are neighbors that cannot be moved away, and it is normal for neighbors to have differences, Huang said in an earlier speech. The key is to properly handle differences in a mature and constructive manner, he said.

Agencies

International businesses eyeing China's resilient consumer market

BEIJING

CHINA'S effective containment of the COVID-19 pandemic and progress in vaccination have greatly boosted people's enthusiasm for domestic travel during the May Day holiday lasting from Saturday to Wednesday.

Viewing the travel rush as a clear signal of the country's economic recovery, especially a pick-up in consumers' sentiment, international businesses are shifting to e-commerce to seek fortune in China's online market, given that the coronavirus has brought overseas travel to a standstill.

POST-PANDEMIC COMEBACK

Passenger trips on Chinese railways hit a new single-day high on the first day of the International Workers' Day holiday, with nearly 18.83 million trips recorded, up by 9.2 percent from the 2019 level.

Experts and media outlets have called the travel boom a "definitely encouraging" sign of post-pandemic revival.

Tommy Wu, a lead economist of British thinktank Oxford Economics, said, "domestic travel will likely recover to close to pre-pandemic levels during the Labor Day holiday, which is definitely encouraging."

"That said, should we see a strong positive outturn on consumer spending during the Labor Day holiday, it will be a very encouraging sign that household consumption recovery is probably back on track again," Wu said.

As a "record-breaking wave of Chinese tourists" are hitting the road for a May Day trip, the travel frenzy is "giving China's economy a powerful short-term boost," Reuters said in a recent report.

That is "in stark contrast to the rest of the world where many countries are still struggling to bring the virus under control, let alone open up domestic or even international travel," the report added.



A staff member presents the goods to be sold during a live video stream during the 14th China Shijiazhuang (Zhengding) International Commodities Fair 2021 in Shijiazhuang, north China's Hebei Province, April 30, 2021. (Xinhua)

"Tickets for everything from domestic flights to theme parks are rapidly selling out in China ahead of its Labor Day holiday as the nation's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic gathers pace," the Bloomberg News observed in a report last week.

"China's early success in tackling the pandemic has helped to underpin its economic rebound," it said. "Its ability to contain sporadic outbreaks has given millions of people the confidence to stick to their domestic travel plans."

BRAND-NEW MODES

Though the five-day break offers a fillip for local economies hit by the health crisis, international retailers targeting Chinese tourists are becoming anxiety-ridden, as border restrictions between countries are undoing overseas travel and consequently tourism-related consumption.

Therefore, some of them are shifting to online business to mitigate the impact.

Aumake, an Australian online platform, has developed a social e-commerce marketplace connecting Asian influencers, buyers and sellers

with Australian brands. Due to the challenges of the pandemic, Aumake has, like many forward-looking companies, transferred its focus to online business.

Keong Chan, executive chairman of Aumake, said this shift managed to provide Australian brands with an effective channel to seamlessly promote, sell and deliver products to Chinese consumers via social media influencers.

Among more than 20,000 registered active users on Aumake's platform, 85 percent are from the Chinese mainland. Nowadays, Aumake is partnering with a social e-commerce team based in Hangzhou and converting end-consumers to small influencers as part of its marketing strategy.

Several foreign brands have been active players on online platforms familiar to Chinese consumers.

Speaking at the China Business Summit 2021 held Monday, New Zealand Minister for Trade and Export Growth Damien O'Connor said, "in China, we have seen New Zealand businesses pivoting to e-

commerce channels, as a way of ensuring their products get to their customers."

"In the absence of travel, we have seen a real investment by New Zealand businesses in maintaining their connection to market, through digital platforms, local business partners, or the government teams," O'Connor added.

GLOBAL ECONOMY DRIVER

As China's early recovery is gaining momentum, observers believe that China holds promise for global businesses.

Christina Otte, an expert with Germany Trade & Invest, an economic development agency, said, "sentiment remains good in both manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors, including among German companies in China."

"If the Chinese economy continues to recover, this will also have a positive impact on the German economy, as both economies are closely linked," she told Xinhua.

China has also consolidated its link with the global business community, with the first International Consumer Products Expo to be held on May 7-10 in Haikou, capital of the southern Chinese province of Hainan, attracting more than 1,300 brands from 69 countries and regions.

Xinhua

US births drop to lowest level since 1970s

By Bloomberg

THE years-long US baby drought worsened last year, with births dropping 4 percent from 2019 to the lowest level since 1979.

The provisional data for 2020, at 3.6 million births, marks the sixth annual drop in a row. The decline will likely continue in 2021, when the brunt of the impact from the pandemic will be recorded - with a nine-month delay.

Fears of contracting the virus while pregnant, or while in hospital to give birth, combined with job insecurity and government measures limiting social contact and business activity, dissuaded Americans from having babies, according to surveys by Ovia Health, a women's health technology company.

"There are several factors that go into family planning, and an entire ecosystem of support that enables and empowers parents and parents-to-be," said Paris Wallace, chief executive of Ovia Health. "In 2020, nearly all of those factors were turned on their head, and many of those support systems came crashing down."

