



LAW  DAR POLICE HOLD 61 SUSPECTS FOR ENGAGING IN CRIMES PAGE 2	DEVELOPMENT  WAITARA CALLS FOR OFFICIALS TO VENTURE INTO RESEARCH PAGE 3	ALARM  RPC WARNS ON EMERGENCY VEHICLE INSTALLATION SYSTEMS PAGE 4	AGRICULTURE  LINDI URGED TO START SUNFLOWER FARMING PAGES
--	---	---	--



Works and Transport minister Prof. Makame Mbarawa (R) listens to a report on ships anchored at Dar es Salaam harbour from port manager Juma Kijavala during his abrupt visit at night to inspect performance on Wednesday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

TPA: Lorries to enter port after filling all cargo clearing papers

By Guardian Reporter

EARLY next month no lorry will be allowed to enter the point of Dar es Salaam if an agent has not finalised the clearing documents, the port CEO has declared.

TPA director general, Eric Khamis said yesterday that vehicles with documents will be allowed into the port area and those with incomplete documents "will be told to clear their documents first."

This affirmation was given in the presence of Works and Transport minister Prof Makame Mbarawa who directed the port

authorities to operate strategically and increase the number of staff involved in cargo handling to promote efficiency.

The director expressed appreciation to the ministry for having innovated a vessels flow format to contain congestion within the port, by setting up checkpoints for port bound Lorries.

The minister was touring the major gateway to observe how the 24 hours operation to clear cargo was progressing, asking the Tanzania International Container Terminal Services (TICTS), the Tanzania Revenue

TURN TO PAGE 2

'Isles varsities must make Zanzibar zonal ICT hub'

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi has appealed to universities and colleges to invest more in teaching various programmes on information and communications technology (ICT) to make Zanzibar an ICT hub in the East African region.

President Mwinyi (pictured) made the remarks in a speech read on his behalf by Second Vice President Hemed Suleiman Abdullah at the 19th graduation ceremony for the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) at its Tunguu campus in Unguja South Region.

Colleges and other learning institutions need to establish new programmes that are essential for the implementation of development plans to increase employment opportunities, he said, noting that Zanzibar colleges' hand the steering wheel in innovation will make them ready to put to effect national development plans.

Development of the blue economy is



among key government priorities, where colleges must provide cooperation to the government by rolling out programmes to enable Zanzibar to reap ocean resources, the president asserted.

"We must depart from where we are,

TURN TO PAGE 2

International minerals market yields 5.8bn/- in govt revenues

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

SETTING up an international minerals market has enabled the Mwanza regional office of the Mining Commission to collect 5.8bn/- in government revenue, equivalent to 55.52 per cent of the 2020/21 target.

Ndembi Tuma, the commission's regional manager, said that in the current 2021/22 financial year the regional office expected to collect 5bn/- but by early December it had collected 3.4bn/-, equivalent to 68.72 per cent of the target.

This observation was made on Wednesday at the royalty board meeting, where the manager stated that these achievements

“About 25 licences were issued to big gold dealers and one to a diamond dealer who sells minerals to the Mwanza Precious Metals Refinery

were contributed by inclusive strategies strengthening controls for gold smuggling from the production stage at the mines to the market.

"In fiscal 2020/21 we targeted to collect 3.6bn/- but collected 5.84bn/-, while in fiscal 2021/22 about 3.43bn/- or 68.72 per cent of the target of 5bn/- has been collected by early December," he said.

In fiscal 2020/22 minerals from external markets weighing 3,329,773.13 grams and traded at the market contributed 397.7m/- and this financial year this source has so far contributed 183.97m/-, he stated.

In fiscal 2020/21 mining trading revenue

TURN TO PAGE 2

IDA credit for land rights of 2m people

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Bank board has approved new International Development Association (IDA) financing for Tanzania that will strengthen the national land administration system and increase tenure security for at least two million land holders, users and their families.

The \$150m land tenure improvement project (LTIP) to be implemented by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development focuses on 14 regions, covering 40 districts, for issuance of one million certificates of right of occupancy (CROs), 500,000 certificates of customary right of occupancy (CCROs) and one million residential license (RLs).

Mara Warwick, the World Bank country director, said in a statement yesterday that Tanzania is experiencing rapid urbanisation with strong implications for land administration, noting that land disputes are increasingly becoming a common feature in both rural and urban areas.

"Securing land rights and improving land management systems will enable opportunities for agricultural investment,



Vendors of vegetables and fruits at Mabibo market in Kinondoni municipality in Dar es Salaam conducting their business in an unfriendly environment, with waste water surrounding their items and threatening their health and that of their customers, as captured yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala



9 770856 542009 >

TURN TO PAGE 2

2021: A grim year for planet earth

By Farhana Haque Rahman

BETWEEN the COVID-19 pandemic and the deadly manifestations of the climate crisis, there were few places to hide for most of us in 2021.

Ageing billionaires riding booming stock markets could take their first flights into space in their own rockets, but for the rest of Planet Earth's 8 billion people with their feet on the ground it was a year of placing hope in the hands of scientists and our political leaders to turn the tide.

Our review of 2021, as seen through the eyes of IPS reporters and contributors around the world, must begin as a year ago by paying our respects to those who lost their lives early, while also extending our gratitude to the often anonymous individuals fighting to make things better.

In 2020 the world mourned the officially reported deaths of some 1.8 million people from COVID-19, but as we approach the end of 2021 the death toll has risen to over 5.3 million. However, the true figure measured by "excess mortality" could be several million higher, according to the World Health Organization.

Scientists made extraordinary breakthroughs in quickly developing vaccines that have shown considerable efficacy in fighting the virus. Health systems in wealthier countries, including China, were equally efficient in dispensing them. Over 8.1 billion vaccines have been administered - more than the world's population.

Yet while some countries had double jabbed over 70 percent of their citizens and were pushing boosters, less than 8 percent of Africa's 1.3 billion people had been vaccinated at all. The disparity is as startling as it is complex in its origins and causes. But it is clear that poorer countries and sectors are suffering disproportionately through rising poverty and inequality as years of development gains are wiped out.

The ramifications are enormous, and women and girls are bearing the brunt of the problems. Girls in poorer countries are dropping out of school and early marriage is increasing. UN Women's latest Measuring the Shadow Pandemic report said all types of violence against women and girls has intensified since the outbreak of COVID-19. UNICEF called the pandemic the biggest crisis for children in its 75-year history, with 100 million falling into poverty.

The failure of better-off and powerful countries to look beyond their national interests is not new and has deep roots. Prioritising the profits of western pharmaceutical companies by opposing the intellectual property waiver at the WTO or hoarding vaccines are just



the latest manifestations.

Seen in this light, the hopes attached to the COP26 Glasgow Climate Summit were never going to be fully realised even though the planet's build-up to the pandemic-delayed event left no doubts in 2021 in terms of floods, droughts, heatwaves and wildfires.

Greenland's highest summit experienced rain for the first time in at least over 140 years. Its ice sheet lost some 166 billion tonnes over 12 months, making it the 25th year in a row where it has lost more ice than it gained.

Parts of Canada and the US experienced a record-breaking "heat dome". Sicily recorded Europe's highest temperature. Germany suffered massive floods. Wildfires ripped through Mediterranean countries and the Dixie fire was California's biggest recorded single blaze. China took months' worth of rain in the space of hours. Sub-tropical South America endured a second year of drought.

"Extreme events are the new norm," said World Meteorological Organization Secretary-General Petteri Taalas, describing COP26 as "a make-or-break opportunity to put us back on track" in reducing greenhouse gas concentrations to stem the rise in global temperatures. It is likely that 2015 to 2021 will be the seven warmest years on record.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) also sounded alarm bells, warning leaders about to meet in Glasgow that "humanity has reached a tipping point" in tackling es-

calating climate and biodiversity emergencies.

So was the Glasgow summit "blah blah blah", in the words of activist Greta Thunberg, or a bold step towards limiting global warming to below 2C as claimed by some? It was hard to tell. "The reality is more nuanced," concluded Carbon Brief, a specialist website, in its extensive analysis.

It reported progress towards flattening the curve of future emissions through climate policies and falling clean energy costs but said the world was still "far from on track" to meet Paris Agreement goals of limiting warming to 1.5C or "well below" 2C.

It was the first COP summit to explicitly target action against fossil fuels, calling for a "phased-out of unabated coal" and "phase-out" of "inefficient" fossil-fuel subsidies.

But in a blow to less developed countries most vulnerable to climate change, the summit text, under pressure from the US and Europe, omitted reference to a specific finance facility, promising "dialogue" instead.

Separately however, the NDC Partnership, which helps countries deliver on their Nationally Determined Contributions to cut emissions, says it is ready to mobilise hundreds of millions of dollars.

Receiving less publicity was the mention in the final text of agroecology, an element of nature-based solutions that will be on the agenda of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Rwanda next June.

Overall, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres described the COP26 texts as "not enough" and a "compromise" reflecting the state of political will in the world.

2021 was full of bad news but billionaires, big pharmaceutical and high-tech firms, as well as autocrats, did well on the whole.

Forbes' annual list of the world's wealthiest reported a rise of 660 dollar billionaires to an unprecedented 2,755. Among the new elite were 210 from China and Hong Kong.

Among autocrats, China's Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin and Iran's hardliners consolidated control at home and flexed their muscles on the international stage. Myanmar's military took back power, while the Taliban seized back Afghanistan. Donald Trump's last desperate attempts to stay in power failed however, with the mob assault on the US Capitol, while US global authority further diminished.

Multiple crises also provided fertile ground for human traffickers dealing in modern slavery and forced labour. Global suffering has vastly increased vulnerabilities to trafficking. For every 100 victims trafficked globally, 50 are women and 20 are girls.

Press freedom, as ever, was both vigorously defended in 2021 while taking a hammering in many countries, notably in Asia.

On December 8 Philippine journalist Jesus Malabanan became the latest reporter to lose his life, shot in the head

outside his home in an apparent extrajudicial killing. He was the 22nd journalist killed in the Philippines since Rodrigo Duterte became president in 2016.

Malabanan's killing came just as fellow Philippine journalist Maria Ressa arrived in Norway to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, along with Russian journalist Dmitri Muratov. The Nobel Committee said the two laureates represent the "courageous fight for freedom of expression" at a time when democracy and press freedom are facing multiple threats.

Such threats make it even more vitally important that IPS Inter Press Service continues to give a voice to the voiceless and fosters evidence-based reporting of development news with a strong sense of social responsibility. In this IPS plays a unique role among news outlets, with women making up 70 percent of reporters and editors, and we are indebted to their efforts.

Just as countries battle to control the pandemic, IPS continues its extensive coverage of issues and places that might otherwise be neglected.

For example IPS reported on how the Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative, a strategic alliance that links the WHO, Sasakawa Health Foundation, and The Nippon Foundation for achieving a leprosy-free world, has highlighted concerns over leprosy resurgence, particularly in Comoros in East Africa.

With Africa acutely aware of the need to establish food sustainability and security for its rapidly growing population, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) has enhanced its Youth in Agribusiness initiatives empowering youth as actors in agriculture through training, research, employment, and entrepreneurship.

In southeast Asia the Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT is partnering with WMO and DeRisk Southeast Asia to develop targeted weather forecasts to work around threats of drought and extreme rains, including provision of specially designed insurance to protect their livelihoods.

But rising sea levels and extreme events mean that the 22 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, which contribute less than 0.03 percent of the world's greenhouse emissions, need climate finance for food security now. Their ability to respond to climate change is supported by the UN Green Climate Fund through the Pacific Community (SPC).

As we approach 2022 - in the race between vaccines and new COVID variants, with devastating tornadoes striking central US, and the threat of war looming over Ukraine - IPS and its partners pledge to keep covering the places, issues and projects that still matter but risk being left in the dark.

Farhana Haque Rahman is Senior Vice President of IPS Inter Press Service and Executive Director IPS Noram; a journalist and communications expert, she is a former senior official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

By Guardian Reporter

Dubai airport handling firm to recruit 400 personnel as it expands into Z'bar

DUBAI National Travel Agency better (Dnata)—a leading global air and travel services provider, plans to recruit more than 400 staff over the next month in Zanzibar.

The company, which operates across more than 30 countries, recently announced that it would invest USD 7 million in the local aviation industry and oversee the operations of Zanzibar Abeid Amani Karume International Airport's (AAKIA) newly-built international terminal (T3) in strong cooperation with the Zanzibar Airports Authority and its partners.

Dnata will recruit customer-oriented talents for a wide range of both office and operational roles, each offering their own unique progression opportunities and career paths. Positions range from entry level to supervisors and management, requiring varied levels of experience and education. Successful candidates will support Dnata in providing quality and safe ground handling, cargo and airport hospitality, including meet & greet and lounge, services to airline customers and their customers at T3.

Dnata is committed to helping people achieve their full potential. The company's talent management framework helps it identify top talent and provide them with the appropriate development, training and career opportunities.



Dnata is one of the world's largest air services providers. A trusted partner of over 300 airline customers, Dnata offers ground handling, catering, retail and travel services in 36 countries.

In the financial year 2020-21 Dnata's customer-oriented teams handled 290,000 aircraft, moved 2.7 million tons of cargo, and uplifted some

17 million meals.

Allen added "Our teams' passion for excellence, broad partnership network and global experience in providing best-in-class ground handling, airport hospitality and Food and Beverages services will ensure consistent quality at every stage of the airport journey. We will deliver an innovative and fresh airport con-

cept that provides an integrated passenger experience whilst showcasing Zanzibar's traditions and style."

Speaking at the same event, H.E. Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar said: "The launch of our new terminal at the Abeid Amani Karume International Airport marks a turning point in the Revolutionary Gov-

ernment of Zanzibar's efforts in becoming a globally recognized island for tourism and trade. The Zanzibar Airport Authority's partnership with dnata reaffirms our commitment to international excellence in providing a seamless experience for all international visitors. We look forward to expanding our global footprint in facilitating trade and investment via

our increased handling capacity for both passenger and air cargo operations."

In addition, Christian Laugier, CEO-Sales for Egis, commented: "We are honoured to bring our three decades of expertise in airport development, operations and maintenance to the project. Our teams will focus on performance across all areas, including infrastructure, operations, safety and security, governance and finance. Our efforts will be on making the airport and air transport more effective catalysts for tourism growth in a destination that has everything to attract visitors, from pristine beaches to a UNESCO World Heritage site. This is an important step that opens great partnership possibilities with Zanzibar, where we are prepared to consider further investment in airport infrastructure development."

Dnata is one of the world's largest air and travel services providers. Established in 1959, the company ensures the aviation industry operates smoothly and efficiently in 129 airports.

Offering ground handling, cargo, travel, flight catering and retail services in 36 countries across six continents, dnata is a trusted partner for over 300 airline customers around the world. In the financial year 2020-21, dnata's customer-oriented teams handled 280,000 aircraft turns, moved 2.6 million tonnes of cargo, uplifted 17 million meals, and recorded a total transaction value (TTV) of travel services of US\$ 62 million.



LG Electronics East Africa managing director, SaNyoung Kim marks the opening of the Arusha-based shop shortly after the ribbon-cutting was completed.

Imbibe a habit of buying environmentally friendly electronics, Tanzanians counseled

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

TZANANIANS have been challenged to inculcate a habit of buying genuine and high quality products that are environmentally friendly.

LG Electronics East Africa managing director, SaNyoung Kim threw the challenge here on Wednesday when speaking at the official opening of the firm's shop in partnership with Benson and

Company Ltd, in a move aimed at giving customers a unique opportunity to experience new technology and products.

Kim said that, for more than 41 years, Benson has now become the main supplier of LG products in Arusha region with the aim of bringing services closer to its customers.

"This is the first time for the LG Company to launch the shop in Arusha after launching three shops in Dar es Salaam,

with the aim of spreading throughout Tanzania.

"These products we launched here today are state-of-the-art TVs, refrigerators, laundry machines where the equipment is more modern and uses less electricity and we promise our customers that in the next few months we plan to open more LG stores in African Community countries. East with the goal of providing services to our cus-

tomers," said Kim.

Benson and Company Ltd managing director Nadeem Hussein said: "We've been providing quality and reliable services to their customers in selling products that touch everyone."

He also applauded President Samia Suluhu Hassan for opening up business opportunities in various countries and thus expanding the scope of traders to do business freely without being har-

assed by anyone.

"Our products are of the highest quality, so we urge customers to come in large numbers to come and buy," said Nadeem.

LG Benson Arusha store manager Zahra Mohamed said the products are very beneficial as they are environmentally friendly and modern and have offered a 20 percent discount on all their products this festive season so that customers can access services.

FOCAC 2021: China, Africa team up to combat illegal wildlife trade

By Special Correspondent

THE recent Dakar meeting of the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) 2021 marked a significant step in collaborative efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade and develop nature-based solutions to support an African green economy and tackle climate change.

FOCAC is the highest platform for Sino-Africa dialogue on trade and investment. Established in 2000, it includes African countries that have diplomatic relations with Beijing. It meets every three years and agrees on action plans and related work programmes for the next three years.

This year's Ministerial Conference identified nine work programme areas that include the commitment to fight against illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade while supporting enhanced investment and trade guided by social and environmental sustainability principles.

As the engagement between China and Africa matured through FOCAC, the collaboration has progressively embraced the need for the effective management of biodiversity in which mutually complementary actions have been taken to address the challenge of illegal wildlife trade."

TRAFFIC's Policy and Partnership Coordinator for Africa Taye Teferi said: "The decision by the Chinese government to close the local ivory market is one such action that has benefited elephant conservation in African elephant range state countries. We hope a similar action would be taken to address the massive challenge that the pangolin is currently facing."

One of four primary outcome documents, the FOCAC Dakar Action Plan (2022-2024), describes how the two regions would promote trade and sustainable development guided by social and environmental sustainability principles.

The two sides agreed to raise public awareness and jointly combat the illegal wildlife trade. Further, both sides pledged to strengthen the capacity of wildlife conservation professionals, strengthen exchanges and cooperation between customs authorities as well as establish an anti-smuggling co-

operation mechanism to crack down on the crimes of smuggling endangered wildlife and their products.

"Through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between The African Union Commission (AUC) and TRAFFIC, our organisation is already committed to providing the AUC and its Member States with the latest evidence-based technical guidance to implement sustainable natural resource management strategies that support national economies and local community development delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We appreciate the commitments made by China to support green projects in Africa and hope this will afford greater opportunities for community engagement," said Teferi.

There was also a specific focus on enhancing the maritime industry, strengthening maritime law enforcement, environmental protection, and improving marine fisheries management. The two sides also agreed to establish an information exchange mechanism to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

"Curbing illegality and corruption within the maritime industry has the potential to enhance food security for many of the coastal African countries," said Teferi.

Throughout China and Africa, climate change is recognised as one of the most severe challenges today and a threat to nature and social and economic development. In Dakar, China and Africa released the Declaration on China-Africa Cooperation on Combating Climate Change. They called on developed countries to fulfill their pledges made under multilateral frameworks to provide funding, relevant technology, and capacity-building support to African countries to enhance their capability and resilience to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change.

"TRAFFIC and our collaborating partners will continue to work in support of the effective and efficient implementation of the FOCAC Dakar Action Plan with a clear focus on social and environmental sustainability to advance an inclusive and sustainable green recovery consistent with the Green Recovery Action Plan of the African Union Commission," concluded Teferi.

America Faces a Fateful Crossroad in 2022

By Alon Ben-Meir

WHEN my assistant handed me copy expressing my greetings and good wishes for 2022 for approval, I paused, thinking, "is that all I can say, just hope for a better, brighter new year?"

How much happier and sunnier can next year be, when we still suffer from the deep scars and bleeding wounds from the social and political malaise that 2021 left behind? We must act now. There is no time to spare because the losses will be of such a magnitude beyond our ability to comprehend.

Politicizing the pandemic

The pandemic is the most challenging crisis facing our nation in more than a century, and remains one of the fundamental human rights issues of our time. Nearly 800,000 Americans have died from the pandemic, yet only 60 percent of our fellow Americans have been vaccinated.

How sad and disheartening that we politicized a deadly virus, as Republicans are three times more likely than Democrats to refuse vaccination. Two of the most populous states, Florida and Texas, not only are refusing to institute vaccine or masking mandates, but are banning local municipalities from instituting their own mandates.

Is it any wonder then that their death tolls are the highest in the country?

To refuse vaccination is to benefit from the precaution of those who have been vaccinated without making any contribution to our collective immunity. By the spring of 2022 more than one million of our fellow Americans will have died from the virus and many Republican leaders still have the crude audacity to oppose mandatory vaccination.

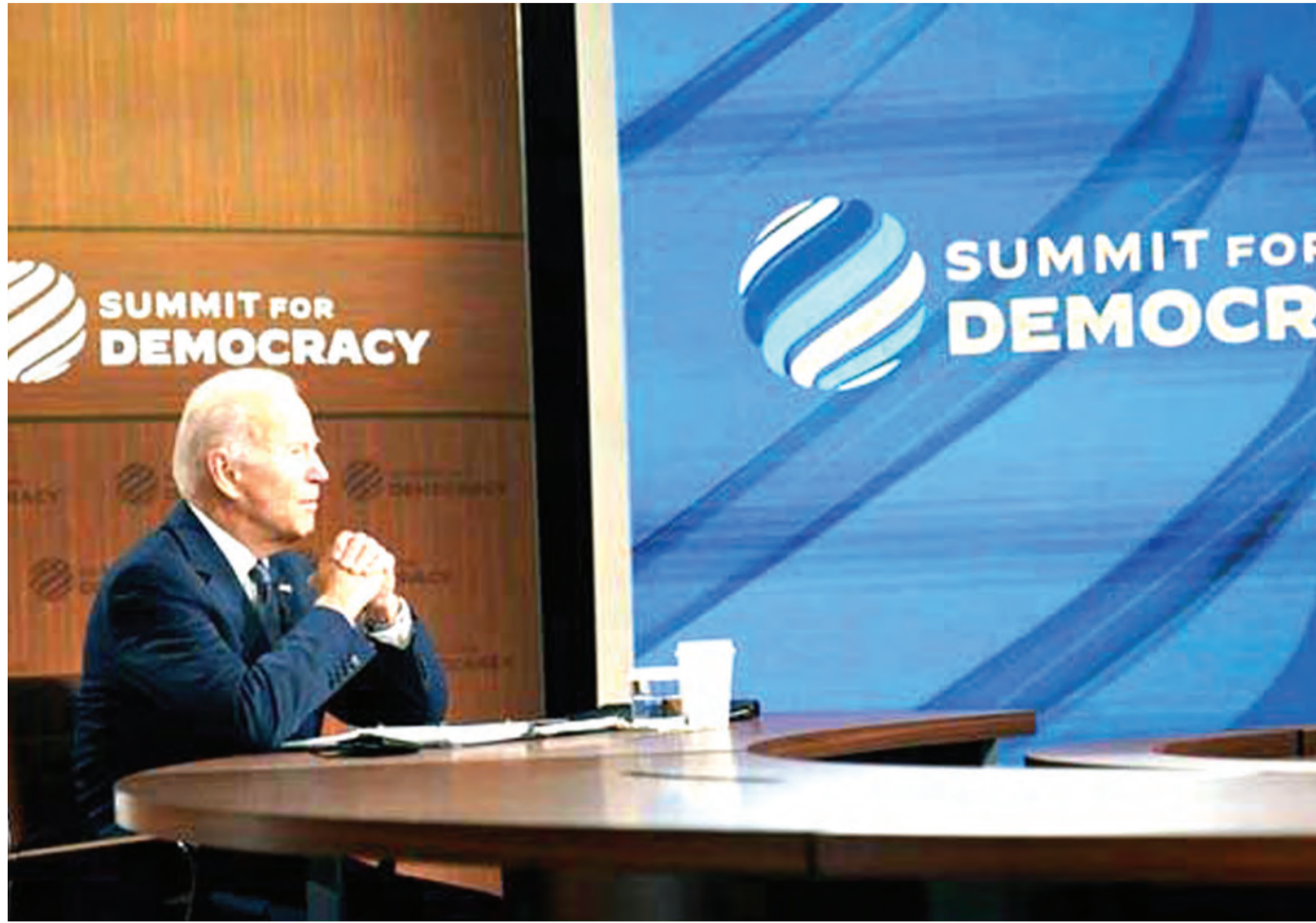
It is time to recognize that each and every one of us has a moral obligation to be vaccinated and contribute to the realization of herd immunity.

