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Lindi police presented 2 vehicles



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Mining: VP reassures firms on amendments

By Francis Kajubi

VICE President Samia Suluhu Hassan has called for more foreign investment in the country's mining sector, underlining that the recent review of laws and regulations was meant to create a win-win situation between investors and the country.

The VP stated that the government is determined to provide all necessary incentives to ensure Tanzania remains one of the leading gold producers in the continent.

The mining sector has continued to grow whereas last year it grew by 17.7 percent while revenue collections increased to 528bn/- in 2019/2020 compared to 270bn/- recorded in the 2015/2016 financial year, she stated.

She was addressing a three-day international conference on minerals and mining investment themed 'mining sector for stable economy and sustainable development,' bringing together mining experts, investors and mining companies from 24 countries.

The conference is expected to bring to light challenges facing miners for governments to take actions, officials said

"Amendments of laws and endorsement of new regulations in the mining sector are not for scaring away investors but to create a win-win situation between them and the government. Changes in the Mines and Minerals Act 2017 were meant to create a conducive environment for investors in the mining sector," the VP affirmed.

Talks are ongoing with two foreign com-



NMB Bank Plc's Chief of Retail Banking, Filbert Mponzi, pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday flagging off the bank's 'Bonge la Mpango' deposit-and-win campaign that will see customers win prizes to the tune of 550m/-. Other prizes include three-wheelers, heavy-duty vehicles and a grand prize of a Toyota Fortuner. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Prof Ndulu was a giant in the field, say experts

By Guardian Reporter

THE death at the age of 71 of former Bank of Tanzania (BoT) governor Prof Benno Ndulu as he underwent treatment at the Hubert Kairuki Hospital in Dar es Salaam has shocked a legion of experts in the banking community and economic research regionally and abroad.

Prof Ndulu (pictured) was born on January 23, 1950 and started his career at the University of Dar es Salaam in the late 1970s, rising to higher academic levels and conducting extensive research. He became an acknowledged expert on Africa's capacity building in the aftermath of structural adjustment programmes.

Before joining the World Bank as lead economist in the country (Tanzania) mission, he was already widely known for his involvement in setting up the African Economic Research Consortium based in Nairobi whose work he led, receiving an hon-



orary doctorate (honoris causa) from the International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague in 1997.

Following his PhD in Economics from Northwestern University (1984) in Evanston, Illinois in the United States, he taught economics and published widely on economic growth, structural adjustment, policy governance and international trade issues.

Standard Chartered Tanzania Bank CEO Sanjay Rughani, deputy chairman of the Tanzania Bankers Association and Chairman of the CEOs Round Table, said in a condolence message: "Africa and the world at large have today lost an incredible visionary leader who nurtured and impacted many individuals and economies. He will surely be missed."

Rughani said that, while serving as BoT governor, the renowned professor championed financial inclusion and the agenda of ensuring sound macroeconomic management.

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Egyptian contractor irks energy minister

By Guardian Correspondent, Rufiji

ENERGY minister Dr Medard Kalemari has directed contractors building the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) to bring on site all the 13 experts remaining in Egypt so that they operate within the premises as required in the agreement signed with the government.

The minister issued the directive while touring the project for generating 2115 megawatts, asking the contractor to increase resource use, including transporting equipment for a while stranded at the port of Dar



I have been told by the contractor that some experts are working from abroad. Why work from abroad while the project is here? You should ensure that all the resources that are required to be here are mobilized to the site

es Salaam.

He told the two Egyptian firms, Arab Contractors and Elsewedy Electric, to ensure they adhere to directives from the government, where the contractual agreement indicates that there are 27 experts at the site and not 14 who are on site currently.

This is considered essential in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) accord the firms signed with the government, he stated.

"I have been told by the contractor that some experts are working from abroad. Why work from abroad while the project

is here? You should ensure that all the resources that are required to be here are mobilized to the site," he asserted.

The minister also advised Rufiji basin regional commissioners and district commissioners to ensure they monitor activities on the banks on the river so that the water level isn't disturbed as this would affect electricity generation.

Dr Kalemari directed that lead engineer Mohammed Hassan be replaced following

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ACT-Wazalendo picks Semu its new chairperson

By Guardian Reporter

THE opposition ACT Wazalendo has appointed Dorothy Semu to the post of national chairperson for one year, to fill a function left by the departed Seif Sharif Hamad. Semu was the party's vice chairperson for the Mainland, on the basis of a statement by Salim Bimani, the party's information and publicity secretary. Her appointment is in accordance with Article 84 (3) and (4) of the party's constitution of 2015 in its 2020 edition, he said, noting that

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ACT-Wazalendo picks Semu new chairperson

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in Article 84 (3) of that constitution it is provided that in the absence of party chairman then the vice-chairman who is from another side of the Union other than the chairman will fill the vacancy. Similarly, it is provided that if the first vice-chairman is also absent, then the remaining vice-chairman shall act as chairman, the statement indicated. However, in accordance with Article 84 (4) of that constitution, Semu will

hold office for a period not exceeding 12 months until a new chairman is elected by as party congress. Maalim Seif, the Zanzibar First Vice President and ACT Wazalendo national chairman died on February 17 at the Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) where he was admitted on February 9. Zanzibar is still in seven days of mourning declared by President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi on February 17, with Maalim Seif being laid to rest at Mtambwe in Pemba.

Prof Ndulu was a giant in the field, say experts

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He added: "He was also well recognized for his significant contributions to capacity building and research in Africa."

Msafiri Nampesya, the late Prof Ndulu's personal assistant, said the deceased was admitted for more than ten days before he died - also noting that funeral arrangements are taking place at the late professor's Mbweni residence in the city.

After leading the BoT from 2008 to 2018, Prof Ndulu assumed the position of senior advisor at the International Growth Centre at the University of London where, reports say, he was given a five-year residence permit in Britain as a top-level expert.

Tanzanian commentators noted that he took over as BoT governor in a difficult period following parliamentary upheaval and the premature exit of his predecessor, Daudi Balali, who also had a track record with the International Monetary Fund for the better part of two decades.

Prof Ndulu, much like his predecessor, ran the central bank at a time when dependency on crop exports had long been eclipsed, with the rise in gold exports at the start of the century, the rise in natural gas exploitation, and steady tourism arrivals.

It is on record that the impact that the professor had in and around Africa is difficult to understate, looking at the litany of assignments and invitations he was receiving before and after leaving his position at BoT.

Many Tanzanian experts who knew him well also affirm that he was the only Tanzanian so far to have served as Deputy Governor and then Governor of the Tanzanian central bank.

They say that explains why, to-

wards the end of his BoT career, international recognition and invitations started streaming in.

On October 13, 2015, Prof Ndulu was named Africa's Best Central Bank Governor, whereas in 2009 he was named the Best Central Bank Governor of Africa during the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Similarly, on January 7, 2016, he was appointed chairman of the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion, a global network of financial policy makers - whose members are central banks and regulatory institutions. On September 27 2019, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa appointed the Tanzanian economics guru to his country's Presidential Economic Advisory Council.

Early last week, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed appointed Prof Ndulu in the same capacity on the recommendation of Dr Yinager Desse, the Governor of the Central Bank of Ethiopia.

It is further reported that, in view of all these engagements, Prof Ndulu was compelled to turn down a similar offer from Rwanda President Paul Kagame as at the same time in his final year he was also sitting on the Board of Directors of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

UK sources said that Prof Ndulu had a special talent resident permit from the British Government for his involvement in the Board of Directors of Oxford University where he spent most of his time.

The permit is for five years and entitled him to live in Britain, the report noted, adding that Prof Ndulu was "one of very few exceptional Africans to be accorded this distinguished honour and privilege".



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa addresses Mtama residents yesterday shortly after presenting a Toyota Land Cruiser to Mtama Police Station and a second one to the Lindi Regional Police Commander. Photo: PMO

Mining: VP reassures firms on amendments

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panies on new mining sites the deals of which will be revealed in due course, she stated, noting that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Tanzania has remained among top gold producers in Africa.

The government targets increasing mining sector contribution to national income to 10 percent by 2025 despite that it contributes 3.5 percent at present, she said.

The Ministry of Minerals projects 526.7bn/- in tax collections during the 2020/2021 financial year, while

between July 2020 and January 2021 the ministry had already collected 360.74bn/-, equivalent to 117 percent of the mid-year target, she pointed out.

The minister, Doto Biteko said that the conference was held for the first time in 2019 to set common ground between investors and the government, to ensure prosperity of the sector.

"The ministry is committed to strengthening ties with the private sector as the key investor in minerals. We have been deploying initiatives to curb smuggling of minerals

with 102 cases of smuggling filed at different courts by the end of last year," he said.

Mining companies need to ensure transparency in their operations as well as making open their budgets for corporate social responsibility, he told the gathering, underlining that the ministry has learnt that some of the companies are not honest with the CSR.

"The government will not tolerate such firms," he declared.

Permanent Secretary Prof Simon Msanjila said in his opening remarks that this year's conference is being

virtually followed by 19 ministers in various countries including Brazil, India, China, Mali, Australia, Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Kenya and Rwanda.

Others following the meeting include the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana and Nigeria.

The number of participating countries had increased as last year ten countries took part in the conference, while the number of participating firms rose to 49 from 10 last year, he added.



Mbeya regional commissioner Albert Chalamila (L) pictured at the Mbeya campus of Mzumbe University yesterday viewing sandals and various other items made by young entrepreneurs and displayed at an exhibition organised by university's students' organisation. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

Italy's ambassador killed in DRC attack

KINSHASA

ITALY'S ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Luca Attanasio, was killed yesterday while travelling with a UN convoy in the east of the country, the foreign ministry said.

"It is with deep sadness that the Foreign Ministry confirms the death, today in Goma, of the Italian ambassador," the ministry said, adding that an Italian policeman also died.

In a separate statement, Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio expressed his "great dismay and immense sorrow" and broke off from a meeting in Brussels with EU counterparts to make an early return to Rome.

"The circumstances of this brutal attack are not yet known and no effort will be spared to

shed light on what happened," Di Maio said, paying tribute to the victims as "two servants of the state".

Attanasio was 43 and had been representing Italy in Kinshasa since 2017. He joined the diplomatic service in 2003 and served previously in Switzerland, Morocco and Nigeria.

According to the foreign ministry, the ambassador and the policemen were part of a convoy of MONUSCO, the UN peacekeeping mission in Congo.

A diplomat in Kinshasa told AFP that Attanasio was with a convoy of the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) when it came under fire near Goma.

A spokesman for the Rome-based WFP could not confirm this, but told AFP the organisation was looking into the reports.

Central Bank tightens oversight on banking

KIGALI

Amidst growing credit uncertainty among local banks, the Central Bank is increasing supervisory oversight over local banks.

This is aimed at ensuring prudent assessment of borrowers that are unlikely to pay, assessment of Business Continuity Management as well as accurate provisioning to avoid effects that could destabilize the financial sector.

The Central Bank's Financial Stability Committee meeting on Thursday last week recommended an assessment of the Business Continuity Management in all supervised financial institutions, to understand their ability to deliver critical operations through disruption.

Egyptian contractor irks energy minister

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delays in formulation of key units as scheduled in the work contract.

He said the consortium should immediately begin construction of an electricity highway to for power transmission to the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) work site and other areas, ready to start supplying power as the work proceeds.

The minister said that he will be visiting the project each month to follow up on the directives, with

acting resident engineer Emanuel Mwandambo assuring the minister that all the directives will be worked upon to ensure efficiency and timely completion of the project.

The Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHP) building contract was signed in December 2018 between state owned power company, TANESCO and the two Egyptian firms, with the work billed at 6.6trn/-. The work is supposed to be completed mid June next year.



Information, Culture, Arts and Sports minister Innocent Bashungwa (2nd-R) pictured in Arusha city at the weekend viewing an assortment of hand-made items produced by gospel singers and members of cultural dancing groups and music bands. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

Premier hands over 2 vehicles to Lindi police

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has handed over two vehicles to police in Lindi Region to assist them execute their day to day duties.

The PM handed over the vehicles at Mtama police station, saying the government will always ensure that the police force is well equipped in order to execute their operations diligently.

The vehicles included Toyota Land Cruiser Pickup with registration number PT2615 and Toyota Land Cruiser V6 with the number PT 4378.

Out of the vehicles PT 4378 is meant for the Regional Police Commander and another PT 2615 for Mtama police station.

Speaking after receiving the vehicles Lindi RPC Mtatiro Kitinkwi said the vehicles will facilitate patrols to be easily conducted.

"The vehicles you have given us will help in logistics including transporting suspects as well as patrols which is now a problem due to the geographical position of Mtama.

The RPC called upon the government to complete the construction of Mtama police station and build houses for officers in the area.

Mtama Member of Parliament Nape

Nnauye thanked the government on behalf of the people of his constituency.



Singida MC allots 500m/- for dumpsite and slaughterhouse

By Correspondent Michael

Sikapundwa, Singida

SINGIDA Municipal Council has allocated over 500m/- in the 2021/2022 fiscal year for the construction of a modern dumpsite and slaughterhouse so as to improve cleanliness and conserve the environment.

Municipal council director, Bravo Lyapembile unveiled

this here over the weekend when briefing the deputy minister in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment), Mwita Waitara, who visited the municipality. During his tour, Waitara inspected two projects including a dumpsite located at Manga village 5-kilometers from Singida town centre and slaughter slab.

Lyapembile said that the funds will also be used to purchase a garbage truck.

According to him, the municipal council has been using old garbage collecting facilities for years, something which hinders effective cleanliness and other sanitation measures.

Municipal mayor, Yagi Kiaratu urged the central government to allocate more budget to the council which receives only 5,415,929/- each financial year which is insufficient.

In his remarks Waitara congratulated the municipality for investing highly in improving environmental preservation through allocating enough budgets.

Kiaratu said the funds can't even support the tree planting campaign, which also include educating people about environmental conservation as well as visiting projects in remote areas particularly during downpour.

He acknowledged that towards improving hygiene in the municipality, having enough sanitary facilities, modern dumping sites, slaughterhouses and wastewater control measures are vital.

"Singida municipal council is also implementing projects to control waste water and collection of manure with the target of making biogas something which will also improve sanitation," he said.

He congratulated the council for issuing 11.7m/- as compensation for the 6.7 land acres for the construction of the modern slaughterhouse.

According to the 2012 population census, Singida has an estimated of 187,563 people whereby 91,815 were men and 95,748 women, the number could have been increased even more now, so there is a need to invest more in protecting the environment otherwise there will be much destruction of environment," he added.

The deputy minister further hailed the municipality for allocating 27m/- from internal sources to purchase garbage alleviators which have the capacity to grade soft and hard waste compared to before both were grouped together thus hindering the recycling process.




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Key Dates

- Last date to submit EOI 25 February 2021

North Mara Gold Mine Limited



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Mamlaka ya Mawasiliano Tanzania

Tanzanians urged to embrace locally manufactured products

By Correspondent Wilhelm Mulinda, Mwanza

TANZANIANS have been urged to build a tendency of loving home-made products, a situation that will significantly help to stimulate the country's industrial development.

The act of disregarding domestic products and thinking that all coming outside the country are more quality is a wrong notion people should do away with in a bid to push forward economic development.

That remarks were made here yesterday by Sales Executive of Kilimanjaro International Leather Industries Company Ltd in the Lake Zone, Hellon Magai when speaking to 'The Guardian' with regard to industrial development.

Citing an example Magai said that some people believe new imported or used shoes are more quality than home-made ones.

The fact is that shoes made in the country are more durable than the imported ones as they are being manufactured based on the environment of home, he noted.

He said that sometime one needs three or four pairs of used shoes per year but with shoes made using leather available in the country can just need even one pair for that period and therefore save costs.

In that context people should see that Tanzanian shoes are quality and sell at relatively low price as compared to those coming outside the country, he said.

He pointed out that people have to be patriotic for buying home-made products as that situation has multiplier effect on the economy in the country.

With the industries providing employment opportunities to people also they can help to retain foreign currency that could be used to import products and therefore the nation accumulate wealth.

Based in Moshi, Kilimanjaro International Leather Industries Company Ltd produces different products that include school shoes, military and safety boots, sandals as well as waist belts among others.



In that context people should see that Tanzanian shoes are quality and sell at relatively low price as compared to those coming outside the country



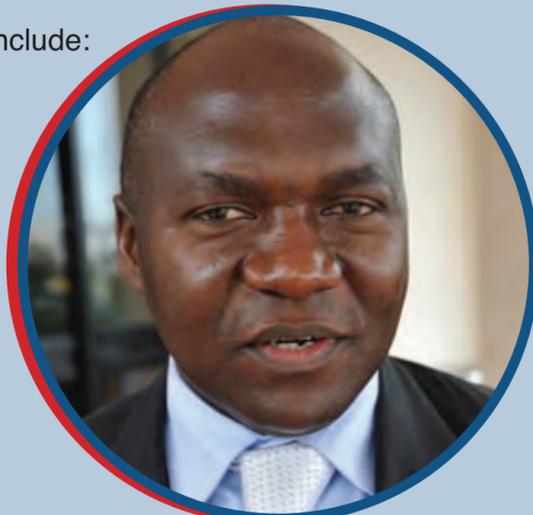
Uhuru Primary School, which is situated in Mbeya Region's Mwakibete ward, is facing a shortage of classrooms and desks. Members of the school's committee came together with parents at the weekend in touring the school to assess the situation, as captured by Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

PharmAccess
FOUNDATION

PUBLIC NOTICE

Stichting PharmAccess Foundation is pleased to announce the appointment of new board members. Coming from government, business and civil society the new board members bring years of experience and leadership to PharmAccess management. The team is dedicated to improving access to healthcare in Tanzania and beyond.

The new board members include:



Dr. Deodatus Mtasiwa
Chairman of the board



Cleopatra Mukangara
Board Member



Mr. Erald Mutalemwa
Board Member



Mr. Eugene Mikongoti
Board Member



Dr. Fatma Mrisho
Board Member

Police call on parents to be more vigilant on children

By Getrude Mbago

THE Dar es Salaam's Police Gender Desk has reminded parents in the country to protect their children against gender based violence, saying gender-based violence is targeted harassment and prejudice against women through technology. Gender based violence can include unwanted sexual remarks.

Violence against women also known as gender-based violence and sexual and gender-based violence are violent acts primarily or exclusively committed against women or girls. Such violence is often considered a form of hate crime, committed against women or girls specifically because they are female, and can take many forms.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam during the weekend, the head gender and children desks at the Dar es Salaam special zone, SSP Leah Mbunda said majority of children's violence cases are due to poor supervision of parents or the communities.

She was speaking during the capacity building training on Child Protection organized by police officers for gender and children desks, advocates, magistrates, doctors, social warfare officers and teachers from various parts of Dar es Salaam. The training was organised by the Women Legal Aid Centre (WLAC).

SSP Mbunda wanted parents and guardians to fulfill their parental responsibilities and protect their children against violence.

She noted that violence against children was on the rise because some of the parents have forgotten their roles while spending most of their time in other responsibilities than being close to their children.

"I beg for the parents to ensure that they closely follow the day to day children activities and make sure that everything goes okay. They should also talk to them openly about sexual and rape incidents to make them be aware of them and comfortable to report whenever happens," she said.

According to her, some parents leave home early in the morning and come back late at night without even struggling to know if their children are safe or not.

Mbunda further acknowledged that the number of violence cases especially child abuse were on the increase something which needs combined efforts to ensure that children are protected.

"Most of the cases which we receive at the desk are children physical violence such as rape and the implementers of the incidents are reported to be family members, neighbors. Parents should strengthen the security of their children while home, this is a very big challenge, we need to be closer with our children to keep them safe," she said.

She however hailed efforts done by the government and stakeholders to educate the public on the GBV issues as the majority of them are now reporting to Police whenever they face the challenge.

Earlier, the WLAC's monitoring and evaluation manager Wigaya Kisandu said the training was meant to equip the groups with more skills and knowledge so as to improve service provision and delivery of justice to people affected by violence acts.

"GBV including violence against children remains one of the most serious human rights violations in the country which calls for determined efforts to curb it. For example, last year we received over 400 cases with majority of them being in the area of child custody and abandonment," she said.

Kisandu cited recklessness of parents in raising their children as one of the major factors that contributes to the increase of acts of abuse against children. She said the Women's Legal Aid Centre works to address the effects of gender-based violence and discriminatory laws in Tanzania. On the ground, WLAC strives to change cultural norms and practices that reinforce gender inequality.

Dr Gloria Lema from Sinza Palestina hospital said child rights protection needs support from the whole community.



Kongwa district commissioner Dr Suleiman Serera addresses Mumi Secondary School students in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Iringa women farmers urged to engage in commercial farming

By Correspondent Friday Simbaya, Kilolo

WOMEN farmers in Iringa Region have been urged to engage in commercial farming of various cash and food crops as the region is endowed with a vast fertile land.