Births fell for women in all age groups between 15 and 40 in 2020, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The declines were steeper in states where COVID-19 hit the hardest, such as California and New York. And the exodus from crowded urban centers exacerbated declines in places such as New York City.

Births in Florida surpassed those in New York last year - by just 440. It's still significant given that the differential in favor of New York was about 1,500 and 5,000 in 2019 and 2018, respectively, according to the national CDC data released on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, fewer than 10,000 babies were born in Alaska, Vermont, Washington DC, and Wyoming in 2020 and the number of births fell 3 percent for Hispanic women, 4 percent for both non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black women, and 8 percent for non-Hispanic Asian women, according to the data.

A separate report from the CDC helps assess the impact from people moving out of big metropolitan areas.

The percentage of births to New York City residents that occurred outside of the city increased for all months from March through November, the report found. Non-Hispanic White residents were 2.5 times more likely to give birth outside of the city in April and May 2020 than in the same period a year earlier.

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Venezuela launches clinical trials of Russia's EpiVacCorona jab

RIO DE JANEIRO

VENEZUELA has launched clinical trials of Russia's EpiVacCorona vaccine on Tuesday. Russian Ambassador to Venezuela Sergei Melik-Bagdasarov was the first volunteer to take part in the trials, the diplomat informed TASS.

The vaccination event took place in the presence of Acting Vice President of Venezuela Delcy Rodriguez and Health Minister Carlos Alvarado.

Rodriguez thanked Russia and Russian President Vladimir Putin for allowing Venezuela to hold clinical trials of EpiVacCorona on its territory.

She expressed confidence that this is "a good vaccine" and hoped that Venezuela would be able to use it to inoculate its population.

The acting VP also noted that the approach by Moscow and Beijing when it comes to vaccine supply is different from the position of other large countries in a good way.

"[The approach] of Russia and China differs from the position of some countries that accumulate vaccines for themselves, creating a disbalance in access to vaccines at the global level," she told the Venezuelan de Television TV channel.

For his part, the Russian ambassador expressed his confidence to TASS that the Russian jab would



Russian Ambassador to Venezuela Sergei Melik-Bagdasarov

successfully undergo all clinical trials in Venezuela and would be approved for use in this country.

"I am very glad and honored as Russia's ambassador and as a citizen of my country to take part in the trials of the new Russian anti-coronavirus vaccine EpiVacCorona by [our] Venezuelan partners."

I am confident that after undergoing all the procedures necessary in Venezuela, this Russian vaccine will be registered here, just like Sputnik V was before that," the diplomat stated, not-

ing that Geropharm, the Russian company, which produces the jab, is well known in Venezuela for supplying insulin.

In late March, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro informed that the country had received the first batch of EpiVacCorona for clinical trials. He added that Venezuela plans to purchase the vaccine in the future.

The Venezuelan government plans to inoculate 70% of its population by the end of 2021, using jabs received from Russia,

China and Cuba.

About the Russian vaccine

The EpiVacCorona vaccine developed by the State Research Center of Virology and Biotechnology Vector was handed over to Venezuela in late March during a visit by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov to Venezuela. Venezuela was the first Latin American country to approve the use of Sputnik V and to launch trials of EpiVacCorona.

EpiVacCorona was the second COVID-19 vaccine registered in Russia, on October 14, 2020. Within a month, the developers of the jab got the permit to hold post-registration clinical trials, namely among seniors.

On May 2, the Vector center informed TASS that according to the trials, EpiVacCorona forms antibodies to three coronavirus strains: the traditional one, and the British and the South African ones.

Vector pointed out that the results of the first and second phases of the trials and the post-registration trials, namely among volunteers over 60, offer no reason to doubt the safety of the vaccine or its ability to form antibodies.

Agencies

China being 'coercive,' say so the world's sole superpower

BEIJING

FOREIGN ministers from the Group of Seven richest countries are finally having their first in-person meeting in two years in London, and apparently U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will not miss out on this opportunity to peddle his "China threat" conspiracy.

According to media reports, ministers from those like-minded countries joined a Tuesday morning session dedicated entirely to China, during which, with apparent maneuvering and guidance from the United States, they concluded by accusing China of being "coercive."

Say so the world's sole superpower, together with a

group of allies who are among the world's leading powers.

In fact, besides numerous unquestionable events recorded in history, even the most recent ones have proven the United States is the very one that has been addicted to practicing coercive policies, with a whole range of tools ready to deal with targeted countries, including sanctions, intimidations, stoking unrest and forming inglorious clique.

Over the years, Washington has been sparing no effort to slander China on issues such as Xinjiang and Hong Kong, and grossly interfering in China's internal affairs under the guise of human rights and democracy.

The United States also

waged a trade war and a tech war against China, used long-arm jurisdiction to illegally arrest Chinese citizens, and put unwarranted pressure on Chinese companies in an attempt to cripple the international competitiveness of Chinese companies and obstruct China's development.

