



CRIME HEALTH ENVIRONMENT AGRICULTURE
CHURCH BUILDING IN DODOMA GUTTED BY FIRE PAGE 3
SURGEONS PERFORM BLOOD VESSEL TRANSPLANTS PAGE 4
HUMAN ACTIVITY: CALL TO SAVE GREAT RUAHA RIVER PAGE 5
CASHEW FARMERS APPEAL FOR REMOVAL OF LEVY PAGE 6



Forest reserve warders shoot at herders - MP

By Guardian Reporter

KONDOA Urban MP Edwin Sannda (CCM) has raised a serious charge in Parliament accusing some wildlife officials at Swagaswaga Forest Reserve for shooting at herders with live ammunition after which they loot their livestock.

He also accused them for conning a 60 year-old lady by soliciting a 1.5m/- bribe, asking the government to take serious action against those involved.

Contributing to the debate on the Budget estimates of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism in the House yesterday, Sannda submitted that there was a big problem with regard to ethics and professionalism by some game wardens while senior ministry officials seem to bless these acts against herders.

"The game wardens use live ammunition, albeit by shooting in the air. The livestock



They also demand bribes if they do not get they sell the animals or slaughter them for their own use

disperse into the forest, they arrest the herders and beat them and inflict other cruel acts on them. All of these acts are violations of human rights. They also demand bribes if they do not get they sell the animals or slaughter them for their own use," he asserted.

He said he has been briefed on particular cases of acts of bullying where last year one young man had his 145 livestock seized.

After the trial of the case it was found he was not guilty and the court ordered the restoration of his animals, but only 33 were returned to him. The rest were sold away by game wardens in various auctions in Singida Region, the MP affirmed.

"One 60 year old lady had her 22 livestock seized by mistake but when it was ordered to return them to her, only three animals were handed back. And they still had demanded from her a 1.5m/- bribe to get her animals back," Sannda said.

The MP said already all complaints from the herders were referred to the Director of the Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA) who has dispatched a team to probe on the matter.

Sannda called for a better system of probing such issues as quickly as they happen, saying if they are left unattended to they will tarnish the government's image before the public.

He also called for stern punishment against the perpetrators, illustrating that in 2018 warders killed a Kondoia youth but while the case was in court the warden involved was

TURN TO PAGE 2



Tanzania, other African states, trying out 'COVID-19 Organics'



Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation minister Prof Palamagamba Kabudi (R) and his Madagascar counterpart, Tehindrazanarivelo Djacoba A. S. Oliva, have a feel of the Madagascar-made herbal tonic vehemently touted as helping in the treatment of Covid-19. This was shortly after Prof Kabudi received a consignment of the tonic in Antananarivo yesterday. Photo courtesy of Foreign Affairs and EAC ministry

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA has received a consignment of the herbal tonic touted as a cure for Covid-19 from Madagascar, a week after President John Magufuli said he would dispatch a plane to Madagascar for the purpose.

A state delegation led by Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation minister Prof Palamagamba Kabudi was welcomed by Prof Djacoba Tehindrazanarivelo, minister of Foreign Affairs and head of Malagasy diplomacy, at the Ivato International Airport in Antananarivo.

While in the Indian Ocean archipelago, Prof Kabudi and his host were seen holding bottles and testing the herbal remedy purported to cure or improve conditions of those with the coronavirus.

The minister accompanied a Tanzanian government flight when it landed at Antananarivo.

"Tanzania has received medicinal support of herbal drugs to combat the coronavirus from the government of Madagascar," government spokesman Dr Hassan Abbas wrote on his twitter handle.

The herbal preparation is produced from the artemisia plant, the source of much of existing anti-malaria treatment.

Tanzania joined a number of African countries who sought help from Madagascar in an effort to find rapid remedies for Covid-19 patients.

Last week, President John Magufuli said that he had been in talks with the Madagascar

TURN TO PAGE 2

MPs: Expand reserves with oil price decline

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

MEMBERS of Parliament yesterday advised the government to take advantage of the relentless fall in oil prices on the world market to strategically boost the country's own reserves through the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC).

They were concerned that the downward trend of petrol caused by decreasing demand since the outbreak of Covid-19 may fizzle out soon, with climbing prices when the pandemic is over.

Presenting views of the Energy and Minerals Committee on the proposed 2020/2021 Budget estimates for the Ministry of Energy, committee

chairman Dunstan Kitandula (Mkinga, CCM) urged the government to take advantage of global oil price gaps to enhance reserves for the country's economy in coming days.

He said MPs were impressed by the supply of fuel and efficient procurement through the Bulk Procurement System (BPS), but there is room to do more.

Between July 2019 and February 2020, the country had sufficient oil reserves with an extra backup to assure the demand for over 40 days, exceeding by 55 percent of backup capacity that the regulations require, where the country must have additional reserves to

TURN TO PAGE 2

'Covid-19 statistics release back soon'

By Guardian Reporter

STATISTICS on the development of the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to be announced after the government completes technical improvement at the National Public Health Laboratory.

Umyy Mwalimu, the Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, said this yesterday in Dar es Salaam when launching 'Afya Call Centre' at the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS).

"For about seven days now we were not able to issue reports of statistics from the laboratory on the development of the pandemic because we are making improvements at our National Public Health Laboratory. "Rest assured that in the next few days the

exercise will be completed and we shall be issuing Covid-19 statistics from time to time," the minister said.

She said Covid-19 exists and will continue to exist for several months, elaborating that there have been deaths thereof but people must know how to live with the disease by taking precautions against infections.

Mwalimu called on the people to continue with daily nation building activities and take care against unnecessary gatherings, keep washing hands with soap and running water and stay one metre apart from others.

In regard to masks, the minister appealed to the people to continue wearing cloth while factory made masks should be for health

TURN TO PAGE 2

SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

- FACT 1 Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.
FACT 2 For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.
FACT 3 Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.
FACT 4 There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.
FACT 5 You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms.





Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa arrives at the National Assembly grounds in Dodoma yesterday ready for the House's ongoing sessions of the marathon annual Budget meeting. Photo: PMO

MPs: Expand reserves with oil price decline

FROM PAGE 1

last 15 days. Kitandula said during the period, fuel importation reached 4.1m litres for local consumption and transit haulage, whereas 58 percent (2.39m litres) were consumed locally.

Energy Minister Dr Medard Kalemani said declining global oil prices have resulted in reduced prices of diesel and petrol in the country.

Crude oil prices in world markets dropped to \$ 23.27 per barrel in April 2020 from \$ 60.39 in 2019, a decrease of 61.5 percent. He said global prices of refined oil (diesel, petrol, kerosene and jet oil) decreased to \$ 593, 578, 612 on average per tonne compared to \$ 646, 606, 575 per tonne in 2018.

Local prices of oil substances have

decreased by about three to five percent. In Dar es Salaam petrol was sold at 2,200/- per litre compared to 2,318/- per litre in 2018 while a litre of diesel was sold at 2,159/- in 2019 compared to 2,229 in 2018.

Dr Kalemani noted that the use of BPS has enabled stable oil supply whereas 6.15 billion litres were imported in 2019 compared to 5.70 billion litres imported in 2018. Of the amount, 3.54 billion litres (57.5 percent) were consumed locally and 2.62 billion litres (42.5 percent) transported to neighbouring countries.

On natural gas, the minister noted that implementation of the Natural Gas Utilization Master Plan (NGUMP) was in the pipeline, with a total of 18.7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas set to be

utilized locally for power generation, industries, fertilizer production, domestic consumption and fueling vehicles.

"The ministry will in the coming financial year continue sensitizing Tanzanians to use natural gas through the Domestic Natural Gas Promotion Plan (DNGPP). Plans are also being finalized to connect gas to homes in the country's capital-Dodoma", he said.

Daimu Mpakate (Tunduru South, CCM) said that as oil is an important aspect in economic growth, the government should consider ensuring stable supply even after the pandemic.

The government to come up with a stimulus package for wholesalers and retailers of fuel substances as most of them succumb to prices declining

steeply, he suggested.

Nanyamba MP Abdallah Chikota (CCM) commended the government for connecting power to 181 villages in Mtwara region. He also expressed satisfaction with government efforts in improvement of electricity services through procurement of two power generators that use gas, with the capacity to generate 4MW each.

The energy ministry plans to spend 2.4trn/- in the 2020/2021 financial year, an increase of 16.1 percent compared to 2.1trn/- set out in the 2019/2020 financial year.

Of the amount, recurrent expenditure will be 28.39bn/- and 2.4trn/- is for development projects, equivalent to 98.9 percent of the total budget.

Kenyans return home from lockdown in Beijing, Delhi

NAIROBI

The long-awaited 'repatriation' flight (KQ 205) from India landed here yesterday evening, after it departed Mumbai at 6.30pm local time.

The 234 passengers are expected to undergo quarantine for 14 mandatory days before they can be released to their homes.

But the flight, our sources indicated, also brought with it two bodies. A passenger who had been sickly died before boarding while another had died earlier.

Kenya's High Commission in New Delhi had worked out the paperwork for 234 Kenyans stranded in India since March 23 2020 following Premier Narendra Modi's total lockdown. The restrictions were extended to May 17 due to the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The single flight picked them up at a subsidised rate of \$800 (Sh85,894) for a business class ticket and USD 430 (Sh45,635) for economy.

Kenya's High Commissioner to India Willy Bett who had earlier confirmed that some patients and caregivers may have missed seats on the flight as reported by the Nation now says that some 17 people who intended to travel back home were ejected and replaced with patients and their caregivers.

Meanwhile, Covid-19 has claimed the lives of seven Kenyans abroad, and it would cost the government Sh4.5 billion if it was to bring back every Kenyan in a foreign country.

Parliament was last week told that some three million Kenyans are currently in various countries.

The National Assembly committee on Defence and Foreign relations, while giving update on the plight of Kenyans abroad, said the government had assured it that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in touch with the governments of these countries to ensure Kenyans' rights were protected

during this period.

In China, which has been in the news for mistreatment of Africans, there are some 3,091, of whom 91 are students.

The House Committee was informed that most of the 3,000 Kenyans had expired passports, and that none of the 91 students wished to return home at this time.

The ministry told the committee that the Chinese Ambassador to Kenya had been summoned over the mistreatment of Kenyans.

He reportedly told the government that the attack on Africans in Chinese cities was as a result of illegal immigrants who had failed to get health documentation and were thus ineligible for housing.

Committee chairman Katoo ole Metito said Kenya and China had agreed that the 3,000 Kenyans would renew their passports after the pandemic, hence should not be subjected to inhumane treatment by the authorities. "The students are still locked down in their respective universities. All are in good health. There were reported cases of two other students elsewhere in China who had received treatment," reads the committee's report.

According to the report, after the coronavirus case reported in Wuhan, all Kenyan missions were under lockdown and staff operated from home, which hampered coordination in terms of offering assistance to Kenyans in Beijing.

However, 10 who approached the embassy in Beijing and would be assisted.

The government also informed the committee that it had disbursed Sh9.6 million to the students for purchase of essentials during this difficult period.

On evacuating Kenyans caught up in China, the committee says that only 40 people expressed willingness to come back home.

AGENCIES



Senior Pastor Dr Elineema Maro (R) of the Bethel Parish of the Dodoma Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and secretary Emmanuel Yesaya have a first-hand of what remained of the church after it was gutted by fire on Thursday evening. It is situated along Ng'ong'ona Street in Dodoma city. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Nairobi

IT was a vibrant economy projected to grow by at least six per cent.

The country was making the final steps in joining the league of oil producers. The heavy infrastructure spending was starting to yield the first dividends.

The tourism industry was just emerging out of a prolonged lull, having been battered by the terrorism nightmare since Kenya started its military action to contain Al-Shabaab extremists' further expansion in the region.

Covid-19 risks shutting down economy

Diaspora remittances were at an all-time high. The road to becoming a middle-income economy had become clearer.

The Big Four agenda was just taking shape and the political landscape had been calmed by the Handshake. Then Covid-19 struck.

In just 50 days, Kenya's economy has come tumbling downhill from one of the fastest-growing on the continent to a near standstill.

Companies that had started the

Tanzania, other African states, trying out 'COVID-19 Organics'

FROM PAGE 1

government for the latter to avail its Covid-19 medicine to Tanzania.

He said the government was working around the clock in an effort to defeat the Covid-19 scourge.

Madagascar President Andry Rajoelina recommended to his peers in a virtual meeting of SADC heads of state recently, touting an organic preparation he was persuaded can cure Covid-19 infections.

The preparation which Madagascar describes as Covid Organics (CVO) is given as a form of herbal tea.

President Rajoelina later talked to the media, asking people to believe in his country's abilities in herbal medicine research. He said all profits accrued through the sale of concoction will be diverted to the Malagasy Institute of Applied Research (MIAR).

But the World Health Organization (WHO) in a statement has warned against any self-medication and said that it has not recommended any medicine as a cure for the Covid-19. Still a top official of the African Centres for

Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) in Addis Ababa said early this week that WHO was in consultation with Madagascar on the progress in herbal applications that may have a positive impact on Covid-19 sufferers.

Madagascar has 128 confirmed Covid-19 cases so far, with no deaths and 82 recoveries, according to figures compiled by the US-based Johns Hopkins University.

The Malagasy Presidency said Senegal, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Guinea Bissau, had conducted inquiries on the Covid organics preparation.

Senegal President Macky Sall has already ordered the remedy after the Madagascar leader briefed his counterparts, it was reported from Dakar.

African CDCP said there were 33,566 coronavirus cases, 1,469 deaths and 10,152 recoveries recorded at midweek, with Tanzania having 509 confirmed cases of coronavirus despite reporting having been suspended for a week for technical reasons.

'Covid-19 statistics release back soon'

FROM PAGE 1

workers.

He also advised all people to wash and iron the cloth masks before using them and stressed they should be clean before wearing them.

For more than one week, the government hasn't updated the status of Covid-19 cases in the Mainland, and

the official data of cases remained 480, with 16 fatalities and 167 recoveries.

The laboratory is under investigation following doubts that were raised by President John Magufuli last week where he voiced his reservations about the accuracy of Covid-19 test results from the state-run lab, saying some of them left a lot to be desired.

Forest reserve warders shoot at herders - MP

FROM PAGE 1

seen roaming the streets. There seem to be effective protection of those who conduct such atrocities, he stated.

Such incidents are not confined to the Swagaswaga Forest Reserve as they are widespread in other reserves in the country, but still very little action is being taken, he added.



Zanzibar Second Vice President Seif Ali Iddi responds to legislators' contributions to debate in the Zanzibar House of Representatives shortly after the tabling of his Office's Budget estimates for financial year 2010/2021 yesterday. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

'Tanzania's headline inflation dropped to 3.4 per cent in April'

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE annual headline inflation rate for April, 2020 has decreased to 3.3 per cent from 3.4 per cent recorded in March 2020, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said yesterday.

At the same time the national consumer price index from March 2020 to April 2020 has increased by 0.4 per cent as some of the food items used for steaming in treatment of corona virus are said to have attributed to this increase.

Releasing the national consumer index for the month of April, 2020 yesterday, the Director of Population Census and Social Statistics, Ruth Davison said this is however lower than the increase of 1.1 per cent recorded from February, 2020 to March, 2020.

However, the director said it is not very clear that the high demand for food products like garlic and lime are the main cause for recorded increase, noting that NBS during data collection does not rely on any predictions and assumptions.

"The overall index has increased to 120.67 in April compared 120.20 recorded in March,2020" she said, adding that the increase of the overall index is attributed to price increase for both food and non food items.

She named some of the food items that contributed to such increase as fish by 1.4 percent ,lime(5.7), garlic(3.4), peas(4.0),potatoes(4.9) and cassava(5.9).

On the other hand, some of the non food items that contributed to such an increase includes garments for women by 1.5 per cent, sewing machines(2.3) and charcoal(1.6).

She said the decrease of the headline inflation explains that the speed of price change for commodities for the year ended April,2020 has decreased compared to the speed recorded for

the year ended Marc,2020.

The overall index went up to 120.67 in April, 2020 from 116.82 recorded in April,2019 while the 12 month index change for non food products in April 2020 has increased top 2.5 percent from 2.2 percent recorded in March 2020.

The director observed that the food and non alcoholic beverage inflation rate for the month of April,2020 has decreased to 4.6 percent from 5.3 percent recorded in March,2020.

In comparison with other East African countries of Kenya and Uganda, she said the annual inflation rate in Kenya has decreased to 6.06 percent in March,2020 from 6.37 percent recorded in Februar,2020.

Annual inflation rate for food consumed at home and away from home for the month of April ,2020 has also decreased to 5.2 per cent to 5.9 percent recorded in March ,2020.

In comparison with other East African countries it is only Tanzania that has recorded decrease in annual headline inflation as Uganda has experienced increase from 3.0 percent in March,2020 to 3.2 per cent in April, 2020 while Kenya also recorded increase from 5.51 per cent in March,2020 to 5.62 percent in April,2020.

The overall index has increased to 120.67 in April compared 120.20 recorded in March,2020

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

Govt gives doctors two weeks to report for duty

MINISTER of State in the President's Office -Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) Seaman Jafo has given two weeks for the 610 newly employed doctors to report to their respective stations.

He also warned Council Executive Directors not to change their work stations and should pay them appropriate allowances.

Jafo was speaking here yesterday on the completion of the process for the employment of 610 doctors to work in the Local Government as among 1,000 doctors they plan to employ following

the directive of President John Magufuli.

Jafo said they will serve in district hospitals, health centres and dispensaries in the district councils.

"These doctors should report to their work stations within two weeks from May 25 this year and I don't want to see they are moved to other centres," he

stressed.

He said the doctors and other health workers employed today now number 9,239.

"Their allocation was - three doctors for each district hospital and between one and two doctors for each health centre and dispensary, and there is no place that has been left out," Jafo

added.

Jafo called upon the doctors not to move away from their work stations after receiving allowances and said those who will do so will be dealt with accordingly. "They should report with all their essential documents in accordance with employment procedure of the public service," he said.

Church building in Dodoma burns down, arson suspected

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

A building belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) has been gutted by fire in Dodoma city, police said yesterday.

The destroyed ELCT church is located in Ng'ong'ona area on the outskirts of Dodoma city.

According to the ELCT Bishop for Dodoma Diocese Amon Kinyunyu, the incident occurred on Thursday.

He said that the suspected culprits burned to ashes everything which was in the church including furniture and holy sacraments equipment.

"Yesterday (Thursday) at around 5pm unidentified persons burned the Ng'ong'ona church building, but

we have left the matter to the police, who are now hunting the suspects," Bishop Kinyunyu said, adding: "It is hard to identify the suspects because there was no conflict going on in the area."

The incident was also confirmed by the Dodoma Police Commander Gilles Muroto who said that he had already sent a special team of police officers to go to the area for further investigations.

Some of the witnesses said that the incident could have been the work of bandits who wanted to steal some equipment in the church.

"When we arrived at the area, there was no single chair and the church had over 90 plastic chairs, one table

and generator and a big water storage tank...This makes us think that may be the suspects were after the equipment and not burning the church, they just ended burning the church to destroy testimonial environment," said Emmanuel Idabu, the church's secretary.

Elinema Mcharo, one of the church's pastors said that the church was still new as it was built last year.

"We were using generator as source of power because the church was yet to be connected to normal electricity, it was still new," he said.

He said that the church's elders' council is going to convene a meeting to see how to continue providing church services to the followers.



World Vision Tanzania's Lake Victoria Zone manager, John Massenza (L), pictured in Shinyanga municipality yesterday presenting to Shinyanga regional commissioner Zainab Telack (C) various items for use in the prevention of Covid-19 infections. Looking on (R) is Shinyanga Regional Medical Officer Dr Yudas Ndugile. Photo: Correspondent Ndalike Sonda

HALMASHAURI YA JIJI LA DODOMA



TANGAZO LA UUZAJI WA VIWANJA

Mkurugenzi wa Halmashauri ya Jiji la Dodoma anawatangazia Wananchi wote kuwa kutakuwa na zoezi uuzaji wa Viwanja kuanzia TAREHE 25/04/2020 katika eneo la wazi Manispaa ya zamani (karibu na Sabasaba) kuanzia saa 2:00 Asubuhi hadi saa 9:30 Alasiri.

Viwanja vinavyouzwa ni katika maeneo ya:

| ENEO | MATUMIZI NA BEI TSHS KWA (SQM1) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Iyumbu New Town Centre, karibu na UDOM na mradi wa Watumishi Housing | • Apartment 7,500/= • Biashara 10,000/= |
| Njedengwa Investment Centre, Karibu na Mradi wa Nyumba 300 wa Kisasa | • Apartment 13,070/= • Biashara 18,876/= |
| Nala Industrial Area, Karibu na Kituo cha Malori | • Viwanda 5,000/= |
| Medeli Extension, Karibu na Jengo la Hazina na Benki Kuu | • Hotel 80,000/= • Taasisi 40,000/= |
| Mtumba (Karibu na Mji wa Serikali na Ikulu) | • ZONE II Makazi 6,000/= • Makazi na Biashara 7,500/= |
| Nala, Karibu na Chuo cha IFM | • Makazi 2,500/= |
| Mahomanyika, KM 2 kutoka unapojengwa Uwanja Mpya wa Ndege | • Makazi 5,000/= |
| Mapinduzi, Karibu na Kituo cha SGR | • Makazi 6,500/= |
| Kitelela, Karibu na Unapojengwa Uwanja wa Ndege Mpya | • Makazi 5,000 • Makazi na Biashara 6,000/= |
| Ihumwa, Karibu na Itakapojengwa Bandari Kavuu | • Makazi 6,000/= • Makazi na Biashara 6,500/= |
| Chahwa, Karibu na Ikulu | • Makazi 3,000/= |

NB: Malipo yote yafanyike ndani ya Siku 90 baada ya kupata hati ya madai.

Kwa mawasiliano zaidi piga simu namba 0714 785513.

Tangazo hili limetolewa na:
Mkurugenzi wa Jiji,
DODOMA

High Court sentences to jail 2 council accountants

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

THE Deputy Registrar of the High Court's Arusha Zone, John Mkwabi, has sentenced the former accountant with the Simanjiro District Council in Manyara District Peter Mollel to seven years in prison over theft.

Mkwabi meted out the sentence on Thursday at Simanjiro Orkesumeti District Court.

In addition to the jail term on the 11 counts over theft faced the accused, Mkwabi also ordered the accused to pay 4m/- fine for each count in nine counts for uttering documents to mislead his employer, equivalent to 36m/- fine or three years in jail.

He also sentenced the accused to one year imprisonment without fine for two counts of abuse of office contrary to Section 31 of the PCCB Act No 11 of 2007.

Another accused sentenced in the same case was Ester Melkior who was the council's assistant accountant. Both accused were taken to prison to start serving their jail terms.

Earlier PCCB prosecutor Isdory Kyando assisted by Adam Kilongozi committed the suspects to court against a total of 24 counts, 10 of which related the tendering of documents to mislead the employer contrary to Section 22 of the said PCCB Act.

The two counts related to abuse of office were contrary to Section 31 of the PCCB Act and 12 counts related to theft as public servants contrary to Sections

258 and 270 of the Penal Code.

The prosecutors tendered in court evidence that was beyond reasonable doubt showing that between 2008 and 2010 the first accused from his position as the council's accountant was supposed to certify the documents and the second accused allegedly prepared the documents.

They jointly collaborated in enhancing the salary payroll to what was actually payable to payees and submitted them to the bank for payment.

It was alleged that thereafter the extra money was banked to the accused's bank accounts for personal use.

A total of 34.52m/- was embezzled in this manner, prosecutors further alleged.

Before the sentence was read, the defence attorney Justus Lyarugo prayed for the court to exercise leniency in sentencing as the first accused had a family that depended on him.

Lyarugo also prayed for the court to exercise similar leniency to the second accused as she was a mother of one child without a father.

For their part, the prosecution side asked for a stiff sentence to the accused as the crimes they committed were against the public interest.

A total of 34.52m/- was embezzled in this manner, prosecutors further alleged



Residents of Bahi Misheni in Bahi District, Dodoma Region, harvest paddy in their farm, as found by Correspondent Peter Mkwavila yesterday.

By Guardian Reporter

JAKAYA Kikwete Cardiac Institute (JKCI) has recently performed special surgeries of transplanting blood vessels for three patients, which has saved over 80m/- that could have been spent in undertaking the operations abroad.