Addressing members of the CCM parent's wing in Kilolo District over the weekend, Special Seats MP, Dr Ritta Kabati said the region has fertile soil which is also suitable for cultivation of vegetables and fruits.

She said the government has already put in place good agricultural policies and has outlined measures to ensure a coordinated and reliable market for Tanzanian agricultural products.

"As women, we must now grab all the economic opportunities including those in the agriculture sector. We venture into horticulture and make a good profit because we have plenty of fertile land to grow fruits and vegetables," said

the MP. Dr Kabati promised the women of continued support through provision of agricultural inputs as well as regular training to be conducted by experts from the ministry of Agriculture.

"I am ready to support you with needed equipment such as tractors and bring experts who will assist you in adhering to the best practices in modern agriculture," said the lawmaker.

Chairperson of CCM women's wing in Iringa Region, Nicolina Lulandala urged women to unite and support their leaders towards implementation of the ruling party's election manifesto 2020-2025.

"We are done with the elections; now let us unite in ensuring successful implementation of our election manifesto," she added, calling upon members of the parents and women wings to establish economically viable projects that can benefit themselves as well as the community.



I am ready to support you with needed equipment such as tractors and bring experts who will assist you in adhering to the best practices in modern agriculture

By Guardian Correspondent, Ngorongoro

Ngorongoro women receive entrepreneurship education

WOMEN and youth in the pastoral communities of Ngorongoro District, Arusha Region have said that entrepreneurship education and the establishment of savings groups have helped them set up economic projects and thus overcome dependency.

Speaking, residents at Enguserosambu village commended the government and several non-government institutions for supporting them to establish the income generating projects.

Naiseku Shimbo, one of the beneficiaries said that through various training classes on entrepreneurship, women have established various saving groups which are now doing well. The groups include Nosotwa, New Vision and Development.

Shimbo said through the groups which were established last year, they have introduced various projects that have in turn helped them reduce dependence on their husbands.

According to her, prior to the formation of the saving groups in 2015, some of the group members received cattle from Oxfam through its partners, PALISEP.

During the distribution, Shimbo was given one cow where she started a food selling business, something which has enabled her to initiate another business of selling drinks, crops and buying livestock.

"I currently have 10 cows and 100 goats, you cannot imagine from someone who had nothing five years ago,

now I have these productive projects," she said.

She commended Pastoralist Livelihoods Support and Empowerment Programme (PALISEP) for supporting the women with prerequisite skills on financial saving and management.

"Apart from giving me a lot of profits, the cows also provide my children with milk everyday, something which has also improved their health," he said.

Doroth Fungu, Oxfam programmes manager in the northern zone said the

project is funded by Oxfam Hongkong and is being implemented in the two districts of Ngorongoro Arusha and Hanang in Manyara Region.

Fungu said the project's major goal is to uplift women and youth economically, supporting them to adapt to climate change through various economic activities such as sustainable sunflower and vegetable farming through home gardens and other economic activities such as salt extraction.

He said the activities help

women and youth cope with the scourge of climate change, which affects agricultural activities—the main source of income for the communities.

"The project also focuses on combating land disputes, especially supporting widows by providing them with customary title deeds. We believe that by doing so, it will enable women to be safer, own more resources and increase their income through sustainable agricultural activities," she added.

Baraka Laizer from the

New Vision and Development group in Lopolu ward said the group which has 28 women and two young men, has already initiated a vegetable garden.

He said after receiving PALISEP training last year, they embarked on tomato and cucumbers farming and they have earned 1.5m/-.

Agriculture officer in Ngorongoro, Laurance Ledio commended the stakeholders for supporting the youth and women in the district, something which has helped the majority of them improve their incomes.



TAZAMA PIPELINES LIMITED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Tazama Pipelines Limited, an interstate organization owned by the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Zambia and which deals in transportation of crude oil from Dar es Salaam to Ndola, Zambia, wishes to invite applications from suitably qualified candidates to fill the under-mentioned posts.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (ONE (1) POST)

- o Diploma in Secretarial Studies
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- o At least three years working experience
- o A very good command of spoken English and Kiswahili language

PLANT OPERATOR (TWO (2) POSTS)

- o Diploma in Mechanical or Electrical Engineering
- o Certificate of Secondary Education
- o At least one year working experience
- o A very good command of spoken English and Kiswahili language

TEMPORARY DRIVERS (TWO (2) POSTS)

- o Certificate of Secondary Education
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- o At least three years working experience as driver, preferably in reputable firm
- o A very good command of spoken English and Kiswahili language

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MODE OF APPLICATION:

Application in own handwriting with detailed CV including photocopies of relevant academic certificates should be submitted to the undersigned within two weeks from the date of this advertisement.

Only short listed candidates will be contacted

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TAZANIA BUREAU OF STANDARDS (TBS) PRESENTS

THE 8th NATIONAL ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION 2021

Tanzania Bureau of Standards is inviting all Students from Colleges and Universities in Tanzania to Participate in the 8th National Essay Writing Competition on Theme/Topic:

"THE ROLE OF STANDARDISATION IN PROMOTING ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE - THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN AFRICA"

To celebrate African Day for Standardisation in March 2021

ENTRY RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

- The competition is open to all university Students below the age of 35.
- The University/College MUST BE recognized in Tanzania.
- Length of the Essay should be between 1000 and 1200 words.
- Essays should be double spaced presented in Century Gothic Font size 12.
- Essays MUST BE submitted in English.
- Authors may use up to 50 words to describe themselves. Information should include their name, Course, year of study and University address (NB: This will not be part of the 1000-2000 words).
- Authors Must submit copy of ID/Passport and a complete filled Registration form.
- Eligibility: The following essays are not eligible for this competition.
 - Essays that have been shown or accepted for other competition.
 - Essays that have been published in any form.
 - Essays that focus on the work of a particular person, organization or brand name.
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Home Affairs minister George Simbachawene (facing camera) has an audience with National Identification Authority officials in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo courtesy of Home Affairs ministry

ARU students welcome new initiative on environment preservation

By Correspondent Felix Andrew

Ardhi University students in Dar es Salaam have welcomed a new initiative of preserving the environment in the area which is initiated by local water vending companies.

Speaking during the launching of a water vending machine at Ardhi University on Saturday, a student identified as Lilian Kilave said they are ready to work with companies which have shown interest to preserve environment.

Kilave who is also Prime Minister of ARU Student's Organisation (Aruso) said the environment plays a crucial role in their study, hence they are ready to collaborate with the water vending company which has shown interest.

"One of the major challenges here is the existence of used water bottles. We congratulate Heritage Pure Drinking water company for their efforts in preserving the environment through the introduction of a water vending machine, which requires a customer to refill or buy an empty bottle without polluting the area," she said.

She asked the company to honor their commitment of preserving the environment including beaches cleaning and mass education.

For her part, the Makongo local leader identified as Saida Mbatia said more efforts are needed to preserve water sources. She said due to climate change, the demand for drinking water

is increasing hence there is a need for the company to extend more services closer to the people.

"Apart from extending services, I urge the company to collaborate with other agencies in preserving water sources," she added.

She said the government would continue to encourage local investors who have shown interest to invest in the water sector and other areas for benefits of the nation.

The local leader asked Makongo residents to create a culture of consuming approved products such as water in order to avoid contamination diseases such as diarrhoea.

For their part, some Makongo residents thanked the company for bringing the affordable water services to their area.

Speaking, Mwajuma Mtemi said the introduction of the water vending machine to their area is a salvation to most of them since they could not afford to buy the product at higher prices.

"We use to drink water packaged in plastic popularly known as kandoro, now we will refill water in our bottles through the vending machine, it would help most of us," she said.

Earlier the Chief Executive Officer of Heritage Pure Drinking Water Dr Edwinus Lyaya, said they have been participating in environment preservation through various ways.

Bagamoyo BMUs in Pangani to learn means of collecting revenues from marine resources

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Pangani

ACHIEVEMENTS recorded in revenue collections by the Beach Management Units (BMUs) in Pangani District Council has started bearing fruit after other units started flocking into the district.

This time around a delegation of BMUs from Bagamoyo visited the district. The team was led by district council vice-chairman, Chandika Dismass and Sinasud Honero,

chairman of the economic and environmental committee. Their visit to Pangani was sponsored by the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish) which is funded by the World Bank. The project is also implemented in Comoro and Mozambique.

This came after reports that revenue collections from marine resources have increased to 256.8m/- in 2017/2018 from 23.8m/- in 2014/2015.

There are 11 BMUs in Pangani district council formed in 2009 through the Marine and Coastal Environment Management Project (MACEMP) which aims at enhancing the management of the marine environment and control illegal fishing.

The BMUs were formed in accordance with the Fishing Act No.22 of 2003 and the 2005 regulations guiding operations of the units.

Pangani District Executive Director, Issaya Mbenje said

that the district had since the 2014/2015 financial year decided to give the BMUs the mandate to collect revenues from marine resources and products.

He said when the councilors gave the job to village executives in 2018/2019, revenues dropped to 137,354,125/- in the 2019/2020 financial year.

"Soon after we noticed the drop in revenues, we immediately revived the BMUs which are located at Mkwaja,

Kipumbwi, Pangani West, and Pangani East along the Indian Ocean coastline. They were trained and provided with the needed equipment," he said.

According to him, from July 2020 to January 2021, the BMUs have been able to collect 93m/-. He said under the new agreement, the BMUs are given 10 percent of their total collections.

Pangani West BMU chairman, John Baya said they have been successful in man-

aging to collect revenues due to the education given to the villagers on the importance of protecting the marine environment and controlling illegal fishing.

He said the villagers are taking part in conservation activities because they are guaranteed of getting 5 percent of the collections which are directed on the improvement of social services including health and education sectors.

Bagamoyo district council

vice-chairman Chandika Dismass said their visit to Pangani was meant to learn how to manage the BMUs for enhanced revenue collections.

Dismass added that the tour follows a directive from the Livestock and Fisheries Deputy Minister, Pauline Gekul issued on January 7th this year whereas she wanted them to borrow a leaf from Pangani district on how to enhance revenue collections from marine products.



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Job seekers to benefit from online professionals platform

By Anaeli Mbise

JOB seekers have something to smile about following the launch of an online platform which registers professionals and facilitates link with potential employers to begin their career dreams.

The platform named 'Gigspace' has been co-developed by Ashura Babi and Steve Mawalla who are upcoming computer experts.

Speaking in an interview, Mawalla said

the aim of the platform was to help internet users be comfortable online as well as assist job seekers with employment opportunities.

"This is the best way in which we want to assist someone to develop skills in his or her profession through digital means whereby a customer is registered in the website to link up with employers," said Mawalla.

He said this was also a great opportunity for employees to double their income, but

also it is the source of income to those who don't have employment.

According to Mawalla there are 400 internet users who uses the forum currently adding that the number was increasing day by day.

He added that among the professions that have been registered in the forum include engineers, accountants, architects and building contractors, journalists and commercial policy makers.

"I urged my fellow youth that they should not rely on the small income they earn in their offices, but to expand the scope of sources of income out of office, in order to improve individual and national economy.

He advised youths to take advantage of the growing number of internet users saying there is a great opportunity to develop and benefit.

The report titled "Measuring Communication in the Society 2018" shows the cost for ICT has decreased internationally in one decade.

Statistics from TCRA shows that there are more than 51 million mobile users, but out of that only 23 million customers use the internet.

Minister for Information and Communication Technology ICT, Dr Faustine Ndugulile, said there is a work going on to simplify the provision of ICT services to the citizens including business people who are the key taxpayers.



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PricewaterhouseCoopers Limited (PwC) invites eligible candidates to indicate their interest to provide consultancy Services as a Local Project Monitor to the Field Support Services Project (FSSP) Tanzania.

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- Five (5) years professional work experience as a technical expert in capacity building and continuous support to Implementing Partners (especially local NGOs and CSOs) in results-based management, monitoring and reporting activities in one or more of the following sectors: education, health, inclusive economic growth, inclusive governance;
- Experience in developing and operationalizing Results Based Monitoring Plan for development work;
- Experience in carrying out research and analysis of systemic and emerging gender equality issues and trends; and
- Experience of working with stakeholders from Non-Government Organization the Government at all levels.

In addition to the key qualifications above, the incumbent is also expected to demonstrate the following skills and competencies:

- Data management skills (collection, cleaning, analysis, interpretation and presentation), documentation of lessons learnt and impact stories;
- Risk management skills (identification, analysis, responses planning and monitoring);
- Strong research, analytical and writing skills;
- Advanced professional proficiency in spoken and written English – level 4 and Kwahili – level 4 as explained in http://www.international.gc.ca/ifa-iaeci/test_levels-niveaux.aspx?lang=eng; and
- Knowledge of gender equality and equity policy priorities and processes in Tanzania.

Interested candidates may obtain detailed description of these services by sending a request email to procurement@fssptz.org. Requests for further information will be received up to three working days prior to the submission deadline. Any request received later than that may not be responded to.

Interested candidates should send their Expressions of Interest (EOIs) ONLY electronically to procurement@fssptz.org not later than 07 March 2021 at 23:59 hours. Late Expressions of Interest shall not be accepted for evaluation, irrespective of the circumstances.

FSSP Manager



Members of the Evangelical Assemblies of God Tanzania church at Ipagala in Dodoma Region engaged in prayers at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

Four Stamigold employees arraigned in Bukoba court

By Correspondent Mutayoba Arbogast, Bukoba

FOUR employees of the Biharamulo based Stamigold Company have been arraigned at the Bukoba Resident Magistrate's court facing various charges including bribery and abuse of office.

The Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) Kagera Regional Chief, John Joseph told journalists that the four were involved in signing a tender agreement worth 4.6bn/- between Stamigold Company and Supercore Company for drilling of rocks contrary to the government procurement procedures.

They are Joseph Sebugwao (manager), Sadick Kasuhya (head of purchasing department), Eliaseph Bwire (purchasing officer) and Clara Mwaikambo (head of finance department).

The PCCB Chief claimed that the suspects all together forged the rock drilling cost and signed a contract worth more than 4.6bn/- instead of 3.4bn/-, thus illegally obtaining more than 1.1bn/-

Three suspects - Denice Sebugwao, Clara Mwaikambo and Eliaseph Bwire have been granted bail with exception of Sadick Kasuhya. Their case will be mentioned on February 25th this year.

ICIPE researchers talk of breakthrough in biological control of fall armyworms

By Special Correspondent

THE International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) has launched mass releases of indigenous natural enemies to control fall armyworm.

Fall Armyworm (FAW) or *Spodoptera frugiperda*, is an invasive pest that is wreaking havoc in Kenya and many other parts of the world, causing huge losses to farmers and impacting food security.

FAW was first detected in West and Central Africa early in 2016 and quickly spread across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Since the first detection of FAW in East Africa, ICIPE, jointly with national and international partners have embarked on basic and applied research to understand the ecology of the pest in Africa to guide the development of sustainable management strategies suited for African conditions. Technologies such as the use of ICIPE's Push-pull technology, maize-legume intercropping and biopesticides have proven to be a key part of sustainable management strategy for FAW, particularly under smallholder maize production systems in Africa.

"These technologies are eco-friendly and compatible with the use of biological control agents," says ICIPE.

So far over 140,000 wasps each of *Telenomus remus* and *Trichogramma chilonis* that parasitize FAW eggs; and 5,000 wasps of *Cotesia* ICIPE that parasitize early larval stages of FAW have been released in five counties (Taita-Taveta, Machakos, Embu, Meru, and Nyeri) of Kenya with very encouraging results.

In Africa, the cultivation of maize represents one of the most important sources of food security, income generation and employment for over 300 million people.

However, the recent invasion by FAW has led to yield losses of 8 - 20 million tonnes of maize on the continent.

The worm attacks all the developmental stages of the maize plant attracting an unprecedented scale of broad-spectrum application of chemical insecticides by the growers.

In Ethiopia and Kenya, more than 50% of maize growers that applied chemical pesticides for FAW control reported that they only provide marginal control or they are completely ineffective. These chemical pesticides are not only ineffective but expensive and pose serious detrimental effects to humans, biodiversity and the environment.

Africa to receive 300m doses of Russian vaccine

By Special Correspondent

AFRICA Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) has received an offer of 300 million doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine.

Director of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), John Nkengasong, said the body is "tremendously proud" to offer the doses which will be available in May to the 54 member states. AVATT was set up by the African Union to acquire additional vaccine doses as Africa targets to immunise 60 percent of the population.

Meanwhile, it said that already the 270 million doses previously secured from AstraZeneca, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson have all been taken up by the first allocation phase deadline through the African Medical Supplies Platform (AMSP).

Speaking at the weekly online press briefing, Dr Nkengasong said that about 26 countries had already submitted their application to acquire 180 million doses of the vaccines.

With these additional 300 million Sputnik V vaccines, AMSP accelerates online Covid-19 vaccines pre-orders for the 55 AU member states.

"We are grateful to receive the Sputnik V vaccines from the Russian Federation and tremendously proud to be able to offer them on the AMSP for our AU member states," said Dr Nkengasong.

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**Taking A New Look
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We need to encourage girls to embrace STEM subjects

IT is evident by the significant investments into skills development and educational programmes that we believe in upskilling our youth to have the right skills to succeed in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. But even as we strive to include as many young learners in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects as possible, our girl learners are lagging behind. According to the UNESCO report, 'Cracking the Code: Girls' and Women's education in STEM', only 35 percent of STEM students in higher education globally are women. This gaping gender gap is especially concerning when we consider that STEM careers are referred to as the jobs of the future. UNESCO notes that a strong gender imbalance exists globally, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, in regard to women's representation in STEM fields. According to the United Nations Institute of Statistics (UIS) less than 30 percent of the world's researchers are women. Numerous studies have found that women in STEM fields publish less, are paid less for their research and do not progress as far as men in their careers.

There are many complex reasons why girls and women are so underrepresented in STEM subjects and fields. Conscious and unconscious biases, social norms and cultural expectations frequently influence the type and quality of education girl learners receive and the choices offered to them. It's important to have diversity represented in STEM, and not just for the sake of numbers. When women are pushed out of

careers in STEM by systems of bias, this influences the products and services that STEM organisations create. Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Machine Learning bias is a recognised concern for organisations developing products and services using this technology.

Only 26 per cent of AI professionals globally are female, according to the 2020 World Economic Forum report on the Global Gender Gap, which also found that current trajectories mean sub-Saharan Africa will only close its gender gap in 95 years - another reason why Microsoft is investing in women's STEM development. The PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) report titled, 'Why don't more girls choose to pursue a science career', noted that the gender gap in STEM subjects is already evident among 15-year-olds, and that boys are more confident and interested in broad science topics despite similar scores in science and maths among all genders. Part of this is likely due to societal pressures and the unconscious bias and stereotypes among some communities that science is 'only for boys'. It's vital that we engage with girls at primary and secondary school levels to raise the visibility of STEM subjects as a potential career trajectory. One such collaboration is the Digi-Girlz programme, which inspires high school girls to pursue STEM subjects by providing them with the opportunity to interact with Microsoft employees and receive computer and technology training.

Why do we appear to have lost the war against noise pollution?

SCIENTISTS have determined that noise, ordinarily, is not a bad thing, but it becomes a pollutant in the environment when it rises to unbearable levels. In Tanzania, noise emanates from electricity generating sets/plants at homes and offices, music from the streets as vendors compete for attention; traffic noise from vehicle engines and horns; construction/industrial noise or noise from worship centres.

Many of our towns and cities have become environmental nightmares. A few years ago, the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) was compelled to embark on enforcement of its laws on noise pollution by sealing several hospitality facilities. The government says the issue of noise pollution has become a perennial problem that is posing a serious threat to the sanity, stability and peace of mind of the state's residents.

We understand that residents, fatigued by the hazardous effect of the constant noise, have had to cry out via petitions to NEMC, which prompted the sealing of the hospitality facilities. This is, however, a problem that goes beyond Dar es Salaam. It is a national challenge even if other cities may not be dealing with it.

Doctors are concerned that pollution worsens spirals underlying health issues, particularly cardiovascular challenges like blood pressure levels and stress related diseases, sleeping disorders, fatigue, as well as hearing problems. We believe the Dar es Salaam City Fathers is on the right path in taking action against those causing noise pollution and we enjoy other cities to pay similar attention, particularly to enforce existing laws or to promulgate regulations

for the good of all. It should also be a source of concern that regardless of robust regulations the government instituted to curb noise pollution, there has been lack of will to enforce them.

For instance, there are NEMC regulations that have all manner of provisions which the government believes will enthrone a healthy environment for all in the country, the tranquility of their surroundings and their psychological well-being by regulating noise levels and generally, to elevate the standard of living of the people. The regulation prescribes the maximum permissible noise levels a facility or activity to which a person may be exposed.