The world has also seen how Washington has sought to defame and push Iran, Venezuela, Cuba and other so-called "adversaries" to compromise through maximum pressure. It has unilaterally withdrawn from the Iran nuclear deal, stepped up sanctions on Iran, and choked off Venezuela's crude exports, devastating the country's pillar industry and divesting ordinary people of livelihoods.

Since the start of the new millennium, the United States has invaded Afghanistan and Iraq under the pretext of combating terrorism, and militarily intervened in Libya and Syria on grounds of humanitarianism, resulting in one hellish humanitarian disaster after another.

Further more, bullying, hijacking and other extreme means smack of mafia tactics were applied to force its allies to serve its interests. Half-believing people could consult the bestselling "The American Trap" and find the distressing experience of author Frederic Pierucci most enlightening.

A most recent example shows that during a visit in March to Brussels, Blinken threatened to impose sanc-

tions on German companies building the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, a project Germany and some other European countries want so badly for energy.

Barbara Weitzel, a commentator for German media Deutsche Welle, said European countries have a high political price to pay for maintaining alliance with the United States.

Behind Washington's coercive diplomacy are its illusion of hegemony, addiction to arrogance and egotism, and selfish calculation to maximize its own profits at the expense of global interests. It is bringing detrimental consequences to the world by escalating conflicts between countries and triggering humanitarian cri-

ses.

Alena Douhan, UN special rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, said sanctions are "bringing suffering and death" to countries like Cuba, Iran, Sudan, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen.

Washington's coercive diplomacy is against the trend of the times and doomed to a dismal end. Over the long run, the interests of all countries are highly intertwined in this age of economic globalization.

Washington's efforts to suppress others' progress through fanning tensions will disrupt global industrial and supply chains, and eventually shoot itself in the foot.

Meanwhile, as the world has

been inexorably moving further towards multi-polarity, more countries will broaden their eyesight to a global scale in finding partners, and choose to keep a social distance with the United States. The coercive actions of hijacking others' policy-making will become increasingly unpopular.

"Unipolarity is over, and with it the illusion that other nations would simply take their assigned place in a U.S.-led international order," U.S. political scientist Graham Allison wrote in a Foreign Affairs article. It is time for Washington to wake up to this fact and abandon its coercive approaches in its dealings with other countries.

Xinhua

SPORT

Boxer Kassim to fight Pazi in non-title fight in July



Twaha Kassim

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

TANZANIA'S professional boxers, Twaha Kassim alias 'Kiduku' and Abdallah Pazi 'Dulla Mbabe', are set to go head-to-head for the third time on July 24, this year.

Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa, is expected to be the fight's official guest. The two boxers took the ring for the first time at the Msasani Club in Dar es Salaam, the bout was declared draw.

But in August 2020, Morogoro-based Kassim ended the controversy after beating Pazi by points in a 12-round Super Middleweight bout at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Despite losing the fight Pazi did not come to terms with the results and he made it clear that he is ready for a rematch with Kassim.

The Dar es Salaam pugilist maintained if he loses the fight then he will clearly state that Kassim is better than the former.

Towards the fight in which the winner will be presented with a new Toyota Crown, the government has pledged to co-operate with the bout's organizers to make the eagerly awaited bout a success.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Hassan Abbas, said the government will participate in hosting the fight, when he graced a dinner orga-

nized by Peak Time Sports Agency in Dar es Salaam recently.

The function, which brought together a section of members of the domestic boxing fraternity, geared towards commemorating the former president of the Tanzania Professional Boxing Organization (TPBO) Yassin Abdallah, who passed away in the city on September 7, 2020.

Abbas also urged sponsors to come forward to use the fight to advertise their businesses.

"We are taking charge of this matter, I call on sponsors to come forward to sponsor the fight, given it is an opportunity to not only advertise but also benefit the boxers," he noted.

Peak Time Sports Agency's Director, Selemani Semunyu, said they have already started preparations for the fight.

According to Semunyu, the presence of the Prime Minister will give the fight status and open up more opportunities for domestic boxers, many of whom come from poor families.

However, he said that they are still looking for sponsors for the fight, including sponsors set to hand over the car.

He pointed out they believe the award will motivate boxers, noting they are optimistic the game will benefit boxers.

Didier Gomes' first 100 days as Simba SC coach

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

DIDIER Gomes da Rosa has been in charge of Simba SC for 100 days.

The French coach, who previously coached Al Merreikh of Sudan, replaced Sven Vandenbroeck on January 24 and has since gone on to lead the Msimbazi Street club to thrilling wins over Egypt's Al Ahly and Congolese club, AS Vita Club.

The landmark was reached on Tuesday and the boss has presided over 18 games during that time, winning 14, drawing three and losing one, with 35 goals scored and only eight conceded.

Gomes has also guided Simba SC to the quarter-finals of the 2020/21 CAF Champions League after coming top in a group that had defending champions Al Ahly of Egypt, AS Vita of DR Congo and Sudan's Al Merreikh.

After his first game in charge when the Msimbazi Street outfit swept aside Sudan's Al Hilal 4-1 at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in an international friendly, the Frenchman was naturally delighted with his team's performance but he spoke of his desire to implement a more efficient playing style.