Moreover, the refusal of so many Americans to be vaccinated is allowing one variant after another to arise and inflict ever more pain and hardship. Our immunity to disease is a collective resource, and none are safe until we all are.

The pandemic is apolitical and colorblind, and 2022 will be merciless and agonizingly harsh unless we rise and act as one. Vaccination should not be a choice but a requirement as long as the unvaccinated can infect others. We do not have the luxury of time.

Democracy under assault

Our democracy is under ominous assault. Republicans are tearing it down brick by brick. One state after



US President Joe Biden presiding over a virtual Summit for Democracy on December 9-10. Credit: Voice of America (VOA)

another passes discriminatory laws and absurd rules, gerrymanders to secure electoral control, and refuses to accept the result of free and fair elections.

We are still reeling from the violent storming of the Capitol to prevent the peaceful transfer of power and accommodate a morally deranged so-called leader, whose lust for power is surpassed only by his contempt for the laws of the land. They were ready to sacrifice the freedom and liberty for which countless Americans have died, only to bask in his authoritarian design. What does that say about America's future, when a multitude of Republicans want to seize power at whatever cost, willingly following such a blind, unhinged, bigoted narcissist who is openly tearing our democratic institutions apart?

Our democracy is facing an unprecedented danger. We must strengthen voting rights, prevent the appointment of partisans to subvert the election, fight political corruption at every level, and make political power decreasingly dependent on money. The election of Biden gave us hope in preserving our democracy and attending to the political and social malaise that swept the nation. But maintaining

the House and Senate for the Democrats in 2022 will be do or die; otherwise, Biden's agenda will be shattered, and authoritarianism will creep in, leading to the collapse of the American institution.

We must rise in unison, hold accountable the traitors behind the insurrection on January 6, and preserve and protect America's 240-year-old democracy that served as a beacon of hope and freedom to the global community.

Climate change denial

Climate change will not happen sometime in the future. It is happening now. We live it—the unprecedented storms, hurricanes, deadly tornadoes, and fires consuming hundreds of millions of trees every year. Sea levels are rising, beaches are shrinking, and island states are slowly submerging in front of our eyes.

Thousands of species still unknown to man are vanishing in the Amazon. Coral reefs are dying at a horrifying rate, with over 30 percent at risk of being lost within the next few decades. To be sure, climate change is an existential threat facing our planet.

The reasons for this unfolding tragedy are clear enough. Coral mining, overfishing, blast fishing, pollution, the

burning of fossil fuels, and animal farming and transportation are among the major contributing factors.

Climate change continues to spark massive migration; millions have been forced to flee their homes, which have become inhospitable due to flooding, fires, and other disasters fueled by the changing environment.

And yet, we still have a multitude of climate change deniers who dismiss the indisputable scientific evidence and refuse to acknowledge what is in front of their own eyes. I applaud Biden's commitment to address the perils of climate change and call on every public and private institution to play their part in combating climate change.

Next year will be even worse unless the country comes together. We must act now to avert the catastrophic impact of climate change before it is too late.

Unfathomable child abuse

It is hard to comprehend; in America, over 13 million children go to school hungry and one in five live in food insecure households. Black and Hispanic children disproportionately suffer from poverty.

How is it fathomable that the richest country on earth disgracefully falls in child poverty between Mexico and Lithuania? One in 11 children, nearly 6.5 million nationwide, live in extreme poverty, compounded by the fact that this age is a time of rapid brain development. Even more damning is the trafficking of children which occurs in every state. Most trafficking victims in the US are citizens; those forced into sex work are not just runaways or abandoned youth, they are children from urban and rural areas, and of every class and race.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received over 17,000 reports of potential child sex trafficking in 2020 alone. Of the over 26,500 children reported runaways in that year, one in six were "likely victims of child sex trafficking."

Sadly, as I write these painful words another child was just trafficked for sexual purposes. And 2022 will be just the same; it will not heal these tragic wounds unless we rise up and put an end to this unimaginable travesty in America today.

Women's rights under assault

To this day, after decades of so-called equality, women are still discriminated against in

this country. In 2020, women earned 84 percent of what men earned; it would take an extra 42 days of work for women to earn what men did in 2020.

Women of color fare even worse, and face higher unemployment than white women—nearly 9 percent for Black women and 8.5 percent for Latina women, versus 5.2 percent for white women.

And who are these men who act as judges and jurors to deny women a central component of their bodily autonomy, to pass laws that prohibit abortion? What right do they have to decide what women can or cannot do with their bodies? This is just another abhorrent manifestation of infringement on women's inherent rights.

The presumption undergirding abortion bans is that women who become unintentionally pregnant do not comprehend the consequential weight of their actions. Those who oppose abortion rights often assume that restrictions on abortion will not adversely affect women's healthcare, when in fact it puts women's health at risk.

A true democracy cannot exist without gender equality. Despite our best wishes for 2022, the plight of women will not change unless we focus on this gender gap, and act decisively and level the field when it comes to women's rights.

The scourge of guns

The scourge from which Americans suffer greatly is the pervasiveness of guns. This year upward of 40,000 Americans were killed by a firearm. Just imagine, as of 2018, Americans possess 120.5 firearms for every 100 residents—translate that to 400 million guns in the United States, enough to provide 8 firearms to every soldier in the world.

Nearly five million children live in a home where a firearm is loaded and unlocked, and women are five times more likely to be murdered by an abusive partner when the abuser has access to a gun. But there is no outrage. We shout and scream about the need for gun control laws. Gun advocates and the NRA say cynically, guns don't kill people. But guns do kill people when there is easy access to a gun.

How many more school shootings must we endure? How many innocent children must die in vain? When will we wake up from this nightmarish, uniquely American reality? Tragically, as many if not more people will be killed by a gun in 2022, and all of our best

wishes for the new year will not save any lives.

We must legislate gun control now, before another 40,000 innocent persons are shot to death. Their blood is on the hands of every lawmaker that refuses to support sensible gun control laws, as one more person killed by a gun is one too many. We must engage in massive and continuing peaceful demonstration and civil disobedience until lawmakers come to their senses and enact gun control law.

Racial and ethnic discrimination

The racial wage gap is the same as it was in the 1950s, with Black workers receiving 22 percent less in salary than whites. Even where racial discrimination should not occur, in medical treatment, doctors regularly prescribe fewer pain medications for Black patients, believing that they feel less pain than whites.

Blacks are incarcerated at more than five times the rate of whites; while they are 13 percent of the total US population, they constitute 40 percent of the total male prison population. Roughly one out of every three Black boys and one of every six Latino boys born today will go to prison in his lifetime, while for white boys it is approximately one in seventeen.

The average white family's net worth is more than ten times greater than a Black family. The pandemic has affected Americans disproportionately by race and ethnicity. American Indian, Alaska Native, Hispanic, and Latinos are 1.6 times more likely to contract COVID than white Americans and over twice as likely to die from the disease. And when it comes to the right to vote, leave it to the Republicans to enact any archaic rule or law to reduce the number of people of color exercising their right, as they deem them illegitimate voters in white America.

This continuing and willful discrimination is destroying our social cohesiveness and the values that we hold so high. Discrimination will not end in 2022, but we must begin to address this scourge, which fundamentally erodes the social fabric of our society.

This continuing and willful discrimination is destroying our social cohesiveness and the values that we hold so high. Discrimination will not end in 2022, but we must begin to address this scourge, which fundamentally erodes the social fabric of our society.

This continuing and willful discrimination is destroying our social cohesiveness and the values that we hold so high. Discrimination will not end in 2022, but we must begin to address this scourge, which fundamentally erodes the social fabric of our society.

This continuing and willful discrimination is destroying our social cohesiveness and the values that we hold so high. Discrimination will not end in 2022, but we must begin to address this scourge, which fundamentally erodes the social fabric of our society.

Contempt for immigrants

This is a country of immigrants, who made America great—enriching our cultural diversity, contributing momentously to our scientific endeavors, and enhancing every walk of life. They farmed the land, built houses and roads, and made the land of plenty richer and better.

What happened under Trump's tenure is beyond contempt—children separated from their parents, held in cages unfit for domestic animals, and asylum seekers removed by brutal force. All migrants are entitled to dignity and respect for their human rights. Though we all want to believe that Trump's treatment of immigrants was an aberration, to this day we still do not have a sound immigration policy.

Not when at least 650 immigrants died this year,

attempting to cross the US-Mexico border. Not when smugglers are forcing immigrants from Mexico and Central America to live in camps and work on farms in the state, an illegal enterprise akin to modern-day slavery. Not when some died, and others were repeatedly raped.

Sadly, what was once the spring of American pride, our treatment of immigrants became the source of disgrace and shame. As 2022 rolls around, no amount of wishful thinking will change this sad reality. We need a comprehensive immigration policy to bolster once again the pillars of America's unique enterprise.

Media under attack

Although America still largely enjoys freedom of the press, the media is under serious threat. Trump's attacks on the media were routine, calling them the "enemy of the people" and coining the phrase "Fake News," as he viewed the media as a threat to his authoritarian design.

Unregulated social media contributes significantly to the dissemination of misinformation and promotion of violence, and major news stations such as Fox News spread lies and conspiracy theories galore.

Police continue to target journalists, such as freelance photojournalist Jeremy Portje, who was arrested and charged with two misdemeanors and a felony last month while documenting a homeless encampment in Sausalito, CA. At a Portland, OR protest, independent photojournalist Grace Morgan said she was shoved by a police officer with his gun.

Following last summer's Black Lives Matter protests, where journalists were handcuffed, shoved, and shot at with less-lethal ammunition, at least 110 journalists were arrested or criminally charged in relation to their reporting.

Around 300 journalists were assaulted in 2020, and there were more than 930 total incidents in 79 cities. Next year will not be a banner year for American journalists unless we use our own tools and fight with the might of our pens, allowing no one to tamper with our freedom to unveil the corrupt politicians who feel menaced by the press.

After all is said and done, my faith in America will never wane. The challenges in 2022 may well be insurmountable, but then again, we have overcome so many adversities before, and can do it again and emerge ever stronger, as long as we put America's national interests above any political partisan agenda. America's star will never fade away, and we will always rise to the call of the hour. This is the America that I know.

And so, with pride and a deep sense of gratification I wish a happy new year to all, and may God bless America.

Dr Alon Ben-Meir is a retired professor of international relations at the Center for Global Affairs at New York University (NYU). He taught courses on international negotiation and Middle Eastern studies for over 20 years.

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 188 00--

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

3 Letters: OWL, HAY, TAN, ARK,
4 Letters: REST, SAME, RAKE, AYAH, IRAQ, EAST, Q-TIP, SAGA, TIME, AFRO,
5 Letters: READY, SCOPE, SNAKE, FROST,
6 Letters: ATHENS, LAYER, PAMPAS, SAHARA, RAKISH, ATTACH, TANAPA, MASHER, MASTER
7 Letters: CASHIER,

CLUES: Across
1. a person who cultivates a land
5. hire a land
6. a piece of land surrounded by water
9. an oil tanker
10. any person
13. Interfere
15. a group with a strong common interest
17. Estates on which crops are grown
19. literary form of over
20. fall behind
21. indicates that a voice is silent
22. single
23. institute a legal proceedings for redress

Down:
1. the sixth day of the week
2. a mass meeting
3. reveal something
4. to inquire
7. an unimportant person
8. passed away
11. Muscat is the Capital city
12. the rubbing and kneading of muscles and joints
14. identify the existence of
15. free from dirt
16. great size
17. a game of Eastern origin
18. cereal plants

WORD-FIT CROSSWORD

SOLUTIONS

WALKABOUT RESOURCES ORDERS PROCESSING PLANT FOR THE LINDI JUMBO PROJECT

By Correspondent Geoffrey Nangai

AUSTRALIAN Stock Exchange listed Walkabout Resources has announced that the first consignment of equipment and plant for its flagship Lindi Jumbo Graphite project in the country has departed Shanghai in China and is expected to dock at Dar es Salaam in January 2022.

Walkabout's CEO, Andrew Cunningham said mid this week that the first shipment includes mobile equipment and non-containerized processing plant equipment such as mobile crane, tele-handler, front-end loaders and ten larger flotation cells.

Cunningham said a second containerized consignment is expected to leave China within a few coming days noting that Lindi Jumbo project continues to deliver milestones with its first consignment of plant and equipment en route by sea from China.

"Our team has worked tirelessly to manage these unprecedented times of fractured supply chains and transport vulnerabilities to ensure Lindi Jumbo's construction



Walkabout Resources' Lindi Jumbo Graphite project site.

schedule remains resilient," he said. Meanwhile, Walkabout Resources has appointed experienced Tanzania Chediel Mashana as Construction Manager to oversee delivery of the project providing guidance to contractor groups and ensuring project safety and quality.

The company in September this year said its Lindi Jumbo Graphite project is on track, maintaining that production at the site will commence in the second quarter of 2022. Cunningham said the company had already signed the first contract for the site with local contractor TNR engineering to undertake the site preparation.

"The value of the contract is about a third of the total capex needed to get us into production. It includes bulk earthworks and civil work to get the plant directed on site which is currently under construction in China," he added.

The Walkabout CEO said then that company has already procured equipment worth one million dollars that is currently under storage in China, which will be shipped to Tanzania. He noted that Lindi Jumbo is an exceptional project in the graphite space with high-grade free concentrate and 24 years life of mine.

City Industrial Property's Belville facility achieves 2 GBCSA certifications

CAPETOWN

The Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA) has awarded City Industrial Property's Belville facility a 4-star Green Star Custom Industrial rating and a Net Zero Carbon rating.

"City Industrial Property is showing true leadership with this facility, and setting an example that others in the industrial property sector can follow. It is one of just three Net Zero Carbon certifications in the industrial sector – a forerunner in a market that is steadily moving towards the goal all new buildings operating at net zero by 2030 and all existing buildings operating at net zero by 2050. These are the ambitious commitments required to meet our national and international climate change targets. It is pioneers like City Industrial Property, greening the industrial sector, who show us it is possible," said Georgina Smit, GBCSA head of technical, at a plaque handover and building tour at the facility.

Achieving a Net Zero Carbon rating essentially means that the building is as energy efficient as possible and the energy that is required for building operations is sourced from renewable energy. This results in net zero carbon emissions from energy over a year. As well as numerous energy efficiency measures in the building, City Industrial Property's Cape Town facility also has a 120.6kWp rooftop solar PV array, which provides renewable energy all year round.

"Resilient and ready for the future" "The payback periods for the sustainability initiatives we have in place here make it a practical choice. And going for green building certification voluntarily means that our customers are aware of our priorities as a business. Our facilities, like our business, are resilient and ready for the future," said City Industrial Property MD David St. Clair.

The industrial facility, which comprises warehouse space and ground and first floor offices features a number of wide-ranging sustainability interventions which contributed to the Green Star certification. Some of the initiatives at this facility include: Mixed-mode ventilation which contributes to energy efficiency and improved indoor environment quality, and LED light fittings and efficient lighting control systems, which also contribute to energy efficiency.

Other initiatives include: Low-flow sanitaryware fittings and rainwater harvesting contribute to water efficiency and resilience, and the facility's wash bay makes use of a comprehensive water and wastewater treatment system, where no potable water is used; Zero ozone depleting potential (ODP) insulation is used in the facility as well as low volatile organic compound (VOC) internal finishes, which have environmental benefits and contribute to improved indoor environment quality which has significant benefits for the occupants of the facility; and The facility has a dedicated waste management area, where recyclables are sorted and managed, thus sending less waste to landfill.

Global aviation leader, dnata comes to Zanzibar targeting to recruit 400 people

By Property Watch Reporter

A leading global air and travel services company, dnata, plans to recruit more than 400 staff members over the next month in Zanzibar as it starts operations.

The company, which operates across more than 30 countries across the globe, recently announced that it will invest US\$7 million in the local aviation industry and oversee the operations of Zanzibar's Abeid Amani Karume International Airport's newly-built international terminal (T3).

The company which is working in partnership with Zanzibar Airports Authority, said in a statement that it will recruit customer-oriented talents for a wide range of both office and operational roles, each offering their own unique progression opportunities and career paths.

"Positions range from entry level to supervisors and management, requiring varied levels of experience and education," the company's statement said adding that successful candidates will support dnata in providing quality and safe ground handling, cargo and airport hospitality, including meet & greet and lounge, services to airline customers and their customers at T3.

"dnata is committed to helping people achieve their full potential. The company's talent management framework helps it identify top talent and provide them with the appropriate development, training and career opportunities," the statement noted.



Zanzibar's Abeid Amani Karume International Airport.

The company which is one of the world's largest air services providers is a trusted partner of over 300 airline customers in offering ground handling, cargo, catering, retail and travel services in 36 countries.

"In the financial year 2020-21 dnata's customer-oriented teams handled 290,000 aircraft, moved 2.7 million

tons of cargo and uplifted some 17 million meals," the statement noted. Established in 1959, dnata ensures the aviation industry operates smoothly and efficiently in 129 airports offering ground handling, cargo, travel, flight catering and retail services in 36 countries across six continents.

dnata is a trusted partner for over

300 airline customers around the world and in the financial year 2020-21, its customer-oriented teams handled 280,000 aircraft turns, moved 2.6 million tonnes of cargo, uplifted 16 million meals, and recorded a total transaction value of travel services of US\$ 62 million.

Sh4.5bn Two Rivers lender converts loan into security

NAIROBI

Two Rivers Mall will convert a Sh4.5 billion loan into a security that will see an undisclosed lender earn dividends and get a share of the shopping complex if the owners decide to sell it, in a plan to reduce interest expenses. The debt was part of \$96 million (Sh10.89 billion) secured during the construction of shopping and office complex that started in 2017.

The deal comes as Centum

Investment Company, which owns the property indirectly through Two Rivers Development Limited (TRDL), plans to reduce finance costs and maintain a zero long-term debt to improve its investment income.

Centum Investment Company CEO James Mworira, however, failed to disclose the lender, adding that the unnamed entity would earn capital gains distributed using a predetermined ratio if shareholders decided to

exit. "In this case, there is no coupon we will be paying each year. Because that is what we were trying to avoid. If there is an exit, the financier will gain from share the profit," Mr Mworira said. "There is a pre-agreed formula that changes year to year and provides the ratio in which they will participate in the equity upside. The shareholding of the Centre will not change. The lender will also receive dividends, based on the formula.

The Two Rivers Lifestyle

Center - with a mall, shops, ATMs, retail mobile and storage units, cinema and offices - is equally owed by Old Mutual Properties and the TRDL. TRDL is a company owned by Centum Investment (58 percent), AVIC International (39 percent) and Kenya Development Corporation (KDC) (three percent).

The financing agreement is expected to save the company Sh340 million per annum and turn Centre's cash flow positive. This comes as

Centum Investment plans to reduce finance costs and operating expenses to below 50 percent of investment income and have the rest used for dividend distribution and reinvestment.

It recorded 1.9 percent drop in debt to Sh4.04 billion in the six months to September compared to Sh4.12 billion in the year ended March. The debt has dropped from Sh14.65 billion in 2017. Finance costs declined by 27.9 percent to Sh326.96 million over the

debt reduction in the nine months period to September compared to Sh453.77 million in same period last year.

"Although we own 58 percent in TRDL, in our financial statement we have consolidated as if we own 100 percent. It is important for us that the entity is profitable. We are supporting the management of the various portfolio to optimise their business and grow their profitability," Mr Mworira said during investor briefing for the half-year period.

TFS CHIEF PRAISES PARTNERS FOR SUPPORTING FORESTS CONSERVATION THIS YEAR

By Correspondent Gerald Kitabu

As the year draws to the end, Tanzania Forest Service Agency (TFS)'s CEO, Professor Dos Santos Silayo has acknowledged the key role played by various stakeholders including development partners, in efforts to conserve forests in the country.

In an interview recently, Prof Silayo said that working with stakeholders has helped in sustainable forestry conservation and yielded desired fruits in many areas ranging from awareness creation to capacity building.

"The stakeholders are key and very good partners, in fact TFS really appreciates and acknowledges their support," Prof Silayo said while wishing the partners a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

He said TFS has been working with different stakeholders who have been supporting different activities which are of preference, but all of them were aimed at helping in sustainable forestry management.

He explained that some of the not for profit organizations such as Tanzania Forests Conservation Group have been running and supporting projects being implemented by TFS such as Chome Forest Reserve in Same district, Kilimanjaro region and Mkingu NR in Morogoro Region.

"Some stakeholders have helped TFS to establish and conduct some studies on the nature reserves," the TFS chief executive noted while citing an example of TFCG in collaboration with other community based organization had Mama Misitu Campaign which was fruitful.

"The TFCG also helped to develop guidelines of forest management, running out community awareness campaigns etc. There are other forest stakeholders working to plant mangroves and other tree species," he added.

TFS also works with international organizations for example WWF works in several projects in different landscapes aimed at protecting the forests, raising awareness on the conservation, and working together to restore ecosystems around Dar es Salaam, Kazimzumbwi and Pugu. Some partners are supporting restoration of arid areas like Dodoma through Kijani project.

"We have also worked to develop some conservation



Tanzania Forest Service Agency's CEO, Prof Dos Santos Silayo when he spoke to Correspondent Gerald Kitabu recently.

strategies especially along Ruvuma landscapes and so forth," he noted while expressing appreciation to a cordial relationship with TFCG especially in setting up and operating the current project known as 'Make Magombera Nature Reserve' to benefit people and biodiversity," Prof Silayo stated naming Nature reserves such as Chome and Mkingu in the Eastern Arc as areas where TFCG backing was excellent.

Commenting on international NGOs, Prof Silayo said TFS works with several international partners such as Food and Agriculture Organisation, United Nations Development Programme with which they are working together to build capacity and manage nature reserve, build networks for tourism management and so forth.

"There are a lot of forests on the village land some of which help us to enable the villagers have their own community forests. They help to prepare land use plans and gazette even wildlife corridors," the TFS chief added.

Commenting on sustainable charcoal which is carried out by TFCG and MJUMITA, he said sustainable charcoal is an idea which he considers good

but advised that it improves in approach for better conservation.

But Associate Professor and researcher from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) in Morogoro, Anthony Sangeda said he has been involved in a number of research on management of Miombo woodland forests especially in Kilosa and once he was involved also in sustainable charcoal production in Kilosa.

About four years or so, Prof Sangeda said he has been carrying out research to see how Miombo woodland species regenerate. He said if you can know the ecology of Miombo trees especially how it regenerate over time then its easy to speak about whether Miombo charcoal production project is sustainable or not.

"Our research of around six to seven years has revealed for sure that Miombo trees regenerate vigorously in one to two years period," he noted adding that the characteristics of Miombo regeneration thus when harvesting very old Miombo tree, regeneration become very poor but when you harvest medium size trees, its better.

"So, it is a diameter at breast height (DBH), the DBH of around 20 to 30 cm is proper age of Miombo trees that can be harvested for sustainable

development because this is the tree that can regenerate and come up with suckers as well as coppices," Prof Sangeda noted.

Sangeda explained that it is very true that Miombo trees regenerate and in that style if you harvest the right age of Miombo tree then you are assured with regeneration and therefore, harvesting whether for charcoal or timber or for any other use, will lead to sustainable development.

"We are managing forests because we want to utilize them. They are there because we need them for protection, timber, services and products. So, if you need sustainable development obviously you need to harvest without destroying them," the SUA lecturer insisted while noting that after six to twenty years, the tree develops into another a fully grown up tree like the one you harvested before.

In remarks on the subject, TFCG's Executive Director, Charles Meshack said the group has come up with a solution to address the issue of deforestation. "The deforestation in the country clears about 469,000 hectares annually and this is happening on the village land where there is no any kind of management," said Meshack.