Popularly known as heart bypass surgery or coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, is used to improve blood flow to the heart. A surgeon uses blood vessels taken from another area of a body to bypass the damaged arteries.

Speaking after visiting JKCI to oversee its progress, deputy Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Dr Faustine Ndagulile commended

JKCI performs 3 blood-vessel transplants saves 80 million/-

doctors and specialists for their efforts in saving people's lives.

"It is so encouraging to see a number of major surgeries which were previous being performed abroad are currently performed by our local experts within the country, this a very big step to be proud of, and amid this coronavirus pandemic, we are happy that patients continue to access quality cardiac services," he said.

"Performing a heart by-pass surgery for the three patients had cost only

20m/- but if a patient decided to undergo such surgery abroad, he/she would have to paid between 80m/- and 90m/-," he said.

For his part, JKCI Executive Director, Prof Mohamed Janabi said that heart bypass surgery service has served lives of a number of patients since it commenced in the country.

"For example there was a patient whom his three blood vessels were damaged, the patient was only waiting to die at home but with this surgery service, has managed to survive," he

said.

Prof Janabi said that with this service, more patients will be able to access the surgery at a reduced cost within the country instead of going abroad for help and it will also reduce costs for government transporting heart patients abroad.

According to him, JKCI has established a good system to ensure that all cardiac patients get required services anytime even as the country struggles to contain the spread of Covid-19 infections.

65 investors approved to cultivate cashew nuts in Itigi District

By Guardian Correspondent, Itigi

SIXTY-five investors have come up to cultivate cashew nuts in Kamenyanga and Njiriri villages in Itigi District and a total of 43m/-subsidy to the villages has been collected.

This was revealed by the chairman of Itigi District Council Ally Minja while closing the Councilors meeting that met to discuss issues raised by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG).

Minja explained that out of 12,700 acres allocated to investors, 3,000 acres are at Kamenyanga village and 9,700 acres in Njiriri village, Agondi Ward where 65 applicants have been approved in Aghondi Ward whereby 65 investors have come up.

He said a total of 19,350,000/- has been paid for survey work while clearing of the areas for farms injected 51,600,000/- and 11,130,000/- was payment for cashew nuts seedlings.

Minja said digging of holes and planting of the seedlings has injected 11,130,000/- and a total of 756,000/- has been collected for the transportation of seedlings from the seed beds to the farms and added that up to now Njiriri village has collected a total of 137,616,000/-

Speaking to the Councilors and other council officials Singida Regional Commissioner Dr Rehema Nchimbi appealed to them not to make a joke out on the cashew nuts as a strategic crop.

Presenting report for the implementation of points and recommendations raised by CAG for FY 2018/2019, the Council's Treasurer Neema Petro Lumambo said up to 2019 there were 57 recommendations.

She said in respect of the water project there were 30 recommendations while for the Joint Health Fund there were 14 making a total of 99 recommendations. She said 41 points have been closed and 58 are still outstanding.



Liwale legislator Zuberi Kuchauka (R) and Liwale district health secretary Maneno Kitinde exchange greetings in style as a precaution against Covid-19 infections. They met in the district on Thursday shortly before receiving one of the 50 ambulances the government presented to some MPs recently for use in their respective constituencies. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

UN sets up knowledge hub for Africa to fight COVID-19

ADDIS ABABA

AS the world grapples with the unprecedented global health crisis of COVID-19, the United Nations is spearheading a digital hub to house information and knowledge resources to assist crucial development system partners in fighting the pandemic in Africa.

The virus has caused a global crisis affecting the core of humanity and the social, economic, environment and related spheres, and it is attacking societies indiscriminately. In Africa, the region's fragile health systems and economic costs can derail the socio-economic development trajectory of the global Sustainable Development Goals and the regional Agenda 2063 aspirations.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) projects that Africa's GDP growth will decrease by almost half to 1.8 per cent. In the region, COVID-19 is already disrupting millions of people's livelihoods, with a disproportionate impact on poor households and small and informal businesses.

"Evidence-based information and data from credible sources will be key, not only to inform the COVID-19 response but also to aid the decision-making processes of governments, UN agencies and development partners to save the lives of people and economies. The Africa UN Knowledge Hub for COVID-19 will be a resource open to all users," said Oliver Chinganya, Director of the African Centre for Statistics.

To mitigate the effects of the pandemic, the United Nations is responding to the crisis as One UN in terms of preparedness, response and provision of updates on the COVID-19 epidemiological situation. The Africa UN Knowledge Hub for COVID-19 is a one-stop shop for information and knowledge resources on the pandemic in Africa on strategies and responses by the regional UN Development System and

Development Partners to support African governments to strengthen capacities to effectively respond to the pandemic. The translation of collective UN knowledge into strategic action can guide the efforts of all national and international partners to support national governments.

"This Africa UN Knowledge Hub for COVID-19 is an accessible and interactive repository of interventions, engagements and resources designed to support African governments as they grapple with the epidemiological, socio-economic and governance complexities of the deadly coronavirus," said Raymond Gilpin, Chief Economist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa.

The portal will facilitate the regional UN Development System's (UNDS) efforts to identify, select, organize, disseminate and transfer important information, knowledge and expertise that exists in the region. This will facilitate a quick response to specific national member state requests in support of Agenda 2030 and 2063, as well as enhance collaboration among the regional UNDS in knowledge management.

The Hub will focus on developing and providing knowledge services from the wider UN system using intelligent clustering and contextualization by leveraging both human and intelligent machine processes. In addition, the Hub will also provide an interactive platform for collaboration, consultation and networking on important issues for the development agenda on the continent.

ECA and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) co-convened this initiative together with all UNDS entities. The collaboration is under Strengthened integrated data and statistical systems for sustainable development (Opportunity/Issue Based Coalition 1) with technical expertise on the development of the Hub provided by ECA.

Stop human activities near Great Ruaha to protect infrastructure, minister orders

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

TWO ministers have visited Kidatu Hydro Power area to inspect the adverse effects in Kilombero District after water dam valves were opened and water released to the flood plains.

The duo was the Energy minister Dr Medard Kalemami and Azan Zungu, Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union Affairs and Environment).

The visit was aimed to assess the destruction at both Kidatu and Mtera hydro power plant sites during which Kalemami called on people engaged in human activities near Great Ruaha River to stop doing so as it causes environmental destruction.

However, he said since his ministry holds the responsibility to oversee the protection of power generating infrastructures, they work together with National Environmental

Management Council (NEMC) and other environmental stakeholders to protect the huge 2115MW Julius



As of now the water has ebbed in the Great Ruaha River compared to some days ago when floodwater threatened the existence of the bridge connecting Kilosa and Kilombero districts

Nyerere Hydropower Project, because water from Great Ruaha River flows to the project.

For his part, Zungu called upon NEMC in collaboration with all stakeholders involved in environmental protection to meet within ten days to give an assessment on the environment destruction since the water was released from both Kidatu and Mtera dams.

As of now the water has ebbed in the Great Ruaha River compared to some days ago when floodwater threatened the existence of the bridge connecting Kilosa and Kilombero districts.

Morogoro Regional Commissioner Loata Ole Sanare said some people were partially affected while others lost their homes due to flooding. NEMC Board Chairman said one of the reasons for these effects was people engaging in human activities including farming along the river banks.



Cattle belonging to residents of Sukuro village in Simanjiro District have a drink from newly upgraded water infrastructure yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey




VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Reporting to : Reporting will be in a Matrix Structure. Component related : IT System Analyst Personnel/Administrative: Project Manager</p> <p>Location : Dodoma/TBA Level of Engagement: Full Time Duration of Engagement : 1 year</p> | <p>iv. Contribute to organizational policy regarding quality standards and strategic planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support HPSS admin department: Maintenance of IT equipment, ensure quality of internet connection, support the team to move into online working modalities: meetings, trainings through skype, zoom and other applications. <p>Along with HPSS Communication Officer update corporate websites and other social media tools.</p> <p>Internal relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closely cooperate with IT System Analyst in Tanzania. • Collaborate with the Health Technology Component Leader on implementing health technology activities at national level. • Coordinate with Regional Teams on the implementation of the project related health technology activities • Cooperate with Component Leaders and Project Management of the project team based in Tanzania and in Basel <p>External relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate with National government authorities • Cooperate with local organizations, NGOs and development partners • Cooperate with SDC <p>Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel regulations • Swiss TPH/HPSS Administration Manual for Local Offices (AMLO) including Internal • Control System (ICS) and all annexes and supporting documentation • Swiss TPH HPSS Employee Code of Conduct <p>Prerequisites for the Job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in IT administration (Windows and/or Linux) • Experience in IT support • Knowledge of government IT infrastructures, policies and interface • Proficiency with MS Office Suite (Word, Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint, Access) • Efficient and professional communication: able to summarize the different aspects of a topic based on facts • Proven record or will of aligning diverse, multi-level teams with project mission and vision. • Strategic agility, diplomacy, conflict management, team building, written and oral communication, and negotiation skills. <p>Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum a Master level academic qualification in ICT or 8 years of experience as system administrator • Knowledge and understanding of programming languages (.NET, Java, Javascript, Python) • Knowledge and understanding of server and networking configuration • Knowledge of databases, system security and troubleshooting |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The Expert will continuously and closely interact with the Health Technology Component Expert, other component experts, other country based component advisors, Project Manager, and Project Director.

Application should be accompanied by:

- A well-typed CV
- Certified copies of relevant certificates
- Names of at least three (3) referees from previous jobs (line managers) with reliable contacts
- Contact address during daytime (Postal Address, Telephone, e mail and Fax)


Send your application to the following address:

**Human Resource Officer,
Health Promotion and System Strengthening
(HPSS) Project,
P.O. Box 29,
Dodoma**

OR
**Online application via email:
adiya.hassan@hpss.or.tz**

Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

**The deadline for submission of application
is on 17th May, 2020 at 16.00 hours.**



UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

| | 2019 | 2018 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | TZS'000 | TZS'000 |
| Assets | | |
| Property and equipment | 218,902 | 33,105 |
| Intangible assets | 169,670 | 169,670 |
| Deferred acquisition costs | 523,687 | 409,100 |
| Investment in government securities and fixed deposits | 2,180,177 | 1,326,702 |
| Reinsurance share of technical provisions and reserves | 417,156 | 335,003 |
| Income tax receivable | 62,474 | 62,475 |
| Insurance and other receivables | 278,000 | 441,665 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 284,222 | 1,904,773 |
| Total Assets | 4,134,288 | 4,682,493 |
| Liabilities | | |
| Insurance contract provisions | 2,550,116 | 2,385,284 |
| Payables to reinsurers | 313,259 | 500,379 |
| Lease liability | 230,847 | - |
| Other payables | 177,527 | 172,111 |
| Total Liabilities | 3,271,749 | 3,057,773 |
| Net Assets | 862,539 | 1,624,720 |
| Shareholders' Equity | | |
| Share capital | 4,047,290 | 4,047,290 |
| Advance towards share capital | 2,511,389 | 2,511,389 |
| Contingency reserves | 14,175 | - |
| Retained earnings | (5,710,315) | (4,933,959) |
| Total Shareholders' Equity | 862,539 | 1,624,720 |

| | 2019 | 2018 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | TZS'000 | TZS'000 |
| Gross written premium | 2,103,339 | 2,584,127 |
| Written premium ceded to reinsurers | (685,814) | (423,737) |
| Net written premium | 1,417,525 | 2,160,390 |
| Changes in the gross provision for unearned premium | (320,247) | (1,183,600) |
| Re-insurers' share of change in the provision for unearned premium | 82,153 | 180,188 |
| Net insurance premium revenue | 1,179,431 | 1,156,978 |
| Commission income | 20,758 | 51,683 |
| Finance income | 182,947 | 134,963 |
| Exchange gain/(loss) | 8,187 | (12,952) |
| Net income | 1,391,323 | 1,356,576 |
| Claims and benefits incurred | (1,128,333) | (356,865) |
| Re-insurers' share of claims and benefits incurred | 764,799 | 9,772 |
| Net insurance claims | (363,534) | (347,093) |
| Acquisition costs | (309,574) | (93,602) |
| Administrative expenses | (1,405,647) | (1,304,043) |
| Finance cost | (20,749) | - |
| Loss before taxation | (708,181) | (388,162) |
| Taxation | (54,000) | (40,489) |
| Loss for the year | (762,181) | (428,651) |
| Other comprehensive income | - | - |
| Total comprehensive loss for the year | (762,181) | (428,651) |

| | 2019 | 2018 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| | TZS'000 | TZS'000 |
| Cash flows from operating activities | | |
| Loss for the year | (762,181) | (428,651) |
| Adjustment for: | | |
| - Depreciation | 20,749 | 35,203 |
| - Interest expense on lease liability | 54,000 | - |
| - Tax expense | 20,749 | 40,489 |
| | (606,234) | (352,959) |
| Cash flows from investing activities | | |
| Acquisition of computer software | (3,718) | - |
| Decrease/(increase) in deposits with financial institutions | (779,769) | 547,385 |
| Increase in investments in government securities | (73,706) | (65,730) |
| Net cash generated from/(utilised in) investing activities | (857,193) | 481,655 |
| Cash flows from financing activities | | |
| Lease payments | (28,904) | - |
| Receipt of funds for issuing additional shares | - | 993,230 |
| Conversion of payable to parent company to equity | - | 224,770 |
| Net cash from financing activities | (28,904) | 1,218,000 |
| Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents | (1,620,551) | 1,606,835 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year | 1,904,773 | 297,938 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year | 284,222 | 1,904,773 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| SIGNED: PROTASE RWEZHURA ISHENGOMA BOARD CHAIRMAN | KISHEN SOMAIYA DIRECTOR |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|

UDSM embarks on studies into traditional medicine in effort to contain COVID-19

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE University of Dar es Salaam has embarked on a special applied research to come up with more traditional medicines that could be used to treat the associated symptoms of Covid-19.

A statement issued yesterday by the varsity's Vice Chancellor for Research stated that the move is aimed to compliment the government's and stakeholders' efforts to fight the spread of Covid-19 infections in the country.

"We are currently carrying out a study to find out how traditional remedies can be used to treat associated symptoms of Covid-19 particularly respiratory diseases. The University has set aside research and innovation grant amounting to 1.5bn/- in the 2020/2021 financial year to fund proposals on the impacts for Covid-19 and other research themes," the statement said.

According to the statement, UDSM through the Technology Development and Transfer Centre (TDTC) has also designed and developed two types of hand-washing machines, automatic and foot operated. "These machines consist of a 250-litre storage water tank and are specifically designed for institutions that serve a large number of people such as hospitals, factories and market places," it said.

The statement said that the machines can dispense liquid soap and water by putting hands near the sensors for the automatic machine or by pressing the pedals for the foot-operated machine adding that the advantage of these machines are that they allow hand washing without touching the tape, which is considered risky.

So far, UDSM has sold the machines to different organisations such as African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), Bank of Tanzania (BoT), National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA), World Food Programme (WFP), Tanzania Oxygen Limited (TOL), Regional Administration and Local Government (RALG), Dar es Salaam City Council (DCC), and Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO).

The university will also distribute 20 hand washing machines to government hospitals designated for care and

treatment of Covid-19 patients in Dar es Salaam.

According to the varsity, other machines will be distributed to Bus/Daladala terminals including Ubungo, Mbezi, Mbagala, Tegeta, Kijitonyama, Mawasiliano, Tandika as well as Ferry terminals at Magogoni and Kigamboni.

Furthermore, the statement noted that UDSM will make a follow-up on their usability, effectiveness and sustainability through a survey that will also further inform the product quality and improvement on the design and fabrication.

"Textile Unit of the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering in collaboration with the Technology Development and Transfer Centre (TDTC) of the University of Dar es Salaam has started production of three layer hi-tech face masks," reads part of the statement.

According to the statement, the masks are already being used by the members of the University community adding that the masks being produced are made from three layers of fabrics; two outer woven fabrics and a non-woven fabric embedded between them.

It also noted that UDSM has started production of hand sanitisers adhering to the World Health Organisation (WHO) and local standards adding that UDSM through its various units has completed a survey conducted to assess the quality of the face masks made using textile and other cloth materials by various institutions and individual entrepreneurs.

"The results of this survey have indicated the suitability of the materials used in making the face masks by measuring their density and porosity. The results which will be made public very soon will offer recommendations on how best to manufacture face masks using textile materials and a team of UDSM staff is currently working on designing and developing an electro-mechanical ventilator," the statement reads.

In addition, the university is encouraging its researchers to conduct more studies related to the global pandemic of Covid-19 adding that the research could focus on economic, political and social implication of the disease.



Dar es Salaam City deputy mayor Abdallah Mtinika (C) witnesses the production of sanitiser and face masks at the University of Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Covid-19: World Vision Tanzania donates items worth 17 million/- to Tabora Region

By Guardian Correspondent, Tabora

World Vision Tanzania has donated various items valued at 17.1m/- for the protection against Covid-19 infections in Tabora Region.

The donation was handed over yesterday in Nzega town by World Vision Tanzania Zonal Manager John Masenza to the Tabora

Regional Commissioner Aggrey Mwanri.

The items included 990 boxes of gloves and 80 dresses for health workers as protective gear against Covid-19 infections, 290 litres of sanitiser and 22 loud hailers for educating the public on preventive measures against the disease.

Masenza said the assistance will be distributed to all eight districts of Tabora Region, and added that another donation of surgical masks are on the way and will be handed over as soon as they arrive.

Receiving the donation, Regional commissioner Mwanri thanked World Vision Tanzania for assisting government's efforts in fighting the

pandemic.

He said the assistance has come at appropriate time when the nation is in the middle of the war against the disease and appealed to other stakeholders in the region to join the war against Covid-19 infections.

He said the items, after they are verified by health experts will be distributed to all eight districts.



Tanga district commissioner Thobias Mwilapa (R) addresses Tanga city councillors on Thursday on measures the district's defence and security committee has taken against traders hiking the price of sugar. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon

Coast Region cashewnut farmers appeal for removal of levy on crop

By Guardian Reporter

CASHEWNU farmers in Coast Region have asked the government to remove the crop's levy which is being collected by the agricultural marketing co-operatives (AMCOS) over lack of a reliable market for the crop.

The farmers aired these views yesterday when explaining challenges they face to sell the crop now amounting to 125 kilogrammes.

One of the farmers, Mickidadi Misomba said after missing buyers for their harvest which were being stored by the cooperative union, they are still required to pay 2000/- per every kilogramme.

"The cashews have been stored and they are now supposed to be returned to us because there are no buyers, but we are required to pay the levies," said Misomba.

He said the decision to return the crops to the farmers was a sad one because they had invested their time and resources and got nothing from it.

He said one of the reasons for the crop to lack buyers was low quality but they are still required to pay levies for the crops.

Mbaraka Bakari who is the secretary general of Mkamba AMCOS said they

have decided to return the cashews to the farmers because they have a low quality.

Bakari said the farmers were supposed to be given back the crops as part of covering costs for preserving the crops.

He said the farmers had no problem being given back their crops but had a challenge paying the levy saying it was upsetting since they have got nothing from the crop.

The chairman for the National Network of Farmers' Groups in Tanzania (MVIWATA) Kudra Msumi said the lack of quality for the crop was caused by poor climate and called upon the government to assist the farmers.

“The cashews have been stored and they are now supposed to be returned to us because there are no buyers, but we are required to pay the levies

Zanzibar to hold General Election despite Covid-19 - minister

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE Zanzibar government has affirmed that this year's General Election will be conducted on schedule despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

This was revealed by Zanzibar

Minister of State in the Second Vice President Office Mohamed About when responding to various issues including elections raised by Members of the House of Representatives for his ministry's budget estimates.

About said the anticipation of the

government is to see the Covid-19 infection rate going down and ultimately controlled, but if it will not, the elections will be held with the advice of health experts on precautions to take.

About assured Representatives

that the money for the elections is available while preparations thereof have reached good stage according to Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC).

He said some African countries have held elections during this

period by adhering to guidelines from health experts, and assured the people that everyone who is qualified to vote will exercise that constitutional right.

He said registration of voters in the Permanent Voters Register (PVR) and

verification of their details has been completed.

ZEC is currently in preparations for the elections that will involve the election of the President, members of the House of Representatives and councillors.

African artists opt for a creative approach in the war on COVID-19

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

TOP artists from across Africa and throughout the African Diaspora have joined forces with the UN cultural agency, UNESCO, to save lives and counter misinformation during the Covid-19 pandemic.

They are creating public service announcements, songs and music videos as part of an online campaign called #DontGoViral which has already reached more than 90 million people in the past week alone.

"The success of the DontGoViral campaign underlines the resilience and creativity of women and men on the African Continent to harness the power of cultural diversity to effectively combat the infodemic that is proving to be just as viral as the pandemic itself," said Audrey Azoulay, the UNESCO Director-General.

"Their contributions highlight the fact that cultural players are a much-needed part of the solution."

UNESCO and the Innovation for Policy Foundation, or i4Policy was launched on 1 April.

The campaign crowd-sources creative content that addresses the urgent need for culturally relevant open sourced information about Covid-19 in African languages, so that communities can learn how to avoid spreading the virus and related misinformation.

UNESCO and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, partnered with the Raised Fists collective from Niger to mobilise awareness in that country.

The collaboration also resulted in a song called Protect Your Life, with lyrics in Djerma, Haoussa, Tamashek and French.

The song states in part that "We are at war against an invisible enemy/ For once, by keeping our distance we will be invincible/ I know you've always dreamed of being Superman/ But stay home, you'll see it's super, man".

Rapper Danny Lee, a member of the

seven-person collective, believes their message speaks to millions.

"We hope our voices and that of Fulani Bororo singers, the nomadic people of the Sahel, will reach every cultural and linguistic region of Niger and even beyond our borders; through all of West and Central Africa," he said.

The music video for Protect Your Life was shot while in confinement. It was filmed in Danny Lee's studio, and in the Niamey hospital to pay tribute to its staff who are working around the clock in the crisis.

Several refugees also star in the video. Having fled conflict, these men and women now produce soap and bleach which are distributed to vulnerable communities in Niger, which is hosting around 500,000 displaced persons.

"Refugees are essential actors in the public health response and a key element of social cohesion, including in the eyes of the population that welcomes them," said Alessandra Morelli, UNHCR Representative in Niger.

"Producing soap and other cleaning products, they become an integral part of the fight against the transmission of the virus. Our aim is for every refugee and every member of the host community to have locally produced soap, bleach and masks."

So far, #DontGoViral has received more than 500 submissions from more than 40 African countries. Millions are following the campaign on Facebook and Twitter. The videos have also received countless plays on YouTube or on radio stations around the world.



"Their contributions highlight the fact that cultural players are a much-needed part of the solution."



Manyara Regional Fire and Rescue Force commander Julishaeli Mfinanga (L) has a word in Babati District on Thursday with officers under his command on the importance of taking precautions against Covid-19 infections. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

Suspected bandits in police hands, firearms impounded

POLICE in Arusha Region have foiled incidents of crime in the city after they arrested four suspected bandits including a traditional healer and one shotgun with sawn off butt and barrel and a Chinese made pistol.

Arusha Regional Police Commander Jonathan Shana said the suspects were nabbed on May 6 this year around 10.00pm at Nduruma bridge area in Baraa Ward, Arusha City.

He mentioned the names of the suspects as Steve Godfrey (32), businessman and resident of Tabata in Dar es Salaam and Yunusi Hamed (37) businessman and resident of Korogwe in Tanga Region.

Others are Said Hamisi (38), businessman and resident of Dar es Salaam and Msafiri Yohana (22) a traditional healer from Magu District in Mwanza region.

RPC Shana said acting on a tip they mounted a trap that bore fruits.

He added: "The suspects were travelling from Dar es Salaam to Arusha in a Toyota Crown with Reg T.777 DSJ. Their aim was to engage in criminal activities in Arusha city but our task force deployed near Nduruma bridge made sure that was not to happen."

"At the time of their arrival we saw the vehicle coming and my officers signaled for it to stop but it increased speed whereupon the police shot at the tyres, after which it started losing direction and hit the embankment of the river and stopped."

He said Yohana, the traditional healer put his hands out of the car window holding a bottle of what was believed to be some local medicine whereupon the

police shot at the hands, wounding him in the process while his companions disembarked with hands up.

He said when they inspected them they found the firearm with four bullets, one pistol with eight bullets in the magazine, three pairs of metal snipers, two iron rods, cellotape and various herbs in bottles," he said.