He disclosed: "At halftime I told them football is not a show, in football you need to be very efficient. We had some possibilities to cross and unbalance the opponent. I think we need to be more efficient and to make the last pass or cross before we get into the box."

He stated: "To be more efficient maybe we need to



Didier Gomes Da Rosa

play less. We don't need to play 40 or 30 passes to create an opportunity to score."

He has basically maintained Simba's brand of attacking football with a slight tweak in crucial away games.

The Msimbazi Street squad's faithfuls have taken Gomes to their hearts and already adore the former Ismaily and AC Horoya coach who is familiar with Eastern Africa football having also coached in Rwanda and Ethiopia.

The French coach's future at the club was cast into doubt towards last week when he was linked with the Libya national team job alongside Spain's Javier Clemente, Argentine Hector Cuper, French duo of Sébastien Desabre and Hubert Velud as well as Egyptian legend Hossam Hassan.

However, the Simba SC boss' agent Khaleed Soliman has now come out to quash these speculations, revealing the former

has his heart fully set on the outfit even though he has received numerous proposals.

In an interview with The Guardian newspaper, Soliman shed light on rumours linking his client with the Libyan national squad role.

The Egypt-based agent reiterated that Gomes is fully committed to continue with his contract at Simba.

He disclosed: "There are a lot of rumours surrounding the coach so we need to clarify that Didier Gomes is fully committed with Simba and wants to continue with his contract."

He stated: "We received some proposals from clubs and one federation but we decided that we want to continue with Simba because coach Gomes likes the atmosphere in the club."

He insisted: "He likes the club's officials, starting from the chairman himself, Mohamed Dewji and Ms Barbara and other staff. He loves the

fans and he has good relations with all players."

He stated: "Gomes has big ambitions to win the league and to reach the semi-final of the CAF Champions League, so he is committed to continue with his contract. We rejected all the proposals and offers we received and deny all rumours that Gomes can leave Simba anytime." However, while club stakeholders are satisfied with the progress under his tutelage to date, there is little time for reflection or celebration as he prepares for his biggest tests.

On Saturday, Gomes will take charge of his first Premier League match against rivals, Yanga, popularly known as 'Dar Derby', a game that could decide the league title race.

Next week, he will lead Simba against South Africa's Kaizer Chiefs as the former attempt to reach the CAF Champions League semi-final for the first time since 1974.

CAF increases reserve players' number in inter-club competitions

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

THE Confederation of African Football (CAF) has increased the number of reserve players from seven to nine from the quarterfinal stage of continental tournaments to be played on May 14, 2021.

In addition to the number of players who will enter one match, CAF pointed out the clubs will be notified shortly after the expected amendments have been made by FIFA through IFAB (International Football Association Board) who are responsible for the amendments to the rules and regulations.

The CAF stated in a statement: "The football federations/ football associations have been notified to inform the clubs that will be participating in the upcoming CAF inter-club Competitions for the 2021/22 season."

The clubs, CAF stated, are required to confirm their participation in the CAF Competition Committee through the CMS (Competition Management System) no later than June 30, 2021.

The statement stated: "Registration of final players is July 10 without a fine. The second period is between July 11 and July 20 for a fine of US \$ 250 (USD 250) per player."

The third period is from July 21 to July 31 where Football Associations are not allowed to remove the name of any player but add new ones with a fine if \$ 500 for one player and these will be used in the second round and onwards.

The teams' head coaches must have a CAF License A and or Pro-License, while the assistant coaches must have a CAF License B and so on. This is for all competitions namely CAF Champions League & CAF Confederation Cup.

Meanwhile, the government has said it is aware of the existence of corrupt practices in the game of football that deprive it of revenue.

The Deputy Minister of State for the President's Office for Personnel and Good Governance, Deo Ndejemi, said so in parliament in Dodoma on May 4.

Ndejemi pointed out that the government through the Institute for the Prevention and Combating of Corruption (IPAC) will improve revenue collection in venues' entries in various matches. In a keynote question, Mlalo Constituency's MP (CCM), Rashid Shangazi, questioned how much the government is tackling and controlling corrupt practices in sports.

In his response, Ndejemi said the results of the analysis enabled him to identify and close loopholes in the area and increase revenue.

He cited the fact that in the game played at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam in March 2019, revenue increased to 206m/- for 50,233 people who booked tickets compared to the revenue of 122m/- for 47,499 people who booked tickets for the match played in January 2019 at the stadium.

"Recognizing the importance of the sports industry in the country, in 2016 the PCCB formed a special investigation team to monitor and investigate corruption in sports where three cases have been filed in court and seven allegations are being investigated," he disclosed.

He called on Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) leaders, football administrators and stadiums' owners to allow and co-operate with PCCB to place anti-corruption advertisements in football and other sports disciplines.

Biashara United now rope in new head coach



Biashara United's new head coach, Patrick Odhiambo (L), addresses sports journalist shortly after he was introduced as the side's tactician in Mara recently. Looking on is one of the club's officials. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

MAINLAND Tanzania Premier League side Biashara United have appointed Kenyan, Patrick Odhiambo, as their head coach to replace compatriot Francis Baraza.