He said based on official

statistics, it is almost 45 percent of the forest standing on the village land which is equivalent to approximately 22 million hectares, which suffer most. "Out of this, only five million is under community based forest management, at least these are secured. The rest about 15 million are not under any kind of management," the TFCG chief executive lamented.

Meshack explained that it means that under current rate of deforestation, which is 469,000 hectares, all forests in the country will disappear within 15 to 20 years time under the business as usual scenario.

Executive Director of Tanzania Community Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA), Rahima Njaidi explained that TFCG and MJUMITA have been implementing the conservation project. "Previously, it was called sustainable charcoal, we have been implementing this project in phases and this is the third phase. It started in early 2012, and after three years we entered the second phase through Transforming Tanzania Charcoal Sector until 2019 when the third phase started called Conserving Forests through Sustainable, Forest-based Enterprise Support in Tanzania (CoForEST) Project due to end in 2022," Njaidi said.

SA rejects Eskom pollution exemptions, utility says 16,000MW at risk

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa has rejected state power provider Eskom's request to remain exempt from pollution standards on some coal-fired power stations, which the utility said on Tuesday, 14 December, would force it to immediately shut down 16,000MW of capacity. That equals about a third of the generating capacity of Africa's most industrialised country.

South Africa relies on Eskom for more than 90% of its electricity, which derives chiefly from 15 ageing coal-fired power stations, for which it has enjoyed waivers on emissions limits for soot, nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide. The heavily-indebted provider says it cannot afford the technology required to meet them.

"If implemented, the decision will result in an immediate shutting down of 16,000 megawatts (MW) of installed coal fired capacity," Eskom said in a statement, adding that it would cost over R300bn to adhere to it.

Pollution in the coal belt is among the worst in the world, rivalling Beijing and Mumbai, and researchers estimate the smog there kills thousands of people a year, with one putting the cost at \$2.37bn a year. The government is fighting legal action with environmental groups over it.

Eskom said the Department of Environment allowed it to postpone meeting emissions standards on seven power stations, with five requests rejected and four only partially granted. Neither Eskom nor the department's spokespeople responded to requests for more details.

The utility is working on a plan with donors, agreed at the COP26 climate talks in November, to shut down its coal-fired power stations and replace them with renewables. It says it should seek to clean the air that way, not by expensively retrofitting old plants with pollution filters.

South Africa's over-reliance on coal has made it the world's 12th biggest greenhouse gas emitter, the Global Carbon Atlas says. Eskom is due to close half its 46,000MW of nominal capacity by 2035, replacing some of that with gas and renewables, and allowing independent producers to make up the shortfall.

NMS seeks green light to continue with Uhuru Park renovations



A man enjoys Carmel ride in Uhuru Park.

NAIROBI

The Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS) wants court to set aside orders that have halted renovation of the historical Uhuru Park grounds.

The agency says the orders were issued irregularly because it was not first made aware about hearing of the application filed by the Communist Party of Kenya, neither was it furnished with the court papers. Through lawyer Duncan Okatch, the NMS says the stop order was issued due to "misinformation of the court and obfuscation of true facts."

He adds that the NMS was not only denied a chance to be heard but the ruling dated December 7, 2021, was delivered without any notice to its boss Lieutenant General Mohamed Badi. "The

ruling if not set aside will have extremely far-reaching consequences on the disputed project and unless the orders are temporarily set aside, it will cause great public injustice," says Mr Okatch.

The order was issued by Justice Edward Wabwoto on the petitioner's claims that the project was commissioned without a public participation and Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report. But Mr Okatch states that there was extensive public participation and stakeholder engagements from the year 2018 and that an EIA report was filed in respect to the said renovation works.

"Sometime in the year 2020, the Nairobi City County Government in collaboration with Safer Nairobi Initiative conducted public participation on the need to rehabilitate Uhuru

and Central parks," explains NMS boss Lt Gen Badi in an affidavit.

The engagements centred on various areas, including collecting their views on what should be done in the park, interventions, improvements and the general outlook. He says that during the session the public noted priority areas as improvement of security, the design to cater the changing culture, make the park more vibrant and translocation of the Marabou stork birds.

He says the renovation plan having been hatched in 2018, could not be implemented due to lack of funds. Justice Wabwoto will rule on the NMS request on December 30. The court order threw the project in limbo as it came slightly three months to the expiry of the mandate of NMS to transform the capital city.

CONSTRUCTION

DUBAI HOUSE PRICES JUMP 21PC AS PROPERTY MARKET CONTINUES TO RECOVER

DUBAI

Residential property prices in Dubai jumped 21 per cent in the first 10 months of the year as the emirate's property sector continues to recover from the coronavirus pandemic on the back of an accelerated vaccination programme and other government measures.

The average house price climbed to Dh1,235 per square foot (\$336.28) in October from Dh1,021 per square foot recorded in January, according to a report from global consultancy Knight Frank. "The buoyancy in market sentiment has rippled outward from the emirate and caught the attention of a new flavour of the buyer, non-resident, ultra-high-net-worth individuals, who for the first time, are flocking to the city to secure our most expensive property," said Faisal Durrani, partner and head of Middle East research at Knight Frank.

"[The] \$10 million-plus home sales now account for 7 per cent for all transactions in the city by value, compared to a long-term average of just 2 per cent." The UAE property market, which softened due to a three-year oil price slump that began in 2014 over supply concerns and the pandemic, is on a rebound as people upgrade to larger homes with outdoor amenities amid a surge in remote working and online learning.

Economic support measures



Apartments in The Palm Jumeirah and Downtown Dubai are outperforming other locations in the emirate in terms of values.

and government initiatives – such as residency permits for those who have retired and remote workers in addition to the expansion of the 10-year golden visa programme – have also helped to improve sentiment. The buyers are from different locations including Monaco, Switzerland and China, Mr Durrani, said.

"Developers are responding, pushing the envelope and bringing to market Dh10,000 per-square-foot homes, such as

Alpago's Palm Flower project. More modestly priced properties continue to languish, however."

Alpago's Palm Flower project at The Palm will feature one residential unit per floor and is being designed by the British firm Foster + Partners, the developer said earlier this month. However, residential values are still about 29 per cent below peak levels in 2014.

Villa prices, meanwhile, surged 14 per cent since the start of the pandemic in January last year, as

people moved to larger homes amid online schooling and the work-from-home culture, according to Knight Frank.

The most expensive areas in the city are recording the sharpest turnaround in values, with apartments in locations such as The Palm Jumeirah and Downtown Dubai outperforming apartments in general since the start of the pandemic.

Similarly, villa prices in Mohammed Bin Rashid City, Dubai Hills and The Palm

Jumeirah have also jumped ahead of the wider villa market, "highlighting the disproportionate impact of positive market sentiment on luxury home values", the report said. Home sales in September crossed Dh12.2bn, which was 100 per cent higher than the previous record of Dh6.1bn recorded for the same month in 2009. Total sales fell to Dh11.2bn in October. Dubai's relative affordability, compared to other global gateway cities,

has been instrumental in driving its popularity and it wouldn't be in the interest of market stability for prices to race past 2008, or indeed 2014 peaks, over such a short period of time," Mr Durrani said.

Meanwhile, apartment and villa sales prices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi jumped in the third quarter amid a broader recovery in the property market, property consultancy Asteco said on Monday. Apartment sales prices in Dubai surged 14 per cent year-on-year in the three-month period, while villa prices rose 37 per cent during the period. Asteco said it expected the momentum of growth to continue towards the end of the year and into 2022, albeit at a lower rate, a trend underpinned by anticipated developments stemming from the successful execution of the Expo 2020.

"Government initiatives in terms of new visa programmes and regulations to attract foreign investment, the easing of Covid-19 restrictions and the successful rollout of the vaccines are expected to boost the economy," it said. Villa rentals in Dubai rose 19 per cent annually, while apartment rents climbed 3 per cent.

In Abu Dhabi, villa prices jumped 14 per cent in the three months to the end of September, while apartments posted a modest increase of 1 per cent. Villa rents in the UAE capital, meanwhile, remained flat during the period, while apartment rents dropped 2 per cent, according to Asteco.

Rio Tinto buys \$825m lithium project



Rio Tinto Group's new lithium mine in Argentina.

SYDNEY

Rio Tinto Group agreed to buy a lithium mine in Argentina for \$825 million as the world's second-biggest miner accelerates its push into battery materials.

The top mining companies are increasingly looking to expand into so-called future facing commodities, such as lithium, copper and even fertilizers, as investors and

governments increase pressure on more polluting materials that have long been the most profitable.

Rio said Tuesday that it will buy the Rincon asset in Argentina from private equity buyers. The lithium brine project is in the so-called lithium triangle in South America, home to many of the best lithium deposits. Major automakers from Tesla Inc. to Volkswagen AG need an ever-growing supply of battery

materials to accelerate the rollout of electric vehicles.

The deal, along with the recent acquisitions of Millennial Lithium Corp. and Neo Lithium Corp., helps cement Argentina's position as a long-term destination for lithium development, said Chris Berry, president of industry consultancy House Mountain Partners.

"This acquisition is strongly aligned with our strategy to prioritize

growth capital in commodities that support decarbonisation and to continue to deliver attractive returns to shareholders," Rio Chief Executive Officer Jakob Stausholm said in a statement.

The company said the undeveloped project has the potential to produce battery grade lithium carbonate. Rio is already looking to develop a \$2.4 billion lithium mine in Serbia as it moves to diversify its business away from iron ore. Yet, the company's plans there have come under pressure from local activists who have filled streets in protest against the project.

Those hurdles make the deal in Argentina "especially important," House Mountain's Berry said. "One of the biggest mistakes I see mining companies make is that they don't have a plan B. Clearly, Rio has thought their lithium strategy through."

Rio's push into lithium comes as prices surge. The global transition toward electrified transport has fired up consumption and lithium prices have more than tripled this year to a record. Miners are scurrying to expand capacity, but they can't keep up with demand and market tightness is likely to persist in the near term.

Rio's peers, which have so far shunned lithium, are also looking to diversify. Larger miner BHP Group is trying to buy a Canadian nickel project – another vital component in the types of batteries that power electric cars or back up renewable energy. It's also looking to build a giant fertilizer mine, as is Anglo American Plc.

Marriott to open two hotels in Saudi Arabia's historic Diriyah district

RIYADH

Marriott International has announced plans to open two luxury hotels in Saudi Arabia's Diriyah. The properties will be located near the Unesco World Heritage site at At-Turaif, offering views of the historic town of Diriyah on the outskirts of Riyadh.

The Ritz-Carlton, Diriyah is scheduled to open in 2025 and will offer 195 rooms, including 34 suites, a specialty restaurant, an all-day dining venue, meeting rooms, an outdoor pool and fitness centre. Ritz Kids, the brand's signature children's club, and a signature spa will round off the facilities.

The second property, a Luxury Collection hotel, will be located in the Samhan district of Diriyah. It is due to welcome its first guests in 2022, offering 141 rooms and 17 suites, along with two signature restaurants, an all-day-dining restaurant, coffee and juice bar, fitness centre, pool and spa.

As part of plans to develop the area into a leading historic tourism destination, 11 square kilometres of Diriyah are being regenerated into a mixed-use urban community, embracing the Najdi architectural style typical of traditional Saudi villages. Led by the Diriyah Gate Development Authority, the project will include cultural institutions and museums, galleries, restaurants, luxury retail, public squares, hotels, recreational spaces, residences, educational institutions and offices.

Diriyah is located within Riyadh province, 15 minutes north-west of Riyadh's city centre. At its epicentre sits At-Turaif, which was built in about 1766 and is recognised as one of the world's foremost mud-brick cities. It was designated as a Unesco World Heritage Site in 2010.

"Bringing the Ritz-Carlton and the Luxury Collection to the development, two well established and admired world-class heritage brands, which are renowned around the world, is a momentous moment for Diriyah," says Jerry Inzerillo, group chief executive of Diriyah Gate Development Authority. "Each property will give travellers a unique perspective on Saudi Arabia's rich past before immersing guests in the future of the destination."

Nissan camper van concepts would put high-end hotels to shame

TOKYO

For this year's Tokyo Auto Salon, Nissan is bringing a variety of vehicles to show, but possibly the most impressive are these camper vans. They're based on the NV350 Caravan, and they're hiding some truly incredible-looking living quarters.

The all-around most impressive one is the

Mountain Base concept, shown at top. It's hard to miss thanks to its faux wood trim all along the sides. Closer inspection reveals the parts that don't have wood-grain vinyl are coated in some sort of truck bedliner material. The front fascia has a sort of integrated grille and headlight guard.

The roof is adorned with an off-road light bar and a gigantic solar panel that can be raised,

angled and swivelled to get in the optimum position. The side windows have also been replaced in favour of more solar panels. Fender flares enclose a chunky off-road wheel and tire combination.

The interior is the big draw, though. A big bench and worktop with screens fills most of it, with all the surfaces covered in wood panelling. And all those surfaces are supported by an intricate,

skeletal-looking structure. Lighting is mounted inside and around these areas providing a modern and stylish environment. Adding some warm ambient is a TV screen used as a virtual fireplace.

Though not as striking on the outside, the Caravan Myroom concept is still highly impressive. The outside is pretty much unchanged except for a custom brown

and white colour scheme and black painted steel wheels.

The interior is perfect for high-style camping, though. It's full of modern-looking furnishings such as cabinets and shelves in light wood finishes. The windows have stylish slats, and the fold-up bed is covered in lovely gray and brown textiles. Additional storage is under the bed, and a couch is fitted for lounging.

WORLD

Biden says to run for president in 2024 if in good health

WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden said Wednesday that he will run for reelection in 2024 if he is in good health at the time.

"Yes," he said when asked by host David Muir if he plans to run for reelection in an interview aired Wednesday on ABC's World News Tonight.

"But look, I'm a great respecter of fate. Fate has intervened in my life many, many times. If I'm in the health I'm in now, if I'm in good health, then in fact, I would run again," he said.

Muir asked Biden whether he still wants to run if his opponent turns out to be former president Donald Trump

again.

"You're trying to tempt me now," Biden answered with a laughter. "Sure. Why would I not run against Donald Trump for the nominee? That'll increase the prospect of running."

Amid the resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of momentum in the legislative process of his sweeping economic agenda, Biden's approval ratings have largely been on a downward trend since the summer, recently stabilizing in the 42 percent to 43 percent range, data from polling site FiveThirtyEight showed.

The president's sagging popularity has stoked speculations over whether



US President Joe Biden

he'll seek another four-year term in the 2024 presidential election. He'll be approaching 82 years of age on Election Day 2024.

White House press secretary Jen

Psaki, in an effort to quell the rumors, confirmed in late November that Biden will run in 2024. "That's his intention," she told reporters then.

Xinhua

WHO: Blanket vaccine booster programmes may prolong pandemic

GENEVA

BLANKET vaccine booster programs are likely to prolong the COVID-19 pandemic rather than ending it, as a result of unequal distribution of vaccines between rich and poor countries, the head of the World Health Organization warned on Wednesday.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a news briefing that "diverting supply to countries already having high levels of vaccination coverage" will give the virus "more opportunity to spread and mutate."

WHO has previously called on countries to reach a target of vaccinating 40 percent of their populations by the end of the year, but only half of WHO member states have been able to make it, which has largely been a result of the global inequity of vaccine distribution, according to Tedros.

While some countries are now rolling out blanket vaccine booster programs, three in four health workers in Af-



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director general of the World Health Organization.

rica still remain unvaccinated by the end of 2021, a year since the first vaccines were administered, he said.

If those vaccines had been distributed equitably, the 40 percent target could have

been reached in every country by September, he added.

As vaccine supply continues to improve, WHO projections have shown that it should be sufficient to vaccinate the entire global adult popula-

tion and to give boosters to high-risk populations by the first quarter of 2022, but only later in 2022 will supply be sufficient for extensive use of boosters in all adults.

Also on Wednesday, the

WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) issued an interim statement on booster doses. Although SAGE confirmed that vaccine effectiveness against severe COVID-19 decreased by about eight percent over a period of six months in all age groups, particularly in adults above 50 years, it still remained cautious on booster programs.

SAGE warned that "in the context of ongoing global vaccine supply constraints and inequities, broad-based administration of booster doses risks exacerbating vaccine access by driving up demand in countries with substantial vaccine coverage and diverting supply, while priority populations in some countries, or in subnational settings, have not yet received a primary vaccination series."

It called on booster programs to be evidence-driven and targeted to the population groups at highest risk of serious disease and those necessary to protect the health system.

Xinhua

Study offers Omicron hope ahead of 2nd coronavirus Christmas

GENEVA/JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH African data offered a glimmer of hope on Wednesday about the severity of the Omicron coronavirus variant, but World Health Organization officials cautioned that it was too soon to draw firm conclusions as the strain spread across the globe.

The study, which has not been peer-reviewed, suggests reduced risks of hospitalization and severe disease in people infected with the Omicron coronavirus variant versus the Delta one, though the authors say some of that is likely due to high population immunity.

Questions about Omicron's virulence are at the heart of scientific and political debate in many countries, as governments grapple with how to respond to the spread of the vari-

ant while researchers race to understand it. Countries imposed new restrictions on their citizens while worrying about the damage the variant might inflict on their economies.

The study found that people diagnosed with Omicron in South Africa between Oct 1 and Nov 30 were 80 percent less likely to be admitted to hospital than those diagnosed with another variant in the same period.

Compellingly, together our data really suggest a positive story of a reduced severity of Omicron compared to other variants. Among patients admitted in that period, those with Omicron had a similar chance of developing severe disease as those with other variants.

However, the study found that people who were hospitalized with Omicron in October-November were 70 percent less likely to develop severe disease than those admitted with Delta between April and November. "Compellingly, together our data really suggest a positive story of a reduced severity of Omicron compared

to other variants," said Professor Cheryl Cohen of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), one of the study's authors. She said this was further reinforced by surveillance data showing significantly lower hospitalizations and deaths in South Africa's current Omicron-driven wave of infections than in previous waves, although case numbers were much higher.

Cohen said that the study's findings could likely be generalized to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa that also have very high levels of previous infection.

"What is unclear is whether the picture will be similar in countries where there are high levels of vaccination but very low levels of previous infection," she said during a media briefing by a group of NICD scientists.

HIGH POPULATION IMMUNITY

The study was carried out by a group of scientists from the NICD and major institutions including University of the Witwatersrand and University of KwaZu-

lu-Natal.

The authors included several caveats and cautioned against jumping to conclusions about Omicron's intrinsic characteristics. "It is difficult to disentangle the relative contribution of high levels of previous population immunity versus intrinsic lower virulence to the observed lower disease severity," they wrote.

An estimated 60 percent to 70 percent of people in South Africa have had a prior COVID-19 infection, Cohen said.

Paul Hunter, a professor of medicine at Britain's University of East Anglia, described the South African study as important and said it was the first properly conducted study to appear in pre-print form on the issue of Omicron versus Delta severity.

But Hunter said comparing Omicron data from one period with Delta data from an earlier period meant it was hard to determine whether the lower hospitalization rates were due to Omicron being less virulent or to population immunity having risen.

Agencies

Nigeria destroys 1 mln doses of expired COVID-19 vaccine

ABUJA

NIGERIAN government on Wednesday destroyed over 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine withdrawn from across the country after being identified for having a short shelf life.

The National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), which coordinates vaccination in the country, and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control monitored the exercise at a dumpsite in a suburb of Abuja, the Nigerian capital.

Faisal Shuaib, head of the NPHCDA, told reporters at the dumpsite that the most populous African country took the decision to join other African nations which earlier destroyed doses of COVID-19 vaccines for the same reason, to boost the confidence of Nigerian citizens in the ongoing vaccination program nationwide.

"We withdrew about 1,066,214, doses of expired AstraZeneca vaccine from across the country," he said, noting that the doses of vaccine might still be potent before the Nigerian health authorities took the decision to withdraw them.

According to the Nigerian health authorities, the manufacturers of those doses of vaccine offered to extend the shelf life but is declined by the Nigerian government. "The work that we do is the work that requires trust. It is a sacred trust that has been bestowed on us by the generality of Nigerians," Shuaib said.

"A few months ago, when these vaccines were offered to us, we knew that they had a short shelf life. But we were living in an environment where the supply of COVID-19 vaccines was very scarce."

The senior public health official said Nigeria still had such short shelf-life vaccines which pose a lot of challenges to the country. More than 10 million people have been vaccinated so far against COVID-19 in Nigeria, according to Shuaib.

According to media reports in early December, over 1 million COVID-19 vaccines are estimated to have expired in Nigeria in November without being used. And the expired doses were made by AstraZeneca and delivered from Europe. Nigeria's health ministry responded quickly and acknowledged some of the vaccine doses which were given by donors had residual shelf lives.

Health Minister Osagie Ehanire explained in a statement that the vaccines which were received in form of donations through COVAX and AVAT facility had residual shelf lives, leaving the country with "a limited period to facilitate distribution and usage."

AVAT, or the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust, which has been launched by the African Union, aims to secure vaccine doses to complement initiatives such as COVAX, the global vaccine equity mechanism, and attain a target immunization of 60 percent of Africa's population.

Ehanire said the vaccines that expired had been withdrawn and will be destroyed.

The minister said the dilemma is not typical for Nigeria, but a situation many low- and medium-income countries find themselves in. He urged donors "to begin the process early enough and create a well-oiled pathway for prompt shipment and distribution through the COVAX and AVAT facilities, to reduce risk of expiration."

Xinhua

South African lawmakers concerned about rising initiation-related deaths

CAPE TOWN

SOUTH Africa's parliamentary committee of traditional affairs on Wednesday said a spike in the deaths of initiation, a cultural ritual involving circumcision, "is of great concern," as 32 initiates reportedly died in the Eastern Cape Province this month.

Traditional initiation, usually held in June and December, is seen as a necessary part of the passage from adolescence to adulthood by some of South Africa's largest ethnic groups.

The loss of life of many initiates due to circumcision-related complications and penile amputation prompted the government and stakeholders to intervene in the matter, including introducing the Customary Initiation Act that became effective in September.

The parliament's Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs said in a statement that the tragedy happened despite its recent series of engagements with the relevant role players from national and provincial levels in a bid to hold those responsible to account, stressing that it would continue to intensify oversight over the implementation of the Customary Initiation Act, which tightens the rite of passage.

The committee called on the relevant departments, law enforcement agencies and traditional leaders to increase efforts to permanently end this "preventable carnage," adding that an urgent meeting is envisaged to share best practice in conducting initiation rituals safely.

Shenzhou-13 crew gives first science class from China's space station

ON Dec. 9, crew members of China's Shenzhou-13 manned spaceflight mission, Chinese astronauts Zhai Zhigang, Wang Yaping, and Ye Guangfu, delivered a wonderful 60-minute science class 400 kilometers above Earth at China's Tiangong space station to elementary and middle school students.

The livestreamed lecture was the first lecture conducted by Chinese astronauts from space in eight years since the last space class was given in 2013, and also the first lecture given from China's space station.

At the main classroom set at the China Science and Technology

Museum, students interacted with their "space teachers" in real time via a large screen.

As the live scene on the screen shifted from the space station orbiting the blue Earth to the roomy and uncluttered core module of the space station, a spinning yellow top appeared on the screen, which was followed by an introduction to the lecture made by Wang.

"There is no end for space exploration. As the top spins continuously, we have moved from the Shenzhou-10 mission to the construction of China's space station. Welcome to the 'Tiangong Class'," said Wang,

greeting students attending the class in different cities of the country. She then introduced to students her crewmates, Zhai and Ye, who also said hello to the whole class.

Wang gave students a virtual tour of the brightly lit core module of the Tiangong space station. The sleeping zone of the core module is equipped with three bedrooms. With photos of her family and some little ornaments, Wang's bedroom looked warm and sweet. The port-hole in the bedroom gave a splendid view of the universe and Earth.

"In zero-gravity environment, our blood distribution is different from

that on Earth. Blood in the lower part of our body flows upward, so we look a little chubby and puffy. It can affect our health.

Therefore we need to counter the physiological effects of weightlessness through a lot of exercise methods," Wang said. She showed students how to use treadmill and spin bike in space.

In the kitchen of the core module, which is equipped with devices like microwave, water dispenser and refrigerator, Wang took out a fresh apple from the refrigerator.

