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Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa has an eyewitness account of the ongoing construction of Uhuru Hospital in Chamwino District, Dodoma Region, yesterday. Left is Dodoma regional commissioner Dr Bilinith Mahenge. Photo: PMO

Builders, leaders under fire as PM affirms hospital launch on Dec 9

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa yesterday gave entities involved in the construction of Uhuru Hospital in Chamwino District, Dodoma Region, 15 days to have the facility ready.

Speaking after visiting the construction site to assess progress, the premier was far from impressed and directed the Chamwino district leadership, the Tanzania Building Agency and Suma JKT to ensure that the job is done by the deadline.

He said the facility, which is meant to serve as the Chamwino District Hospital, must be completed in time for it to be officially launched by President John Magufuli on Independence Day - December 9.

"The speed is good but not good enough; ensure you work day and night so that the work

is completed by December 5 and ready for launching on December 9," he said.

He reminded the contractor to ensure that construction materials made by Tanzanian industries such as tiles are sourced locally to boost local factories and create jobs.

"You are in disagreement about where to buy tiles; TBA are adamant that tiles must be imported. Why import tiles from abroad while we have a factory in Chalinze and another at Mkuranga?" the premier demanded.

"We used these locally-made tiles at the headquarters of the National Electoral Commission and the quality is good, no complaints arose."

Briefing the PM on the progress, Joseph Nyamhanga, the Permanent Secretary in the President's Office (Regional Administration and

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Stakeholders praise Blue Economy ministry move

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

FISHERIES stakeholders in Zanzibar have hailed the decision by newly elected President Dr Hussein Mwinyi to form a Blue Economy ministry, saying the move stood to resolve many of the challenges facing the sector and improve livelihoods.

In the Cabinet list he unveiled on Thursday, Dr Mwinyi named Abdallah Hussein Kombo as Blue Economy and Fisheries minister.

Speaking to The Guardian here yesterday, Association for the Welfare of Fishers chairman Omar Muhammed Ali called on the minister and his team of experts to reach out to those engaged in fishing through their organisations and work together towards unlocking the sector's potential.

"We have issues that need to be ironed out;



The recently revamped Zanzibar Fishing Corporation (ZAFICO) was tasked with modernizing fishing by deploying equipment that can operate in deep sea

chief among them being contentious clauses in the Fisheries Act of 2010 especially sections that prohibit certain fishing gears," he said.

All said fishers are ready to work with the ministry by obeying the laws but said the laws should not make it impossible for thousands working in the sector to earn a living.

"I suggest that we have regular meetings to discuss challenges and chart the way forward together. Creation of this ministry is an opportunity to change our lives for the better," he said.

Semeni Muhammed, secretary of Zanzibar Association for Organic Farmers rearing edible millipedes on the shore expressed hope that the ministry will help farmers improve their skills and help with storage and cooling facilities.

"The market is there; the demand is bigger than

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Serengeti world's second most booked destination at 2021 eve

By Guardian Reporter

THE Serengeti National Park has done it again; it is the world's second most booked and aspired leisure destination for 2021.

Forbes' Bucket List Travel: The Top 21 Destinations for 2021 puts the Serengeti only behind Maldives—a small archipelagic island state in South Asia.

The study conducted by Ovation Travel Group's agents compiled an exclusive list of the top leisure destinations based on advance sales and client aspirations, says Forbes in its online publication.

"The savannah stretches out in grasslands, open plains, and rivers," the report quotes Joyce



Novick, a luxury travel consultant at Ovation Travel Group. "It's the perfect place to host the diverse animals - lions, buffalo, wildebeest, gazelle and elephants that come each year in search of food."

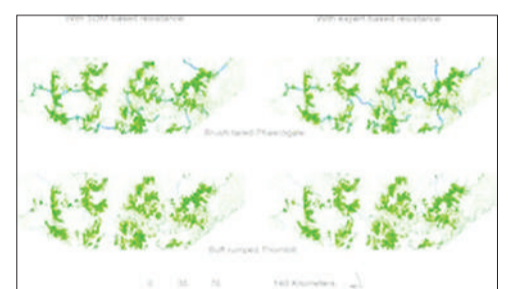
The publication encourages animal lovers of all ages not to miss an opportunity to visit Serengeti, thanks to its unmatched wealth of wildlife.

"This is the perfect way to immerse yourself in the animal kingdom and to reflect on your place in the environment," the Forbes' report underlines.

Rwanda which is ranked seventh is the only other African destination on the exclusive list.

The Serengeti is followed by Antarctica in the

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'Vital wildlife corridors loss an impediment to gene flows'

PENNSYLVANIA, US

A LARGE-SCALE study of African elephant genetics in Tanzania reveals the history of elephant populations, how they interact, and what areas may be critical to conserve in order to preserve genetic diversity for species conservation.

The study, by researchers at Pennsylvania State University, appears online in the journal Ecology & Evolution and is the first to explore gene flow - a process vital to maintain necessary genetic diversity for species survival - between protected areas in Africa.

"Elephants are a hallmark of the savannah, but poaching and habitat loss and fragmentation have led to major population declines across Africa," said George Lohay, postdoctoral scholar in biology at Penn State and first author of the paper. "Human activities accelerate the loss of elephant habitat, as well as the land between protected areas. Maintaining connectivity between protected areas may be especially important for this far-ranging species, particularly with regard to gene flow, which can improve genetic diversity and help buffer small populations against disease and other threats."

The researchers compared both nuclear and mitochondrial DNA of 688 elephants across Tanzania from 4 major areas with large elephant populations. These include the Serengeti and Tarangire-Manyara in north-east Tanzania, Ruaha in south-central

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Former Prime Minister Judge (rtd) Joseph Warioba (2nd-R) presents working tools to incoming Media Council of Tanzania President Judge (rtd) Juxon Mlay in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly after the inauguration of the council's new board of directors. Looking on are outgoing MCT vice president Hassan Mitawi (L), who is succeeded by Zanzibar media executive Yusuf Khamis Yusuf, and executive secretary Kajubi Mukajanga. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Serengeti world's second most booked destination at 2021 eve

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third place and Lake Powell Jackson Hole, both in the United States.

In the sixth place is a Peruvian destination called Cusco which is followed by Rwanda then Denali National Park in Alaska, US, Porto Cervo in Italy and Sonoma County in California, US caps the top 10.

But this is not the first time for Serengeti to bully other leisure destinations. It does it often. Just last week, it was named alongside Mafia-based Thanda Island as winners in this year's prestigious World Travel Awards.

The Serengeti scooped Africa's leading national park category and the Indian Ocean getaway grabbed Africa's leading luxury island.

This was the second time in a row the destinations won the categories they first won last year.

For Serengeti, this is now a fourth

recognition in a row after it won the best African Safari Park in 2018 in ratings organized by SafariBookings.com. The win followed an in-depth study that included more than 2,500 reviews from safari tourists and industry experts.

In 2017, Tanzania was named Africa's Best Safari country by SafariBookings.com after an in-depth analysis of reviews from safari tourists and acclaimed Africa experts. In its announcement of the win, SafariBookings.com said more than 2,500 reviews were used in the comprehensive research which included contributions from safari-goers all over the world and 22 reputable guidebook authors.

"This is the perfect way to immerse yourself in the animal kingdom and to reflect on your place in the environment."

Stakeholders praise Blue Economy ministry move

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the supply. We cannot satisfy the China market alone. We just need to increase production," she said.

Muhammed Khamis Mwamvura, Information and Communication Technology officer from the Deep Sea Fishing Authority said the docket is a parent ministry that will coordinate cross-cutting issues handled by other ministries but have something to do with blue economy such as tourism.

"The Union government plans to buy eight deep sea fishing vessels and four will be brought to Zanzibar; plans are also underway to build fish processing industries here. Things will definitely change for the better," he said.

Retired President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein told the 10th Zanzibar Business Forum in March that as part

implementation of blue economy strategy, three new ports had been lined up for construction, namely at the Mpigaduri passenger terminal area, the oil and gas terminal at Mangapwani and the fishery port at Malindi.

The recently revamped Zanzibar Fishing Corporation (ZAFICO) was tasked with modernizing fishing by deploying equipment that can operate in deep sea, plus conducting sale of the catch.

A new fishing boat was procured with another under construction, meanwhile as an improved fish market was being built, with these development likely to attract more tourists, he stated.

Implementation of the blue economy vision will be overseen by the Zanzibar Planning Commission, the former Isles president had declared.

African scientists go rooting for research, innovation to hasten COVID-19 response

NAIROBI

GREATER investments in evidence-based research, technology and innovation should inform efforts to hasten post-COVID-19 recovery of African economies and livelihoods, scientists said on Thursday.

The African scientists and policymakers who attended a virtual summit in Nairobi agreed that leveraging home-based research and innovation has the potential to boost pandemic recovery in the continent.

Hamadi Boga, principal secretary in Kenya's ministry of agriculture in his opening remarks said that COVID-19 offers a chance for African countries to re-imagine policies and ensure they promote inclusive growth, climate resilience and food security.

"We should promote research and evidence-based policymaking to help re-awaken economies and livelihoods impacted negatively by the COVID crisis," said Boga.

"There is a huge potential for scientific research and innovation to accelerate pandemic recovery through enhanced response to the food, health and climate crisis," he added.

The Nairobi-based Africa Research and Impact Network organized the summit titled "Africa in the Post-COVID-19 world: Lessons for research and policy."

Dozens of African policymakers, scientists and health advocates attending the three-day virtual summit which ends on Friday said that collaborative research and innovation could help place the continent on a sustainable pandemic recovery pathway.

Joanes Atela, a senior researcher at Nairobi-based Africa Center for Technology Studies said that governments should prioritize policy interventions that cushion vulnerable demographics from COVID-related shocks. "The solution to some of the shocks linked to the pandemic

including declining food security and incomes lies in creating a platform to share knowledge, experience and best practices that have worked elsewhere," said Atela.

He said that increased budgetary allocation for research, technology and innovation is key to building resilience of African economies, livelihoods and ecosystems during the pandemic era.

Atela said that action on climate change, sustainable use of natural resources and urban renewal will enable African countries to withstand shocks linked to COVID-19.

Participants said the pandemic recovery should lay emphasis on rebuilding ecosystems to help address the climate crisis, poverty, hunger, disease and inequality.

Richard Munang, Africa Regional Climate coordinator at the UN Environment (UNEP) said the continent has the potential to recover from the COVID crisis subject to policy reforms and investments to strengthen the resilience of communities and their ecosystems. "The focus of our attention should be how to restore the health of our economies and ecosystems that underpins livelihoods in order to realize a sustainable post-COVID-19 future," said Munang.

He said that governments should enact policies that encourage innovation in agriculture, health and energy to help rebuild livelihoods devastated by the pandemic.

"We should promote research and evidence-based policymaking to help re-awaken economies and livelihoods impacted negatively by the COVID crisis"

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Tanzania, and Selous in southeast Tanzania. Each contains several areas with varying levels of protection, including national parks, game reserves, and private land conserved for livestock and wildlife tourism. Many of the wildlife corridors – the areas between these protected areas – have closed completely due to human activity.

The researchers suspected that the East African Rift Valley that runs between several protected areas would prevent gene flow between elephant populations. But, interestingly, they found that elephants from Lake Manyara National Park were in some ways more genetically similar to elephants across the rift in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area – in the Serengeti region – compared to elephants in the closer Tarangire National Park.

"Even though there are no physical barriers between elephants in Lake Manyara and Tarangire, there is very limited gene flow between the two populations," said Douglas Cavener, professor of biology at Penn State and an author of the paper. "It may be that cultural or behavioral barriers play a role instead. Other studies have tracked elephants moving between the two areas, but they don't appear to be mating with each other."

The similarities among the two groups across the rift suggests that there was gene flow between Ngorongoro and Lake Manyara sometime in the past.

"There is anecdotal evidence from the 1970s of elephants actually climbing across the rift, but most of the corridors connecting Ngorongoro and Lake Manyara have since become occupied by humans," said Cavener. "The Lake Manyara population is now almost completely isolated and contains only about a hundred individuals. The loss of gene flow through these corridors may lead to negative consequences due to inbreeding over the next few generations."

The researchers also found

'Vital wildlife corridors loss an impediment to gene flows'

that elephants in Tarangire were genetically similar to those more than 400 km to the south in Ruaha. This suggests extensive gene flow between the two populations before the corridors were closed between them.

"Because elephants are long-lived and because mutation is a slow process, it can take multiple generations to see genetic differences between populations," said Cavener.

"We know there was significant gene flow between elephants in Tarangire and Ruaha in the recent past, but the corridors between the areas are currently blocked. Opening up these corridors could encourage gene flow, which can help maintain more genetically robust populations," asserted Lohay.

The researchers also suspected that the Eastern Arc Mountains in southern Tanzania could prevent gene flow between populations on opposite sides of the mountains in Ruaha and Selous. But while the populations had somewhat similar nuclear DNA, their mitochondrial DNA, which is passed on primarily through the maternal line, was much more varied.

"While female elephants tend to remain in the groups where they were born, males are ejected from the herd when they reach sexual maturity, which can facilitate gene flow between groups," said Lohay. "When you see lots of differences in mitochondrial DNA markers but relatively few differences in nuclear markers, it can be a hint that males are migrating but females are not. It's a crude measurement, but that might be what are seeing here. In the future, we'd like to ascertain the parentage and relationships between individuals so we can better understand the role of males in gene flow in these populations."

The study also sheds light onto the history of recolonization of the Serengeti, where elephant populations were almost completely wiped out due to poaching in the late 1800s and, after rebounding somewhat in the 1960s, drastically declined again in the 1980s. The researchers found that mitochondrial DNA of elephants in the northern Serengeti differed from those in the southern Serengeti, suggesting that two distinct groups of elephants arrived from outside the area in the early 1960s when recolonizing the area.

"Understanding these relationships and population histories can help inform future conservation efforts," said Lohay. "This study provides a baseline for future genetic studies on these remarkable animals. We also provide recommendations for wildlife corridors that should be prioritized for conservation in order to maintain potential gene flow between populations. Although we can't be certain elephants will use certain corridors, at the moment they have limited options and are facing serious habitat losses due to human encroachment."

In addition to Cavener and Lohay, the research team at Penn State also include Casey Weathers, a graduate student in wildlife and fisheries science at the time of the research and currently at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Anna Estes, assistant research professor in the Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences at the time of the research and currently at Carleton College; and Barbara McGrath, associate research professor of biology. The study was supported by the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, and the Penn State Eberly College of Science and Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences.



National Assembly Speaker Job Ndugai makes closing remarks in Dodoma yesterday at a seminar for members of the recently inaugurated 12th Parliament. Others are Deputy Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson (C) and Clerk of the National Assembly Stephen Kigaigai. Photo courtesy of National Assembly

Builders, leaders under fire as PM affirms hospital launch on Dec 9

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Local Governments) said the hospital project came about after President John Magufuli directed that 995.1m/- that was set aside for independence celebrations in 2018 – which he suspended – be directed towards the

project. In January last year, after receiving 2.415bn/- in dividends from Telco Airtel, the president directed that the money be diverted to the project, he explained.

By November 19 (Thursday), about 4.4bn/- was availed for the project and 4bn/- had already been spent.

Back in September, SUMA JKT works supervisor Girimu Kanansi said the works being undertaken would be completed in October. Hospital construction was earlier set to be completed in May but heavy rains hindered the progress of the work, he added.



CCM's Ideology and Publicity Secretary, Humphrey Polepole, pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday announcing the names of the party's nominees who are to vie for positions as city and municipal mayors as well as ward council and district chairpersons across the country. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Arusha introduces special desks to protect children

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

ARUSHA has pioneered efforts to establish and endorse special desks in schools and other public institutions as platforms to advocate children rights as well as helping to fight against gender based violence.

The first symbolical desk was inaugurated here during the occasion to mark the Universal Children Day, with pupils and students from all parts of Arusha gathering in the city to issue declarations regarding their demands for basic rights in homes, schools and around respective communities.

The nearly 300 children from different schools, institutions and child-focused organisations conducted debates, dramas, recitals and even songs to reinforce their voices to be heard, provided for and inclusion into decision making platforms in matters likely to affect their wellbeing.

The Arusha Regional Administrative Secretary, Richard Kwitega graced the ceremony held at Arusha primary school, saying according to government statistics, 50 per cent of the country's population is made up of children of 18 years old and below.

"And because Tanzania's current population estimates have reached 56 million people, then the nation should be made up of more than 25 million children which is quite a large number and one which should not be ignored," pointed out RAS Kwitega.

The World's Children Day event in Arusha was held at the Arusha school community hall under the organisation of SOS Children Villages, in association with local schools, World Vision as well as the Centre for Women and Children Development.

"This is the only occasion in which children get to speak, heard and express their concerns, complaints and demands before parents, teachers

and government officials," explained Mpellya Ali the SOS Youth and Children Rights Programme coordinator.

The annual World Children's Day was first established in 1954 as Universal Children's Day. The event is observed on the 20th of November each year to promote international awareness and unity among children worldwide, with the mutual aim of improving younger people's welfare.

November 20th is also described to be an important day because this is the date when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959. It is also the date that the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 30 years later in 1989.

Since 1990, the World Children's Day also marks the anniversary of the date that the UN General Assembly adopted both the Declaration and the Convention on children's rights.

Belgium's envoy rubbishes digital platform claims

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIAN ambassador to Belgium Jestas Nyamanga has called on the public to rubbish the information which claims that the European Union (EU) Parliament is working to impose economic sanctions on Tanzania and thwart loans and aids.

In a video posted on several digital platforms as well as the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC), ambassador Nyamanga refuted the claims saying that they are all totally untrue and worthless. Nyamanga said the information was provided by people who want to tarnish the image of Tanzania. It is a serious misrepresentation that Tanzania has been barred from getting 1.6trillion/- from the European Union which is not true.

"It is not true that the funds have been suspended, the implementation of various projects is progressing well and there is no strings tied over the funds," he said.

He said: "Today, 19th of November in Belgium, the European Union's Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs met in its regular session whereby among the issues discussed was about Tanzania and the General Election."

According to him, this is very common to discuss and talk about their development partners, once the election is over and especially the General Election.

"These reports are fallacious. The parliamentary committee meeting did not issue any declaration on Tanzania. What happened was to give the Members of Parliament (MPs) to give their views on the post-election in Tanzania," he explained.

The envoy said that the session held was of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the EU's Parliament with a total of 71 members and during the sessions everyone had the right to express his/her views freely.

"The EU Parliament has a total of 705 Members of Parliament, as in Tanzania MPs have the right to express their views, so in that session the MPs expressed mixed views but there was no single resolution which was passed," he elaborated.

The envoy also said that there were no ongoing debates in the European Parliament about imposing sanctions on Tanzania or wanting to impose any economic sanctions on Tanzania, including of selling its products in those countries.

He assured Tanzanians that diplomatic and economic relation between EU countries and Tanzania is well and had been fine for the past 45 years.



These reports are fallacious. The parliamentary committee meeting did not issue any declaration on Tanzania. What happened was to give the Members of Parliament (MPs) to give their views on the post-election in Tanzania



Salamu za Pongezi

Mhe. Majaliwa Kassimu Majaliwa

Uongozi na wafanyakazi wa kampuni za IPP wanaungana na Watanzania wote kumpongeza Mheshimiwa Kassim Majaliwa kwa kuteuliwa na Mhe. Rais Dk. John Pombe Magufuli kuwa Waziri Mkuu wa Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania .

Hongera sana.

Govt called on to incorporate digital space education in schools' curricula

By Getrude Mbagu

THE government has been called upon to incorporate digital space education in schools' curricula so as to create future generation which has broader understanding on the digital technologies, rights and their impacts.

This was said yesterday in Dar es Salaam by Asha Abinallal, co-founder of Women at Web organisation at a special digital skills media workshop.

She said that feedback from the surveys that the organisation had conducted in mid 2018, showed that online harassment was a serious problem because there was a lack of awareness on what online harassment constitutes even with the cybercrime law and regulations in place.

"It is better now, education should be incorporated in our curricula, enabling children from primary school to university level, learn and understand well about digital space and thus be able to know their boundaries as well as opportunities of the technologies," she said.

She was supported by Carol Ndosu, co-leader-Women at Web who also called for more investment in the area so as to reduce the raising online Gender Based Violence (O-GBV).

According to her, GBV has now gone online where a number of women undergo hard times when it comes to protecting their digital rights.

Online harassment can include online bullying, trolling, cyber stalking, defamation and hate speech, public shaming, and theft and hacking, amongst other offences.

"Online gender-based violence exists within a context similar to what happens in real life. We now live in a virtual society and offline violence has extended to online, so it is better for education to be given to the current

generation to enable them to respect human rights and online privacy when they grow up," she added.

She said that women are the main target of online violence, especially women with voices, like female journalists, activists and politicians.

She also urged journalists in the country to utilise fully the emerging opportunities in the safe digital space technologies to improve their lives and transform communities.

Ndosu said majority of journalists who are working in the mainstream media do not take advantage of the digital space to improve their profession and income.