In all of these, the government stipulates maximum permissible noise levels from a facility in the general environment and that there will be exemptions for those who can prove that high noise levels from their facility is inevitable. Regardless, those who seek exemption are required to apply for a permit to emit noise in excess of the permissible levels, and this permit can be revoked if there is violation of the terms and conditions. Besides, whoever considers that the noise levels being emitted, or likely to be emitted, may be higher than the permissible noise levels is expected to complain in writing but must show or prove personal loss or injury or discomfort caused by the emission of the alleged noise.

Dar es Salaam City has 'Guidelines on Noise Pollution' that include provisions for people to obtain noise permit for open air shows, crusades and promotional advertisements, among others. The government has also stipulated standard approved noise level in all residential, commercial and industrial areas.

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America and a lost Africa

By Donald Duke

AMERICA lost Africa for four years under Donald Trump. The Joe Biden Administration can regain it. Essentially, the United States should resist the temptation to compartmentalise the world into neatly convenient areas of descending strategic interest to it. The Trump Administration was a past master at that game. Its ideological war with China privileged the Indo-Pacific region over all others. Incidentally, the region was known as the Asia-Pacific before the Americans decided to rename it, in order to bring in India as a counterweight to China. (Hence the "Indo").

A new strategic geography was created almost overnight. The rest of the world had no choice but to live with this imagined creation and readjust its own priorities. Japan, South Korea, Australia and the ten countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations suddenly found themselves to be a part of the Indo-Pacific. True, the geographical concept of the Indo-Pacific precedes the Trump ascendancy, but his political construct of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific was a thinly veiled attempt to contain China.

After the Indo-Pacific came the European Union. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation bound Europe existentially to America, except that Russia was in no mood to give up its historical dominance of eastern Europe. The Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 marked the limits of trans-Atlantic power in Europe, the American invocation which had sought to write Russia out of contemporary European history simply because the Soviet Empire had dissolved.

Thanks to the successful American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and regime change in Libya, the Middle East receded from American priorities, except for Syria, where Russian and Iranian intervention upheld the Bashar al-Assad regime against the sustained Western assault on it.

The North, Latin and South Americas formed the next tier of interest to the United States. Physical proximity does not guarantee foreign policy visibility. Nei-



ther Canada nor Mexico threatened America militarily. The only challenge was the demographic one: the steady arrival in the United States of illegal immigrants from impoverished neighbors. The Trump dispensation went to work on securing borders.

Then came Africa. It did not have a China to question the primacy of the United States. It did not have a Britain or a Germany that had produced the historical template for the United States of America. Unlike the Middle East, it did not have a religious community extensive enough to pose the challenge of a clash of civilizations with a largely Christian but ultimately secular United States. And Africa lay nowhere close to America.

Hence its place at the bottom of the American strategic barrel. In the American imagination, Africa was compartmentalized out of its geographical identity as a world civilization. By that term, I mean a continent where human history began, where humans held on to their agency as historical actors in spite of the colonial Scramble for Africa, and where thinkers and activists participate in the unfolding of global history to this day.

It is that Africa which America should re-engage after the hiatus of the Trump years. The key to that re-engagement lies in China.

This point is made trenchantly by Rand Corporation senior political scientist Michael Shurkin in a recent article. "Seeing Africans as Africans and not pawns in some great game

paradoxically could go a long way toward strengthening the United States' position in its competition with other powers," he argues, "especially if it translates into engagement with, and investment in, African economies and institutions in ways that are not limited to and transparently about countering Chinese moves."

Shurkin lays out the demographic stakes on the table. Africa's share of the global population stands at 17 per cent, he points out, and it is projected to grow to about 25 per cent by 2050 and 40 per cent by 2100. Four sub-Saharan African countries are projected to be among the ten most populous nations in 2100, among them Nigeria, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Tanzania. America, by contrast, is projected to be inhabited by 424 million people.

Even assuming that China continues on its growth strategy till then, would it not make sense for 424 million Americans to recognize Africa's demographic strength, economic potential and political weight in international affairs at that time in the future? If so, the effort to build bridges with Africa should begin now.

The Biden Administration needs to shift Africa out of America's China strategy. Africans are not interested in the global balance of power between the United States and the

People's Republic of China because they do not wish to have to choose between friends. China's economic links with Africa are welcome, par-

ticularly in the realm of infrastructure and connectivity. Equally so, however, are American investment, technical know-how, and strategic help.

Everywhere in this world, Chinese are a fact of economic, political and strategic life. That fact cannot be wished away. Equally, however, Americans are a cultural fixture of African life. I cannot think of a single African nation where the majority of citizens hate and reject the American way of life. The heady mix of personal, economic and political freedom that the United States promises -- although it does not produce that combination always for all its citizens -- is a lodestar of the African sky.

Africans admire China for its economic progress and its sparkling ability to preserve law and order. America seems messy by contrast, but its political freedoms show a way out of the mess. Africans, who love prosperity and freedom in equal measure, are neither pro-Chinese and anti-American nor the other way around. Africans are pro-African. So should the United States be. China does not ask Africa to choose between it and America. Nor should America.

Africa was known once, in the most racist of ways, as the Dark Continent. It became the Lost Continent under Trump. Under Biden, it could become a part of the world regained for America.

Africans welcome the new dawn. Let the sun shine now.

On shaky ground: ICC must rebuild with a new prosecutor

By Otilia Anna Maunganidze

FOR the International Criminal Court (ICC), February has been a momentous month. A new chief prosecutor was appointed after a fraught election, important cases were started and another was concluded, and a decision reached on the question of Palestine. With some effort, the ICC can use these developments to assert its independence and leverage goodwill by focusing on investigations and cases.

On 4 February, the ICC convicted its first person for crimes committed in Uganda - former Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) commander Dominic Ongwen. The offences occurred between July and December 2005.

The conviction comes after over a decade of false starts and sometimes no activity at all. It's the first conviction of anyone - in a national or international court - for crimes carried out in northern Uganda during the conflict between the LRA and the government.

Just as Ongwen's long trial ended, another - of Central African Republic former militia Alfred Yekatom and Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona - started on 16 February. The two, suspected of serious crimes carried out in Central African Republic (CAR) between 2013 and 2014, are the first to be prosecuted in the second batch of trials connected to the CAR.

Also in February, the ICC announced that it had jurisdiction in Palestine, paving the way for formal investigations into alleged atrocities in the country despite fierce objections from Israel.

ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda had, in December 2019, announced her intention to open a formal inquiry into alleged international crimes in the occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

However, Palestine remains an occupied territory rather than a



British barrister and newly appointed chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court (ICC) Karim Khan.

sovereign state, and the prosecutor needed ICC judges to "confirm" whether the court has the authority to proceed.

In 2012, Palestine joined the ICC as a state party by relying on its status as a United Nations (UN) non-member observer state and immediately called for an investigation into crimes committed in Palestine.

The Palestine matter, with all its political complexities, is a good opportunity for the ICC to show greater focus on cases outside Africa. The matter will require careful handling of a tense political environment by the ICC and the need to balance political interests and the law.

On 14 February, the Sudanese government agreed to cooperate with the ICC in the trial of former militant Janjaweed leader Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman (Ali Kushayb). Ali Kushayb, arrested in June 2020 and handed over to the court, is accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Darfur region.

This memorandum of understanding is the first of its kind between the ICC and Sudan, and paves the way for a collaborative relationship that didn't exist before. Sudan isn't party to the ICC's Rome Statute.

The Darfur situation - which implicates senior government officials and the country's former president Omar al-Bashir - was referred by the UN Security

Council to the ICC. As a result, for over 15 years, inter-actions between the ICC and Sudan were tense.

On 12 February, after months of struggling to reach consensus on who should be the ICC's next chief prosecutor, members of the ICC's Assembly of States Parties finally elected British lawyer Karim Khan by secret ballot.

Khan's election was the first time that ICC member states didn't reach a unanimous decision on who should lead the court's prosecution arm.

Numerous candidates were considered, after which the ICC election committee vetted 89 applicants and shortlisted four. Khan wasn't among them, and when member states failed to reach a consensus, the committee revised the shortlist.

After much backroom lobbying and disagreement between the 123 ICC member states, the second round of secret ballot voting saw Khan garner 72 votes - just 10 more than the required 50% to win.

The process, tainted by political influence, allegations of vote trading and concerns about a flawed vetting process that didn't reveal candidates' alleged misconduct, means Khan's tenure could start on a bad footing.

Khan currently heads the UN Security Council-mandated investigation of crimes committed by the Daesh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

He previously served as a legal adviser in the prosecutor's office at the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Rwanda, and as defence counsel on various ICC, ICTY and Special Court for Sierra Leone cases.

Khan isn't new to the game and should know the challenges of international justice fairly well. His task is to remedy them. While his term only starts in June, he'll need to start now to engage with his predecessor and chart the way forward for his office and the ICC.

To do this, Khan will need to build on the work - sometimes slow and arduous, as the Ongwen and other trials have shown - of his predecessors. He must also improve the prosecution's performance and grapple with the politics of international justice.

Recommendations from the independent expert review of the court's operations, completed in

2020, can provide a useful guide.

Khan's biggest duties will be to assert his office's independence and through effective delivery on his mandate to remedy the poor public perceptions of the ICC. These include concerns about the court's independence, its relationship with the UN Security Council and perceptions of bias against African states, whose cases remain the majority of the court's roll.

Though elected to lead prosecutions, Khan - as with his predecessors - also has the mammoth tasks of helping ensure the rights of victims and dealing with pressure from the international community, both in support of and against the ICC.

For Africa, whose relationship with the court has often been tense due to allegations of bias against African leaders and concerns over slow justice and limited redress for victims, the question remains: Can the ICC deliver justice for the continent? **DM**

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INVITATION TO TENDER – TIME EXTENSION
TENDER No. TNRF/BMZ/ 2-6/02/2021
CONSTRUCTION WMAs OFFICES, RANGER POST, RENOVATION OF TOURIST HOSTEL AND INFORMATION CENTRE

1. Background
 The Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (TNRF) is a network organization registered in 2006 as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), with the aim of promoting the improvement of natural resource governance to achieve more sustainable rural livelihoods and better conservation outcomes. TNRF works for improved natural resources governance by helping to bridge the gap between:

- a) People's local natural resource management needs and practices, and
- b) National natural resource management priorities, policies, laws and programs

TNRF has received funding from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Tanzania Country Office to implement some of activities within Climate change adaptation support for community managed areas (CBNRM) project aiming at supporting Protection of key ecosystems, increased resilience and adaptation for sustainable use by local communities. To strategically support operations of both Endumeit and MAKAO WMAs, improved infrastructure is very key to address the challenges they are facing like human wildlife conflicts, poaching and diminished income flow to sustain the operations of the WMAs in the light of COVID 19 and climate changes challenges.

TNRF thus invite interested bidders for the following:

- Lot 1:** Tender Code TNRF/BMZ/2/02/2021 Construction of office block for MAKAO WMA at Mwangudo, Meatu district
- Lot 2:** Tender Code TNRF/BMZ/3/02/2021 Construction of two observation towers/ranger posts for MAKAO WMA; one at SAPA and second at Shugushi site, Meatu district
- Lot 3:** Tender Code TNRF/BMZ/4/02/2021 Construction of office block for Endumeit WMA at Tingatinga, Longido District.
- Lot 4:** Tender Code TNRF/BMZ/5/02/2021 Construction of information center for Endumeit WMA at Tingatinga, Longido District
- Lot 5:** Tender Code TNRF/BMZ/6/02/2021 Renovation of tourist hostel for Endumeit WMA at Olmolog, Longido district

Interested suppliers/firms may purchase tendering documents from TNRF offices, Plot # 10, Corridor Area, Arusha or via email: info@tnrf.org upon presentation of a request letter duly stating the company name and original bank slip/scanned for TZs 100,000 (One Hundred Thousand Tanzanian shillings only) for each of the Lots mentioned above being a non-refundable fee. See our bank accounts details below:

Accounts Name: Tanzania Natural Resource Forum
Account No: 002 – 4002411.
Bank Name: Absa Bank (T) Ltd, Arusha Branch

All tenders in one original and one copy, properly filled and enclosed in plain sealed envelopes (Not indicating bidder's name) stating clearly TENDER FOR GOODS, SERVICE AND WORKS should be addressed to:

Procurement Tender Committee Tanzania Natural Resource Forum P.O BOX 15605, Tel: +255747158888 ARUSHA-Tanzania TENDER No. TNRF/BMZ/2/02/2021

Deposited at the reception of Tanzania Natural Resource Forum Offices, Plot # 10, Corridor Area, Arusha.
Deadline for application is 1st March, 2021 at 11am

Coronavirus has made the health sector sick, but the industry is recovering

By Sasha Planting

ACROSS the board, private healthcare providers felt the brunt of the pandemic in the first half of 2020, with operating profits falling by 35% to 86%.

Yet this started to change in the second half as hospitals learnt to operate within the parameters of Covid-19, the middle class began to prioritise both healthy living and health insurance, and the promise of vaccines became a reality.

The first companies to feel the impact of the pandemic were the hospital groups, not just the big three of Mediclinic, Netcare and Life Healthcare but also smaller ones like RH Bophelo and Advanced Health. The latter was facing difficulties before the pandemic began.

This was after the South African Society of Anaesthesiologists drove a call to shut down elective surgery, the most profitable activity at a hospital, to prioritise Covid-19 patient care.

But during the first wave of the pandemic, the expected surge of patients didn't come. "Some hospitals sat with occupancy levels of 30%, compared with an average of 66%," says Meryl Pick, a fund manager with Old Mutual Investment Group.

The change in patient mix, lower levels of occupancy, extra personal protective equipment and staffing costs had an impact on profitability, with the result that Mediclinic's earnings for the six months to the end of September fell 86%, whereas Netcare saw operating profit fall 61% in the year to September.

The latter half of the year, however, allowed hospitals to apply lessons learned. Elective surgery was reintroduced. The treatment of Covid-19 patients improved as doctors learnt the benefits of using steroids and oxygen instead of intubations, among other treatments.

As the peak of the second wave passes, hospital operators are reporting signs of a return to more regular patterns of activity, with occupancy levels back up to 55% to 58% in the second half of last year. "A third wave is expected, but hospital groups have weathered the worst of the storm," says Izak van Niekerk, a co-portfolio manager at Mergence Investment Managers. But profitability levels will not return to normal until SA's population is vaccinated or has achieved herd immunity, adds Pick.

The outlook for private medical aid membership and the impact on the healthcare sector is tied to the economy and remains uncertain. "Covid-19 has had such a significant impact on the economy, and in turn the financial wellbeing of consumers," says Mohamed Mitha, investment analyst with Kagiso Asset Management. "There is concern regarding increasing numbers of medical aid policy cancellations [or downgrades] owing to affordability constraints. This would shrink the size of the addressable market for hospital operators."

This trend, which was in existence before the pandemic, has not worsened during the pandemic, and in fact may have reversed. The latest medical aid num-



bers released by the Council for Medical Schemes following the annual "switchover", where members are able to swap plans, show that fewer than 6% of Discovery Health Medical Scheme members chose to change their plans at the end of 2020, 3% upgrading for greater benefits and 3% downgrading.

"People are very aware of health ... and are holding on to their medical aid and other insurance - perhaps funding it from other savings," says Van Niekerk.

In fact, the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) saw a surge in membership, both before and during the pandemic. Its membership grew from 727,840 in February 2020 to 750,980 by the end of 2020, according to GEMS principal officer Dr Stan Moloabi, who

was quoted in an article on internet platform BusinessTech.

That said, the economic outlook is uncertain and this will inevitably play out in medical aid membership in the future.

As hospitals have reported fewer patients, so medical schemes have seen a decrease in overall claims during the pandemic, which has been good for their solvency levels. But this is expected to be temporary as the healthcare system catches up with the backlog of postponed elective procedures, says Mitha. But a potential decline in medical aid beneficiaries and increased downgrading in cover are factors to monitor, because this could affect how solvency is managed by the medical schemes going forward, he says.

Discovery, which includes Discovery Health, has adopted a very cautious stance. To maintain financial strength it set aside R3.4-billion for future impacts on claims and lapses related to Covid-19. This was accounted for in its financial year to June 2020, with the result that rather than being up 9% operating profit fell 22%. The company is in a closed period and will present its results for the six months to December next week.

Pharmaceutical company Aspen reported flat results to June 2020, as gains in some pharma products offset losses in others.

Like Discovery, the company is in a closed period ahead of the release of its results for the first half of 2021, and could not comment on the impact of the Johnson & John-

son vaccine manufacturing contract. The company will manufacture one million doses of the vaccine per day, which will contribute significantly to increasing capacity utilisation at its Port Elizabeth plant.

Aspen has signed a nondisclosure agreement and cannot discuss pricing. But Van Niekerk notes that, even if Johnson & Johnson sells the vaccine to governments at cost, its contract manufacturers are likely to earn a good margin. A US contract manufacturer for Johnson & Johnson's vaccine, Catalent, mentioned that margins of 30% to 40% are possible on full capacity utilisation.

"What is also becoming clear is that this will not be a once-off benefit for Aspen - this virus will be around for a while and mutations suggest that people will require boosters into the future."

Though the "new normal" is not yet clear, one thing is. SA's big healthcare players have the benefit of scale, strong management and resilient balance sheets. They will survive. But the impact of Covid-19 on smaller operators is likely to have been more severe and the impact has yet to play out. **DM**

Over 98 percent of once-impooverished villages in China have access to broadband

By Yu Jingxian, Wang Zheng

AS modern communications technology has been introduced to more and more once poverty-stricken areas in China and communication network has been continuously extended across the country. Over 98 percent of the once-impooverished villages in China have gained access to broadband.

Official data shows that since 2015, China's central government and basic telecom operators have accumulatively invested over 60 billion yuan (\$9.28 billion) in the construction of fiber optic network in 43,000 villages that were plagued by poverty and the construction of 4G base stations in more than 9,200 once poverty-stricken villages.

Guan Jinlan, a once poor resident in Weining Yi, Hui and Miao autonomous county, Bijie, southwest China's Guizhou province, is excited about the convenience brought about by communication network.

"My child is working in south China's Guangzhou. In the past, we often got interrupted during phone calls due to weak signal. Since we have better communication network now, I can not only enjoy better quality of phone calls, but video chat with my child," Guan said.

"I never expected that I could one day video chat with my child," she said.

More than 99 percent of the administrative villages in southwest China's Tibet autonomous region have been covered by fiber optic and 4G networks, including those near Mount Qomolangma, Jinsha River, Qiangtang grassland and the borders.

Thanks to the introduction of better communication network, Beldron, a 26-year-old villager in Motuo county, Nyingchi city of Tibet, has been able to promote a stone pot produced by the county's cooperative through live-streaming.

"This is our stone pot. You'll know how great it is when you have a taste of our local specialties cooked with it," Beldron said during a live-streaming show held to promote the stone pot in a store of the cooperative. Over 20 stone pots can be sold during one live-streaming show, Beldron told the People's Daily.

Communication networks have broken the boundary of space, and allowed new information, technologies and services to reach remote areas at the earliest possible time, said an official with China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT).

While ensuring residents in rural areas have access to communication networks, the MIIT has intensified efforts to provide them with more affordable and higher-



Xu Xuefan, a villager in Fengxin county, east China's Jiangxi province, promotes local watermelons together with a volunteer, who is also a member of the Communist Party of China (CPC), via live-streaming, June 4, 2020. (File photo)

quality communication networks, the official noted, adding that the ministry has effectively cut the cost of the use of communication network for residents and advanced the wide application of Internet in the cause of poverty

relief.

The MIIT has launched a program to encourage basic telecom operators to introduce favorable broadband packages for poverty-stricken residents and areas, in

an attempt to increase broadband speed and lower rates for Internet services.

Over 12 million previous registered poor households have enjoyed such targeted favorable packages, among which more than 7 million were offered 50 percent or above discounts on network charges.

After gaining access to broadband Internet, Shibazi village, Ningqiang county, northwest China's Shaanxi province, has got new sales channels for local specialties, and lifted all the 165 poor households in the village out of poverty last year, according to Luo Xinfang, secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) branch in the village.

"The remote village has been covered by the 100MB broadband. It's very fast," Luo said.

The village has benefited from the fiber optic network constructed by the branch of China Telecom, a major telecom operator in China, in Ningqiang county.

Since 2016, the branch has invested nearly 2.2 million yuan in the construction of relevant facilities and built two base stations in the village, covering over 600 households with fiber optic network and mobile network.

The MIIT has continuously implemented pilot projects for universal telecommunications services, popularized 4G network in rural China in a faster pace, and promoted 5G network construction in a proper and orderly manner.