The water dispenser is used to draw water for drinking and cook-

ing, according to Wang, who said that with technological advances, the space station has realized regeneration of water for drinking and cooking and that every drop of water is made full use of in the space station.

Ye and Zhai demonstrated to students how they resist the physiological effects of weightlessness in space during the class.

Besides exercise equipment, astronauts also have a "secret weapon" that can help prevent muscular atrophy caused by weightlessness, said Zhai, referring to the "penguin jump suit" Ye was wearing during

the class.

It has multiple elastic bands inside to help the astronauts maintain their muscle strength, said Zhai, who considers the suit a valuable fruit of the ingenuity of space science and technology experts.

During the class, students in the classrooms on Earth put a ping-pong ball in a glass of water and the ball floated. When Wang did the same thing in the space station, the ball stayed in water. "The reason is that buoyancy almost disappears in zero-gravity environment," Wang explained.

People's Daily

Libyan election called off amid disputes

TRIPOLI

LIBYA'S parliament said Friday's planned presidential election would not go ahead and did not name a new date, leaving the internationally backed peace process in chaos and the fate of the interim government in doubt.

It was the first official announcement of a delay, which had been widely expected amid ongoing disputes over the rules.

With major mobilizations in Tripoli and other western areas by armed groups, the collapse of the electoral process risks aggravating local disputes and triggering a new round of violence.

Disputes over the path forward could also undo the wider UN-

backed peace process between Libya's main eastern and western camps that have maintained a ceasefire since last year.

Factions, candidates and foreign powers have been talking behind the scenes about whether an election can still take place with a short delay or whether a longer postponement is necessary to reach agreement on the legal basis of the vote.

Meanwhile, the status of the interim government that was installed in March as part of the same peace process is also at risk, with the eastern-based parliament having withdrawn confidence from it in September.

The parliament's electoral committee's statement on Wednesday added that the government's mandate would expire on Friday.

Afghan Taliban stop Pakistan army from fencing border

KABUL/PESHAWAR, Pakistan

TALIBAN soldiers in Afghanistan disrupted the erecting of a security fence by the Pakistani military along the border between the two countries, Afghan officials said on Wednesday.

Pakistan has fenced most of the 2,600 km border despite protestations from Kabul, which has always contested the British-era boundary demarcation that splits families and tribes on either side.

Afghan defense ministry spokesman Enayatullah Khwarazmi said Taliban forces stopped the Pakistani military from erecting an "illegal" border fence along the eastern province of Nangarhar on Sunday.

He played down the incident, saying everything was now normal. The Pakistani army did not respond to a request for comment.

A video circulated on social media showed Taliban soldiers had seized spools of barbed wire and one senior official warning Pakistani soldiers stationed in security posts in the distance not to try to fence the border again.

Reuters could not verify the video independently.

Taliban spokesman Bilal Karimi said they were investigating the incident.

Taliban and Pakistani forces came face-to-face over the border incident.

two Taliban officials told Reuters on the condition of anonymity, and the situation was tense.

They added that following the incident there was cross border mortar fire from Pakistani territory further north along the frontier into Afghanistan's Kunar province on Wednesday.

It was unclear if the incidents are linked. The officials said Afghan military helicopters could be seen patrolling the area.

The fencing was a main reason behind the souring of relations between previous US-backed Afghan governments and Islamabad. The current standoff indicates the matter remains a contentious matter for the Taliban, despite its close ties to Islamabad.

Foreign governments have long alleged that Pakistan supported for the insurgent movement as it fought the US backed government and Western troops - a charge Islamabad denies.

The lawless mountainous border was historically fluid before Pakistan began erecting a metal fence four years ago, of which it has completed 90 percent.

The border incident happened the day foreign delegates from around the world gathered in Islamabad for a summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to discuss the unfolding humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan.

France says Omicron to be dominant soon, resists new curbs

PARIS / WARSAW

France could soon see 100,000 new COVID-19 cases a day due to the rapid spread of the Omicron coronavirus variant but the government does not plan to introduce new restrictions for the time being, Health Minister Olivier Veran said on Wednesday.

President Emmanuel Macron is counting on an accelerated vaccine booster program to keep the virus in check. Veran said he expected 22-23 million booster doses will have been administered by Christmas, up from 20 million as of Wednesday.

"The objective is not to reduce the speed of the virus' spread because the variant is too contagious. The objective is to limit the risk of serious cases overwhelming hospitals," Veran told BFM TV.

"This is why we are moving fast on booster shots."

France is reporting about 70,000 coronavirus infections a day as it battles a fifth wave of the epidemic.

The Omicron variant will be the dominant strain of the virus in France by early January, Veran said.

France has for months required a health pass for people to enter bars, restaurants, museums and other entertainment venues. In recent days it has closed night clubs and cancelled

New Year's Eve firework displays.

However, Veran said there were no plans at this stage for further restrictions or an extension of school holidays, though he cautioned nothing could be ruled out.

France registered a 210 COVID-19 deaths in hospitals on Tuesday, taking the country's total death toll to 94,913. AstraZeneca Plc said on Tuesday it is working with Oxford University to produce a vaccine for the Omicron coronavirus variant, joining other vaccine-makers who are looking to develop the variant-specific vaccine.

"Together with Oxford University, we have taken preliminary steps in producing an Omicron variant vaccine, in case it is needed and will be informed by emerging data," a spokesperson for the company said in a statement.

The Financial Times first reported the news, citing Sandy Douglas, a research group leader at Oxford.

"Adenovirus-based vaccines (such as that made by Oxford/AstraZeneca) could in principle be used to respond to any new variant more rapidly than some may previously have realized," Douglas told FT.

A lab-study last week found that AstraZeneca's antibody cocktail Evusheld retained neutralizing activity against the Omicron variant.

Brazil shuts illegal timber schemes

BRASILIA

BRAZILIAN environmental agents this week shut down schemes involving hundreds of companies the agents said were covering up illegal logging in the Amazon rainforest, according to government documents reviewed by Reuters.

The operation conducted by the main federal environmental enforcement agency Ibama provides a rare glimpse into how illegally cut Amazon wood is inserted into legal timber supply chains, using shell companies and faking shipments.

The enforcement operation is one of the most complete ever conducted by the environmental agency, because it caught so many of the people hiding behind or doing business with the shell companies, one Ibama agent told Reuters.

Ibama identified more than 220 companies and 21 logging concessions involved in various schemes disguising the origin of illegal wood, according to the documents seen by Reuters.

The environmental agency will place embargoes on the companies this week to prevent them from selling wood and will hand out more than 50 million reais (\$8.76 million) in fines, the documents said.

Ibama has also passed on the findings to public prosecutors and police for further criminal investigation, the documents said.

Ibama did not respond to a request for comment.

The agency can issue administrative penalties like fines and embargoes but cannot make arrests or issue criminal charges. The companies and people



Aerial view show a deforested area of Amazonia rainforest in Labrea, Amazonas state, Brazil on Sept 15, 2021. AFP

involved can appeal the decisions with Ibama.

Under President Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil's Amazon deforestation in 2021 surged to the highest level in 15 years, according to official government statistics.

Bolsonaro has rolled back environmental protections and sought to introduce more mining and farming to the Amazon, saying it is needed to alleviate poverty.

Brazil permits legal logging, handing out a limited number of concessions that allow only a proportion of trees to be cut in a specific area, and sets quotas capping the harvest.

Those quotas are given out as credits that then accompany the wood as it is sold and resold, certifying its legal origins until it is made into a "finished product" like furniture or flooring.

ABut under the schemes, companies

were selling the credits without the wood, the documents said.

Buyers would then attach the woodless credits to illegally sourced wood with origins such as protected nature reserves or tribal lands.

In some cases, the companies involved were shell companies that only existed on paper in order to funnel the credits, which could change hands many times before being used, the documents said.

The scheme involved more than 102,000 cubic meters of illegally cut wood from Para, Rondonia and Mato Grosso states.

That amount represents the harvest of about 97 square kilometers of forest, an area larger than Manhattan, which still pales in comparison to more

than 13,000 square kilometers of deforestation officially recorded in the 12 months through July.

"That's a drop in the ocean," said Raoni Rajao, a land use expert at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, when asked about the discovery.

The Ibama operation provides an example of the most common way which illegal loggers sell their wood into the legal system, according to Rajao.

"It's certainly very widespread," he said.

Most of the illegally harvested wood was sold into Brazil's domestic market for a variety of uses, said the Ibama agent, on condition of anonymity.

The final manufacturer or consumer generally has no way of knowing the wood is illegal as the timber appears to be legitimate in the government system, the agent said. Therefore, they cannot be held liable, the person said.

Selective logging to extract valuable timber is often the first step in deforestation, with the remaining forest then burned to clear land for agriculture.

Agencies

Pirate code has significant influence on development of American democracy

By Zhang Mengxu

Pirate organizations and piratical activities in the American history have exerted a strong influence on the formation of the country's democratic system, said Marcus Rediker, a distinguished professor of Atlantic history at the University of Pittsburgh, in a recent interview with People's Daily.

From emphasizing the freedom and equality of each individual pirate to developing the earliest forms of representative democracy and the mechanism of checks and balances for better management, the operation mechanism of pirate organizations has promoted the emergence and evolution of the early American democratic system, Rediker explained.

Democracy is a concrete phenomenon that is constantly evolving. Each country's democracy is rooted in its own history, culture and tradition.

There have been many theories about the formation of the American democratic system in the country's academic circles in recent years, among which the ones focusing on the role of pirate code have attracted wide attention.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, many local people in Massachusetts chose the "career" as pirates. They would hold up passing merchant ships carrying gold, silver and other commodities in the Caribbean Sea in winter and in coastal waters around New England in summer.

The New England Pirate Museum located in Salem, Massachusetts houses different versions of pirate code in history, restored pirate ships and pirate treasures that have been unearthed.



In the 17th century, sea-robbers in the West Indies signed "articles of agreement" with one another, based on which the pirate code was formulated to regulate the operation of pirate organizations.

According to the pirate code, every man has equal title to an equal share of the fresh food and strong liquors after a successful robbery; the captain and quartermaster shall be elected by all; and the captain and quartermaster can receive two shares of a prize, other officers one and a quarter to one and a half shares, and the rest one share each.

Bartholomew Roberts, a famous pirate from Wales, plundered over 400 ships in his life. The 11-article pirate code he created has been the most widely circulated one among all versions of such documents.

The pirate code in the 18th century showed the earliest signs of "the right to vote" "checks and balances" "representative democracy" and "spoils system", which can be considered as the embryo of American democracy, as some American experts and scholars pointed out.

An article published on the website of History News Network of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, George Washington

University, analyzed the relations between pirate organizations and the American democratic system.

Pirates made a significant contribution to the development of American democracy, according to the article.

"The first rule of one particular pirate code reads, 'Every man has a vote in affairs of moment,' securing, at the start, a man's right to participate in the selection of the captain and other officials," said the article.

Besides, pirate organizations had a system of checks and balances and booty distribution, which, though radical for its time, formed a balance of order among a group of pirates, according to the article.

"Pirates, in effect, were pioneers in democracy," said the article. Pirate governance created sufficient order and cooperation to make pirates one of the most sophisticated and successful criminal organizations in history, said Peter Leeson, an economics professor at the George Mason University in the U.S., in his published paper titled "The Law and Economics of Pirate Organization".

A sample of 700 pirates active in the Caribbean between 1715 and 1725 reveals that over a half of these pirates were English and American, according to the paper.

To effectively organize their banditry, pirates needed mechanisms to prevent internal predation, minimize crew conflict, and maximize piratical profit. By devising election system, piratical checks and balances and spoils system, they guaranteed order on ships and improved the efficiency of piracy, suggested the paper.

Leeson believes that the systems employed in pirate governance are very similar to the modern democratic political system of the U.S.

Although there is no definite evidence that the American democratic system has its origins in the pirate code, it can be inferred from the timeline and extremely high similarity of relevant content that the founding fathers of the U.S. used the democracy system of checks and balances from pirate organizations when creating the U.S. government, Leeson said in an interview with People's Daily.

James Madison and other founding fathers of the U.S. may have borrowed the institutional design in pirate code, which is why democratic decentralization was mentioned in the Federalist Papers, Leeson said, adding that from this perspective, pirates were the initiator of the democratic governance system of the U.S.

The pirate code has exerted a direct influence on the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the institutional design of the early American government; piratical activities were of great significance for the prosperity of then British colonies in the U.S., laying economic foundation to some extent for America's independence from Britain, according to an academic paper titled "Piracy's Influence in the Atlantic World" collected by the University of Florida.

People's Daily

NEW YORK

GLOBAL oil demand roared back in 2021 as the world began to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, and overall world consumption potentially could hit a new record in 2022 - despite efforts to bring down fossil fuel consumption to mitigate climate change.

Gasoline and diesel use surged this year as consumers resumed travel and business activity picked up. For 2022, crude consumption is expected to reach 99.53 million barrels per day (bpd), up from 96.2 million bpd this year, according to the In-

Global oil's comeback year presages more strength in 2022

ternational Energy Agency. That would be a hair short of 2019's daily consumption of 99.55 million barrels.

That will put pressure on both OPEC and the US shale industry to meet demand - after a year when major producers were surprised by the rebound in activity that overwhelmed supply and led to tight inventories worldwide. Numerous OPEC nations have struggled to add to output, while the US shale industry has to deal with investor demands to hold the line on spending.

After beginning the year at \$52 a barrel, Brent crude rose as high as about \$86 per barrel before tailing off at the end of the year. Forecasters say prices could resume their upward path in 2022 unless supply increases by more than expected. Bank of America researchers estimate Brent will average \$85 a barrel in 2022, due to low inventories and a lack of spare capacity.

The unknown is the Omicron coronavirus variant, as numerous countries have re-imposed travel curbs

which will hurt the aviation industry and consumption.

"If this is another wave like the ones we've seen before then it is a negative hit to economic growth in the first quarter of 2022," said Damien Courvalin, head of energy research at Goldman Sachs. "But if there is a subsequent recovery, oil demand, which briefly touched pre-COVID levels in early November, would then be at new record highs for most of 2022."

The 2021 rebound took suppliers by surprise, rais-

ing tensions between large producing countries and the world's biggest consumers like the United States and India. With gasoline prices up sharply earlier this year, US President Joe Biden called for the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies, known as OPEC+, to boost overall output after restraining supply for months.

However, OPEC nations have struggled to raise output due to underinvestment, as Reuters data

showed the group was over-complying with its production targets in November.

The US shale industry, similarly, has not responded to higher prices as they had done previously, bowing to investor pressure to restrain spending. Overall US production averaged 11.2 million bpd in 2021, compared with a record of nearly 13 million bpd in late 2019, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

Canada, Norway, Guyana and Brazil should add

supply in the coming year, said Rystad Energy's senior vice-president of analysis, Claudio Galimberti. US oil production is expected to average 11.9 million bpd for 2022, according to EIA.

Coronavirus cases are surging due to the highly contagious Omicron variant, and further outbreaks could slow the recovery in major economies.

IEA and others have lowered expectations slightly, with the IEA cutting its forecasts for 2021 and 2022 by 100,000 bpd on average to account for lower air travel.

Agencies



Mchenga Queens basketball side's players pictured after featuring in one of the fixtures of a tournament, which targeted to welcome the New Year, that took place at JMK Youth Park in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Mchenga Queens holds sway in New Year's Eve hoops tourney

By Guardian Correspondent

SPORTS tournaments targeting to welcome the New Year, which took place at Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (JMK) Youth Park in Dar es Salaam, came to a close early this week, with Young Queens, Mchenga, Juhudi, and JMK Youth Park outfit emerging victorious.

The annual competitions, which had participants participate in basketball, soccer, wheelchair, and hockey, have been organized by the JMK Youth Park. The basketball tournament, which involved both boys and girls, brought together ballers aged between 18-16 from Arusha, Tanga, and one side from Kenya.

In the boys' event, Mchenga defeated JMK Youth Park squad 45-30, whereas Mchenga Queens beat Arusha's Orkeeswa 46-32.

In the U-16 boys' event, the High View team defeated Mchenga 65-45, Orkeeswa cruised to a 40-34 win over Mkwenga.

Said Said from Mchenga was presented with a trophy for showcasing the best performance in the event.

Youth Queens' Judith Edward was presented with a trophy as she was voted as the best player in the U-18 girls' event. High View's James Adam was awarded a trophy for displaying the best showing in the U-16 boys' competition, the U-16 girls' event's best player award went to Orkeeswa's Love Isaiah.

In hockey, the Kigamboni team walloped Arusha 7-4 in the boys' event. Michael netted three goals, Gerald slot-

ted in two goals and Jasphar notched one goal for the eventual winners.

Arusha's team's goals were scored by Antony, who notched three, and Zakha that slotted in one goal.

Kigamboni team took the first spot, followed by Arusha and Juhudi Strikers in second and third places respectively. In girls' hockey, the Juhudi team hammered Buza 4-0.

In a football tournament, which brought together footballers below 17 years, the JMK Youth Park team beat Mandoz 9-1.

The football competition was conducted in a league format and JMK Youth Park notched a 2-0 win over Avocado FC in the second game, and later settled for a 0-0 draw with Mabibo FC.

In a soccer tournament for U-15 footballers, the JMK Youth Park team emerged as champions, followed by the Vijibweni team in second place.

The participating teams in the U-17 event were JMK Youth Park, Mabibo FC, Avocado FC, and Mandoz from Mwanza, the U-15 event brought together JMK Youth Park, Vijibweni, and Young Warriors.

JMK Youth Park's Sports Coordinator, Bahati Mgunda, said the tournaments turned out to be a great success.

He congratulated all clubs which have participated in the New Year's Eve competitions, including the basketball team from Kenya.

"We are pleased by impressive performance showcased by players we have watched throughout the tournaments," Mgunda disclosed.

Simba SC defying TFF on the major stadium is positive, but Premier League sides struggle

By Correspondent John Kimbuta

AFTER officials of the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) showed a measure of contempt on the person of the Simba SC Chief Executive Officer by refusing her invitation card or gate pass to the city derby, the Msimbazi Street side quickly moved into action.

It altered its plans for the training pitch at Bunju suburb that was until that point seen as the high point of having an own club pitch, deciding to compete with the federation on a centrally placed stadium.

Some pundits said that the club shall be satisfied if the stadium shall admit just 30,000 of their fans when the team plays, showing TFF that 'nothing is impossible.'

While this effort shall require that the club fan base and support structures cough up plenty of money to put up a big enough stadium on empty land at Jangwani, next door to their city rivals, Young Africans SC, popularly known as 'Yanga', it spells major prospective losses on the part of TFF for matches that would be played at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, with Simba SC in the game.

Only when Yanga will be the home team could the match be placed at the Temeke district facility, so it will pale somewhat in its centrality for local football.

It is a self-inflicted injury that TFF officials will have themselves to thank and also a good plus for the growth of soccer.

Listening to analysts of premier league matches, there is a repeated observation that when teams play in most upcountry grounds they are compelled to use long shots and headers type of football instead of practicing good soccer, that is, essentially a passing game, calculating space, etc.

The reason is that the playing ground is usually uneven, so it is inconvenient to plan runs or passes as the ground or grass patch will be unpredictable, not facilitating deft movement - or impinging on such effort by uneven ability to run, pass or swerve.

The city giants usually have either Uhuru Stadium or Benjamin Mkapa Stadium as home ground, which are more suit-



Simba SC

able places as the ground is even and thus predictable display of soccer can be generated.

Building a spacious stadium close to the city center will be a plus for the game, despite that strictly speaking Benjamin Mkapa Stadium and Uhuru Stadium were sufficient, other than the Azam FC facility at Chamazi out of the city center but with a big fan base available.

A training spot at Bunju would have been for prestige purposes, and could by comparison with Azam Complex also be used as a venue since the northern suburb of Tegeta and adjacent placed (if by a ring road to Tabata and Buguruni) adds to the numbers.

But on the whole, Bunju is not comparable to Mbagala in fan base outreach, and long-range buses can be unreliable.

With the city likely to have four good stadiums in a few years and the regions having few comparable facilities, there ought to be more pressure for the regions to break the age-old monopoly of controlling stadi-

ums by municipal authorities and ruling party structures.

The reason is simply that they cannot put the stadiums on a modernized basis, but as in the TFF context in the city, they relish in being the masters of the situation, what some novelists and drama pundits describe as 'lords of poverty,' being bosses among poor populations.

Defying TFF is good in the sense of underlining capacities, but more needs to be done.

It is not clear if the current Ministry of Culture, Arts and Sports will be able to move in that direction, or it will listen to stakeholders in the current situation, and habitually ministerial authorities have no inkling of comprehending the private sector point of view.

Former minister, Harrison Mwakymbe, put up a salutary show of defiance about Simba SC key investor, Mohammed Dewji, issuing what he sort of believed were policy directives, that there ought to be at least three investors. The club defied that order.

At present, the other city center major side, Yanga, is also affirmatively in a shareholding or corporate structure, where it is known who the major investors are, but it goes as a company rather than a specific individual as with their rivals.

Admittedly the current major shareholders in Yanga shall be in a stiff test to see if they can imitate their archrivals next door, like building a stadium in another location, unless - true to their recent habits - they also launch a bid to build a stadium at Jangwani, their traditional home.

But they have themselves to thank for causing the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium fracas that led to the decision to build an archrivals structure a doorstep from their clubhouse, a rundown facility they will have trouble even being proud of it as their base.

It is only the beginning of their troubles, that is what it looks like.

Yanga set to rope in another goalkeeper

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YANGA is in the process of roping another goalkeeper to their squad after finding out that the outfit's number one goalkeeper Djigui Diarra will feature for Mali's national team at the 2022 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) finals in January.

Diarra is Mali's number two goalkeeper, behind DR Congo's TP Mazembe goalkeeper, Ibrahim Mounkoro, who is the side's number one goalkeeper.

The Yanga goalie, who has been signed this season from Mali's Stade Malien, is one of the West African nation's team's goalkeepers for the side that will take part in the AFCON finals in Cameroon.

Yanga, as a result, will be left with only one goalkeeper, Erick Johora, with Ramadhani Kabwili released recently.

The NBC Premier League leader is reportedly contemplating signing Ruvu Shooting goalkeeper, Mohamed Makaka, while also keeping tabs on Mbeya City FC goalkeeper Haroun Mandanda.

To make sure they have a competent goalkeeper, they have seen fit to sign the Ruvu Shooting goalkeeper, Makaka.

The Coast Region club's shot-

stopper has won fame among local soccer fanatics for his competence between the posts, even though his team has sometimes conceded defeat in top-flight ties. Apart from Makaka, Yanga is counting on Mandanda, if they would not recruit the Ruvu goalkeeper, to help Johora, who has missed the number role in front of Diarra at Yanga.

Yanga's registration committee is struggling to find the best goalkeeper as arriving in January without signing a new goalkeeper could be a nightmare for them.

Currently, there are two reserve keepers, Johora, and Geoffrey Yunus Magaigwa, a youthful goalkeeper promoted from the youth team, at Yanga.

Yanga has upcoming tough top-flight fixtures before traveling to Zanzibar to feature in the next year's Mapinduzi Cup slated for January.

The Jangwani Street side is enjoying Diarra's services between the posts after missing an ace shot-stopper in the previous season. The squad had two keepers, Kenyan Farouk Shikalo, and Metacha Mnata that were both battling for a place in the first team, both were shown the exit door.



Wakala Msomi beach soccer outfit's players take part in training session at Karume Stadium in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Kessie strikes twice as Milan beat Empoli to take hold of second place

EMPOLI

AC Milan midfielder Franck Kessie played a starring role by scoring twice in a 4-2 win over Empoli on Wednesday, leaving the Rossoneri second in Serie A at the midway stage of the season.

The Ivory Coast international was deployed in a more advanced attacking midfield position and excelled in the role by striking twice before half-time, either side of Nedim Bajrami's goal for Empoli.

An Alessandro Florenzi free-kick and a Theo Hernandez goal extended the visitors' lead before Andrea Pinamonti pulled one back for the hosts from the penalty spot.