"Development of science and technology has made things so easy for us, it has brought a number of opportunities of which most of them are yet to be fully utilised, journalists should now focus on being more digital in their activities," she said.

The workshop brought together journalists from various organisations who interactively discussed and shared expertise on various issues concerning digital rights and freedom so as to expand the proper use of the digital space technologies in the country.

The forum underscored the critical role of stakeholders and the government across the country in the formulation of Internet policies, regulation and legislation that are favourable and meant to transform communities.

Tanzania just like many other African countries, mobile phone users has rocketed to around 65 per cent penetration and over 11.3 million internet users. This is an opportunity for the youths who want to build smart solutions to tap into that market and develop the economic and social growth of the country.



Rukwa regional commissioner Joachim Wangabo (2nd-L) symbolically launches the 2020/2021 agricultural season, which included the use of modern farming tools, at Ntendo in Sumbawanga municipality on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Forum calls on govt to strengthen agricultural policies, regulations for rural women farmers

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo,

Dodoma

RURAL Women Farmers Forum (RWFF) has urged the government to strengthen agricultural policies, regulations and systems for rural women farmers in Tanzania.

RWFF president Amina Senge made the call yesterday when speaking during the meeting which attracted nearly 100 smallholder women farmers from across Tanzania and was meant to share experiences and chart ways to counter numerous challenges that hinder their daily activities.

Amina expressed over the need for the government to ensure conducive environment for enabling the women farmers to improve their production.

"Most smallholder women farmers in the country are still facing some difficulties and irregularities especially when accessing loans from financial institutions for boosting their productivity," she said.

She underscored the need for the Ministry of Agriculture to work more closely with the forum in order to understand numerous setbacks facing the women farmers from grassroots level.

Eva Mageni, president of African Rural Women Farmers Forum challenged the rural women farmers in Tanzania to effectively use the forum in order to air their voices in order to lobby better policies, regulations and systems from the government.

Magreth Thomas, a smallholder farmer from Morogoro Region said

the small number of agricultural extension officers was another challenge which denies the farmers in rural areas for timely extension services and vital agricultural guidelines.

However, she hailed the government's efforts in supporting the smallholders women farmers in rural areas through financing the forum.

Elizabeth Msuya, coordinator of Chamwino non-government organisation network expressed over the need for creation of good policies to support disabled women farmers in rural areas across the country.

"In rural areas, most of disabled women farmers who cultivate food and cash crops are grappling with numerous challenges, the situation

which calls for immediately intervention from both, the government and the private sector," she observed.

For his part, Action aid livelihood manager, Elias Mtinda, said Action aid is very determined to continue assisting women farmers in the rural areas to meet their deserved targets.

Operating within 28 districts from across the country, the Rural Women Farmers Forum was established in 2017 for the general vision to empower the smallholder women farmers in rural areas to understand their rights in order to take part in the processes of development of key national agendas, including budget planning.

The forum has currently about 28,343 members in 820 villages.



Kinondoni district Commissioner Daniel Chongolo (L) shares a light moment with small traders selling fruits at Dar es Salaam's Bunju B mixed-goods market yesterday shortly before officially listening to their grievances at a brief meeting. Photo: Correspondent Christina Mwagala

UN body urges greater COVID-19 vigilance in Africa as holidays near

BRAZZAVILLE

WITH the end of year approaching and many African families planning get-togethers, the World Health Organization (WHO) is urging countries to be on high alert for a possible surge in COVID-19 cases. This comes as nearly 20 countries in the region experience an uptick in cases.

After reporting a downward trend then a plateau, Africa has been experiencing a rise in cases since early October. Unlike the first wave of cases which was triggered by hotspots in Southern Africa, the latest increase is driven by the North African region, where temperatures are beginning to fall.

In the 47 countries in the WHO

African Region, 19 countries have reported over a 20% increase in new cases in the past 28 days compared with the previous four weeks. However, 17 countries are also reporting a more than 20% drop in the number of new cases over the past 28 days, compared with the previous four weeks. There have also been increased reports of health worker infections and deaths, particularly among more experienced health workers.

Large group gatherings and mobility have been identified as risk factors for increasing the spread of COVID-19 and the approaching holiday season can promote these risks, leading to super spreader events.

"As we near the time of year when people get on the move to spend their

holidays together, there is a bigger risk of COVID-19 transmission," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa. "New clusters of cases can emerge in places that have so far been unaffected as people travel or gather for festivities. But we can lower the risks by wearing masks, limiting the numbers of people who come together, observing physical distancing and practicing good hand hygiene. We can celebrate yet do so safely."

WHO is urging Member States to conduct risk assessments at the subnational level and identify areas of high risk. Based on this analysis local governments can adjust their public health measures accordingly and be agile in their decision-

making. WHO is helping prepare for a potential rise in hospital admission by training additional contact tracers and clinicians to better handle cases, ensuring crucial supplies are on hand and boosting screening at border crossing points.

WHO has identified a worrying trend of disregarding safety measures among populations. As part of an effort to re-energize key public health measures, WHO is launching the "Mask Up, Not Down" campaign today. The campaign aims to reach over 40 million young people in Africa with positive messages on the correct use of masks through social media, and to combat complacency, fatigue and misunderstanding around COVID-19 prevention measures.

GCF approves \$60 million for four climate change resilience projects

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

FOUR low-emissions, climate resilient projects in sub-Saharan Africa are benefiting from a financial package of around US\$60 million.

This was decided by the Board of Directors of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which met virtually from 9 to 13 November 2020.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has just released a new flow of climate finance to sub-Saharan Africa. At its 27th meeting, held virtually from 9 to 13 November 2020, the GCF Board of Directors approved nearly US\$60 million for four climate adaptation and mitigation projects in East and West Africa.

The lion's share, US\$30 million or 50% of the total GCF allocation to Africa goes to the environmental organisation Acumen. It is earmarked for Acumen's energy access relief facility programme in sub-Saharan Africa. The second funding will be managed by the African Development Bank (AfDB). It is worth US\$10 million and is aimed at improving climate information systems for resilient development in Liberia.

The other two financings are for an amount of 9.9 million each. One will be managed by IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) to finance resilient agriculture projects in the Imbo and Moso production basins in western and eastern Burundi respectively, while the other will be used in Sudan by the World Food Programme (FAO) to strengthen the adaptive capacity of local communities, restoring the carbon sink potential of the Gum Arabic Belt, and developing the Great Green Wall of Africa, the African Union's flagship initiative to combat the effects of climate change and desertification in Africa.

The 27th session of the GCF released a global envelope of US\$1.01 billion

A total of 16 climate adaptation and mitigation projects from developing countries were funded at the 27th



This climate financing will provide much-needed support to developing countries as the world responds to the climate crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic at the same time

Create conducive environment for Diaspora to invest at stock exchange, CMSA calls on DSE

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE Capital and Market and Security Authority (CMSA) yesterday directed the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE) to ensure Tanzanians in the Diaspora invest in the country's stock exchange to increase financial inclusion.

Speaking to reporters in Dar es Salaam at the launch of the DSE Mobile trading platform, the CMSA executive director Nicodemus Mkama said the platform should enable the diaspora to access and invest in the market.

He said the mobile platform enables Tanzania's diaspora to access and invest using mobile phones without meeting the brokers to connect them with the market.

The executive director said the platform resonates with the government goal of assuring that financial inclusion increases among the people.

"After 22 years of its existence, it is now easy for the diaspora to access the platform and invest in the DSE without physical contact or meeting the brokers," he said.

"I call on Tanzanians diaspora to invest at home through DSE, to increase the country's capital investments by registering on the platform," he added.

Mukama said according to a Finscope study conducted in 2017, over 60 percent of Tanzanians make financial transactions through mobile phones.

Also according to quarter statistics ended September, 2020 from the Tanzania Communication Regulatory

Authority (TCRA), about 49.2 million Tanzanians use mobile phones while 30.5 million people make financials.

He noted that it is expected that the trading platform will attract more people making mobile transactions to switch to and invest at the DSE.

Besides that, the trading platform will reduce the cost used to invest and hence increase the amount of financial capitals invested at the DSE.

For his part, the DSE Executive director Moremi Marwa said that the trading platform helps in price discoveries and evaluation

He said through the platform the customers know the price at the market without contacting the brokers noting that it will attract more new entrepreneurs and small investors.

"I call on banks and financial institutions to utilize the system to fast-track the financial inclusion hence more investments," he said.

According to him, technology has become the engine of investments through price discoveries and evaluation.

The Financial Sector Deepening Trust (FSDT) Executive Director Sosthenes Kewe said the technology has simplified and enabled many people to get relevant information.

Furthermore, more people have got business opportunities to invest at the DSE, adding that it has broadened the chance for private people to invest.

"The platform has reduced nuisances to the investors and therefore encourages more to register and invest," he explained.



GF Trucks & Equipment's Ltd sales and marketing officer Juma Lukolo (R) briefs Elius Mwakalinga (L, gesturing), Permanent Secretary in the Works, Transport and Communications ministry, in Dar es Salaam on Thursday at the opening of an exhibition jointly organised by the Tanzania Civil Engineering Contractors Association and construction stakeholders. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Wilhelm Mulinda, Mwanza

COMPASSION International Tanzania (CIT) is set to improve lives of five million vulnerable children and youth in 21 regions across the country.

This is part of the CIT's strategic plan of the year 2020-2022.

Speaking at the meeting here yesterday with pastors of evangelical churches that work in partnership with CIT in Kagera, Mara, Geita and Mwanza regions, national director of CIT, Mary Lema said that through the plan, they will implement programmes that include sponsorship to children and youth.

She said that their project aim at improving health as well as diet of mother and child, education, clean

Compassion to improve lives of 5 million vulnerable children, youth

water and environmental cleanliness among others.

According to her, that programme is implemented based on priorities in three areas that are to enable the Church to attain its targets to save children and youths in a bid to alleviate poverty among them.

Other areas are to strengthen strategic cooperation with different stakeholders including the government at national level as well as enabling the church to reach its targets according to the plan.

She said that at present CIT is working in 21 regions in Tanzania Mainland in over 80 district councils where it has managed to reach 112,000 children and youths through approximately 500 churches.

In the process CIT is spending an average of 6bn/- every month to implement the projects to children and youths by using the evangelical churches, she said.

She said that CIT is registering children for sponsorship starting from the age of three years to seven and it

also sponsoring students to pursue university studies provided that they passed through their hands.

In so doing the CIT believes that children and youths will have a reasonable standard of living and not live in poverty, noting that even God does not want people to be poor.

She said that CIT which started in 1999 in the country has been one of big christian missions to promote development of children and youths in the country.



Passengers travelling from Hanang District to Mbulu District stranded on Thursday, their bus having failed to cross Maghang River bridge in Manyara Region owing to flooding. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

WHO looks to boost virus safety awareness in Africa

By Special Correspondent

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched a new coronavirus safety awareness campaign targeting Africa's youth population.

The Mask Up initiative was unveiled in an online briefing by Dr Matshidiso Moeti, regional director for WHO Africa, on Thursday.

"Wearing masks can save lives. This is why WHO is launching today the '#MaskUp, Not Down' campaign which aims to reach over 40 million young people in Africa on social media by the end of 2020," she said.

Moeti said there has been promising news regarding COVID-19 vaccine development over the past two weeks, with initial data from late-stage trials of two candidates indicating high levels of efficacy.

"We are now working with African countries on preparedness to roll out the vaccines," she said.

Moeti called for caution ahead of the coming winter holidays.

"We are now nearing the time of year when people travel to spend their holidays together. These end-of-year get togethers are a key part of our lives in African countries, but they can certainly increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission," she said.

"Outbreaks spread socially, and we can stop them with safe social interactions. I ask everyone to be mindful of your individual risks and the risk of you loved ones, friends, and neighbors."

The virus caseload in Africa is now over 2 million, including with more than 1.7 million recoveries and over 48,000 deaths.

Moeti also spoke about the success of anti-Ebola efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

"Finally, some good news. While fighting COVID-19, WHO has also been supporting the Democratic Republic of the Congo to control its 11th outbreak of Ebola. Yesterday, the government declared it over! This is a big achievement," she said.

"Innovations used to fight Ebola, such as technologies to keep vaccines at super-cold temperatures, will be helpful when bringing a COVID-19 vaccine to Africa," the official added.

The WHO announced the end of the 11th Ebola outbreak in the western part of the DRC on Wednesday.

In a statement, WHO Africa said 130 people were infected and 55 died in the outbreak, which took place in communities scattered across dense rainforests, as well as crowded urban areas.

10,000 East Africa's youth in Arusha to attend annual leadership summit

By Guardian Reporter

TEN thousand young people from all the six East African Community partner states will next week gather at the EAC headquarters in Arusha and six capitals in the region to discuss issues pertinent to the bloc's development agenda.

The November 23 to 27 event dubbed the 'YouLead Summit', is East Africa's flagship youth leadership development programme seeking to unlock youth leadership potential for a prosperous region.

It is hosted by the East African

Community (EAC) and MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS TCDC) in Arusha, Tanzania.

The YouLead Summit 2020, themed 'Development is People: Youth at the centre of Peace and Development Agenda' is a strapline of a speech by the founding father of Tanzania and a proponent of East African integration, the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, who said, "...maendeleo ni watu ... si vitu..." which translates to development is about people...not things.

YouLead Summit 2020 will bring together young leaders from various

sectors, government officials, development practitioners and policymakers from across the East African region to engage in dialogue addressing issues pertinent to youth in the region.

The aim is also to shed light on the experience of the East African youth who not only have to contend with the present challenges within their respective countries and beyond but are also faced with the uncertainty to forge a way to create an ideal future for themselves and for generations to come.

Former President of Tanzania Jakaya Kikwete is expected to grace the 2020 edition of the summit which will for the first time go virtual in addition to the physical gathering at Arusha.

At the regional level, sessions will be held at the EAC headquarters in Arusha, as the central command centre, with delegates, speakers and mentors, forming a limited physical audience under prevailing COVID-19 complaint standard operating procedures.

The command centre model will be replicated in the six EAC capitals in

each country's context. The various national level summit centres will be connected via a virtual platform.

In addition, key sessions will be telecast live on various radios, TVs, and social media platforms of leading media partners in the region.

The vibrant platform will provide a platform for the old and young, experienced and novice, to meet, interact and discuss development issues without prejudice.

Thematic areas to be discussed during the summit will address on re-inventing leadership for East African

millennia's; youth at the centre of peace building and conflict prevention; accelerating economic opportunities and decent work for youth, and young women mobilising towards Goal 5 of Agenda 2030 (gender equity and women's empowerment) and Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063.

YouLead summit 2020 will also feature an inter-generational dialogue on leadership, policies and results, as well as the East African Youth Enterprise Award Ceremony, focused on recognising outstanding cross-border business ideas by young entrepreneurs.

Farmers urged to use new fertiliser to increase paddy, maize productivity

By Guardian Correspondent, Songwe

TANZANIAN smallholder farmers have been urged to use a variety of fertiliser (MiCROP) it is specifically meant to increase maize and paddy production in the country.

Yara Tanzania marketing manager John Meshack made the call yesterday when speaking at the official launch of Yara MiCROP fertiliser in Songwe Region.

He said their company was deliberately targeting smallholders to increase their harvests because they were Tanzania's main producers. The launch was made deliberately in Songwe because Mbeya and Songwe farmers were important producers of rice in Tanzania.

The type of fertiliser being popularised, the manager said, had zinc and sulphur micro-nutrients which he said were necessary for a farmer to reap quality crops. He called on farmers to take the issue very seriously.

"We have targeted you smallholders because we want you to see value of

farming by having bumper harvests and getting profits. Yara will establish a fertiliser plant in Dar es Salaam. Therefore, supply of fertilizers will be smooth in Tanzania," he promised.

Meshack said their company was cooperating with the government to achieve the national agenda of making Tanzania an agro-industrial country by 2025.

One of the farmers who attended the launch, Edson Ambilike, said Songwe farmers were hopeful. "We welcome the new variety. We want bumper harvests," he said.

YARA is the leading crop nutrition company in Africa and millions of farmers have undergone training on better and sustainable farming techniques that have a greater and profitable yield for farmers.

The company manufactures high quality fertilizer that is available all over the continent at any time and works in partnership with farmers' institutions, community based organizations, non-governmental organisations in offering education and nutritional solutions so as to improve their livelihoods.



Omary Kitiku, a senior engineer with Gasco, makes a presentation in Dar es Salaam yesterday on opportunities available in the civil works wing of the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation subsidiary and the requirements interested contractors and consultants ought to meet to qualify. It was at a Civil Works Opportunities Conference organised by the Tanzania Civil Engineering Contractors Association. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

THE United Nations has urged Africa to develop clear competition and consumer protection rules for African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in order to boost trade.

Mukhisa Kituyi, secretary general of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said that lack of adequate competition laws leads to distortion practices that undermine

UN urges Africa to develop clear competition and consumer rules for AfCFTA to boost trade

cross-border trade.

"We need to have clear competition laws regulating cross border trade so that enterprises and trade can thrive in Africa," Kituyi said during a trade

forum on the AfCFTA.

Kituyi added that the main casualties when big enterprises use competition laws to their advantage are small enterprises.

He noted that small and medium-sized enterprises play a big role in the continent because they provide the bulk of employment opportunities.

The UNCTAD senior official revealed

that there is currently a shift in global value chains as firms seek to source from local sources. "This phenomenon has disrupted African companies that had found a niche in supplying global

value chains," Kituyi said.

He observed that the continental-wide free trade regime will help Africa's economic rebound during and after the post-COVID-19 pandemic.

He noted that Africa is the region that least trades with itself due to heavy reliance on international markets for its commodities.

He said that up to 40 percent of goods traded between African countries are value-added products.



Preparations for the construction of classrooms for a secondary school at Kigera in Nyakatende ward in Musoma Rural constituency under way earlier this week. The school is expected to enroll students for Form One beginning next year. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

UNEP, WHO join fight to end failing drugs in Africa

By Special Correspondent

UNITED Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organisation have joined a continental campaign to end antimicrobial resistance in Africa.

The campaign, led by six entities, comes as cases of drug-resistant HIV, TB and malaria rise across the continent. The campaign was launched during the World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW) Campaign for Africa. It calls antimicrobial resistance the "silent public health threat" in all countries in Africa.

Antimicrobials include antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals and antiparasitics and are used to prevent and treat infections in humans, animals and plants.

In Africa, research findings estimate

that 4.1 million people could die of failing drug treatments by 2050 unless urgent action is taken.

Malaria, which kills 3,000 children in Africa every day, is increasingly showing resistance to once-effective treatment options.

Tuberculosis is also becoming resistant to the drugs typically used to treat it. Current studies indicate that drug resistance to HIV is increasing and could cause 890,000 deaths by 2030 in sub-Saharan Africa.

"If we don't act now, we could see the continent roll back the gains in health we have made through immense effort and sacrifice. We must stop endangering our future and think before we pop a pill in our mouth," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa, one of the partners of the campaign.

The others are the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the African Union, Food and Agriculture Organization, and the World Organisation for Animal Health.

An estimated one in 10 medicines globally is substandard or falsified, and the African region is one of the most affected in the world.

Without proper medical supervision, people often stop their drug course too soon or they double-dose rather than keep to a prescribed strict time interval for appropriate drug-taking.

This improper use of antimicrobial medicines enables bacteria, viruses, fungi and microscopic parasites to mutate into superbugs that are resistant to the drugs designed to kill them.

These superbugs can travel across

countries, resulting in thousands, or potentially millions, of deaths.

Their treatment is resulting in prolonged hospital stays and the need for more expensive medicines, leading to huge additional costs in health expenditure by governments and individuals.

Improper disposal of pharmaceutical, hospital, abattoir, human and animal waste also contaminates the environment with antimicrobials and antimicrobial-resistant organisms.

"Healthy environment provides us with efficient mechanisms to prevent and control diseases which lead to less use of antimicrobials; as human beings, animals and crops are less exposed to microbes," said Dr Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, Unep's regional director for Africa.

Sadc records increase in production of fish

WINDHOEK

THE Southern African Development Community (SADC) has recorded an increase in aquaculture production which rose to 100,950 tonnes in 2020, from 92,773 tonnes reported in 2019.

Ocean and inland waters such as lakes, rivers and reservoirs in the SADC region provide significant benefits to citizens such as food and nutrition security from fisheries and aquaculture, and economic and social development from fisheries and aquaculture.

The fisheries sector in SADC member states, comprising marine and inland capture fisheries and aquaculture, generates a variety of benefits, including nutrition and food security, livelihoods, employment, exports and foreign currency, and conservation and biodiversity values that are of global significance.

As part of the implementation of the SADC Regional Aquaculture Strategy, 12 member states have implemented national aquaculture programmes in line with the regional strategy, resulting in the increase in aquaculture production.

Development and approval of Guidelines for Aquaculture Management in the SADC region was done to support sustainable, environmentally and socially acceptable aquaculture practices in the region.

Capacity building programmes to support aquaculture value chains were also conducted through transformation of aquaculture in the SADC region by way of regional training meetings.

The fisheries sector in SADC contributes an average of about two percent to regional GDP, with total average exports worth of US\$152 million and average imports of US\$100 million.