At present, rural areas in China have gained access to the same network and Internet connection speed as urban areas, including regions that suffered from extreme poverty, while the once poor areas in the country are seeing significant improvement in communications infrastructure. **People's Daily**

Financing NDCs: Turn to local resources for reliable funding

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE fight against climate change has seen countries taking various adaptation measures and making efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Adaptation measures, like emission reduction efforts, are diverse often based on country situations and needs, capacities and development plans that are aligned to the sustainable development goals.

However, in 2015 196 parties signed the Paris Agreement and set the world on course towards sustainable development, with the aim of limiting global warming to between 1.5 and 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels. The Agreement provides a platform for Parties to set long term goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Parties are thus expected to outline domestic mitigation measures, with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions. Through the Paris Agreement, Parties also agreed to a long-term goal for adaptation – to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience in a manner that does not threaten food production. Additionally, they agreed to work towards making finance flows consistent

As party to the Paris Agreement, Tanzania submitted her first NDCs to the Secretariat of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on May 18, 2018 but it is yet to submit her revised goals as required by the Agreement. In total, 190 Parties have submitted their first NDCs but only eight have submitted their second revised NDCs.

NDCs are drivers of change hence they must be revised after every five years to keep abreast with realities on the ground. They thus provide opportunity to revisit national priorities.

According to a representative of UNDP (TZ) Abbas Kitogo, the agency worked with partners to collect, analyse, synthesize and compile the NDCs and deliver them to the government. “However these have not been forwarded to the UNFCCC as required, so the ball is on the government’s court. Things are happening fast, procrastination is the thief of time, thus we are left behind as we are overtaken by events,” he says

So what does failure to submit the NDCs in time mean? “Failure to revise our NDCs and submit the same to the Secretariat means that we do not adhere to the Paris Agreement that we signed and ratified,” says Dr. Sixbert Mwanga, Executive Director of Climate Action Network Tanzania (CAN TZ).

“And for this reason we are missing opportunities that come with revision and submission of our NDCs. But the overall impact is that our people become more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change not only because we are likely to miss the financial contribution of the international community towards the country’s adaptation and mitigation efforts but also home grown adaptation measures that are implementable,” he explains, adding that this is a significant shortfall in Tanzania’s implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Early this month CAN Tz convened a consultative workshop to discuss how to support implementation of NDCs during which participants looked at issues that have stalled Tanzanians efforts to implement its NDCs and adaptation measures in particular. They highlighted a range of reasons including lack of finance, limited knowledge on issues of climate change and weak coordination of projects implementation.

The UNFCCC has put in place several climate change finance packages but while accessing them is indeed tedious, it also requires commitment on individual Parties to solicit the funds. Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and South Africa are among Parties that have secured substantial climate funding from the UN organization while other countries still lag behind.

“The UNFCCC has made available several funds such as the Adaptation Fund, the Green Climate Fund and the Green Technology Fund and there are elaborate procedures to access them although the process is indeed tedious. But countries that take issues seriously get the money and spend it on adaptation and mitigation projects. Unfortunately we have put ourselves in the “average bracket”; our people don’t go that extra mile required to accomplish the procedures and they don’t work hard to identify and exploit the opportunities available,” says Dr. Mwanga. “There is a lot



A group of participants brainstorming on how to support implementation of NDCs in Tanzania. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

of money out there but we are not good enough at writing fundable proposals.”

There are views that while the FCCC has made available funds for climate change adaptation and mitigation, Tanzania should turn to its local resources and mobilise funds for implementation of adaptation and mitigation projects. Such funds could come in the face of National Climate Fund and government could set simple procedures to access the money and give direction on how it should be spent. This, however does not mean that efforts to solicit multilateral funding should be abandoned, rather local funds could be disbursed to enable implementation of projects that are meant to address climate issues quickly while progress is being made to secure funds from international sources.

“We need to have our own climate funding strategy that focuses on mobilizing local resources to finance adaptation and mitigation. There must be a budget for this and the strategy should respond to our development needs and to meet sustainable development

goals,” says Dr. Gerald Kafuku from COSTECH.

He says that it is not appropriate for Tanzania and indeed other developing countries to depend entirely on international funding in order to address local climate change issues when these countries have abundant natural resources that they could harness and use to find adaptation and mitigation projects. “I know we have budget allocations for water, forestry, land and other sectors that are hard hit by climate change. Government also has a special fund for disasters. But that is not enough. We need to have specific budget allocation for climate adaptation and mitigation which is different from the disaster fund. Funding from development partners and the international community should only be additional to what the country has established,” he explains.

Speaking about climate funding during the consultative workshop a UNDP (Tz) representative, Abbas Kitogo, explained that climate finance from local sources is possible. “Besides funds made avail-

able by the UNFCCC, there are also many sources of funds within the country. What is lacking, however, a strategy, some kind of system of mobilizing these funds and channeling them to address climate change issues. Tanzania should establish a clear mechanism to collect available funds from the local sources to be used in implementation of climate change projects while pursuing international funding,” he said.

Experts in climate finance argue that national climate funds are a catalyst for country-driven NDC implementation as countries need to ensure that climate spending is based on national priorities and is directed towards projects that will bring big impacts. “For these reasons, a growing number of countries are establishing and operationalizing national climate funds. These funds enable countries to mobilize, pool and blend both domestic and external sources of finance, to support more coordinated programming of resources across stakeholders, and - most importantly - to ensure national ownership of climate finance,” reads

part of the report of Africa Climate Week held in Accra, Ghana, in 2019.

On that note, the Government of Rwanda has become one of a few nations across the world to develop a national climate change and environment fund, built on Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy. The National Climate Change Fund aims to ensure sustainable financing is accessible to support environmental sustainability, resilience to climate change and green growth.

But it is not just lack of finance that stall implementation of NDCs. Lack of cooperation and coordination has been cited as stumbling block to implementation of various adaptation projects in the country and this situation has left out groups of people and government departments in addressing climate change impacts. “When it comes to climate adaptation and mitigation we often talk about land, forestry, fisheries, pastoralism, industry, agriculture but rarely do we acknowledge the importance of forests and communities who live adjacent to and own the forests. We forget that if these people are left behind, forests will be degraded and there will be rampant deforestation which may lead to land degradation, soil infertility, water shortage and desertification, all of which defeat measures of adaptation and mitigation,” warned Dr. Siima Salome Bakengesa from Tanzania Forestry Research Institute (TAFORI) during the consultative workshop. She stressed the importance of creating a friendly environment for the participation of stakeholders from diverse sectors and that no one should be left behind.

Perhaps the problem with implementation of NDCs is not grounded in finance, cooperation and coordination only. Various stakeholders in the country have little knowledge regarding issues of NDCs and climate change in general and this lack of knowledge leads to inaction.

“Out of the 40 participants who attended the workshop, only two were aware of the global status of NDCs as indicated in UNFCCC register. This is a serious problem. Failure to seek knowledge and information is a weakness that cuts across all sectors - government, civil society and the academia,” says Dr. Mwanga. “We have to reach out and keep abreast with information because if we lag behind we will not be able to help communities of small producers, farmers, fishers and pastoralists, among others, to become resilient to climate change impacts,” he adds.

Xi Jinping’s speech at World Economic Forum call for closer global cooperation

By George Muntu

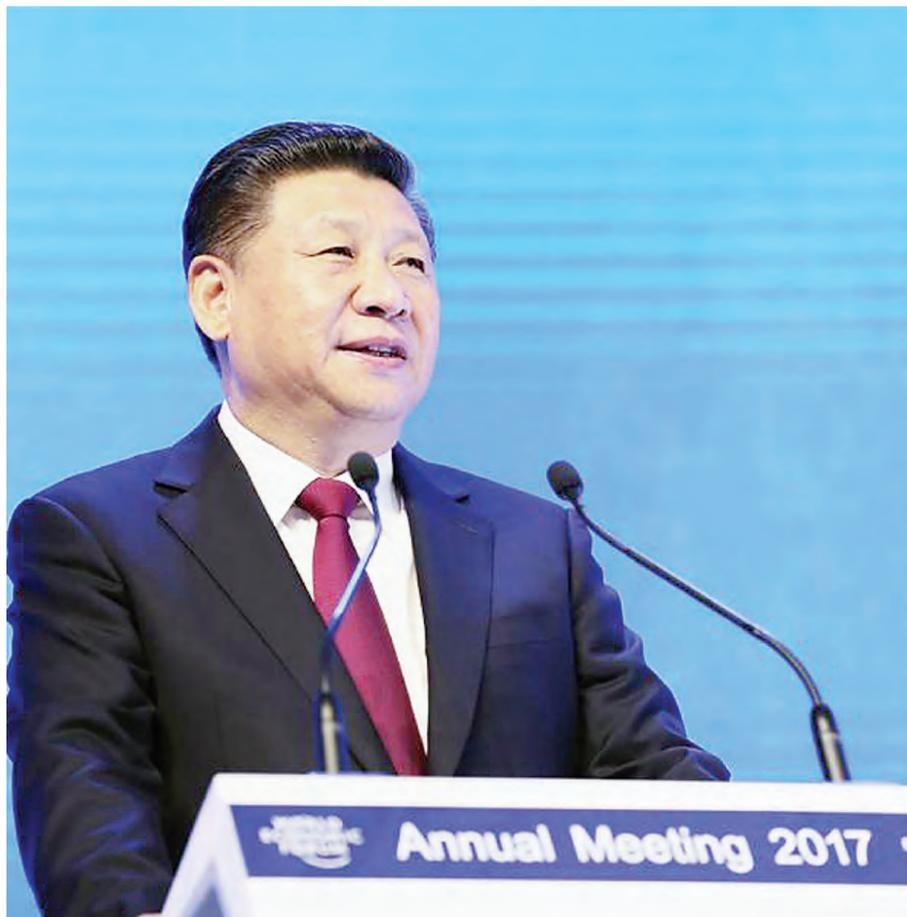
IN his special address at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Virtual Event of Davos Agenda on 25 January, 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping called on all countries to uphold international rules and remain committed to openness and inclusiveness. His views and proposals have been widely echoed by the international community, since they offered approaches to get out of the current difficulties through joint efforts by all countries, and pointed out the way forward for creating a better future for humanity.

President Xi said, the problem facing the world are intricate and complex, the way out of them is through upholding multilateralism and building a shared future for mankind. In his previous speech at the WEF in 2017, Xi strongly advocated free trade and defended the benefits of globalisation. His vision is widely believed to be a proper way to revive the world economy, to improve people’s livelihood, to enhance solidarity and cooperation, and to promote peaceful, inclusive and sustainable development so as to guarantee lasting security of the world.

Apart from that, Xi emphasized the importance of abiding by the international law and rules, stating that international governance should be based on rules and the consensus reached among nations, not on the order given by one or a few countries.

As we are all aware, the world is currently facing a lot of challenges due to the behaviours of a few major powers refusing to respect and enforce the international law. Another factor that contributes to those challenges is the tendency of some Western countries, notably the United States, to use their domestic laws and regulations to punish other countries, especially those who dare challenge their supremacy in global and regional affairs. These challenges, including economic sanctions, financial restrictions, trade and technological warfare, etc., undermine global cooperation and economic growth.

Recent years have witnessed the United States withdrawing from various international agreements and organizations, such as the Iran Nuclear Deal, the Paris Climate Agreement, the UNESCO, the United Nations Human Rights Council, etc. It is clear that the Trump administration did not respect multilateralism and international agreements, so it decided to take unilateral actions to fulfil its own ambitions.



The unilateral practices that disregard the interests of other countries have not only caused slowdown in the development of world economy, but undermined the effectiveness of global governance based on the international law and centred on international organizations.

As President Xi rightly pointed out, “Differences in history, culture and social system should not be an excuse for antagonism or confrontation, but rather an incentive for cooperation.... History and reality have made it clear, time and again, that the misguided approach of antagonism and confrontation, be it in the

form of cold war, hot war, trade war or tech war, would eventually hurt all countries’ interests and undermine everyone’s well-being.”

Clearly, the world we live in today is volatile, and the protectionist and confrontational policies pursued by some Western countries in trade, investment, politics, diplomacy, and people-to-people exchanges have violated the international law, reduced mutual trust among nations, and hampered international cooperation in various fields. The international community must unite to oppose protectionism, provocation of confrontations and any economic sanctions without the approval by the UN Security Council.

Thus, China strongly opposes double standard and the practice of applying international law in a selective way. Instead, it advocates equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules for all countries, and upholds the common values of humanity, i.e. peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom.

These principles and values China has been promoting can help build consensus and forge a synergy in tackling global challenges, pursue peaceful coexistence among various countries based on mutual respect and on expanding common ground while shelving differences, facilitate exchanges and mutual learning among countries, and inject impetus into the progress of human civilization.

It should be recognized that with the growth of developing countries, global prosperity and stability will be put on a more solid footing, and developed countries will stand to benefit from such growth.

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has once again proven that countries in the world are closely connected and share a common stake. Mankind cannot declare a true victory over the virus if there is still one country struggling against it.

The frequently heard calls for global cooperation during the recent WEF Virtual Event of the Davos Agenda were a vivid reflection of the broad consensus in the international community.

There is only one Earth and one shared future for humanity. Only by standing united and working together can people address the major tasks they are faced with, and the only way out for all countries is to safeguard and practice multilateralism and advance the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

George Muntu is a Dar es Salaam based writer

Is this the end of Myanmar's quasi-democracy?

NEW DELHI

ON February 1st, 2021 the military of Myanmar overthrew the country's democratic government in a coup d'etat followed by arresting more than 40 government officials including Aung San Suu Kyi. The military declared a year-long state of emergency under the rule of its Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. Troops took over the streets, a night-time curfew has been put into force. Tens of thousands of protestors have taken to the streets across Myanmar, in what is seen as the biggest street protests in more than a decade. The anti-coup demonstrators are undeterred by police attacks and increasing violence from the security forces.

According to this list, the military has arrested multiple members of civil society, including activists, writers, musicians, filmmakers. Monitoring group Assistance Association for Political Prisoners said "more than 384 people have been detained, in a wave of mostly night-time arrests".

The first known casualty of the coup, Mya Thwe Thwe Khaing died on February 9 when a police officer opened fire with live ammunition, hitting her in the head while she was protesting in Naypyidaw. Two more protestors were killed in the city of Mandalay, marking Myanmar's bloodiest day since the military seized power. Myanmar's minority community fears renewed violence after the military coup.

United Nations Secretary General António Guterres condemned the use of deadly violence in Myanmar, "The use of lethal force, intimidation & harassment against peaceful demonstrators is unacceptable. Everyone has a right to peaceful assembly. I call on all parties to respect election results and return to civilian rule," António Guterres said.

The military in Myanmar alleges that the recent landslide election win by Aung San Suu Kyi was marred by fraud. Following the coup, the military has already announced replacements for a number of ministers.

Witnesses in Mandalay reported seeing soldiers from the 33rd Light Infantry Division, which led the deadly campaign against Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state in 2017. The United Nations Special Rapporteur, Tom Andrews said, "The 33rd Light Infantry Division was reportedly involved in the lethal attacks in Mandalay today - the same division responsible for mass atrocity crimes against the Rohingya in 2017. A dangerous escalation by the junta in what appears to be a war against the people of Myanmar."

"The very idea of Aung San Suu Kyi taking the trip to Hague at the end of 2019 to defend the actions of the military spoke volume about who she is as a person, and where she stands in her understanding of how democratic transition in Myanmar should progress," says Yasmin Ullah, a Rohingya Social Justice Activist to IPS News.

"We have had three coups so far since 1962, and that memory still lives very deeply with a lot of Myanmar citizens. The pain and hurt that comes with it still reminds them of the glory that the country could never actually achieve.

"We have lived under a military regime for decades, without unifying, without taking to the streets, and making it known to the world that we reject this unconstitutional ceasing of power. The citizens are out on the streets because they will not have another chance at this, people are done with the fact that they will have to live under a culture of impunity where the military is untouched," says Yasmin.

Following the coup in Myanmar, Washington has imposed sanctions on the military, urging other U.N members to follow suit.

The UK too announced asset freezes and travel bans on three generals in Myanmar and is also going to be putting in place new measures to prevent UK aid. Singapore warned that there will be "serious adverse consequences" for Myanmar if the situation there continues to escalate.

The European Union's foreign affairs chief Joseph Borrell urged the military and "all security forces in Myanmar to immediately stop violence against civilians."

Rights group Human Rights Watch in its report, Myanmar, Sanctions, and Human Rights said, "it supports the use of certain types of sanctions - including targeted sanctions and travel bans, and restrictions on military, trade, financial, economic, and other relations - as a means to condemn situations involving grave widespread human rights abuses or humanitarian law violations, to assert pressure to end those abuses, to hold those responsible to account, and as a means to deter other parties from becoming complicit in abuses."

"We are calling on the United Nations Security Council to impose a global arms embargo. Separately, the UN General Assembly can also endorse individual governments or regional organizations imposing unilateral sanctions on Myanmar's military, something the General Assembly has done in the past (e.g., during South Africa during apartheid.), the report stated.

International rights defenders have expressed concerns over grave human rights violations in Myanmar following the Feb. 1 military coup.

"What we are witnessing in Myanmar didn't just suddenly happen. You cannot leave the perpetrators of grave crimes under international law on the loose and then act surprised when they trample human rights again," said Amnesty International's Deputy Director of Advocacy Sherine Tadros.

"It was already ingrained in us Rohingyas to be intimidated, to fear the military, to fear authority, because that has always been the tactics used on us. The same kind of tactics we see now - the psychological warfare, night raids, shooting of people, arbitrary arrest, restrictions of movements - all of the things that the protestors are dealing with right now have been used on every single ethnic community and the Rohingyas," says Yasmin.

It's been thirty-three years since the uprising in 1988 in Myanmar against the military dictatorship, also



known as the 8-8-88 Movement. The armed forces continued to rule until 2011, when a new government began a return to civilian rule. The military's current threat to revoke the constitution only revealed the fact that it is willing to overturn any political - democratic system when its interests are threatened.

"Without a real change and reform within Myanmar to the very foundation to rip off the military power because they have infested different parts of the country that makes Myanmar what it is, without doing that there is no democracy that could take place," says Yasmin. **IPS**



The very idea of Aung San Suu Kyi taking the trip to Hague at the end of 2019 to defend the actions of the military spoke volume about who she is as a person, and where she stands in her understanding of how democratic transition in Myanmar should progress

DANISH EMBASSY, NETHERLANDS & FINLAND & BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION DAR ES SALAAM

PUBLIC AUCTION:

UNIVERSAL AUCTION CENTRE under instructions received from Royal Danish Embassy, Netherlands, Finland & British High Commission. We shall sell Household furniture's, Vehicles, Generator and Motorcycle by public auction on Saturday February 27, 2021 commencing at 10:00 am. The auction will take place at Golden Resort Sinza, Lion Street. Furniture Bidding Start at 10:00am; Sofa beds, Chest drawer, Dressers, Wardrobe, Dining table, Chairs, Office table, Chairs, Book case, Beds, Mattress, Fridge double door, Freezer, Washer, Dryer, Cooker Electric & Gas, A/c split units, Photocopy m/c, Tyres, Laptop, Computer set and etc Motor Vehicle & Generator Bidding Start at 12:00 hrs.

Unit	Make	Model	Year	Duty
1	L/Rover Freelander S/ Wagon	SALFA2 Petrol Engine	2012	Not paid
1	Ford FOGO Saloon	YFAA9 Petrol Engine	2012	Not paid
1	Ford Ecosport Station Wagon	9BFUT Petrol Engine	2015	Not paid
1	Nissan Murano Station Wagon	JNIT QR25 Petrol Engine	2006	Paid
1	Toyota Land Cruiser Prado	VZJ Petrol Engine	2004	Paid
1	Mazda Atenza Saloon	GG3S Petrol Engine	2002	Paid
3	Honda & Yamaha Motorcycle	XL125 & YBR125G Petrol Engine	2010	Not Paid
3	Generator Silence 30 Kva	Perkins Engine Diesel	2012	Not Paid

All items may be inspected at Golden Resort Sinza, Lion Street from December 24th to 26, 2021 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

AUCTION CONDITIONS:

- The winning bidder for Furniture has to make full payment to cashier immediately. For Vehicle & Generator winning bidder must pay 25% to cashier immediately and the final payment in full within 4 working days by March 4, 2021 at 4:00pm. For payments not made within 4 working days, the Vehicle or generator will be offered to the next highest bidder and the advance payment will be forfeited.
- Payments via CRDB, NBC Bank VISA & Master Cards will be accepted.
- All items are sold on "as is" basis with no guarantee.
- Duty and all taxes are the responsibility of the buyer.
- Bidder will remove the items after all payments and duties
- All persons entering the premises must obtain a Bid Number at the entrance.
- All persons entering the premises must wear Mask and wash hands with running water.