"Getting back to winning was what counted today. We needed it for the league table and for our confidence," Pioli told Sky Italia.

Milan goes into a two-week winter break in second place with 42 points, four behind leaders Inter Milan.

A shock 1-0 defeat for Napoli at home to relegation battling Spezia means the third-placed Neapolitans are now three points behind the Rossoneri.

"We are showing that we are competitive again, but the final step is always the most difficult one," Pioli added.

Milan's recent dip in form coincided with a growing injury list, and star striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic was the latest player to be sidelined ahead of their trip to Tuscany.

But Kessie put in an impressive performance playing behind striker Olivier Giroud and opened the scoring by meeting a lay-off from the French striker to fire in after 12 minutes.

Empoli drew level six minutes later when Bajrami drilled a shot into the far bottom corner, before Kessie notched his second of by firing through the goalkeeper's legs.

It was the 25-year-old's 13th league goal of 2021, the most a Milan midfielder has scored in a calendar year since Brazilian great Kaka netted 15 in 2008.

Patrick Cutrone smashed a shot off the bar for the hosts, but Florenzi's free-kick found the bottom corner to create a two-goal cushion after 63 minutes.

Hernandez soon smashed in Milan's fourth from six yards to put the game to bed, before Pinamonti pulled one back from the spot.

Milan's evening was made even better by the result in Naples, where a Juan Jesus own goal gave relegation battling Spezia a surprise 1-0 win over Napoli.

The hosts had two goals disallowed and hit the bar late on as they lost a third consecutive home league match.

Thiago Motta's side was winless in six league games heading into Wednesday's clash but became the first team to win a Serie A match without having a shot on target since statisticians Opta began collecting data in 2004-05. REUTERS

Conte ready to give everything for Spurs ahead of Chelsea semi-final

LONDON

TOTTENHAM Hotspur manager Antonio Conte said he is relishing the opportunity to face former club Chelsea in the League Cup semi-finals after his side moved a step closer to ending their 13-year trophy drought with a 2-1 win against West Ham United.

Tottenham, runners-up to Manchester City in the competition last season, made it to the semis thanks to first-half goals by Steven Bergwijn and Lucas Moura on Wednesday.

Conte guided Chelsea to the Premier League title in the 2016-17 campaign and the FA Cup crown the following season.

"For sure it'll be nice to play against Chelsea for me," Conte told reporters. "I spent two amazing seasons with Chelsea and enjoyed everything there, but now I'm the manager of Tottenham and I'm ready to give everything for this club."

Arsenal faces Liverpool in the other semi-final and Conte said at this stage of the competition there is no easy draw.

"When you reach the semi-final, for sure in England to lift the trophy is very difficult. You find Chelsea, Liverpool, and Arsenal, then Tottenham."

"West Ham, they eliminated Manchester United and Manchester City. In England, the level is very high... Now let's see. It's a good game."

The semi-finals are scheduled to be played over two legs in January.

The last major trophy claimed by Spurs was the 2008 League Cup when they beat Chelsea in the final. REUTERS

From chaos to calm: How India have evolved since their last South Africa tour

By Karthik Krishnaswamy, ESPNcricinfo

THE last time India played a Test series in South Africa, they made an extraordinary start. Within 29 balls of the first morning in Cape Town, South Africa were 12 for 3, with Bhuvneshwar Kumar running rampant.

At the time, Virat Kohli had been India's full-time Test captain for three years.

His team had dominated every opposition at home and claimed re-sounding series wins in Sri Lanka and the West Indies.

They were now beginning a cycle of tours that would test their skills, their adaptability, and their ambitions to the limit, and they had made one hell of a first impression.

Over the rest of that day, however, Bhuvneshwar, Mohammed Shami, and the debutant Jasprit Bumrah demonstrated not just their obvious skill but also a sense of naivety, erring frequently in length and line in their over-eagerness for wickets, and 12 for 3 eventually turned into 286, a winning first-innings total on a Newlands surface that seamed from start to finish.

That chaotic energy pervaded the rest of that South Africa tour and the tour of England that followed.

Instead of the wickets and pulls and cover drives that would normally feature in a highlights package, we see this, India is bowling stump-to-stump lines with strong leg-side fields, and they occasionally drift too straight and concede a single or, on a couple of occasions, a boundary off a leg glance.

There's one off-side boundary too, off a defensive shot that's edged through a gap in the slip cordon.

Those two minutes and 48 seconds of non-highlights came from a passage of play in which India conceded 19 runs in 8.3 overs to two set batters - England began the day at 77 for 0 - in good batting conditions.

They were waiting for an opening, trusting that it would come, and making every effort to ensure that they relin-



Jasprit Bumrah leads a battle-hardened India pace attack. GETTY IMAGES

quished none of their control over the match by the time it came.

In place of the chaotic energy of early 2018, India radiated a sense of knowing calm.

Between the South Africa tour of 2017-18 and the one they've just begun, this is the biggest leap India has made as a Test team.

It is a product of their painstaking preparation - two ready examples being Ravi Shastri and Bharat Arun devising a 21st-century version of leg theory five months before their 2020-21 tour of Australia, and R Ashwin making Steven Smith his "obsession for about six months" - but also of their bowlers' ability to execute plans.

The Shami of 2021, for instance, is a vastly different bowler to the Shami of early 2018. He has the same skiddy

pace and flawless wrist position, but he is fitter and bowls with a better-grooved action, and is, therefore, less likely to stray in line or length by accident, through experience and success he has also grown more patient and trusting in his own methods and is less likely to stray by design.

India's attack has greater depth too, which has allowed them to rest their senior fast bowlers whenever possible, and to play four quicks as and when required, without a massive drop in quality between the new-ball bowlers and the second change.

As with any tour, though, this one begins with challenges. The absence of Ravindra Jadeja will test India's ability to play five bowlers, it remains to be seen if they trust the lower-order ability of Ashwin and Shardul Thakur enough to do so.

If they don't, they will need to find ways to manage the workload of four bowlers without compromising on the pressure applied on South Africa's batters.

The batting unit, meanwhile, is without Rohit Sharma, its form player of 2021.

And where Kohli, Cheteshwar Pujara, and Ajinkya Rahane were all 29 and in their theoretical prime during the 2017-18 tour, they are now 33 and with averages in the 20s and one

ICC to make \$3 million bid for cricket's inclusion in 2028 Olympics

By Tristan Lavalette, ESPNcricinfo

AFTER a stalled Olympic push over the last year amid internal politicking, the ICC is hoping to ignite a \$3 million bid with a lobbying and PR blitz ahead of a defining period likely to determine cricket's fate at the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

Cricket is already on the back foot having recently been excluded from the provisional list of 28 sports for the 2028 Games, an apparent blow for inclusion into the Olympics for the first time since 1900.

But that is not yet caused to panic, with a final decision only expected in 2023 when the Los Angeles 2028 Local Organizing Committee proposes additional sports - that process, rather than this provisional list is what cricket aims to be a part of.

Having publicly announced an Olympic bid only in August, the ICC has had a long-term view on inclusion, but those close to the process have been frustrated by the internal political upheaval that has stymied the bid.

"It took time to get the ball rolling," an official with knowledge of the ICC's bid told ESPNcricinfo.

"There hasn't been enough work done yet. There have been too many sideshows within the ICC."

There have long been grandiose visions of cricket reappearing in the Olympics and informal discussions between senior figures at ICC and

IOC were held as far back as during the Beijing 2008 Games.

The IOC had long courted cricket because of its following in South Asia, where the Olympics traditionally has not resonated.

Initially, however, reluctance from the BCCI and ECB proved stumbling blocks. But when they finally committed, the ICC's Olympic dreams were revived.

Late last year, a working group was formed by then-acting ICC chair Imran Khwaja that included independent director Indra Nooyi, then-ECB chair Ian Watmore, Tavengwa Mukhlani (Zimbabwe), and Scotland's Tony Brian who at the time was an Associate director. They were tasked with providing a detailed analysis of how cricket could be an Olympic sport.

But they never met, with Khwaja soon losing a bitter and interminably long ICC chairperson election to Greg Barclay.

Khwaja became deputy chair but was replaced as chair of the Olympics working group by Watmore, who had backed Barclay in the election and formed a close working relationship with him.

The post-elections focus shifted in the first half of this year on the tumult engulfing the ICC chief executive Manu Sawhney, who was relieved from his duties in July after allegations of bullying following a workplace culture review.



International Cricket Council (ICC) Chairman, Greg Barclay.

As chair of the ICC's HR committee, Watmore played a key role in Sawhney's departure and during this period "wasn't focused on the Olympic stuff", according to an official.

When the Sawhney

saga ended, attention finally reverted to the Olympics, with the ICC announcing its bid amid the Tokyo Games fervor in early August.

"We know it won't be easy to secure our inclusion as there are so many

other great sports out there wanting to do the same," Barclay said at the time.

"But we feel now is the time to put our best foot forward and show what a great partnership cricket and the Olympics could be."

The working group finally met for the first time in August and had been tweaked with the inclusion of USA Cricket chair Paraag Marathe and Associate director Mahinda Vallipuram replacing Brian.

A \$3 million budget was set aside for the Olympic campaign with some of the funds dedicated to travel to encourage working group members to fraternize with relevant stakeholders.

Taking the lead, Watmore immersed himself in the role and had meetings with high-level officials including LA 2028 LOC boss Casey Wasserman.

But Watmore's own sudden resignation from

century between them in the last two years.

A new coaching group is in place too, and Rahul Dravid and Paras Mhambrey are yet to establish the relationships with the players that Shastri and Arun built over their tenure.

The captain is now a captain in only one format, and his relationship with his cricket board is the rockiest it's ever been.

But a Test series is, at its heart, the contest between two bowling attacks, and South Africa is yet to complete the transition away from Vernon Philander, Dale Steyn, and Morne Morkel.

They have also lost Anrich Nortje to a hip injury. Kagiso Rabada, Lungi Ngidi, and Duanne Olivier - which seems the likeliest combination to play on Boxing Day - could still prove formidable in home conditions, of course, but measure that against the attack that started South Africa's last home series against India, Philander, Steyn, Morkel, Rabada.

India, meanwhile, has a bowling attack with skill and variety, and the know-how that has come from playing and winning Tests in nearly every part of the world.

That, then, could be their biggest reason to believe they have their best-ever chance of winning a Test series in South Africa.

the ECB derailed the momentum, as Barclay took the reins. "He (Watmore) was getting a move on and seemed to make more contacts than Greg, who might be busy with all he has going on," an official said.

At the working group's meeting last month, communications firm Burson Cohn & Wolfe was appointed and tasked with establishing a strong PR campaign.

It will identify and help engage the "critical influencers in and around the IOC", according to officials.

Famous former and current cricketers are also expected to be part of the marketing blitz as those close to the project know that no more time can be wasted after such a lethargic start.

"The worry is that we need to lift our game to be considered for 2023," an official with knowledge of the bid said. "Things need to happen now."

Gwiji by David Chikoko



Dar police hold 61 suspects allegedly engaging in crimes

By Guardian Reporter

DAR ES SALAAM Special Police Zone is holding 61 suspects for allegedly engaging in various offences including armed robbery, drug abuse and looting.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the zone's commander ACP Murilo Jumanne said the arrests were the result of a special operation to fight criminal incidents carried out from December 1 to 22 this year.

He noted that among those arrested were John Zakaria popularly known as 'Cobra' and seven others who are alleged to have been involved in armed robbery and money laundering offences in various parts of the city.

"Seven others are also being held in connection with theft of electronic devices in Mabwepande, Mbweni, Kinondoni and other parts of the city which were later sold in Kibiti district, Coast region," he said.

He said the items are 22 televisions of different sizes, two radios, five laptops and a car (Subaru) with registration number T410 DUS.

In addition, the force has arrested five suspected drug dealers with 16 grams of heroin and 34 others with 13.3 kilograms of cannabis.

Commander Murilo said legal procedures were being finalised to bring the suspects to justice and others have been already sent to

court.

He said the Force has also arrested three suspects for breaking and entering into warehouses of traders using fake keys and stealing items including 49 reference books, coins worth more than 1.6m/-, air condition and six bulbs.

In another development, three male suspects involved in car theft in Ilala district have been arrested with 24 side mirrors, six reverse cameras, four alarm remotes, two horns and one Centre Lock.

"In this as well as all the suspects will be brought to justice after the investigation is completed," said Muliro.

He urged parents and guardians not to allow children to travel without special supervision.

He wanted motorists and other road users to adhere to road safety rules and regulations to avoid unnecessary accidents, which include avoiding driving while drunk.

ACP Murilo further wanted the public to avoid burning tyres or damaging infrastructure on the basis of the end of the year celebration.

"The Dar es Salaam special police zone is well prepared and has strengthened its crime prevention systems. We will conduct patrols and searches so that citizens can celebrate Christmas and New Year peacefully," he explained.

TPA: Lorries to enter port after filling all cargo clearing papers

FROM PAGE 1

Authority (TRA) and the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) to enhance communication between them for increased efficiency.

"This long queue can be reduced or ended if you all work together because the port is not a place to rest and stay idle," he said, underlining that the government has taken various steps to reduce congestion at the port.

Fuel tankers have been allowed to pass the gate without checks, he pointed out, underlining that special check points for Lorries have been set up, in which case vehicles entering the port should have permits.

"This is not a place to spend three to four days. You must ensure that appropriate actions are taken against them as it is these permits that make people spend time here," he asserted, hailing TPA for a job

well done.

The director affirmed that the current speed in clearing cargo has helped to reduce vessel congestion and thus increasing revenue collection, noting that there were 18 vessels outside the port and 13 others inside the port, disembarking cargo.

Dar es Salaam port has a rated capacity of 4.1m tonnes of dry cargo and 6.0m (dwt) of bulk liquid cargo annually, with a total quay length of about 2,600 metres, and eleven deep-water berths.

The port handles about 95 per cent of the country's international trade, also serving the landlocked countries of Malawi, Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, a convenient freight linkage for the region to the Middle East, South Asia, the Far East as well as Europe, Australia and America.

Zanzibar seeking investors to develop its smaller islands

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE Zanzibar government has rented its 10 islands to eight potential investors who will manage and operate them to stimulate economic development in the Indian Ocean archipelago.

The move is part of the ongoing efforts to boost the blue economy and further open up more investment opportunities in Zanzibar's small islands.

Briefing journalists yesterday here, executive director of the Zanzibar Investment Promotion Authority (ZIPA) Sharif Ali Sharif said this the first phase and the government will also announce the second phase in the near future.

He said a total of 53 local and foreign investors expressed interests and demonstrated their ability to operate and manage investment projects, skills, and ability to conserve the environment, biodiversity, cultural heritage, and community development.

He said the investors were also required to have high end investment, financial capacity and lease acquisition cost.

The islands include Changuu, Bawe, Chapwani, Pamunda A and B, Kwale and Chumbe, all in Unguja. Others include Matumbini A, Njao and Misali, which are located in Pemba.

He named the investing companies as East Africa Investment Mauritius Ltd which will manage and operate the Misali island at a tune of US\$83

million; Group8 holding Ltd which will operate Kwale Island at a tune of US\$68 million and Bawe Retreat Limited for Bawe island at a cost of US\$30 million.

Others are Changuu Lodge Ltd which will manage and operate the Changuu Island at a tune of US\$20 million; Zantexas Investment Limited to manage Chapwani Island at a tune of US\$20 million and Chumbe Island Coral Park Limited for Chumbe Island.

Other investors are Tulia Zanzibar Beach Resort Limited for Pamunda A and Pamunda B at a cost of US\$30 and the Imperial East Africa Limited for Pungume at a cost of US\$10.5.

He said the government is expecting to get \$261.5 million from the investments. He said the two islands—Matumbini and Njao are yet to get investors, but efforts are ongoing to make sure they are given to investors in the second phase.

According to Sharif, the process was done in accordance with the Zanzibar Lands Act of 1992, adding the government does not intend to establish private islands.

"Citizens shouldn't be worried about this because we have taken into consideration their rights to use and access the islands. We have not prohibited any cultural and traditional events at the islands," he added. He said the government will issue guidelines to investors on how to operate the islands whereas job priorities should be given to Islanders surrounding the project area.



Minerals minister Dr Doto Biteko gives directives to Kahama market mining officers on business operations during his visit on Wednesday. Right is Shinyanga regional commissioner Sophia Mjema. Photo: Correspondent Shaban Njia.

IDA credit for land rights of 2m people

FROM PAGE 1

thus increase household resilience to climate change and other potential crises. This is crucial for Tanzania's economic development and poverty reduction," the statement noted.

LTIP will benefit individual and communal land holders and users for both genders in the targeted regions. It will also benefit public land sector professionals, obtaining the skills needed to support land administration, she said.

In the long term, beneficiaries will extend to the public and the private sector, using the data gathered for improved planning and investment. The government will benefit from increased tax revenues and other forms of land related revenue generation to fund the land

administration system, she affirmed. Victoria Stanley, World Bank senior land administration specialist and associate LTIP task team leader said the focus on capacity building and institutional strengthening for the land sector is consistent with global lessons in that field.

The latter shows that if the land administration system is not affordable, accessible and agile, people will not use these services and the transactions will be done informally, quickly making the property data out of date," she explained.

LTIP will contribute to predictable policies and transparent processes and procedures, essential for successful private sector investment, such as the systematic registration of land rights and

basic land administration system infrastructure.

Specific activities financed under the LTIP include those which increase tenure security, those supporting land information management such as scaling up the integrated land management information system (ILMIS) and property valuation systems, also financing opening land offices, apart from supporting land and housing tribunals.

Recent World Bank analysis has identified gender constraints in agriculture as including weaker access to land by women, while most occupants of land lack formal documentation to their land and property, "but men are more than three times as likely as women to claim to be the sole owners of land

or property assets," she stated.

To contribute to closing the gender gap on women's land rights, LTIP will promote gender equity in the mass certification activities by ensuring that women can register land either individually or jointly with their husbands with the full range of rights, the specialist indicated.

The project will measure progress on women's access and rights to land by, monitoring how many CROs, CCROs and RLs are issued and registered as husband, wife, jointly or as communal property. Data on the level of increased tenure security will be gender disaggregated, and finally, data collected on land conflicts will be gender disaggregated as well, she added.



Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) director general, Eric Hamissi speaks in Dar es Salaam yesterday during a meeting between Tanzania ports authority (tpa) and Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) officials. Right is Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) Deputy Commissioner General, Msafiri Mbibo. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

'Isles varsities must make Zanzibar zonal ICT hub'

FROM PAGE 1

where not a single university or educational institution in Zanzibar has a programme to teach important programmes on fishing and the development of ocean resources," he remarked. Colleges and universities must continue doing research to enable the community to solve the challenges they are facing, he emphasised.

The government understands that many colleges are faced with challenges regarding competition on new students' enrolment contributed by the increasing number of colleges, he stated.

He also commanded the SUZA leadership for collaborating with the government to prepare experts and

leaders at various levels in the 19-year period since its first graduation.

For his part, SUZA Vice Chancellor Dr Abdulkadir Othman Hafiz lauded the government for its efforts in developing the university, as it has provided expertise for many students in Zanzibar and the wider East African region.

Since its establishment in 1998 the university has enjoyed excellent cooperation from the government, enabling it to have helped attain its development targets.

SUZA academic Prof Haroonah Nsubuga said of the graduation that a total of 617 students qualified in various fields, being 345 women and 272 men, at certificate, diploma, bachelors' and masters' degrees.

International minerals market yields 5.8bn/- in govt revenues

FROM PAGE 1

totalled 23.86bn/-, with inspection fees reaching 3.97bn/- paid, compared to royalties totaling 11.038bn/- and inspection fees of 1.83bn/- for the current fiscal year.

"These achievements are a result of increased public awareness in mining areas on their rights and responsibilities as to mining licences, before engaging in mining activities. Proper supervision and above all, awareness among small miners on the health and environmental issues were critical," he said.

About 16 licences were issued to middle dealers, 12 gold dealers, two diamond dealers and 11 to small miners and dealers in minerals, he stated.

About 25 licences were issued

to big gold dealers and one to a diamond dealer who sells minerals to the Mwanza Precious Metals Refinery.

A total of 460 licences were issued to small dealers including 261 in gold, four to Amesthsty Co., 129 to construction firms for mines, 14 to dealers in diamonds, 37 to gold processors, five for gold carbon processing projects, including those located at Mkuyuni, Nyamagana and Misungwi, he stated.

Sotta Mining Corporation at Nyanzaga expects to exist for 12 years, produce 3.07m ounces of gold and employ up to 1,000 people during construction. It has been issued with a licence for a big mine and upon completion it expects to employ 600 people, he added.

SPORT

From chaos to calm: How India have evolved since their last South Africa tour

PAGE 19

USA seals historic T20I win over Ireland

LAUDERHILL

CHRISTMAS came early for USA on Wednesday afternoon at the Broward County Stadium as Gajanan Singh and Sushant Modani's 110-run partnership was the gift that kept on giving to the small but vocal crowd that chanted for the home side throughout a remarkable 26-run win over Ireland.

On a day that was historic from the start with USA hosting a Test nation in a bilateral series for the first time, the home team decided to put an exclamation point in the history books by marking the occasion with their first-ever T20I win over a Full Member.

Dressed in Ireland's neon green T20I jersey, Barry McCarthy looked primed to play the role of the Grinch after taking three wickets in a powerplay that reduced USA to 16 for 4 after the hosts had won the toss and chosen to bat first.

McCarthy nabbed USA captain Monank Patel second ball of the match pushing with hard hands at a back of a length ball edging behind to Neil Rock. Dot ball pressure led to an impetuous charge from Xavier Marshall playing around a length ball to be bowled for 4 in the third over.

Debutant Ritwik Behera was defeated trying to sweep Simi Singh to go leg before for a four-ball duck.

McCarthy was then given a third over in the powerplay and rewarded captain Andy Balbirnie by inducing a false flick off the pads from Ryan Scott to deep square leg for 8.

But just when it looked like USA's stockings were about to be filled with coal, Gajanan and Modani came to the rescue with a record-breaking stand, producing a new high for USA for any wicket in T20Is. The pair initially focused on soaking up pressure and seeing off the early storm as no boundaries were scored from the sixth through the 11th over when USA inched along to 56 for 4.

But Gajanan's slog sweep over wide long-on for six off Simi Singh in the 12th was a harbinger of the merry power-hitting to come as USA plundered 132 runs off the final nine overs. Up to that stage, USA had only scored two boundaries but finished the second half of their innings with eight fours and nine sixes.

The left-right combo of Gajanan and Modani also caused match-up problems against Ireland's bowlers who struggled to deal with the traditionally strong crosswind in Lauderhill that blew to the east grandstand on Wednesday.

Gajanan scored all but one of his five sixes to the east side, bringing up a 35-ball half-century with an edge to the third man boundary.

The partnership finally ended when Gajanan bottom edged a half-tracker from legspinner Ben White that was well held by Rock for 65.

Modani soldiered on with a fresh left-handed partner in Marty Kain, adding another 38 in quick time for the sixth wicket. After originally being included in the ODI squad only, Modani made the most of his T20I debut that came about as a result of a Covid outbreak in the USA squad by bringing up a 38-ball half-century. He fell one ball later to make it 164 for 6 with seven balls left, driving to long-off to give McCarthy one more wicket at the death in a spell of 4 for 30.

Gajanan Singh flicks one of his five sixes over backward square leg Peter Della Penna

In recent years during the Samuel Plummer era as pitch curator in Lauderhill, 180 has traditionally been a par score.

Mark Adair's fateful 20th over resulted in USA going well past that magic number thanks to Kain, who flicked two fours and two sixes in a 23-run frame.

With the wind blowing strongly to Kain's leg side, Adair misfired badly off the first four deliveries with the field set for wide yorkers. Instead, he fed Kain on his pads and saw the ball disappear over the east side rope on each occasion as Kain's unbeaten 39 off 15 took USA to a commanding 188 for 6.

Compared to USA's paltry powerplay score of 26 for 4, Ireland got off to a far more confident start in the chase behind the typically belligerent hitting of Paul Stirling, who muscled six boundaries inside the first four overs.