Fisheries are a vital oceanic and aquatic resource that forms the core of the blue economy in the Region. Besides wild catch, there has been phenomenal growth in fish farming in SADC. While adoption of aquaculture is growing over time due to increasing

demand for fish and fish products, people in the region view aquaculture as a sector for gainful employment and self-enterprise.

The sector employs about 145,000 people, and more than one million benefit indirectly.

Per capita fish consumption in the region is 11kg per person, which constitutes an average of 16 percent of the total animal protein intake and five percent of the total protein intake. This makes the contribution of fisheries to food and nutrition security in the region significant.

Most, if not all SADC member states, are well-endowed with fisheries and aquatic plants which could be harnessed for the growth of blue economy. Following the principles of the blue economy, the problems of overfishing; illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; fishing in high and open seas are expected to be regulated even though the focus would still be on the optimum use of fishery stock in the region.

The blue economy may warrant a significant departure from the conventional fishing practices and regulations in the SADC region. In addition, this may necessitate changes in the legal and institutional structures for enabling a smooth realisation of blue economy goals.

In order to optimise benefits from the fisheries and aquaculture SADC Heads of State in 2001 endorsed the SADC Protocol on Fisheries.

The protocol aims to promote responsible and sustainable use of the living aquatic resources and aquatic ecosystems of interest to state parties, in order to promote and enhance food security and human health; safeguard the livelihood of fishing communities; generate economic opportunities from nationals in the region; ensure that future generations benefit from these renewable resources; and alleviate poverty with the ultimate objective of its eradication.

In 2008 SADC ministers responsible for marine fisheries signed a Statement of Commitment to combat IUU fishing in support of Article 9 of the SADC Protocol on Fisheries.

By Guardian Correspondent, Kilosa

Community forest conservation: Raise economic and social status of women

RESIDENTS of Ulaya-Mbuyuni village in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region take pride in Ashura Mohamed, 24, a mother of one, who has lived all her life in the village.

For the past nine years she has earned her living through production of charcoal but for the past four years have been instrumental in turning around her status in the community, after participating in the sustainable charcoal production a project introduced by Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG). The project promotes conservation of forests by villages as a means to improve social services and reduce poverty among individuals.

Through the project villagers conserve the village forest, Ulaya-Mbuyuni Village Forest, which covers 3,540 hectares and benefit from their work through sustainable charcoal production. The village started conserving and protecting the forest in 2012. Ms. Mohamed participated in several training sessions and started actual production in 2016. "Four years down the road I have no regrets. In the short period I have built a house, I have bought a motorcycle and installed solar electricity in my house. I wouldn't be so successful if I stuck to the traditional method of charcoal production or any other activity," explains Ms. Mohamed, adding that the family is not rich but they are able to meet all their needs without laboring very much.

By engaging in sustainable charcoal, she has raised her income more than four times. "With traditional charcoal production, I earned about 200,000/- annually but my income from sustainable charcoal production now stands at about 1.4m/- annually. Never did I dream to earn so much money," she explains.

The sustainable charcoal project has 25 members, 10 of whom are women. Yet it is not just about being part of the group; each member must work hard if they are to realize tangible benefits. It is for this reason that not many women have joined the group because charcoal production is difficult. According to Ms. Mohamed, sustainable charcoal production takes fewer trees than traditional production methods and this helps to conserve trees and the general environment. Trees are cut according to a harvesting plan prepared by the village, a situation that ensures sustainable benefits for all from the forest.

"Villagers have realized individual and communal benefits while ensuring that the forest is conserved so that future generations may also enjoy these benefits," says Hashim Said, Chairman

of Ulaya Mbuyuni village.

Mosi Hassan Kikope, 26, of Nanjilinj A village in Kilwa District is another beneficiary of community forest conservation efforts. The village owns and manages two forests, Mbumbila A and Mbumbila B, with a total of 83, 538 hectares. While their counterparts in Kilosa District thrive on charcoal business, those in Nanjilinj earn money through sale of forest products such as timber, unprocessed logs and poles. With an annual average income of 200m/-, the village government is implementing a plan to raise the dignity of pregnant women regardless their marital status.

"The village government offers 50,000/- to pregnant women on their eighth term regardless whether one is married or single. I got that money when I was pregnant with my first child who is two years old. I am now in the waiting list for my second child who is four months old," explains Ms. Kikope.

The programme has not only eased the economic burden among families and single mothers but also the anxiety of meeting hospital expenses during delivery and acquiring the essentials for the newborn. Of course parents have to meet other costs related to the upkeep of the pregnant woman but the basic requirements for the expected baby are taken care of by the village government.

"Women are happy with this programme because they don't have to worry about their needs when they are ready to deliver. They get enough money to prepare for the coming of the newborn two months before; that anxiety is now over. Between 2012 and 2013 when the village started harvest the forest the village government offered 30,000/- to every pregnant woman but now they have raised that amount to 50,000/-. Maybe they will increase the amount when the government gets more money from conservation of the forest," says Ms. Kikope.

There are cases when pregnant women develop complications and cannot deliver at the village dispensary. They must be referred to the District Hospital in Kilwa. "In such circumstances the village government offers a loan of between 50,000/- and 100,000/- to enable the family to meet transport and other costs. This loan is repaid in installments according to the agreed plan. It is



Ashura Mohamed of Ulaya Mbuyuni village explaining to journalists how sustainable charcoal production has changed her life.

all about safe motherhood and the village government can implement this programme because we conserve the forests and earn some income. Otherwise this would not be possible," says Sharifa Rashid Kibou (45) whose daughter delivered in December 2019 and is a beneficiary of the programme. She adds that the 50,000/- 100,000/- is offered to any villager who falls sick and requires treatment at the District hospital.

However, some complications have emerged as a result of the programme. "Since 2012 when the village government introduced the programme to offer money to pregnant women, the number of women who got pregnant began to rise. The situation has become complicated after the village government raised the amount of money from 30,000/- to 50,000/-. Now 80 women deliver annually up from about 45 in 2012 as a result of which pregnant women don't get the money in time. Some women remain in the waiting list long after they have delivered," explains Ms. Kibou. "But the good thing is that we know we will get the money even after we have delivered the baby," she adds.

Besides financial assistance offered when one is pregnant or falls sick, women in Nanjilinj A are happy because they can easily access safe water. With proceeds from sale of forest

goods, the village government drilled six shallow wells and rehabilitated three more. Villagers are now assured of a reliable and safe water supply throughout the year. "It is a burden off our shoulders. We don't have to spend hours walking around looking for water thus we have more time to do other things for the family," says Ms. Kibou. There is something else that women are happy about. "We also don't have to worry when our children when they are selected to join secondary schools as the village offers 100,000/- to enable parents meet their child's requirement. Formerly this burden was shouldered by the family and in most cases mothers had to worry most about it. It was worse for single mothers. But now the village offers it as grant and it is really a relief for women," explains Ms. Kibou.

Women in Mtanza-Msona village of Rufiji District also participate in conservation of forests and enjoy various benefits. Besides financial gains, women have built confidence and courage to speak for conservation and stand to be elected for leadership posts in the village. Capacity building and awareness raising campaigns conducted by TFCG, MJUMITA (Mtandao wa Jamii wa Usimamizi wa Misititu), TNRF (Tanzania Natural Resources Forum) and other organisations have given women

opportunity to learn and practice good governance, conservation and other skills which they apply in their daily lives.

"Women participation in conservation is high because they benefit from the forest they conserve. The village natural resources committee comprises 12 members and one third of them are women as required by regulation. If there was no limitation, there would be more women in the committee; they have the ability and the confidence to lead," explains Salma Issa Wamba, the Chairperson of the Village Natural Resources Committee.

She says that women take part in identifying trees earmarked for logging as per harvesting plan, they take part in loading logs onto trucks and others are employed in the logs processing plant owned by the village. "In all these activities the women not only earn money but also hold leadership posts in their groups; they organize the activities. So it is not just about conservation but building the capacity and confidence of women to lead," she explains.

According to the village chairman, Ismail Said Lusozzo, women are active in all activities related to conservation because they are agents of change at family level. "If women take part in conservation, then the rest of the family are likely to follow. Besides, gains from conservation very often ease the burdens women carry. Reliable water supply, increased income, and good schools- all these bear some relief to the women. They must take the lead to ensure that families and the whole community benefits from conservation," he explains.

Highlighting the success of community forest conservation, Acting Rufiji District Forest Officer Robert Kiondo says that forests owned and managed by village governments thrive better than those managed by other authorities because villagers realize benefits. "Village governments have shown that they can conserve forests and realize both communal and individual benefits. They draw their own conservation and harvesting plans which they implement accordingly with the result that they get income from sale of forest products," he explains, adding that among other things they spend the money to improve social services and thus reduce the burden

women have to carry in bringing up families.

Rufiji District Executive Director Rashid Salum says that forest sources are a source of income to the government and individuals in the district and urges all stakeholders, particular non-governmental organisations, to help communities undertake better conservation of the resources for their own benefit. "It is quite clear that villages can manage forests better than other authorities; just look around and you will notice that forests owned and managed by village governments thrive better than those owned by the District Council or those in general land. The government has the duty to set a friendly environment for villages to exploit existing opportunities so that they improve social services and reduce poverty among families," he explains.

TFCG Government Liaison and Capacity Building Office, Simon Lugazo, says that Community Based Forest Conservation (CBFC) has been successful because villages have the mandate to decide how to manage their forest and gain from it while ensuring that it is conserved for the benefit of current and future generations. "There are various things here, one is that communities must understand that they own the resource and they can realise tangible benefits that will improve their lives if they conserve. The other is that organisations like TFCG, TNRF and MJUMITA should help them to learn how to conserve and protect the resources and make and implement harvesting plans. Beyond that, help village governments to institute good governance by being transparent in revenue collection and expenditure as well as all other activities pertaining to management of the resources. Once this is done the forest will thrive and the villagers will improve their lives as we have witnessed in various villages," he explains.

CBFC has backing of the Forest Policy (1998) which stipulates that village forest reserves will be managed by the village governments or other entities designated by the village governments for this purpose. They will be managed for production and protection based on sustainable management objectives identified for each forest reserve. Conservation, protection and harvesting will be based on management plans.

The Forest Act (2002) also gives villages the mandate to protect, reserve, manage and sustainably use forests on village land for their current and long term development needs. The also Act gives mandate to village governments to set prices for their forest goods.



Goats have the right of way, if you will, along a Kigogo suburb road in Dar es Salaam yesterday - but the consequences can be tragic. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

By Special Correspondent

African scientists fear continent will be left behind as gene editing revolutionises production of food

SCIENTISTS in Africa are calling on their governments to ensure the continent isn't left behind as gene editing revolutionises food production.

Gene editing is a good tool that can help enhance Africa's food security, say scientists across the continent, and it shouldn't suffer the same fate that has stymied the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) over the last three decades.

As GMOs continue to face regulatory barriers that are hampering their acceptance across the continent, scientists are convinced that gene

editing offers a new frontier for introducing advanced technology to tackle food security issues in Africa.

"Very soon, GMOs may be forgotten," Prof. Walter Alhassan, retired director general of Ghana's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, told the Alliance for Science. "Now we have new breeding techniques [with] gene editing. This technology is moving, and Ghana should not be left behind."

"We hope our government will put money into science," Alhassan added.

"That is how the nation will develop. COVID-19 has been a rude awakening... Without science, we cannot develop... We are all ready to move ahead with the technology, but our governments must put their money where their mouth is."

Dr. Chiedozi Egesi, senior scientist at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Nigeria, said that gene editing technology can help make African crops more resilient, more productive and more nutritious if applied appropriately.

"We need technologies such as gene editing to increase our productivity, enhance the nutrition status of our crops and make them more resilient to climate change and a pandemic environment," Egesi said. "For example, we have seen promising landmark research for virus resistance in banana and cassava, pest resistance [against] the fall armyworm in maize and better nutrition, like less cyanide in cassava and high iron and zinc in cassava, among others."

Africa's entrepreneurs fill the gaps in the continent's response to COVID-19

By Special Correspondent

INNOVATIONS have made a "huge difference" in Africa's fight against the coronavirus pandemic, as entrepreneurs step in to fill gaps in health systems and keep economies moving, according to experts.

Since the first infection was recorded in Nigeria at the end of February, entrepreneurs have developed tools ranging from contact-tracing apps in Kenya and Ghana to WhatsApp chatbots in South Africa and self-diagnostic tools in Angola.

More than 120 new health technologies were recorded this year by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Africa, according to a report published earlier this month.

"We realise these innovations have made a huge difference. We are fighting Covid-19 in the context of weak health systems," Moredreck Chibi, WHO's regional innovation adviser for Africa told the Telegraph. "Governments, besides locking down early, had limited options to leverage other than innovation to address the pandemic."

Initial fears of the virus tearing through health systems and crowded megacities to kill millions have not materialised. The continent has recorded more than 1.8 million cases and 45,000 deaths, for a population of over one billion. The UK, with a population of 67 million, has recorded a similar death toll.

Many African countries went into lockdown early on in the pandemic and have introduced prevention measures to curb spread after economic concerns forced them to open back up. Working alongside health authorities, start-ups and developers, as well as more

established companies, have seized the opportunity to help, using technology and shifting their business models to adapt to a new normal.

In Nigeria, health investment company Flying Doctors set up mobile Covid-testing booths, which separate the sample collector from the people being tested. These have boosted testing while protecting health workers, a scarce resource in the country.

Start-ups and developers, working alongside health authorities, have seized the opportunity to help CREDIT: AFP

In Kenya, developers created an app to allow passengers on public transport such as the brightly decorated matatu minibuses, taxis and motorbike rides to check in and enable health authorities to track the contacts of newly infected cases.

"When we had the first case, it was apparent to many of us that we would have to leverage innovation to make people's lives easier in the new way of living: lockdowns, disrupted supply chains, working from home, distributing PPE..." said Ronald Osumba, director of the iGov digital start-up accelerator in Nairobi.

Osumba and iGov are part of the team that developed mSafari as a pilot project in June. From November onwards, the government is planning to expand its use and make checking in on public transport mandatory, as it works to keep a new surge in infections in check.

An estimated 50 per cent of Kenyans use public transport every day, making it one of the most important forms of transmission of the virus. Each matatu carries around 300 people every day, said George Njao, the director of Kenya's national transport and safety authority.

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Children's Day: Globally all children must be protected

CHILD morbidity and mortality rates in Tanzania keep soaring. Indeed, the situation is worrisome. Accurate figures in both aspects are hard to come by as not all sick children are taken to hospitals. In the same vein, not all deaths occur in hospitals. Children's Day is a commemorative date celebrated annually in honour of children, whose date of observance varies by country. In 1925, International Children's Day was first proclaimed in Geneva during the World Conference on Child Welfare. Since 1950, it is celebrated on 1 June in most Communist and post-Communist countries. World Children's Day is celebrated on 20 November to commemorate the Declaration of the Rights of the Child by the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1959.

Children's Day began on the second Sunday of June in 1857 by Reverend Dr. Charles Leonard, pastor of the Universalist Church of the Redeemer in Chelsea, Massachusetts: Leonard held a special service dedicated to, and for the children. Leonard named the day Rose Day, though it was later named Flower Sunday, and then named Children's Day.

Children's Day was first officially declared a national holiday by the Republic of Turkey in 1920 with the set date of 23 April. Children's Day has been celebrated nationally since 1920 with the government and the newspapers of the time declaring it a day for the children. However, it was decided that an official confirmation was needed to clarify and justify this celebration and the official declaration was made nationally in 1929 by the founder and the President of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal

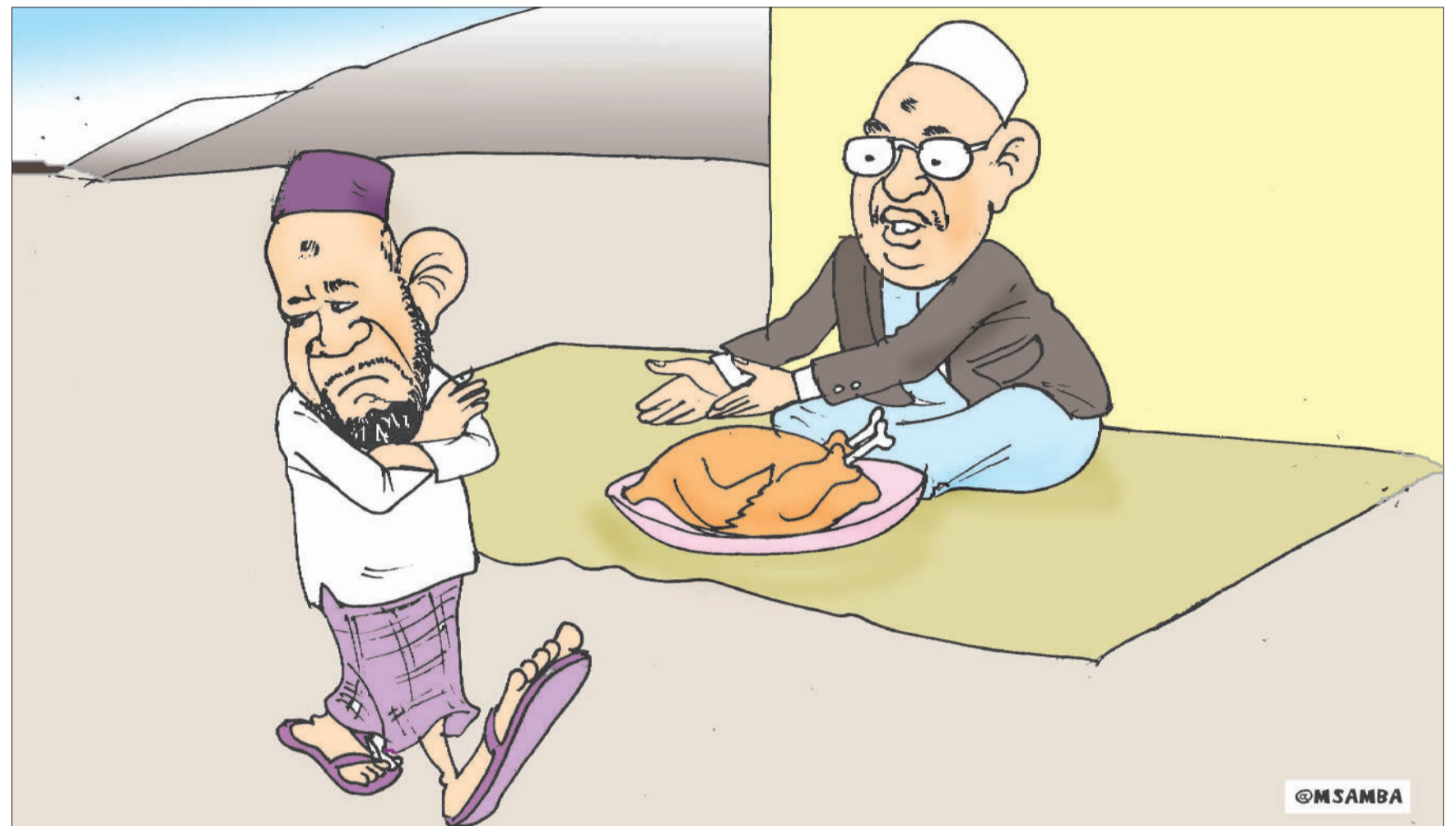
Atatürk.

International Children's Day was first proclaimed in Geneva during the World Conference on Child Welfare in 1925. On 4 November 1949, 1 June was established as the International Day for Protection of Children by the Women's International Democratic Federation in Moscow. Since 1950, 1 June is celebrated as Children's Day in many Communist and post-Communist countries.

In 1954, Children's Day was proclaimed by the United Kingdom to encourage all countries to institute a day, firstly to promote mutual exchange and understanding among children and secondly to initiate action to benefit and promote the welfare of the world's children.

That is observed to promote the objectives outlined in the Charter and for the welfare of children. On 20 November 1959, the United Nations adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. World Children's Day is celebrated on 20 November to commemorate the Declaration of the Rights of the Child by the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1959.

In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals outlined by world leaders to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. Albeit this applies to all people, the primary objective is concerning children. UNICEF is dedicated to meeting the six of eight goals that apply to the needs of children so that they are all entitled to fundamental rights written in the 1989 international human rights treaty. UNICEF delivers vaccines, works with policymakers for good health care and education and works exclusively to help children and protect their rights.



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Independent candidates and service delivery on promises

By Special Correspondent

THERE is an idiomatic expression which runs across the linguistic spectrum of many Africans, that one finger alone cannot crush or pick a louse meaning one person alone cannot do everything as teamwork is necessary to alleviate the workload.

However, many independent candidates in this year's local authority and regional councils' elections are defying this reality. Yes, they have their followers but at the apex of their political structures, they should have worked together within a political party setup. However, in the final analysis, it is their democratic right to choose the independent candidate route.

The question lingering in many voters' minds is whether these independent candidates will deliver on their political campaigns' promises.

Unfortunately, this state of political situation has been abused and distorted by many people and seasoned

politicians alike. The opponents to independent candidature contend that the independent candidates will not have access to the budget meant to implement the projects in their constituencies and local authorities as they are not members of the power that be.