For further information contact:
UNIVERSAL AUCTION CENTRE,
 (PLOT NO. 5 "E" LION STREET SINZA) DAR ES SALAAM
 CELL NO: 0754 284 926,
 E-mail: universalauction@hotmail.com
 Insta: [universalauctioncentre](https://www.instagram.com/universalauctioncentre)

RADIO ONE PROGRAMME SCHEDULE



23.00 HRS	TUESDAY PROGRAMME
05.00 AM	HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I
06.00 AM	AMKA NA BBC
06.30 AM	NIPASHE
06.50 AM	MATANGAZO
07.00 AM	NEWS BULLETIN
7:10 AM	MATANGAZO
07.15 AM	TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI
07.25 AM	UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI
07.40 AM	KUMEPAMBAZUKA II
08.00 AM	HABARI NYEPESI
08.10 AM	KUMEPAMBAZUKA III
09.00 AM	HABARI ZA BIASHARA
09.10 AM	MATANGAZO
09.20 AM	BRAND TALK
09.30 AM	KUMEPAMBAZUKA SHERIA
10.00 AM	NEWS BRIEF
10.03 AM	DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS
10.10 AM	YALIYOMO YAMO
13.00 HRS	NEWS BULLETIN
13.10 HRS	DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS
13.30 HRS	DJ SHOW
16.00 HRS	NEWS BRIEF
16.03 HRS	DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS
16.30 HRS	HOJA YA LEO
18.30 HRS	DIRA YA DUNIA BBC
19.30 HRS	SPOTI LEO
20.00 HRS	NEWS BULLETIN
20.10 HRS	UCHUNGUZI KAMILI
21.00 HRS	NEWS BRIEF
21.05 HRS	DURU ZETU
22.00 HRS	NEWS BULLETIN (24 HRS)
22.15 HRS	AFRO TZIZI

FAHARI YA MSIKILIZAJI // THE LISTENERS PRIDE



TUESDAY	
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
22:00-00:00HRS	DALA DALA(marudio)
00:00-04:00HRS	LETE RAHA (marudio)
04:00-05:00HRS	SPOTI (marudio)



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Barrick invests 672bn/- in local contractors



Dr Mark Bristow, President, and CEO of Barrick Gold Corporation, addresses the International Minerals and Mining Investment Conference 2021 in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Courtesy of Barrick Gold Corporation.

By Francis Kajubi

BARRICK Gold Corporation has invested US\$290million (672.56bn/-) in local contractors and service providers in the regions where it operates at the end of 2020.

Speaking yesterday at the three-day International Minerals and Mining Investment Conference 2021 that is coming to an end today, Dr Mark Bristow, President, and CEO of Barrick Gold Corporation said that the company has also employed a big percent of locals in the areas of security and sanitary.

"If money alone is the indicator of success we have paid US\$800million into the country in the form of taxes, dividends, permits, infrastructure, salaries, and payments to local suppliers. For the past year our team has focused on gaining our social licence to operate through effective stakeholder arrangements" said Dr Bristow.

He asserted that the company among other things is now focusing on operating Bultanhulu ad Buzwagi mines as corporate with a capacity of producing 500,000 ounces of gold a year for the period of over the next ten years.

"Health and safety of our employees and protection of the environment

is an absolutely core to our business. In that perspective we have been monitoring the spread of Malarianad HIV in the areas that we operate by playing our part effectively by stopping further spread or even eradication where possible;

The other thing that we also take into serious consideration is the issue of environmental conservation in the areas that we operate. Since we started operations Barrick has been keen with water resource management commitments" he explained.

He said the company has upgraded its existing water treatment plant from 2.5million litres per day to 28 million litres per day.

"As part of us taking Acacia, we inherited mines that were in bad shape. We have now improved the understanding and management of the mines hence good results" he added.

According to him, North Mara has improved to underground mining while Bultanhulu has restarted underground mining that had stopped during the acquisition of the company. With the massive technological developments happening in the mining sector, to remain competitive Barrick is investing in advanced technologies.

He concluded that all three mines produced 462,000 ounces at the end of 2020 and we have achieved a great deal taking over Acacia.

Congo seeking to control fuel shortages with new refinery

RAZZAVILLE

FACED with chronic fuel shortages, the Republic of Congo is seeking to refine more oil at home. President Denis Sassou Nguesso on Sunday launched the construction of a new, bigger refinery near the port city of Pointe-Noire.

The 2.5 million tons per year facility will cost \$600m.

Named Atlantic Petrochemical Refinery, this unit will be built on 240 hectares and must officially offer more than 5,000 direct and indirect jobs.

It aims to diversify and consolidate the industrial fabric of the country which depends essentially on oil, its first source of export.

The project follows an investment agreement concluded in 2020 between the Congolese government and the Beijing fortune Dingheng investment Co Ltd.

The amount of the contract is 600 million dollars, according to a parliamentary source contacted by AFP, but who did not wish to comment on Brazzaville's share of the construction bill.

"The refinery will produce automotive and aviation gasoline, liquefied petroleum gas, diesel, lubricants, bitumen, kerosene and other products (...)," Hydrocarbons Minister Jean-Marc Thystère Tchicaya said during a ceremony presided over by Congolese Head of State Denis Sassou Nguesso.

"The new refinery is therefore an important link in the diversification of the economy in the hydrocarbons sector," he added. "It is a modular refinery with a nominal processing capacity of 2.5 million tons per year. This capacity could be increased if needed," said Li Yonghong, president of the Chinese company.

Congo's first refinery, the Congolaise de raffinage (Coraf), in operation since 1982, has a capacity of 1 million tons per year, but officially it only processes 600,000 tons annually while the country's needs are estimated at 1.2 million tons.

SBL's agri-business project boosts farmers' productivity, income

By Smart Money Reporter

INGREDIENTS for making alcohol, more often than not, differ, but the technique of brewing are basically the same. Beers comprise of water, grains, hops and yeast. The sources of these ingredients are therefore extracted from the soil, so to speak.

That's why, Serengeti Breweries Limited's initiatives of empowering local farmers to produce these raw materials locally through technical and financial assistance, is of paramount importance.

Cereals such as maize, millet and sorghum have been used to substitute grain requirements, and are formidable ingredients in beer brewing process. Fortunately, they can be grown locally and in large quantities unlike barley that is widely used worldwide.

What this means is that in essence, as said earlier, beer comes from the soil - through the growing and harvesting of these crops so that they can be brewed into beer. And if they can be produced locally, it will always be prudent for beer-makers to support their production.

Serengeti Breweries Limited has over the last seven years embarked on empowering local farmers to produce quality cereals not only to enable the brewer get the necessary ingredients but also to boost their economic wellbeing.

According to SBL Corporate Relations Director, John Wanyancha, more than 400 new farmers are this year set to join SBL's agri-business project, a program that provides farmers with high quality seedlings free of charge, links them to financial institutions to acquire capital needed for large scale farming and supplies them with fertilizers and other farming implements.

Wanyancha said the beer-maker's ambitious project



West Kilimanjaro farmers who are beneficiaries of Serengeti Breweries Limited's agri-business program inspect their barley after harvest last year. Photo courtesy of SBL.

facilitates farmers growing maize, sorghum and millet in various parts of the country, enabling the company to increase its locally-sourced raw materials used in beer production. SBL has three breweries located in Dar es Salaam, Moshi and Mwanza respectively.

"To date, this project has benefited more than 100 core farmers across various regions including Arusha, Manyara, Mbeya, Kilimanjaro, Singida, Morogoro, Shinyanga and Dodoma who collectively cultivate around 20,000 acres," he said.

The main objective of this grand initiative is to work with Tanzanian farmers to help them create self-sustaining businesses and secure the local production of raw materials. Agribusiness partnership with farmers is geared towards propping up financial fortunes of the local farmers by including

them into the SBL supply chain while extending and improving Tanzania's long term and short-term farming goals as a whole.

Said Msua, a large-scale farmer from Kilimanjaro region is one of the beneficiaries of the support provided by SBL. He said, "SBL's agri-business project has been helpful to me because the company has consistently provided me with fertilizer, seedlings and insecticide. Through this support, I have been able to get improved yields than the past when I didn't have SBL's support."

Another farmer, Mwinyi Makame from Manyara region, echoes Msua's comments. Makame, a large-scale farmer whose farm is over 500 acres, said, "Am very grateful to SBL because they have provided with seedlings and other farming implements without fail. Without

the company's support, I would have incurred a lot of expenses buying all the requirements for such a large shamba."

Elaborating on the advantages of the project, Wanyancha said it also reduces the quantity of raw materials that SBL needs to import in order to produce beer and promotes food security while saving the much-needed foreign currency. "SBL has contributed in many ways to the socioeconomic development of the country in the form of taxes, engages in comprehensive corporate social responsibility and creates direct employment to many Tanzanians," he added.

Under this unique project, once the additional farmers are incorporated into it, they will benefit from over 300 metric tons of seedlings that the brewer provides

to the beneficiaries annually, an equivalent to 300,000 kilograms.

Noting that this is the fifth year that the brewer is supporting the project, the SBL Corporate Director noted that they have so far contributed over 1,000 tons (1 million kilograms) of seedlings to the farmers.

The benefits accrued by the 100 households so far under the project, include, the purchase of tractors, boom sprayers as well as improved economic conditions like constructing modern houses and being able to send children to better schools.

Under the arrangement, SBL has increased its locally-sourced raw materials to 10,000 tons in the past four years, which is equivalent to 70 percent of the total raw materials that the company uses in beer production annually.

Public debt repayment hits Sh1trn for first time

NAIROBI

REPAYMENT of public debt will for the first time cross the Sh1 trillion mark from July, underlining the burden of mounting government borrowing.

The Treasury in February disclosures to Parliament show that it will pay Sh1.023 trillion for loans in the year starting July, making it the single-largest expenditure and more than double the Sh435.7 billion that taxpayers paid for debt four years ago.

At Sh1.023 trillion, Kenya will require an average of Sh2.8 billion daily in the financial year when the repayment of principal sums of a majority of the commercial and semi-concessional loans fall due.

The Jubilee administration has ramped up borrowing in recent years to build a range of infrastructure projects, leading to a squeeze on its finances as the loans fall due just as the economy is reeling from the impact of the coronavirus crisis.

Kenya will use Sh5.76 for every Sh10 collected as taxes and other levies in the year starting July for debt payments, leaving little cash for building and maintenance of roads, revamping the rickety health sector, boosting food security and affordable housing.

Kenya's administration will have borrowed at least Sh76 trillion to implement his manifesto in the 10 years of power after inheriting slightly more than Sh1.89 trillion in June 2013 from the Kibaki government.

Treasury chiefs project in the Budget Policy Statement released this month that total debt will jump to Sh8.59 trillion in the year ending June 2022, less than two months before the end of President Uhuru Kenyatta's final term.

Several local and international agencies, including the IMF and World Bank, have expressed concern over Kenya's rising appetite for borrowing to finance state expenditure.

The Parliamentary Budget Office – a technical unit that advises lawmakers on financial and economic matters – says “debt repayment may be crowding out development expenditure”.

The unit has cited a reduction in the share of development expenditure to gross domestic product (GDP) – the value of economic output – from 6.2 per cent in Jubilee administration's first financial year in office (2013/14) to 5.9 per cent in the year ended June 2020.

“Whereas development spending as a share of GDP decreased, other major expenditure categories such as expend-



Treasury Cabinet Secretary (minister) Ukur Yatani. File photo

iture on wages and salaries of national government employees, expenditure on operation and maintenance, pensions and transfers to counties remained relatively unchanged between 2013/14 and 2019/20,” the PBO wrote in a report late January.

The debt repayment will be nearly thrice Kenya's combined development spend of Sh355 billion in the current year and more than 16 times that of infrastructure like roads whose spend is expected at Sh76.89 billion.

It is almost three times the Sh383 billion allocated to the 47 counties and Sh14 billion for revamping infrastructure in educational institutions.

The debt repayment costs will be driven up by huge principal sums owed to external lenders such as China Exim Bank, which funded the standard gauge railway (SGR) line from Mombasa to Suswa near Naivasha.

The Treasury estimates repayment to foreign creditors, who account for 51 per cent of Kenya's total debt portfolio, will jump 58.40 per cent in the year starting July to Sh406.21 billion the current year's Sh256.46 billion.

Domestic repayments, on the other hand, will drop Sh84.71 billion, or 12.07 per cent, to Sh617.24 billion.

Repayments to Chinese lenders – Exim and China Development Bank – will account for 29.54 per cent of the Sh406.21 billion external debt costs in the fiscal year 2021/22, according to the forecast by the Treasury.

Kenya's administration began in 2016 to pour billions into infrastructure projects, including a Chinese-built railway, roads and bridges.

Kenya has already secured deals to suspend debt service with the Paris Club and other creditors, including China, covering the six months to the end of June this year.

Under those deals, which fall under the G20's initiative to offer poor nations debt relief, Kenya is deferring payments worth \$600 million due in the period.

The deferred amount, which includes \$378 million to China alone, will be paid over five years after a grace period of one year.

The Treasury will spend Sh99.36 billion to service Exim Bank debt in the year starting July, a 132.84 per cent surge compared with Sh42.67 billion in the current fiscal year ending June.

The jump in debt obligations to China's Exim bank partly reflects the Sh22.04 billion that was deferred this year as part of the debt relief.

Repayments to Italy, which has deferred Sh6.92 billion, are projected to jump more than three-fold to Sh21.09 billion from Sh6.94 billion this fiscal year, while France's will more than double to Sh8.01 billion from Sh3.01 billion.

The Treasury projections further show repayments to the World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA), the country's largest multilateral lender, will climb 20.42 per cent to Sh31.89 billion.

Farmers fighting back against locust invasion

NAIROBI

Kenya is battling some of the worst locust plagues in decades, but start-up The Bug Picture hopes to transform the pests into profits and bring “hope to the hopeless” whose crops and livelihoods are being destroyed by the insects.

Unusual weather patterns exacerbated by climate change have created ideal conditions for surging locust numbers, which have destroyed crops and grazing grounds across East Africa and the Horn.

Scientists say warmer seas are creating more rain, waking dormant eggs, and cyclones that disperse the swarms are getting stronger and more frequent.

The Bug Picture is working with communities around the area of Laikipia, Isiolo and Samburu in central Kenya to harvest the insects and mill them, turning them into protein-rich animal feed and organic fertiliser for farms.

“We are trying to create hope in a hopeless situation, and help these communities alter their perspective to see these insects as a seasonal crop that can be harvested and sold for money,” said Laura Stanford, founder of The Bug Picture.

In central Kenya's Laikipia, clouds of locusts are devouring crops and other

vegetation. The Bug Picture is targeting swarms of five hectares or less in inhabited areas not suitable for spraying.

Swarms can travel up to 150km (93 miles) a day and can contain between 40-80 million locusts per square kilometre.

“They destroy all the crops when they get into the farms. Sometimes they are so many, you cannot tell them apart, which are crops and which are locusts,” said farmer Joseph Mejia.

The Bug Picture pays Mejia and his neighbours Sh50 (\$0.4566) per kilogramme of the insects. Between February 1-18, the project oversaw the harvest of 1.3 tonnes of locusts, according to Stanford, who said she was inspired by a project in Pakistan, overseen by the state-run Pakistan Agricultural Research Council.

The locusts are collected at night by torchlight when they are resting on shrubs and trees.

“The community ... are collecting locusts, once they (are collected) they are weighed and paid,” said Albert Lemasulani, a field coordinator with the start-up.

The insects are crushed and dried, then milled and processed into powder, which is used in animal feed or an organic fertiliser.



A swarm of desert locusts in Meru on February 9, 2021.

Regulators probe engine blow-outs as older Boeing 777s are suspended

NEW YORK

SHOWERS of jet engine parts over residential areas on both sides of the Atlantic have caught regulators' attention and prompted the suspension of some older Boeing planes from service.

The Saturday incidents involving a United Airlines 777 in Denver and a Longtail Aviation 747 cargo plane in the Netherlands have put engine maker Pratt & Whitney in the spotlight – although there is as yet no indication that their causes are related.

Raytheon-owned Pratt & Whitney said it was coordinating with regulators to review inspection protocols.

Following the Colorado engine failure, when United Flight 328 dropped debris on a northern Denver suburb before landing safely, Boeing recommended the suspension of 777s with the same PW4000 turbine, and Japan made it mandatory.

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) weighed in on Monday, requesting more information on the Pratt engines in light of both events. A woman sustained minor injuries in the Dutch incident, with scattered turbine blades on the town of Meerssen. One was found embedded in a car roof.

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said it would soon issue an emergency airworthiness directive.

Both incidents involve the PW4000 engine type that equips a relatively small

number of older planes, some grounded by the pandemic, limiting the likely repercussions.

They nonetheless bring a new headache for Boeing as it recovers from the much more serious 737-MAX crisis, which saw its flagship narrowbody jet grounded after two deadly crashes.

“This is certainly an unwelcome situation for both Boeing and Pratt, but from time to time issues will pop up with aircraft and engines,” said Greg Waldron, a managing editor at industry publication Flight Global.

“The PW4000-powered 777-200 is slowly fading from service,” he said, and the COVID-19 slump means that airlines forced to suspend it “should be able to fill any network gaps” with 787s or other 777s equipped with General Electric engines.

The 777-200s and 777-300s affected are older, less fuel-efficient models still flown by five airlines: United; Japan Airlines; ANA Holdings Inc; Asiana Airlines Inc and Korean Air. Most are in the process of being phased out.

Boeing said 69 of the 777s operating globally with PW4000s had been in recent service, with another 59 stored. Pratt & Whitney engines power less than 10% of the delivered 777 fleet of more than 1,600 planes.

United suspended 24 of its 777s, pre-empting Boeing's advice, after the Saturday blow-out that dropped the right engine's protective outer casing near homes.

In the Dutch case, the Longtail pilot was informed of an engine fire by air traffic control after taking off from Maastricht bound for New York, and diverted to Liege, Belgium.

The Dutch Safety Board said on Monday it was investigating the incident.

Examination of the 26-year-old United jet showed damage was mostly confined to the right engine, the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said. Its inlet and casing became detached and two fan blades were fractured, with others exhibiting damage.

The FAA said early findings suggested that “inspection interval should be stepped up for the hollow fan blades that are unique to this model of engine, used solely on Boeing 777 airplanes”.

Earlier in-flight PW4000 engine failures have previously been examined by authorities.

Another United 777 of the same vintage suffered an engine failure in February 2018, when a cowling fell off about 30 minutes before the plane landed safely. A full-length fan blade fracture was behind the incident, the NTSB determined.

After a malfunction forced a Tokyo-bound JAL 777 to return abruptly to Naha airport in December, Japan's Transport Safety Board reported finding two damaged fan blades, one with a metal fatigue crack. Its investigation is ongoing.

JAL, which operates 13 of the planes, said they were scheduled for retirement by March 2022.

Red flag over KSh578m pay for Huduma Namba ICT

NAIROBI

THE Information Communication Technology ministry is on the spot over utilisation of Sh577.9 million for purchase of ICT components for Huduma Namba.

The State department paid for undisclosed activities related to the Huduma Namba long after the closure of the registration exercise, raising questions of possible fraud.

Auditor-General Nancy Gathungu has specifically zeroed in on Sh95.9 million pending payment saying “its accuracy and validity could not be confirmed.”

The registration exercise for the National Integrated Information Management System (Niims), commonly known as Huduma Namba, started on April 2, 2019 and ended on May 25, 2019.

“However, there were payments and expenditure for activities undertaken long after the closure, some of which were in relation to the negotiation process,” Ms Gathungu says in a report tabled in Parliament on February 11.

The State chief auditor also flagged Sh120.25 million that was paid to internet service providers despite the ICT department having ownership and controls the National Optic Fibre Backbone Infrastructure (NOFBI), which provides internet to the service providers.

“However, the service providers have

not been charged for the use of this infrastructure. No explanation has been provided for this anomaly,” the Auditor-General said.

The ICT ministry could not explain why it wired back Sh255 million out of the Sh577.9 million the Interior docket provided for purchase of Huduma Namba ICT equipment.

The ministry also failed to provide for audit review a breakdown of expenditure that are in line with the detailed critical infrastructure component budget as well as approved work plan and procurement plan as submitted by Interior ministry.

The State has started rolling out issuance Huduma Namba cards which is billed to be “the authentic single source of truth on personal identity in Kenya”.

Some 38 million people had been registered by the time the Sh9.6 billion exercise closed in May last year.

Data collected through the Huduma Namba registration will be stored in the Integrated Population Registration System (IPRS) – the central location for easy electronic access by institutions, including private corporations that provide crucial and sensitive services.