He said after interrogation the suspects confessed coming to Arusha to engage in crime with the assistance of the traditional healer who told them they would be invisible.

He added that they also disclosed the identity of their host in the city with whom they would work in committing crimes.

"They said even when the traditional

healer was displaying the bottle out of the car window the others believed that the police would doze off and would not see them as that is what they did when they committed crimes in Morogoro, Tanga, Dar es Salaam and Mwanza."

RPC Shana appealed to all people intending to commit crimes in Arusha to stop harbouring the thoughts as they will never succeed.

Arusha Regional commissioner Mrisho Gambo congratulated the police and asked the Minister for Home Affairs George Simbachawene and the Inspector General of the Police (IGP) to award the RPC and all officers who planned and eventually arrested the bandits with firearms.



Newly harvested cassava, an especially important Ramadhan-time item on the menu of fasting Muslims, is offloaded from a vehicle ready for sale at Dar es Salaam's Buguruni mixed-goods market yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

AfDB welcomes \$10 million CTF investment to diversify Ethiopia's sources of energy

ABIDJAN

THE African Development Bank (AfDB) has welcomed a decision by the Trust Fund Committee of the Clean Technology Fund (CTF) one of two funds within the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) to extend a \$10 million concessional senior loan for development of the 50 MW Tulu Moyo Geothermal Power Plant project in Ethiopia.

The CTF approved the loan on 20 April 2020 for the project, which is seen as a critical step to the East African country's drive to harness sustainable and resilient energy resources to support its economy and livelihoods. With this investment, CTF becomes the first progressive geothermal Independent Power Producer (IPP) in Ethiopia.

"We welcome the participation of CTF in this project. This concessional resource will be instrumental in helping the country to diversify its energy mix by facilitating the deployment of renewable energy technologies while supporting Ethiopia in meeting the targets under its National Electrification Plan 2.0," said Anthony Nyong, Director of Climate Change and Green Growth at the Bank.

The project entails the design, construction, commissioning and operation of a 50 MW geothermal power plant under a Build, Own,

Operate and Transfer (BOOT) scheme, and marks the first phase of the Ethiopian government's plan to build cumulative generation capacity of 150 MW by 2024.

The project will include a sub-station and an 11 km transmission line.

Antony Karembu, Principal Investment Officer and Renewable Energy Specialist at the African Development Bank noted that as the first progressive geothermal independent power producer in Ethiopia, CTF will leverage climate finance options in mobilizing private sector operators for the project.

The project is expected to curb greenhouse gas emissions by over 10 million tonnes CO2 equivalent over its lifetime, and will create around 600 jobs, Karembu said.

CTF will catalyse the deployment of renewable energy technologies in Ethiopia and will underpin future investments into the sector as first-mover risks are reduced and compliance requirements are better understood to all market participants, Leandro Azevedo, Principal Climate Finance Officer and CIF coordinator at the African Development Bank, stated.

The CTF funds will be drawn from the Dedicated Private Sector Programme III designed to provide risk-appropriate financing for high-impact, large-scale private sector projects in clean technologies.

AfDB approves €40 million in grants for bridge linking Cameroon and Chad

ABIDJAN

THE Board of Directors of the African Development Bank Group has approved grants worth €40.94 million for the construction of a bridge to connect Cameroon and Chad across the Logone river.

The grants, comprising a €20.785

million tranche for Cameroon and €19.215 million for Chad, were approved on 30 April 2020. The facility is from the Investment Facility for Africa under a framework agreement between the Bank Group and the European Commission.

The funds will co-finance the costs of construction of the bridge between

Yagoua in Cameroon and Bongor in Chad, access roads and feasibility studies, management said in a report to the Board. The bridge, once completed, is expected to bolster bilateral and sub-regional integration and cross-border trade, safeguard life and property during the river crossing and boost socio-cultural ties between the two

countries.

"Specifically, the project aims to promote interstate trade, particularly between Cameroon and Chad, reduce travel time and transportation costs, and improve accessibility of basic services by nearby communities," the report noted.

In addition to the Logone river

bridge, other projects under the Pillar Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreement (PAGODA) include the rehabilitation of the Lome-Cotonou road, road development and transport facilitation on the Bamako-San Pedro corridor between Mali and Côte d'Ivoire and the rehabilitation of the CU2a community road section in

Burkina Faso near the border with Niger.

The Bank and the European Commission are committed to co-financing development projects that tackle poverty by investing in critical infrastructure to promote seamless connectivity of transport, energy and ICT.

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World Migratory Bird Day is about birds connecting world

WORLD Migratory Bird Day will be celebrated by people across the world today Saturday 9th May with the theme "Birds Connect Our World."

The UN-led campaign aims to raise awareness of migratory birds and the importance of international cooperation to conserve them. It is organised by a collaborative partnership among two UN treaties - the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) - and the Colorado-based non-profit organization, Environment for the Americas (EFTA).

Coming at a time when most of the world's population is under some form of restricted movement due to the coronavirus, this theme carries a particular relevance and poignance.

"Migratory birds can be found everywhere: in cities and in the countryside, in parks and in our backyards, in forests and in mountains, in deserts and in wetlands, and all along the shores. They connect to all of these habitats, and they connect us and the places where we live to people and places around the globe," said Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of CMS. "Yet, migratory birds are under threat, from loss of habitat, climate change, poisoning, power lines, and illegal killing. We need to step up our actions across the world to better protect migratory birds and the habitats they need to survive and thrive."

The theme underscores the importance of conserving and restoring the ecological connectivity and integrity of ecosystems that support the natural cycles that are essential for the survival and well-being of migratory birds.

Given that there is clear evidence that the destruction of wild areas can facilitate the kinds of infectious diseases the world is now combatting, urgent action to better protect and

sustain wildlife and their habitats is needed.

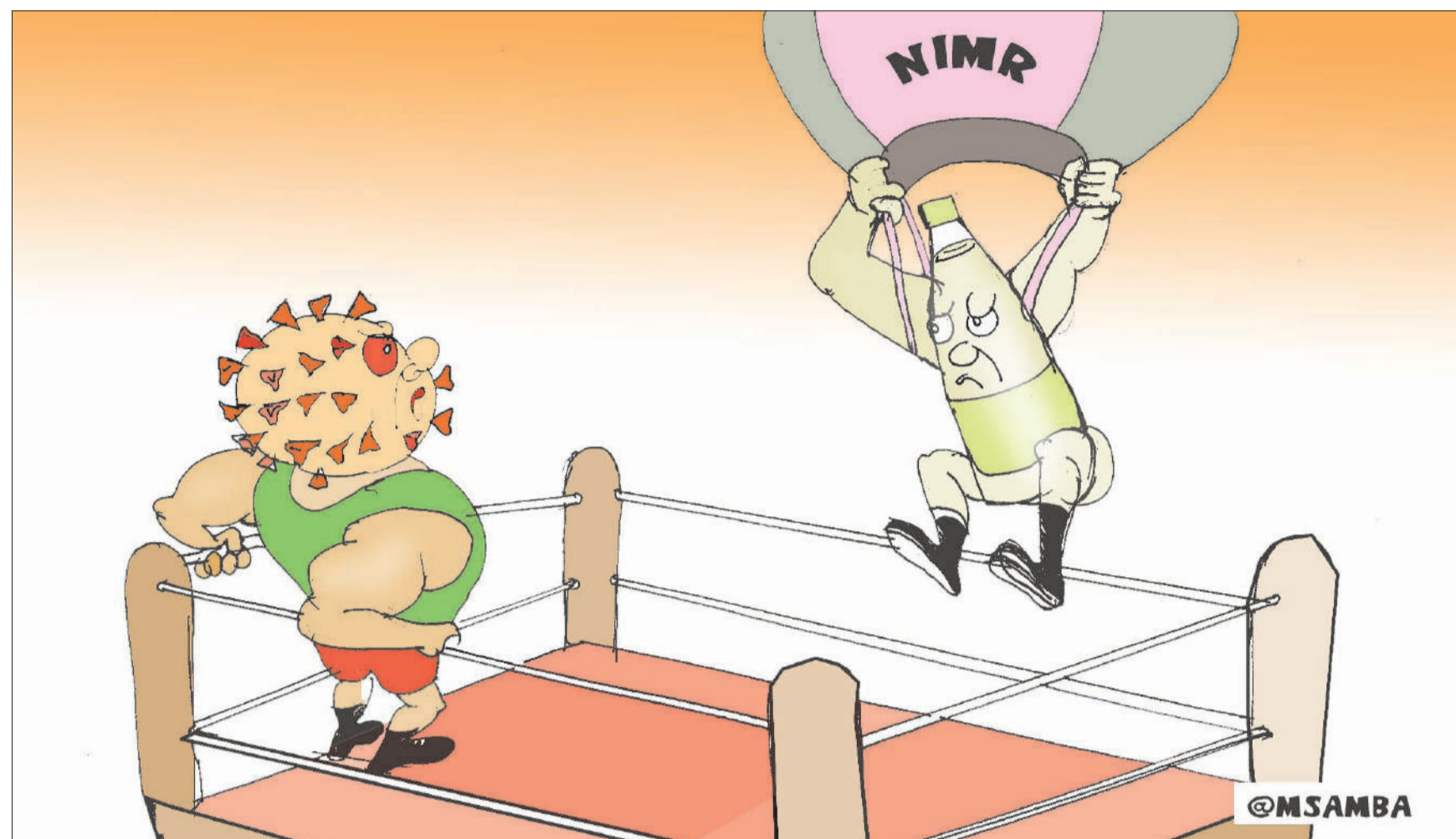
Because migratory birds depend on a network of sites that cross national borders along their migration routes for breeding, feeding, resting and overwintering, international action to protect them is essential.

Hundreds of virtual talks and a wave of social interactions dedicated to migratory birds are expected to take place in many countries on the day, with educational programmes being offered virtually by many organizations including schools, parks, zoos, forests, wildlife refuges, wetlands, museums and libraries.

"Despite the challenges that humankind must face, it is not a silent spring. Birdsong has overtaken the sound of cars in many of the world's cities. Many birds are coming back to breed in wetlands, forests and even in our gardens. This shows that the cycles and rhythms of nature, including those of migratory birds are continuing on their normal course," said Jacques Trouvilliez, executive secretary of AEWA. "The only real difference is that more people are now listening. Let us hold on to this new sense of appreciation, enjoy this music, and look for birds around us. Birds carry a message of hope. Let us remember the birds and, nature as a whole, when we go ahead to build a healthier, more environmentally responsible and more liveable world for all of us. Birds connect us."

Approximately 1,800 of the world's 11,000 bird species migrate, some covering enormous distances.

Launched in Kenya in 2006, the UN-backed campaign has grown in popularity over the years and countries recently agreed that World Migratory Bird Day is to be celebrated globally on two peak days - the second Saturdays in May and October - to accommodate the cyclical nature of migration and to allow celebrations to take place in countries in every part of the globe.



BY ANISH SHIVDASANI

THE early national lockdown has slowed down the Covid-19 infection rate. But it has paralysed the economy and caused many to go hungry. A smarter approach - using digital tools - could identify and target virus hotspots, enabling much of the country to resume economic activity.

With just over 3,300 confirmed Covid-19 cases and 58 deaths reported by Tuesday 21 April, South Africa has performed considerably better than Europe and the US in flattening the curve and slowing down the infection rate. We acted swiftly to close our borders and implement a national lockdown. The rapid, science-based decisiveness of government has been laudable.

However, we have a long way to go before we beat the virus: even if the actual number of cases is tenfold that of the confirmed number of 3,300, less than half a percent of South Africans have had the infection. This means we have barely even started this battle.

There are only three possible ways to beat the virus:

1. Using a vaccine or treatment to prevent or cure infections;
2. Draconian lockdown for around 40 days - during which the entire population must stay at home with virtually no exceptions, resulting in zero new transmissions and elimination of the virus. This was the approach China used in Wuhan and the strategy New Zealand is using to attempt to destroy the virus; and
3. Intermittent lockdowns to flatten the curve until around 60% of the population contracts and recovers from Covid-19, thereby resulting in herd immunity.

Neither a vaccine nor an effective treatment has yet been discovered and a draconian lockdown is impractical in South Africa. This leaves intermittent lockdowns as the only way to manage the disease and either reach herd immunity or buy enough time (many months) until we get a vaccine or treatment.

However, the national lockdown is a blunt instrument and there is growing pressure for the government to release it after 30 April. Aside from bringing the economy to a grinding halt and pulling children out of school, the lockdown has put significant pressure on low-income township dwellers who live hand to mouth and don't have the resources to stock up on food for weeks like their wealthy suburban counterparts.

Protests and looting have broken out across the country in recent days in response to hunger. This now confounds the government with a fiendishly complex dilemma: release

Ways to deploy technology in arresting spread of COVID-19

the lockdown and risk an explosion in infections or keep the lockdown in place to reduce infections but risk people starving to death.

There is, however, a middle way that might enable us to release the national lockdown while proactively managing the spread of infections: using digital tools in conjunction with large-scale testing to closely monitor and manage new outbreaks. We would still need to implement lockdowns, but they would be much more focused and targeted, allowing much of the country to function again.

Here it is instructive to look at South Korea, which at one point was the second-worst affected country after China but has now managed to bring the disease under control. South Korea never implemented a complete lockdown, even at the peak of its outbreak. People are mostly going about their business as usual, albeit while observing physical distancing: schools, universities and places of worship remain closed and the government still discourages leaving home for non-essential reasons.

South Korea's ability to manage the disease is thanks largely to its extensive use of digital technology to:

1. Identify individuals who may have been infected;
2. Trace others with whom they have been in contact; and
3. Combine these steps with large-scale testing. These steps made the invisible virus "visible" and enabled South Korea to contain it.

Using mobile technology to identify, trace and communicate with people who might be infected

The first step is to develop a mechanism to identify people who may be infected. We have already made progress in this area. A WhatsApp chatbot developed in South Africa (and subsequently adopted by the WHO) can now be used to self-report symptoms and flag potentially infected individuals to the Department of Health. This chatbot should be pushed as widely as possible, and all major cellphone operators, banks and other corporates with massive consumer bases should notify their customers of it.

The second step is digital contact tracing. Contact tracing is the identification of people that an infected individual has been in contact with recently and who might have been at risk of infection. Performed correctly,

contact tracing can enable authorities to identify people at risk, contact them, test them and get them to self-isolate, thereby containing the spread of the virus. Manual contact tracing requires an infected individual to remember all the people they have been in contact with. However, this is dependent on an individual's memory and is therefore limited to contacts that they know and remember having met. It would not, for example, detect the person that an infected individual might have shared an elevator with but does not know.

This is where digital tracing comes in. A new smartphone app developed by the Singapore government uses short-range Bluetooth signalling to compile a log of all the mobile devices it has been in proximity with recently. This effectively stores all the contacts an individual has been close to in recent days. If that individual tests positive for the infection, all their recent contacts can be notified immediately via the app and given instructions to get tested and self-isolate. The collection and logging of proximity data between mobile devices is done in a decentralised manner without collecting location information, so privacy is preserved. Apple and Google recently announced plans to develop a similar Bluetooth tracing feature into their mobile operating systems so that approved apps can use the data for contact tracing. Such apps could be used by the Department of Health to perform contact tracing more accurately and more scalably. If mobile operators were to zero-rate the app, people could download it for free enabling widespread adoption.

However, an app may not be sufficient, since only around 60% of the population have smartphones capable of downloading apps. Apps may need to be complemented with cell tower triangulation data, which can be used to detect the location of any type of cellphone, even if it's not a smartphone. Pulling this off would require integration of cellphone user data from all mobile networks into a centralised system, so all the mobile operators would need to come to the party to supply this data and privacy considerations would almost certainly be raised. However, tracking contacts and notifying them can be done without exposing their location data. Used together, Bluetooth apps and cell tower triangulation can effect scalable contact tracing and communicate with individuals at risk in real time, significantly reducing the rate of

infection.

Linking digital contact tracing with testing to unlock the economy

Self-reporting symptoms and digital contact tracing are necessary but not sufficient to control the disease. They must be combined with large-scale, high-capacity testing so that results can be fed back into the app network and individuals at risk can be notified.

Diagnosing Covid-19 can be done either by using a technique called PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) or by blood testing. While PCR is a sensitive method that can detect early infections, it is expensive and time-consuming. Blood tests are far cheaper and quicker than PCR tests and can also identify people who have previously had the infection, but the WHO has warned that no blood test has yet proved to be reliable and accurate enough. It is likely, however, that a reliable blood test will be available within months.

At present in South Africa, only PCR testing is being used and even then with limited capacity (currently less than 10,000 tests per day vs 130,000 per day in South Korea). If we are to remove the lockdown effectively, PCR testing would need to be significantly ramped up from the current capacity by procuring more PCR machines and training more technicians. PCR testing should then be used in conjunction with blood tests as they become available, with results fed back to the digital contact tracing network. Infected areas (red zones) could then be locked down while uninfected areas (green zones) could remain open. People who have had the virus and recovered could get antibody "passports" allowing them to move around freely without fear of spreading or catching the virus.

South Korea is a highly developed nation and it will be a tall order to emulate it. But even if South Korea can achieve a fraction of South Korea's level, it will be better than nothing. South Africa has world-class telecoms and IT infrastructure but far from world-class healthcare services. We should use the former to ensure the latter does not get overwhelmed.

Reflecting on World War II is time for remembrance and reconciliation

BY resolution of 22 November 2004, the UN General Assembly declared 8-9 May as a time of remembrance and reconciliation and, while recognising that member states may have individual days of victory, liberation and commemoration, invited all member states, organisations of the United Nations System, non-governmental organisations and individuals to observe annually either one or both of these days in an appropriate manner to pay tribute to all victims of the Second World War.

The Assembly stressed that this historic event established the conditions for the creation of the United Nations, designed to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, and called upon the member states of the United Nations to unite their efforts in dealing with new challenges and threats, with the United Nations playing a central role, and to make every effort to settle all disputes by peaceful means in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and in such a manner that international peace and security are not endangered.

On 2 March 2010 the General

Assembly invited all member states, organisations of the United Nations system, non-governmental organisations and individuals to observe 8-9 May in an appropriate manner to pay tribute to all victims of the Second World War. A special solemn meeting of the General Assembly in commemoration of all victims of the war was held in the second week of May 2010, marking the sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

During the commemoration, the Secretary-General called the Second World War "one of the most epic struggles for freedom and liberation in history," adding that "its cost was beyond calculation, beyond comprehension: 40 million civilians dead; 20 million soldiers, nearly half of those in the Soviet Union alone."

In resolution the General Assembly recalled that the Second World War "brought untold sorrow to humankind, particularly in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Pacific and other parts of the world." It underlined "the progress made since the end of the Second World War in overcoming its legacy and promoting reconciliation, international and regional cooperation and democrati

Children welfare stakeholders reiterate need for child protection amid Covid-19

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

As the government is embarking on several strategies and immediate measures to battle Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), stakeholders advocating for child protection, has recommended that, more priorities should be directed to children to ensure that they remain safe throughout the difficult time.

Peter Walsh, country director for Save the Children in Tanzania made the call yesterday, urging all responders to prioritise children in the response, warning that failure to do so, will bring long-term impacts to the group even after the pandemic is gone.

In an interview with The Guardian, Walsh noted that, children are at great risk from the effects of coronavirus. "In our 100 years of service to children we have seen that in any crisis, including in previous pandemics, the young and vulnerable suffer disproportionately."

"Child protection is more vital as many people are afraid and stressed right now. These feelings are known to increase violence, abuse, neglect and substance abuse at home where children should be safest," he said.

He said that health systems which were already struggling to manage childhood illnesses will be further weakened by the outbreak. Children with pre-existing health conditions such as HIV, tuberculosis and acute malnutrition will be the most affected," he explained.

The director added that, health facilities will be overcrowded with COVID-19 patients which will further collapse the health systems. Hence, this might contribute to poor health seeking behaviour among caregivers with under-five.

"Response need to be more strengthened including restructuring of child health clinics during this pandemic by reducing overcrowding of caregivers with under-five who are vulnerable to the virus," Walsh insisted.

"Without being able to go to school, children in abusive homes have lost access to the support of their friends and community. We know there is a risk that we will see the increase of abusive behaviour and suicide amongst these vulnerable children if protection services recede during the pandemic," he explained.

Covid-19 is having both short-term and far-reaching implications for our families, friends and colleagues. It also has an impact on our work, and will affect the achievement of our shared vision of a world without violence against children.

"We saw in the Ebola pandemic how a health response can cause harm to children and families. We saw the parents of children removed from their home for medical



treatment, without any provision of care for their children, and we saw children go into treatment with their parents placing them at risk of catching the disease or without their parents - alone and scared," director added.

"We have the opportunity to learn from these experiences in previous pandemics to make the response for children in Tanzania less scary and less damaging for children. This is not a time when we need children and their families to be afraid of health service providers," he stressed.

Walsh further advised the government to ensure that mental health, psychosocial support and protection services are a core component of the response to COVID-19 by increasing psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, integrating their work into the prevention and clinical management of Covid-19.

"Also, Community Health Workers (CHWs) need to be capacitated and empowered to provide treatment for uncomplicated wasting at the community level, including training on low no-touch assessment, simplified treatment protocols, remote supervision and key messages on COVID-19."

He also said that, all front line workers (e.g., health, community workers, security personnel and others,) should

be trained on psychological first aid, child protection, gender based violence and how to get those in their care more assistance with these issues when they see them.

In the rush to protect people of all ages in Tanzania, it may seem like common sense to reroute available resources towards combating the virus but doing so could lead to the death and injury of many from other causes, including women and children.

The director applauded the government of Tanzania, together with multiple stakeholders who have launched a comprehensive response to the Covid-19 outbreak in Tanzania aimed at controlling the spread of Covid-19 while tracing and treating those infected.

Tanzania should develop national support for their poorest and most vulnerable people, including protec-

tions for jobs and guaranteed family income. "We recommend that the government combine measures for controlling spread of infection with increased & expanded social safety net payments as a means to mitigate against lost income, and ensure families are able to put meals on the table and meet basic needs," he emphasised.

So far, Tanzania has recorded 480 cases of Corona virus, 167 recoveries and 16 deaths, according to the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children.

While, globally, data from World Health Organisation up to May 05, shows that there are 3,517,345 reported cases, with 243,401 deaths caused by the disease.

According to the joint statement signed by leaders from 22 world leading organisations, working to end violence against children, they commit-

ted that;

Leaders of the organisations, to come together in solidarity to share our deep concern, call for action and pledge our support to protect children from violence and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on children in every country and community.

A third of the global population is on COVID-19 lock-down, and school closures have impacted more than 1.5 billion children. Movement restrictions, loss of income, isolation, overcrowding and high levels of stress and anxiety are increasing the likelihood that children experience and observe physical, psychological and sexual abuse at home - particularly those children already living in violent or dysfunctional family situations.

We must act now. Together, we call on governments, the international community and leaders in every sector to urgently respond with a united effort to protect children from the heightened risk of violence, exploitation and abuse as part of the broader response to COVID-19.

Governments have a central role to play. They must ensure that COVID-19 prevention and response plans integrate age appropriate and gender sensitive measures to protect all children from violence, neglect and abuse. Child protection services and workers must be designated as essential and resourced accordingly.

As global organisations working to end violence against children, we will continue to advocate for and invest in effective child protection solutions. We will collectively develop and share technical resources and guidance for policymakers, practitioners, parents, caregivers and children. And we will support the courageous health, child protection and humanitarian professionals working around the clock to keep children safe during these unprecedented times.

Govt responses to Covid-19 should ensure protection of the rights of women and girls

By Special Correspondent

AUTHORITIES in sub-Saharan Africa must ensure that their responses to the Covid-19 pandemic include specific protections for the rights of women and girls, Amnesty International, Women's Link Worldwide and the International Planned Parenthood Federation Africa Region (IPPFAR) say in a report published yesterday.

The document provides a roadmap for governments and regional organisations for taking appropriate measures to protect the rights of women and girls, who are often disproportionately affected in crisis situations.

It highlights states' obligations to guarantee the right to live free from discrimination and violence and calls on governments to ensure access to essential sexual and reproductive health services, commodities and information during the pandemic.

"The current Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of women and girls," said Marie-Evelyne Petrus-Barry, the IPPF Africa Regional Director.