Some people think that for one to deliver and bring development home, one must be a member of the ruling party. But the reality is that we have had councillors from the ruling party who have dismally failed the electorate. Many politicians have been using the national purse to intimidate the masses and regard the taxpayers' monies as if it comes from their own pockets. They capitalise on the ignorance of the electorate and say nasty things about the masses if the latter fail to vote for them.

Some politician stunts the electorate if they vote for the independent candidate and challenge them if their aspirations and national needs could be realized. But each constituency is allotted a certain amount of

money for development. National development is the government of the day's obligation and should see to it that projects are carried out and completed as per stipulated budget. Whether the councillor is independent or from the opposition, it is imperative for the government of the day to release the funds for national development. Ministers and councillor who deny the electorate national development on suspicion that they did not vote for them are violating the constitutional provision which requires that all Namibians be treated fairly and equally before the law.

Instead of delivering on their campaign promises, many politicians end up attacking their opponents personally instead of assuring the electorate what they intend doing for them.

How can one explain a situation where a politician mocks another political colleague from the opposition of being physically challenged, when the same politician has a wife, a son and

a mother who are all crippled? Being physically challenged is not anybody's wish but sometimes comes naturally, in which case the victim has no control over the illness.

The culprits in this political mess are leaders of political parties and their top brass as they fail to instil a sense of discipline in their followers.

Many leaders are known for inciting their followers to provoke the other political opponents just to sow seeds of political and social discord. In the long run, this type of politicking has cost Africa a lot, leaving deaths in its wake. Politicians at all levels should realise that at the end of the political kaleidoscope, Namibians' welfare should come first.

There is no need for campaigns to be provocative and violent. Independent candidates who are capable of assisting the masses should be accorded the support they need. Candidates who cannot deliver despite having national resources and connections at their disposal should not be pampered.

Industrialisation with strong linkages to domestic economies should help Africa to achieve growth

INDUSTRIAL development is of critical importance for sustained and inclusive economic growth in African countries. Industry can enhance productivity, increase the capabilities of the workforce, and generate employment, by introducing new equipment and new techniques. Industrialisation, with strong linkages to domestic economies, will help African countries achieve high growth rates, diversify their economies and reduce their exposure to external shocks. This will substantially contribute to poverty eradication through employment and wealth creation.

Within the framework of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1991-2000), the United Nations General Assembly, in 1989, proclaimed 20 November 'Africa Industrialisation Day'. Since then, the United Nations System has held events on that day throughout the world to raise awareness about the importance of Africa's industrialisation and the challenges faced by the continent.

Since 2018, the Africa Industrialisation Day has been successfully commemorated with weeklong events. The Africa Union Commission will be hosting the 2020 Africa Industrialisation Week celebrations on 16-20 November 2020, under the theme 'Inclusive and sustainable industrialisation in the AfCFTA and COVID-19 era'.

On 21 March 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda, the Agreement establishing an African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was signed, creating a single African market for goods and services and the world's largest free trade area by number of countries. The AfCFTA is expected to become operational on 1 January 2021, backed up by 28 ratifications to date, and 54 signatures to the Agreement. However, despite these positive developments, the advent of COVID-19 early 2020 has posed the most formidable risk to the smooth phase-in of the AfCFTA, given its disruptive nature to business and commerce. Thus, given this scenario the need to build continuous political advocacy on the need to industrialise Africa cannot be overemphasised. The AIW2020, therefore, presents such an opportunity, to rally stakeholders at national, regional, continental, and

global level to exchange knowledge on the continent's structural transformation agenda.

Despite being the second most-populated continent in the world (1.2 billion people), Africa represented only 14 per cent of the world manufacturing value added in the first quarter of 2020. While the COVID-19 pandemic has evolved more slowly in sub-Saharan Africa than in other regions, it has exerted a sizable toll on economic activity with a growth expected to fall to -3.3 per cent in 2020, pushing the region into its first recession in 25 years. The combination of domestic lockdowns and lower external demand from the global recession will weigh heavily on the industry sector.

The theme of the 2020 African Economic Conference is 'Africa beyond COVID-19: accelerating towards inclusive sustainable development'. At the conference, established academics and young researchers will be able to present their solution-oriented research to policymakers and decision-makers. The conference is jointly organized by African Development Bank (AfDB), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and will be held on 8-10 December 2020.

Africa Industrialisation Day is a time when governments and other organisations in many African countries examine ways to stimulate Africa's industrialisation process. It is also an occasion to draw worldwide media attention to the problems and challenges of industrialisation in Africa.

Africa Industrialisation Day themes have focused on business and technology in previous times. Various events are held to mark Africa Industrialisation Day. Many of these involve local and national leaders and representatives of national and international non-governmental organisations. A special effort is made to unite leaders or representatives of as many African countries as possible to stimulate discussion on the industrialisation of Africa and assess the progress made in the past year. The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) plays an important role in coordinating events on or around Africa Industrialisation Day.

Political Campaigning: Oppose without hate

BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

WE can all agree that the level of political campaigning in recent times has been at an all-time low all over the world. The so-called leader of the free world, the United States, is still reeling from the bitterly divided election. Here in Namibia media reports also suggest we are moving towards a path of hate, the kind of disdain for one another that threatens to erase the gains we have made in terms of nation-building over the last 30 years.

Recently, Swapo stalwart and former Namibian Defence Force chief Martin Shalli apologised for comments he made at a political rally that was not only vicious and tacky, but un-Namibian to say the least. You see, we have lived a painful history. This young

nation is founded on the blood of brave Namibians who made the ultimate sacrifice.

As Namibians watched the Namibian flag being hoisted on 21 March 1990, then Founding President Sam Nujoma proudly said never again would Namibia be oppressed. But ensuring that we continue to nurture our freedom requires of us not to see each other as enemies. When we attempt to exert power over each other, act superior to other Namibians and assume that one is more entitled than the other, we move closer to oppressing each other.

When people feel othered, and when a segment of society looks down on others, we all lose. It is patriotism that loses. While political parties are encouraged to follow the Electoral Commission of Namibia's code of conduct, certainly ordinary Namibians

also need a mindset change. With political lines drawn ahead of the regional council and local authority elections, the very polarising political campaigning has torn apart families, while tension between communities and friends is the order of the day. People continue to hurl insults at each other on social media. While these are very emotional times, we can also not accept that this behaviour is a reflection of who we are as a people.

We have our weaknesses as Namibians, but we are not a bitter lot. We know reconciliation, we know peace, we know the desire for peace. How we debate and engage each other in these times of elections, sets the tone for how we exist moving on. Remember, we can oppose one another without hate. After all, we are all Namibians.

BDF should be called to order
The killing of four family members

by the Botswana Defence Force has been a topical issue this whole week. It is unfortunate that the events that led to the brutal killing of the Nchindo brothers and their Zambian cousin could have been averted had Botswana not reneged on a May 2015 agreement with Namibia in which it undertook to end its infamous 'shoot-to-kill' policy as an anti-poaching strategy. According to reports about 37 Namibians have been killed by the BDF since independence.

To this we say, one Namibian life lost is one too many. It is our sincere hope the joint investigation by the two countries will provide useful information and bring the culprits to justice.

The violent and callous killing of our nationals whom we understand did not represent a genuine danger should be condemned with the utmost contempt.

SA police bill fails to address chilling effect on freedom of assembly

By Catherine Kruyer

THE South African Police Service Amendment Bill, prepared by the Civilian Secretariat for the Police Service and recently published for public comment, is a comprehensive revision of the legislation governing policing in South Africa to align it with the Constitution.

The legislation being amended includes the Regulation of Gatherings Act 205 of 1993. This gives effect to the right to freedom of assembly.

The Constitutional Court has often recognised the importance of this right. The Court, in *Garvis*, explained that the right exists to “give a voice to the powerless” and that it is often the only mechanism available to vulnerable people to express their concerns.

Laws criminalising conduct connected with gatherings do not align with the Constitution.

But there are a number of issues in the Gatherings Act that put this important right at risk. The Act was enacted before the adoption of the interim Constitution, and the enshrinement of the constitutional right to freedom of assembly. It is, therefore, in need of comprehensive revision to align it with the Constitution. But the Bill falls far short of this.

Overbroad definition of “gathering”
“Gathering” is a key term in the Gatherings Act on which the level of regulation turns. In particular, the planning of a “gathering” is the trigger for the onerous notice requirements prescribed in section 3 of the Act.

But the definition of “gathering” in the Act is too broad - including within its ambit every group of 15 or more people intended to “mobilise or demonstrate support for or opposition to the views, principles, policy, actions or omissions of any person or body of persons or institution”.

The definition of “gathering” needs to be more carefully tailored to the purpose of the notification requirements. As explained by the Constitutional Court in *Mlungwana*, the purpose of notification is to ensure peaceful protests. Giving adequate notice allows the police to effectively monitor gatherings and properly plan for the deployment of police to avert disruptive protests.

However, the selection of the number of 15 people as the trigger in the Act for needing to provide notice is entirely arbitrary. There is no clear link between disruptive protest and the number 15. As the Constitutional Court said, “[t]here appears to be no intrinsic magic in the number 15”.

The definition of “gathering” in the Act should be amended so that notice will only be required when a protest is likely to be disruptive or when police deployment is likely to be necessary. This can be achieved by limiting the definition of “gathering” to an assembly with a much larger number of participants - resulting in a definition that is, at least, more closely connected to the purpose of averting disruptive protest. It can also be achieved by limiting notice requirements to certain types of gatherings, which will need to be clearly spelled out in the legislation.

Chilling effect

In *Mlungwana*, the Constitutional Court was confronted with a challenge to a provision in the Gatherings Act that criminalises the failure by a convenor of a gathering to give notice of the gathering in accordance with section 3 of the Act.

The court found that the criminalisation of the failure to give notice unjustifiably limited the right to freedom of assembly. The court stressed that criminalisation has a chilling effect on the exercise of the right to freedom of assembly:

“[C]riminalisation has a ‘calamitous effect’ on those caught within its wide net. The possibility of arrest and its aftermath, even without conviction, is a real ‘spectre’ for those seeking to exercise their section 17 right. If convicted, those concerned face punishment, moral stigma, and a criminal record for at least ten years.”

The court accordingly found that the provision was inconsistent with the Constitution and declared it invalid. The Bill seeks to rectify this defect in the Act by deleting the provision. But the Bill does no more than what was directly ordered by the Court.

Criminalisation

There are a number of other provisions in the Act that similarly impose criminal sanctions for conduct connected to gatherings.

Section 12(1)(b) of the Act criminalises

the failure to attend a meeting called for negotiations regarding the amendment of notices and the imposition of conditions on a gathering.

Section 12(1)(c) criminalises the failure by convenors to appoint marshals, and to take steps to inform participants and marshals of conditions to which a gathering is subject.

Section 12(1)(d) criminalises the contravention of or failure to comply with the contents of a notice or the conditions to which a gathering is subject, if done knowingly.

And section 12(1)(h) criminalises the failure to comply with the notice requirements in respect of the postponement, delay or cancellation of a gathering.

The criminalisation of this conduct clearly limits the right to freedom of assembly. While the criminalisation serves the important purpose of avoiding disruptive protests, it does not appear that the limitation can be justified under section 36 of the Constitution (the limitations clause). This follows from the reasoning of the Constitutional Court in *Mlungwana*. Criminalisation cannot be justified if there are less restrictive ways to avert disruptive protests, including the imposition of administrative fines or heightened civil liability for convenors.

There are, therefore, grave doubts about the constitutionality of various provisions in the Gatherings Act. The Bill must address this to align the Act with the Constitution.

South Africa, officially the Republic of South Africa (RSA), is the southernmost country in Africa. It is bounded to the south by 2,798 kilometres (1,739 mi) of coastline of Southern Africa stretching along the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans; to the north by the neighbouring countries of Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe; and to the east and northeast by Mozambique and Eswatini (Swaziland); and it surrounds the enclaved country of Lesotho. South Africa is the largest country in Southern Africa and the 25th-largest country in the world by land area and, with over 57 million people, is the world's 24th-most populous nation. It is the southernmost country on the mainland of the Old World or the Eastern Hemisphere. About 80 per cent of South Africans are of Bantu ancestry, divided among a variety of ethnic groups speaking different African languages, nine of which have official status. The remaining population consists of Africa's largest communities of Whites, Asian (Indian), and multiracial (Coloured) ancestry.

South Africa is a multiethnic society encompassing a wide variety of cultures, languages, and religions. Its pluralistic makeup is reflected in the constitution's recognition of 11 official languages, which is the fourth highest number in the world. Two of these languages are of European origin: Afrikaans developed from Dutch and serves as the first language of most coloured and white South Africans; English reflects the legacy of British colonialism, and is commonly used in public and commercial life, though it is fourth-ranked as a spoken first language. The country is one of the few in Africa never to have had a coup d'état, and regular elections have been held for almost a century. However, the vast majority of black South Africans were not enfranchised until 1994. During the 20th century, the black majority sought to recover its rights from the dominant white minority, with this struggle playing a large role in the country's recent history and politics. The National Party imposed apartheid in 1948, institutionalising previous racial segregation. After a long and sometimes violent struggle by the African National Congress (ANC) and other anti-apartheid activists both inside and outside the country, the repeal of discriminatory laws began in the mid-1980s.

Since 1994, all ethnic and linguistic groups have held political representation in the country's liberal democracy, which comprises a parliamentary republic and nine provinces. South Africa is often referred to as the “rainbow nation” to describe the country's multicultural diversity, especially in the wake of apartheid. The World Bank classifies South Africa as an upper-middle-income economy, and a newly industrialised country. Its economy is the second-largest in Africa, and the 34th-largest in the world. In terms of purchasing power parity, South Africa has the seventh-highest per capita income in Africa. However, poverty and inequality remain widespread, with about a quarter of the population unemployed and living on less than US\$1.25 a day. Nevertheless, South AF-



Protests and large gatherings are often the only mechanism available to vulnerable people to express their concerns

rica has been identified as a middle power in international affairs, and maintains significant regional influence.

The name “South Africa” is derived from the country's geographic location at the southern tip of Africa. Upon formation, the country was named the Union of South Africa in English, reflecting its origin from the unification of four formerly separate British colonies. Since 1961, the long form name in English has been the “Republic of South Africa”. In Dutch, the country was named Republiek van Zuid-Afrika, replaced in 1983 by the Afrikaans Republiek van Suid-Afrika. Since 1994, the Republic has had an official name in each of its 11 official languages.

Mzansi, derived from the Xhosa noun umzantsi meaning “south”, is a colloquial name for South Africa, while some Pan-Africanist political parties prefer the term “Azania”.

History

Prehistoric archaeology

South Africa contains some of the oldest archaeological and human-fossil sites in the world. Archaeologists have recovered extensive fossil remains from a series of caves in Gauteng Province. The area, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has been branded “the Cradle of Humankind”. The sites include Sterkfontein, one of the richest sites for hominin fossils in the world. Other sites include Swartkrans, Gondolin Cave Kromdraai, Coopers Cave and Malapa. Raymond Dart identified the first hominin fossil discovered in Africa, the Taung Child (found near Taung) in 1924. Further hominin remains have come from the sites of Makapansgat in Limpopo Province, Cornelia and Florisbad in the Free State Province, Border Cave in KwaZulu-Natal Province, Klasies River Mouth in Eastern Cape Province and Pinnacle Point, Elandsfontein and Die Kelders Cave in Western Cape Province.

These finds suggest that various hominid species existed in South Africa from about three million years ago, starting with Australopithecus africanus. There followed species including Australopithecus sediba, Homo ergaster, Homo erectus, Homo rhodesiensis, Homo helmei, Homo naledi and modern humans (Homo sapiens). Modern humans have inhabited Southern Africa for at least 170,000 years.

Bantu expansion

Settlements of Bantu-speaking peoples, who were iron-using agriculturists and herdsmen, were already present south of the Limpopo River (now the northern border with Botswana and Zimbabwe) by the 4th or 5th century CE (see Bantu expansion). They displaced, conquered and absorbed the original Khoisan speakers, the Khoikhoi and San peoples. The Bantu slowly moved south. The earliest ironworks in modern-day KwaZulu-Natal Province are believed to date from around 1050. The southernmost group was the Xhosa people, whose language incorporates certain linguistic traits from the earlier Khoisan people. The Xhosa reached the Great Fish River, in today's Eastern Cape Province. As they migrated, these larger Iron Age populations displaced or assimilated earlier peoples. In Mpumalanga Province, several stone circles have been found along with the stone arrangement that has been named Adam's Calendar.

Portuguese contacts

At the time of European contact, the dominant ethnic group were Bantu-speaking peoples who had migrated from other parts of Africa about one thousand years before. The two major historic groups were the Xhosa and Zulu peoples.

In 1487, the Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias led the first European voyage to land in southern Africa. On 4 December, he landed at Walvisch Bay (now known as Walvis Bay in present-day Namibia). This was south of the furthest point reached in 1485 by his predecessor, the Portuguese navigator Diogo Cão (Cape Cross, north of the bay). Dias continued down the western coast of southern Africa. After 8 January 1488, prevented by storms from proceeding along the coast, he sailed out of sight of land and passed the southernmost point of Africa without seeing it. He reached as far up the eastern coast of Africa as, what he called, Rio do Infante, probably the present-day Groot River, in May 1488, but on his return he saw the Cape, which he first named Cabo das Tormentas (Cape of Storms). His King, John II, re-

named the point Cabo da Boa Esperança, or Cape of Good Hope, as it led to the riches of the East Indies. Dias' feat of navigation was later immortalised in Luís de Camões' Portuguese epic poem, *The Lusíads* (1572).

Dutch colonisation

By the early 17th century, Portugal's maritime power was starting to decline, and English and Dutch merchants competed to oust Lisbon from its lucrative monopoly on the spice trade. Representatives of the British East India Company did call sporadically at the Cape in search of provisions as early as 1601, but later came to favour Ascension Island and St. Helena as alternative ports of refuge. Dutch interest was aroused after 1647, when two employees of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) were shipwrecked there for several months. The sailors were able to survive by obtaining fresh water and meat from the natives. They also sowed vegetables in the fertile soil. Upon their return to Holland, they reported favourably on the Cape's potential as a “warehouse and garden” for provisions to stock passing ships for long voyages.

In 1652, a century and a half after the discovery of the Cape sea route, Jan van Riebeeck established a victualling station at the Cape of Good Hope, at what would become Cape Town, on behalf of the Dutch East India Company. In time, the Cape became home to a large population of “vrijlieden”, also known as “vrijburgers” (lit. free citizens), former Company employees who stayed in Dutch territories overseas after serving their contracts. Dutch traders also imported thousands of slaves to the fledgling colony from Indonesia, Madagascar, and parts of eastern Africa. Some of the earliest mixed race communities in the country were formed through unions between vrijburgers, their slaves, and various indigenous peoples. This led to the development of a new ethnic group, the Cape Coloureds, most of whom adopted the Dutch language and Christian faith.

The eastward expansion of Dutch colonists ushered in a series of wars with the southwesterly migrating Xhosa tribe, known as the Xhosa Wars, as both sides competed for the pastureland necessary to graze their cattle near the Great Fish River. Vrijburgers who became independent farmers on the frontier were known as Boers, with some adopting semi-nomadic lifestyles being denoted as trekboers. The Boers formed loose militias, which they termed commandos, and forged alliances with Khoisan groups to repel Xhosa raids. Both sides launched bloody but inconclusive offensives, and sporadic violence, often accompanied by livestock theft, remained common for several decades.

British colonisation

Invasion of the Cape Colony, Cape Colony, British Bechuanaland, and Colony of Natal

Great Britain occupied Cape Town between 1795 and 1803 to prevent it from falling under the control of the French First Republic, which had invaded the Low Countries. Despite briefly returning to Dutch rule under the Batavian Republic in 1803, the Cape was occupied again by the British in 1806. Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, it was formally ceded to Great Britain and became an integral part of the British Empire. British emigration to South Africa began around 1818, subsequently culminating in the arrival of the 1820 Settlers. The new colonists were induced to settle for a variety of reasons, namely to increase the size of the European workforce and to bolster frontier regions against Xhosa incursions.

In the first two decades of the 19th century, the Zulu people grew in power and expanded their territory under their leader, Shaka. Shaka's warfare indirectly led to the Mfecane (“crushing”), in which 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 people were killed and the inland plateau was devastated and depopulated in the early 1820s. An offshoot of the Zulu, the Matabele people created a larger empire that included large parts of the highveld under their king Mzilikazi.

During the early 1800s, many Dutch settlers departed from the Cape Colony, where they had been subjected to British control. They migrated to the future Natal, Orange Free State, and Transvaal regions. The Boers founded the Boer Republics: the South African Republic (now Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West provinces), the Natalia Republic (KwaZulu-Natal), and the Orange Free State (Free State).

The discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1884 in the interior started the Mineral Revolution and increased economic growth and immigration. This intensified British efforts to gain control over the indigenous peoples. The struggle to control these important economic resources was a factor in relations between Europeans and the indigenous population and also between the Boers and the British.