The top tier team have been without a coach since Baraza left for another top flight squad Kagera Sugar a couple of weeks ago.

The Mara-based charges opted to go for the tactician, who was serving under Nicholas Muyoti at the Football Kenya Federation (FKF) Premier League side Kakamega Homeboyz, to maintain the tactical consistency initiated by his predecessor.

Odhiambo and Baraza had worked together while at Sony Sugar and chances are high the former might have been recommended by the latter.

"I am happy to have received the opportunity to work with Biashara," Odhiambo said during his unveiling.

He disclosed: "It is a challenge that I have accepted and I am ready to help the team achieve the set objectives."

He pointed out: "I thank the management for trusting me with the job, it shows they know what I am capable of achieving."

Odhiambo has coached Sony Sugar before joining Gor Mahia as the assistant coach under

Steven Polack.

He then left at the beginning of the season for Homeboyz in the same capacity.

Biashara United's chairman Selemani Mataso exuded confidence the CAF B license holder will help the team finish in one of the top four positions.

"We had about 60 coaches who had sent applications for this job but [Odhiambo]'s CV was impressive," the official stated.

He said: "The board felt he is best suited to succeed Baraza who had done a wonderful job before getting another challenge."

He disclosed: "We have set a target of finishing in the top

four by the end of the season, and we are confident Odhiambo will help us achieve it."

"We wanted consistency in tactical approach and youth development in the team and Odhiambo can deliver that. As the management, we are going to accord him all the support he needs to help the club develop."

Biashara are currently placed fourth on the table with 44 points from the 28 matches they have played.

They have 12 wins, eight draws, and as many losses. The team have further scored 24 goals and conceded 23.

They are also in the quarter-finals of this year's Federation Cup.

Villarreal stand in way of Arsenal v Man Utd Europa League showdown

LONDON

ARSENAL's season appeared to be ending with a whimper when they were reduced to 10 men after falling 2-0 behind against Villarreal in last week's first leg of their Europa League semi-final.

Instead, a precious away goal gave them hope they can finish an inconsistent campaign on a high by setting up a showdown in the Polish city of Gdansk against Manchester United.

Arsenal are ninth in the Premier League table and are unlikely to qualify for Europe next year via that route but winning the Europa League would give them a ticket back to the Champions League.

Mikel Arteta's side won the FA Cup last season but have failed to build on that triumph and are on course for a fifth consecutive finish outside the top four in the English top flight.

The Spanish manager spoke last month of his belief that Arsenal -- Champions League regulars under former boss Arsene Wenger -- have a "responsibility" to deliver European football for next season.

Their hopes hung by a thread when Dani Ceballos was sent off with just over half an hour to go in Spain last week after goals from Manu Trigueros and Raul Albiol had put the home side 2-0 up.

But Nicolas Pepe stepped up to score from the penalty spot to make the score 2-1 and give Arsenal genuine hope they can reach a second Europa League final in three years.

Captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang returned to the scoresheet for the first time since early March in Arsenal's 2-0 win against Newcastle on Sunday.

The 31-year-old has recovered after contracting malaria while on international duty with Gabon.

Arteta said that match was the perfect preparation for the Villarreal game on Thursday.

"Yes, because we had a strong and a very convincing performance," he said. "We scored two goals, we kept a clean sheet, won the points, and had some really strong individual performances too."

"The only downside is the one with David (Luiz, who was injured during the game) because we know how important he is to us. I think we lost him today."

Standing in Arsenal's way is their former boss and Europa League specialist Unai Emery, who won the trophy three years in a row from 2014 when he was in charge of Sevilla and also took Arsenal to the 2019 final.

Villarreal, who have never reached the final of the Champions League or Europa League, have put together a promotional video ahead of the clash against Arsenal starring Pau Torres, with the message: "Let's flip the script... It's our time."

- United romp -

While Arsenal and Villarreal fans face a nervy night, Manchester United are virtually assured of a place in the final of a competition they won in 2017 after hammering Roma 6-2 in the first leg.

United were in trouble when they were trailing 2-1 at Old Trafford last week but blitzed the Italians in the second half, with standout performances from Paul Pogba and Edinson Cavani.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said after the game that the job was not yet done but he is on the brink of ending his semi-final hoodoo and reaching a final for the first time as United boss.

The Norwegian will hope there will be no distractions after Sunday's match against Liverpool was postponed following a pitch invasion at Old Trafford as part of a protest against United's owners, the Glazer family.

A first trophy in four years would not magically ease the festering tensions at the club but it would add gloss to a season in which they are likely to finish second in the Premier League.

AFP

Man U owner refuses to apologise over ESL

LONDON

MANCHESTER United owner Avram Glazer has refused to apologise to fans for the club's involvement in the failed breakaway European Super League.

Avram is a member of the American Glazer family who own United. Their ownership has faced protests from fans since they bought a controlling stake in the club in 2005 but these have intensified in recent weeks since the ESL announcement.

"This an opportunity for you -- an apology perhaps?" a reporter said to Glazer, who didn't engage with her. The reporter followed up with questions about whether the family would consider selling the club or if he wanted to say anything to fans but he didn't respond.