She elaborated: "Their health and wellbeing is not only negatively impacted by the disruption of essential sexual and reproductive services such as contraceptives counselling, maternal and newborn health, gender-based violence (GBV), and testing and treatment for HIV and sexually transmitted infections, but also their livelihoods and even their lives are threatened when sexually based crimes go invisible and stay unpunished."

She added: "This is why the African Union, regional economic commissions, governments and women rights defenders must redouble their efforts in ensuring that the sexual reproductive health and rights of women and girls are protected and upheld and violations of these rights are documented and dealt with by justice systems."

The organisations have appealed to governments to take urgent action to protect the rights of women and girls, highlighting the specific gender risks which the Covid-19 pandemic poses.

Examples highlighted in the report include the right to live free of violence and any form of torture, inhumane or degrading treatment.

"During times of crisis and turmoil



such as the one we are living in, women and girls face an increased risk of suffering violations of their rights," said Women's Link Worldwide President & CEO Viviana Waisman.

"This is especially true for women already living in marginalised situations," For this reason, it is urgent that we work to ensure that their rights are respected and guaranteed," she noted.

She added: "These guidelines are a roadmap to allow us to carry out this monitoring and advocacy work and demand that governments comply with their obligations and maintain their commitment to the rights and lives of women and girls during the Covid-19 pandemic."

According to the report, the implementation of measures such as curfews, lockdowns or travel restrictions may lead to police brutality and violence which ultimately poses a risk for women and girls to being subjected to sexual violence.

There are also concerns of increase in teenage pregnancies, as previously observed in Sierra Leone following the lockdown imposed to halt the spread of the Ebola epidemic.

Accordingly, governments are called upon to put safeguards in place to ensure that women and girls are protected from sexual violence and have access to sexual and reproductive health

services and commodities.

The organisations have also called for better protection for refugee and migrant women. Africa hosts more than 25.2 million refugees and internally displaced people and houses four of the world's six largest refugee camps in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia.

Refugee camps in the region usually provide inadequate and overcrowded living arrangements that present a severe health risk to inhabitants.

"As Covid-19 spreads across the region, women and girls have reportedly already faced an increase in domestic violence. Restrictions on movement, social isolation and lockdowns can

make it even harder for women to access essential services like sexual and reproductive healthcare and protection from domestic violence," said Samira Daoud, Amnesty International West and Central Africa regional director.

"We call on governments in the region to act urgently to prevent gender gaps increasing," she noted, adding: "Any measures taken to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic must respect and protect women's rights, including the right to live free of violence and torture and other ill-treatment, and the right to access justice."

Amnesty International is a global

movement of more than 7 million people who take injustice personally. They crusade for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

IPPFAR is meanwhile the leading sexual and reproductive health service delivery organisation in Africa and the leading sexual and reproductive health and rights advocacy voice in the region.

For its part, Women's Link Worldwide is an international nonprofit organisation that uses the power of the law to promote social change advancing the rights of women and girls, especially those facing multiple inequalities.

In parched southern Africa, virus spurs action on water supply

JOHANNESBURG/
BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe

FIFTY people and their cattle share the only borehole in Gongu village in southwestern Zimbabwe, meaning frequent handwashing to fight the coronavirus is easier said than done.

Across drought-hit southern Africa, COVID-19 has spurred governments to dispatch water tankers, drill boreholes and repair taps - solutions experts and residents of thirsty slums and villages say must last long after the pandemic has passed.

"We're calling for the government to do more because at the moment there are few boreholes," Khulekani Ncube, Gongu village's headman, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

"Most villagers don't have soap and masks to protect themselves against the virus. But we conserve the little water we have to prevent the spread of COVID-19," he said.

Many central and western parts of southern Africa - including Zimbabwe - have experienced their lowest rainfall since 1981 over the past year, according to the United Nations, highlighting inadequate water access across the region.

Nearly 70 percent of Africans would struggle to access food and water if in lockdown for 14 days, according to a report by the Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19 (PERC), a consortium of global public health organisations.

The report published on Tuesday found that social media comments from Africans, specifically in central and southern regions, spotlighted the "incomprehensibility" of following handwashing instructions in areas with little water.

As authorities scramble to boost immediate water supplies, tapping state funds or

in partnerships with charities, specialists say longer-term solutions might prove more cost-effective too.

"Water tankers are good for emergencies, but one of the most expensive water solutions out there," said Barbara van Koppen, a southern Africa researcher with the International Water Management Institute, a non-profit research organisation.

"We need to use the coronavirus crisis to question: what are short-term solutions and what are long-term?" she said in a phone interview.

IN THE PIPELINE

South Africa has more than 7,200 confirmed coronavirus cases, the highest on the continent, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

The South African government sent an estimated 7,700 water tanks and 1,200 water trucks to villages and townships across the country, the official news agency reported.

"We're looking into using reservoirs, drilling boreholes and making use of groundwater too," said Sputnik Ratau, a spokesman for the country's water and sanitation department.

But some communities say they are tired of waiting for lasting solutions to the long-standing problem.

"Some villages have not had running water for over 20 years," said journalist Ndivhuwo Mukwehwo from Limpopo, South Africa's northernmost province, who wrote about the delivery of 132 water tanks to drought-stricken villages in the province in early April.

"Access to water will help with hand washing, but also cooking, drinking and cleaning," Mukwehwo said. "We just hope the water tankers are still here after the pandemic."

Across the border in Zimbabwe,



A worker observes sanitation protocols as she washes her hands under running water at the end of a tobacco reaping session at Tilisa farm in Bromley, Zimbabwe on April 15, 2020, ahead of the start of the tobacco selling season scheduled to begin on April 22, 2020, but now likely to be disrupted due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

which has at least 34 coronavirus cases, 62,000 litres (16,000 gallons) of water have been distributed during the outbreak, said Moment Malandu, coordinator for the government rural infrastructure agency in Matabeland South province.

As they wait for more emergency water aid, people are innovating too.

Gongu villagers use five-litre buckets called "Tippy Taps" that slowly dispense water through an attached nozzle, aiding hand washing and making their borehole supply last longer.

More permanent measures

are also in the pipeline.

Malandu said the coronavirus pandemic had spurred ongoing repairs of 1,200 water points and accelerated plans to help drill 600 new boreholes in Zimbabwe's eight provinces.

'ENOUGH TO GO AROUND'

In Malawi, which has at least 41 coronavirus cases, the government's COVID-19 response includes a \$5.6 million water distribution plan, involving the construction of solar-powered water systems and the repair of existing water sources.

Mozambique, which is still recovering from two devastating 2019 cyclones, has partnered with the United

Nations to establish a COVID-19 municipal task-force to assess key water points for people with disabilities and in informal settlements.

The government has also suspended collection of a water supply tax in rural areas during the current crisis, according to a United Nations report.

Mozambique has reported at least 80 cases of the virus according to Johns Hopkins University.

In West Africa, the Ebola outbreak led to an increase in demand and supply of water to prevent the spread of the disease, according to a water security report published by K4D, a platform for evidence-based research.

The researcher van Koppen said

there was enough water in southern Africa, urging governments to prioritise and invest in water infrastructure to ensure demand is met during the coronavirus crisis and beyond.

"Governments need to start with what is already there. For example, often there are boreholes that already exist but don't work as they are badly maintained," she said, adding that asking communities what they need is an important first step.

"There is actually enough water to go around," van Koppen said. "It's just about prioritisation. Do we use it for luxury uses, such as golf courses, or do we invest in water infrastructure where it's most needed?"

Xinhua

A changing global political structure amid COVID-19

ATHENS

AS the COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world, the global political structure is changing; amid a widening gap in transatlantic relations and a familiar U.S. withdrawal from international affairs, many other countries and regions are shouldering global responsibilities and becoming new voices for cooperation in face of challenges.

Many experts and media worldwide agree that all these changes happened during the 100 days after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on Jan. 30.

WORSENING TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

Transatlantic relations have suffered a new blow in the global health crisis, with U.S. President Donald Trump's unilateral moves proving to be "aggressive isolationism," the European Council on Foreign Relations, a pan-European think tank, pointed out in a commentary published in early April.

A day before the WHO announced that Europe became the epicenter of the pandemic on March 13, Trump already issued travel bans on most of mainland Europe, which incurred widespread doubt, disapproval and condemnation from the continent. The European Union (EU) issued a joint statement criticizing the U.S. measures for being taken "unilaterally and without consultation."

When Europe is struggling, what the United States did has amplified the gap in the transatlantic relations.

On March 18, some U.S. media applauded the fact that the U.S. Air Force flew half a million coronavirus testing swabs from Italy to the U.S. state of Tennessee, at a time when Italy recorded over 35,000 cases, the most outside China.

In early April, Washington was ac-

cused by Berlin of "modern piracy" after redirecting 200,000 Germany-bound masks for its own use. The White House faced the same accusation from France.

Analysts worldwide said the transatlantic alliance was already in a bad shape before the sudden outbreak of the pandemic. Since the current U.S. administration came to power, the U.S.-Europe bond has suffered a series of blows over the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's defense expenditures, trade conflicts, the Iran nuclear deal and the refugee crisis, among others.

Alexandra de Hoop Scheffer, director of Research, Transatlantic Security at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, told French daily Le Figaro that Europeans have made the majority of their decisions during the crisis without consulting the United States due to Trump's indifference towards its European allies in the virus battle.

"It's as if they've internalized the fact that we shouldn't expect anything from American leadership anymore," she said.

Erik Brattberg, director of the Europe Program and a fellow at the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said in an article on the organization's website that the latest bout of transatlantic discord is marked by "a lack of European trust in Washington's intentions, unpredictable U.S. foreign policy decision making, a dearth of U.S. diplomatic decorum, and a sense of ideological drift across the Atlantic."

U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM GLOBAL AFFAIRS

It has been widely recognized that Washington is playing a blame game to shift its responsibility for the poor management of the pandemic within the United States and wrench itself out of a political impasse caused by a delay in tackling the virus.

And its latest move to cut off WHO funding has triggered a new wave



Maria van Kerkhove, technical lead for the Health Emergencies Program of the World Health Organization (WHO), speaks at a daily briefing in Geneva, Switzerland, on March 3, 2020. (Xinhua)

worldwide of questioning the U.S. leadership in global affairs.

"How shortsighted when global coop needed more now than ever," Lawrence Gostin, director of the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University, tweeted after the White House's decision, adding that Washington has "entirely abandoned" U.S. global health leadership.

Yet the word "withdraw" is no new to the Trump administration.

Washington quit the Paris Climate Agreement in 2017, with Trump saying the decision

was in accordance with his "America First" policy. A few months later, it quit the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

It then withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran nuclear deal, in May 2018.

Over the past century, the United States has displayed global leadership in almost all global crises, including the 2008 financial crisis and the 2014 Ebola crisis. It has granted assistance to other countries, and established today's multilateral international system.

"But this is perhaps the first global crisis in more than a century where no one is even looking to the United States for leadership," said an article from The New York Times on April 23.

Although the United States is acting as the current chair of the G7, it was French President Emmanuel Macron who called for a virtual G7 summit to discuss the coronavirus crisis in mid-April. During the summit, Trump was left isolated for his decision to suspend WHO funding.

"The United States will no longer be seen as an international leader because of its government's narrow self-interest and bungling incompetence," commented Kori Schake, deputy director general of the London-headquartered International Institute for Strategic Studies, in an article published by Foreign Policy magazine in March.

"Washington has failed the leadership test, and the world is worse off for it," Schake said.

NEW VOICES FOR COOPERATION

Facing the coronavirus - a common enemy of mankind, many countries and regions, such as China and the EU, have been shouldering great global responsibilities and waging all-out efforts to deepen international cooperation.

Since Jan. 3, China has been regularly informing the WHO and relevant countries on the latest development of the epidemic situation within the country.

Chinese scientists were the first to uncover the genetic code of the virus and shared it with the WHO on Jan. 12, "enabling the roll-out of effective testing around the world," wrote Robin Niblett, director and chief executive of British think tank Chatham House, in an article published in April.

Besides, China has offered assistance to over 120 countries around the world, sending urgently needed medical supplies and dispatching teams of experts to those in need. It has also donated 50 million U.S. dollars to the WHO in the past two months to support the global fight against COVID-19.

"This could be the first major global crisis in decades without meaningful U.S. leadership and with significant Chinese leadership," said Rush Doshi, director of the China Strategy Initiative at Washington-based research group the Brookings Institution, in a story published by The New York Times in March.

The outbreak is also a test of European integration. The EU quickly unified its internal policies in response to the epidemic, and has performed actively on international stages such as the G20 and the G7 to coordinate global cooperation. It has also showed its full support for international organizations such as the United Nations and the WHO.

Conquering the pandemic requires solidarity and "strong and co-ordinated policy responses" by governments and societies at a global level, emphasized Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Thomas Greminger.

Xinhua

'Commonwealth members must maintain basic non-Covid-19 healthcare while tackling virus'

By Guardian Reporter

COUNTRIES should maintain essential health care to non-Covid-19 patients while dealing with the coronavirus pandemic.

This is a message from Secretary-General Patricia Scotland ahead of the Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting taking place virtually on 14 May.

Some countries have temporarily suspended cancer treatment and surgery to help hospitals manage an influx of Covid-19 patients. At the same time, contagion suppression tactics such

as lockdowns and border closures have limited the delivery of mosquito nets, insect repellents and vaccination schedules.

Treatment and vaccination disruptions for preventable and curable illnesses could significantly increase mortality, according to the World Health Organization.

The Secretary-General said: "The spread of Covid-19 has brought home to us with greater immediacy the devastating impact that disease can have on every aspect of our lives."

"The global response to Covid-19 has been impressive, but let us not lose focus on other health threats which kill thousands daily and put millions more at risk."

"Authorities should follow guidelines issued by the World Health Organization. They need to determine which health services ought to continue based on their local context and deploy whatever resources are available to deliver maximum treatment and care for all in need."

A study by Johns Hopkins University predicts that about one million women and children could die in the next six months because the pandemic is disrupting routine health services in low and middle-income countries. These disruptions include a lack of access to family planning, ante and postnatal care, vaccinations and limited equipment, supplies and medical staff available during childbirth.

Patricia Scotland said: "Even before the present pandemic, our Commonwealth focus has been on the priority of providing Universal Health Coverage, so that all citizens have access to essential health services without financial hardship."

"This is particularly important for pregnant women and young children, to avoid unnecessary mortality, and becomes even more so in mobilising healthcare resources in order to respond effectively to the pandemic."

As of 7 May, Covid-19 has killed about 264,000 people. Based on the 2017 data, Covid-19 is far behind other diseases in terms of mortality, while heart disease and cancer were the leading cause of death globally killing nearly 18 and 10 million respectively. Kathleen McCourt,

President of the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation, said: "Over the past few months, countries across the world have implemented unprecedented measures to contain the spread of the infection at great economic and human costs."

"It is worthwhile, however, to reflect that existing diseases do not take a holiday."

Since last week, health organisations have warned that Covid-19 could trigger a spike in malaria and measles cases as some vaccination and prevention measures are on hold.

Prof Kathleen added: "While our focus is on this pandemic and to put the infection and death rates from Covid-19 into a broader perspective."

"It is essential that governments do not neglect the major causes of death and disability in their countries, particularly those affecting the most vulnerable such as women and children." She said, like other pandemics, Covid-19 will run its course, but that other major diseases are here to stay unless countries remain vigilant.

Farmers' Hub: Introducing young agripreneurs from nations in the Sahel region to greenhouse agriculture

BAMAKO, Mali

THE Farmers' Hub project, supported by CTA and the Syngenta Foundation for a Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA), is benefiting young farmers in Mali and Senegal. The initiative aims to improve the productivity and quality of fruit and vegetable farming using greenhouses, whilst creating youth employment opportunities. After a year of operation, the young agripreneurs have shown promising results and significant profits.

Established in 2019, the Farmers' Hub project is supporting 22 selected youths in Mali and Senegal to invest in agriculture.

The project provides training sessions in greenhouse farming and business management, and has equipped the agripreneurs with 13 greenhouses, technical equipment such as seedling trays and machinery, and agricultural inputs and plants.

During the first year of the project, the agripreneurs have used these

resources to rent out their agricultural machinery and equipment, and provide advice to other producers in greenhouse farming.

All the agripreneurs are also taking part in continuous training to ensure optimal usage of the greenhouses and proper care of the plants. They are trained by Sidibé Agritechniques and Passion Nature, two private sector companies with agribusiness expertise in Mali and Senegal, respectively.

Passion Nature, for example, provided participants with training on investment strategies and business management in November 2019.

The youths were also trained in management and entrepreneurship by the local incubation centres, and from September 2019 to January 2020, they were trained on seed production and processing techniques by Mali's World Vegetables Centre.

To foster knowledge sharing, the project hosts field days whereby visitors are invited inside the greenhouses and are introduced to the concept



and objectives of the project. In Mali, 342 farmers and 100 university students had the opportunity to take part in the field days so far.

The project has trained the youth on use of the mobile platform e-Hub, which was initially developed by SFSA in Bangladesh and allows for data

collection and transaction management.

Provided with mobile phones and tablets to input their data and monitor their activities, but also with small printers to issue invoices for their clients, all the agripreneurs in both countries have access to and make use of this mobile tool.

The next step in the app's development is to add an SMS alert option to send extension messages and practical information.

To improve the sustainability and environmental outcomes of project's farming activities, the agripreneurs are testing new methods of fertilizer generation, for instance, using filao, rice husks or peanuts shells, to decrease their dependency on imported fertilisers.

To facilitate the process, the Farmers' Hubs have been provided with incinerators. The youth are also testing alternative materials for seedling trays, such as wood or polystyrene, instead of plastic to reduce their production costs.

In West Africa, East Africa and Asia, where the project is located, the Farmers' Hub model is an innovation that sparks the interest of many farmers but also government officials, donors, NGOs and the media. In Senegal for instance, this interest - and the performance of the agripreneurs - has resulted in the country's 10 Hubs generating more than €20,000 in revenue through their nursery services alone. The Hubs have served more than 1,000 farmers with machinery rental services and advise, and have provided training to more than 1,000 farmers on good agricultural practices.

The performance of the Farmers' Hubs in Senegal has allowed them to take part to the second season of Ferme Factory, a TV show that aims to encourage youth to invest in agriculture and thus limit their migration. The filming took place from June to December 2019, at one of the Hubs, and 38 young agripreneurs participated.

With the project showing promise and attracting local attention, the next step will be to assist the youth in establishing ties with financial institutions. This will enable the Hubs to further grow their activities, and guarantee their sustainability.

Generation Africa kicks off next agritech competition for Africa

By Samuel Mungadze

GENERATION Africa has announced the second annual GoGettagz competition, which aims to grow the pan-African entrepreneurial community and pave the way for new businesses embracing technology and innovation in the agrifood and agritech sectors.

The Generation Africa consortium is a partnership initiative between Yara International, Econet, and Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, Corteva Agriscience, Southern African Confederation of Agricultural

Unions and Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture, seeking to inspire young African entrepreneurs to join the agrifood sector.

Now in its second year, the annual competition has \$100 000 prize money.

Organisers say the 2020 competition, launched amid the coronavirus pandemic, will give hope and support to agripreneurs on the African continent.

"Bringing on board influential co-founders, members and ambassadors, the 2020 competition aims to grow the pan-African GoGettagz entrepreneurial com-

munity and pave the way for new businesses embracing technology and innovation in the agrifood and agritech sectors," Generation Africa says.

"The competition launches as the coronavirus pandemic is having a severely negative impact on health, well-being and livelihoods of billions of people throughout Africa and the world."

"While the ultimate costs of this crisis are unknown, tremendous effort and innovation is needed to keep agribusiness going and ensure the health crisis does not also translate into a severe food crisis."

According to Generation Africa, leadership and coordinated action are required at global, national and local levels "to find solutions for agrifood systems that are responsive to, and supportive of, health measures. Africa's youth agripreneurs have a huge role to play."

Svein Tore Holsether, president and CEO of Yara International, comments: "We have decided to go ahead with the 2020 GoGettagz Agripreneur Prize Competition. Not despite the coronavirus, but because of it."

"Now, more than ever, we need to support African agrifood en-

trepreneurs and the small and medium agribusinesses on the continent. They are the people who produce food and get it to the people who need it. They will be the people who help to rebuild our economies after the pandemic is over."

Further, the organisers say the 2020 GoGettagz Agripreneur prize competition will acknowledge two innovative ventures, one led by a man and one led by a woman, who founded or co-founded companies in the agrifood sector in Africa.

"The winners will each be awarded a grand prize of \$50

000, along with an industry-leading support network to take their businesses to the next level."

With the competition, Generation Africa says it wants to inspire and nurture young entrepreneurs in Africa's agrifood sector, from sapling businesses to companies that have already firmly taken root.

"Agrifood is more than an essential business in this global pandemic, it is urgent for survival," says Strive Masiyiwa, founder and executive chairman of Econet. "Our African agribusinesses must stay strong and innovate to meet growing food needs

locally, across the whole value chain. With forex income impacted by COVID-19, our nations can no longer rely on imports to feed our people. Now is the time for Africa's entrepreneurs to see and seize new opportunities."

The GoGettagz Agripreneur prize competition is open to agrifood entrepreneurs, aged 18 to 35 from across Africa. Applications can be submitted to the competition through its Web site. Ten finalists will be invited to compete in a live or virtual (online) pitching contest at the Africa Green Revolution Forum Summit in September.

Mandatory Covid-19 tests at borders slowing trade in East Africa - official

By Ajifowoke Gbenga

THE East African Community is trying to curb the spread of the new coronavirus among long-distance truck drivers in the region while simultaneously facilitating the transport of goods between member states amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

There are plans to deploy mobile lab clinics at border crossings in line with resolutions from a recent emergency bilateral meeting between health ministries of Kenya and Uganda, as well as EAC officials.

"Following the increase of Covid-19 cases among truck drivers from Kenya transiting through Uganda, we have proposed four testing centers in Mombasa, Kemri-Nairobi, Eldoret and at Malaba-Uganda border," acting head of Health in the EAC Secretariat, Michael Katende, was quoted as saying.

"We do not have testing facilities at the Kenya-Uganda border. Therefore, the region is planning to deploy mo-

bile laboratory kits at Malaba on the Kenya-Uganda border to carry out testing," Katende said, adding that Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Burundi have already received their mobile labs.

Prior to the meeting, the regional bloc had issued new guidelines, suggesting among other things, that all border crossings should be kept open for freight traffic so that trucks can be cleared as quickly as possible.

The new guidelines also require testing for all truck drivers while states are to set up special stopping points so that drivers have as little contact with the population as possible. Although not binding, the guidelines are meant to enable joint action.

EAC member states are interlinked at many levels, hence the need to come together and issue regional guidelines. While the move helps to reduce mistrust among truck drivers and border officials, an issue already causing new frictions between Kenya and Uganda,

the new procedures come with their own implications.

Media reports last week showed a 30 kilometer-traffic jam at the Kenyan town of Malaba on the border with Uganda due to the mandatory testing. A result of this is reduced clearance for the goods being moved and slower trade between the neighbors. For instance, logistics startup Kobo360 said it has seen clearance for its truck drivers carrying essential goods shrink to less than 50 percent.

The new procedure has also increased the cost of transport from Nairobi to Kampala. Truck drivers are seeing additional fuel expenses, increased mileage per trip, and even truck and cargo security, raising drivers' monthly costs. The increased costs are further expected to lead to increased prices of goods for the end-user, as the extra cost will be passed on to consumers.

More so, small and medium-sized companies that depend on cross-border trade are particularly threatened



by delays and restrictions, economist Robert Kappel told German publication DW. "Many of the farmers or small entrepreneurs must now try to sell their products elsewhere but often the local market is limited."

As of Monday, Kenya had the highest number of infections in the region with 490 confirmed coronavirus cases, followed by Tanzania with 480, Rwanda (259), Uganda had 89, South Sudan (46), and Burundi with 19. Kiga-

li is also tightening border controls for movements from Dar es Salaam after seeing a spike in the number of positive COVID-19 cases, most of which are linked to cross-border truck drivers especially from Nairobi and Dodoma.

Are Mozambique's insurgents closing in on illicit trafficking profits?

EVENTS in recent months raise important questions about whether the insurgents in northern Mozambique may be positioning themselves to reap greater profits from the many trafficking routes that pass through their neck of the woods.