The Anglo-Zulu War was fought in 1879 between the British Empire and the Zulu Kingdom. Following Lord Carnarvon's successful introduction of federation in Canada, it was thought that similar political effort, coupled with military campaigns, might succeed with the African kingdoms, tribal areas and Boer republics in South Africa. In 1874, Sir Henry Bartle Frere was sent to South Africa as High Commissioner for the British Empire to bring such plans into being. Among the obstacles were the presence of the independent states of the Boers and the Kingdom of Zululand and its army. The Zulu nation defeated the British at the Battle of Isandlwana. Eventually, though, the war was lost, resulting in the termination of the Zulu nation's independence.

The Boer Republics successfully resisted British encroachments during the First Boer War (1880-1881) using guerrilla warfare tactics, which were well suited to local conditions. The British returned with greater numbers, more experience, and new strategy in the Second Boer War (1899-1902) but suffered heavy casualties through attrition; nonetheless, they were ultimately successful.

Independence

Within the country, anti-British policies among white South Africans focused on independence. During the Dutch and British colonial years, racial segregation was mostly informal, though some legislation was enacted to control the settlement and movement of native people, including the Native Location Act of 1879 and the system of pass laws.

Eight years after the end of the Second Boer War and after four years of negotiation, an act of the British Parliament (South Africa Act 1909) granted nominal independence, while creating the Union of South Africa on 31 May 1910. The Union was a dominion that included the former territories of the Cape, Transvaal and Natal colonies, as well as the Orange Free State republic.

The Natives' Land Act of 1913 severely restricted the ownership of land by blacks; at that stage natives controlled only 7 per cent of the country. The amount of land reserved for indigenous peoples was later marginally increased.

In 1931, the union was fully sovereign from the United Kingdom with the passage of the Statute of Westminster, which abolished the last powers of the British Government on the country. In 1934, the South African Party and National Party merged to control the vastly larger black majority.

Ten questions for publishers launching digital subscriptions

By Lee Kah Whye

AT the time of WAN-IFRA's (World Association of News Publishers) recent Digital Media Asia, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post (SCMP) was eight weeks into its new digital subscription service.

Adrian Lee, the publication's senior vice president for marketing and events and executive sponsor of their digital subscription project, discussed some early lessons from the Post's much-anticipated global subscriptions launch.

He highlighted ten questions he recommended that publishers should ask themselves when they consider launching a subscription service.

Question One: Why are you launching a subscription service?

For the South China Morning Post, revenue diversity is something that is key to the sustainability of not just us but news organisations in general, especially in the digital age," Lee stated.

He elaborated: "Building direct relationships with readers is a healthy value exchange between readers and news organisations. Everyone knows that quality, premium, fact-checked journalism is not sustainable if there isn't a revenue line that supports that."

Lee went on to explain that what helped SCMP launch their subscription service was their growth. In March 2017, they had 3 million monthly active users. This had ballooned to 50 million by March 2020, aided by global interest in China's rise as well as Covid-19.

Question Two: Who's in the room?

Starting and running a digital subscription service is a collaborative and cross-department effort, and the right people must be "in the room".

"We had to have all our respective teams engaging and aware of what the impact of raising a digital service would mean to them," Lee reasoned, adding: "Leaders from each department meet weekly to discuss what is upcoming, and what the learnings and the implications might be."

Question Three: What's your positioning?

There are two market positions for the SCMP subscription service. First, the legacy of SCMP is that of the news-

paper of record in Hong Kong. It desires to serve every English speaker in Hong Kong and make everyone a subscriber.

Outside of Hong Kong, The Post is looking to support anyone who wants to have an elevated understanding of China. It sees itself as a specialist publication which this target group will additionally subscribe to.

"Knowing that we have different positions actually changes the way we build our product, potentially changes the way that we price and also changes the way we market and communicate our service," Lee says.

Question Four: What type of subscription service should one choose?

There are three different types of subscription service - hard paywall, freemium and flat or dynamic metered. SCMP has chosen the metered route, but it is also looking into finding a blended option.

"We've seen a number of news organisations blend their subscription services based on market needs, audience needs and, effectively, the premium-ness and the strength of the content they are able to generate," said Lee, adding: "The choice of a subscription model is an evolving decision. It's not something that is wholly fixed."

Question Five: What should be in front of your meter?

SCMP had a lot of discussions about what should be behind their paywall. They decided that core editorial content should sit behind the paywall.

The content that SCMP decided should stay in front of the paywall includes commercial content where there are advertisers paying for it, corporate pages, public service content, product and services pages, experimental content and some nascent areas and specialty sub-brands.

Question Six: What kind of technology decisions should you make?

There were four things that SCMP had to decide regarding technology. The first decision to make was whether to buy or build the technology. SCMP decided to buy as that would allow them to scale quicker.

The second was related to the selection of a payment gateway, what curren-



cies to process in and the local tax implications.

Thirdly, SCMP had to implement a system to capture customer information and to market its services.

They knew that being data savvy was important. Among other things, it helped them understand and track their audience and allowed for efficient and effective communication with users.

They had an email service provider which helped them automate client communication via newsletter and EDM (electronic direct mail). Another requirement is a digital advertisement server for running house and paid advertisements.

The final piece is customer service, which the SCMP decided to outsource owing to their requirement for speed of deployment, scalability and the need for 24/7 support for global customers.

Question Seven: How do you price your products?

Some of the things SCMP had to consider for pricing are the various types of customers they have. Website and in-app pricing also had to be considered.

To leverage customers of existing products and services, SCMP used bundling to encourage them to subscribe to the new digital service. The publication looked into bundling digital subscriptions with their print newspaper, their events business and their knowledge vertical, SCMP Research.

Other important considerations are the duration of plans, trial pricing and launch promotions.

Question Eight: How are you marketing your products?

"We worked out that the best way to convert subscriptions is to speak to our existing readers," Lee said, elaborating: "We

spent a lot of our time working on our contact strategy to understand how we should be communicating to our existing users who have SCMP accounts and who have subscribed to newsletters but who have not yet bought a subscription. Those are people who understand the value proposition of SCMP."

Similarly, SCMP built a strategy around communicating with potential subscribers and subscribers who have churned or who are coming to the end of their plan in order to encourage them to sign a new contract.

SCMP has a blended approach of organic and paid marketing. The various marketing campaigns that have run recently include a "support journalism" mission-driven message for Hong Kongers and the rest of the world, tactical marketing focused on price, and some experiments with specific messaging for various high-growth markets around the world.

Question Nine: How do you measure success?

SCMP has set very ambitious goals and tracks these with a daily dashboard that displays daily revenue numbers and also shows which stories are driving up the subscription numbers, as well as churn attribution.

"You really need to take a daily look at all of your data to understand what is working and what is not. This goes for paid and unpaid pieces, as well," Lee explained.

Question Ten: How are you iterating and learning?

To grow a digital subscription service, Lee recommends continuous iteration or rehearsal and learning. SCMP's core leadership team meets weekly both to suggest new approaches to testing and to assess performance.

The publication has various subscription teams looking at user acquisition, conversion, retention and community as well as a special team looking at performance and how to maximise conversion.

The data team helps team members understand and evaluate performance, which leads to ideas and further debate. Goals are set weekly as well as quarterly.

"Having this combination and the frequency of communication does help us," Lee said, adding: "We frequently do retrospectives as well, which makes us able to have honest conversation about what works and what doesn't."

•A dispatch by the World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) which Lee Kah Whye, director of media business consultancy Project Mercury, penned as an external contributor. He has previously nearly 20 years at Reuters and was head of the news agency business for Asia. SCMP has meanwhile been reporting news about Asia and China and its impact on the world for 17 years. It recently launched a digital subscription service. business consultancy.

Recusal, friendship and impartiality: Interesting times indeed at South Africa's Zondo Commission

By Omphemetse S Sibanda

ASSUMING that it is proven that Zondo and Zuma were once friends, can we arrive at the conclusion that Zondo is a 'bad judge' to preside over Zuma's appearance at the commission because their assumed friendship makes it difficult for Zondo to be impartial?

The argumentation at the Zondo Commission this week generated many talking points. These ranged from references to gold-diggers; reference to the Zondo Commission as the "Slaughterhouse Commission"; propagation of a conspiracy theory that Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, or rather the commission, had lined up witnesses in the most unintellectual manner and contained "people that truly had a gripe and an axe to grind with the former president Jacob Zuma"; and reference to professors talking about the commission as a place of accountability when they had not set foot in court.

All this was said by advocate Muzi Sikhakhane in representing Zuma in his bid to have Zondo dethroned as the chairperson of the commission.

Recusal cases are not a walk in the park for petitioners. But for now, I would like to focus on "friendship" as one of the points of concern and used to support the bid for the recusal of Zondo.

I previously wrote that recusal jurisprudence based on friendship between the judicial officer and the "accused" as a ground has not gained much favour in many developed legal systems (see here). In this opinion, I do not wish to regurgitate my previous argumentation about recusal and friendship, except to quote once more from an article by Jeremy M Miller:

"Friendship is loyalty, and loyalty to one side of a case (be it a named party or law-



Former president Jacob Zuma at the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into allegations of state capture

yer) is the perfect antonym to impartiality. Partiality being the perfect definition of a bad judge." Assuming that it is proven that Zondo and Zuma were once friends, can we arrive at the conclusion that Zondo is a "bad judge" to preside over Zuma's appearance at the commission because their assumed friendship makes it difficult for Zondo to be impartial?

South Africa is eagerly awaiting Zondo's ruling on Zuma's application for his disqualification as the chair of the commission. Some are concerned that the commission will collapse should Zondo be recused, amounting to a free pardon for all who want to get away with crimes of State Capture.

Others may be waiting to see if the "non-

sense" by Sikhakhane that "the case law applicable to recusal applications was 'unreliable', and 'intellectually dishonest', as judges got to determine what standard should be used to decide whether they should recuse themselves," will have some legal force and effect. "I am very reluctant about case law on recusal because it is judges telling the world, 'When you judge me, judge me this way,'" said Sikhakhane.

Strangely though, Sikhakhane's mistrust of the judges in recusal rulings did not stop him from relying heavily on the Canadian case law governing the disqualification of judges, which has, over the years, taken divergent strands on the issue of judicial impartiality. To be precise, Sikhakhane relied

on R v S, Report [1997] 3 SCR 484 regarding the bias of a judge to make what at times looked like a condescending attitude toward a commission and/or its chairperson in trying to explain in a convoluted manner the concept of apprehension of bias. Not that there was anything new or worth influencing the South African case law because the gist of the Canadian case of R v S with respect to the test for the apprehension of bias is part of the test laid down by the South African Constitutional Court in President of the Republic of South Africa and Others v South African Rugby Football Union and others 1999(4) SA 147 (CC).

My interest is in knowing what impact Zuma's response to the denial by Zondo that

they never were friends will have on the recusal decision, because this will change recusal jurisprudence in South Africa forever.

Perhaps excitement over the outcome is in part harnessed by scholarship such as that of James Sample, which I agree with, who in his 2013 article (Supreme Court Recusal: From Marbury to the Modern Day, 26 Geo. J. Legal Ethics 95) revealed that Justice Scalia of the United States Supreme Court once remarked that "[a] no-friends rule would have disqualified much of the Court in Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company v. Sawyer [343 U.S. 579 (1952)], the case that challenged President Truman's seizure of the steel mills. Most of the Justices knew Truman well, and four had been appointed by him." [At p.109].

Just for your interest, and context, to settle a labour dispute and avert a nationwide strike of steelworkers in April 1952, which he believed would jeopardise national defence, President Harry S Truman issued an Executive Order directing the Secretary of Commerce to seize and operate most of the US's steel mills. Fred Vinson, appointed by President Truman in 1946 as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, sat in the Sawyer case and gave a dissenting judgment in favour of Truman. Should it mean that the chairperson of a commission of inquiry; the Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice should as a general rule be disqualified from hearing matters or cases of presidents who appointed them in the first place?

Madame Justice LHeureux-Dubé in the Canadian case of R v S, Report [1997] cited by Sikhakhane discussed the difficulty of dealing with the concept of impartiality. She proposed that this may be addressed in part by relying on the integrity of judges and making it known that the significance of reliance on the integrity of judges is often neglected in recusal cases.

I would be interested to know if Sikhakhane's glowing admission that his client Zuma and himself do not doubt the integrity of Zondo would embolden Zondo not to recuse himself or if it would counter his argument for Zondo to recuse himself.

Perhaps most fitting for whatever outcome we will receive on recusal is the phrase, "May you live in interesting times", borrowed from what is said to be a Chinese curse and given notoriety when used by Robert Kennedy in his speech in Cape Town in June 1996.

Migratory locusts threaten SADC food security

By Moses Magadza

MEMBERS of Parliament from the SADC region are calling for a concerted regional effort to prevent African Migratory Locusts (AML) exacerbating an already dire food security situation, amid reports that the destructive pests have become "smarter".

The locusts are already wreaking havoc in several SADC countries that include Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Angola, stoking fears of famine in a region in which nearly 44.5 million people are already food insecure.

Dr Lewis Hove, the Resilience team leader at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s sub regional office for Southern Africa last week told the lawmakers that scientists were baffled by an unprecedented observation that the locusts were now surviving in winter when there is little for them to eat.

"That is a problem we are seeing for the first time. It (AML) is not behaving the way it normally behaves. Maybe the temperatures are warmer and they can survive on things they don't normally graze on. It eats all the cereals and pasture for livestock," Hove told

the MPs who belong to the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. Their Committee met virtually.

Many economies in Southern Africa rely on agriculture, with an estimated 70 percent of the region's citizens eking their livelihoods in the sector. Although the AML outbreak is the talk of the moment, Hove said there were "much more threats the region faces to food security".

He said: "The agriculture sector is still reeling from the catastrophic impact of climate change and recurrent droughts, with dire humanitarian, environmental and productivity consequences. The impact of climate change has been compounded by the serious consequences of trans-boundary plants pests and diseases."

In recent years, climate change has been so severe on crop production that even top grain-producing countries that include South Africa and Zambia were struggling to meet their own needs.

Apart from causing droughts and floods in parts of SADC, climate change has triggered an outbreak of Fruit flies that have been decimating fruits in all SADC

Member States save Lesotho, with annual losses due to the flies in Africa conservatively estimated at US\$2 billion.

Added to this, the Fall Armyworm, which landed in Southern Africa in 2017 and is now present in all SADC countries except Lesotho, has caused losses of over 20 million Metric Tonnes of maize in 12 African countries – enough to feed 100 million people.

As if that is not bad enough, tomato farmers all over SADC are up against Tomato Leaf Miner disease, which is also known as Tuta absoluta. Hove said yield losses to this "terrible disease" could reach "100 percent under high pest infestation with significant impact on tomato production, income and trade".

Tomato is widely regarded as a crop grown or sold by women in informal markets, so the disease is reportedly disproportionately affecting women.

Other diseases threatening food security in the region include the Banana Fusarium wilt, which wiped out bananas on 1 550 hectares and caused the laying off of 2 500 farm workers at Matanuska Farm in Burma Valley in Zimbabwe in 2013.

In Angola, DRC, Malawi, Mo-

zambique, Tanzania and Zambia, farmers are cracking their heads over the Banana Bunchy top virus, while in other parts of Africa Cassava Brown Streak virus disease and Wheat Blast disease are thwarting farmers' efforts.

The AML is the latest on a list of pests posing a serious danger to crop production and livestock grazing during the 2020/21 season. The pests normally breed in Botswana and Angola but have spread to many countries when normal to above normal rainfall has been forecasted in most parts of the region.

"We need to make sure that farmers capitalise on that (good season) to recover from the series of droughts," Hove said.

He suggested that to beat the locusts, SADC Member States could learn from the insects and try to outwit them at their game.

He said: "As they fly together, they are very smart. Individually, they might be foolish but as a swarm they coordinate very well. That's why it is important that we work as a region, not as individual countries. They can fly into the next country and we can end up with blame games."

The MPs agreed that responses by individual countries were no

match to the elusive locusts. They called on SADC countries to coordinate their responses and use standard chemicals to kill the pests.

Hove warned: "If we don't control this pest right now – keep it where it is, kill the swarms and the hoppers (young ones) – we are likely to see the livelihoods of at least 2,3 million people already in acute food security further affected."

FAO, working in concert with the SADC Secretariat, has set up a Southern Africa Emergency Locust Response and Preparedness Project.

During the meeting, MPs shared lessons and experiences from responding to the pest infestation. Zimbabwe's Senator Tambudzani Mohadi said her country had invested in training locals to support surveillance efforts.

She said: "Making use of funding from development partners through the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund (ZRBF), the Plant Protection Department conducted 163 Training of Trainers with participants drawn from various stakeholders and to date over 23 000 farmers have been trained adequately on Locusts Bio Identification, surveillance, monitoring

and management of any invasions and their breeding grounds."

An MP from Madagascar, Dr Ra-jaobelina Lava Herizo said AML had affected about 500 hectares in the hard to reach south-west parts of the country since 2013.

"They are threatening livelihoods of communities in those areas," he said. He added that chemicals used to control the locusts were not effective and local communities were using "traditional ways" to try to save their crops.

Herizo said Madagascar was boosting satellite surveillance on the locusts while using drones to detect them with assistance from FAO.

From the Kingdom of Eswatini, lawmaker Princess Phumelele Dlamini said although her country was on the lookout.

"The country is on high alert to ensure routine surveillance at farming communities across all ecological regions. This is being done through the extension service of the Ministry of Agriculture, Mankerns Research Centre, and farmers association. The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) has also been made aware of the possible disaster which may impact the country's food security," she said.

The Princess called for a regional approach and "adoption of early warning and information sharing strategies for the SADC Region".

Hove concurred and contended that national responses including spraying had largely failed due to lack of effective coordination and surveillance in the face of inadequate resources.

The MPs called for increased awareness and advocacy for adequate resources to mount a regional and coordinated response not just to AML, but other trans-boundary pests and plant diseases. They agreed on the need for their governments to set aside resources to make the envisaged regional response a reality.

Granted that AML totally disregards national boundaries, the MPs agreed that confronting the pests as individual nations would be futile.

The MPs agreed, also, on the urgent need to deepen and broaden knowledge on climate change and its effects. To support pre-emptive action, the MPs resolved to advocate for resources to be put in place to set early warning systems and initiate action.

Chikondi Chabvuta from Action

World's only known white giraffe is fitted with tracker to deter poachers

NAIROBI

THE world's only known white giraffe has been fitted with a GPS tracking device to keep poachers at bay in north-east Kenya, conservationists say.

A conservation group said rangers could monitor the lone male giraffe's movements in real time.

The giraffe has a rare genetic condition called leucism, which causes the loss of skin pigmentation.

He is thought to be the last of his kind, after poachers killed two of his family members in March.

Rangers fear the giraffe could suffer the same fate as his relatives, a female and her seven-month-old calf with similar white skin. Their carcasses were found in a conservation area in Kenya's north-eastern Garissa County, where the male giraffe is currently living alone.

The Ishaqbini Hirola Community Conservancy, which oversees wildlife in the area, said the tracking device was attached to one of the giraffe's horns on 8 November.

In a statement the non-profit group said the tracking device would give hourly updates on the giraffe's whereabouts, enabling rangers to "keep the unique animal safe from poachers".

The manager of the group, Mohammed Ahmednoor, thanked conservationists for their help in protecting the giraffe and other wildlife.

"The giraffe's grazing range has been blessed with good rains in the recent past and the abundant vegetation bodes well for the future of the white male," he said.

The Kenya Wildlife Society, the main conservation body in the east-African country, said it was happy to assist in efforts to protect "unique wildlife like the only known white giraffe". White giraffes were first spotted in Kenya in March 2016, about two months after a sighting in neighbouring Tanzania.

A year later, white giraffes made headlines again, after the



mother and her calf from the conservancy in Kenya's Garissa County were caught on camera. Native to more than 15 African countries, giraffes are the world's tallest mammals. They

are hunted by poachers for their hides, meat and body parts.

Some 40% of the giraffe population has disappeared in the last 30 years, with poach-

ing and wildlife trafficking contributing to this decline, according to the Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF).

Giraffes have been designated as a vulner-

able species on The International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List, with an estimated population of 68,293 globally.

Bank supports continental strategy on COVID-19 with US\$27.33 million

By Special Correspondent,

ADDIS ABABA

THE African Development Bank (AfDB) has approved a grant of US\$27.33 million to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

The grant agreement was signed yesterday in Addis Ababa by Amira Elfadil Mohammed, Commissioner for Social Affairs, African Union Commission and Dr Abdul Kamara, Ethiopia Country Manager, African Development Bank.

Awarded under three key components - technical assistance and capacity building (US\$19.33 million), institutional support (US\$7 million) and contribution to the African Union COVID-19 Response Fund (US\$1 million) - the grant is to support implementation of the Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak. It will enable Africa CDC to provide technical assistance and capacity building support in combating the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigating its impact in 37 Afri-

can Development Fund eligible African Union Member States.