United co-chairman Joel Galzer did release a statement on April 21 apologising to fans and said the owners had failed to show respect to the "deep-rooted traditions" of the English game.

"Although the wounds are raw and I understand that it will take time for the scars to heal, I am personally committed to rebuilding trust with our fans and learning from the message you delivered with such conviction," he said.

"We continue to believe that European football needs to become more sustainable throughout the pyramid for the long-term. However, we fully accept that the Super League was not the right way to go about it. (Agencies)

Man City's first-ever UCL final puts them on the verge of 'mission accomplished'

By Mark Ogden, Senior Writer, ESPN FC

IT was the moment that Pep Guardiola knew it was mission (almost) accomplished. As Riyad Mahrez celebrated his and Manchester City's second goal of their Champions League semifinal second-leg victory against Paris Saint-Germain, Guardiola turned away from the pitch, sought out Ferran Soriano in the directors' box and, with his fist clenched, nodded at the club's chief executive.

The two men, who twice enjoyed Champions League glory with Barcelona, were both hired by City's Abu Dhabi owners to replicate their success at Camp Nou in the blue half of Manchester. It has not been plain sailing in this competition during Soriano's nine years at the Etihad and Guardiola's five, but that knowing look from the manager to the CEO said it all -- City are now one step from achieving their ultimate dream of lifting the European Cup following a comfortable 2-0 win (4-1 on aggregate) over an ill-disciplined and outplayed PSG.

For it to be mission accomplished for City, Guardiola, Soriano and, of course, owner Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, they will have to beat Chelsea or Real Madrid in Istanbul next month to win the Champions League for the first time. But City had never gone beyond the semi-finals before -- they lost 1-0 on aggregate against Real Madrid under Manuel Pellegrini in their only previous appearance at this stage in 2016 -- so they have broken new ground by reaching the final.

And for Guardiola, having not reached a Champions League final since 2011, this success ends his own barren run, with only Louis van Gaal and Jupp Heynckes (14 years) bridging a bigger gap between managing in finals in the competition.

"It is for all of us and the club," Guardiola said. "I'm incredibly proud and my first thoughts are with the players who didn't play today."

"They all deserved to play, everyone has made a contribution and now it is time to enjoy it. We have to win the league and we have two or three weeks to prepare for the final."

"We fought together and we're in the final of the Champions League and those are nice words."

"People believe it's easy to arrive in the final of the Champions League. Getting to the final now makes sense of what we have done in the past four or five years."

City's progression to the final will not be met with universal acclaim, however. With the Abu Dhabi regime spending over £1 billion on players since buying the club in 2008, the old accusations of financial doping will be aired once again.

This is a club, of



PSG midfielder Angel Di Maria was sent off in the team's loss to Manchester City. (Agencies)

course, which was initially banned from this season's Champions League by UEFA for breaking Financial Fair Play rules. City successfully overturned the ban on appeal at the Court of Arbitration for Sport, so if they win the competition next month, they will regard it as a double triumph having won off the pitch as well as on it.

But while City's spending and brushes with UEFA are well-documented, they are not the only club to spend fortunes chasing a dream. PSG reached last season's final having taken a similar path to the biggest game in club football, while all the winners of the Champions League since Porto's surprise success in 2004 have done so having invested heavily in their squads.

Nowadays, the only fairytales in the Champions League are the ones that have been paid for.

City have certainly had to take their medicine over the years in this competition, though. In their early assaults on the Champions League, they struggled to get beyond the group stage and when they eventually did, found themselves eliminated two years running in humbling defeats against Barcelona in the Round of 16.

There were also shocking exits to Monaco and Lyon, and failures to overcome Premier League rivals Liverpool and Spurs in momentous quarterfinals. On each of those occasions, Guardiola was rightly criticised for tactical mistakes and controversial selections. The man hired by Sheikh Mansour to deliver the Champions League just seemed unable to reproduce his Barcelona magic.

But this season, it has been a different story, with this victory breaking an English record for consecutive wins in the competition with seven. Manchester United (1965-66), Leeds (1969-70), and Arsenal (2005-06) had previously managed six in a row.

City cruised through a group of Porto, Marseille, and Olympiakos before making easy work of Borussia Monchengladbach in the Round of 16. Borussia Dortmund then

gave City a scare before falling by the wayside in the quarters and then came PSG -- conquerors of reigning champions Bayern Munich in the last round and led by the superstar duo of Neymar and Kylian Mbappe.

But after a difficult first half in Paris in the first leg, City dominated this two-legged tie over the next 135 minutes, notably blowing the French champions away in the second half last week at the Parc des Princes. Mahrez, born on the outskirts of Paris, scored three of City's four goals in the tie and his brace in this game will go down in the club's history as the one which secured a first-ever Champions League final.

The absence of supporters denied City and their supporters the chance to celebrate the achievement properly. But while semifinals tend to be tense and cagey affairs, this one was only unpredictable in terms of the weather, with snow and hail providing an unusual backdrop in early May.