The illicit economy in northern Mozambique helped shape the conditions that led to the current insurgency in Cabo Delgado and may drive instability in the future. Criminal networks have become economically and politically entrenched in the region. In the aftermath of the Mozambican civil war, heroin trafficking flourished in Cabo Delgado; and in the past 10 to 15 years, many other illicit markets - including timber, ivory, rubies, other gemstones, drugs and human smuggling - have boomed in the region. Many of these trades traversed Cabo Delgado en route to Pemba port, which has a reputation for corruption.

Illicit trade in the north of the country has capitalised on and fostered corruption at all levels of government. Since 2010, the links between drug trafficking and high-ranking figures in Frelimo have been well documented. In 2013, an investigation by the Environmental Investigation Agency into timber trafficking in northern Mozambique identified apparent links between the traffickers and a serving Mozambican government minister as well as a former minister.

The exploitation of recent natural resource finds, such as rubies around Montepuez and offshore gas in Palma, has likewise been characterised by corruption among the country's political and economic elites. The proceeds of legal and illegal markets have primarily been channelled to traffickers, well-connected business people and high-level politicians.

Local communities have suffered the negative repercussions of these developments, such as being forcibly evicted by private and public security forces to make way for projects. This toxic combination of corruption, marginalisation, increasing inequality and insecure land rights has created deep distrust in the Mozambican state and left the region vulnerable to the current outbreak of violent extremism.

The Cabo Delgado insurgent group began as a religious sect in 2007, as young Muslim men - frustrated by the inequality and lack of opportunity afforded by the current status quo and the breakdown in governance - turned to extremist ideology inspired by the teachings of radical Kenyan cleric Aboud Rogo, and argued for a society ruled by a stricter Islamic sharia legal code. It was only in 2017, after coming into conflict with the national Islamic Council and with the state, that they chose the path of a vio-

lent insurgency.

The sect first established itself in or near areas where valuable resources were being found, local corruption was high and trafficking was rife.

- Mocimboa da Praia has been, and remains, a major hub for illicit trafficking, with the fishing harbour used to land heroin off dhows from the Makran Coast, and illegal migrants, ivory and timber all smuggled in and out by boat.

- Macomia has been a centre for the timber trade, in which corruption has played a major part, for more than 20 years.

- Montepuez is the site of the biggest ruby deposits in the world, discovered in 2009, where local elites have captured access to the concessions and forcibly displaced farmers and artisanal ruby miners.

- Balama has been an important centre for ivory poaching and trafficking since about 2011, and more recently a small market for gemstones and alluvial gold has developed.

Major illicit flows passing through northern Mozambique.

Global Initiative research conducted when the insurgency was in its infancy found that, at the time, the insurgent group was not systematically exploiting illicit economies for funding. Instead, its connections to criminal trafficking markets were ad hoc, reflective of the general importance of illegal and unregulated markets to livelihoods in the north. However, more recent research into the changing dynamics of the north and reports of the growing sophistication of the insurgency mean the time is ripe for reevaluation.

Many of the criminal economies in northern Mozambique are undergoing major changes which will affect the ways the insurgents may exploit or participate in them. The bulk heroin trade - the most lucrative drug flow through Mozambique - is ongoing, as major seizures of dhows carrying heroin off the Mozambican coast in December 2019 demonstrate. On 14 December, a dhow that was reported to be carrying over a tonne of heroin was intercepted, while a second boat was intercepted on 23 December carrying 430kg of heroin and other illicit substances, and the 13 Pakistani crew members arrested.

The Mozambican defence and security forces intercepted a dhow reportedly carrying heroin on 14 December 2019. The crew set the boat on fire to destroy the evidence and drugs and jumped into the sea.

The insurgency has caused some disruption: Some of the old networks appear to have shifted their northernmost landing sites further south. New trafficking networks have emerged in Pemba, possibly in response

to improved law-enforcement capacity further north on the East African coast, shifting a larger volume of heroin trafficking further south. Heroin is landed at Mocimboa de Praia, at Quissanga and directly into the fishing harbour in Pemba, then sent south to Nampula. There is also evidence from recent seizures in Pemba that Tanzanian networks may be receiving heroin in Cabo Delgado and shipping it north into Tanzania.

There has been an increase in local heroin availability, on the streets in Pemba and among artisanal miners in Montepuez and in the alluvial gold mines. Heroin arriving in Montepuez is controlled by Tanzanian trafficking networks, who bring it by truck from Dar es Salaam. These trucks bring commercial goods for sale in the local shops, and the heroin is packaged in order for specific retailers, hidden among commodities like biscuits and sugar.

Since the discovery of ruby deposits in Montepuez in 2009, the most lucrative mining site has been concessioned to a company controlled by the Mozambican elite, which then entered into partnership with an international mining company. Local artisanal miners have been forcibly removed from the concessioned areas. The displaced artisanal miners illegally mine areas around the concessions and have attacked the mining concessions, sometimes overwhelming local security staff and police.

Before 2017, Thai buyers based in Montepuez bought rubies directly from the artisanal miners for sale in Bangkok, a centre of the global gemstone market. The Mozambican police undertook a large-scale operation in February 2017 to clamp down on illegal miners and buyers around Montepuez, and 3,600 people were arrested. Illegal miners who were not Mozambican, around two-thirds of those arrested, were deported. Several hundred foreign buyers were also deported, and with the 2016 criminalisation of mining without a licence, many did not return and these established flows were disrupted.

However, the flow of "rough" rubies (uncut gems sold by artisanal miners) continues. Recent Global Initiative fieldwork in Bangkok found that Mozambique-sourced rubies were available from Guinean networks, who were reportedly buying direct from Mozambique. Gemstone buyers in Bangkok reported that West African networks have become increasingly important intermediaries for African gemstones sold in Bangkok.

Artisanal gold-mining in northern Mozambique has accelerated in Niassa and Cabo Delgado provinces, in particular in sites within the Niassa National Reserve. Some miners cross from Tanzania to exploit this resource.



The Mozambican defence and security forces intercepted a dhow reportedly carrying heroin on 14 December 2019. The crew set the boat on fire to destroy the evidence and drugs and jumped into the sea. File photo

There are reports of district police being bribed to let these operations continue. Some of the raw gold is bought at the mines by foreign buyers, while some of it is moved across the border to the gold market in Dar es Salaam. There are also local markets for the gold in Montepuez and Nampula.

Illegal alluvial gold mining site in the Niassa National Reserve.

Mozambique has historically been an epicentre of illegal wildlife trade. In 2008-2018, Niassa National Reserve lost approximately 72% of its elephants (which had numbered at least 13,000) to poaching. The ivory store in Lichinga, the capital of Niassa province, was raided, and 867 pieces of ivory weighing just over 1 tonne were stolen, some later seized in Maputo and Cambodia.

Pemba is no longer a major trafficking route for ivory, reportedly because of a combination of international law-enforcement operations targeting key trafficking networks and a major push on ivory trafficking by individuals perceived to be incorruptible within key Mozambican law-enforcement units. However, other animal products - such as lion teeth and claws, and pangolins and pangolin scales - are available in Pemba.

Other illicit markets exist in Pemba and Cabo Delgado. The trade in high-value hardwoods from Cabo Delgado has long been extremely lucrative. Concessions and quotas have typically been acquired in corrupt deals - initially by South Africans in the late 1990s and more recently by Chinese companies, some members of which were found to be involved in ivory trafficking. All commercial logging of valuable hardwoods was stopped in late 2015 in an attempt to buy time to reform the sector. However, the trade continues as commercial traders have circumvented the ban by setting up local community logging operations which are allowed to continue exploiting this resource, and investing in protection systems and other forms of corruption to allow the trade to continue.

The northern Mozambique coast is also a major site for human smuggling on the migrant route from the Horn of Africa to South Africa. Local dhows move down the coast from Zanzibar bringing people and other illicit products, including heroin. Landings are made in Mocimboa da Praia and Quissanga and on the beaches near Pemba, typically on full-moon nights.

How the insurgents are linked to the illicit economy

When the religious sect that preceded the insurgency was founded in 2007, it offered youth who joined opportunities for personal development, such as training at international Islamic universities or small business loans. Members became involved in the formal and informal economies - trading goods from Tanzania, supplying timber to traders operating in Macomia, and participating in the ivory trade by poaching elephants in Quirimbas National Park. Poaching there was at its height in 2009-2013.

Since mid-2019, the group has increased both the sophistication of its strategy and the frequency of its attacks. It appears that the group is better armed, has improved training and has grown in size. While it may have acquired arms from its operations against the FDS, there are reports that FDS deserters and possibly foreigners are being paid to provide training and that recruits are being attracted by salary

offers. This suggests that their funding has grown.

The illicit economy may be playing an increasing role in this. Verifying reports of insurgent involvement in illegal markets is, however, a challenging task. Below, we discuss - based on our own recent fieldwork in the region and sources in both Cabo Delgado and Niassa - the potential for the trade in timber, ivory (and other wildlife products), gold, rubies, and heroin to provide the insurgents with income. These are discussed in order from the least to most likely.

Timber and ivory

Early reports on the group suggested they were involved in the local timber and ivory trades. While this may have been true in their core areas of influence just inland from the Cabo Delgado coast, there has never been confirmation of their involvement in either poaching or ivory trafficking from Niassa Reserve, which underwent massive elephant poaching from 2009-2014 in particular. As mentioned above, poaching rates and the transport of ivory eastwards have since plummeted.

However, the insurgency does appear to be attempting to expand its activities into Niassa. Since at least 2011-2012, there have been verifiable reports of recruitment to a fundamentalist Islamic sect within remote communities in Niassa Reserve. In February 2020, a sect member originally from Niassa was back in the reserve actively recruiting poachers to join the insurgency.

Gold

There are also reports that insurgent groups pass through remote artisanal gold mining camps in Niassa Reserve. The regular buyers of Niassa gold are all known traffickers with no known links to the insurgency. However, the recent imposition of Covid-19 restrictions in Mozambique has reduced the number of gold buyers in the reserve.

There have been recent sightings from the air of new artisanal mining villages in Cabo Delgado on the western boundary of Quirimbas National Park, which is on the western edge of the insurgents' area of influence. While it was not possible to confirm any current connections between the insurgents and the gold market, this may be a risk to monitor in the future.

Rubies

Since at least 2011-2012, the group has recruited youth in and around Montepuez and has maintained a mosque and madrassa outside the town. After the February 2017 operations to break up illegal mining and smuggling gangs, the Thai and other foreign networks that had previously dominated this market did not return, at least not in large numbers.

There have been reports that some of the insurgents have filled the vacuum left by these traders and are buying rough rubies locally and selling them to traders who can sell them internationally, particularly traders with links to Pakistan (which has a small ruby market) and Thailand (which is the central ruby market). There are also reports that some of the foreign miners expelled from the Montepuez area may have joined the insurgents. This would provide a connection between the insurgents and the illegal ruby market.

Cross-border trade with Tanzania creates opportunities for insurgents to dispose of this contraband in international markets, as Dar es Salaam is a regional trading hub for both gemstones

and gold. Monitoring gold and gem markets to verify these reports further will be important in the coming months.

Drugs

The most reliable reports of the insurgents developing an illicit income stream are linked to the heroin trade. There is a significant range in street-level heroin prices across East and Southern Africa. The range in prices in northern Mozambique - far greater than found in any other research site - reflects the variance in heroin quality available in Cabo Delgado that we also found during qualitative fieldwork in the region.

We believe this spread suggests there are two distinct heroin markets: one of low-grade (and low-price) heroin smuggled from Tanzania to supply the local mining population, and another of offcuts from purer, large-scale heroin shipments smuggled through Cabo Delgado.

Law-enforcement sources report that the insurgents are establishing connections to the drug-trafficking networks that use the northern Cabo Delgado coast to land shipments from dhows. Since it is unlikely that they have the connections to procure heroin from suppliers in Afghanistan, they are most likely reaching agreement with existing trafficking networks to "tax" the trade (take payment for allowing it to operate).

This requires influence over key landing sites (such as Mocimboa de Praia and Quissanga), and key transport routes (such as the N380 north-south road inland from the coast, which is the only surfaced road in the region). There are anecdotal reports that known heroin traffickers in Mocimboa de Praia have not had any of their business infrastructure damaged in attacks and may have been making "donations" to the insurgents from early on.

Changing tactics

There has been a significant recent shift in the rhetoric and style of attacks committed by the Cabo Delgado insurgents. Rather than terrorising communities as in previous months, they are instead attacking state infrastructure and military bases. They have used their increasingly vocal media campaign to declare their intentions to create a caliphate. Analysts we interviewed suggest that part of the insurgents' aim is to re-establish control over areas historically controlled by Muslim sultanates along the Swahili coast. This historical claim would play into the caliphate narrative and the group's claim of legitimacy.

If this territorial control were achieved - along the coast from Quissanga to Palma as well as on the key inland transport corridor along the N380 road and the town of Macomia - this could vastly change the dynamics of the insurgency.

Control over key sea and land routes would allow the insurgents to "tax" legal and illicit economies in the region more systematically. While there may already be some protection of heroin trafficking and involvement in the gold and ruby trade, this could expand to include human smuggling, timber trafficking and possibly a share of the illegal wildlife trade.

The locations of recent attacks - which include coastal landing sites, transport hubs and the sites of natural resources - suggest that the insurgents may be targeting the illicit economy as a more substantial source of future revenue. Over time, control over the illicit economy may begin to shape the actions of the group more clearly.

Agencies

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 80 00--

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

WORD-FIT

3 LETTERS: MEN, MRS, NIT
4 LETTERS: JUNE, USER, LOUD, DOME, NEED, WAGE, RAIN
5 LETTERS: AURAL, ROUND, ACORN, COLOR, EVENS
6 LETTERS: ANGOLA, SPACES, MANENO, ANNUAL, T-SHIRT
8 LETTERS: MINERALS
7 LETTERS: SAMARIA
10 LETTERS: JOURNALIST

CROSSWORD

CLUES: Across

- an administration
- one less than ten
- insect infests human hair
- keep away from somebody
- no longer young
- express sorrow
- the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse
- things unacceptable
- a person appointed to select a team in a sport
- First man
- the possibility of suffering injury or harm

Down:

- a list of dishes in a restaurant
- magical power in Maori
- a state of feeling
- lie in a sheltered position
- at any time
- to heed
- enticed into sexual activity
- to tell someone firmly
- oedema
- a faintly blue gas obtained by the silent discharge of electricity in air
- not happy
- a boy

SOLUTIONS

WORD-FIT: MONEY, SPACES, MANENO, ANNUAL, T-SHIRT, MINERALS, SAMARIA, JOURNALIST

CROSSWORD: 1. ADMINISTRATION, 2. NINE, 3. LICE, 4. KEEP AWAY, 5. OLD, 6. GRIEVE, 7. MULE, 8. UNACCEPTABLE, 9. CAPTAIN, 10. FIRST MAN, 11. HAPPY, 12. BOY

BUSINESS

REVISIT

What happened to these 4 'Big Brother Africa' couples?

JOHANNESBURG

BASED on recent years Big Brother seems to have had a higher relationship success rate than The Bachelor, and the African spin-off certainly had no shortage of couch cuddles and steamy showers.

Running for nine seasons, some "showmances" fell apart when the cameras stopped rolling, while others stood the test of time. The original "social experiment" - let's take a look the Big Brother Africa couples who are still together, and those who just couldn't make it work.

MERYL SHIKWAMBANE AND MWISHO MWAMPAMBA

Meryl Shikwambane and Mwisho Mwampamba made Big Brother Africa history in 2010 when they became

the first couple of the franchise to get engaged on the show. While wedding bells rang over the loudspeakers in every room, certain contestants voiced their concern about the engagement, saying their relationship wouldn't last beyond the season.

But Meryl and Mwisho proved naysayers wrong when they tied the knot after leaving Big Brother house. It's unclear whether the couple, who have a beautiful family together, are still together - but we're still hopeful for a fairytale ending.

MANDLA HLATSHWAYO AND LEXI VAN NIEKERK (Big Brother Mzansi)

Mandla Hlatshwayo and Lexi Van Niekerk caused a stir with they shared a steamy shower during Big Brother's notorious shower hour in 2015, and



Meryl Shikwambane and Mwisho Mwampamba

the couple went on to keep the fire burning years after the show aired, having welcomed a child together in 2019.

The couple capitalised on their new-found fame, starring in their own reality show Mandla and Lexi, which documented the pair's life following their departure from the Big Brother house. The couple parted ways after

the arrival of their child, but Daily Sun reported in April that the they had since reconciled.

QUINN SIEBER AND JENNIFER MUSSANHANE

Quinn Sieber and Jennifer Mussanhane met on the fourth season of Big Brother Africa. The pair started dating after the show came to an

end, and married after having their first child together. The happy couple recently welcomed baby number two and couldn't be happier.

KEVIN CHUWANG PAM AND LIZ GUPTA

Kevin developed a crush on Liz during the filming of Big Brother Africa: Revolution, but their love

story blossomed after leaving the house.

Kevin proposed in 2010, and the couple tied the knot two years later. In 2018 the couple spoke to a Nigerian publication Premium Times about the "secret to their lasting marriage," but based on social media activity there is speculation that the once happy couple has split.

COMMITMENT

'Working in the wild during Covid-19 times'

NAIROBI

BRIAN Heath has lived in Kenya's wild longer than he has lived in its civilisation. The director of Seiya Limited and CEO of Mara Triangle says he likes to live in large open spaces and proximity to wildlife.

Even as the coronavirus pummels the world, Heath has stayed at his office tucked away at Mara Serena Safari Lodge, working nearly as normally as ever. "Contact is minimal out here. It's easier to observe social distancing in the wild," he says.

Heath isn't much of a conversationalist, which is sometimes mistaken for aloofness. Since he was 19, the Nakuru-born son of

a farmer has worked with cattle and wildlife in ranches and conservancies across Laikipia, Tana River and Marsabit counties. And now Narok, where he has been since 2001.

At Mara Triangle, he oversees daily park patrols, track maintenance and coordination of tour activities for the more than ten lodges and tented camps within and around the 510 square-kilometre conservancy. His is a uniquely demanding but thrilling job, he says.

A Master graduate of Animal Health and Reproduction from Edinburg University, Heath is a stickler for time. "I'm usually in the office at 6.45am. At 7.30, I meet my departmental heads for

daily briefings and to plan for the day."

By 4pm, he's out to go for a three-hour lone game drive. If nothing else, this allows him "to reflect." He returns to the office at 7pm to work until 8.30pm. Dinner and later a beer - his only indulgence - completes his day. Such has been routine for 50 years.

His outlook in life is couched in astonishing modesty. But what is it like to do the same thing for 50 years? Isn't this mind-numbing, I wonder. "The wild isn't like an office where your job is clearly defined. Out here every day is different and exciting. I've been fortunate to do what I like all my life."

Half a century later, his best asset is managing human resource. "I like to give people room to make their judgement. Micro-managing people limits their ability to think." By developing his team's skills, Heath says he has more time for himself. The father of a son, 40, and daughter, 38, he likes to fish for recreation. Every year, he and his friend travel to Kiwayu Island in Lamu for fishing expeditions.

From interactions with harmless animals to close shaves with dangerous ones, Heath has experienced the wild in all its shades. "After living with wildlife for many years, you understand their behaviour under different circumstances. You know when

to engage and when to back off," he notes.

If he were a different animal species, Heath would be a predator. "I'd be a lion." Why so? "Lions are socially-intriguing animals. They spend a big amount of their life sleeping. They live a happy, tough but short life." At 70, he has had five lifespans of the average lion. But he wants more. "I'd like to work for ten more years. At this age, I don't have much time left."

Any major adjustments in life? Heath says navigating the demands of technology has often thrown him off-balance. If he had his wish, life would be much slower. "Thirty years ago, communication was a process. You wrote a letter, for instance, and waited

for several days for feedback," he recalls. "Today, everything is instant. Someone sends you an e-mail and an hour later, they're reminding you about it." This fast life has made people more irresponsible, he argues. "Before, you'd handle your issues before turning to others for help."

Propositions have been made to convert Maasai Mara into a premium tour destination with fewer players to boost conservation efforts. Such a move would effectively push smaller tour operators out of business. Heath is a proponent of this controversial idea. Isn't this unfair, I ask. "What do we want the Mara to be? A mass destination at the expense of the environment or a premium

destination that's conscious of conservation?" he poses.

Heath says most investors in tourism are in the business as a side gig and that "their hearts are elsewhere." During the wildebeest migration between June and July, occupancy at the ecosystem surges to about 110 per cent, only to slump to between 20 and 30 per cent after the wonder. Heath likens this annual raid to a "feeding frenzy."

"The short high season is completely overrun. It leaves the park destroyed because of the high traffic. We must protect the Mara for posterity at all costs." To do this, he suggests spreading out visitation to ease pressure on the reserve.

FRUSTRATING

Foreign-trained doctors turn to the courts to be able to work in S. Africa

GAUTENG

MORE than 100 South African doctors who studied overseas are in limbo because the country's presiding medical board is allegedly preventing them from writing an exam that would allow them to practise in their home country.

As South Africa's fight against Covid-19 intensifies, News24 can reveal that a group of qualified and trained doctors are sitting at home without work. They have turned to the courts in the hope of getting an order to allow them to take the Health Professionals Council of SA (HPCSA) board exam, which would qualify them for internships at public hospitals.

In papers filed in the Gauteng High Court, 38 foreign-trained doctors allege that the HPCSA gave an assurance more than once that they would be able take the exam, only to later renege on the basis that the medical schools they studied at - in Romania, China and Guyana - are not "recognised" by the HPCSA. Doctors, who have been trained and qualified at foreign medical schools, have been battling with the council since at least 2018.

Memorandum

The organisation representing the doctors, South African Internationally Trained Health Professionals Association (SAITHPA), has

also written a memorandum to the Presidency and the Ministry of Health to ask them to investigate allegations of corruption, racism and victimisation faced by foreign-trained doctors.

SAITHPA claims that at least 175 foreign-trained doctors are without work because of various obstacles the HPCSA has allegedly put in their way. However, interviews News24 has done with affected doctors, who are part of the court case, as well as academics involved in internship programmes, suggest the number could be higher.

The memorandum to the Presidency also contains allegations that doctors who wrote a board exam in January are still waiting for their results. This situation is sure to cause a stir among the medical fraternity, which was recently criticised by the Department of Health for roping in Cuban doctors to aid the Covid-19 fight - an effort that apparently costs more than R400 million - while dozens of trained doctors stew at home.

Health Minister Zweli Mkhize defended the Cuban doctors' arrangement, saying they were merely here to supplement medical efforts and not to take jobs.

'Repeatedly failed'

The HPCSA has not responded to the allegations in court. The body was sent a detailed query, but did not respond for several days

before publication. The Department of Health referred News24 to the HPCSA, but said it was aware of "some South Africans who trained in some foreign countries but have repeatedly failed HPCSA board examinations."

"Government cannot risk employing persons who are not duly qualified," spokesperson Popo Maja said. The Presidency did not respond to a request for comment.

Court action

In court papers, Sarvashni Chetty, a doctor who graduated at the Texila American University in Guyana, alleges in an affidavit that 12 of the applicants had applied to write the board exam in 2019, but were unable to because the exam can only take 120 applicants.

On the back of this, the Legal Resources Centre (LRC), on behalf of 111 foreign-trained doctors, threatened the HPCSA with legal action if the doctors were not able to sit the exam. The HPCSA later allegedly allowed 60 of them to take the exam in January 2019, and the rest would take it in a slot in May that year.

But the council later allegedly reneged on this commitment for some who had applied for the board exam, on the basis that "the institution from which they obtained their basic medical degree was not evaluated by the relevant Medical and Dental Board previously."



Medical students and their parents at the meeting

This effectively left foreign-trained doctors in limbo, while the HPCSA would "review the curriculum offered at the universities that the applicants graduated from," court papers allege.

'Unanswered'

The affidavit then lists 14 times SAITHPA or doctors wrote to the HPCSA to furnish them with the details of their qualifications or to try to come to an understanding, or to place on record exactly which medical schools it did recognise. These

allegedly went unanswered. Eventually, on 16 August, 2019, the HPCSA allegedly gave its "assurance" that those who SAITHPA represented would write "the first available examination in 2020."

However, the following month, the HPCSA allegedly wrote to SAITHPA saying it was "unable to commit" to that arrangement. The other 37 applicants filed confirmatory affidavits of Chetty's allegations. Her affidavit says the situation has left her and her fellow applicants suffering "severe

emotional, financial and other prejudices."