At the touch of a button, it would produce one's details stored at the various registries, including births and deaths, marriages and divorce, as well as passport, aliens, ID cards and citizenship registers.

Biden set to revise small business loans to reach smaller, minority firms



People walk past a business that is closing following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the Manhattan borough of New York City.

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden will launch changes on Monday to the main U.S. coronavirus aid program for small businesses to try to reach smaller, minority-owned firms and sole proprietors left behind in previous rounds of aid.

Biden administration officials said that for two weeks starting on Wednesday, the Small Business Administration will only accept applications for forgivable Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans from firms with fewer than 20 employees to ensure that they are not crowded out by larger firms.

The changes, to be formally announced by Biden on Monday afternoon, come as small business bankers say demand for Paycheck Protection loans is slowing as firms reopen. The White House released a fact sheet outlining the changes on Monday morning.

When the PPP was launched in April 2020 at the height of coronavirus lockdowns under a \$3 trillion relief bill, its initial \$349 billion ran out in two weeks. Congress approved another \$320 billion

in May, but the program expired in August with about \$130 billion in unused funds.

The program was re-launched on Jan. 19 with \$284 billion in new funds from a coronavirus aid bill passed at the end of December, and a Biden administration official said about \$150 billion of PPP money is still available.

But Biden administration officials said there are still many minority and very small firms in low-income areas that have not been able to receive aid.

The changes aim to make it easier for firms with no employees – sole proprietors, independent contractors, and self-employed people such as house cleaners and personal care providers – that could not qualify previously because of business cost deductions.

The Small Business Administration will revise the rules to match the approach used to allow small farmers and ranchers to receive aid, the businesses said.

The officials said the program will also set aside \$1 billion for businesses without employees in low- and moderate-income areas, which are 70% owned by

women and people of color.

The SBA will provide new guidance making it clear that legal U.S. residents who are not citizens, such as green card holders, cannot be excluded from the program. The Biden Administration will also eliminate exclusions that prohibit a business owner who is delinquent on student loans from participating in the program.

Business owners with non-fraud felony arrests or convictions in the previous year are excluded from the program. However, Biden administration officials said they will adopt bipartisan Senate proposals to remove this restriction, unless the applicant is currently incarcerated.

According to the White House fact sheet, the Biden administration is also improving the program's operations by strengthening and streamlining fraud checks, revamping the loan application and government web sites that communicate with small businesses, talking more with borrowers about their needs, and deepening the government's relationship with lenders.

For Black founders, venture funding remains elusive despite new funds

NEW YORK

WHEN Donnel Baird first pitched his idea in 2014 to create a technology platform that could help small apartment buildings and other urban structures become energy efficient, he got the U.S. government to promise him \$2.1 million, provided he could raise a similar amount from elsewhere.

But not one of some 200 venture capital firms he approached agreed to invest back then.

Baird believes that initial funding was elusive in part because as a Black man without a background in software development, he was an outsider. Investors did not grasp the opportunity that seemed obvious to him as someone who had grown up in a predominantly Black, low-income neighborhood in Brooklyn, Baird told Reuters.

"That's one of the hardest things about being Black. It is really hard to tease out why things happen. All I know is that the VCs decided I could not pull off what I was talking about," Baird said in an interview. "Silicon Valley has a narrow archetype of what they like to invest in."

Some seven years later, the 39-year-old has become the recipient of one of the largest early-stage funding rounds ever raised by a Black entrepreneur. His company, BlocPower, has raised \$63 million in debt and equity, with the help of Goldman Sachs Group Inc and other investors. The bulk of the money will go toward financing energy-efficient heating and cooling systems for BlocPower's clients.

The financing is both a sign that corporate America's growing acknowledgment of its diversity problem is beginning to lead to some change, and a stark reminder that the pace of change is slow. Interviews with Black entrepreneurs and investors as well as a Reuters analysis of venture capital data provided by Crunchbase, a business information company, show Baird is an outlier.

The share of U.S. venture capital going to Black-founded companies stood at just over 3% of the \$147.6 billion of 2020's overall deal volume, the data shows. In the past six years, that percentage has not budged above 5%, even though about 10% of U.S. companies are Black-owned, according to U.S. Census data.

For Black founders, consistent support has come from only a handful of venture capital firms, and many of them are relatively small.

"One of the challenges for Black entrepreneurs is that you have a good idea, you're ahead of the curve, and you have the skills to execute it, but because they haven't seen a Black person do it, they wait for another person to do it," said Jon Gosier, a Black entrepreneur who said he had to sell one of his more successful ventures a few years ago because he could not find investors.

Venture capital firms, which typically provide funding in exchange for an equity stake, finance only a tiny sliver of U.S. businesses. But their backing can make a huge difference to an entrepreneur's success. Amazon.com Inc, Facebook Inc and many other corporate titans today have benefited from such early backers.

Past founders and employees of such companies have in turn gone on to back other successful ventures. Black entrepreneurs have largely been unable to generate such wealth. The value of equity that Black founders hold in their companies, on average, is about a quar-

ter the value of their white counterparts, a McKinsey & Company study shows.

"So often, people who have worked at those sorts of companies who have found financial success can go back to the folks in their community," said Deldelp Medina, executive director of Black & Brown Founders, a nonprofit organization supporting Black and Latino entrepreneurs. "We haven't been able to build that out."

For Black founders, consistent support has come from only a handful of venture capital firms, according to Crunchbase data. Only 16 firms out of hundreds of venture capital firms participated in 10 or more early-stage funding rounds for Black-founded or Black-led companies between 2015 and 2020, the data shows. The list includes large accelerators such as Techstars and Y Combinator, the famed program that funded Airbnb Inc and DoorDash Inc.

Among the 10 most frequent backers of Black founders in that period, three were founded by African Americans: Backstage Capital, Precursor Ventures and MaC Venture Capital. Another firm in the top 10, Kapor Capital, focuses on companies that close "access gaps," especially in Black and Latino communities. Kapor Capital and MaC Venture Capital have both invested in BlocPower.

Backstage, Precursor and MaC have less than \$200 million in assets under management combined, Pitchbook data show. In contrast, the top 20 U.S. venture capital firms each managed tens of billions of dollars or more.

"We can only meet a tiny portion of the demand," said Charles Hudson, managing partner and founder of Precursor Ventures, referring to Black-founded venture firms such as his. "The biggest of us are not very big in the grand scheme of things." The lack of venture capital financing forces entrepreneurs to seek out alternatives, which can be limiting when they need to go back for more money, entrepreneurs and investors said.

"When you have an investor base that's made up of individuals and angel investors and maybe accelerators and less institutional capital, it's a lot harder to go back to those previous investors and ask them to help you out through a potential downturn," said Monique Woodard, founder and managing partner of early-stage investor Cake Ventures.

Larger venture firms are under pressure to make greater efforts toward diversity, but the attempts are fledgling. Andreessen Horowitz's Talent x Opportunity Fund, launched in June, for example, drew criticism for its relatively small initial funding of \$2.2 million. The firm, a previous investor in BlocPower, has since announced investments in seven companies through the fund.

Andreessen Horowitz declined to comment on the fund.

Some firms have taken steps toward building a pipeline of diverse talent. At Kapor, for example, a program is in the works to partner with other firms to train potential investors from underrepresented backgrounds.

But too often, said co-founder Mitch Kapor, other investors have turned to him as a would-be scout for diverse talent, rather than building broader networks themselves.

"Where do we find Black founders to invest in?" Kapor said he is often asked. "Like the answer was something like, 'Aisle 12.'"

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Goodyear to buy Cooper Tire for \$2.8 billion, nearly doubling China presence

COLORADO

GOODYEAR Tire & Rubber Co said it would buy Cooper Tire & Rubber Co in a \$2.8 billion deal to beef up its portfolio in the high-margin light truck and SUV segments and strengthen its presence in North America and China. Shares of Cooper, which has historically had stronger margins than Goodyear, jumped 20% in morning trade while Goodyear stock was up 3.4%.

The deal, announced on Monday, nearly doubles Goodyear's presence in China and broadens distribution for Cooper replacement

tires through Goodyear's network of 2,500 retail stores in the country. U.S. and China, the two largest tire markets in the world, account for about one-third of global industry volume.

The combined company will also benefit from Goodyear's original equipment and Cooper's strength in the rapidly growing light truck and SUV product segments.

The global tire industry was hard hit in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic led to a sharp decline in demand for replacement tires and original equipment, forcing automakers to halt production.

However, industry

experts expect a rebound in auto demand this year, fueled by the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, record low interest rates and healthy consumer savings as people held off spending money on large purchases during the pandemic.

Under the terms of the deal, the implied cash and stock consideration for Cooper shareholders is \$54.36 per share, representing a premium of 24% to its closing price on February 19.

Goodyear expects about \$165 million in run-rate cost synergies within two years after the deal closes. Goodyear shareholders will own about 84% of the

combined company while Cooper shareholders will own about 16%.

Goodyear intends to fund the cash portion of the deal, expected to close in the second half of 2021, through debt financing. The combined company will be headquartered in Akron, Ohio.

Separately, Cooper reported a nearly 3% fall in quarterly revenue, while net income attributable to the company fell 25.8% to \$37.99 million the fourth quarter ended Dec. 31.

Lazard is serving as lead financial advisor for Goodyear while Goldman Sachs & Co LLC is advising Cooper.



The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. company logo is seen in Westminster. File photo

WORLD

Strike grips Myanmar, anti-coup protesters defy junta's lethal warning

MYANMAR police began to disperse pro-democracy protesters yesterday as businesses around the country shut in a general strike called to oppose the military coup despite a threat from authorities that confrontation could cost lives.

Three weeks after seizing power, the junta has failed to stop daily protests and a civil disobedience movement calling for the reversal of the Feb. 1 coup and release of elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

There were protests in cities and towns across the country on Monday, from the northern hills on the border with China to the central plains, the Irrawaddy river delta and the southern tip of the panhandle, images on social media showed.

In the capital, Naypyitaw, where the military is headquartered, a police water cannon truck and numerous other vehicles closed in to break up a proces-

sion of chanting protesters who scattered when police on foot chased them, wrestling several to the ground.

"They're chasing and arresting us. We're just protesting peacefully," one woman said in video clip posted on Facebook. The response of security forces this time has been less deadly than in crackdowns in earlier phases of turmoil in almost half a century of military rule but three protesters have been killed - two shot dead in Mandalay on Saturday, and the first, a woman shot in Naypyitaw, who died on Friday.

The army has said one policeman died of injuries sustained in the protests.

Late on Sunday, state-owned media MRTV warned that protesters they could get killed.

"Protesters are now inciting the people, especially emotional teenagers and youths, to a confrontation path where they will suffer loss of life," the broad-



A flag is waved as demonstrators protest against military coup in Yangon, Myanmar, yesterday. REUTERS

caster said.

Facebook said yesterday it had removed MRTV's pages for repeated violations of its standards, including its violence and incitement policy. On Sunday, it deleted the military's main page for the same reason.

The junta's warning didn't discourage people from turning out in their tens of thousands.

In a country where dates are seen as auspicious, protesters noted the significance of the date 22.2.2021, comparing it with demonstrations on Aug. 8, 1988, when a previous generation staged anti-military protests that were bloodily suppressed.

"Everyone is joining this," said San San Maw, 46, at the Hledan junction in the main city of Yangon, which has become a rallying point for the protesters. "We need to come out."

Police later lined up, apparently in

preparation to disperse protesters from another site in Yangon, outside a U.N. office, a Facebook feed from the Eleven media outlet showed.

Speaking earlier, Htet Htet Hlaing, 22, said she was scared and had prayed before joining the demonstration, but would not be discouraged.

"We don't want the junta, we want democracy. We want to create our own future," she said.

RESTRAINT

Author and historian Thant Myint-U said the window for a peaceful resolution was closing.

"The outcome of the coming weeks will be determined by just two things: the will of an army that's crushed many protests before and the courage, skill and determination of the protesters (much of society)," he said on Twitter.

Agencies

Blizzards, pandemic and America's human rights fairy tales

BEIJING

THE American people are being thrashed by one crisis after another: The raging coronavirus pandemic has so far taken almost 500,000 lives in the country; roaring blizzards have killed some 50 people in Texas and other southern states, and left millions more struggling with frost, darkness and disrupted daily lives.

The dire situation has once again busted the human rights fairy tales the world's sole superpower has flaunted for decades, and revealed the hollowness behind the country's brassy promises to its citizens.

For quite some time, the human rights that have been truly preserved and promoted in the United States are those of the powerful and the wealthy.

At the same time, such basic human rights as those to life, health and even survival of the general public have been either neglected or damaged.

Following the coronavirus outbreak in the country, the previous U.S. administration, which should have devoted itself to beating the disease and saving lives, had chosen intentionally to downplay

the threat of the deadly virus, spread lies and misinformation, and sought to shift responsibility to others.

The American public has paid a bloody heavy price for Washington's arrogance and ignorance. The United States now still ranks first in terms of infections and deaths worldwide.

Life expectancy in the country fell by an astounding full year in the first half of 2020 due to the pandemic, with minority groups suffering the sharpest declines, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A report published on Feb. 10 by the Lancet pointed out that around 200,000 Americans should not have died if proper measures had been taken.

The ferocious winter storms have offered American politicians another chance to display their indifference to the welfare of the American people.

While the howling storms have led to freezing temperatures and widespread power blackouts in Texas, the state government and local power grid operators have so far



The U.K. flags are seen during a protest outside the Houses of Parliament in London, Britain, on March 29, 2019. (Xinhua)

failed to bring forward a timetable for power restoration. Some unscrupulous companies have taken the advantage to charge exorbitant prices for essential supplies of electricity. And as millions of Texans are shivering in coldness and

desperate for water and food, Senator of the Lone Star State Ted Cruz flew to Mexico for holidays.

What is more jaw dropping is that Mayor of Colorado City Tim Boyd posted on Facebook recently that the local govern-

ment has no responsibility to support the people amid the weather crisis, and that "only the strong will survive and the weak will perish."

While showing little interest in promoting the human rights of their own people, some Washington politicians have turned human rights into an excuse for meddling in the businesses of others overseas.

Pretending to care about the human rights far beyond its shores, Washington militarily intervened in the Middle East, causing huge losses of human lives there, and smeared China over alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Tibet to stoke divisions and instability in China, and to contain the country's development.

In the famous Danish fairy tale, the little match girl could still light matches to have warmth and the feeling of being loved, even though those were illusory.

For the ordinary Americans in the face of blizzards and the pandemic, even those hallucinations are out of reach, except that both they and the little match girl live in fairy tales.

Xinhua

DNA database to prevent black market sales of Australian species

CANBERRA

AUSTRALIAN wildlife will be DNA tracked in an attempt to prevent the trafficking of exotic animals.

Sussan Ley, the Minister for the Environment, yesterday announced that the government would adopt the recommendations of a review of

export permits for normative species conducted by KPMG.

The review found that endangered species such as the Glossy Black Cockatoo and Purple-Crowned Lorikeet have been exported for sale on the black market.

It recommended that the government establish a DNA databank of the genetic line-

age of every animal imported and exported from Australia, allowing authorities to better track the animals and crack down on trafficking.

"The growing involvement of organized crime in the trade, sophisticated international trading operations and the soaring value of Australian wildlife on black markets,

some of which can sell for tens of thousands of dollars, underline the need to send the strongest possible deterrent," Ley said. "It is important that we are setting the highest possible benchmarks in the regulation of wildlife trade."

According to the KPMG report hundreds of endangered parrots were exported to the

Berlin-based Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP).

It was later found that the ACTP was run by Martin Guth, a convicted fraudster, who was selling birds for hundreds of thousands of dollars. The DNA databank will begin with birds before being expanded to include all native animals.

White supremacy a 'transnational threat', UN chief warns

GENEVA

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned yesterday that white supremacy and neo-Nazi movements are becoming a "transnational threat" and have exploited the coronavirus pandemic to boost their support.

"White supremacy and neo-Nazi movements are more than domestic terror threats. They are becoming a transnational threat," he told the Geneva forum. Without naming states, Guterres added: "Today, these extremist movements represent the number one internal security threat in several countries."

In the United States, racial tensions simmered during the turbulent four-year presidency of Donald Trump. His successor Joe Biden has said the Jan 6 siege of the US Capitol by Trump supporters was carried out by "thugs, insurrectionists, political extremists and white supremacists".

"Far too often, these hate groups are cheered on by people in positions of responsibility in ways that were considered unimaginable not long ago," Guterres said. "We need global coordinated action to defeat this grave and growing danger."

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet is to report to the council on March 18 on systemic racism against people of African descent. The global inquiry was launched after George Floyd died in Minneapolis last May when a white police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Guterres also accused authorities in some countries of using the COVID-19 pandemic to deploy "heavy-handed security responses and emergency measures to crush dissent".

"At times, access to life-saving COVID-19 information has been concealed - while deadly misinformation has been amplified - including by those in power," he said.

Guterres warned about the power of digital platforms and the use and abuse of data.

"I urge all Member States to place human rights at the centre of regulatory frameworks and legislation on the development and use of digital technologies," he said. "We need a safe, equitable and open digital future that does not infringe on privacy or dignity."



Lam gets vaccinated as HK sees 16 new COVID-19 cases

HONG KONG

CHIEF Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor was inoculated yesterday afternoon with a shot of Sinovac Biotech's coronavirus vaccine as the city reported 16 new COVID-19 cases.

Lam was vaccinated at a community inoculation center at Hong Kong Central Library and was followed by high-ranking government officials. Executive Councilors and lawmakers were also expected to follow suit yesterday.

Describing the upcoming vaccination program as a silver lining in the city's pandemic fight, Lam appealed to residents to get inoculated.

"If residents are not confident enough to come forward (to receive jabs) on the basis of false information, the work cannot be done and the expected benefits of the vaccination program cannot materialize," Lam said.

"When your turn comes, please register on the internet and come forward to receive your jab as soon as possible. We have procured enough vaccines. We will do all we could to make it easier for residents to receive vaccination."

The city's new COVID-19 cases included 13 local infections and three imported cases, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) said in a statement.

Four of the latest infections were untraceable while the city's tally of confirmed cases rose to 10,884.

The CHP said the four cases of unknown origin included that of a 66-year-old postnatal care helper who last went to work on Feb 11 before developing symptoms on Friday.

The other three involved two retirees - a 76-year-old man who lived at Yee On Centre in Kwun Tong and a 62-year-old man who lived at Wang Toi Shan Wing Ning Lei in Yuen Long - as well as a 41-year-old computer officer who visited his workplace on Feb 11.

Xinhua



Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor gets inoculated at the Community Vaccination Centre set up at the Hong Kong Central Library's Exhibition Gallery in Causeway Bay, Hong Kong yesterday.

CHINA has steadfastly advanced its transport since 2012 as a way to shatter the bottleneck restraining rural development and contribute to its poverty alleviation efforts since 2012.

The country has built or upgraded 59,000 kilometers of roads serving resource transport, tourism and business development in poor areas, offering a solid guarantee for farmers to get rid of poverty.

As of September last year, all towns, townships and administrative villages with feasible conditions had been connected to asphalt and concrete roads, and bus services. The state also subsidized the upgrading of 17,000 kilometers of national expressways and 53,000 kilometers of national highways. By now, almost all county seats in poor areas have access to highways of Grade II or above.

China builds, upgrades 59,000 km of roads in poor areas

"My fellow villagers all started businesses after a road were built around my village, and I have to work harder to expand my poultry business," said Yang Xiaoyan, a resident from Pingzhai village, Ziyun Miao and Buyei Autonomous County, southwest China's Guizhou Province. A winding mountain road has for the first time connected the village to the outside world.

The transport progress has enhanced the "blood making" capacity of poor areas. For instance, Shiquan County, situated in the Qinling-Bashan Mountains in Ankang, northwest China's Shaanxi Province, has been working to improve its transportation over the recent years. It has built 1,186 kilometers of roads for

business development and 352 bridges. The enhanced transportation led to rapid development of local agriculture. Now the county is home to 11,000 mu (733 hectares) of day lilies and 75,000 mu of silkworm breeding fields.

Besides, the transport progress is also creating massive jobs for poor residents. In recent years, local transport departments across China have offered various public service jobs weighted towards poor residents, such as road construction and maintenance, as well as express delivery.

As of August the last year, China had offered 668,000 rural jobs related to roads, including 270,000 for public service, benefiting more than 370,000 registered impoverished

residents.

What comes together with the rural transportation progress is also thriving rural tourism. In Xuanhe Township, Liancheng County, southeast China's Fujian Province, nice and neat courtyards in ancient Chinese styles are attracting huge numbers of tourists coming for the county's specialty - dried sweet potato slices. "The convenient transportation has brought us both popularity and wealth," said Wu Zaiyang, Party chief of the county's Peitian village.