It was also comfortable for City because they were by far the superior team. PSG had no Plan B beyond their toothless sideways passing game, especially without Mbappe, who did not feature due to a calf injury. Even from the early stages, Guardiola's players were able to manage the tie in second gear.

City's back-four was outstanding, summer signing Ruben Dias starring and left-back Oleksandr Zinchenko enjoying his best performance for the club in their biggest game. His run and cross in the build-up to

Mahrez's opening goal set the tone for City's victory. Mahrez's second was at the end of another breakaway, with the Algerian converting Phil Foden's cross from close range, and the 2-0 margin could have been far greater.

But City didn't need to push for more, especially with PSG losing their heads -- their lack of discipline resulting in a red card for Angel Di Maria for kicking out at Fernandinho on 69 minutes. By that stage, the game was in the bag and City could prepare for the final and that occasion, on May 29, is now the only thing that matters to Guardiola and everyone connected to the club.

If the Spaniard can guide City to glory in Istanbul, he will have done everything he was hired to do back in 2016. But it is not job done just yet. Chelsea or Real Madrid will both back themselves to win too, but City are the best team left in the Champions League and are now just 90 minutes away from securing the Holy Grail which has eluded them thus far.

Meanwhile, Paris Saint-Germain midfielders Ander Herrera and Marco Verratti have said referee Bjorn Kuipers swore at players from the French side during the defeat to Manchester City in the Champions League semifinal second leg on Tuesday.

Two Riyadh Mahrez goals gave City a 2-0 victory on the night and a 4-1 aggregate win with PSG players showing their frustration in the final minutes as Angel Di Maria was sent off for a kick at Fernandinho

and several others were shown yellow cards. PSG manager Mauricio Pochettino was among those to approach Kuipers at full-time.

But Herrera and Verratti said after the match that part of that frustration was down to inappropriate comments aimed at them from the Dutch match official.

"The referee tonight said 'f--- off' to Leandro Paredes," Herrera told RMC. "If we say that we get a three or four match ban."

Verratti added: "The referee said to me 'f--- you.' If we say that, we get banned for 10 matches."

Following the match, PSG sporting director Leonardo Leonardo said "You can hear and see the footage. It is so clear. I don't understand. It is a real shame. I don't want to put our elimination on the referee but there were a lot of situations not dealt with properly."

According to Leonardo, when Paredes came off, he told the PSG bench: "It is incredible. He told me to f--- off. I can't believe it. It is incredible."

PSG will mention the incident to UEFA.

PSG were facing an uphill task in Manchester having lost the first leg 2-1 in Paris with Idrisse Gueye sent off late on and thought they had been awarded a penalty inside seven minutes at the Etihad only for Kuipers to overturn his original decision after looking at the VAR monitor.

Mahrez opened the scoring soon after before adding a second to effectively kill the tie on 63 minutes before Di Maria received his marching

orders six minutes later.

Meanwhile, CBS commentator Jim Beglin has apologised after using the term "Latino temperament" in Tuesday's Champions League semifinals match between Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester City.

Beglin made the remark as cameras showed PSG's Angel Di Maria walking off the pitch after receiving a red card for kicking Man City defender Fernandinho.

"It's that Latino temperament," Beglin said, as Di Maria, an Argentina international midfielder, walked off the field.

Moments later, Beglin apologised for using the term.

"When Di Maria was sent off, I described it by using the word Latino. For anybody that's taken offense, I do apologise -- sincerely apologise."

Beglin tweeted a longer statement after the match, saying:

"I apologise for my culturally insensitive remarks during the Champions League tie between Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain. I wrongly used a racial stereotype. This was inappropriate and unacceptable. Words have a strong impact, and I fully understand the severity of what I said when Angel Di Maria was sent off. I will learn from this and be better moving forward."

CBS has not commented regarding Beglin's remarks.

Man City won the second-leg match 2-0 to advance on aggregate 4-1 to the Champions League final on May 29 in Istanbul, where they will face either Real Madrid or Chelsea.



SPORT

Man City's first-ever UCL final puts them on the verge of 'mission accomplished'

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Tanzania's athletes set for one-month camp in Japan



Tanzanian marathoner, Alphonse Simbu.

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA Olympic Committee (TOC)'s leadership states the country's athletes, who will qualify for Tokyo Olympics, will camp in Nagai city for 30 days to prepare for the Games slated for July to August.

Filbert Bayi, TOC secretary general, confirmed in an interview the camp will be held in Nagai, saying it will help local athletes prepare well for the Games, as well as adapt to Japan's weather.

The Tokyo Olympics are slated for July 23 to August 9 in Tokyo but Bayi stopped short of disclosing the date local athletes will depart for Japan.

"Our local athletes who will qualify for the Olympics will camp in Japan in the city of Nagai for 30 days, the camp will help them prepare for the Games and also adapt to Japan weather ahead of the Games," he said.

Traditionally, TOC has been

hosting a local camp for athletes, who qualify for Olympics, but Bayi could not say if the committee will have a local camp this year.

The TOC official stated National Sports Associations are organizing individual camps.