'Invaluable in an emergency situation'

Meanwhile, the memorandum to the Presidency says results for a board exam that doctors took in January have still not been released, without a reason. "Consequently, graduates who qualified to register for internship in the mid-year cycle, were unable to do so," the letter reads. Dr Robert Ian Caldwell, a retired doctor who was involved with

foreign-trained medical students during his time at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's School of Clinical Medicine, said he had also been alerted about these results not being released.

Caldwell said even though passing this exam would only qualify the doctors to take on internships, they would still be useful during a crisis such as the one the country currently faces. "Even at the most junior level, they'd be invaluable at an emergency situation."

GAMBLING

Dh50 million to be won in Emirates Loto rollover

DUBAI

THE Emirates Loto draw will rollover to a whopping Dh50 million next week after the main cash prize went unclaimed again.

Three lucky winners walked away with Dh333,333 each in the third draw, drawn on Saturday

night, matching five out of six numbers. The winning jackpot numbers were 6, 17, 20, 27, 32 and 39. The draw has only been running for three weeks but the big jackpot has remained elusive to players. "We've seen player numbers increase by 20 to 30 per cent every week," said Paul Sebestyen, chief executive

of Emirates Loto.

However he believes the effect of Covid-19 on sales has been significant. "Naturally it hasn't been as great as we wanted because a good portion of the consumers haven't been able to go out to purchase our collectables in the retail environment," Sebestyen says.

"Most of our sales are being driven by people visiting our website and also going to, either, Google or the App Store and downloading our app." The Emirates Loto is a fatwa-approved, collectable scheme with the option to enter a weekly live draw. People can buy the collectable cards and then decide whether they wish to enter the

draw free of charge. Customers can also choose not to receive the card and donate a portion of the purchase price to charity.

The Emirates Loto is drawn live on a Saturday evening from a sound stage in Dubai's Studio City. It is streamed live on YouTube and Facebook. It uses the best global practices to ensure propriety and

transparency in the lottery process.

"We have an independent adjudicator oversee the choice of the balls and the machines that choose the numbers," said Nick Dutt, operations manager for Emirates Loto. Emirates Loto has three machines that choose the balls and two sets of balls, both the machine and the balls are chosen at random so the

likelihood of calculated impropriety is infinitesimal.

"We weigh every ball and check the sizes so that there can be no discrepancy. We then run five 'dummy draws' in the machine before the actual draw to ensure there is a random spread of numbers and balls," said Dutt.

OUTSTANDING

Kenyan DJs in Diaspora keep the party going amid curfews

NAIROBI

AT 10pm on a Friday, DeeJayAisher, a stage name for Philly Ojallah, hangs headphones around her neck, her fingers tuning buttons and knobs on her turntable. She dances a bit and introduces herself to her audience just as she does in nightclubs. Only that she is streaming the disco music live from her living room in Berlin, Germany to thousands of people watching from around the world.

As she scratches and spins the turntable, her crowd of about 14,000 viewers immediately starts sending in comments on the 254 DiasporaDJs Live Facebook page. This is an online platform with a following of 90,000 people and counting, where Kenyan disc jockeys (deejays) living in different parts of the world stream music live from their homes.

Some of Philly's 3,000 viewers type out song requests but most praise her, ("Wow! you have mad talent...Yours is on another Covid level. Your mix can cleanse our lungs from corona. That song is for those who haven't sent a tip")

In-between, she speaks over the music about the coronavirus pandemic, corrupt African leaders, and about God's unrelenting mercy during these tough times; messages that blend in perfectly to the tunes of her pre-recorded music. One month since it was formed, the online platform has lured over 800 deejays, playing from rumba to Christian music to 80s soul songs.

A majority are in the US, scattered in North Carolina, San Francisco, and Washington DC to Oklahoma. Others are based in Kenya, South Korea, Australia, United Arab Emirates, Belgium, South Africa, among other countries.

Music heals the soul and Philly knows this too well. She learnt how to deejay to fight the loneliness that comes with being in a foreign country. "I started deejaying as a distraction to draw me out of depressive thoughts. As I struggled to learn the machine, with the help of YouTube tutorials, my passion grew. I offered to play at a Kenyan pub in Germany during weekends for free to build confidence and fan base," says Philly who has been a deejay since 2016.

In the silence of the lockdowns and curfews, another deejay who is entertaining online crowds to the wee hours, depending on the time zones, is Nairobi-based Kaydee, who prefers to use his stage name. His mastery of the turntable is enviable and is reminiscent of the glorious days of Ogopa Deejays in the late 1990s. One of his fans termed him as the "godfather of deejays" when the virtual fans enquired.

"I think I underestimated my skills, in five minutes I had about 800 views," says Kaydee, who has been a deejay for 16 years now. His first two-hour show had over 9,300 comments and about 215 people had shared it, meaning that the numbers keep growing as more viewers replay it.

For Kaydee, all his Fridays to Sun-

days used to be fully booked before Covid-19. He has done gigs in over 20 countries and shared booths with renowned deejays, musicians, and producers but at no moment has his club crowds been as big as it was in the 254 DiasporaDJs Live.

"Those numbers? Not in clubs. The only time I've entertained such was in a concert," he says, adding the reason he pulls such crowds is because his music is unpredictable. "I play every genre but in an unexpected way since most of my mixes are blends. I have tried to perfect and combine turntablism and basic production where I flip instrumentals and acapella to create mash-ups and remixes. It requires understanding the equipment, embracing technology, and research," he says.

Deejay Sunny Sishtuki, a stage name for Sunny Chauhan, who lives in North Carolina, US, says his online crowd, of about 1,500 to 3,000 viewers for every one-hour show, is also nothing compared to those he has entertained in clubs.

"The replays of the live shows are way higher than even the real-time viewers and growing every day. This is definitely higher than playing in a club, most clubs do not have the capacity to have many people," says Sunny, a household name in four clubs in the US.

He grew up in Eldoret and music runs in his family. "I grew up in a musically inclined family. My dad used to be a deejay before I was born. I used to help my uncle's friend set up his



Philly Ojallah aka DJ Aisher, who lives in Berlin

sound system and lighting before his shows from as early as 11 years," says Sunny who has been deejaying in the US for 16 years.

The stay-at-home orders and closure of discotheques and night clubs have cancelled meetups but Sunny, now in his 30s, says deejays are bringing fun to people's living rooms or bedrooms, and giving them options to news-watching.

Brenda Beekay, a financial analyst and event organiser in the US, is one of the nine founders of the deejays online platform. She says the live shows entertain people 24/7 because they watch from different areas of the world with different time zones.

"Roughly, we have had 800 online shows so far," she says, adding that they started the 254 DiasporaDJs Live to support talents on one global platform and create an open entry market

in discovering new Kenyan acts across the globe. "I'm excited that we've helped unearth new talent globally," she says. "There are many dope underground DJs who have come to the limelight. Now clubs, event organisers and media houses ought to stop recycling the same deejays based on their names," adds Philly.

Invisible audience

"You do not have a dance floor to see how well you are entertaining the crowd. You go with your gut and make the most of it," says Sunny. John Wahome, who lives in Seoul, South Korea, works part-time as a deejay as he finalises his Master's degree in International Relations and Public Diplomacy.

He has never deejayed in a Kenyan club. He got his first online slot on a Wednesday at 11am, enabling him to use the platform to showcase his skills

and have a feel of how Kenyans keep the party going.

"Entertaining Kenyans across the globe is an honour but it dawned on you that they have differences in taste of music, time zones, age, and some prefer certain genres at particular times of day," says John who has been a DJ in Seoul for four years, out of the nine years he has lived there.

Does being a deejay in Seoul pay well? "The highest-paying are outdoor gigs, school festivals, city cultural festivals... You earn anything from \$500 (Sh50,000) to \$2,000 (Sh200,000) or more," says John.

Live stream deejaying will be a game-changer post-Covid-19. Kaydee notes that the pandemic has levelled the playing field for deejays globally and now a majority are competing afresh for opportunities in radio shows, live streams, and podcasts.

INNOVATIVE

Johannesburg couple host Zoom wedding complete with an MC, several DJs

JOHANNESBURG

JOHANNESBURG-based couple, Ianthe Sandnes and Izak van der Walt, took their nuptials to Zoom and celebrated with their friends and family around the world.

The couple had planned to have their wedding day on 25 April this year but due to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown had to postpone their big day. What could have remained a moment of grief and sadness the "nearly weds" took their would-be wedding ceremony to Zoom.

The eminent video teleconferencing software allowed the couple to have a virtual wedding with more than 120 of their friends and family connecting from different countries. But how did this Zoom wedding come about in the first place?

The couple had already decided to get together with their loved ones online but didn't anticipate such a large scale celebration. When Izak's boss suggested they do just a toast with their friends, it then snowballed into two MCs directing the festivities, a famed DJ making a music offering, two comedians entertaining with a three-tiered mini wedding cake completing the party, courtesy of Ianthe's mother.

After going through "all the stages of denial" about their physical wedding, Izak says they first tackled the decision of when they would postpone their wedding to and settled on 27 March 2021. "Hopefully that's a safer date," he says.

"We had planned for the original wedding to be about 100 guests in person but for the Zoom wedding we wanted to invite more people because now there were less restrictions," says Izak. The couple then decided to invite friends and family from far and wide because the technology made it easier to share the moment.

"Luckily our MC, Inge Coetzee, had already done a very small wedding gathering where she was the MC, for one of our good friends, ironically. She had a lot of ideas around how you manage a lot of people because it gets quite chaotic."

Guests called in from parts of North America including Canada and the U.S. in Washington DC, New York, Los Angeles, as well as Argentina, Amsterdam in Holland, Rome in Italy and Ianthe's bridesmaid whose work on a cruise ship was put on hold also joined in from the coast of Bali.

"She can't leave the cabin so for her, this was very special," says Izak. The guests all tuned in from their varied



Screenshot of Ianthe and Izak during their Zoom wedding party.

time zones, some at 8:00 and the bridesmaid mentioned above called in at 2:00 to attend the virtual ceremony that took place at 16:30 South African time.

Ianthe says, "All the bridesmaids and maid of honour said a speech, which was quite nice. So we kept to the usual wedding agenda - we kept the structure going which was very cool." The programme for the virtual wedding included games, speeches and time for an open dance floor, the ceremony lasted about two hours before the dance floor opened.

Izak adds that before the virtual wedding "the groomsmen surprised me with a Zoom bachelor party, where we all just got onto a call and had a few drinks and caught up." Adding to the festivities, Izak secretly organised for comedians Glen Biderman-Pam and Schalk Bezuidenhout to crash the wedding and provide some comic relief for the guests. The couple also treated the guests to a virtual dance floor and had DJ Half 'n Half play a set. "We danced virtually to our first song in front of everyone, so we were dancing to a computer - which was quite

weird - and the dancing went for another hour or so," says Izak.

"We had a photographer, which was myself and my bride-to-be, we had other photographers around the world taking screenshots, which was amazing. What's cool is that you can record Zoom, we had our wedding video unedited," he adds.

Ianthe says, "In general I think people were a bit down about being in their houses and not being able to go out in general so they had something to look forward to and dress up. All the guests dressed up beauti-

fully as if they were coming [physically] to the wedding and we also dressed up in a suit and a white dress, so we all looked the part."

The wedding call ended between 20:30 and 21:00. "I don't think it would replace the actual event, it was a completely different experience. It was incredible waking up the next day, it felt like the real thing. It was incredible to wake up with the feeling of 'last night we did something, last night we went out - it actually felt like that,'" says the bride.

ON-RECORD

Dame Judi Dench making history as the oldest British Vogue cover

LONDON OSCAR-WINNING 85-year old actress, Dame Judi Dench, has just secured a spot in British Vogue's list of historical milestones as the fashion arbiter's oldest cover star. Yet another feather in Edward Enninful's designer cap.

Sharing the cover on Instagram as he does with every new issue, British Vogue's Editor-in-Chief wrote the following about his June 2020 issue: "I can't tell you how pleased I am to see Dame Judi Dench, the unassailable queen of stage and screen, starring on her first Vogue cover at the age of 85 - making her the oldest cover star in the history of the magazine. For the June 2020 issue, she speaks to @GilesHattersley about everything from why retirement is out of the question to her enduring love of champagne, and brings a message of hope from her own quarantine in the English countryside."

An aside: There's something to be said about Edward's ability to move the needle for Vogue historically (across all their international editions) on several occasions, and doing so tastefully and gracefully. From Rihanna's September 2018 issue to Meghan Markle guest editing the September 2019 issue to Rihanna's durag cover - he inspires headlines with his bold editorial moves.

Judi's first-ever Vogue cover - which will be available for digital download on 7 May 2020 - was shot in March by Nick Knight before the world went into lockdown. Publications have since employed innovative measures by creating editorial spreads shot via FaceTime, creating their own CGI cover stars and even dropping a blank cover in response to Covid-19.

Styled in garments from the likes of Dolce & Gabbana, Giorgio Armani Privé, and custom-made Catherine Walker, Judi Dench speaks on the "art of ageing gracefully" among the other intrigues of her life, love and career. Why, of course! The star's age is what makes this June cover a moment worth talking about.

In the greater scheme of things, 85 is not too big a number, yet it is certainly an age to admire and one which rouses much amazement, gratitude and acclamation whether one is famous or not. At this age, Dame Judi is healthy, still working and as sophisticated as ever. Essentially, it shouldn't be surprising that an actress of her caliber is on the cover of any magazine, but given the industry's (at large - publishing, fashion, beauty, entertainment) ageist makings, we still make an event of seeing 'older' women receiving their roses while they can still smell them.

Headlines are made about women embracing their grey hair, laugh lines



Dame Judi Dench

and wrinkles, dating when they're older than a certain age, or working well into their 60s. But that's hardly any fault of the audience, but rather the manner in which sexist narratives around a woman's age - from as early as her 20s - are shaped and subsequently warped. So much so that it's not un-

usual to hear people exclaim "she looks so good for a 39 year old!"

Additionally, casting models in their teens has been an industry standard for decades until recently, and this has opened a conversation about older models cementing careers alongside fresh(er) faces. A 2018 W24 article investigated this phenomenon locally, noting that "modelling agencies in South Africa book plenty of models who are 40 years old or more for local modelling jobs, but these models have not been popular on fashion runways." Carl Heunis, a director at G3 Models, said there is more of a demand for curvy women than older models. "TV mostly books older models," said Carl.

In the article it was also further revealed that at Ice Models, older models are more popular when it comes to beauty related jobs involving perfumes and cosmetics. Operations director at Ice Model, Jane Celliers, said there have been some bookings for runway but more so for models in their late 30s but

not older. Lara White, a director at Boss Models, said older models do get booked when the job is targeted for their age group but that fashion jobs mostly go to models between 16 to 30 years old, depending on the model and the brand.

Conversely, there's a growing market for what I like to call the 'silver' darlings of social media - style muses over the age of 45 (and 45 isn't even old at all), who are living aspirational lives in chiffon and cashmere and seal their digital love letters to their followers with champagne kisses. Deborah Darling, Iris Apfel, Tracee Ellis Ross, Paula Sutton, Yasmin Furrnie, and 68-year-old Fenty model JoAni Johnson are just a few of the names who come to mind and who - similarly to Dame Judi Dench - will not let age be a deterrent to living fabulous lives even when they become octogenarians (as Iris has already proven). So to conclude with Yasmin Furrnie's Instagram bio: "Life is too short; do what you want, do what you like and never act your age!"

This is the most appropriate way to remind ourselves that besides the archaic pressure of the 'biological clock' (that medical advancements have since clapped back to) imposed on women, ageing isn't something we should fear. Age shouldn't be something women are shamed for by the younger guard in their respective fields or make us feel compelled to declare that we actually don't mind getting older as a means of diverting potential shaming and the aggressive marketing of anti-ageing products.

PROGRESSIVE

Elon Musk keeps attacking lockdowns and the US coronavirus death counts

NEW YORK

DURING Tesla's earnings call last week, Musk, the company's CEO, launched into an expletive-ridden tirade, describing the restrictions as an "outrage."

"I would call it forcibly imprisoning people in their homes against all their constitutional rights. That's my opinion, and breaking people's freedoms in ways that are horrible and wrong and not why people came to America or built this country - what the f-"; he said.

Then, in series of tweets, Musk suggested that US authorities are over-counting Covid-19 deaths, since the federal government classifies the deaths of coronavirus patients as Covid-19 deaths, regardless of any underlying health issues that may have contributed to their passing. Musk said that was "misleading to the public" and "needs to stop."

Of course, lockdown orders have hindered Tesla and SpaceX's abilities to build cars, spaceships, and rockets, and temporarily stymied progress toward Musk's ultimate goal - populating Mars. Tesla was forced to close its main US car factory in California, which poses a "serious risk" for the business, Musk said.

However, scientific research clearly shows such measures save lives by slowing the coronavirus' spread. What's more, data on excess deaths and frontline observations from funeral directors and emergency responders in New York City suggest that if anything, the US was at first undercounting deaths.

Counting the people killed by the coronavirus is no simple task, especially given that many with preexisting conditions are getting sick, lockdowns affect access to medical services, and there's still not enough diagnostic testing nationwide.

Given that, Dr. Deborah Birx, the response coordinator for the White House coronavirus task force, recently

confirmed that the US would count all coronavirus patient deaths as COVID-19 deaths, even though some countries don't ascribe to that protocol.

"There are other countries that if you had a pre-existing condition, and let's say the virus caused you to go to the ICU [intensive care unit] and then have a heart or kidney problem," she said during an April 7 news briefing. "Some countries are recording that as a heart issue or a kidney issue and not a COVID-19 death."

The US's rational for reporting those as COVID-19 deaths is straightforward and sensible: Having a comorbidity, or added risk, often greatly increases the chance a person with COVID-19 will die. Research also increasingly shows the disease impacts more than just our lungs. It can cause blood clots that may lead to strokes and require amputations, even in young, healthy patients. There's also mounting evidence the virus may harm organs like the heart, kidneys, and the nervous system.

Yet Musk slammed the inclusive approach, tweeting: "Classifying all deaths as corona even if corona didn't cause the death is simply a lie."

Too many excess deaths The pandemic's carnage is clear in excess deaths numbers, which compare current death rates to historic data.

Recent analyses by the New York Times and Financial Times lined up several years' worth of weekly death rates and compared them to 2020's weekly death rates. The difference between the two suggests the federal government - even with a wide scope of what counts as a Covid-19 death - is significantly under-counting.

Between March 8 and April 11 in New York City, for example, the New York Times reported there were 11,900 excess deaths yet only 10,261 confirmed Covid-19 deaths - a gap of 1,700. New York state (excluding the city) saw a similar gap, with 4,200 excess deaths and 2,425 confirmed Covid-19 deaths.



ISIDÍNGO MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM ITV

ITV PGM SCHEDULE table listing programs for Saturday 09 May, Sunday 10 May, Monday 11 May, Tuesday 12 May, Wednesday 13 May, Thursday 14 May, Friday 15 May, Saturday 16 May, and Sunday 17 May. Includes program names, times, and special features like 'CAPITAL' and 'CAPITAL WEEK 20 2020'.



Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk

WORLD

France to start 'very gradual' easing of lockdown from May 11 - Prime Minister

PARIS

FRANCE would start to ease restrictions on movement from next Monday through "a very gradual process" which would stretch over several weeks at least to avoid a resurgence of COVID-19, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe confirmed on Thursday.

"Following the data of the past few days, the gradual lifting of the confinement can be started on May 11. This is a new step in the fight against the epidemic," Philippe announced. "We must be very vigilant because an eventual resurgence of the virus will be very difficult for our country. That's why we opted for a progressive process," he stressed.

At a press conference alongside ministers of economy, health, transport, labor, interior affairs and education, Philippe added that the exit from

the lockdown would be differentiated and vary among regions.

"The good news is that we are able to validate deconfinement throughout the metropolitan territory.

The less good news is that certain departments (in the country) have worse results than expected," he said, adding that "the country is cut in two with the virus circulating more quickly in some regions."

On an updated color-coded map which classifies regions based on the virus spread and pressure on hospitals, 32 administrative departments are in red, including the northeastern region, and Ile-de-France, also known as Paris Region in the north-central part of France.

"In the Paris Region, the infection rate is falling slowly, but remains quite high, higher than we expected. That is why in these territories we will need to

be extra vigilant," said the prime minister.

In the zones with risks, people will be allowed to move freely but parks, gardens and secondary schools will remain shut.

Meanwhile, cafes, restaurants and secondary schools may reopen from early June in "green" regions. In the overseas territory of Mayotte, the government prolonged the lockdown as "infections are rising fast."

Next week, about one million children and 130,000 teachers will return to school. Some 400,000 companies representing 875,000 jobs will resume activity. Libraries, small museums may reopen while access to beaches could be allowed at the request of mayors.

Under the new rules, France maintains restrictions on public gatherings of over 10 people and keeps borders closed until further notice. Mask-wearing will be mandatory on public transport, while religious ceremonies will be permitted from June 1 if social distancing rules are respected.

"We are constantly looking for the right balance between the essential resumption of family, economic, cultural and social life and the necessary respect for all the precautionary measures to prevent the epidemic from starting again and protect the French people," Philippe

said.

The prime minister noted that a national lockdown could be re-imposed if the pace of the virus circulation accelerates again.

"In three weeks, at the end of May, we will know exactly where we are. If the number of infections stay low, we can move to a new phase. But, if they don't change, if they increase, we'll have to consider future confinement measure," he added.

As of Wednesday, France's death toll from the novel coronavirus reached 25,809, the fifth highest toll in the world behind the United States, Britain, Italy and Spain.

The number of patients in hospitals dropped by 792 to 23,983. The same downward trend was reported in intensive care units where 3,147 patients need life support, down by 283 for the 29th day in a row.

Xinhua



Prime Minister Edouard Philippe

US Senate upholds Trump veto of Iran war powers resolution

WASHINGTON

THE US Senate failed on Thursday to override President Donald Trump's veto of a resolution that would have reined in his ability to wage war against Iran by requiring him to obtain congressional authorization for military action.

The vote was 49-44 in favor of the resolution, but that fell short of the two-thirds majority, or 67 votes, needed to override a veto in the 100-member Senate.

The resolution, led by Democratic Senator Tim Kaine, had passed the Republican-led Senate and Democratic-led House of Representatives earlier this year with support from Democrats and Republicans despite Trump's opposition.

Trump vetoed it on Wednesday, calling it "very insulting" and accusing Democrats of pursuing the matter for political reasons, although the measure was introduced by some of Trump's fellow Republicans, as well as Democrats.

Kaine (pictured) responded by saying that Congress is doing its job by trying to assert its authority to weigh in on the use of military force.

"It is not a partisan effort. It was bipartisan from the very beginning," Kaine told reporters on a conference call before the vote.

"It was introduced to stop a rush to an unnecessary war," he said.

Trump also contended that, as commander in chief he needed to retain broad authority for military action against Iran. Trump withdrew the United States in 2018 from the international nuclear agreement with the Islamic Republic reached under his Democratic predecessor, Barack Obama, and has been waging a "maximum pressure" campaign against the Tehran government.

The war powers resolution was introduced weeks after Trump ordered a strike in January that killed top Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani at Baghdad's airport. The strike in Iraq raised fears of renewed conflict in the Middle East and frustrated members of Congress from both parties who said they were not sufficiently briefed on the decision.

It was the seventh veto of Trump's three-year-long presidency. None has been overridden. Trump's fellow Republicans, who hold a 53 to 47-seat majority in the Senate, rarely break with the president.

The measure would require Trump to remove US troops engaged in hostilities against Iran unless Congress declares war or passes a specific authorization for the use of military force.

It was the latest in a series of recent efforts by lawmakers from both parties - during Obama's presidency as well as under Trump - to wrest back Congress' constitutional right to declare war.

Agencies

Putin: Russia grateful to Austria for careful treatment of wartime burial

VIENNA

RUSSIA is grateful to the authorities and people of Austria for careful and respectful treatment of Soviet war memorials, Russian President Vladimir Putin said in his address broadcast by Austria's ORF channel on the 75th anniversary of liberation of Austria from Nazism.

"The Great Victory saved humanity. It paved way to rebuilding of the independent, dynamically developing Austria. Over 26,000 Soviet soldiers sacrificed their lives for its liberation.