"The fight against COVID-19 is far from being over," said Mohammed. "This generous financial support from the African Development Bank will help strengthen the capacity of Africa CDC to respond to the COVID-19 and future pandemics. It will help improve the capacity of National Public Health Institutes of Member States, support evidence-based epidemic intelligence, strengthen infection prevention and control, and support the Regional Economic Communities."

"The expected outcome from the Bank's collaboration with the Africa Union is a stronger Africa CDC able to rapidly coordinate emergency assistance across Africa, particularly in low income member countries, beyond the current COVID-19 response, working in collaboration with other development partners, including those in the private sector," said Dr Kamara.

In February 2020, Africa CDC developed a continental strategy to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, aimed to enhance

cooperation, collaboration, coordination and communication while preventing severe illness and death and minimizing social disruption and economic consequences due to the pandemic.

The strategy was validated by the African ministers of health in February and endorsed by

the Bureau of Heads of State and Government in March 2020.

Although Africa has not recorded very high number of COVID-19 cases and deaths as in other continents, the impact of the pandemic has been very high on the continent, exerting intense pressure on the al-

ready fragile health system and adversely affecting the socio-economic situation on the continent.

Since the validation and endorsement of the continental strategy, Africa CDC has continued to leverage resources to provide technical and material sup-

port to Member States in their response to COVID-19.

In June 2020, Africa CDC rolled out the Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT), an initiative that has enabled it to bring partners together as a collective to expand testing, contact tracing and treatment of COVID-19 cases across the continent.

"We see PACT as a movement that allows us to do certain things very quickly. Since it was rolled out, testing, contact tracing and treatment have improved across the continent, but we are not there yet. What this tells us is that what we are doing is working and we must intensify our efforts. This is why partnership with institutions like AfDB is very important to us," said Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC.

The partnership with the AfDB is unique as a pan-African institution supporting socio-economic and development initiatives across Africa. The grant award will significantly enhance the capacity of Africa CDC to provide more support to eligible Member States.

"Indeed this grant will be a big boost to Africa CDC efforts in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa including strengthening its own capacity to address public health issues in the continent," said Dr Ahmed Ouma, Deputy Director of Africa CDC.

As a leading development finance institution, AfDB has made significant contributions to the COVID-19 response in Africa through its COVID-19 Rapid Response Facility approved by the Boards of Directors in April 2020 and this contribution will further contribute to the Bank's efforts in mitigating the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Africa.

"Through this support to the African Union and the Africa CDC, the Bank is demonstrating its continued commitment to supporting African countries to build a healthy and productive society in line with the High-5 Agenda on 'Improving the quality of life for the people of Africa'," said Martha Phiri, Director of the Human Capital, Youth and Skills Development Department.



A cop shoots a Black man, and a police union flexes its muscles

By LISA GIRION and READE LEVINSON Filed ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

BY the time Officer Joseph Ferrigno shot a Black man from behind, court records show, the Rochester cop had drawn at least 23 misconduct complaints in nearly nine years on the force.

One came from a woman who said Ferrigno, a burly hockey player, slammed her to the ground and broke one of her ribs. Another was from a one-legged man dumped from his wheelchair at a bus stop and roughed up by Ferrigno and two other officers.

Through it all, the Rochester Police Department and the Locust Club, the local police union, stood by Ferrigno. By his own account, the officer never once was disciplined for using excessive force.

Then came April 1, 2016, when Ferrigno - alone in his squad car on a chilly, moonless night - made the most fateful decision of his career.

Two hours into his shift, Ferrigno spotted a Chevrolet Impala, the same model driven by a Black man suspected of threatening a woman with a gun a few days before. Without turning on his overhead lights or siren, Ferrigno followed for a few blocks, then watched as the driver backed into a driveway on a residential street. The officer pulled in front of the driveway, flipped on his cruiser's spotlight and trained it on the Impala. He saw two Black men inside.

Ferrigno drew his Glock handgun, jumped out and shouted, "stay in the car," he later told detectives in a sworn statement.

Silvon Simmons, the passenger in the Impala, remembers the moment differently. He heard no warning, he told Reuters. Blinded by the spotlight, he couldn't make out anything about the car blocking the narrow driveway.

Simmons, a 34-year-old equipment deliveryman, wasn't the man wanted by police. Nor was the car's driver, who lived next door. The two later explained they were coming home from a trip to the store.

As Simmons stepped from the Impala and squinted into the spotlight, he told Reuters, he was terrified by the silhouette that emerged: a large figure charging toward him, gun in hand. In a neighborhood where gunplay is common, Simmons turned and ran toward the back door of the house where he lived with his girlfriend and their three boys.

Ferrigno, 33, had been on the lookout for a man driving an Impala. Even so, the cop ran past the driver, pursuing Simmons into the darkness. Suddenly, Ferrigno told detectives, he saw a "white flash" and heard a "loud bang." Simmons "was shooting at me," the officer said, "and the fear came over me that he was going to continue until he got me."

Ferrigno fired four shots, hitting Simmons three times - in his back, his buttock and his right thigh.

A second officer soon arrived, and the two approached the Black man bleeding in the grass. There, Ferrigno later told detectives, he spotted something: "the suspect's gun on the ground next to him." Simmons later said that he hadn't fired a gun and didn't even own one.

Cops swarmed the scene. At least four - including a detective who led the investigation into Simmons - held official positions in the union. Also quick to arrive was the union's boss, Locust Club President Michael Mazzeo.

Before leaving the scene, Ferrigno asked for two things: a lawyer and a union rep. The officer, who told detectives he "was shaking and still in a state of shock," was driven to the station and later sent home.

Simmons, stripped naked by paramedics treating his wounds, was handcuffed and loaded into an



PURSUIT: Officer Joseph Ferrigno, shown in a Rochester Police Department photo taken shortly after he shot Silvon Simmons, had amassed at least 23 citizen complaints by April 1, 2016, the night of the Simmons shooting. By his account, he was never disciplined for using excessive force.

ambulance. Although Simmons was the one who took three bullets, Ferrigno is listed as the victim in at least 65 police reports.

POLICE POLICING POLICE

Simmons' experience, from the moment Ferrigno spotted the Impala to the surprising conclusion in a courtroom almost two years later, offers a detailed anatomy of the policing tactics and policies that have driven mass protests across the United States. The shooting and its aftermath are also emblematic of the difficulties facing many American cities attempting to remake their police forces.

In Rochester, New York's third-largest city, elected leaders have lost much of their authority in overseeing the city's police force to a strong union. Today, officials here are working to overcome formidable legal roadblocks to reclaim some of that power.

The city council is trying to establish a civilian board with the power to discipline cops. The union, which represents about 700 of the department's 900 employees, is fighting the move in court. A judge has ruled in its favor.

Such struggles to give communities greater oversight are playing out in much of America, where - with few exceptions - police are left to police themselves.

That power to ward off outside scrutiny derives from union contracts and state labor laws. Reuters analyzed labor contracts signed or extended over the last five years by 100 of the nation's largest cities. Most - 88 - set strict limits on how civilian complaints are investigated or how cops are punished. Even with policing under intense scrutiny nationwide, unions in some cities recently have won new rights that make oversight even harder. Such pro-

tections enable cops with histories of misconduct complaints, like Ferrigno, to remain on the beat.

Beyond their favorable contracts, unions have used state labor laws to force cities to negotiate over broader department policies. They have successfully contested changes to where officers are assigned, who directs traffic, who catalogs evidence and who answers 911 calls.

Empowered by statutes and court rulings, unions have moved into "the actual policy and running of police departments," said Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, a Washington, D.C.-based think-tank that advises chiefs.

Rochester's leaders, like those of many cities, share blame for being in this predicament. Amid a recession in the 1980s, many municipalities bargained away some disciplinary authority in exchange for police wage freezes.

Now, when cities try to claw back control, they often fail. Citing state labor laws, courts across the country have held that cities are prohibited from changing police disciplinary policies or procedures unilaterally. In addition, both law-and-order Republicans and pro-labor Democrats in many states have approved "bills of rights" that expand protections for cops beyond what other government workers get.

The Locust Club's Mazzeo and other union bosses say they're protecting public servants who have answered a dangerous calling. Rochester cops patrol a city where the rate of violent crime is twice the national average.

Since 1950, two Rochester police officers have been fatally shot while on the job, union records show. The most recent was in 2014, when Officer Daryl Pierson was shot and killed during a foot chase following a traffic stop.

Failing to defend officers accused of wrongdoing, no matter how disturbing a cop's conduct may seem at first glance, is akin to sacrificing them to a mob, union leaders say. Cities should focus on better policies and training, they argue, and altering the protections officers enjoy won't succeed without union buy-in.

But Wexler, the adviser to police chiefs, says all sides are losing in today's struggle. In the smartphone era, as more police violence is captured on video, the slow pace of responding to public concerns about policing creates greater peril for union members, city leaders and the residents that both serve. As Wexler put it: "Every police department is one incident away from chaos."

HISTORY OF MISTRUST

For its examination of the Simmons case, Reuters talked to dozens of people and reviewed thousands of pages of government documents, including police reports, crime scene photographs, evidence logs, audio recordings and trial testimony. Ferrigno couldn't be interviewed for this article. A Rochester police official said department rules prohibit any of the officers involved in the case, including Ferrigno, from speaking publicly about it.

The Simmons shooting didn't gain much attention outside this city of 206,000, which has fallen on hard times since the Eastman Kodak Company faded as the global king of photography. But for some locals, the case of a white officer - Ferrigno - who shot a Black man - Simmons - became the latest chapter in decades of mistrust between cops and a community.

In July 1964, cops brought police dogs on a call to arrest a drunk man at a street party in a Black neighborhood, sparking days of riots. In 1993, federal lawyers unsuccessfully prosecuted five narcotics officers who allegedly robbed, beat and tortured suspects in predominantly minority neighborhoods. One of those acquitted: Mazzeo, who became head of the union 15 years later, in 2008.

Rochester police officers have shot at least 44 people since 1970, a Reuters review of press accounts found. Of those, 23 died. At least a dozen officers involved in those shootings were recognized later that year for distinguished or excellent service. One received a key to the city. The schism between the city's overwhelmingly white police force and many of its residents - 40% of whom are Black - grew even wider in September, when protests flared over how police treated another Black man.

Daniel Prude, 41, died after he was arrested in March during a psychotic episode. About five months later, video of the arrest became public. It showed a naked Prude handcuffed and hooded while an officer pressed his face into the pavement.

The footage hardened concerns that the use of force by officers remains largely unchecked, with Black residents often suffering the consequences. It brought into focus a key issue Reuters found in examining the Simmons shooting - namely, the insularity of a department policing itself. And it again illustrated the power of Rochester's storied police union.

The Locust Club, which started as a social club for cops, is named for a kind of wood used to make nightsticks. In its early years as a union, it built a reputation for confrontation. Its members once tried unsuccessfully to pressure city officials for a raise by ticketing their cars. Another time, cops campaigned for overtime pay by staging a six-hour walkout, in violation of a judge's order. The city agreed almost immediately to return to the bargaining table, and cops won overtime.

The Locust Club also fought efforts to allow outsiders to play even an advisory role in disciplining officers. Among its first moves: waging a five-year legal challenge against a civilian-led police advisory board that, the union said, was unconstitutional and "hostile to the police and ignorant of police problems."

The union lost the court battle but won the war: In 1970, soon after the Locust Club exhausted its appeals, a new Republican mayor effectively killed the board by eliminating its funding.

In the 1990s, the city tried again, creating a new civilian review board. But the board's powers were limited, and the Locust Club, after threatening to sue, never bothered.

Instead, the union focused on something more valuable to members: new contract provisions defining how officers are investigated for suspected wrongdoing and disciplined for misconduct. Decades later, these provisions would come into play the moment Ferrigno shot Simmons.

TAKING THE BIBLE

Simmons' encounter with the cop played out similarly to others that have stoked outrage against police in other cities: A Black man minding his business gets stopped by a cop and then gets shot.

That's not how the drama was framed on the news the next day. Police said they had been searching for a man wanted for threatening a woman with a gun. Ferrigno had been shot at and returned fire, striking his alleged assailant three times, the reports said. The suspect was in critical condition.

Absent from news accounts was a fact police investigators knew as soon as they pulled Simmons' driver's license from his pocket: He wasn't the man the cops were after. Nor was the driver, a friend who fled to his own house next door.

Simmons woke up handcuffed to a hospital bed, breathing through a tube and flanked by uniformed Rochester police officers. He had a fractured rib, a collapsed lung and bullets that surgeons left in his chest and pelvis.

Police wouldn't let him watch television or see family or a pastor. They refused to answer his questions.

They also took away a source of solace. From a report filed by a Rochester police officer three days after the shooting: "I noticed that Silvon Simmons had a Bible in his hands. I did take that Bible away from him and gave it to the nurse. I did advise her that he isn't allowed to have the Bible in his possession at this point in time."

Although the breathing tube prevented Simmons from talking, he tried to prod police to clear him.

"Did they check me for Residue," he wrote on a piece of paper collected by a police guard. "RESIDUE. Gun Powder. Can you ask please."

Simmons told Reuters he knew that no residue would be found on his palms or the sweatshirt he had on that night. That's because, as he repeatedly told police, the Ruger found near his feet wasn't his.

Police didn't test for residue. They did, however, search his home and car for bullets, holsters, gun cleaning supplies, or anything else that might indicate Simmons owned the Ruger. They found nothing to help their case.

When Simmons was taken off the ventilator, his first visitors were police detectives. He asked for a lawyer. He said the gun wasn't his. On sedatives and the powerful pain reliever oxycodone, Simmons protested that detectives were taking advantage of him.

The detectives continued the interrogation anyway; a judge later ruled the interview violated Simmons' right to counsel.

'I'M THE ONE WHO GOT SHOT'

Ferrigno's turn with detectives went differently. It would be five days before investigators questioned him about his actions that night, after negotiating conditions with his lawyer and Locust Club representatives.

Such delays can make figuring out what happened more difficult, said Stephen Rushin, a criminal law professor at Chicago's Loyola University. "The first 48 hours are some of the most important periods of time to get to the truth and make sure that people can't construct stories to deflect blame," Rushin said.

Ferrigno gave his statement in the office of a private lawyer provided by the union. The detectives were fellow members of the Locust Club.

The day before Ferrigno's interview, a Monroe County Court judge arraigned Simmons in the hospital. Simmons hadn't yet had a chance to meet his public defender, and the charges were grave: attempted aggravated murder, attempted aggravated assault of a police officer, and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon.

As it happened, Judge Melchor Castro had seen Simmons before.

In 2013, Castro had signed off on a plea deal and sentenced Simmons to a year in jail for misdemeanor assault. Simmons told authorities that a neighbor in Rochester's sometimes tough Dutchtown section had pulled a gun and then shot at his truck as Simmons hurried to get away, court documents show. Simmons escaped without injury, but only after he deliberately struck and injured the neighbor with his Dodge Durango SUV, according to court records.

During the brief hearing in 2013, Simmons was told that he was waiving any rights, "such as self defense in this matter," by taking the plea deal. Simmons replied, "yes, sir." He served eight months.

When Castro came to his hospital room in 2016 to explain the charges, this time Simmons was incredulous. "What in the world are you talking about?" Simmons recalled telling the judge. "I'm the one who got shot."

Bail was set at \$250,000. Simmons remembered it as "some crazy numbers that we couldn't ever do. Never."

Frank and Sharlene Simmons, retired and living in Tennessee, drove nearly a thousand miles to be by their son's side.

At the hospital, they were stopped at the nurses' station. Sharlene scanned the intensive care bays until she saw her son "chained" to the bed and surrounded by guards. The sight "just broke us to pieces," she recalled. Frank, a decorated Marine veteran who served in Vietnam, said it seemed like Simmons was being treated "like a POW."

His parents say Simmons had been a good student. He played shortstop on a youth baseball team sponsored by the Rochester Police Department. As a boy, he thought about becoming a cop like his cousin, who at the time was on the Rochester force. Eventually, he followed his father into a job delivering heating and air conditioning equipment.

In early 2017, after Simmons had been in jail for nearly a year, a county prosecutor offered a deal. The most serious charges - attempting to kill a police officer and attempted aggravated assault - would be dismissed. But only if he pleaded guilty to a weapons charge and accepted a 15-year sentence.

Rejecting the deal meant risking life in prison. Public defender Elizabeth Riley presented the prosecutor's offer. She said his response was immediate.

"No. I didn't do it," Simmons told her. "I'm not taking that deal."

Agencies



PAINFUL MEMORIES: Simmons at Immel Street, site of the shooting, in September. He said it was his first time back in the neighborhood since he was hauled away in handcuffs in an ambulance 4½ years earlier. REUTER

WARNING

Smoking worsens Covid-19 infection in airways, newly completed research reveals

SAN FRANCISCO

SINCE the early days of the pandemic, questions have been raised about the link between smoking and Covid-19, the disease caused by SARS-CoV-2.

In June this year, the World Health Organization stated that, based on existing literature assessing the association between smoking and Covid-19, there was “insufficient information to confirm any link between tobacco or nicotine in the prevention or treatment of Covid-19”.

However, more recent studies have shown that while smokers are not at risk of contracting infection, their risk of severe disease and death, once infected, is higher than that of non-smokers, although the ways that cigarette smoke exposure affects airway cell infection by SARS-CoV-2 have not been very clear.

A new study by scientists at the

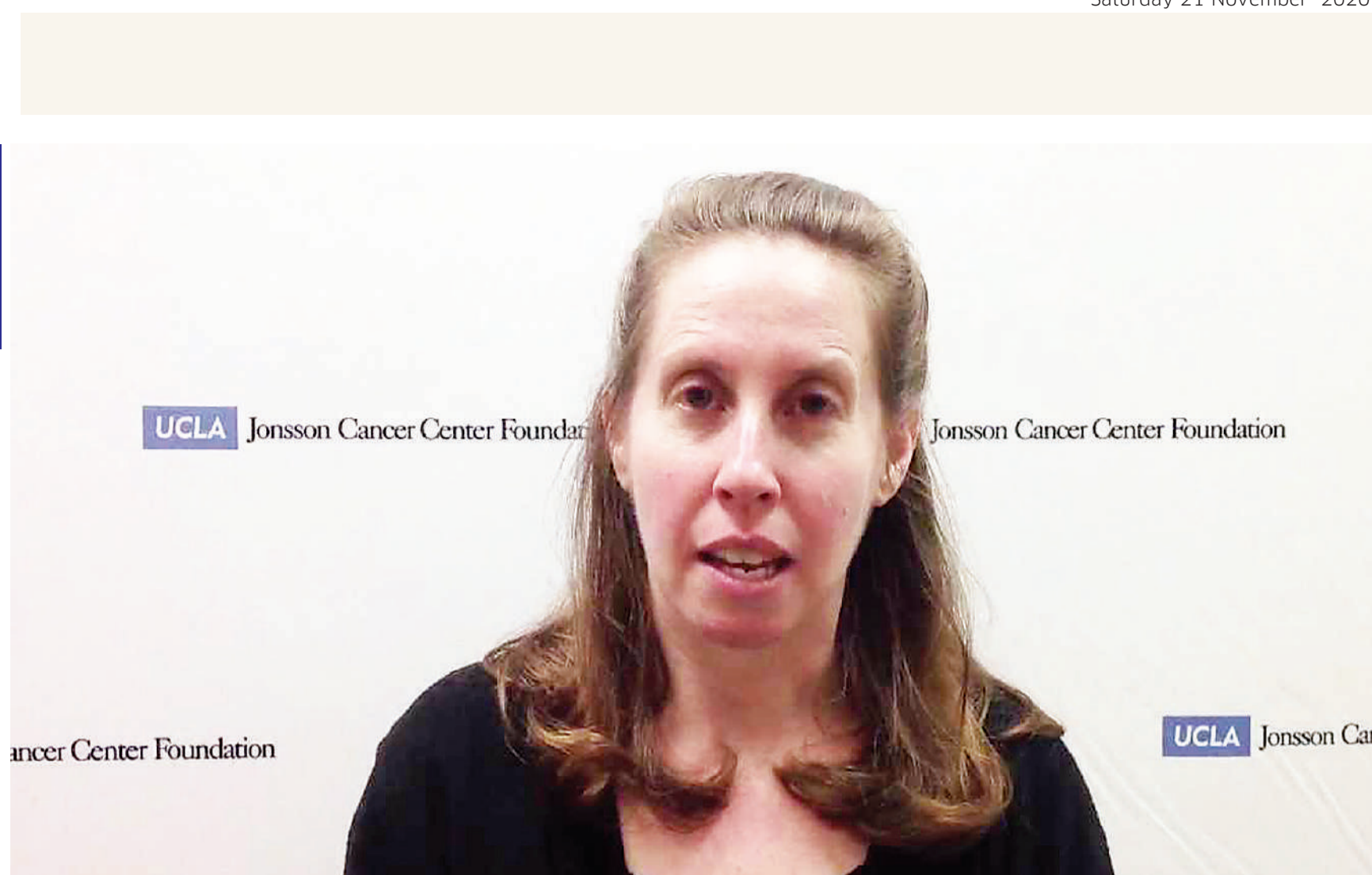
Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at the University of California has helped understand how this happens by investigating SARS-CoV-2 infection on a cellular and molecular level – using a model of airway tissue created from human cells.