But after Balbirnie fell into a short ball trap at deep square leg to Ali Khan in the second over, Stirling succumbed to a nip-backer from left-arm medium-pacer Saurabh Netravalkar to fall for 31. Despite being in a solid position at the end of the first six with the score 54 for 2, Ireland's middle-order struggles from the T20 World Cup continued to rear their head in Florida as the innings struggled to regain any momentum.

Lorcan Tucker ended with an unbeaten 57 off 49 balls after entering at No. 3, but was scoring at less than a run a ball for the majority of his knock.

Wickets continued to fall at regular intervals at the opposite end as the fall of Curtis Campher on a charge gone awry to left-arm spinner Nisarg Patel ended Ireland's best partnership of the day for 33 runs making it 74 for 3 in the 10th.

By the time death overs specialist Khan took the ball for the 19th, Ireland needed 51 off 12 balls.

A yorker from Khan cleaned up William McClintock for 9 to put a stamp on the performance as USA's franchise T20 star ended with 2 for 30. While the result may be a sign that Ireland's prolonged form funk from the 2021 T20 World Cup is not going away anytime soon, it is also a warning to next year's T20 World Cup Qualifier field set to be contested in Oman and Zimbabwe that USA will not be content to wait for a free berth as co-hosts in 2024 to make their T20 World Cup debut.

AGENCIES

Simba SC, Yanga land easy group stage fixtures in 2022 Mapinduzi Cup



Yanga midfielder, Zawadi Maaya (C), celebrates with teammates, Abdallah Shaibu (R), and Adeyem Saleh after the former netted a goal in one of the 2021 Mapinduzi Cup tournament's fixtures which took place in Zanzibar in January.

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

MAPINDUZI Cup defending champion, Yanga, has been drawn in Group B with teams from Zanzibar in the next year's showdown, according to fixtures released by tournament organizers.

Yanga has been put in Group J with KMKM and Taifa Jang'ombe, whilst Simba SC is in Group C with Mlandege and Selem View.

Simba SC will begin its quest for lifting the showdown's title on January 6, whereas Yanga will begin its campaign on January 7.

The 2019 Mapinduzi Cup winners, Azam FC, have been put in Group A that also consists of Namungo FC, who are par-

ticipating in this tournament for the second time in a row. Zanzibar's Meli 4 City and Yosso Boys.

Group A will have two sides sailing through to the semi-finals while the other groups will produce one team each.

Mapinduzi Cup is organized to celebrate the Zanzibar Revolution which took place on January 12, 1964.

The Mapinduzi Cup is a tournament that was created by the Zanzibar Football Federation (ZFF) to commemorate Zanzibar's Revolution Day

which is marked annually on January 12. The first edition of the showdown took place in 1998.

However, the tournament now mainly attracts Zanzibar's clubs and clubs from Mainland Tanzania.

Since 2013, clubs from Kenya and Uganda have been invited to take part occasionally whereby URA FC and Kampala City Council FC have lifted the competition's title once.

Along with the Zanzibar Cup and Nyerere Cup, the three tournaments are the three main knockout tourna-

ments in Zanzibar. The Mapinduzi Cup maiden edition was won by Jamhuri FC.

Azam FC has won more than four trophies in this tournament. The Dar es Salaam outfit lifted the event's top honour in 2012, 2013, 2017, 2018, and 2019. Simba SC has the most appearances in the tournament's final. It has lost the tournament's title on five occasions.

The competition, which is scheduled to kick off on January 1, 2022, will end on January 13.

Annadil Burhani Cricket Club progresses to DC-MCC T20 Cup tournament's last four

By Guardian Reporter

ANNADIL Burhani cricketers have sailed through to this season's Balakrishna Foundation Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC)-Malabar Cricket Club (MCC) T20 Cup tournament's last four's stage with a six-wicket victory over Patel Brotherhood A squad in the last eight's clash that took place early this week. Experienced cricketer Abbas Adamjee's batting heroics proved crucial to Annadil Burhani Cricket Club's progression to the last four's stage, given the player saw to it the club comes out victorious.

Patel Brotherhood A side had a chance to start batting, amassing 96 runs losing nine wickets in 20 overs.

Dhavalkumar Patel was so far the cricketer with double-digit figure out of all members of

Patel Brotherhood A's top order, which seemed to have found it difficult to contain Annadil Burhani Cricket Club's bowlers.

Dhavalkumar posted 12 runs in his short stint at the crease, with Annadil Burhani Cricket Club's bowler, Adnan Zariwala, bringing the batsman's stint to an end.

Patel Brotherhood A's efforts to amass an imposing score endured a setback given there were two other early exits, which left the squad reeling at 66 runs in the 14th over and seven wickets were taken.

Ankurkumar Shah withstood Annadil Burhani Cricket Club bowling unit's pressure for a few overs to record 15 runs.

Tarpan Tailor and Chetan Patel were the other batsmen with two-digit figures as they notched 13 runs not out and 13 runs respectively.

Annadil Burhani Cricket Club's Adnan Karimjee, Akil Raja, Murtaza Kaderbhai, and Adnan Zariwala recorded two wickets



Annadil Burhani Cricket Club's Abbas Adamjee (L) gets the Man of the Match prize from Tanzania cricket legend, Kulbuddin Dossajee, shortly after the former's club faced Patel Brotherhood A outfit in this season's Balakrishna Foundation Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC)-Malabar Cricket Club (MCC) T20 Cup tournament's quarterfinal that took place recently. PHOTO: MCC

each as they successfully foiled efforts to record an imposing total.

With an achievable target in their sight, Annadil Burhani Cricket Club hardly wasted time given its batting unit got down to a successful chase for four wickets in 13.1 overs.

After openers, Adnan Karim-

jee, and Mufaddal Seifuddin had faced early exits, Adamji got his hands on the bat and executed solid knocks to help his squad come out victorious.

The top-order batsman's 41-ball 56, which consisted of seven boundaries and two sixes, had the club smoothly notch the victory.

The tournament, which is organized by MCC in association with DC and Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA), was officially inaugurated in Dar es Salaam in 2016.

The tournament, which was not held last year due to the coronavirus outbreak, involves 16 teams this time around.

The teams that have taken part in the tournament are Estim, Aga Khan SC, Shree Kutchi Leva Patel Sports Center (SKLP-SC), Tamil Nadu Sports Club, GP, Alaf Aces, K&P Constructions outfit, and Caravans Cricket Club.

Lions Cricket Club, Union SC, Sandy's Super Strikers, Annadil Burhani, Dar Cricket Club (DCC), Dar Black Panthers, Upanaga SC, and hosts, MCC, complete the list.

The 16 teams had been divided into four groups playing against each other in the round-robin phase, with the top two winners in each group qualifying for the quarterfinals.

The eight teams proceeded to the knockout stage and battled for progression to the semi-finals, with the last two reaching the finals.

The tournament had witnessed 31 matches be-

ing played during seven weeks, with the final due to be played at Leaders Club ground this month.

Other matches were played at the Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club oval.

Balakrishna Foundation is the competition's main sponsor. Other supporting sponsors include Estim Constructions Limited, Alliance Insurance Limited, Canara Bank Limited, Nida Textiles Limited, NTS- Bosch, Tanzanair Limited, Kivingu, Cosmos Group, Alliance Finance Limited, Eleven Agri Limited, and Rickshaw Travels Limited.

Unoplast Tanzania Limited, Honest Logistics Limited, Davis & Shirliff Limited, Hitech Sai, METL Group, Abacus, UC Unity, ABC Emporio, Flashnet, A-One Products, and Bottlers Limited are also the co-sponsors.

Essar Life of Style, Gathani Tanzania Limited, Aurobindo, Xtreme Fitness, Target Brands, Ahead Africa Solutions, Regal Pharmaceuticals Limited, Unity Computers, Tanzania Assurance Company Limited, and Wipro Technologies Tanzania Limited complete the co-sponsors list.

Flexibles by David Chikoko



Next census scheduled for August 2022 will not leave any group behind - NBS

By **Grtrude Mbago**

THE National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has said that the next census scheduled for August 2022, will not leave any group behind so as to ensure that the government gets correct statistics for proper development planning.

Anne Makinda, Commissioner of the 2022 Population and Housing Census made the revelation this week during the meeting that brought on board teachers with hearing impairment from various parts in the country.

The meeting was organised by the Association of Teachers with Hearing Impairment (CWUT) with support from NBS.

According to Makinda, the census will come up with clear statistics of the number of people with disabilities (PWDs) so as to plan for them better.

She said NBS is currently implementing a special public awareness strategy which aims to intensively educate, encourage and promote the participation of all people in the 2022 census.

Dubbed, '2022 Publicity and Advocacy Strategy (PAS)', the initiative aims to reach all people from national to the grassroots level with correct education on the importance of the census exercise.

She said NBS in collaboration with stakeholders are working to sensitise parents and families with persons with disabilities to give full cooperation to officials who will conduct the census exercise by giving them clear information.

Makinda said the country needs important statistics so as to enable it to plan and implement its development strategies effectively.

"The government is taking bold steps to ensure everyone is counted in the 2022 Census, using the

geographical Information System (GIS) technologies to demarcate the country into enumeration areas for the first time and adopting the combination of traditional and digital data collection," she noted.

Karim Bakar, CWUT director commended NBS for supporting the meeting to educate them on the importance of next year's census.

He acknowledged that there are no clear statistics on the number of people living with disabilities and the type of disabilities they have, because in the previous census families were hiding them.

Karim urged NBS to continue to work with associations for people with disabilities to ensure issues thwarting their identification are carried in consideration if the country is to reach the desired developmental goals.

"The exercise is very important in providing important statistics which will be used by policymakers in planning, setting development programs and monitoring their implementation, so I call my fellow PWDs to cooperate and come up to be counted," he said.



NBS is currently implementing a special public awareness strategy which aims to intensively educate, encourage and promote the participation of all people in the 2022 census



Sirari district commanding officer of Police in Mara region SSP Ukulule (R) destroys 89 bags of marijuana impounded from a man suspected to from a neighbouring country and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment by a court on Wednesday. Photo: Correspondent Samson Chacha

Waitara calls for public officials to venture into research, publications

By **Henry Mwangonde**

DEPUTY Minister for Works and Transport, Mwita Waitara has called on senior public officials to venture into research and publications in their areas of expertise to address various development challenges facing the country.

Waitara made the call in Dar es Salaam yesterday when speaking at the official launch of the book titled 'Climate Variability and Its Impacts in Tanzania: Climatology of Tanzania', written by Dr Ladislaus Chang'a who is the Director of

Research and Applied Meteorology at the Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA).

He said the book came at the right time when researchers are still working on studies to contain challenges caused by climate change. "I call upon civil servants to embrace what Dr Chang'a has done. This is extraordinary. We need to empower and encourage our people to do the same," Waitara said.

TMA Director General Dr Agness Kijazi said the book will be used in research, teaching and analysis of climate in the country saying

it will be resourceful as there are few publications on the area in the country.

According to Dr Kijazi an analysis by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) shows heat has risen to 1.1 degree Celsius and that it will reach 1.5 degrees Celsius by the year 2030.

The newly launched book provides an overview of the dynamics of climate variability in Tanzania.

The manuscript provides an overview of the general climate of Tanzania and the main climate

drivers and covers the analysis of trends of extreme climate indices including the trend in the numbers of warm days and warm nights.

It also provides a brief description of the drought concepts and drought climatology in Tanzania.

The book briefly overviews the impacts of climate variability in Tanzania focusing on quantification and characterization of the socio-economic impacts of heavy rainfall, floods and droughts but also provides highlights of the options used by local communities in coping with climate variability.



Iringa regional commissioner Queen Sendiga (L) leads Iringa district officials to visit development projects in Iringa district council yesterday. Second right is Iringa Urban district commissioner Mohamed Moyo. Photo: Correspondent Friday Simbaya

By **Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza**

Lukuvi calls for councils' involvement in preventing unplanned settlements

LANDS, Housing and Human Settlements Development Minister William Lukuvi has called on regional and district officials to supervise the issue of unplanned settlements saying anyone wanting to build a house should follow the laws governing Urban Master Planning.

Launching the Master Plan for Mwanza City Phase III for 2015-2035 that has cost 7bn/-, he said all the two councils are supposed to closely supervise the Plan is implemented as intended so that by 2035 it should be completed.

"Both Mwanza local councils including Ilemela Municipal Council are supposed to make sure to prohibit unplanned settlements, the step that will also do away with

land conflicts. Councillors should supervise the laws to prevent squatters," he said.

He also called upon people who have the habit of invading poor people's land, plots to stop doing so and Councillors and government officials should protect people who own land legally.

He said due to the population increase and economic opportunities therein, the government decided to re-plan the City by preparing a Master Plan to develop the city economically, socially and geographically whereas the entire country has come up with

26 such master plans.

Hence, he said in all areas of which their master plans have been completed, their development must abide by the plans while Councillors should be strict to make sure the plan is implemented.

He also called upon officials to be good land users by construction storied schools to eradicate challenges regarding distances walked by students to school.

"Mwanza is among big cities that is rapidly growing and is an economic commercial hub in the Lake Zone hence it has immense economic opportunities according to its

geographical location," said Lukuvi.

For his part, the Ministry's Director of settlements Development Deogratias Kalimenze said in regard to Mwanza City the Master Plan is the third one for its development, the first one was adopted in 1974 and the second 1992 and the current one in 2015.

He said the Master Plan was inclusive because it involved all stakeholders in areas where they were being prepared, a total of 37 sittings were held in Ilemela Municipality wads and Mwanza City and 16 sittings for the level of experts and stakeholders.

Increasing acts of GBV, child abuse retard economic development - RC

By **Guardian Correspondent, Kigoma**

KIGOMA Regional Commissioner Thobias Andengenyne has said the increasing acts of gender based violence (GBV) and child abuse retard government efforts to attain upper economy status due to the society not fully understanding their effects.

He made the remarks here early this week when opening the forum of the National Task Plan Against Gender Based Violence and Child Abuse (Mpango Kazi wa Taifa Kutokomeza Ukatili Dhidi ya Wanawake na Watoto - MTAKUWWA), saying in order to attain upper industrial economy status there should be the respect on other human beings.

"Even if we continue to build railways, schools, hospitals in places where other humans are humiliated by others, all these things will be valueless," he added.

He added that the economy will be beneficial if it will reflect human respect among the beneficiaries and eradicate all acts of gender based violence and child abuse.

"GBV has many adverse effects even making women shun economic activities and we know that here in Kigoma, the biggest labour force is women which has to be protected at any cost," the RC added.

He said if the community wants their children to get education, to be in good health there must be a war to protect the women and children.

He said the campaign touches every citizen as the violence in committed in various areas starting from the home, schools, open spaces and work places and in some cases they are perpetrated by trusted

close relatives.

He said the debate being raised should instigate the increase of the fight against these acts of violence.

For her part, the Director of Community Development Division from the Ministry of Health, community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children Mwachira Magwiza said since 2018 when the government launched MTAKUWWA, the aim was to reduce acts of gender based violence and child abuse by 50 per cent, and through these debates the percentage could be even higher.

"The government continues to coordinate and form various committees on children's protection and so far 18,186 committees have been formed out of the 20,750 that are required to be established," she said.

For his part Kigoma regional Community Development Officer Nyamara Elisha, said the region has formed 630 protection committees on women, equivalent to 100 per cent required.

Martha Jerome, one of the forum's participant said members of the community are the ones committing these crimes hence everyone has the responsibility to rebuke these acts by reporting the same to the police and be ready to provide evidence.

The forum, part of the National Task Plan against Gender based Violence and Child Abuse (MTAKUWWA) drew participants from various community groups in Kigoma Region including religious leaders, academics, NGOs, entrepreneurs, teachers, traditional healers, prominent people and journalists.

Farmer - pastoralist' clash leaves two dead

By Guardian Correspondent, Kilindi

TWO people including one identified as Mbelwa Mhamba from Kibirashi village in Kilindi District, Tanga Region have been killed during armed clashes that lasted for two days between Maasai pastoralists and farmers

During the clashes two guest houses owned by Maasai pastoralist communities in Kibirashi village are claimed to have been extensively damaged by a group of angry people with several people believed to be injured in the incident.

The incident, confirmed by the police, happened on Monday afternoon at the village farms before shifting to people's settlements.

It is also claimed that after the livestock invaded the fields, the farmers decided to confiscate the animals, the move that was fiercely opposed by herders.

Athumani Idi, one of the witnesses told this paper that when the farmers were going about their farming activities they heard screams for help and when they arrived at the area they found a person seriously wounded by a spear on various areas of his body.

"We decided to rush him to the hospital but what surprised us the herders continued attacking other people and yesterday, the second day of the clashes, the attacked and killed one of us," Idi said.

For his part, Saidi Ramadhani blamed defence and security organs in the district claiming they the source of the killings and destruction to property that occur from time to time by not taking any tangible steps against the perpetrators.

"We are used with such killings and so far more than five people have been killed by the Maasai herders, no steps have been taken, as they boast that they have the money hence they will continue killing us," he added.

Kibirashi ward Councillor Bakari Fau confirmed the killing of Mbelwa Mhamba during the clashes but he was yet to know the names of those wounded.

Fau appealed to the central government to intervene in the farmers/herders conflicts as they have been a threat to the lives of the people, as such incidents have been taking from time to time in the area.

However when this paper phoned the Kilindi District Commissioner, Abel Busalama for further steps that have been taken in the incident, the call remained unanswered.

Later the DC sent an SMS saying he was in a meeting at Kibirashi Village and later at Mafisa Village discussing the issue.

Tanga Regional Police Commander, Sofia Jongo promised to talk to reporters later as she was in Muheza District dealing with what she said a special operation.



We decided to rush him to the hospital but what surprised us the herders continued attacking other people and yesterday, the second day of the clashes, the attacked and killed one of us



Fire and Rescue Public relations officer Sgt Amani Hassan demonstrates on how to put out fire during the training for The Guardian Ltd employees at Mikocheni Light Industrial Area in Dar es Salaam yesterday. With him is TGL factory printing manager Balasubramaniyan Venkadachalam. The Fire and rescue number is 114

Mwanza RPC warns on emergency vehicle installation of systems

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

MWANZA Regional Police Commander Ramadhan Ng'anzi has directed heads of institutions, agencies and individuals who have illegally installed lights and ambulance siren sounds on their vehicles to remove them immediately.

RPC Ng'anzi accused some drivers and vehicle owners over failure to comply with traffic regulations

and road safety rules by fixing emergency warning lights, which are normally used or fitted to a vehicle for use when the driver wishes to convey to other road users the urgency of their journey.

"We are going to seize all the vehicles fixed with warning lights and ambulance siren sounds. Drivers will also be arrested and arraigned," he added.

RPC Ng'anzi warned drivers whose licenses have expired to

renew them, insisting to arrest and arraign them.

Traffic Police Commander, Wilbroad Mtafungwa said they will take stringent measures against any driver who will violate traffic regulations especially during this festive season.

"We will not hesitate to take stiff measures against anyone violating traffic regulations during Christmas and New Year celebrations. I also warn motorcycle drivers to avoid

carrying passengers beyond their capacity," said the traffic boss, insisting that all upcountry travelers using buses must fasten their seat belt for safety.

Mtafungwa said that traffic police conducted operations to inspect vehicles at different places between December 1st and 20th 2021, whereas a total of 122,950 buses were inspected, among them, 17,886 were those on transit and 1,024 were seized.



National Environment Management Council director general Dr Samuel Gwamaka (L) with environment officer Rajab Chaka (R) inspect harmful garbage dumped at Visegese area in Kisarawe district, Coast region yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Reporter

TASAF builds residential home for Kagongo dispensary doctor

THE Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) has constructed a residential house for the doctor in charge at the Kagongo village dispensary in Kigoma district so as to enable citizens to access health services smoothly and timely.

Minister of State, President's Office, Public Services Management and Good Governance, Mohamed Mchengerwa made a statement at the village when speaking with beneficiaries of the Fund.

Mchengerwa said the construction of the house has relieved the villagers of the delay in getting services as the

doctor who was serving them had to travel about 10-kilometres every day to the centre.

"We have succeeded in building this house, it was a bit hectic as the doctor was living far away from this area and had to spend a lot of time on the road to reach the dispensary, this was affecting people's health and lives," he said.

The minister said the government

through TASAF will continue improving social services so as to ensure that citizens receive smooth, quality and timely services.

"To achieve this, President Samia Suluhu Hassan has issued enough funds so as to facilitate implementation of various projects for smooth provision of social services," he added.

"Let me tell you that the

government under President Samia has issued 2.03trillion/-for the implementation of TASAF II phase three project, this means that we will reach all poor households in the country including those that were not enrolled during the previous phases," he explained.

Mchengerwa is in Kigoma Region to inspect the implementation of TASAF projects.

Shinyanga Prison overwhelmed with remandees and inmates

By Guardian Correspondent, Shinyanga

SHINYANGA Prison (Mhumbu) has raised concern over vast numbers of remandees and prisoners, a situation which has resulted in the shortage of accommodation.

Mhumbu Prison chief warden, William Makwaya made the statement yesterday when speaking after receiving 50 mattresses from Shinyanga Regional Commissioner, Sophia Mjema.

Makwaya said the Mhumbu prison faces accommodation challenges for both detainees and remands whereas the number has increased to 450 while its capacity is to accommodate 160 people in total.

"The number of remandees and prisoners is too high compared to our capacity. Our buildings here are meant to accommodate 30 women and 130 men," he said, adding that the congestion of prisoners threatens their health.

Speaking when handing over the mattresses to the Regional Head of Prisons, Lazaro Nyanga, Shinyanga Regional Commissioner, Sophia Mjema said the donated mattresses are meant to ease accommodation challenges at the Mhumbu prison.

She said the situation has been contributed by an increased number of prisoners and remandees.

Mjema said despite the fact that both remands and prisoners are wrongdoers; it does not mean that they should miss out their rights because they are also humans.

She said the only difference is that they have been detained to be trained, hence the need for the government to protect their health and ensure their rights.

"The mattresses we have handed over to Mhumbu prison has been donated by GSM. We are hoping to receive another 50 mattresses from the company, thus making a

total of 100 mattresses," said the Regional Commissioner, noting the government is determined to protect the rights and health of prisoners.

Shinyanga Regional Head of Prisons, Lazaro Nyanga thanked the RC for her efforts to acquire the mattresses which will help to solve accommodation challenges at the Mhumbu prison.



The mattresses we have handed over to Mhumbu prison has been donated by GSM. We are hoping to receive another 50 mattresses from the company, thus making a total of 100 mattresses



Dodoma region administrative secretary Dr Fatuma Mganga speaks with economic production groups of Dodoma for capacity building yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Lindi farmers urged to start sunflower farming

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

LIWALE District Commissioner in Lindi region, Judith Nguli has called on farmers in the district to grab opportunities in sunflower farming as a way to increase cash crops for more income generation.

She also dispelled fears that the crop was not introduced in the district to replace other cash crops; instead it is a further way for income generation.

The DC made the remarks on Wednesday this week when

distributing sunflower seeds to 112 farmers provided by Liwale Socio Economic Development Organization (LSEDO) a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO).

The NGO is engaged in sunflower cultivation and mobilising farmers to increase cash crops they cultivate instead of continuing to depend on cashew nuts, pigeon peas, sesame and maize.

"Grab this opportunity as a way to have an extra cash crop for income generation, it is not being introduced to kill other crops, but for your own

financial benefits," Nguli said.

The DC also instructed the District Agricultural Officer to direct extension officers to accord cooperation to the NGO to enable it reach its targets in developing sunflower farming in the district.

Ally Kamuna, the NGO's Secretary said they had planned to provide seeds to 237 farmers, but only 112 turned up for collection, and that it will send the seeds to them.

"As you know, many farmers live in rural areas and sometimes transport is a great challenge to

them, hence for those who did not turn up we shall send the seeds to them," Kamuna said.

He explained that every farmer has been given two kilos of the sunflower seeds, enough for one acre without mixing with other crops. "According to agriculture experts an acre can yield from seven to 15 bags of sunflower and that a kilo of the crop yields a litre of sunflower oil," he added.

He added that as for now LSEDO has 316 registered members from 20 wards in Liwale District.