There are over 200 military graves on the Austrian soil. We are grateful to the authorities and people of Austria for careful, respectful treatment of these memorials that are very important for us," Putin said.

According to the president, the memory of the fallen and of the war events, protection of truth and honoring of true heroes is more than just a common duty.

"This is a matter of conscience before the entire generation of victors. They sacrificed everything so that us, their heirs, would never know the tragedy of war. And now we must also do the best we can so that no one ever dares to wage a new one again. This is our responsibility before future generations," the president said.

Every year on May 8, Austria celebrates the anniversary of the end of World War II. A solemn event, the Festival of Joy, marks this occasion. It is organized by the Austrian Mauthausen Committee.

Following the 1938 Anschluss, Austria became a part of Nazi Germany. Restoration of its statehood began after its liberation from Nazis and creation of interim government on April 27, 1945.

Agencies

UN chief makes global appeal against COVID-19 hate speech

UNITED NATIONS

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres yesterday launched a global appeal to address and counter "the virus of hate" - hate speech related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"COVID-19 does not care who we are, where we live, what we believe or about any other distinction. We need every ounce of solidarity to tackle it together. Yet the pandemic continues to unleash a tsunami of hate and xenophobia, scapegoating and scare-mongering," said Guterres (pictured) in a video message.

Anti-foreigner sentiment has

surged online and in the streets. Anti-Semitic conspiracy theories have spread, and COVID-19-related anti-Muslim attacks have occurred. Migrants and refugees have been vilified as a source of the virus - and then denied access to medical treatment, he said.

With older persons among the most vulnerable, contemptible memes have emerged suggesting they are also the most expendable. And journalists, whistleblowers, health professionals, aid workers and human rights defenders are being targeted simply for doing their jobs, he said.

"We must act now to strengthen the immunity of our societies



against the virus of hate. That's why I'm appealing today for an all-out effort to end hate speech globally," noted the UN chief.

Guterres called on political leaders to show solidarity with all members of their societies and

build and reinforce social cohesion. He called on educational institutions to focus on digital literacy at a time when billions of young people are online - and when extremists are seeking to prey on captive and potentially despairing

Xinhua

Tunisia satisfied with Tunisia-China cooperation in fighting COVID-19 - minister

TUNIS

TUNISIAN Minister of Health Abdellatif Mekki on Thursday expressed satisfaction with Tunisia's cooperation with China in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tunisia-China cooperation "was one of Tunisia's best experiences in terms of cooperation with foreign countries to cope with the spread of the virus," Mekki (pictured) told Xinhua in an interview at the headquarters of Tunisian Health Ministry.

"This pandemic threatens not only one country, but also all humanity," Mekki said, adding that Tunisia has cooperated with many countries through the World Health Organization to contain the spread of the virus.

The Tunisia-China cooperation in the fight against the novel coronavirus has been done "in many forms including the scientific level, where we have recently organized several video-conferences between Tunisian and Chinese experts, and the commercial level with the acquisition of medical supplies," the minister said. "We are satisfied with this cooperation, and we hope that it will develop further in the future," he said.

Mekki stressed that the Tunisia-China medical cooperation "is not occasional, but dates back to decades."

China dispatched the first medical mission to Tunisia in 1973, and since then, 1,000 Chinese doctors have been sent to Tunisia to help the country in the fields including



general surgery, gynecology, obstetrics, radiography, pediatrics, orthopedics, cardiology and acupuncture, the minister noted. The Chinese medical teams have provided health screening services for more than 5.7 million Tunisian pa-

tients, medical treatment for over 880,000 patients in Tunisian hospitals, and 320,000 surgical interventions, he added.

On Tunisia's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the minister said that his country has controlled "the first wave of the spread of the coronavirus." "Tunisia is among the countries that have recorded a low number of confirmed cases of COVID-19," Mekki said. On Wednesday, Tunisia reported three new COVID-19 cases, bringing the total number of the infections in the country to 1,025.

"In order to confront this pandemic, Tunisia took early preventive measures on the health and socio-economic levels," Mekki said.

However, he warned of a possible second wave of the virus' spread in

Tunisia.

"Despite the positive results that we have recorded, we must remain wary of the possibility of a second wave, especially after the start of partial lifting of lockdown which allows hundreds of thousands of workers and employees to return to work in the public and private sectors," said Mekki.

Amid the improvement of the situation, Tunisia started on May 4 partial lifting of the lockdown, which includes three stages, from May 4 to 24, from May 24 to June 4, and from June 4 to 14.

On April 29, the Tunisian government listed the sectors involved in the first phase of the partial lifting of lockdown as transportation, health, food, self-employment, artisans and services.

Xinhua

China unveils name, logo of first Mars exploration mission

CHINA officially unveiled the name and logo of the country's first Mars exploration mission on April 24, China's Space Day.

All of China's planetary exploration missions in the future will be named the Tianwen series, with the first Mars exploration mission being Tianwen-1.

The name comes from the long poem "Tianwen", meaning Questions to Heaven, written by Qu Yuan (about 340-278 BC), one of the greatest poets of ancient China. It signifies the Chinese nation's perseverance in pursuing truth and science and exploring nature and the universe. It also signals the endless pursuit of science and innovation.

Since China launched a global campaign to solicit names and logos of the first Mars exploration task on August 2016, 35,912

names and 7,439 logos have been submitted. After expert review and online voting, the name "Tianwen" ranked first with about 317,000 votes.

The logo of the mission features the solar system and the eight planets that travel around the Sun, signifying the colorful universe and a rich variety of scientific discoveries. The shape of the logo resembles the letter C, standing for China, international cooperation and the capacity of space exploration. It carries China's spirit of open cooperation in aerospace development.

Experts introduced that China's planetary exploration missions will all adopt the "C"-shaped logo and the name "Tianwen," with the English name of the planet to be explored placed under the logo.

As a planet in the solar system, the Mars



has a minimum distance of more than 50 million kilometers from the Earth, and the farthest apart they can be is about 400 million kilometers. Out of curiosity in the outer space and extraterrestrial life, as well

as the similarities between Mars and the Earth in such areas as the environment, human beings have always been interested in exploring Mars.

Experts say that studying Mars can bring a lot of inspiration to mankind. Mars is the most similar planet in the solar system to the Earth regarding environment. It has not only an atmosphere, but also suitable temperatures, as well as a similar rotation period to that of the Earth. Therefore, studying the similarities and differences between the two planets and taking them as references for one another is a basic research of great value.

An article published on foreign media claimed that scientists found evidence of the existence of liquid water under the south polar ice cap of Mars. This discovery

once again ignited people's enthusiasm for exploring the Red Planet.

Scientists believe that studying the long-term evolution of Mars' magnetic field, the evolution of Mars' atmosphere and climate, the Martian geomorphology, and regionalized research of the planet is of great scientific significance.

Experts introduced that subject to movement of the Earth and Mars and based on the capabilities of the existing carrier rockets, the opportunity to launch a Mars probe at a relatively lower cost comes every 26 months. Mars exploration can be called a world's frontier scientific and technological innovation activity.

China plans to launch the first Mars probe in 2020, aiming to complete orbiting, landing and roving, carry out global

and comprehensive exploration of Mars, and conduct detailed survey of key areas on the surface of the Mars.

China's first Mars exploration mission is a complicated process that requires a wide range of technologies and plentiful key links, thus posing huge challenges.

For example, compared with the 380,000 kilometers between the Earth and the moon, the Earth-Mars distance is much farther, placing a huge test for the aircraft's communication system for tracking, telemetry and command.

It takes the probe about 7 months to fly to Mars, but landing on the planet takes only about seven minutes. Given the Mars' gravity, which is only 1/3 that of the Earth, safe landing will be a difficult and challenging task.

People's Daily



A view of 5G base stations built by China Mobile at Mount Qomolangma. Photo: Courtesy of China Mobile

5G rollout at Mount Qomolangma marks a milestone of China's telecom construction

THE peak of Mount Qomolangma (Mount Everest), the world's highest point at 8,848 meters above sea level, is expected to be covered by 5G signals on Saturday, according to Chinese telecom operators, marking a significant step in China's 5G capability.

China Mobile, the world's largest telecom operator by the number of subscribers, and Huawei jointly opened three 5G stations at Mount Qomolangma's base and transition camps on April 19, at altitudes of 5,300 meters and 5,800 meters, respectively, a spokesperson of China Mobile told the Global Times. The download speed of the 5G network is 1 gigabyte per second.

Another two 5G stations are expected to be completed on Saturday at the 6,500-meter-high advance camp, which will cover the summit of Qomolangma. These stations, based on non-standalone and standalone networks, will be the world's highest installed 5G base stations.

The 5G Active Antenna Unit stations are supplied by Huawei and are highly concentrated, small and lightweight, which significantly reduces the difficulty of installing them on Mount Qomolangma, according to the spokesperson. She added that the construction of the stations on the world's tallest mountain has posed challenges to Chinese engineers.

"As the base camps of Mount Qomolangma are among national natural reserves, it is difficult to bring materials to that elevation," the spokesperson said, noting that in order to protect the natural environment, no excavation is allowed in the mountain's core area. Construction workers are laying hardened cable in a way that brings minimal harm to the surrounding environment.

China Mobile has not disclosed the cost of building the 5G base stations, but industry insiders estimate that installing one 5G base station on Mount Qomolangma could cost 1 million yuan (\$140,000), compared with an average of around 30,000-40,000 yuan in major Chinese cities.

"We call it 'mission impossible' because the challenges are formidable. How can we ensure a stable 5G network? How can we guarantee electricity supply for 5G stations in extreme weather conditions? How can we ensure cables don't snap at -20 C?" Xiang Ligang, a veteran telecoms industry analyst in Beijing, told the Global Times.

By overcoming these difficulties and building the world's highest 5G base stations, China has shown the world its leading 5G technology and capacity, analysts said. "This marks a milestone in China's 5G rollout," Xiang stressed.

In addition to China Mobile, China Telecom has announced that it built 5G base stations at the Qomolangma base camp, at an altitude of 5,145.3 meters on April 13. The tested upload and download speeds were 700 Mbps (megabytes per second) and 223Mbps, respectively. China Unicom has also announced in recent days that it has built two 5G base stations on Mount Qomolangma, which will provide full 5G coverage for the mountain's observation deck and No.1 base camp.

Industry observers said that building the 5G stations on Mount Qomolangma will help scientific investigation, meteorological monitoring, and mountaineering communication and rescue.

"Sooner or later, we may be able to see 5G-powered live broadcasts of travelers conquering the peak," Xiang said.

Global Times

Melinda Gates gives US administration 'D-minus' for coronavirus response

SAN FRANCISCO

MELINDA Gates on Thursday gave a mark of "D-minus" for the lack of national coordination when asked to grade the U.S. administration's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We need leadership at the national level. We lost two months almost now in terms of our national response."

Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, said in an interview with U.S. news outlet Politico. "In terms of our national

response, we have governors who are stepping up.

Luckily. But now we have fifty different homegrown state solutions instead of a national response," Gates was quoted as saying.

"If we were doing the things that the exemplar countries are doing, like Germany, we would be testing, first, health care workers and then the most vulnerable, and you'd be doing contact tracing," she said.

"And we would be able to start thinking about slowly reopening places in society in safe and healthy ways.

But we have a lack of a coordinated effort. That's just the truth, across the United States," she added.

We should be putting far more money into testing and tracing ... to where we can quarantine in the United States," she noted.

Pointing to a huge need at the global level "for a vaccine, for medicines, for testing," Gates said "more is needed for the international response, which the U.S. really has been lacking in its response completely on the international front."

Xinhua

Black adults four times more likely to die from COVID-19 than whites in UK- ONS

LONDON

BLACK adults are more than four times as likely to die from a COVID-19 related death than white people in Britain, according to a provisional analysis by the British Office for National Statistics (ONS) released Thursday.

When taking age into account, black males are 4.2 times more likely to die from deaths that are COVID-19 related and black females 4.3 times more likely than their white counterparts in the country, said the ONS. The latest figures were published by the ONS one day after Britain became the first country in Europe to pass 30,000 confirmed coronavirus deaths. A total of 30,615 people have died in hospitals, care homes and the wider community after testing positive for the virus, according to the latest official figures released Thursday.

VULNERABLE MINORITY

Data published by the ONS found that ethnic minority groups were more vulnerable to COVID-19. Researchers said the difference in virus mortality is partly due to socio-economic disadvantages and other circumstances.

Shadow Justice Secretary David Lammy responded to the figures by calling for an urgent investigation into the disproportionate number of deaths. "It is urgent the causes of this disproportionality are investigated," he tweeted. "Action must be taken to protect black men and women -- as well as people from all backgrounds -- from the virus."

The ONS report shows people of Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian and mixed ethnicity had statistically significant raised risk of death compared with the white population amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The figures, which were adjusted for age, suggest that people from all ethnic minority groups -- except women with Chinese ethnicity -- are at greater risk of dying from the disease than white groups.

The ONS analysts also found that men of Bangladeshi/Pakistani ethnicity were 3.6 times more likely to die with the virus than white men, with the equivalent figure for Bangladeshi/Pakistani females set at 3.4. Men of Indian ethnicity were found to be 2.4 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than white men, while the figure for women of Indian ethnicity is slightly higher, at 2.7.

For people of Chinese ethnicity, the



Underlying health conditions play a role in the disproportionate number of deaths, the ONS said

team found an increased risk among men but not women: men were 1.9 times more likely to die from COVID-19, while the figure for women was 1.2. The ONS used data on death registrations up to April 17, combined with 2011 Census records, to model the impact of the virus on different ethnic groups. It also looked at COVID-19 deaths between March 2 and April 10 in England.

COMPLEX ISSUE

Commenting on the findings, Tim Elwell-Sutton, assistant director of strategic partnerships at the Health Foundation, said, "This is a complex issue and the exact reasons why black and minority ethnic groups are being disproportionately impacted by the virus are still unknown but existing social inequalities and structural discrimination in British society are likely to be playing a significant role," the London-based Evening Standard newspaper reported.

"Today's data shows some of the impact of socioeconomic disadvantage, as well as region and health status, but even after taking these things into account, black and minority ethnic groups are still at higher risk," he was quoted as saying. "Some black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to have existing health conditions compared to the white population and may therefore be more likely to experience worse symptoms if they become infected with the virus," he told the newspaper.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the Department of Health and Social Care also commented on the data. "We're aware that this virus has sadly appeared

to have a disproportionate effect on people from BAME (Black, Asian, and minority ethnic) backgrounds," the spokesperson said. "It is critical we find out which groups are most at risk so we can take the right steps to protect them and minimise their risk," said the spokesperson.

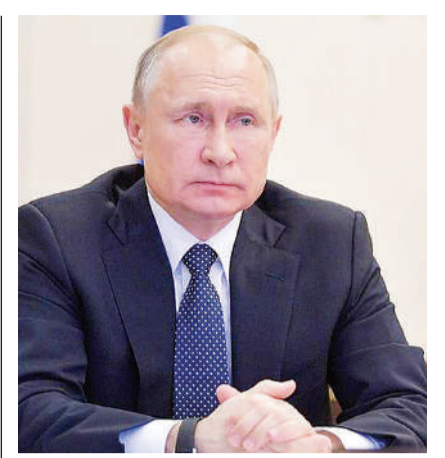
UNEXPLAINED REASONS

As ethnicity is not recorded on death certificates, the ONS used the data linked to the 2011 Census which included self-reported ethnicity. The ONS said that the report has suggested that the difference between death risks among various ethnic groups is partly due to socio-economic disadvantage and other circumstances, but some of the reasons remain unexplained.

According to the ONS, once further factors were taken into account, including socio-demographic and self-reported health and disability factors, the differences between black and white people narrowed but were still stark. The risk of a COVID-19-related death for black men and women was then 1.9 times more likely than the white population. Men in the Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic group were 1.8 times more likely to have a COVID-19-related death than white males, with the figure being 1.6 times for women.

The ONS acknowledged that because its analysis of population characteristics was linked to the 2011 Census, it may not accurately reflect the current circumstances in 2020. The differences in the risk of dying with the virus could be driven by factors not included in its model, it said.

Xinhua



Putin, Merkel congratulate each other on anniversary of Victory over Nazism

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Angela Merkel congratulated each other on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Europe and the world from Nazism in a telephone conversation, the Kremlin press service reported yesterday.

"Vladimir Putin (pictured) and Angela Merkel exchanged congratulations on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Europe and the world from Nazism," the press service said.

"[They] highlighted the importance of preserving the historical memory of tragic events of those years. In particular, they were confident that both countries would never forget those German patriots who selflessly fought against the Nazi regime."

German government spokesman Steffen Seibert commented on the outcomes of the meeting that the sides shared the opinion that it's important to preserve the memory of World War II forever.

"Both [leaders] have honored the memory of millions of victims and remembered the immeasurable sufferings that the war unleashed by Nazi Germany had led to," Seibert said.

Merkel and Putin believe that "the memory of the war and its horrors must be preserved for all time," he added.

The leaders confirmed their intention to advance bilateral relations in a constructive manner, the Kremlin press service reports.

"It was underlined that today Russia and Germany are partners in addressing many current international problems. The intention to advance bilateral relations in a constructive manner was confirmed," the statement reads.

In exchanging opinions about the coronavirus pandemic developments, Putin and Merkel "expressed an intention to provide mutual assistance and continue close cooperation on infection spread prevention established earlier," the Kremlin added.

Agencies

HONG KONG

NOVEL coronavirus (COVID-19) was found to be more effective than Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) in infecting human airways and eyes, according to the faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong that made the results public on Friday.

Michael Chan Chi-wai, associate professor of the university's School of

COVID-19 'more infectious via airways, eyes than SARS'

Public Health, and his research team compared the infection of COVID-19, SARS-CoV and the influenza viruses such as H5N1 and H1N1 using human upper respiratory tract and eye tissues in a Biological Safety Level-3 laboratory.

The results showed that COVID-19

is much more efficient in infecting the human conjunctiva and the upper respiratory airways than SARS-CoV, and its level of infection is comparable to what is observed in the 2009 pandemic H1N1.

Taken together, this explains the higher transmissibility of the COVID-19

pandemic than that of SARS-CoV.

"This study also highlights the fact that eyes may be an important route of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) human infection," Chan said.

In a previous study, the research team discovered that COVID-19 can remain alive for a few days on smooth

surfaces such as stainless steel, glass and plastic.

The new finding highlighted the possibility that infectious virus can be spread from such contaminated surfaces by hands, when people touch the surfaces and rub their eyes afterwards.

The finding implicated that it is vital

Xinhua

Internet Plus strategy accelerates recovery of Hubei's economy

MAJOR Chinese e-commerce platforms are now assisting Hubei province, former epicenter of the novel coronavirus pneumonia, to expand sales channels of its agricultural products and groceries, contributing to the recovery of the province's economy and work resumption of its enterprises.

"Hubei sections" are something that major online marketplaces have been trying to promote recently, where the province's products are presented to consumers in just clicks.

For instance, over 20,000 kinds of farm produce from 50 places of Hubei have been put onto shelves on the "Hubei section" of Taobao, an e-commerce platform under Alibaba.

According to the platform, it will hold more than 100 promotional activities for Hubei's agricultural products between April and June.

China's fast-growing online group discounter Pinduoduo also contributed its efforts to helping Hubei's economy.

Through cooperation with Hubei Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, it launched an exclusive collection of Hubei's products on its mobile application, the first of its kind set up by the e-commerce giant.

Pinduoduo's rival JD.com launched an online activity, distributing 100 million yuan of coupons to encourage the customers to "buy out" the products from

the province.

Besides, livestream marketing is also applied to alleviate Hubei's stagnant sales of farm produce. News anchors, influencers, and even heads of cities and counties in the province joined livestream shows and advertised Hubei specialties.

It is reported that Douyin, a popular Chinese short-video app, has planned 13 livestreaming shows for 13 prefectures and cities of Hubei to promote their agricultural products, food, and consumer goods. The activities will be joined by the mayors of all the 13 places.

According to statistics, as of April 17, major e-commerce platforms had sold a total of 796,000

tons of agricultural products from Hubei province and witnessed 12.8 million online transactions.

Major Chinese internet companies are also "fast-forwarding" Hubei's economy with technological support.

Pledging to make it easier for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to advertise their products and help Hubei with "influencer economy", Douyin exempted certification fees for Hubei enterprises and offered free online marketing courses for them. It also adopted measures to support livestream hosts and planners.

Suning Cloud Store recently provided pairing assistance for nearly 200 of its franchised stores

in Hubei, raising subsidies for the latter. JD.com announced recently that it will invest more than 6 billion yuan (\$849 million) in Hubei in the next three years, in a bid to help boost the economic recovery and development of local SMEs.

The e-commerce giant will render full support to Hubei to build new infrastructure, propel the upgrading of the logistics industry and help sell local agricultural products to consumers across the nation.

"Alibaba is willing to give full play to its advantages in digital technology and commerce, integrating the capabilities of the whole platform to help the provincial capital Wuhan in epidemic

prevention and control, economic recovery and enterprise services, and promote the overall recovery of consumption, manufacturing, as well as domestic and foreign trade as soon as possible," said Daniel Zhang, chairman and CEO of Alibaba Group.

"In the past 70 days, more than 18 million people have posted videos to cheer up Hubei and Wuhan on Douyin.

Now, we hope to take more concrete actions to help the optimistic, positive and brave people of Hubei and accelerate the economic recovery of the province," said Zhang Nan, CEO of Douyin.

Industry insiders pointed out that the Internet Plus strategy has revitalized Hubei's economy.

The Internet has given full play to its advantages in epidemic prevention and control, not only reducing human contacts, but also stabilizing the economy and facilitating development. It has also played a big role in facilitating the people and benefiting enterprises.

Thanks to the internet sector, Hubei's containment efforts and economic development have both been guaranteed.

The Internet economy has unlimited potential for development. It should seize the opportunity, as well as make active exploration and steady progress, so as to bring dynamic power to Hubei's economic recovery.

People's Daily

The Guardian

SPORT



Virat Kohli

India ready for quarantine in Australia to help tour proceed – official

SYDNEY

INDIA captain Virat Kohli and his team mates would be ready to spend two weeks in quarantine in Australia if that helped the tour go ahead as planned later this year, a top official of the Indian board has said.

A cash-strapped Cricket Australia (CA) is banking heavily on the series, reportedly worth A\$300 million (\$195 million), to help it cope with an acute financial crisis triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) treasurer Arun Dhumal offered encouraging words, saying India cricketers would be willing to isolate themselves before playing four tests and three one-day internationals in December and January.

"There is no choice - everyone will have to do that. You would want to resume the cricket," Dhumal told the Sydney Morning Herald.

The boards have been discussing the possibility of a fifth test but Dhumal felt playing extra limited-overs matches would make more financial sense.

"If there is a window available it would be up to the boards to decide whether they wanted to go for a test match or maybe two ODIs or maybe two

T20s.

"Given the revenue loss they will have on account of lockdown, post-lockdown they will want to have revenue and revenue most likely will come from ODIs or T20s much more than a test match."

Dhumal was less optimistic about the preceding Twenty20 World Cup and did not fancy a flagship tournament in Australia featuring players who are still rusty as they emerge from the lockdown.

"Would you want to be without training for that long and straight away go and play (the) World Cup?" he said.

"That is a call every board has to take. It seems to be difficult."

The BCCI has had to indefinitely postpone its own cash-cow Indian Premier League (IPL) and Dhumal said an alternative window for the tournament was yet to be identified.

"Once things get clear, then only will we be able to go back to the drawing board and think about re-starting cricket."

Neither Dhumal nor BCCI president Sourav Ganguly was immediately available to elaborate when Reuters contacted them. (\$1 = 1.5316 Australian dollars)

REUTERS

Athletes could be particularly vulnerable to serious COVID-19 symptoms, says union

BERN

PROFESSIONAL athletes could be particularly vulnerable to falling seriously ill with the new coronavirus, the head of a global union representing them told Reuters on Thursday.

Brendan Schwab, the executive director of the World Players' Association, added that some players were being asked to sign away rights that would normally give them legal and financial protection should they fall ill.

"We have seen some research that athletes may be particularly vulnerable to serious symptoms," said Schwab, whose union represents around 85,000 athletes, including many who play in the NBA, MLB, NHL, NFL, rugby, European soccer and Australian Rules football. "The virus may get deep into the lungs, it is a virus that can cause severe damage not only to the lungs but other organs and athletes need to be at a very high level of health and fitness in order to be able to preserve their careers."