Smoking vs vaping: Which one is worse?

Is vaping really safer than smoking? Take a look at what we really know about the recent craze some say could help you quit smoking – and what’s behind the recent spate of vaping deaths abroad. Their report was published in Cell Stem Cell.

The study

To perform their study, the scientists employed a platform known as an air-liquid interface culture. Essentially, this is grown from human airway stem cells and closely replicates how the airways behave and function in humans.



Brigitte Gomperts, a professor of pulmonary medicine at UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Centre.

The airways carry air breathed in through the nose and mouth to the lungs, also functioning as the body’s first line of defence against airborne pathogens, such as viruses, the authors noted. “Our model replicates the upper part of the airways, which is the first place the virus hits,” said Brigitte Gomperts, a professor of pulmonary medicine and member of the UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Centre.

“This is the part that produces mucus to trap viruses, bacteria and toxins and contains cells with finger-like projections that beat that mucus up and out of the body.” This type of model, Gomperts explained, has previously been used to study lung diseases for over a decade and has been shown to mimic the changes in the airway that

can be seen in someone that smokes.

“Smoking cigarettes is like creating holes in these walls” The air-liquid cultures used in the study were grown from airway stem cells that were taken from the lungs of five young, healthy, non-smoking tissue donors. To replicate the effects of smoking, the researchers exposed these airway interface cultures to cigarette smoke for three minutes per day over four days.

They then infected the cultures exposed to cigarette smoke (along with identical cultures that had not been exposed) with live SARS-CoV-2 viruses. The two groups were compared. In the models exposed to smoke, the researchers saw between two and three times more infected cells.

A more in-depth analysis led to the conclusion that smoking resulted in more severe infection, at least in part, by blocking the activity of interferons (which play a critical role in the body’s early immune response to fight the virus).

“If you think of the airways like the high walls that protect a castle, smoking cigarettes is like creating holes in these walls,” Gomperts said. “Smoking reduces the natural defences, and that allows the virus to set in.”

UNIQUE

First meme biennial to take place in December

SEATTLE

ANYONE who uses social media has come across it at some point – the meme. There are the classic animal memes, featuring cats and ‘Doge’, or the more recent “2020 Challenge,” in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, or the man skateboarding along to Fleetwood Mac’s Dreams or “How it’s started / How it’s going”.

This paragraph is, arguably, evidence that the visual medium does not lend itself to a written description. Now, this

ubiquitous element of internet culture is the focus of an art exhibition titled Memennial 2020: A Biennial 4 Memes.

The artist-led initiative will debut in December across three cities, Seattle, Dallas and Sydney, and will include meme screenings, shows with physical artworks and an online exhibition with digital art. Writing and analysis around meme culture will also be included.

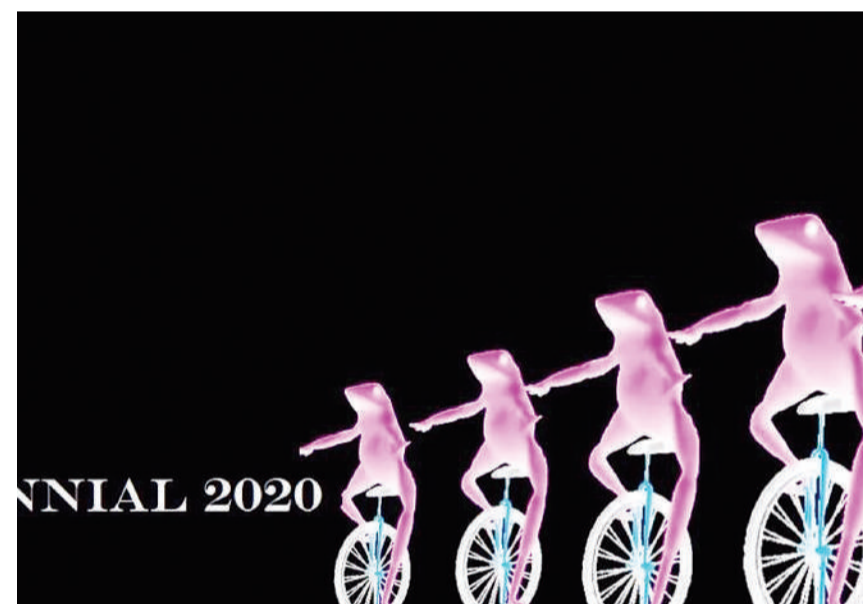
On the Memennial website, the organisers elevate the role of the meme beyond a visual expression of humour: “Memes move elections / Memes move

revolutions / Memes move consciousness / Memes move laughter out of our dark cavernous guts.” Adding: “They serve as a coping mechanism during the first global pandemic in our lifetimes. They subvert discourse faster than any other medium. They create society.”

This first biennial for memes is founded by artist Anam Bahlam, who told Artnet News, “Memes are free and authorless and make me think about society a little differently. So I wanted to honour these aesthetic creators.” Bahlam will

curate the show with Soomi Han, and together they have selected the artists in the exhibition, including Hannah Epstein, Rowen Foster and Sylv Hannah.

They are also accepting submissions via an online open call, where individuals from around the world can submit memes, digital art, object-based art and writings on memes until November 22. Defined as a replicable idea within a culture or society, the internet meme has taken the form of image-and-text combinations featuring animals, cartoons, TV shows or stock images



Art memes.

STIMULANT

Playing video games could boost mental health, shows Oxford University research

LONDON

A NEW study by the University of Oxford, UK, found that those who played video games for long periods of time reported feeling happier than those who did not.

Using Nintendo’s Animal Crossing: New Horizons and EA’s Plants vs. Zombies: Battle for Neighborville, the study focused on 3,274 gamers over the age of 18. It used shared anonymised data, which showed how long each participant had been playing, and then asked them to fill out a survey about their overall well-being.

More importantly, the study was one of the first to be completed using actual play-time data. In past studies, data gathered about how long a participant had been playing games were usually self-reported es-

timates, meaning that they could be inaccurate.

Professor Andrew Przybylski, who led the study, said he was surprised by the results. The study, he said, “shows that if you play four hours a day of Animal Crossing, you’re a much happier human being, but that’s only interesting because all of the other research before this is done so badly.” He also added that in years of previous research, the findings were generally the other way around, suggesting that the longer people played, the more unhappy they were.

“Our findings show video games aren’t necessarily bad for your health; there are other psychological factors which have a significant effect on a person’s well-being. In fact, play can be an activity that relates positively to people’s mental health – and regulating video games



‘Animal Crossing: New Horizons’ was one of the most popular video games of 2020.

could withhold those benefits from players,” he said.

However, he suggested because

both games had social elements and players could interact with characters controlled by other humans,

perhaps it was the social element that saw a rise in happiness. “I don’t think people plough a bunch of time

into games with a social aspect unless they’re happy about it,” he said. “It’s like a digital water-cooler.”

STUNTED

Poor nutrition in poorer countries cause children to grow shorter

JOHANNESBURG

HUNGER in South Africa has become a humanitarian crisis. That’s according to the Gift of the Givers. The Foundation says it has been inundated with requests for food, especially at schools.

Limited data exist on the health and nutrition of school-aged children and

adolescents on a global level. A global analysis, led by Imperial College London, was recently published in The Lancet. The study examined the height and weight of groups aged between five and 19 years.

The world’s tallest kids

Researchers assessed growth trends among 65 million participants between 1985 to 2019 – based on data

pooled from 2 181 population-based studies. An average difference of 20cm was found between adolescents from the world’s tallest and shortest populations. The tallest were from the Netherlands, Montenegro, Estonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (boys); and the Netherlands, Montenegro, Denmark, and Iceland (girls). And the world’s shortest kids lived in Timor-Leste,

Laos, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea (boys); and Guatemala, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Timor-Leste (girls).

South African kids not among the healthiest

In the case of South Africa, the findings indicated that local girls tended to gain too much weight for their height.

The study also showed that around the age of five years, South African children were at optimal height, but once they reached 19 years they were shorter than recommended by the World Health Organization for that age group.

In their paper, researchers said: “The unhealthiest changes – gaining too little height, too much weight for their height compared with children in

other countries, or both – occurred in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa.”

This kind of study is of great importance as it shows that good nutrition is vital in young children to ensure good outcomes. Researchers warned that good nutrition in the early life of a child is vital as it can impact the rest of their life, and, if neglected, can lead to stunted growth and obesity.

EQUALITY

Elizabeth Marami is the first female marine pilot in Kenya

NAIROBI

THE maritime industry is ripe with opportunity for women. According to the International Labour Organization, women account for only 2% of the total workforce in the industry, and this has led to the unprecedented awareness about work opportunities for women.

Former African Union Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma called for greater participation of women in maritime industries, especially in the development of Africa's Blue Economy, as this could further develop the continent's maritime industries and result in economic development.

Elizabeth Marami, 28, has made history by becoming Kenya's first female marine pilot. Born and bred in the coastal city Mombasa, Marami initially studied law at the University of Nairobi, but later changed course and went on to pursue navigation in Alexandria, Egypt for 5 years. "I always grew up knowing that I wanted to do something different, some-

thing out of the ordinary. Being awarded a scholarship to pursue this career was God's answered prayer..." she says.

Her job as a marine pilot entails assisting vessels with coming into territorial waters because according to law, vessels entering a country's territorial waters may not progress to the harbour without officials.

Entering the industry was not easy task for Marami. "Two years ago, I wanted to be the first female captain in the country," Marami says in her video trailer for "Against the Tide." But the number of times I got turned down made me convince myself that I was okay with an office job," she added. Marami was inspired to continue with her pursuits when she came across an article about Kate McCue, America's first female captain of a megaton cruise ship.

Working in a male-dominated industry has had its challenges for Marami, including earning the respect of senior management as a female profession. She says that

"every new day comes a new experience and lesson". Adding "I have had those who have accepted me, helped me become better, and there have been some rejections that stung so hard I almost gave up, but overall I'd say I have certainly grown a thick skin." Here's a video of her story and her initiative "Against the Tide."

She is often the only female on board for sometimes 18 months at a time, and like in most professional settings, mutual respect and being a team player keeps her and the team in good standing. If she wasn't a marine pilot, Marami would have pursued a career in fashion and writing. In fact, she has her own fashion blog where she shares pictures and fashion tips, as well as personal essays.

She started an initiative for women in the maritime industry called "Against the Tide," an online platform that provides "a glimpse into the experiences and travails of a female seafarer, both successful and unsuccessful career paths of these gallant wom-



Elizabeth Marami

IMPRESSIVE

Thebe Magugu in line for 2021 International Woolmark Prize

JOHANNESBURG

THE Woolmark Company - a global authority on wool - announced their 2021 International Woolmark Prize (IWP) Top 6 finalists this week.

One of these deserving finalists is Kimberley-born designer Thebetsile Magugu, founder of the eponymous label founded in 2016, Thebe Magugu. According to The Woolmark Company, The International Woolmark Prize celebrates outstanding fashion talents from around the globe who showcase the beauty and versatility of Australian Merino wool.

"It is the world's most prestigious award for rising fashion stars," the organisation declares. Essentially, the IWP and the LVMH Prize are the fashion equivalents of the Golden Globe and the Oscar Awards, and our very own Thebe Magugu could hold both by the end of 2021.

Out of a pool of 380 applicants from around the world, Woolmark selected six emerging designers to compete for the 2021 prize and present their collections at an international fashion week next year.

Announcing their finalists, The Woolmark Company revealed that it has "reflected on how [it] can better build sustained careers for emerging designers from across the world."

Woolmark also states that each designer has received AUD\$60 000 (over R670 000) to "carefully develop their Merino collections, keeping in mind the focus of this year's prize, Less is More, celebrating responsible production and craftsmanship."

"The designers have also begun their work in the Innovation Academy, The Woolmark Company's intensive mentoring program, which this year is in its most robust form," it adds. From shepherds in Australia to northern Italian wool mills, to New York high-end suit-makers, businesses are having to come up with ideas to adapt or go bust. Expressing his excitement on Instagram, Thebe shares a smattering from a Vogue interview in which he said:

"I'm from a place that grapples deeply with socio-political issues and where unemployment stood at a staggering percentage - even before COVID-19. So keeping production local is how I can contribute to that in my own capacity."

"This also leads me into areas like upcycling,



Thebe Magugu attends the LVMH Prize 2019 Edition at Louis Vuitton Foundation on September 04, 2019 in Paris

because I am trying to utilise the resources I have in a local capacity, doubly preserving ideas of craft and handwork local artisans have been doing for years."

In 2019, Thebe proved victorious over more than 1700 applicants from 100 countries across all continents for the LVMH Prize, where Nigerian-based gender-neutral designer Kenneth Izedonmwon of Kenneth Ize was again the only other African designer to make the list of eight finalists.

Thebe Magugu's fashion catalogue of work successfully winnowed his fellow competitors, managing to garner the favour of a heavyweight panel of judges including the likes of Jonathan Anderson, Kris Van Assche, Maria Grazia Chiuri,

Nicolas Ghesquière, Marc Jacobs, Clare Waight Keller, Humberto Leon, Carol Lim, as well as Delphine Arnault, Jean-Paul Claverie, and Sidney Toledano. The LVMH win earned this fashion talent €300 000 (approximately R4.8 million) and a year's worth of mentoring from the group.

The designer who hails from the place of diamonds, Kimberley, therefore continues to prove that he is indeed a true product of this city. Revealing in a 2018 interview with True Love where it all began, the 2019 LVMH Prize winner shared the following:

"I interned for Woolworths about three years ago. The brand's fashion designer, David West, asked me to move to Cape Town to intern there

after seeing my graduation collection. I learnt so much from him.

A few years later, Woolworths contacted me in my capacity as a solo designer, asking me to collaborate with them in their Style by SA initiative, aimed at promoting the creations of local designers in their stores and online."

Lucilla Booyzen, director of South African Fashion Week (SAFW), expressed elation over Thebe Magugu's LVMH Prize last year, saying this "is an incredible break-through for Thebe to receive recognition at this level. It is the fashion equivalent of winning a gold medal at the Olympics. We are utterly delighted and proud of his success."

INCENTIVE

All schoolchildren to get meals as government reviews policy

KIGALI

THE school feeding programme is set to change in order to cater to all primary and secondary school children once the proposed policy by the Ministry of Education comes into force. Under the proposed policy, parents' contribution to the school feeding programme will be compulsory.

"It is the first time we are going to feed all students in the country," Valentine Uwamariya, the Minister for Education, said. Currently, the government provides Rwf56 per day as support to each

student's feeding while at school. The money caters for students in public and government-aided secondary schools.

While Uwamariya acknowledges that the contribution per student is small, given the large number of students it has a significant impact on the government budget. However, schools and lawmakers have persistently asked the government to increase its contribution.

"The government will continue to provide such support, and it increased because instead of considering secondary school children only, the programme is



Students take lunch as part of the school feeding programme at Groupe Scolaire Kimironko on November 16.

being extended to primary school children," Uwamariya said. "Because children in primary schools are many, the government's contribution to might double or even quadruple."

As of end 2019, public and govern-

ment aided primary schools had 24 million pupils while secondary schools had over 649,000 students, according to official data. Based on these numbers, it means that some 3 million school-going children

RECOGNITION

Glo is named most popular Nigerian brand for 2020 - HKLM

LAGOS

AFRICA'S foremost branding agency, HKLM, is celebrating two branding wins this month: Glo, Nigeria's second largest telecommunications operator (HKLM helped launch the brand 17 years ago and refreshed it last year) has been acknowledged as Nigeria's most popular brand in 2020 by Top 50 Brands Nigeria, and the 28th most admired African brand for 2020 in Brand Africa's annual survey.

HKLM conceptualised Glo's original name, positioning, identity and visual language in 2003, overhauling most of these aspects in 2019 to deliver a new visual language that was fresh and dynamic, but still retained the valuable brand equity Glo had garnered over the years.

With representation in eight African countries, HKLM has helped establish and grow blue-chip brands like Glo in 20 of Africa's 54 countries. Most of these have been indigenous brands that have taken on established global brands.

Gary Harwood, co-founder at HKLM, says it takes a special skill to build indigenous brands rather than coat-tailing big international brands across the continent. "To do this, you need to get out of your comfort zone and out of the major cities to really understand the market dynamics specific to different countries, different regions and the different cultures within specific countries. Brands are not built overnight; it takes persistence, tenacity and dedication to build a compelling brand capable of standing the test of time," Harwood explains.

He likens the process to constructing a house, beginning with a solid foundation. "In branding, that foundation is what we at HKLM call the Brand Platform. The single most important part of a brand platform is the brand purpose, which is the deepest expression of why the brand exists. This purpose is then supported by the brand's vision, values, positioning and personality," Harwood notes of HKLM's process of creating award-winning brands.

Glo is a wholly-owned Nigerian telecommunications company, and has been an HKLM client since its inception in 2003. HKLM was instrumental in positioning the brand as 'proudly Nigerian', and Glo has been widely recognised as being a major contributor to reinstating Nigeria's national pride.

Glo's brand communication celebrates every aspect of Nigerian culture, including sponsoring the national football team, the Super Eagles; celebrating the Nobel Laureate for Literature, Wole Soyinka; and featuring a multitude of Nigerian musicians, actors and comedians in marketing communications to showcase Nigeria's rich cultural diversity. HKLM has been actively involved in all aspects of Glo's marketing communication, from its print and digital creative executions to its built environment.

UNIQUE

Guinness glory: Emirati mum sets world record for Down syndrome awareness

ABU DHABI

WHEN Latifa, 9, was diagnosed with Down syndrome upon her birth in 2011, her mum Meera Al Hosani admits "the first two years were challenging. We did not even know how to provide the basic needs. But we educated ourselves, and with love and pride, we got to where we are today. The love we gave Latifa, she had paid back with happiness, joy and laughter through the years."

It's this theme of happiness that helped Al Hosani set a Guinness World Records on November 18. The chief of happiness and a well-being officer at the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi, Al Hosani, 39, created the world's largest sock world, spelling "happiness" in Arabic using 1,447 socks.

The term and the material,

themselves, are closely connected to a condition that is thought to affect 1 in 700 children. Socks are said to resemble the shape of human chromosomes, and since people with Down syndrome have an extra chromosome, it was why Al Hosani turned to them. "The extra chromosome is also called the happiness chromosome," says Al Hosani, who also has a six-year-old daughter, Shireena.

The record-breaking display took six hours to assemble, and was put up at Manarat Al Saadiyat in Abu Dhabi. It marks the UAE's 425th Guinness World Record, of which Al Hosani says: "It was never about being the biggest or the largest. Latifa has always been a source of joy for our family and community, and I wanted to spread this emotion to my society."

The proud mum notes that

her daughter, who is in grade 3 at Sheikh Zayed Academy, has an ear for music and knows her own mind. "She has a taste for classical music and enjoys listening to jazz. She can memorise a song from the first time she hears it. She also loves playing on the piano and singing. It is her morning routine, the minute she wakes up! "One day, her dad called her Lulu, her pet name, and she replied: 'My name is Latifa', showing that she understands that she has her own identity and can express herself."

Al Hosani says it's this message, that people with Down syndrome can lead fulfilling lives, which she would like to spread among other families and the community through the socks campaign, which is fittingly named My Name is Latifa.

She also credits the UAE's encouraging leadership and its



Meera Al Hosani with her daughters Latifa, left, and Shireena

affinity to invest in its people. "We have learnt from our wise leadership to always be a pioneer in what we do. So it's a privilege to be a contributor and part of this accomplishment."

"Being an Emirati contesting alongside two fellow nationals [Omeir Al Mheiri who got two GWR titles for Farthest Wakeboard Ramp Jump and Most Wakeboard Rail Airs; and Khawla Al Romaithi, who set a world record for the fastest time to travel to all seven continents] proves that with persistence and determination we can achieve anything."

ACTIVISM



Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas.

Priyanka named ambassador for British Fashion Council

LONDON

THE British Fashion Council has named Priyanka Chopra Jonas as its new ambassador for positive change. The actress and activist will support the council's efforts to "lead the charge on change", using fashion as a platform to inspire.

She will promote best practices in the industry, shine a light on inclusive and ethical business initiatives, and act as a spokeswoman for education in the creative fields. Between now and December 2021, she will play an active role in a number of BFC events, including London Fashion Week and The Fashion Awards.

"Through my role, I look forward to celebrating the incredible diversity and creativity of the industry, while working to champion budding and iconic designers doing their part to make an indelible impact on people and our planet." Chopra Jonas has starred in more than 60 international and Hollywood films, was featured on the cover of Time magazine's Time 100 issue, in which she was named one of the most influential people in the world, and has been recognised as one of Forbes' "Most Powerful Women."

She is involved in several initiatives to protect children's rights and to

promote the education of girls around the world, including her namesake charity, The Priyanka Chopra Foundation for Health and Education. In December, she received the Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award for her efforts as a Unicef Goodwill Ambassador.

The appointment forms part of the fashion council's wider strategy that includes the Institute of Positive Fashion (IPF), which was launched to aid the British fashion industry in becoming more resilient, circular, equal and fair.