Minister warns officials against development funds embezzlement

By Guardian Correspondent, Kishapu

DEPUTY Minister in the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG) DR Festo Dugange, has warned financial embezzlement in the implementation of various development projects.

Dr Dugange issued the warning here yesterday when inspecting expansion work at Negezi Health Centre and the construction of classrooms in Kishapu District.

He said the government has spent a lot of funds in various development projects; hence he would like to see the projects are built with high quality according to the money worth and that there should not be any embezzlement even of one cent. "I have inspected the expansion work to the Negezi Health centre and I agree that the work is of high quality but I warn against any embezzlement of funds," he added.

He said the health centre will be of great help to Negezi residents and the entire Ukenyenge Ward as it will incorporate surgery services.

Meanwhile the Deputy Minister lauded the construction work of classrooms in the district which he said were in good stage of completion while in others they were already completed with desks.

For his part, Kishapu District Commissioner Joseph Mkude,

submitting report on the health centre project, said they received 250m/- and the work was now on the roofing stage and expect to finish work in January next year so that in early February it should start providing its services to the people.

In regard to classrooms construction he said they received 1.9bn/- for 97 classrooms whereas in regard to secondary schools 81 classrooms will be built and 16 classrooms for satellite schools.

Some of Kishapu residents including Sophia Andrew hailed the government for the health centre expansion project as it would remove inconveniences to pregnant women who have to travel long distances for delivery services at Shinyanga Regional Referral Hospital.



I have inspected the expansion work to the Negezi Health centre and I agree that the work is of high quality but I warn against any embezzlement of funds

Ndalichako calls on VETA to research on news fields

By Guardian Correspondent, Kigoma

EDUCATION, Science and Technology minister, Prof Joyce Ndalichako has called on the Vocational Education Training Authority (VETA) to conduct research and introduce new fields according to the country's environment to ensure that its economic development aims are achieved.

She made the remarks on Tuesday when laying foundation stone at the 21-acre VETA College at Nyumbigwa Ward in Kasulu District, which is among four VETA colleges completed and 20 others to be completed by June 2022.

The minister also inaugurated a total of 18 completed buildings in the first phase costing 2.197bn/-, and seven buildings still to be completed in the second phased costing 1.2bn/- while 220.842m/- has been approved for purchase of furniture for the college.

Among completed buildings include workshops for masonry, carpentry, administrative buildings, 2 classrooms, dining room, three toilets, two teachers' quarters and two dormitories.

Prof Ndalichako said the main aim for VETA colleges is to ensure

students finishing schools with various skills, and for those continuing for further studies have the expertise to assist them in self-employment to solve the unemployment challenge.

For his part, VETA Managing Director Pancras Bajuju said so far there are 60 students who applied and selected to join the college, including 22 in motor vehicle repairs, 22 electricians and 16 in tailoring and stressed that they have 20 computers for courses in computing, and the courses officially begin in January 2022.

He also called on Kasulu government authorities to provide them with more land for the construction of the remaining buildings and for future expansion of the college.

For his part, Kasulu District Commissioner, Col Isaac Mwakisu hailed the Education, Science and Technology Ministry and pledged to take care of the infrastructures built.

Josephat Gerald, speaking on behalf of fellow Kasulu residents, said he was pleased for the government decision to bring technical education closer to them and that they will make sure they urge their youth to enroll for training at the college.

Rwanda's mountain gorilla population is growing

KIGALI, Rwanda

IN the Volcanoes National Park forest in Rwanda the population of mountain gorillas has seen an increase.

The conservation success story is now facing a different challenge.

The growing numbers of gorillas struggle to coexist in a shrinking habitat.

Prosper Uwingeli, director of the Volcanoes National Park, offers some context. "We have seen challenges, the challenges of the habitat because in the past 60, 50 years, the park lost 54 percent of its size. And when the effort was put in place for the mountain gorilla population to recover to the current numbers, the habitat has not changed", he says.

According to the last census, there are more than 1,000 mountain apes left in the world. The rising numbers, however, can lead to fighting between the primates,

according to the director of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund in Rwanda.

"The interactions themselves changed in the sense that they became very violent, and during this (interaction) period, we have recorded seven silverbacks' (male gorillas) deaths. So that's again a consequence of more groups ranging in the same area without expanding and going to the rest of the park, and thus leading to more intergroup interactions, and then more infanticides", says Felix Ndagijimana.

In order to improve the current situation, Rwandan authorities have decided to extend the park therefore providing more space to the mountain gorillas.

The expansion however means displacing some families.

Ten percent of tourism revenues in Rwanda is used for building schools, amenities and for a compensation fund.



Tanga region traffic commander Leopold Fungu speaks with passengers at Muheza bus stand yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

Report: Global malaria response suffered due to COVID-19

By Susan Chacko

GLOBAL efforts to tackle malaria suffered due to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in 2020, according to the World Malaria Report 2021 released December 6.

If expeditious action is not taken, the world is in the danger of seeing an immediate resurgence of the disease, particularly in Africa, the report published by the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned.

There were an estimated 627,000 malaria deaths in 2020, an increase of 12 per cent over 2019. Some 47,000 (68 per cent) of the additional 69,000 deaths were linked to disruptions in

the provision of malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

An estimated 241 million malaria cases were reported in 2020 in 85 malaria-endemic countries, increasing from 227 million in 2019. Most of the increase came from countries in the WHO African Region, the World Malaria Report 2021 said.

The WHO African Region, with an estimated 228 million malaria cases in 2020, accounted for about 95 per cent of cases. Twenty-nine countries accounted for 96 per cent of malaria cases globally.

Six countries – Nigeria (27 per cent); the Democratic Republic of

the Congo (12 per cent); Uganda (5%); Mozambique (4%); Angola (3.4%) and Burkina Faso (3.4%) – accounted for about 55 per cent of all cases globally.

Crucial milestones of the WHO Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030 have been missed in 2020. The 2030 targets will not be met without immediate attention.

India accounted for 83 per cent of cases in the WHO South-East Asia Region. Sri Lanka was certified malaria-free in 2016 and remains malaria-free.

Global progress against malaria had levelled off even before the pandemic. Countries with a high

burden of the disease were losing ground. Some 24 countries have registered increases in malaria mortality since 2015.

The WHO updated the WHO Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030 this year, incorporating lessons learned from the global malaria response during 2016-2020.

The lessons included stalled progress, the high burden to high impact approach and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new strategy called for tailoring malaria responses to local settings, harnessing innovation, strengthening health systems and ensuring robust global malaria funding.

Simiyu livestock officers called to ensure electronic branding

By Guardian Reporter, Simiyu

OFFICIALS from the Livestock Department and the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Division in Simiyu Region have been required to have a joint strategy to ensure the fixing of electronic earrings on livestock is implemented according to the aims intended.

Speaking on Tuesday this week at the seminar for the introduction of the new electronic livestock branding system, registration and tacking of the livestock in Simiyu Region, Acting Regional Administrative Secretary Eng. Mashaka Luhamba said the exercise should be conducted meticulously as Simiyu is among regions with big livestock population in the country.

He said regional authorities will make sure it makes a follow up and will need frequent reports on the exercise implementation to be assured of positive results to know the region's livestock population.

Dr Audifas Sarimbo from the Livestock Services Division of the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries told seminar participants that electronic earrings are fixed on animals aged more than three months and that the exercise will reduce intermingling of livestock from other areas.

He said the electronic earring identification system to be conducted countrywide will assist in better livestock planning and land use as well as assisting livestock keepers to access bank loans and

livestock insurance services.

He added that it will also assist to know the countrywide livestock population, in districts and regions and control rustling as every animal will have its details in the earrings that would also facilitate loans insurance to livestock keepers.

"The system will also assist in fighting infectious livestock diseases and enable the government and livestock stakeholders to have better veterinary services as well recovering the lost animals," DC Mfune added.

Speaking at the seminar, Simiyu Region Livestock Officer Juma Kazula said seminar participants agreed that by 15 January 2022 every district in the region will have prepared for the implementation of the exercise, the exercise that should be completed by July 15 next year.

Earlier, officials from the Livestock and Fisheries Ministry led by Dr Audifas Sarimbo met with the Simiyu region Administrative Secretary Prisca Kayombo for launching the guidelines on electronic livestock branding.

Kayombo said the earrings will assist in increasing value to livestock skins that used to be marred by the former method of livestock branding.

The electronic livestock branding exercise is being conducted according to the 2011 law and that a livestock keeper has to pay 1,750/- for each head of cattle and donkeys and 1,000/- for each goat and sheep.



Gidewari village chairman, Baltazari Akonay shows the tarmac drums which are stored at a road construction site by TANROADS which will be used to expand mount Dabir road in Manyara region yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jaliwason Jasson

TANESCO vows to continue improving working environment for its workers

By Correspondent Michael Sikapundwa,

Morogoro

THE Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (Tanesco) has assured its staff that it will continue improving the working environment so as to stimulate effective and efficient service provision.

Speaking at the firm's 51st workers' council meeting held here, member of the TANESCO's board of directors Zawadi Nanyaro said the firm has heard their challenges and it is going to work on them.

Nanyaro was speaking on behalf of the firm's board chairman Omari

Issa.

The meeting also hosted the national leaders from the Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (TUICO) and brought on board over 100 council's members from various regions in the country.

Nanyaro said management has accepted challenges which are facing its staff and it will continue addressing them through salary increment, increasing working equipment as well as promotions.

"We will table your claims on the board so as to make sure staff salaries and promotion are considered with the target of increasing morality

to staff members, so as to regain the lost status of the company to customers," she said.

Besides, the firm will continue putting a friendly working environment through the provision of working tools whose delay creates mistrust of staff members and company at large.

TanESCO's managing director, Maharage Chande, promised implementation of recommendations from the meeting with the target of increasing customers.

"To ensure sustainable electricity services, we have short and long term plans including the Julius

Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) which will produce 2,115 megawatts, Rumakali 222 MW, Ruhudji 358 MW and Kinyerezi 1 extension 185 MW. With this, we hope that power challenges will become a thing of the past in Tanzania serving all people and sectors," he asserted.

In efforts to combat fake TANESCO staff, commonly as 'vishokas', Maharage said the management has invested much on online services through social media groups as customers can access the services like charges of installation and emergency office call in case of electrical faults.

Wheat farmers urged to abide by modern farming practices for quality yields

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

WHEAT farmers in the country have been urged to abide by modern farming practices for quality yields.

They have also thanked the Crops Board of Tanzania (CPB) for enabling them to reap good harvests in the last season after loaning them the S Select' type of seeds and connecting them to financial institutions for loans.

They also called on the government's facilitation in getting fertiliser subsidy and low interest loans to enable them benefit more from wheat farming.

The farmers made the remarks at different times when speaking to reporters who visited them in their farms in Karatu and Monduli districts.

Assistant Agriculture Officer for Monduli Ward, Roy Mduma said during the last farming season, despite challenges of little rains and late acquisition of seeds including lack of fertiliser for planting, the had good harvests due to quality seeds.

"S Select' type of seeds is good because there were farmers who did not apply fertiliser but managed to harvest up to 11 bags of wheat per acre, but they could have harvested up to 18 bags had they used fertiliser," Mruma said.

He added: "We advise farmers to prepare their farms and farm inputs early so as to apply them in time as the climate will not wait for them."

In regard to loans, he said they have already discussed that at a meeting with institutions concerned

including Tanzania Seeds Co and pesticides dealers, and added that the seeds company including TARI-Seliani is the ones producing the 'S Select' type of seeds.

Mruma added that in regard to Monduli wheat farmers, beginning January next year are supposed to start preparing their farms so that by the end of February or beginning of March they should start planting.

"In the past, farmers in Monduli concentrated in barley farming because wheat, as a food crop was not in great demand but from last farming season they reverted to wheat farming after the government, through CPB decided to revive the crop via contract farming," Mruma added.

Daniel ole Laizer, a farmer from Lendikinyo Village, Sepeku Ward in Monduli District said the 'S Select' seeds have given him huge harvests, reaping over q18 bags of wheat per acre.

He appealed to Seed Co producing 'S Select' type of seeds to establish sufficient demonstration farms in their areas to enable farmers understand better on better farming practices of wheat.

For his part, a prominent farmer from Karatu district, Daniel Pareso said the main secret in getting good quality harvests is for farmers to make early preparations of their farms.

He said in the past he used to plant seeds obtained from various people that were of low quality harvesting about five bags of wheat per acre.



Petty traders chairman in Dodoma region Bruno Mponzi (2nd R) talks with Dodoma district commissioner Jabir Shekimweri who visited the area set aside for small traders along Bahi road recently. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

JOHANNESBURG

AFRICAN scientists and health advocates in Africa say they're deeply disappointed by a statement from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention about the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.

The CDC last week recommended the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines ahead of the J&J, because of concerns the J&J shot could, in rare cases, cause blood clots, or thrombosis.

The J&J vaccine is one of the most widely used in Africa, because it's a single dose shot that doesn't require ultra-cold storage. The South African health department has reassured people that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is safe.

African scientists and health advocates slam CDC recommendation on Johnson & Johnson vaccine

In a statement, the CDC said it was expressing a "clinical preference" for other vaccines over J&J.

"This updated CDC recommendation follows similar recommendations from other countries, including Canada and the United Kingdom," the CDC said. Still, the CDC said "receiving any vaccine is better than being unvaccinated."

But health authorities in Africa say the CDC recommendation has done "irreparable" harm to their vaccination efforts. They say that the

CDC's linking of the J&J vaccine with rare, but potentially fatal, side effects will spark widespread rejection of the vaccine on the continent, where other vaccines are mostly unavailable.

Fewer than 6% of people in Africa are vaccinated and the World Health Organization describes Africa as "one of the least affected regions in the world."

"I've been inundated with calls from people saying, 'You're poisoning us' and 'We don't

want to take this' and 'We're getting second-hand vaccines; we shouldn't be getting the J&J, we should only be getting the Pfizer,'" said Barry Jacobson, president of the Southern African Society of Thrombosis. "The CDC, by putting out this statement, has made people scared about taking the J&J booster, and they shouldn't be."

South Africa's top epidemiologist, Salim Abdool Karim, maintains J&J's vaccine is safe.

"If you had to just look at, for

example, thrombosis from cases of COVID-19, it's far higher than from what we see from the vaccine," said Karim, an epidemiologist at South Africa's University of KwaZulu-Natal, who previously advised the South African government on COVID-19. "So there's no question that this vaccine has a net benefit, even in the face of these side effects."

The CDC recommendation followed the occurrence of a rare and sometimes fatal blood-clotting issue, called thrombosis with

thrombocytopenia syndrome, or TTS, that specifically affected the brain, in people who got the J&J vaccine.

"We've seen thrombosis occurring with all the vaccines," Jacobson said. "But the fact of the matter is, if one gets COVID, the risk of thrombosis is massive. It's a much greater risk of dying of thrombosis from getting COVID than from being vaccinated and getting a thrombosis, where the risk is miniscule compared to the other group."

Jacobson was on the safety committee that oversaw one of the world's biggest vaccine trials, when half-a-million health workers in South Africa received the J&J vaccine earlier this year.

Denmark extends \$30m grant for climate-smart water and sanitation services in four drought-prone African countries

By Special Correspondent

THE Danish government has provided a \$30.1 million grant to the African Development Bank-managed African Water Facility to enhance access to quality water and sanitation for Africans living in four arid and drought-prone countries.

The grant will benefit rural dwellers in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Somalia under the Facility's Improving access to climate-resilient safe water supply and sanitation services in the Sahel and Horn of Africa program. The grant is expected to cover the period through 2025.

The program entails the rehabilitation, expansion and climate-proofing of water supply systems, sanitation and hand washing facilities.

"We are particularly pleased to contribute to this program, which is fully aligned with the new Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation called 'The World We Share,'" said Tobias von Platen-Hallermund, Chief Advisor in Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "One of the strategic pillars of this strategy is climate change adaptation and improving access to clean water so that vulnerable households will continue to have access to drinking water despite water-related shocks such as floods or droughts."

The program is expected to drive recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic in the four target countries, in part by mobilizing new investment in climate resilient water and sanitation infrastructure. "Regular hand washing with soap and water is a critical first line of defence against the virus. Unfortunately, even today millions

of people around the world do not have access to clean water and hand washing facilities," von Platen-Hallermund noted.

Oswald Chanda, African Development Bank Director for Water and Sanitation Development welcomed the Danish financing, which will deliver better hygiene and access to water and sanitation to an estimated one million people.

"Thanks to the support from Denmark, the African Development Bank will prepare four to five bankable projects ready for financing," Chanda said.

The program will also provide technical assistance to institutions and support efforts to reduce climate-related flood and drought risks in the target countries.

The grant funding follows the signing in February 2021 of an agreement by the Nordic Development Fund and the African Water Facility for an \$8.8 million grant, as part of the same program.

The African Water Facility has collaborated with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Nordic Development Fund since 2020 on the Sahel and Horn of Africa program.

The African Water Facility, established in 2005, assists African countries to mobilize financing, and to use the funds to address their water supply and sanitation needs. The Facility's goals are aligned with African Water Vision 2025 targets as well as those of the Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to water.

Denmark, a founding member, has provided more than \$37 million to the African Water Facility; NDF's contribution amounts to roughly \$15.2 million.



Ijala district commissioner Ngwilabuzu Ludigija (R) presents a dummy cheque worth 10m/- to Biko lucky winner Mikidadi Kaimu in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. Left is Biko Ambassador Kajala Masanja. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Special Correspondent

WITH the African Continental Free Trade Area operational since January 1, 2021, African countries have great e-commerce opportunities to exploit. However, they need well-adapted policies to take full advantage of this market.

Last December 17, the board of directors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group approved a \$1.5 million grant to Smart Africa Alliance, a grouping of 32 African countries, organizations, and international companies that share the vision of a single digital marketplace on the continent. The money, which comes from the African Development Fund, AfDB Group's concessional window, will be used to assess policy gaps in the digital and e-commerce ecosystems

Alliance secures \$1.5million AfDB grant to improve e-trade in Africa

of ten countries, including Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Uganda, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Republic of Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"One of the critical challenges preventing the continent from preparing for Africa's bold new future is the inability to conduct cross-border payments for goods and services due to a lack of solutions and crippling policies. Our partnership with the African Development Bank is crucial in creating an enabling environment to advance e-payments, and the digital

economy is essential for Africa's renaissance," said Lacina Koné (pictured), CEO of Smart Africa.

As part of its mission, Smart Africa Alliance will consult public and private sector players to develop an e-learning program that will directly benefit 600 stakeholders. These include government officials, SMEs, and private mobile operators; 2,500 other stakeholders are expected to be impacted indirectly.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) gathers 1.2 billion people and a GDP of \$2.5 trillion in the 55 member states of the African Union. It is presented

by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) as a bearer of tremendous opportunities for e-commerce on the continent. But for this prospect to become a reality, the legal framework in each African nation needs to comply with international trade standards. According to Nicholas Williams, the Bank's Division Manager for ICT Operations, "this project is both timely and vital. For the continent to create a unified digital market by 2030, efforts should focus on harmonizing and building a cohesive policy environment for intra-continental trade."



Kilindi district magistrate in-charge Mariam Mfanga speaks with Kwastemba villagers at Bokwa ward in Tanga region during the Ethics and Human Rights day held at district level recently. Photo: Correspondent DegeMasoli

By Special Correspondent

AFRICAN Innovators in the education sector took centre stage at the 2021 RewirEd summit, which took place at the Expo 2020 Dubai.

The summit, led by Dubai Cares, and delivered in partnership with global stakeholders, presented an opportunity for the global education community to gather as a collective to scale and jumpstart some of the positive change the sector wants to see in education.

The African Union presented to the world, gathered at Expo 2020 Dubai, this year's finalists in the Innovating Education in Africa (IEA) challenge.

A full circle moment, where five innovators who made it to the finale,

AU awards 3 outstanding education innovations at RewirEd Summit

having outshined 50 of their peers in the preliminary rounds; had the privilege of pitching their ideas to a global audience.

The Innovating Education in Africa (IEA) is a flagship programme of the African Union Commission and Partners, intended to identify and promote practical social and technological innovations aimed at enhancing access, quality, relevance and inclusion in education in order to release the potential for empowerment, employability and inventiveness, as stipulated in the

Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25).

Since its establishment in 2018, the IEA program has identified 140 innovations from over 40 African countries and invested up to 500,000 USD to promote and support their growth.

The Acting Head of the Education Division, Hambani Masheleni, highlighted the critical need for adopting innovations within Africa's education systems and the need to ensure quality, relevance, and inclusion from the early years.

He underscored the importance of public-private partnerships to build and sustain ecosystems that support scaling of innovations and education outcomes, to drive Africa's development agenda under Agenda 2063.

Out of the five finalists, three innovators were awarded grants that will be used to undertake pilot projects in collaboration with African Union Member States, to create reference points for scaling innovation in education and training.

Understanding human-elephant conflict and vulnerability in the face of climate change

By Special Correspondent

DESPITE all that is known about the challenges of human-wildlife conflict, however, measuring its impact on human livelihoods is complicated.

An international team of researchers, including Northern Arizona University professor Duan Biggs, spent three years investigating the dynamics between wildlife, people and the environment across the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, the world's largest terrestrial trans boundary conservation area, extending across five African countries.

The study, led by Jonathan Salerno of Colorado State University and funded by the National Science Foundation, involved a large team of collaborators, including researchers from the University of Colorado Boulder, the University of Louisville, the University of California Berkeley, the University of North Carolina Wilmington, the University of Botswana, the University of Namibia, Stellenbosch University and Griffith University as well as The Nature Conservancy South Africa and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife of Zambia.

As described in their paper recently published in Current Biology, "Wildlife impacts and changing climate pose compounding threats to human food security," the team used interdisciplinary approaches across a wide study area to better understand how climate change interacts with human-elephant conflict to affect household food insecurity.

The goals of the project were to identify the socio-ecological conditions and patterns that affect household and community vulnerability and to determine leverage points that may aid in mitigating how land-use decisions and land-cover change affect

vulnerability in the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area in southern Africa. The investigators combined household surveys and participatory mapping to characterize how indicators of vulnerability shape smallholders' land use decisions. They integrated data on the environment, market factors, government policy and subsidies, culture and ethnicity and the presence and intervention of non-governmental organizations with remotely sensed imagery to compare trajectories of land-use and land-cover change with underlying socio-ecological drivers. By advancing the understanding of vulnerability, this research identifies how vulnerability influences and is affected by socioeconomic and biophysical drivers at multiple scales.

"The project as a whole is focused on understanding human vulnerability and adaptive capacity in the context of environmental change," Salerno said. "Taking a systems-level view of this problem is important because we're studying human vulnerability, which can be defined and impacted by many different things."

Another important finding of the study was that the people within these affected communities have the adaptive capacity to gather food resources and buffer the impacts of elephant conflict and short rain seasons. Although the individual communities may be resilient, larger institutions such as governments and aid organizations are not currently sufficiently supporting effective risk mitigation or risk reduction strategies for households. The team also advocates that in addition to habitat protection, there need to be appropriate resources and funding put toward human-wildlife conflict mitigation programs to support the conservation of African savannah elephants.

FRIDAY 24 DECEMBER 2021

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

TRC should heed Waitara directives on inspection of railways infrastructure

A few days ago, while in inspection visit of Katavi region, Works and Transport Deputy Minister, Mwita Waitara was upset by the decrepit infrastructure and poor services that he found at Mpanda Railway station.

Among others he found the station lacking a passengers' waiting room and this deficiency, he was told, existed since train services were established at the station over 70 years ago.

He learned that passengers buying tickets had to queue in the open, sometimes exposed to the elements to be accorded the service and had to remain so until they board the train.

In the circumstances the Deputy Minister directed Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC), the country's rail transport operator to make inspections of its all railway station buildings including other infrastructures, saying conditions in some of them could be even worse.

In fact, the recent history of our railway system is synonymous, if not closely associated, with anguish, ineptitude, lack of accountability, corruption, negligence and wrong decisions. But negligence has been causing very devastating effects.

At one stage, and this was after independence, there was a rampage of uprooting of the railway infrastructures, done for absolutely nothing, as one can let himself look back.