Schwab said that while players were willing to take a calculated risk to resume their sporting careers, since social distancing rules cannot be adhered to in most sports, it would not be at any cost. "We are concerned that some sports bodies are trying to place the economic and legal risk of contracting the disease on to players and that is something which we think should not be tolerated," he said.

Schwab said that if players signed away their rights, they could be denied "the basic economic

and legal protection which should go along with being injured or otherwise ill in the ordinary course of work."

He added that, by taking part in contact sports, the "players themselves are being asked to do something which is inherently risky and inherently contrary to all of the health information that is being given."

"Player health and safety should be not be something which is negotiable because of the economic pressure sport is under at the moment," he added.

Schwab said the widespread testing was a key to ensuring elite sport could take place but athletes did not want it to be carried out at the expense of the general public.

"The players are making it very clear that they don't want to have a high level of testing if that is going to place the public health effort in jeopardy," he said.

Sports competitions which restart early, such as Germany's Bundesliga, had a special responsibility.

"We believe that those sports who want to try and go first, they do try and set the very best practices," he said.

"We were very impressed by the comments of Bayern Munich and Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer who was saying that, yes this is a leadership example, we as players have to step up to the mark. And, when it comes to health and safety, the leagues and the governing bodies need to do the same."

REUTERS

The NBA is proceeding with extreme caution

By TIM REYNOLDS

THE NBA says some players can voluntarily return to their team practice facilities starting Friday, with some very specific conditions and only in places where local and state governments have signed off on such openings.

It's unclear how many players will be back on the floor Friday when the league ban gets lifted. Miami is allowed to open its doors for the first time in six weeks but won't until at least Monday while it works out certain logistical details. Orlando isn't going to welcome players back immediately either. Same goes for Utah, the first NBA team to deal with the coronavirus after Rudy Gobert tested positive March 11 and the league shut down almost immediately. And most teams aren't allowed to open yet to because of local rules.

Basketball hasn't been played in two months and the league, the teams and the players still seem to have a universal desire to get back to work, finish this season and crown a champion. But, perhaps mindful of challenges other leagues have faced in their efforts to resume play amid a coronavirus pandemic that has shut down the sports world, the NBA seems to be moving with extreme caution.

"The biggest goal is to have the confidence of the players and the staff that they can enter the facility safely," Utah general manager Dennis Lindsey said.

Simultaneously, everybody wants to play, and everybody wonders if it's safe to play. It's like all parties involved know that a major misstep now could doom any realistic chance of playing anytime in the next few months.

"Our task force at the league is studying how do we get back to playing basketball again, following the data, looking at every possible model," Magic CEO Alex Martins said this week while addressing an Orlando-area economic forum.

And opening the practice courts is only Phase One.

Phase Two, who knows when that will come. It's not imminent.

Games are not close. Getting players back into facilities is not a precursor to games being played,



In this Feb. 5, 2020, file photo, Denver Nuggets guard Jamal Murray arrives at the Vivint Smart Home Arena before the start of their NBA basketball game against the Utah Jazz in Salt Lake City. As inclined, NBA teams like Miami, Orlando and Utah could all be back in the gym for voluntary workouts in small groups starting Friday, May 8, when the league ban on such things expires. (AP)

it's more about keeping them out of public gyms and playgrounds that are starting to reopen. Positive tests during individual training or practices could delay or destroy plans for games.

There are some reasons for hope. The NBA is still working toward a plan to test players if the season resumes. It has exchanged data with leagues across the world, and there have been some success stories. Baseball is being played again in South Korea. MLS teams returned to fields Wednesday for workouts with restrictions. Germany's top soccer league has allowed players to return to training facilities, even though some staff and players have tested positive.

It's the NBA's turn to start seeing where it stands.

"There's been this unprecedented collaboration and communication among scientists across the world right now," said Dr. John DiFiore, the NBA's Director of Sports Medicine. "What's going on sports medicine sort of parallels that at a much different level of course. But there is an awful lot of that going on across the world right now. It's at least daily

communication in one way, shape or another with colleagues across the world in all these different leagues, because we're all learning from each other."

The rules that NBA teams will have to adhere to when they resume even the voluntary workouts are like none previously put in place. A 12-foot buffer between everyone, one player per basket, one ball per basket, no more than four players in the facility at once. Everyone must wear masks and gloves, the lone exception being players while they work out. Every player must undergo cardiac screening before resuming voluntary workouts.

Spalding, which makes NBA basketballs, has even developed a plan that has been sent to teams for how to clean the balls after workouts: wipe them down with a solution made from a quarter-teaspoon of dish soap like Dawn mixed with a gallon of water, then further wipe them down with just water, allow them to air dry, then spray the balls with a disinfectant.

"We're all analyzing information and talking through what-ifs and trying to learn little details that

could make a difference," DiFiore said. "It's literally a constant, daily process."

Cleveland is among the teams planning to open its doors to players Friday, along with Portland and Denver. By next week, a few teams will have players back at work and getting shots up again.

"We will be opening up in a soft opening ... at some point, soon," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said in a chat on the NBA's Twitter channel Wednesday night. "There's a flickering of a light that we're all feeling right now, but I think it's also important that we all stay extremely aware and vigilant as we take these incremental steps forward."

If all goes right, most teams may be back within two or three weeks. Maybe in June, they can practice. Maybe in July, the season can resume. There are countless hurdles to clear by then, the testing issue foremost among them. It is far from certain that the season gets saved.

But getting back onto the court is a good first step, even if the NBA is taking baby steps on the way there.

AP

Woods, Mickelson, Manning and Brady showdown set for May 24

NEW YORK

THE coronavirus relief golf match featuring Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Super Bowl-winning quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton Manning will be on May 24 at Medalist Golf Club in Hobe Sound, Florida, WarnerMedia's Turner Sports said on Thursday.

The sanctioned PGA Tour event, which is being dubbed The Match: Champions for Charity, will begin at 3 pm ET (1900 GMT) and the four golfers will come together to make a charitable donation of \$10 million to benefit COVID-19 relief.

WarnerMedia is banking on a matchup featuring two of the most famous golfers of their era alongside two of the all-time greatest NFL quarterbacks competing on the nation's Memorial Day holiday weekend to be a welcome sight for sports-starved fans.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unimaginable tragedy and heartbreak," Jeff Zucker, chairman of WarnerMedia News and Sports, said in a news release.

"We're hopeful this event and platform will help raise meaningful funding for COVID-19 relief, while also providing a source of brief distraction and entertainment for all sports fans."

The competition, which is being held 2 1/2 weeks before the PGA Tour plans to resume its season, will feature 15-times major champion Woods and Manning up against five-times major winner Mickelson and Brady in Team Match Play.

The golfers will play fourballs on the front nine and a modified alternate shot format on the back nine, where each competitor tees off and then the team plays alternate shot from the selected



In this April 3, 2018, file photo, Tiger Woods, left, and Phil Mickelson share a laugh on the 11th tee box while playing a practice round for the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga. The next match involving Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson involves a \$10 million donation for COVID-19 relief efforts, along with plenty of bragging rights in a star-powered foursome May 24 at Medalist Golf Club. Turner Sports announced more details Thursday, May 7, 2020, for "The Match: Champions for Charity," a televised match between Woods and Peyton Manning against Mickelson and Tom Brady. (AP)

drive. Medalist Golf Club opened in 1995 and is the home course to many PGA Tour players including 15-times major champion Woods, who last competed in February and then withdrew from a number of tournaments with a back injury before the PGA Tour decided to cancel a slew of events because of the coronavirus.

Mickelson finished third in the Pebble Beach Pro-Am in early February and missed the cut in his next two starts.

Brady joined the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in March after 20 years with the New England Patriots during which he won an NFL-record six Super Bowl titles.

Manning, who played for the Indianapolis Colts and Denver Broncos, retired in 2016 as the NFL's all-time leader in passing touchdowns and yards and is the only five-times winner of the league's Most Valuable Player award.

REUTERS

LaLiga: Saudis bidding for Newcastle are 'stealing football'

By ROB HARRIS

THE president of the Spanish league wants the Premier League to consider the "damage" that Saudi Arabia's pirating of broadcasts has caused the sport before it decides whether to approve a takeover of Newcastle by the country's sovereign wealth fund.

The Saudis are trying to buy an English topflight club while "stealing football" through the beoutQ service that is undermining the sport's finances, La Liga President Javier Tebas told The Associated Press.

The Premier League has been part of a joint push by global soccer competitions, including La Liga, in trying to shut down beoutQ's pirated broadcasts of games. They both lodged protests with the American government which led last month to Saudi Arabia remaining on a "Priority Watch List" as one of the "notorious markets for counterfeiting and piracy."

Human rights activists have also put pressure on the Premier League to consider stopping the Saudi sovereign wealth fund becoming the majority owner of Newcastle. The Premier League has not commented on the progress of the process for approving the takeover even as objections to the deal have grown.

"European football rights - including Newcastle rights - have been stolen systematically by BeoutQ for three years," Tebas said in a statement to the AP. "Now the Saudis want a seat at the top table - forgetting the damage they have done through BeoutQ. If football leagues and clubs do not protect their intellectual property, they have nothing. LaLiga couldn't be clearer about this - stealing the football broadcast is stealing football."

The bootlegging of sports broadcasts is a proxy in a wider Gulf diplomatic and economic boycott of Qatar, which owns Premier League and La Liga rights through the beIN Sports network that is banned from operating in Saudi Arabia.

La Liga and the Premier League wrote separately to the Office of the United States Trade Representative in February to highlight the lack of legal action taken by Saudi Arabia over beoutQ despite complaints.

AP

Italian season in limbo with new wave of positive coronavirus tests

ROME

THE fate of the Serie A championship remained in limbo on Thursday after state scientists met with football bosses in a desperate effort to save the coronavirus-interrupted season threatened by a new wave of positive tests among players.

The Italian Football Federation (FIGC) huddled with the government's technical scientific committee to discuss details of the medical protocol for a potential return to group training.

The talks came with pressure mounting from sports-deprived fans and sponsors for Italy to follow the German Bundesliga's lead and return to action.

Sports Minister Vincenzo Spadafora said after the meeting he was "hopeful" team training could resume on May 18.

"There has been a very important, very in-depth meeting, with many requests from doctors and scientists to the FIGC," Spadafora said on Facebook.

"Now the committee, on the basis of these insights, will draw up its own assessment which will be sent to the Ministry of Health."

FIGC president Gabriele Gravina has shown an iron will to save the season and avoid "the death of Italian football".

But time is running out for Serie A which began to descend into chaos at the end of February as the new coronavirus swept across Italy's north - home to big teams such as Inter Milan and Juventus.

The league eventually threw up its hands and suspended the champi-

The Premier League's current television contracts are worth 9.2 billion pounds (\$11.4 billion) over three seasons.

"The scale and nature of online piracy, such as that committed in Saudi Arabia ... continues to place this revenue at significant risk," the Premier League wrote to the U.S. government body.

The Saudi Public Investment Fund is pursuing an 80% stake in Newcastle in a 300 million pound (\$370 million) takeover alongside the wealthy British-based Reuben brothers and financier Amanda Staveley, buying out retail entrepreneur Mike Ashley.

A letter was sent to Premier League clubs last month by beIN Media Group CEO Yousef Al-Obeidly warning of the "danger of allowing the acquisition" given Saudi Arabia's "illegal actions and their direct impact upon the commercial interests of the Premier League."

Amnesty International has also asked the league to consider blocking the bid because the fund is overseen by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, saying he has been involved in a "sweeping crackdown on human rights."

Agnes Callamard, a U.N. special rapporteur who authored an inquiry into the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, said there was "sufficient credible evidence regarding the responsibility of the crown prince demanding further investigation" and required sanctions.

Tebas has also previously denounced Saudi Arabia over human rights by highlighting its role in the murder of Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in 2018.

"The Saudi Arabian government has a policy whereby they improve the image of the government through sport - whitewashing their image," Tebas said during a visit to London in January. "We should not forget what happened in the Turkish embassy."

"We should not forget these things. This happened in an embassy, not a pub and this is very serious, at least in my opinion. Money is not the only thing that matters."

Where does Africa stand in terms of leagues restarting post-coronavirus?



Plateau United are the league leaders in Nigeria, by four points. There is no decision about continuing the season, as yet. (Agencies)

By Ed Dove, Special to ESPN

IN late April, the Confederation of African Football set May 5 as the date by which they wanted clarification from each member federation on their intended plans for local competitions.

Africa's domestic sporting competitions were halted in March and April, as the coronavirus pandemic first began to establish itself on the continent.

However, this week the respective national federations and league management committees have needed to outline their plans for the future, and it's proven easier said than done.

CAF's communiqué - as seen by ESPN - also outlined the governing body's request to know the identities of the teams being put forward for next season's continental club tournaments, "in order to help [CAF] design a plan for the organization of [African] interclub competitions during next season."

Remaining hopeful

Nigeria are also yet to make a proclamation on the future of the NPFL, although League Management Committee chairman Shehu Dikko has vehemently dismissed the recent rumours that he's called for the league to be concluded in China.

Earlier, an NFF statement issued on April 24, in light of a meeting of the NFF Executive Committee, outlined the league's intention to "conclude the league season after COVID-19 and resumption of football activities; [and to] consider the most plausible format for conclusion of the remaining games."

South Africa's PSL Executive are still intending to finalise a matchday strategy to safeguard players and officials, which they hope will persuade the government to allow the resumption of play.

The league has been suspended since March 16, although chairman Irvin Khoza has previously outlined his desire to conclude the campaign.

"As the PSL we're confining ourselves within the directives of FIFA, that the leagues can only resume if given the green light by their governments," Khoza told City Press.

"I must say [Arts and Culture minister Nathi Mthethwa] has been of great assistance on how to get to a comfort level if the government were to say when it will be safe to resume."

"He was happy with us as not just a sport but as a business."

Lesotho also remain committed to completing the 2019-20 season. The federation informed CAF on Tuesday that they were unwilling to cancel the league, but that they are open to extending the planned conclusion date of the campaign in order to honour all fixtures.

Mali also announced - on May 4 - their intention to push on with the current campaign, "as soon as the health situation allows," with Djoliba currently atop the standings, while Tanzania are also exploring options to resume domestic action behind closed doors.

With sports in Uganda still banned for another fortnight at least, the federation are yet to make a decision on the future of their league, although FA President Moses Magogo is confident that - with only five rounds of fixtures to play - the league can be concluded before August.

"Not until we see that we can't have the one month by August shall we entertain the discussion of which buttons to press," he told the Daily Monitor.

Zambia, too, appear committed to concluding the current campaign; they've pushed the start date for next season back to March 2021 (from August/

September 2020) in order to allow time to play the outstanding 10 fixtures.

Similarly, Algeria are determined to conclude the current Ligue 1 Professionnelle season, and published a detailed document outlining their intention for the league to resume five-to-six weeks after the nation's lockdown ends - regardless of when that may be.

They have then allocated an eight-week period in which the 2019-20 season will be concluded, and then a four-to-five week window before the 2020-21 season begins.

Yet to make a decision

Some of Africa's biggest nations have opted to defer their decision, with some pointing to ongoing domestic restrictions which prevent them from planning for the future and reaching clear conclusions.

The Royal Moroccan Football Federation will meet on Thursday in a video conference to examine the options open for Morocco's domestic football in light of the ongoing lockdown.

Tunisia are more optimistic about a return next month. Youth and Sports minister Ahmed Gaaloul said on Thursday that sports teams will be able to resume training later this month, with a June or July return date envisaged, while the federation - in a document seen by ESPN - have proposed an extensive testing and confinement plan to ensure a safe return of competition behind closed doors.

Cameroun have also refused to show their hand, with FA President Seidou Mbombo Njoya insisting that a decision on the Elite One's future will only be taken when it is imperative.

"Football is not the priority in the current situation," he said in a statement published on the federation website. "Football is secondary."

"We will make the decisions when it is necessary to make them, but we have all the scenarios and all the options ready and have informed CAF and FIFA. Let's not get carried away."

Guinea-Bissau are waiting for guidance from the continent's governing body.

"Due to the problem of this pandemic, we've stopped our competitions, like all

of the other countries in Africa." Guinea-Bissau FA President Manuel Nascimento told ESPN, "but we're waiting for the orientation of CAF and FIFA in order for us to decide if we resume or not."

Ghana are also stalling, and are pointing to the ongoing government restrictions in the country which prevent them from resuming competition, with the GFA sticking by their decision not to consider a return to action before late June.

"The Executive Council, at its meeting on Tuesday May 5 decided that the status quo remains," began a statement from the GFA, as seen by ESPN.

"The Executive Council further decided that the Association will continue to monitor the situation and would revisit it on June 30 2020 after a careful assessment and evaluation of the issue and to take further decisions."

It remains to be seen whether CAF will accept this response.

Seasons cancelled

Guinea, Angola and Kenya moved quickly to conclude their leagues, although not without some controversy for the latter.

Kenyan FA president Nick Mwendwa cancelled the league on April 30, declaring Gor Mahia champions and CAF CL qualifiers in accordance with federation statutes which state that if the campaign ends prematurely before reaching the three-quarter mark, the table at the half-way point of the season will stand.

However, the decision has been contested by the KPL - the league's governing body - while second-placed Kakamega Homeboyz have also warned that they will mount a court challenge to the ruling. Kenya is currently under curfew until May 16.

The Angolan Girabola only had five matchdays to play, but club presidents agreed unanimously in a conference call on Friday to end the campaign and send top two - Petro Atletico and Primeiro de Agosto - to CAF competitions, although the former will not be declared champions.

Mauritius had already taken the deci-

sion to end their season, confirming before CAF's communiqué that they would cancel the current campaign at all levels of the football's pyramid.

Since then, Liberia have also cancelled their season, although the country's football authorities have decided upon a four-team playoff involving the top four teams in the league to decide the Champions League qualifiers.

Congo-Brazzaville, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Niger have also cancelled the rest of their campaigns, with each offering various different strategies to deal with deciding CAF representatives, relegation and promotion.

In Congo, reigning champions AS Otoho - who led the table at the time of suspension, 14 points clear with six games to play - will retain their championship following the decision to cancel their league. Otoho will advance to the Champions League, with Diablos Noirs set to enter the Confederation Cup.

The Ethiopian Federation, in a statement as seen by ESPN, revealed their decision to end the season with immediate effect.

"Considering the country is under a state of emergency and the unpredictability of the coronavirus outbreak, we have decided to cancel all of this year's league games," the statement said.

The country, which is under a state of emergency, has opted not to send any representatives to next season's CAF competitions, and there will be no promotion or relegation.

On Monday, Burkina Faso announced the decision to cancel their campaign without any relegation or promotion, and no champions declared. Rahimo FC and Salitas will get another opportunity to compete in continental competition, having been the country's two representatives in 2019-20.

Mauritania concluded their league campaign on Monday, in an announcement which also announced financial support packages for clubs and players, although the nation are yet to decide upon their representatives for CAF competitions.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Where does Africa stand in terms of leagues restarting post-coronavirus?

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Megan Schutt was the leading wicket-taker at the T20 World Cup. GETTY IMAGES

Restarting game should not compromise its quality, says Joe Root

LONDON

ENGLAND test captain Joe Root is keen to play international cricket this summer but not by compromising on quality of the game or its intensity, the 29-year-old has said.

With professional cricket suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is considering playing the series against West Indies and Pakistan behind closed doors.

"If the game is compromised, it shouldn't be going ahead," Root (pictured) told Sky Sports.

"The game itself, the intensity it is played at - if you can't play test cricket at its absolute best we shouldn't play it. It's not a fair reflection of the sport."

England's home series against West Indies scheduled for June has been postponed while the inaugural 'The Hundred', which was to begin in July, has been moved to next year.

Root, like any professional cricketer, longed for international cricket but stressed public health was paramount.

"The guys are all missing playing and desperate to get back out there but safety is paramount for everyone involved. As soon as that is compromised, this can't happen," he said.

According to a Guardian report here ECB's plans to play in 'bio-secure' venues could keep the players away from their families for up to nine weeks.

Fast bowler Mark Wood said most players were fine with the idea after their chat with director of cricket Ashley Giles and the chief medical officer Nick Pierce.

"We trust what Ashley and the doctor are saying and if an environment is set up where it works then I think most players would trust that," Wood said in a video conference.

"We are all willing as long as the environment and everybody - people working at the ground, management, cameramen - is safe.

"Everyone is desperate to get going and it would be good to get out there but the bigger picture is what is going on in the front line," added the 30-year-old.

REUTERS



Mwanza's Gwambina FC players in group picture prior to featuring in one of their First Division League (FDL) assignments which took place in Misungwi. PHOTO: COURTESY OF GWAMBINA FC

Gwambina FC focuses on winning promotion to Premier League

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

GWAMBINA FC leadership has confirmed the side has not experienced financial crisis, given their players receive their salaries.

The Mwanza-based team noted they are chiefly focusing on winning promotion to the next season's Premier League.

The leaders pointed out side's technical bench is lately closely monitoring their players' individual training sessions as part of preparations for this season's First Division League (FDL) re-

maining matches.

Gwambina FC secretary general Daniel Kirahi pointed out they are now setting their sight on ensuring the club's players are in great shape in an effort to live up to their expectations.

"We do not experience financial crisis given we have a sponsor who pays players' salaries, we are only obliged to ensure our players that are now training in their respective homes, stick to the training and are fit," he pointed out.

"We do not want to make mistakes when the league restarts. We want to post good

results and eventually make our dreams come true."

Gwambina FC are one of a few soccer outfits in Tanzania which have neither confirmed to have experienced financial difficulties nor ask for financial support from either Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) or Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB).

Sporting activities in the country are currently on a break with a view to containing the coronavirus spread.

Gwambina FC were, as of the day the sporting activities were officially put on hold, occupying top spot in Group B of this

season's FDL after posting 40 points in 18 games, with Geita Gold FC occupying second spot in the group.

Gwambina FC are in pursuit of three points to make certain of their place in the Premier League in the 2020/21 season.

They are nevertheless left with four matches, in which they are to come up against Dar es Salaam's Transit Camp, Pamba FC of Mwanza, Rhino Rangers of Tabora and Mashujaa FC of Kigoma to notch the three points which could land them a place in Premier League.

Schutt braced for women's game to feel impact of Covid-19

SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA pace bowler Megan Schutt has called on the women's game to be treated fairly when it comes to potential cuts in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic but accepts it is inevitable that the impact will be felt.

The domestic set-up across Australian cricket looks set to come under pressure amid cost cutting even though the players' union cast doubt on the severity of Cricket Australia's financial warnings which led to the majority of staff being stood down.

While the prospects for the 2020-21 Australia season being able to take place are promising - on Friday the government launched a two-month road map to get the country back up and running - there remain a lot of questions around sport at all levels.

In the women's professional game the WBBL, which had its first standalone season in 2018-19 rather than being played concurrently with the men's competition, and National Cricket League could both be shrunk.

"Cricket around the globe is going to be affected by this and I have no doubt that women's cricket is also going to suffer," Schutt said.

"Whatever kind of season they can muster together, I think they are going to be happy enough with.

"Obviously there's going to be reductions somewhere, there kind of has to be, and as long as we aren't taking a significant hit in women's cricket specifically then I'm okay with that. It's about finding a balance of how we can get cricket going again on the national and international scene."

Alongside a potential reduction in matches there could also be a slimming down of support staff around teams. A number of the states have already laid off staff - Schutt has friends at the South Australian Cricket Association (SACA) who have lost their jobs - while the national team might not have the volume of coaches it has become used to.

"It really sucks seeing staff being let go in all areas," she said. "Returning to cricket there will still be people helping out... and individually we do that really well with helping each other out and we've been a little self-sufficient in how we go about how training sessions. Training conditions will be a little different, whether that's in small groups or pairs. I'm confident we'll be able to adapt to whatever we've given."

However, despite the positive progress being made against the virus in Australia, Schutt does not expect to see crowds this year.

"I'm pretty sure there won't be any crowds in 2020 but hopefully they can be allowed to attend next year. We are happy to play cricket whether that's in front of fans or not." AGENCIES

Flexibles by David Chikoko



Obviously there's going to be reductions somewhere, there kind of has to be, and as long as we aren't taking a significant hit in women's cricket specifically then I'm okay with that. It's about finding a balance of how we can get cricket going again on the national and international scene