The smooth roads have led to efficient and two-way circulation of personnel, commodities, capital and information between rural and urban areas. In 2020, the number of express packages delivered to and from rural

areas surpassed 30 billion, and the exchange of industrial products and farm produce between urban and rural areas totaled 1.5 trillion yuan (\$232 billion).

In recent years, integrated road passenger transport in urban and rural areas has made progress. A passenger transport network with county seats as centers, towns and townships as junctions, and administrative villages as points has taken shape.

Years ago, students from Longxi village, Xianxia Township, Yudu County, east China's Jiangxi Province had to cross mountains to go to school. "After a 1.2-kilometer road was built, the students finally have a safe road to go on," said Zhu Senlin, principal of the Longxi primary school. Thanks to

the improvement in both hardware and software, the school has been recruiting more and more students in recent years.

"We had to walk a long way carrying our parents on our backs to get to the township hospital once they got sick in the old days. Now it's more convenient with the roads built, and it takes only a dozen minutes if we ride a motorcycle," said Liang Shaofeng, a resident from Wukou village, Guizhou province.

According to an official with the Ministry of Transport, China will keep enhancing its road construction in rural areas and build more roads to connect villages and even households, so as to effectively align its poverty alleviation achievements with rural revitalization.

People's Daily

Lavrov says Turkey not seeking to create Great Turan

MOSCOW



TURKEY does not seek to create the Great Turan as a supranational entity, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in an interview with RBC television channel.

"If we talk about the Great Turan as a supranational entity in the historical sense, I do not think Turkey seeks this goal. I cannot see how the countries, which used to be part of the Soviet Union and then became independent, can support any form of this idea in real life.

On the contrary, the entire pathos of their foreign policies and the practice of their activities are to strengthen their national states," he said.

Lavrov pointed out that the theme of Turk-speaking relations had penetrated deep enough in Turkey's cooperation with the countries concerned, including Azerbaijan and certain nations in Central Asia.

The Russian Foreign Minister remained of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, where Russia holds an observer status.

"Some of our republics are interested in contacts. They promote concrete projects there. There is TURKSOY, the International Organization of Turkic Culture. There is also such a structure as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic Speaking States.

All of them have been functioning for quite a long time. They have their own plans and hold events. In general, it happens through cultural, linguistic and educational traditions," Lavrov stressed. **Agencies**

UNHCR calls for rescue of Rohingya refugees stranded in sea

BERLIN

The United Nations refugee agency on Monday called for the immediate rescue of a group of Rohingya refugees who were adrift in their boat in the Andaman Sea without food or water, many of whom were ill and suffering from extreme dehydration.

The agency said it understood some passengers had died, with fatalities rising over the weekend on a boat it said had left the coastal district of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh about 10 days ago and had experienced engine failure.

"In the absence of precise information as to the refugees' location, we have alerted the authorities of the relevant maritime states of these reports and appealed for their swift assistance," the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in a statement.

"Immediate action is needed to save lives and prevent further tragedy," it said, offering to support governments by providing humanitarian help and quarantine measures to those rescued.

A senior Indian Coast Guard official told Reuters the boat has been tracked and was reported to be safe but did not yet know the condition of those aboard.

The Rohingyas are a Muslim minority that has suffered persecution in Buddhist-majority Myanmar and many have fled in rickety boats, encountering often perilous journeys in the hope of reaching Malaysia and Indonesia.

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas fled a deadly crackdown by Myanmar's security forces in 2017 and poured into neighbouring Bangladesh, where about a million live in poor conditions in sprawling refugee camps, unable to work or leave without government permission. **Agencies**



Slovakian PM insists on earliest possible purchase of Sputnik V vaccine

PRAGUE

THE Russian coronavirus vaccine should be purchased as soon as possible, Prime Minister of Slovakia Igor Matovic wrote in Facebook.

The government of Slovakia did not make the decision to purchase the Sputnik V on Thursday. Ministers from the Za Ludi (For the People) party insisted on prior registration of the Russian pharmaceutical in the European Union.

"The person that wants we wait with [making] the agreement [on the Russian vaccine supply] until its registration by the European Medicines Agency until the time when all its volumes will be sold out by the producer, simply does not want the Sputnik V to be in Slovakia but desires that we continue relying on supplies of vaccines ordered by the European Union, accompanied with long delays. He wants us to suffer from the lockdown and unexpected deaths," Matovic wrote.

The Healthcare Ministry of Slovakia can authorize use of the Sputnik V, the Prime Minister noted. The Healthcare Ministry "issues thousands of permits" to use non-registered drugs within a year. "Nobody has casted a doubt on such practice [the need to use in urgent cases] until now. Why obstacles with the Russian vaccine surfaced at present?" he added.

Matovic said on Friday he reached an agreement with the Russian Minister of Industry and Trade Denis Manturov and head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund Kirill Dmitriev on the supply of a batch of the Sputnik V vaccine to Slovakia by June end. **Agencies**

Wang Yi calls on US to return to reason on China policy

BEIJING

CHINESE State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi yesterday called on US policymakers to abandon biases, give up unwarranted suspicions, and return to reason on China policy to ensure a healthy and steady development of China-US relations.

Wang made the remarks when delivering a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Lanting Forum in Beijing, with the theme of "Promoting Dialogue and Cooperation and Managing Differences: Bringing China-US Relations Back to the Right Track."

Fifty years ago, Dr. Henry Kissinger made the ice-breaking visit to China, and with extraordinary political resolve, leaders of China and the United States jointly reopened the door of interaction which had been closed for decades, Wang noted.

However, in the past few years, China-US relations deviated from the normal track and ran into the biggest difficulties since the establishment of diplomatic ties, he said, adding that the root cause was because the previous US administration, out of its own political needs, seriously distorted China's future path and policy, and on that basis, took various measures to suppress and contain China, which inflicted immeasurable damage to bilateral relations.

"Fifty years later today, we must, with the sense of responsibility for the two countries and the world, make once again the sensible and right decision," he said.

It is important to respect each other and not to interfere in each other's internal affairs, Wang said, adding that this is a basic norm governing international relations. Noting that China has all along respected the choices made by the American people, Wang said that China has no intention to challenge or replace the United States and stands ready to have peaceful coexistence and seek common development with the United States.

"We hope the United States will respect China's core interests, national dignity, and rights to development. We urge the United States to stop smearing the Com-



Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the Lanting Forum, with the theme of "Promoting Dialogue and Cooperation and Managing Differences: Bringing China-US Relations Back to the Right Track", in Beijing yesterday. (XINHUA)

munist Party of China and China's political system, stop conniving at or even supporting the erroneous words and actions of separatist forces seeking 'Taiwan independence,' and stop undermining China's sovereignty and security through internal affairs concerning Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet," he added.

Wang stressed the importance of stepping up dialogue and properly managing differences, saying that at present, both sides should follow up on the phone call between the two presidents on the eve of the Chinese New Year, act in the fundamental interests of the two peoples, take a forward-looking, open-minded and inclusive attitude and reactivate or establish dialogue mechanisms in vari-

ous areas and at various levels.

"China is, as always, open to dialogue. We stand ready to have candid communication with the US side, and engage in dialogue aimed at solving problems," Wang said.

He called on efforts to move in the same direction to restart mutually beneficial cooperation, saying that with regional hotspot issues and global challenges emerging one after another, areas for China-US cooperation are expanding rather than shrinking, and the prospects for interaction are broadening rather than narrowing. "We hope that the US side will adjust its policies as soon as possible, among others, remove unreasonable tariffs on Chinese goods, lift its

unilateral sanctions on Chinese companies and research and educational institutes, and abandon irrational suppression of China's technological progress, so as to create necessary conditions for China-US cooperation," Wang said.

China is ready to coordinate policies and work with the US in the three areas of COVID-19, climate change and world economic recovery, Wang said.

Pointing out that it was important to clear the path for the resumption of bilateral exchanges in all areas, Wang also said that China hopes the US side will act as early as possible to lift its restrictions on Chinese educational and cultural groups, media outlets and institutions for overseas Chinese affairs in the United States, remove its barriers for US subnational governments and social sectors to engage with China, as well as encourage and support the resumption of normal exchange programs between universities and research institutes. **Xinhua**

Schools in England to reopen on March 8 as UK eases lockdown

LONDON

LOCKDOWN measures will start to be rolled back in England on March 8 because the criteria which guides easing is currently being met, Prime Minister Boris Johnson's office said yesterday.

Johnson said his government's priority was to get children back to school in a cautious easing of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

Earlier the day, vaccines minister Nadhim Zahawi said that schools will reopen on March 8, while two families or six people will be able to meet outside from March 29.

"Children first, then the priority is schools, two people able to meet outdoors and maybe have a coffee together, that is also on the 8th of March. Then (on the) 29th, two families, or rule of six, and outdoor sports (will be allowed to start again)."

The evidence indicates that vaccines are proving effective at cutting the transmission of COVID-19, Zahawi said.

Some 17.6 million people, over a quarter of the 67 million population, have now received a first dose of the vaccine.

On Sunday, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the first dose of a vaccine appears to reduce the chances of transmitting coronavirus by "about two-thirds".



A seven-year-old boy (left) and his four-year-old are watched by their mother as they complete their remote learning tasks, set by their local primary school after they were made to close due to COVID-19, in Marsden, northern England, on Jan 21, 2021. (AFP)

Meanwhile, Hancock said the country had recently succeeded in driving down cases of the more infectious South African variant. Overall daily coronavirus cases hovered around 11,000 a day last week, compared with a high of over 80,000 in late December.

Another 9,834 people in Britain have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the cumulative caseload to 4,115,509, according to official figures released Sunday.

Daily fatalities were the lowest since December and less than half of the aver-

age of the previous seven days. Another 215 people died, compared to a weekly average of almost 500.

Leaders in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will also ease restrictions over the coming months. **Agencies**

US scholar hails positive results of educational exchanges with China

BY ZHANG MENGXU,

This year marks the 42nd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the US. Forty-two years ago, Madelyn Ross was a senior in Princeton University, majoring in East Asian Studies.

"When I heard about the establishment of diplomatic relations, I realized that it might be possible for me to go to China as a student or English teacher.

I had been studying Chinese language and history in college so I was eager to take advantage of the chance to see China for myself." Ross, now the Associate Director of China Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and Executive Director of SAIS China, said in an interview with People's Daily recently.

"China felt like a great mystery in 1979. Before I left, I had almost no access to Chinese news or people. Only a few Americans had been to China in the past thirty years," Ross told People's Daily.

Ross came to China and did graduate work in Chinese at Fudan University in Shanghai in 1979-1980, where she was one of the first American students to study in China following the normalization of China-US relations.

The first time Ross went to a completely unfamiliar country, her mood was complicated.

But she was met at the airport by



Madelyn Ross is the Associate Director of China Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)

two teachers from the university, and people were kind and friendly from the very beginning.

"As an American, I was as much or more of a mystery to my Chinese colleagues and friends as they were to me. Some people were curious and ques-

tioning, and others were cautious at first - but in all cases there was mutual respect and a lot of goodwill. I had many friends in Shanghai and I was able to develop some strong lasting friendships.

Since then, Ross has forged an indissoluble bond with China. She has

worked for 30 years in China-related positions at educational and non-profit organizations.

"Many Americans who have studied Chinese have been able to use this experience in their work in government, business, and other sectors.

Thousands of Chinese have stayed in the United States and become productive citizens in all aspects of life, or gone back to China with a better understanding of what America is like.

When the US and China go through troubled periods in their relationship, these people on both sides have a relatively realistic view of the issues and are helpful in maintaining dialogue and solving problems," Ross said.

During Biden's administration, Ross believes that more positive signs may be seen. She thought that limits on educational exchanges between China and the US will remain in place due to the pandemic, but these will be lifted as soon as possible.

"In the long term, the new administration has made it clear that it intends to be more open and global in outlook, will encourage study abroad, and will be more welcoming toward international students and scholars.

I am optimistic that positive changes will be felt immediately by Chinese and other international students in the US," Ross said.

People's Daily



Deus Kaseke

Kaseke now out to help Yanga clinch VPL title

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

YANGA's midfielder, Deus Kaseke, said despite having a good scoring performance this season, he has set his sight on helping the team reclaim the Vodacom Premier League (VPL) title.

The former Mbeya City FC and Singida United midfielder has had a good season enough to persuade Yanga's head coach Cedric Kaze to use him regularly in many league matches.

Kaseke has made it clear that he has no plans to compete for the VPL top goal scorer's gong because his dream this season is to see to it the Premier League title lands in won by his outfit to fulfill his and his fellow players' promise to their fans.

"I score goals for the benefit of my team, because we want the championship, but I have no plans to compete for the VPL top goal scorer prize," he noted.

He presently ranks fourth in the list of the Premier League top scorers this season with six goals to his name.

The midfielder said he is not afraid of his rivals in the race, but his position on his team hardly gives him the opportunity to score as often as his predecessors.

Kaseke explained that he has never dreamed of winning the VPL top scorer award due to his position on the field.

He was adamant all clubs he has played for have important people to

be given that role.

Kaseke also made it clear that effort and devotion are the aspects which motivate him to showcase spirited displays for Yanga.

Yanga are placed first in the VPL standing after playing 21 matches and have scored 34 goals.

The midfielder has been involved in eight goals, and he has scored with six goals and a total of two assists. He is the leading scorer in the squad.

He was moreover in Yanga's starting line up in their VPL match against Mtibwa Sugar, which took place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Saturday and saw Yanga edge Mtibwa Sugar 1-0.

Kaseke said: "It's a lot of effort and prayer to God who is omnipotent, so we are still fighting for the fans, they are ought to support us and we will do well."

Simba's top scorer in the domestic top flight's past two seasons, Meddie Kagere, is leading the scoring race with nine goals.

Kagere's team mate, John Bocco, comes second with eight goals while Azam FC's Prince Dube is placed third with seven goals.

Yanga lead the league's standing with a total of 49 points, followed by their age-old rivals Simba who are in second place with 42 points after 18 matches.

Can Poulsen revive the old magic?

By Correspondent Lloyd Elipokea

RECENTLY, there was a distinctly discernible stir in domestic football when it emerged that our old friend, the Dane Kim Poulsen, has been reemployed as the Taifa Stars' head coach.

This major development followed an underwhelming and disappointing African Nations Championship (CHAN) finals campaign, which predictably led to the ouster of the former Stars' head coach, the Burundian Etienne Ndayiragije.

As he is no stranger to our domestic football patch, Kim Poulsen ought to find it infinitely easier than a newcomer would do to ease into the saddle and meet the ambitious requirements of the weighty task at hand that he has been entrusted with once again.

Obviously, the Dane's first order of business will be to ensure that the Taifa Stars successfully advance to the 2021 AFCON finals.

Indeed, where this particular quest is concerned, Poulsen faces a daunting and hefty task on his hands.

In the 2021 AFCON Qualifiers, the Taifa Stars are precariously sitting in third place in Group J, having riskily collected merely four points from as many games.

So, it is patently obvious that the Dane faces a Herculean task to turn around the Stars' faltering 2021 AFCON finals qualifying campaign.

And, in this hopefully successful endeavour, this writer would like to wish Kim Poulsen the very best of good fortune because it is likely that he will need it.

From matters Tanzanian football, let us segue nicely now to wheelchair tennis where earlier this week on Tuesday, a certain



Kim Poulsen

South African heroine, Kgothatso Montjane, impeccably finished as the runner-up alongside her partner in the Australian Open women's wheelchair tennis doubles championship.

Indeed, the significance of Montjane's exceptional feat rests on this very fact, the Australian Open is traditionally the first Grand Slam of every year.

To those still scratching their heads in wonderment over the significance of Grand Slams in tennis, well, they are the most coveted and most immensely prized trophies in tennis.

You see, there are four Grand Slam championships every year and these are, the Australian Open, Wimbledon, the French Open and the US Open, which traditionally is always held towards the end of the year.

Thus, for the women's wheelchair tennis star Kgothatso Montjane to finish as the runner-up alongside her partner in the Australian Open women's wheelchair tennis doubles event is no mean feat.

In fact, it is a sterling achievement which should be celebrated to the hilt and further assures Montjane's stature as a tennis great par excellence.

In addition, it is hoped that Montjane's extraordinary accomplishment will serve fittingly as a beacon of hope to other wheelchair tennis players not just here on home soil but indeed across the span of the continent that they, too, can climb painstakingly to the summit of the sport.

Indeed, a wise sage once said to me: "hard work plus determination equals suc-

cess." And, truly they do.

As this sporting narrative eases into its home stretch, Dear Reader, I would like to heartily commend Simba SC for kicking off their CAF Champions League group stage campaign in thrilling and grand fashion.

Earning a 1-0 triumph over AS Vita Club of the DR Congo in Simba's opening group stage clash was an impressive accomplishment that sets the tone for their campaign in continental football's most exalted tournament.

Lest it be forgotten, AS Vita Club of the DR Congo are no pushovers.

Hats off then to the Msimbazi Street side and it is hoped that they will continue in this rich vein of form for the duration of this hallowed continental football competition.

CR Belouizdad set to host Mamelodi Sundowns in Dar

By correspondents Ismail Tano & Nassir Nchimbi

ALGERIA's CR Belouizdad can finally breathe as the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) has agreed to host the relocated CAF Champions League match between the Algeria champions and Mamelodi Sundowns of South Africa.

The federation agreed to host this match after meeting the government to see the possibility to host the two visiting teams, with the Algerian league envoys being the match's hosts.

The CAF Champions League match will therefore be played in Dar es Salaam on February 28.

"The management of the Belouizdad has received a correspondence from the TFF, informing them of their agreement to host the match on February 28 at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam," CR Belouizdad said.

The Algerian football outfit approached TFF, via the Algerian Football Federation (FAF), for a request to relocate the match to Dar es Salaam, after it was impossible for them to organize it in Sudan.

As a reminder, the FAF had asked CAF to postpone this match, initially scheduled for today, due to the risk of contamination with the South Africa variant of coronavirus, following a request made by the Algerian club.

Thanks to this solution found within the allotted time, the CRB



Dar es Salaam's Benjamin Mkapa Stadium will be Algeria's CR Belouizdad's home ground in the team's CAF Champions League's group stage clash against South Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns, slated for the end of this week.

avoided being handed 2-0 loss.

The decision to postpone the fixture was taken at the end of a meeting held on Wednesday week at the Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reform, in the presence of the Scientific Council for monitoring the Covid-19 pandemic, representatives of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS) and the director of the competitive pole of Chabab Taoufik Kourichi.

The CAF validated this postponement, while granting the CRB a period of 48 hours, to allow the squad to

find a neutral country to play the match.

Mohamed Bekkat Berkani, member of the National Commission for monitoring the evolution of the Covid-19 pandemic, called last Monday for the relocation of this match, considering that the progress of this meeting on the Algerian soil represents a real risk. The situation in South Africa is out of control.

In a press release published on its official website on Friday last week, the FAF indicated that failure to comply with the decision (relocation of the match) would result in the application of the Co-

vid-19 regulation stipulated.

The rule discloses: "If a host team cannot organize the match or cannot host another team for lack of government clearance, that team will be considered to have lost the match 2-0."

"Also, it should be noted that the failure to respect the aforementioned deadline or the impossibility of finding a neutral country to host the match in question will result in the application of the decision of the CAF Emergency Committee in date of November 8, 2020 as stipulated above," the FAF noted.

Kagere vows to lead Simba SC to victory over Al Ahly

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

AS Mainland Tanzania's Vodacom Premier League's defending champions, Simba, prepare to take on Egypt's Al Ahly in the second match of Group A of this season's CAF Champions League, Simba's forward Meddie Kagere has vowed to see to it his squad beat the visitors.

Simba will entertain the

Egyptian football big guns, this season's CAF Champions League's defending champions, in the tie to be played in Dar es Salaam today.

Kagere scored the only goal that helped Simba post 1-0 victory over Al Ahly in their 2018/19 CAF Champions League's group stage fixture played at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam, which was then known as National Stadium, on Feb-

ruary 12, 2019.

The muscular attacker scored on the 65th minute and helped Simba revenge for their embarrassing 5-0 defeat to Al Ahly in Cairo.

Kagere said he is confident what he had done that day would be repeated due to the preparations they are currently making for the Group A game.

"If I get a chance to play in the match on Tuesday

and we create chances even if they are as few as they were last time I can give our fans joy by scoring again, we want to win again at home," the striker that have netted nine goals disclosed.

"You know we are going to play against the best team here in Africa in all areas, so, we are going to meet enough competition from them, a situation which will contribute to creating a few scoring

chances, and if I get one of the chances, I will make sure I use it," he said.

He disclosed: "We have managed to win away from home, it is a good start for us because among the goals we had there was to see to it we at least do not leave without one point, but we managed to get three."

"If we manage to play well and beat Al Ahly we will obviously finish well in the

group."