The country so far has two athletes Alphonse Simbu and Failuna Matanga who qualified for the Tokyo Olympics.

The Nagai camp has come after successful discussions between TOC and Nagai city authorities to host local ath-

letes ahead of the Games in the city.

Gulam Rashid, TOC president, last year disclosed that the committee is having discussions with Nagai city authorities to host local athletics and judokas to prepare for the Games.

"As you all know, we have a good relationship with the city of Nagai, discussions are underway so that our athletes should camp in that city to prepare for the Olympics," he said.

Rashid disclosed the development when the com-

mittee received financial support from Japanese companies based in Tanzania and individuals.

The financial support targeted to support the country's athletes' preparations for the Tokyo Olympics which are slated for mid this year.

The financial support came from the committee on commerce and industry of the Japanese Society of Tanzania, Japan's Ambassador to Tanzania and Japanese women society in the country.

During the event, Rashid said the financial support from the Japanese has demonstrated their enthusiasm, pride and duty which Japanese people have in hosting the Olympic Games.

"This donation has come at a good time, we really thank the Japanese people for this support and we are sure that they will come again with more financial support, let me assure you all that the money will be used for its intended purpose," he said.

TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV THURSDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 MPYA
12:30 Bongo Hits
13:00 Msimi Kitaani (r)
13:30 Kili Za Wana
14:00 Uenzi (r)
14:30 DK10 Za Maangamizi
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Waganga Ulimba (r)
16:00 Ubungo Kids (r)
16:30 #HSHTAG
17:00 SLEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soop
19:30 EATV SAA I
19:45 MIADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 SalamaNa

'SalamaNa' is our new show in which Salama has a chat with interesting people from different spheres of influence in our society. You will be entertained, educated and amazed.

Every Thursday at 9pm

eastafrica RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM



Tanzania Football Federation (TFF)'s information officer, Clifford Ndimbo.

FIFA grassroots soccer program's course gets underway in Dar

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

A five-day training course, centered on FIFA grassroots football program, which involves Tanzania's coaches, began yesterday at Karume Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Forty seven participants from across the country are attending the course, which is supervised by Raymond Gwebu.

Tanzania Football Federation (TFF), through the federation's information officer Clifford Ndimbo, said the course is part of the national football governing body's efforts to build the capacity of grassroots coaching.

He said the federation expects the trainees to pass on the knowledge acquired to children in their respective areas to boost football development at the local level.

"The five-day FIFA grassroots coaching course gets underway in Dar es Salaam at Karume Stadium where 47 coaches are attending and head instructor is Raymond Gwebu," the information from TFF disclosed.

In recent years, the country has put much emphasis on grassroots football.

The approach has paid dividends as in previous editions of continental tournaments, national junior teams have qualified for finals.

The FIFA grassroots program is aimed at helping to develop the game at the grassroots level.

The program places at its core emphasis on the notion of both education and fun for the children.

It targets boys and girls aged 6-12 years through school, community and club initiatives.

Kenyan club appeals against coach's move to VPL side

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

KENYA's football outfit, Kakamega Homeboyz, have vowed to petition world football governing body, FIFA, to take action against Tanzanian club Biashara United after the latter hired the services of the former's coach Patrick Odhiambo without their consent.

The gaffer, who as well coached Gor Mahia in the past, was unveiled by the Vodacom Premier League side on Tuesday as a replacement of another Kenyan coach Francis Baraza.

Baraza left the club a couple of weeks ago to join other Premier League outfit, Kagera Sugar.

The decision by Odhiambo has irked Homeboyz's chairman Cleophas Shimanyula, who stated they will do all they can to have the tactician's contract with Biashara terminated since he is still under contract with them.

"I was not aware Patrick Odhiambo had left my team to sign for another club in Tanzania, in fact, I just read the story on your website and it is very disappointing for the coach to do what he has done," Shi-



Patrick Odhiambo

manya said on Wednesday. He disclosed: "Odhiambo is still contracted to Homeboyz, he signed a one-year deal in the middle of the ongoing FKF Premier League season and his contract with us is still valid so

I don't understand how he has managed to negotiate with Biashara whereas Homeboyz was not involved."

He queried: "We are talking to our lawyers to give us the way forward, we are planning

to write to Football Kenya Federation and then FIFA because this is a serious matter, who gave him [Odhiambo] the go-ahead to sign for Biashara?"

Shimanyula has further hit out at Odhiambo for leaving

Homeboyz without even saying a word to the team, which helped him when he had struggled without a salary while coaching Gor Mahia.

"Sometimes I don't understand people, Odhiambo came to Homeboyz openly crying we give him a job, he was crying that at Gor Mahia they had gone for several months without salary and he had a lot of bills to pay, I took him and gave him a contract to sign," Shimanyula noted.

He stated: "But now, he has decided to walk away even without saying bye-bye, not even to the players or the technical bench he was working with, he never told anyone he was leaving, anyway we will follow up the matter, we will ask for FIFA guidance and all we want is the contract he signed to be terminated."

Odhiambo had coached Sony Sugar before joining Gor Mahia as the assistant coach under Steven Polack.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