During the early years of our independence the government decided to uproot what was called the Southern Line that ran from Nachingwea to Masasi instead of extending it to the eastern shores of Lake Nyasa. We are now considering of doing exactly that -- reconstructing the railway in the proposed Mtwara

Development Corridor project.

The Manyoni-Singida line was also uprooted, only to be reconstructed 20 years ago at great cost. And in late 60s the Kaliua-Mpanda line was also lined up for dismantling but was only spared because some cooler heads prevailed.

The Tanga-Arusha and the Ruvu-Mnyusi lines, the latter inaugurated during the last years of British colonial rule, were also spared of uprooting, but instead left to die a natural death, with scrap metal dealers reaping from the infrastructure's sleepers, bolts and nuts.

The two lines were rehabilitated during the Phase V government of President John Magufuli.

And talking about negligence, this has wrought much havoc to the railway transport operations and its infrastructures in terms of accidents.

To mention but a few - in early 1992 a passenger train plunged into a flooded river near Kilosa killing scores of passengers. The Station Master allowed the train to proceed while aware of the danger from the heavy downpours in the flood prone area. But the clearest case of negligence by railway officials resulted in the biggest train accident in the country's history in 2002 that involved a passenger train.

Over 300 passengers perished after the passenger train they were travelling in backtracked at high speed and crashed near Dodoma from what was clearly locomotive failure. Or, correctly, from gross incompetence by TRC officials for letting a defective locomotive haul the passenger train.

So it is time TRC takes the Deputy Minister's directives - to inspect its infrastructures for both the convenience and safety of passengers.

Africa needs to chart a new path forward for public health

THE first International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2021) comes at a critical time on the continent and in the world. COVID-19 has strained health systems globally, and with limited access to vaccines in Africa, the pandemic has laid bare deep inequities in access to healthcare and scientific innovations. We hope CPHIA will create a unique platform where African researchers, policymakers and stakeholders can share perspectives and research findings in public health, while ushering in a new era of strengthened scientific collaboration and innovation across the continent.

The African Union (AU) and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) recently opened the first international Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2021), with over 10,000 participants expected from 140 countries around the world.

The conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia features presentations from African heads of state and government, dignitaries and leading health experts, who discussed how to accelerate progress against COVID-19 and chart a new path forward for public health on the continent.

CPHIA 2021 comes at a critical time for Africa and the world since COVID-19 has strained health systems globally, and with dangerously limited access to vaccines across Africa, it has laid bare deep inequities in access to healthcare and scientific innovations.

Less than 20 African countries met the global goal of vaccinating at least 10 per cent of the adult population by 30 September 2021,

while nearly 90 per cent of high income-countries met this target. As of 3 December 2021, only 7 per cent of the African population has been fully vaccinated, as many countries face a surge in new infections and the emergence of the SARS-CoV-2 variant of concern Omicron.

"CPHIA 2021 is creating the foundation that will allow us to usher in a new era for science, partnership, and innovation on the continent," said Prof. Senait Fisseha, CPHIA 2021 co-chair and Director of Global Programmes at The Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation. "The hope is that this will become the preeminent annual health gathering in Africa - where policymaker, researchers, advocates, community organisations and more come together to learn, address challenges and chart a path forward together. There are major changes ahead for health on the continent, and this is just the beginning."

"Africa has some of the most sophisticated research institutions and talented scientists in the world, who have been closely monitoring COVID-19 and rapidly sharing their knowledge," said CPHIA 2021 Co-Chair and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Global Health Equity, Professor Agnes Binagwaho. "CPHIA 2021 will provide the platform to both highlight their incredible contributions and allow for strengthened collaboration across sectors so we can better respond to current and future health crises and achieve health equity."

CPHIA 2021 is a virtual event and is free for all participants. It will feature seven scientific plenaries and eight parallel sessions, and more than 40 side events that focus on the main pillars of the African Union's New Public Health Order to meet the aspirations of Agenda 2063 - the Africa We Want.

The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

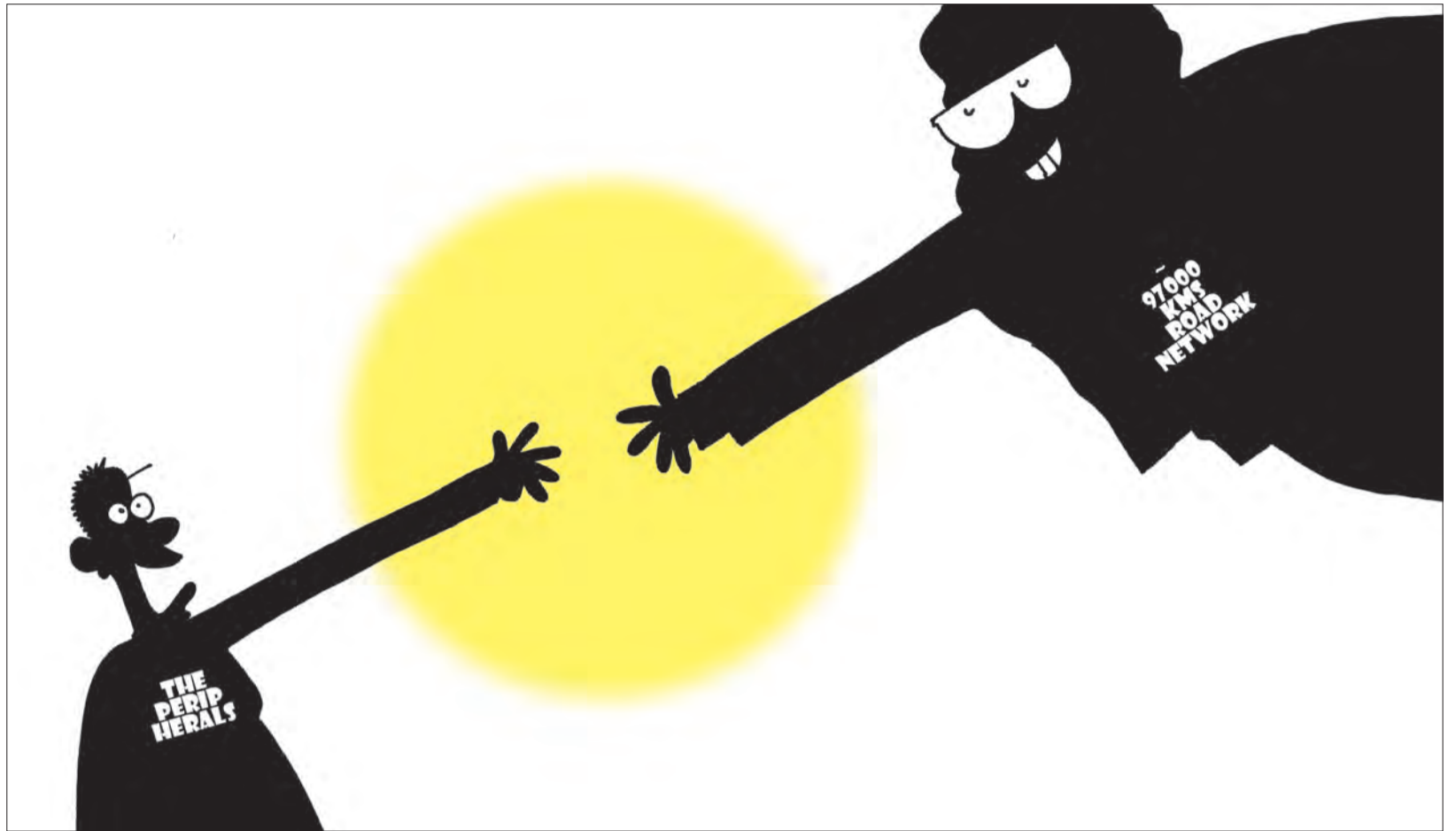
Managing Editor: WALLACE MAUGGO
Circulation Manager: EMMANUEL LYIMO

Newsdesk

News Editor: LUSEKELO PHILEMON
0757154767
General line: 0745700710
E-mail: guardian@guardian.co.tz

Advertising

Mobile: 0782253676
E-mails: advertise@guardian.co.tz
Website: www.ippmedia.com
epaper.ippmedia.com



By Special Correspondent

THE United Nations Population Fund's 'kNowVAWdata' initiative asserts that immediate

action is needed on the issue of violence against women.

When COVID-19 swept across the world in early 2020, countries fell like dominoes into states of lockdown. In this environment, concern grew that violence against women perpetrated within their own families - mostly by husbands or intimate partners - would escalate. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) projected that COVID-19 would cut global progress towards ending gender-based violence within this decade by at least one-third.

Efforts to collect this data have continued, however. This information is key to shedding light on the fact that violence against women is a critical global public health emergency that requires ongoing attention.

Over the years, governments and development partners have realized the impact of violence against women on individual health, family stability, and society as a whole. The UN Sustainable Development Goals also include hard targets

Violence against women is a global health emergency!

on elimination of all forms of violence against women and call for collection of data to show advances towards this. Countries need robust data to understand the extent and dimensions of this issue, and to measure progress towards addressing it.

In the "big data" era, collecting information has never been easier. Researchers can gather huge amounts of data passively, with digital tools such as social media and mobile technology providing unprecedented reach. These tools are inadequate to measure the prevalence of violence against women, however, while administrative data such as police, hospital or helpline records only reveal part of the problem. Population-based surveys can go much further in painting a more accurate picture. It was out of this realization that the kNowVAWdata initiative was born to help collect and understand data on violence against women (VAW).

The kNowVAWdata initiative was launched in 2016 by UNFPA's Asia-Pacific Regional Office supported by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It enables individuals, research teams and countries to collect reliable, comparable prevalence data in a way that protects and empowers both those collecting the data and the women who share their stories and experiences. The initiative is built on existing gold standard practice methods and tools.

Some violence against women is rooted in social norms around discipline; some is an expression of an ownership ideology towards women and girls. The kNowVAWdata surveys use in-depth, mixed-methods research that both quantifies prevalence and yields qualitative data to tell women's individual stories. This helps to lift the veil and reveal the origins and dimensions of different types of violence against women.

Conducting a VAW survey can be an experience that is both heart-rending and uplifting in equal measure. This was the case in Mongolia, for example, where the kNowVAWdata team worked with the National Statistics Office to design and implement the country's first national VAW survey in 2017. That summer, 15 teams fanned out across all 21 of Mongolia's provinces, overcoming logistical challenges, a forbidding landscape and harsh weather conditions to interview more than 7,300 women.

One of these interviewers, Badmaa, explains the sense of mission and the strong empathy researchers everywhere take with them to the field. "I wanted to help women like me who have experienced violence," she says. "I could see my own life flash before my eyes when I listened to them. Sometimes when the women were afraid I told them about my own story and they were able to open up to me."

Weah government corruption wounds deepen

By Special Correspondent

LAST week Thursday, December 9, 2021, economic sanction imposed on a key supporter of President George Manneh Weah, Senator Prince Yormie Johnson (Nimba County) by the United States Treasury Department brings to three, the number of direct interventions by the U.S. Government against graft and uncontrollable misuse of public funds under the Weah-led government.

Under its Global Magnitsky Act, the U.S. Treasury records that Senator Johnson has been involved in pay-for-play funding with government ministries and organizations for personal enrichment, detailing that as part of the scheme, upon receiving funding from the Government of Liberia (GOL), the involved government ministries and organizations launder a portion of the funding for the return to the involved participants. It says the pay-for-play funding scheme involves millions of U.S. dollars, and that Senator Johnson has also offered the sale of votes in multiple Liberian elections in exchange for money. Hence, Johnson is designated

pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being a foreign person who is a current or former government official, or a person acting for or on behalf of such an official, who is responsible for or complicit in or has directly or indirectly engaged in, corruption, including the misappropriation of state assets, the expropriation of private assets for personal gain, corruption related to government contracts or the extraction of natural resources, or bribery.

Similarly last year, on International Anti-Corruption Day, December 9, 2020, the U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned Liberia's renowned lawyer and senator, Harry Varney Gboto-Nambi Sherman, for corruption and bribery, blocking his assets.

OFAC noted that Senator Sherman, who chairs the Liberian Senate Judiciary Committee, offered bribes to multiple judges associated with his trial for a 2010 bribery scheme during the former Sirleaf administration, and he had an undisclosed conflict of interest with the judge who ultimately returned a not guilty verdict in July 2019.

Then on Thursday, September 10, 2020, the United States Government barred former Liberian passport

director Andrew Wonplo and his entire family from traveling to America "due to his involvement in significant corruption."

Former U.S. Secretary of State under the Trump administration Michael R. Pompeo explained that in his official capacity at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia from 2018 to 2019, Mr. Wonplo was involved in passport fraud that undermined the rule of law, reduced the Liberian public's faith in the current government's management of identification and travel documents, and compromised the integrity and security of immigration processes.

"This designation is made under Section 7031(c) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2020 (Div. G, P.L. 116-94)", read a statement that was published on the United States Embassy's website in Monrovia in 2020. "In addition to Mr. Wonplo, I am announcing the public designation of his spouse, Dennice Wonplo, and their minor children", Mr. Pompeo added.

There are more officials or former officials to be designated for corruption in Liberia, according to the United States Government, and Liberians are edgy to know who

may be the next corruption official to get on the U.S. corruption watch list, especially so when officials at the National Port Authority from the Managing Director down to branch managers are entangled in corrupt deals that breed conflict of interest.

These self-inflicted wounds under the current administration are undermining transparency and accountability in the public sector and eroding the trust of both Liberians and international partners with adverse future consequences.

President Weah should listen now and take a cue from signals coming out of Washington, DC to demonstrate leadership over the state of affairs rather than allow himself to be surrounded by cronies. In other words, the government should match words with deeds in its corruption fight. Anything short of this is nothing but mere lip service.

Corruption is depriving citizens of basic social services, including health, education, safe drinking water, electricity, and security, etc. The Weah administration has a choice to heal the current wounds as a result of corruption or continue to self-destruct.

Eliminating gender-based violence key to achieving equality

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

TANZANIA recently joined other countries across the world to celebrate 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) which affects mainly women, girls and children.

The campaign was initiated by the Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991 and is supported by the United Nation's initiative to end GBV by 2030.

Speaking recently in Dar es Salaam during a symposium organized by TGNP-Mtandao, the organization's Executive Director Lilian Liundi said that since its establishment in 1993, they have been working jointly with other players in the country to attain zero GBV.

She said this year their Knowledge Centres located in 15 districts across the country organized and carried out various campaigns against GBV affecting women and children.

According to Liundi, this year's country slogan was 'Citizen, end gender based violence now.' Internationally the slogan was 'Orange the World: End violence against women now.'

While commemorating event, TGNP focused on evaluating how the available funds set aside to implement the national plan of action against GBV are spent to end the vice.

"These celebrations give us a rare opportunity to think, discuss and internalize the achievements attained in the war against GBV. Also, we discuss the challenges and lessons we learn," she said.

"We eventually establish common strategies and voice on how to address GVB against women and children."

GBV has become national tragedy not only in Tanzania but even other African countries, resulting in many deaths, disabilities, humilia-



Minister for Industry and Trade Prof Kitila Mkumbo (second right) in a group photo with gender rights activists during a symposium organized in Dar es Salaam recently by TGNP-Mtandao. Photo/Daniel Semberya

tions and lowering the dignity of women, girls and children."

It is prevalent to the extent that one third of women report to have faced GBV in one form or the other, including rape.

Liundi said that GBV has negative impact not only to women, but also to the national economy, development and social welfare in general.

According to a report by the World Bank, Tanzania loses 1.2 per cent of its national GDP due to acts of GBV. African countries lose around USD 105 million due to lack of gender equality.

"GBV is preventable and we can end it if all of us join hands and if everyone fulfills their responsibility," she said.

"We should not forget that gender equality is a foundation for building the

world we want. And the world we want is the one which is free of GBV against women and children."

The guest of honour at the symposium, Minister for Industry and Trade, Prof Kitila Mkumbo said that anything that tries to remove the dignity and right of a person should be dealt with relentlessly.

He said among other things, the powerful weapon to end GBV is education and life skills.

"When women and girls are empowered with skills that make them financially stable, they are automatically liberated from GBV and other harassments from their partners," he said.

Nasieku Kisambu who deals with governance, rule of law, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health rights at

the Swedish Embassy in Dar es Salaam commended the government for the efforts and resultant progress made so far in collaboration with civil society organisations and other stakeholders in addressing GBV.

"We commend the opening of space and commitments towards gender equality. Our work on gender equality is core," she said.

"We are mindful and strategically aligned to the agenda 2030 on sustainable development goals (SDGs), Beijing Declaration and platform for action and other regional and international commitments."

She added: "We are honoured to be part of this symposium. This is because this agenda is our core business and because

TGNP has been our key partner, contributing to our flagship result area on gender equality."

Kisambu added that the embassy is guided by the Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy which aims to ensure women and men have same powers to shape society and their own lives.

"Our current bilateral strategy for Tanzania has four result areas namely human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality. We featured 16 champions committed to fighting inequalities, toxic masculinities and all kinds of violence against women and girls," she said.

Kisambu said that even after the 26 years of Beijing Conference, too little has changed.

"We are committed to taking an intersectional and right based perspective in addressing discriminatory socio norms, legislations, measures and behaviours."

To end GBV calls for broad efforts through a multi-sectoral approach to normatively and operationally address the root causes of violence, focus on prevention, promote accountability, engage men and boys, support women's rights organizations, feminists' movements and civil society organisations, she said.

"We all need each other to address this agenda. We need good laws and policies, we need prevention strategies and norms, we need adequate financing, we need accessible and available services, we need data and accountability and we need education among other things," she said.

Helen Fytche Head of Cooperation at Global Affairs Canada said that her country is proud to joining the 16 days of activism campaign to reaffirm her commitment to supporting action and to add voice to the countless activists, women's rights groups and organisations working to end GBV in Tanzania.

"Canada strongly believes that advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is both the right thing to do and the most effective way to reduce poverty and inequality, and build a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world," she said.

This year's world theme: 'Orange the world: End violence against women now' speaks not only on the urgency of ending GBV but also to the fact that vice has been a reality for women and girls for too long.

"Recognising that women's rights organizations and movements are on the frontlines of transforming entrenched gender norms and harmful practices, Canada has committed USD5 million towards our Women's Voice and Leadership initiative to support local women's rights organizations in Tanzania to advance the empowerment and rights of women and girls, including eliminating GBV," she said.

Blue ocean solutions for climate resilience, accelerated development

COUNTRIES like the Seychelles and Belize, with coastal blue carbon ecosystems are increasingly looking to the ocean for climate change and business solutions.

Nairobi, Kenya, Dec 22 2021 (IPS) - Seychelles' 115 islands are an exotic ocean ecosystem of beaches, coral reefs, and unique plant and animal species. Concerned with the impacts of climate change, the country has committed to decarbonize by 2050.

As climate change threatens food security, livelihoods, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, countries with coastal blue carbon ecosystems are increasingly looking into the ocean for climate change and business solutions.

Angelique Pouponneau, CEO, Seychelles' Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust, says for these countries, "the blue economy, sectors dependent on healthy marine and coastal resources, is at the heart of their updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submissions."

Under the Paris Agreement, countries revise their NDCs every five years to cut greenhouse gas emissions to limit the earth's temperature rise and commit to implementing solutions to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Seychelles made a most ambitious commitment in its NDC to decarbonize its economy entirely by 2050, making it one of the few developing countries to do so.

"Seychelles developed a national blue economy road map anchored on identifying sectors of the blue economy industry that can generate wealth and sustainable management of marine resources. Priority areas include aquaculture to help build resilience among local communities and accelerate sustainable development," says Pouponneau in an interview with IPS, adding that sustainable fishing and building ocean-based enterprises are crucial to the success of this Indian Ocean



Countries like the Seychelles and Belize, with coastal blue carbon ecosystems are increasingly looking to the ocean for climate change and business solutions.

archipelago.

"Building ocean-based enterprises, providing a regulatory framework for sustainable businesses, and financing research and development activities are the three pillars of the blue economy roadmap."

Seychelles launched the world's first sovereign blue bond in 2018. The blue bond, Pouponneau says, is an innovative financial tool to support sustainable marine and fisheries start-ups and SMEs and the key to unlocking ocean-based sustainable business.

According to the Seychelles government, the bond is a pioneering financial instrument that raised US\$15 million from international investors. The success of the bond demonstrates the potential for countries to harness capital markets for financing the sustainable use of marine resources.

Similarly, as part of the Nature Conservancy's Blue Bonds for Ocean Conservation program, Belize signed a Conservation Funding Agreement, also known as the Blue Bond.

"Our Blue Bond is similar to Seychelles'. However, Belize's is larger and has a more comprehensive set of targets," Beverly Wade, the Policy and Planning Advisor in the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation, tells IPS.

"The bond establishes a Conservation Fund of USD 180 million, to be accessed over 20 years, to support the implementation of coastal and marine conservation projects by government and non-governmental partners."

Wade, a representative on the Belize National Climate Change Committee, says the ministry is finalizing the framework for Blue Economy for the South American country.

"This is a five-year multisectoral policy, strategy, and plan. Belize is one of the countries in the Mesoamerican Reef region involved in the Smart Coasts Project that promotes ecosystem-based adaptation and climate smarting of Marine Protected Areas and Coastal Development Plans," she tells IPS.

Belize, a leader in marine spatial planning and habitat mapping, has

updated Marine Habitat Map by processing satellite imagery and artificial intelligence to classify critical marine habitats such as seagrass and corals.

The Blue Bond, she says, will facilitate the completion of a comprehensive Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) for Belize's entire Blue Space, an urban design term for visible water.

Overall, 163 nations have submitted their NDCs to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) under the NDC Partnership.

The NDC Partnership is a global initiative to help countries achieve their national climate commitments through financial and technical assistance through the Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP).

The Partnership supports countries with a coastal blue carbon ecosystem to "enhance the quality, increase the ambition, and implement NDCs, every five years since the first round of NDC were submitted in 2016. With a footprint across 62 member countries and nine institutional partners since October

2017, the NDC Partnership holds significant experience, resources, and expertise to ensure that countries achieve NDC objectives.

This support is timely and critical. World Bank data shows the global ocean economy is valued at an estimated \$1.5 trillion per year. Approximately 80 percent of international trade by volume is carried by sea, and an estimated 350 million jobs across the globe are linked to fisheries.

The report, NDCs-A Force for Nature? notes that 105 out of 114 updated NDCs submitted by October 12, 2021, included nature-based solutions in their roadmap to limit global warming.

Through CAEP, launched in 2019 with the technical and financial support of 46 partners, the NDC Partnership is currently supporting 67 countries to submit enhanced NDCs and fast-track their implementation.

The CAEP aims to catalyze change towards resilient, sustainable, and low-emission development, supporting the objectives of the Paris

Agreement for member countries of the NDC Partnership. It also assists developing member countries in enhancing NDCs and fast-tracking their implementation, including providing in-country technical expertise and capacity building.

The NDC policy commitment, Pouponneau says, is a "robust, realistic, measurable and achievable yardstick against which Seychelles is evaluating its progress towards climate change resilience and sustainable development."

"NDCs are a planning, finance and resource mobilization and accountability tool. And there is a commitment right from grassroots to the international level to achieve set targets," Wade agrees. She explains that through the NDC updating process, the National Climate Change Office, with support from the World Wildlife Fund and PEW Charitable Trusts, a National Blue Carbon Working Group was established.

"The group provided oversight for the research activities conducted in support of establishing realistic mangrove mitigation and adaptation targets for the updated NDC," she says.

"The NDC also identifies concrete targeted actions to meet these obligations. And provides a space for bringing together planned and ongoing activities from existing national strategies as well as plans for target achievement."

Both local communities and most of the Seychelles' urban areas and infrastructure are concentrated next to the shore; therefore, the country's economic activity relies on the sustainable management of marine resources.

"The blue economy's primary challenge is the lack of understanding between the use of ocean-based resources, climate change resilience, and sustainable development. There is a need to educate local communities on why it is no longer business as usual," Pouponneau says. "This education will go hand in hand with financial incentives to help local communities use ocean resources sustainably."