Kagere said finishing at the top of the group has the first two advantages in the quarterfinal stage.

"An outfit which finishes first in its group is paired against opponents that do not have much quality, but even the first match in that stage will start away and end at home," he said.

The Egyptian team arrived at Julius Nyerere In-

ternational Airport with a squad consisting of 22 players, missing Ali Maaloul, Taher Mohamed Taher, Walid Soliman, Salah Mohsen and Hussein El-Shahat for various reasons.

The mentioned players' positions are expected to be filled by players, namely Wahid Mahmoud, Mahmoud Kahraba, Mohamed Magdy, Mohamed Sherif and Ayman Ashraf.

Should Messi stay at Barca or join Man City, PSG? - 2

LONDON

LIONEL Messi needs little introduction: he'll go down in history as one of the best to ever play soccer, with six Ballons d'Or to his name, countless individual awards and team trophies in his cabinet and all of them earned while playing for Barcelona. And yet, this summer he has a very real choice. After trying to leave Barca last summer -- remember we all learned the word "burofax"? -- he'll be able to walk out the door for free this summer once his contract expires on June 30.

The case for letting him go: It's the economy, stupid. You can concoct arguments about how another two or three years of Messi in blaugrana might negatively affect change, renovation and development at Camp Nou in pure football terms, but that would be irresponsible. There's only one elephant in this room, and it's the colour of money.

FC Barcelona's financial figures are complex, and some parts are open to a variety of interpretation, but nobody can evade three key facts: Their €1.1bn global debt is a horrific figure to deal with, the revenue stream is and will continue to be brutally affected by the pandemic and, finally, the outlay needed to retain Messi via anything even vaguely similar to his current deal is unfeasibly huge. The club still owes him a vast sum -- perhaps as much as €60m -- and the couple of hundred million it would take to reengage him when he's out of contract in June, hypothetically for another two seasons, is money that FC Barcelona neither have nor can faithfully promise to have.

But, for the sake of argument, let's say that President Laporta (hypothetically) promises to name Barcelona's Camp Nou stadium "El Estadio Messi" in perpetuity, guarantees Messi that he'll be head of the club's La Masia Academy the instant he finishes his playing career at Inter Miami or with Newell's Old Boys, and agrees to a reduced, reasonable salary that Barcelona can actually afford from 2021 until 2023 -- and the wee man agrees to stay on those terms -- there would still be negatives.

Barcelona's squad is improved, but that's because coach Ronald Koeman has been daring in how much he has used, trusted and, crucially, developed previously unused academy kids; he has also benefitted from breakthrough seasons by Dembele, Trincao and Pedri. This isn't to say that this squad, if it wishes to win La Liga and be a Champions League contender, doesn't need astute refurbishing. But that requires money the club will struggle to raise and money that, in this scenario, will be paid to Messi.

It's an invidious situation and one in which -- it's perfectly feasible -- Messi's family love of this city, his loyalty to the club (rather than the previous board), his unwillingness to uproot in the middle of a pandemic, his lack of appetite for a change of climate, culture and language might leave Messi willing to stay, to commit, to renew, to apply his greatness ... but leave Barcelona unable to fund that wish.

What should Barcelona do? With both sides of the case made, here's the endgame: If I were Laporta, I'd mix elegance with street smarts. Messi was understandably sick of being fed nonsense by the previous board, who patently thought of him as someone to be patted on the head, misled and then discarded. Be straight with him and his people. Show them the books. Explain that you want him, passionately, to stay and retire at FC Barcelona. Engage in finding mutually interesting ways of constructing a two- or three-year deal that attacks the financial problem laterally -- meanwhile, accepting, openly, that it's Messi's duty to investigate the PSG and Man City options. Encourage him, even.

In 2003, Barcelona were working hard on the Ronaldinho deal with PSG. They were in the race but losing, all the while insisting to the Brazilian that after some grey-wintered "Northern" seasons in the French capital, he'd hate the rain, cold, damp and grey skies of Manchester. Ultimately, when Manchester United and PSG fell out over Ronaldinho's price, the player factored the weather and culture into his decision and chose the Mediterranean life.

Laporta would be wise to revisit that tactic. Perhaps Messi is ready for a change. Perhaps he can be tempted to put aside worries about whether his wife and kids (a factor that's absolutely fundamental to him) can adapt and settle, whether he can work, thrive and excel in a French or English training ground. Perhaps. But, were I Laporta, I'd play on this element, while admitting that it's Messi's right to play the field before deciding.

Among the many things I've learned about this phenomenal footballer, who will go down in the all-time pantheon of sporting (not just footballing) greats, is the truth that he requires to be happy, focussed, engaged and energised by his daily work, the likelihood of winning important trophies, and having people around him who aren't subservient, but are leaders, winners and on his wavelength. If Laporta can convince Messi that this is the atmosphere he'd be staying to enjoy, and that he's far less likely to encounter these things under the grey, freezing skies "up north," then perhaps the Camp Nou faithful can continue to enjoy the greatest footballer they've ever seen.

What's crucial to understand, however, is that, for any of these three clubs, it's not about winning the battle to obtain Messi's services -- it's about the longer war to make him inspired, engaged, ambitious, hungry and supreme again, even at the age of 34. It can be done.

Manchester City, PSG, Barcelona: start your engines. -- Graham Hunter **ESPN**

Man United's fringe players are fighting for their future

MANCHESTER, England

OLE Gunnar Solskjaer is saying all the right things about pushing Manchester City to the wire, but he would be forgiven if he doesn't even believe it himself. Manchester United are back up to second in the Premier League table after a 3-1 win over Newcastle on Sunday, but with City making it 18 consecutive wins at Arsenal earlier on Sunday, the odds-makers give Solskjaer's team less than a 1% chance of winning the title.

To put it into context, the experts believe there's an equal probability of them being relegated instead.

United have plenty left to play for this season and a trophy in either the FA Cup or Europa League would put a gloss on a campaign during which Solskjaer can already confidently point to progress. But Solskjaer's task over the summer is how to get closer to City; between now and then, his players are playing for their place in the squad for what the Norwegian hopes will be the next step forward.

Newcastle, meanwhile, are going in the other direction and an eighth defeat from their past 10 games left them just three points above the relegation places, piling more pressure on Steve Bruce. For Solskjaer, it



Daniel James, right, continued his rich run of form with the crucial second goal as Man United thumped a listless Newcastle at Old Trafford. (Agencies)

was a positive end to a day that began with an announcement that Nicky Butt and Mark Dempsey would be required on the bench after a number of his staff were forced to self-isolate in line with COVID-19 protocols.

"We've got good staff elsewhere," said Solskjaer afterwards. "Of course, it was a different preparation for the boys, but that's the situation we are in. We have to be ready."

"In the first half, even though we had most of the possession, we didn't create enough. We had to step it up and we did in the second half."

"I'm never going to say [the title race] is done until it's done, you've seen so many examples of teams that just hang in there, keep working, do their

own job and something might happen. It's not something we think about -- we think about our own performances and our own games; that's the only thing we can control. We have loads to play for and improve on."

Solskjaer will back his core of young players -- namely Marcus Rashford, Mason Greenwood, Scott McTominay and Aaron Wan-Bissaka -- to get better and better, helped by his established senior players like Bruno Fernandes and captain Harry Maguire. But conversations have already taken place between Solskjaer and his recruitment team about a plan for the summer transfer window, and the players already here have got three months to prove their positions are not in

need of upgrades.

Club chiefs have not tried to hide the fact that the coronavirus pandemic, which has stopped supporters attending games at Old Trafford for almost a year, have affected the finances, but executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward and the Glazers will still make money available for transfers. The question now is how Solskjaer uses it. There will be no major overhaul because he prefers a gradual turnover of players, but as he approaches his two-year anniversary as permanent manager, the focus has to be how he ends the wait for a title.

Ask United fans what the team needs and you'll find several willing arguments that everywhere from centre-back to centre forward

should be the priority, which shows the scale of the task, and it will be Solskjaer's job to decide on the positions most in need of fresh faces.

Watching on Sunday, Solskjaer will not have been happy to see his team concede from a speculative cross into the box that allowed Allan Saint-Maximin to briefly make it 1-1. It was the 32nd league goal they have shipped this season, the same as Fulham in 18th. At the other end, Anthony Martial's struggles as first-choice striker continued until he was replaced 20 minutes from time. After getting 17 league goals last season, the Frenchman has managed just four this term, two of which came in the 9-0 win over Southampton.

There's no doubt

about Rashford's place in Solskjaer's plans, but the England forward had a far more productive night, scoring the first goal with a terrific run and thumping finish before his close touch and quick feet won a penalty for Fernandes to score his 22nd goal of the season. In between, Dan James scored his sixth goal in his last nine appearances for club and country and his third in as many games for United.

James, the 23-year-old winger, has had to be patient this season, but he is vindicating Solskjaer's decision to reject loan offers from Leeds United last summer and in January. Back in the team, James has taken his opportunity to show he deserves to stay long-term. Others may not be so lucky.

"Dan is working hard, he is a great boy in and around the place," said Solskjaer, who also handed a debut to 17-year-old academy graduate Shola Shoretire. "He knows he has been very close a few times. When you score the amount of goals he has at the moment confidence must be sky high."

"Dan with the energy he has, the X factor and the pace, he gives us something that must be hard to play against if you are a defender. It's been a very good week for him."

Arsenal must prioritize Europa League after settling for defeat vs. Man City

LONDON

THERE often comes a point when European competition takes on greater significance than domestic pursuits, and Arsenal have surely reached that juncture now. The same is true of Manchester City, especially given the responsibility Pep Guardiola feels in delivering Champions League success as the ultimate validation of his methods. But they can concentrate on their last-16 tie against Borussia Monchengladbach almost free of Premier League concerns after a facile 1-0 win over the Gunners at Emirates Stadium restored their 10-point lead at the summit.

Meanwhile, Mikel Arteta has no such comforts. Arsenal's 11th league defeat of the season leaves them 11 points adrift of the top four, meaning Champions League qualification -- an essential financial and footballing target -- is surely most likely achieved through the Europa League.

Winning Europe's second-tier competition will be difficult, of course, but last season's FA Cup final success underlined Arteta's ability to prepare a team for knockout matches. If anything, it's a managerial skill he's arguably developed to greater effect than his squad management, a criticism that first emerged when Southampton knocked Arsenal out of the FA Cup in January.

Yet it could reasonably be argued that Arsenal



Arsenal were too tired to put up a genuine fight vs. Man City as the schedule gets more gruelling. At this point, they should save their best for the Europa League. (Agencies)

would have been beaten on Sunday no matter what team Arteta selected.

City extended their staggering run to 18 successive victories in all competitions with a victory that never looked in doubt from the moment Raheem Sterling scored after 77 seconds. Guardiola's side were already working the ball with their customary swagger and Riyad Mahrez should be praised for the accuracy of his delivery from the right, but it is a damning indictment of Arsenal's defence that Sterling, just 5-foot-7, was allowed to rise unmarked and guide a header past goalkeeper Bernd Leno.

The Gunners regrouped in the face of an early onslaught, but in truth City eased off thereafter, happy to control the game through conservative possession. From start to finish, both teams played as though they knew the end result and were willing to save

themselves for what comes next.

For Arsenal, it is surely their biggest game of the season to date. Their Europa League last-32 tie against Benfica is finely poised after the first leg ended 1-1. Arteta named an unchanged lineup for that game from their previous outing against Leeds United, the first time the Spaniard had done so during his tenure, and an understandable decision given the

attacking fluency they showed against Marcelo Bielsa's side. But the knock-on effect was surely felt here, even with five alterations to the team.

Bukayo Saka did his best to carry an attacking threat for the hosts, combining positively with Kieran Tierney down the left, but both looked fatigued by the end, particularly Tierney. Hector Bellerin, in his eighth consecutive

start, was some way off his best. At least Emile Smith Rowe was given a breather for all but the final 18 minutes. Martin Odegaard, on loan from Real Madrid, started his third consecutive game, but could not affect it in anything like the way Arteta would have hoped.

The same was true of Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, whose three outings in seven days sum up his inconsistency at present: a hat trick against Leeds, followed by profligacy against Benfica and then anonymity against City. He had just 19 touches all game, the fewest of any player to play 90 minutes, closely followed by Nicolas Pepe (22), whose underwhelming 73-minute display underlines how important it is for Arsenal to spend the money they have wisely when trying to match teams with much greater financial muscle. At £72 million, Pepe cost more than any other player on the pitch, yet he was

probably the most peripheral.

"With the schedule we have, it is really demanding. We have no time to recover, very little time to prepare a game," Arteta said after Sunday's defeat. "For example, against City we could not prepare the game on the field because we didn't have enough time. But we have to get used to it."

The need for Arsenal to get everything right in the transfer market is heightened by the wider financial constraints the club are under -- exemplified by the first-team wage cut and 55 non-playing staff redundancies -- but it would be exacerbated still further without any income from European football. There are a myriad of complications, but the fifth-placed team and FA Cup winners go into the Europa League next season, with the sixth-placed side qualifying for the inaugural Europa Conference League.

ESPN

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Man United's fringe players are fighting for their future

PAGE 19



Simba SC players participate in training in Dar es Salaam recently to shape up for the Vodacom Premier League and 2020/21 CAF Champions League fixtures. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA will be looking to carry on their winning form when they host Egyptian football heavyweights, Al Ahly, in a CAF Champions League's group stage clash at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam today evening.

The Msimbazi Street-based team won their first CAF Champions League's group stage match, a 1-0 victory away to AS Vita Club in DR Congo.

Another victory will take them to the top of the table with six points. They have not lost in their last seven games

across all competitions.

Didier Gomes da Rosa, Simba's head coach, has practically a full strength side to select from with captain John Bocco and Erasto Nyoni back from injury lay offs.

Jonas Mkude will likely be recalled in midfield for this fixture in Mzmiru Yasin's place, whilst Paschal Wawa and Joash Ochieng should play at centre back again.

Simba will bank on a passionate home crowd support after the Confederation of African Football (CAF) approved their request to allow 30,000 fans to attend the game.

The club's information officer, Haji Manara, believes that they have the impetus to register maximum points as the prime target is to qualify for the quarter finals and beyond.

He said: "We defeated them in 1985 when they were the defending champions of CAF Club Cup Winners and the latest win was 1-0 when Meddie Kagere scored."

"We are capable of beating them again. Everyone associated with Simba has that hope that we can win on Tuesday. From the players, the technical bench, officials and fans all are hopeful."

"The players did not take off days granted after the Biashara United game because they needed to train and give Tanzanians an entertaining game against Al Ahly."

"We accept that we are not at their levels but Simba always love playing big teams. We are psychologically prepared knowing that we have no other choice but to win on Tuesday."

"A win will take us closer to our target which is to qualify for the semi-final of the Champions League," he concluded.

Meanwhile, Al Ahly will miss the service of Ali Maaloul, Taher Mohamed Taher, Walid Soliman, and Salah Mohsen, who have been ruled out due to injury, while Hussein El-Shahat is suspended.

On Saturday, they received good news, with defender Ayman Ashraf cleared fit for the Simba game after recovering from muscular injury.

In head-to-head stats, the two sides have met four times with each side claiming two wins.

Simba won the last meet played in Dar es Salaam courtesy of a Meddie Kagere second half strike.

TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV MONDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
14:00 Wanawake Live (r)
14:30 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Copa Coca-Cola (r)
16:00 Akili & Me (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 5SELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 5SPORTS LIVE
22:30 Bongo Hills

UJENZI

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06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Namungo FC coach seeks to work on club's weaknesses

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA'S Namungo FC's head coach, Hemed Suleiman, says he will rectify all mistakes his players committed during the first leg of this season's CAF Confederation Cup play offs against Angola's Clube Desportivo de Agosto, which took place in Dar es Salaam last weekend.

Namungo FC won 6-2 against Clube Desportivo de Agosto in the clash, which was deemed as an away tie, at Azam Complex.

Suleiman, who is popularly known as 'Morocco', in a monitored radio interview which took place yesterday, said although they won convincingly he will rectify weaknesses his players showcased during the game.

He said his team did not stick to his plan and he vowed to work on the weaknesses before hosting the Angolan side in the second leg at the same venue on Thursday.

"There are mistakes which we committed, look they were first to score and we equalized, and they were coming on our side," he noted.

"We committed a lot of mistakes which resulted in our opponents being awarded three penalty kicks. I will work on all those mistakes before meeting our opponents on Thursday," he said.

Morocco said rectifying the mistakes will also be vital when the team reach the group stage where they are expected to meet some of the top African football giants at the club level.

To reach group stages, Namungo FC needs either a win of any margin or any draw.

"We need to prepare well for our group stage games, the teams in group stage are very tough so we need to prepare well for those assignments," he said.

In the last weekend game, the hosts were the first to score through Britan Moyo on the 13th minute and Hashim Manyanya equalized for the hosts 19 minutes later.

Striker Sixtus Sabilo put Namungo FC 2-1 up on the 38th minute.

Clube Desportivo de Agosto's player Ambrosin Antonio levelled matters for his team on the 52nd minute, Reliant Lusanjo scored the third goal for Namungo FC six minutes later.

Three minutes later, Sabilo was at it again, given he netted the fourth goal for his side.

Second half substitute, Erick Kwizera, registered his name on the score sheet for Namungo FC on the 66th minute and the squad's last goal was scored by Stephen Sey.

Kilimanjaro Aces maintain winning ways in 2021 TCA T20 Super League

By Guardian Reporter

KILIMANJARO Aces' cricketers have stretched their winning run in this year's Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Reliance Insurance T20 Super League, cruising to a two-wicket victory over Tembo Warriors in a clash which took place in Dar es Salaam last weekend.

Experienced batsman, Jatin Darji, slotted in as opening batsman, had by far the best performance at the crease once Tembo Warriors were presented with the opportunity to bat first in the match.

Darji nailed 31 runs, which consisted of four fours and a six, he was ultimately the only one with double digit score given the rest of the players displayed woeful showing.

Neither Vishal Patel, who has of late shown scintillating performance with the bat, nor Issa Kikasi could make their experience count, leaving Tembo Warriors with a poor score.

Tembo Warriors, ultimately, notched 67 runs all out in 17 overs, with Patel, Kikasi and the remaining performers ending with poor scores.

Kilimanjaro Aces' experienced spinners, Kassim Nassor and Athumani Siwa, mercilessly tormented Tembo Warriors' players and played pivotal role in frustrating the batsmen.

The two skilful bowlers ended with three wickets apiece. Nassor gave away seven runs



Kilimanjaro Aces' player, Arshaan Jasani (L), is presented with the best player of the game by Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA)'s Chairman, Premji Pindoria, after the former's club played Tembo Warriors in this season's TCA Reliance Insurance T20 Super League tie, which took place in Dar es Salaam on Sunday. Kilimanjaro Aces edged Tembo Warriors by two wickets. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TCA

in four overs, notching an economy rate of 1.75.

Siwa bowled three overs, gave away 10 runs and ended with an economy rate of 3.33.

Laksh Snehal chipped in with two wickets, giving away seven runs in two overs.

Although they were presented with a modest target of 68 runs in their sight, Kilimanjaro

Aces had to knuckle down to the victory, given they experienced a spirited fight back showcased by Tembo Warriors.

Kilimanjaro Aces, led by gifted batsman Arshaan Jasani, reached the target, notching 70 runs for the loss of eight wickets in 18.2 overs.

The squad's chase faced a blow earlier in the innings, as

opener Dhruvit Mehta succumbed to an early exit given he was dismissed for duck by Tembo Warriors' medium pacer Salum Jembe. Fellow opener Jasani put his resoluteness to show, notching 16 runs.

His efforts to extend his stay was thwarted by Tembo Warriors' Khalil Rehemtullah, who went for a catch to dismiss the

former from Suraj Pala's bowling.

Skipper Nassor replicated his stellar performance with the ball, when he took the crease, as he recorded 14 runs to see to it Kilimanjaro Aces get down to successful chase.

The team's chase later on faced a scare given they dropped four wickets in quick succession.

Youthful batsmen, Karim Athuman and Mohamed Yunus, though stood firm to catapult their team to the victory with solid knocks.

The two batsmen forged the eighth wicket stand, with Athuman recording seven runs not out whilst Yunus ended with five runs not out.

Patel, Darji, Rehemtullah, Pala and Jembe ended their bowling stints with a wicket each during Tembo Warriors' turn with the ball.

Reliance Insurance are main sponsors for the tournament, which is organized by the national cricket governing body in a bid to boost cricket promotion at the domestic level.

The showdown's co-sponsors are Sayona Drinks Ltd, Unity Computers, Sterling, Pepsi, Harab Motors and G1 Security.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

DOESN'T EXPECTING
THE UNEXPECTED
MAKE THE UNEXPECTED
BECOME THE EXPECTED?