"We are delighted to welcome Priyanka Chopra Jonas as the BFC ambassador for positive change," says Caroline Rush CBE, chief executive of British Fashion Council. "Her work as a social activist, promoting causes such as the environment and women's rights, and her commitment to using her reach for good are what have made her one of the industry's most courageous voices and the perfect choice as the BFC ambassador for positive change."

"We look forward to working with Priyanka over the next 12 months, for her to share her voice and knowledge on causes she cares about, helping us with the important goal towards creating an industry that is more diverse, equal and fair."



ISIDINGO MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

ITV PGM SCHEDULE

SATURDAY 14 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
9:00 Watoto wetu
10:00 Shika Bamba 5
10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt
11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
12:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang
13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe
16:20 Igizo: Mtego
17:00 Shamsham za Pwani
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Korean drama: Hwarang
19:00 Jungu Kuu
19:30 Shika Bamba
20:00 Habari
21:00 Art and lifestyle
21:30 ITV TOP 10
22:10 Isidingo rpt
00:30 DWTW

SUNDAY 15 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Watoto Wetu
10:00 Isidingo
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt
12:00 Bongo Movie rpt: Without daddy
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo
15:30 Mwangaza
16:30 ITV Top 10
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Matukio ya wiki
19:30 Igizo: Mtego
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko
21:05 Mizengwe
21:25 Kipindi maalum: Cheza pesa
21:30 Mjue Zaidi
22:14 Bongo Movie: Wageni wangu
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin

MONDAY 16 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
09:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto wetu
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 ITV Top 10 rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera News
12:30 Mtego rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Mjue Zaidi
13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:10 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:10 Aibu yako rpt
18:15 Mapishi
18:45 Kesho leo
19:00 Afya ya Jamii
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:05 Dakika 45

22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTW

TUESDAY 17 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
09:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto wetu
10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:00 Watoto Wetu
12:30 Afya ya jamii rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Kesho leo rpt
13:30 Shika Bamba rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:10 Yu wapi
18:15 Mapishi rpt
18:30 Uchumi na biashara
19:00 Jarida la wanawake
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Tanzania yetu
21:30 Chetu ni chetu
22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 DWTW

WEDNESDAY 18 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
09:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto Wetu rpt
10:30 Uchumi na biashara rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Dakika 45
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza Huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang
19:00 Ijue Sheria
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco
21:30 Kipindi Maalum: Kesho leo
21:45 Ripoti Maalum
22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
2:00 DWTW

THURSDAY 19 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI

6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto
10:30 Shamba lulu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Ijue Sheria
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Kesho leo rpt
13:30 Tanzania yetu
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt:
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Jagina
19:00 Usafiri wako
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Malumbano ya hoja
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 DWTW

FRIDAY 20 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
10:00 Watoto wetu
10:30 Usafiri wako rpt
11:00 The Base
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanesco
13:00 Jagina rpt
13:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
17:30 Ibadaya ya kislamu
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mizengwe rpt
18:30 Utalii
19:00 Shamba lulu
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:05 Kipima Joto
21:00 Utalii
23:00 The Base
00:30 DWTW

SATURDAY 21 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
9:00 Watoto wetu
10:00 Shika Bamba 5
10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt
11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
12:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang
13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe
17:00 Igizo: Mtego
17:20 Shamsham za Pwani
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Korean drama: Hwarang
19:00 Jungu Kuu
19:30 Shika Bamba
20:00 Habari
21:00 Art and lifestyle
21:30 ITV TOP 10

22:10 Isidingo rpt
00:30 DWTW

SUNDAY 22 Nov

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Watoto Wetu
10:00 Isidingo
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt
12:00 Bongo Movie rpt: Wageni wangu
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo
15:30 Mwangaza
16:30 ITV Top 10
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Matukio ya wiki
19:30 Igizo: Mtego
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko
21:05 Mizengwe
21:25 Kipindi maalum: Cheza pesa
21:30 Mjue Zaidi
22:14 Bongo Movie: Zawadi yangu
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin

CAPITAL

Sat 14 Nov

08:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Rev rpt
09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt
10:00 Culinary delight rpt
10:30 Innovation rpt
11:00 Out n' about rpt
11:30 Sports Gazette rpt
12:00 Usafiri wako rpt
12:30 Eco@Africa rpt
13:00 Business edition rpt
13:30 Korean Drama rpt: The Slingshot
14:30 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt
17:45 Bundesliga kick off
18:15 Capchat rpt
19:15 Mizengwe
19:30 The Decor
20:00 Korean Drama: The Slingshot
21:00 Out n' About
21:30 Movie: Bordertown
23:00 Series rpt: Godwin
01:00 Al Jazeera

Sun 15 Nov

08:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 In good shape
10:00 Capchat rpt
11:00 Sports Gazette rpt
11:30 Korean Drama rpt: The Slingshot
12:00 Jagina rpt
12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt
13:00 In good shape rpt
13:30 Series rpt: Itohan
15:15 Aibu yako
15:30 Rev rpt
16:45 Mizengwe rpt
17:00 The Decor rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Turning the Spotlight rpt
19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights
20:00 Korean Drama: The Slingshot
21:00 Shift
21:15 Capchat live
22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
00:00 Al Jazeera

Mon 16 Nov

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)

13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Godwin
16:30 Tanzania Yetu rpt
17:00 Eco@Africa rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 The Decor rpt
19:30 Shamba lulu
20:00 Series: Godwin
20:45 The Monday Agenda
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Kipima Joto
00:00 Al Jazeera

Tues 17 Nov

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Godwin
16:30 Capchat rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Innovation
19:30 Jagina rpt
20:00 Series: Godwin
20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny
21:30 Capital Prime
22:00 Turning the spotlight rpt
22:30 Eco@Africa
23:00 Al Jazeera

Wed 18 Nov

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Godwin
16:30 Culinary delight rpt
17:00 Innovation rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Sports Gazette
19:30 Chetu ni chetu
20:00 Series: Godwin
20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Dakika 45:
22:45 The Decor
23:15 Al Jazeera

Thurs 19 Nov

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Godwin
16:30 Business edition rpt
17:00 In good shape
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Turning the spotlight
19:30 Tanzania yetu
20:00 Series: Godwin
20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Capchat rpt
23:00 Al Jazeera

Frid 20 Nov

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Godwin
16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Rev
19:30 Eco@Africa
20:00 Aibu Yako
20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition
20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt
00:00 Al Jazeera

WORLD

Georgia ruling adds to Trump losing streak as lawyers bluster

BY BLOOMBERG

A FEDERAL judge in Atlanta denied a bid to halt Georgia's certification of its election results, handing US President Donald Trump another setback despite his lawyers' increasingly improbable claims and bluster that they can overturn Democrat Joe Biden's victory.

US District Judge Steven Grimberg on Thursday evening rejected a suit by conservative lawyer and Trump ally L. Lin Wood, who had sought to prevent Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger from certifying the vote tally on Friday. According to the state's hand recount completed Wednesday, Biden won Georgia and its 16 electoral votes by more than 12,000 votes.

"To halt the certification at literally the 11th hour would breed confusion and potential disenfranchisement that I find has no basis in fact or in law,"

Grimberg, a Trump appointee, ruled from the bench.

The Georgia decision came just after a judge in Arizona tossed a Republican suit seeking a fresh audit of the vote in pivotal Maricopa County, which largely delivered that state to Biden. Earlier in the day, the Trump campaign pulled the plug on its own suit seeking to block Michigan's voter certification, falsely claiming that it had already succeeded in stopping it.

But Trump's legal team was busy pitching another reality at an off-the-rails press conference on Thursday, at which lawyers Rudy Giuliani, Jenna Ellis and Sidney Powell claimed they were on the verge of winning the election for Trump by demonstrating a vast conspiracy involving widespread voter fraud abetted by Democratic leaders, a corrupt software company and deceased Venezuelan dictator Hugo



President Donald Trump

Chavez.

"President Trump won by a landslide," Powell said at the press conference. "We are going to prove it."

They are running out of time. Following Georgia on Friday, Pennsylvania and Michigan are both expected to certify on Monday or shortly thereafter. Trump needs to flip at least three states that voted for Biden to keep the White House. He's pushing Republican state legislators to overrule voters, but most have rejected those overtures so far.

In the Atlanta suit, Wood had claimed Georgia state election board members violated the constitutional rights of voters through the way they allowed election officials to process defective absentee ballots. Wood had sought an injunction and a hand recount in Georgia's 159 counties. The allegations were broadly similar to those brought

by the Trump campaign in federal court in Pennsylvania seeking to block that state's certification of its election results.

No standing

Grimberg ruled that Wood lacked legal standing to bring his lawsuit and said he failed to show he was harmed. Pennsylvania is also moving to dismiss the campaign's suit in that state for lack of standing and failure to allege a viable constitutional claim. The campaign claims voters in Republican-leaning counties were deprived of due process and equal protection because Democratic-leaning counties had different procedures for accepting or rejecting ballots.

In a Thursday response to the Trump campaign's latest filing, Pennsylvania Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar slammed its effort to "fabricate a criminal conspiracy between the Secretary and certain Pennsylvania counties to steal the election - an outrageous charge that has no basis in fact."

Grimberg's decision in the Georgia case came after Trump's campaign said it was dropping its Michigan election lawsuit, falsely claiming it succeeded in halting certification of election results in Detroit and surrounding Wayne County, which were certified Tuesday evening.

The Trump campaign's assertion is based on the attempt by two Republican canvassing board members to rescind their Tuesday votes in favor of certification. Democrats say it's not possible for the two Republicans to walk back their votes.

In Arizona, the dismissal on Thursday ended a Republican effort to force a re-do of a ballot audit despite having no evidence of voter fraud or software errors. Democrats had accused the state GOP of intentionally trying to make Maricopa County miss the state's Nov 30 deadline for certifying results.

Agencies

Russia notes wide support for anti-Nazi resolution in UN, says diplomat

MOSCOW

MOSCOW is inspired by support from an absolute majority of UN member-states, who at the 75th UN General Assembly session voted for the Russia-initiated resolution on the struggle against Nazism, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in a commentary yesterday.

"The vast and invariable support for the Russian initiative, provided by countries committed to the struggle against the heroization of Nazism, is inspiring," Zakharova said.

She stressed that the Russia-proposed resolution was co-authored by 58 countries around the world, while its adoption was supported by 122 states. Only the United States and Ukraine opposed it again, while 53 delegations, including the EU member-states abstained.

"Who could have thought that after so many years some members of the Organization would use professed concern about freedom of speech to oppose efforts against the heroization of Nazism, neo-Nazism, the ideology of racial supremacy and other varieties of intolerance, thus neglecting their obligations under the main human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination," the commentary runs.

Agencies



DR Congo's Ebola outbreak beaten

NAIROBI

THE Democratic Republic of the Congo was on Wednesday declared free of Ebola infections, almost six months after the first cases in the latest outbreak were reported in the country's northwest.

The World Health Organization, in announcing the end of the outbreak, called for sustained vigilance against potential flare-ups in infections. The UN agency said it was 42 days since the last patient tested negative for the virus. It was the 11th outbreak of the virus reported in the Central African country.

The WHO said it is working with partners to improve training for front line medical workers in Equateur Province, where the 2020 outbreak took hold.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in a statement on Wednesday, called for people to remain vigilant.

The humanitarian network warned that the announcement does not spell the end of the considerable challenges that the country is facing, including the coronavirus emergency and long-standing economic and security issues.

Jacques Katshishi, secretary general of the DR Congo Red Cross, said it is not the time to leave vulnerable Congolese communities behind.

'Huge achievement'

"Bringing Ebola to zero is a huge achievement, but now we are faced with our next challenge: keeping it there. This is not a moment to be complacent; the world cannot afford a resurgence of Ebola in DR Congo," Katshishi said.

Announced on June 1, the outbreak the second to affect Equateur and the third nationwide since 2018 infected 119 people and killed 55. It spread to 13 of the region's 18 health zones.

The WHO said the battle against the outbreak was made more difficult by the pandemic. The large number of cases in remote communities compounded the problems. Still, health workers were mobilized locally and moved quickly under the leadership of the government.

"Responders worked closely with community members to increase understanding of the virus by visiting more than 574,000 households and providing more than 3 million people with pertinent health and safety information," the WHO said.

The UN agency said vaccination efforts began four days after the outbreak was declared and more than 40,000 people at high risk were vaccinated.

Agencies



Nelly Marie, 14-years-old, an Ebola survivor and school student sits in her bedroom in Beni, north eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo on Wednesday. (AFP)

Ethiopia's Tigray forces fire rockets at neighbouring region's capital

ADDIS ABABA

FORCES from Ethiopia's rebel Tigray region fired rockets on Friday at the distant capital of the neighbouring Amhara region, Amhara authorities said, raising worries the conflict could spill into a wider war.

Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people have been killed and tens of thousands of refugees have fled from two weeks of fighting in Tigray, raising questions of whether Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed can hold his ethnically diverse nation together.

"The illegal TPLF group have launched a rocket attack around 1:40 a.m. in Bahir Dar," the Amhara government's communications office said on its Facebook page, referring to the Tigray People's Liberation Front. It said the rockets caused no damage.

Bahir Dar, the lakeside Amhara regional capital, is located hundreds of miles from the fighting in Tigray. Tigrayan refugees have told Reuters the Amhara militia is fight-

ing on the government side, and the two regions have a border dispute.

A local journalist and another resident in Bahir Dar both told Reuters they had heard two explosions and had been told by people in the area that at least one of the missiles landed near the airport.

Ethiopia, a federation of 10 ethnic regions, was dominated for decades by Tigrayans in a TPLF-led ruling coalition, until Abiy, who is of Amhara and Oromo descent, took power two years ago. He says he aims to share authority more fairly in the country; the TPLF accuses him of pursuing a vendetta against former officials and restricting regional rights.

The conflict erupted two weeks ago after what the government called a TPLF attack on army forces stationed in the region.

A week ago, Tigray forces fired rockets at two airports in Amhara. They have also fired at rockets into the neighbouring nation of Eritrea, which has a long-running enmity with the TPLF leadership and made



Members of Amhara region militias ride on their truck as they head to face the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in Sanja, Amhara region near a border with Tigray, Ethiopia November 9, 2020. File Photo

peace with Ethiopia in 2018, earning Abiy the Nobel Peace Prize.

Reports of ethnically motivated killings have emerged during the conflict. Rights group Amnesty International documented a mass killing of civilians, many of whom appeared to be Amhara, by what it says were Tigrayan forces on Nov. 9-10, which the Tigray authorities denied. Refu-

gees fleeing the conflict into Sudan have said they were targeted for being Tigrayan.

Tigray forces accused the government of bombing a university in the Tigray capital of Mekelle on Thursday. There was no immediate response from the government, although officials have said they are only attacking military targets.

Agencies

WHO says vigilance key to avert COVID-19 surges in Africa during holidays

NAIROBI

THE World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday urged African countries to intensify vigilance in order to avoid a spike in COVID-19 positive cases during the holiday season.

Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa said the holiday season, whose hallmark is intensive mobility and family reunions, could reverse gains achieved towards the pandemic's containment.

"As we near the time of year when people get on the move to spend their holidays together, there is a bigger risk of COVID-19 transmission," Moeti said in a statement released in Nairobi.

She warned that new clusters might emerge during the festive

season across the Sub-Saharan African region if communities fail to adhere to public health guidelines aimed at curbing the spread of the virus.

"But we can lower the risks by wearing masks, limiting the numbers of people who come together, observing physical distancing and practicing good hand hygiene," said Moeti.

Africa's COVID-19 caseload and fatalities stood at 2,013,388 and 48,408 respectively on Thursday based on statistics from Africa Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention.

The continent has experienced surging infections since October with statistics from WHO indicating that 19 countries have reported over 20 percent increase in new cases in the last 28 days



compared with the previous four weeks.

On a positive note, 17 countries have witnessed more than 20 percent drop in the number of new positive cases over the last 28 days thanks to the efficacy of

containment measures.

Moeti said that reopening of economies and flouting of public health guidelines like frequent handwashing, wearing of face coverings and physical distancing, was behind the surging infec-

tions in Africa.

"There is a certain level of fatigue around the virus and the upcoming holiday season might exacerbate the risks," said Moeti, adding that targeted interventions like widespread testing and contact tracing are key to contain the pandemic.

She said that African governments should strengthen local healthcare systems to enhance their capacity to respond swiftly to new clusters during the holiday season.

Moeti said that localized interventions should place emphasis on robust testing, contact tracing and enhanced protection of vulnerable demographics to avert strain on health facilities that could trigger a spike in fatalities.

Xinhua

Belt and Road National Pavilion enriches consumers' choices, stimulates spillover effect of CIIE

COVID-19 has postponed outbound trips for many Chinese, but the Belt and Road National Pavilion set up at the China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone (FTZ) are enabling them to have a taste of exotic environment without having to cross the border.

The Belt and Road National Pavilion project was inaugurated ahead of the opening of the 2nd China International Import Expo (CIIE) by the China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone National (Regional) Center.

At present, the project includes pavilions of more than 20 countries and regions, such as Spain, Belgium, South Africa, Russia, Iran, and Mongolia, exhibiting and selling thousands of imported

high-quality products.

In the Syrian national pavilion, Aleppo soaps has been drawing huge attention. These hard soaps handmade with olive oil come from Jubilee Soaps, largest soap maker in Syria. They are very popular around the world because of their tastefully selected materials and long history, said a staff worker at the pavilion. However, according to the staff worker, Jubilee Soaps was blown up in war and only a few hundred pieces are now left in the world.

Imported products are nothing new to Chinese consumers who used to shop overseas and are today presented with a wider selection of imported products at home.

The Belt and Road National Pavilion has not only provided more high-quality products from various countries for Chinese consumers, but also established a sales and display platform for CIIE exhibitors at the consumer end and stimulated the spillover effect of the event.

In Thailand's national pavilion, rubber latex products and Thai snacks are particularly welcomed by consumers.

The pavilion has made special labels for products from the CIIE and the sales of rubber latex products and durian snacks have reached tens of million yuan, said Cheng Yubo, managing director of Thai Pavilion Corporate Co., Ltd.

The Belt and Road National Pavilion also empowers CIIE exhibitors to con-

nect with relevant industries and enterprises in the FTZ, and expands trade channels at the business end.

Cheng believes that the Belt and Road National Pavilion serves as a permanent platform for the CIIE from which consumers can buy high-quality imported products at any time. The project also drives the development of enterprises in East China, he added.

Apart from housing national and regional pavilions, the 7,000-square meter Belt and Road National Pavilion is also equipped with modern multimedia facilities such as 4D cinema, broadcast rooms, and super-large screens, making it a display and promotion platform integrating trade and retail, cultural

exchanges, as well as economy and investment. The construction of the Belt and Road National Pavilion is a major attempt made by the China (Shanghai) Pilot FTZ to facilitate the integration of commerce and trade, noted Zhang Hao, deputy general manager of Shanghai Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone Group Co., Ltd., which helped facilitate the construction of the pavilion.

The abundant overseas commodity resources in the FTZ need to provide people with tangible consumer and cultural experiences while building a trading platform for companies, Zhang added.

People's Daily

The Belt and Road National Pavilion also empowers CIIE exhibitors to connect with relevant industries and enterprises in the FTZ, and expands trade channels at



Employees of an agricultural company in Anyuan county, Ganzhou, East China's Jiangxi Province process fungi on Oct. 17. File photo

Massive migrant workers return to East China for jobs closer to home

TAKING a sip of tea, Chen Donghua, head of a garment factory in Ganzhou, East China's Jiangxi Province, unfolded the story of how he started his business. "To have a cup of the tea from my hometown was a dream of mine over 20 years ago when I worked out-of-town," the man told the People's Daily.

Forced to drop out of school due to poverty, Chen left his hometown Yudu county for work in Xiamen.

Southeast China's Fujian Province at 19 years old. The man worked almost all jobs in the garment manufacturing industry, from lathe worker to factory manager.

Finally, he gained his own OEM business in 2004, and that was after he had left his hometown for 13 years.

In 2015, Chen decided to move a branch of his to Yudu county under the matchmaking efforts of the local garment association. He was offered factory buildings and exempted from two years of rent.

Three years later, the man built his second plant in Yudu in which he established a poverty alleviation workshop. Around 80 percent of the employees working for the plant are locals, including 20 from impoverished households.

Over the recent years, over 60 garment enterprises above designated size have settled in an industrial park in Yudu county, most of which were established by migrant workers returning home.

Resuming work after COVID-19, the industrial park has created jobs for 15,000 people, including around 5,000 impoverished ones.

"We are not taking a one-size-fits-all approach, but developing an industrial system that suits local conditions and building poverty alleviation workshops on top of it," said Lai Wailai, deputy director of Ganzhou's poverty alleviation office.

"The returnees have established 1,248 poverty alleviation workshops

that created jobs for 12,071 impoverished laborers," Lai introduced.

These workshops can enjoy a series of favorable policies and subsidies as long as they create a certain number of jobs for impoverished people, he further introduced.

So far, 169,000 returnees have started their own businesses, creating 435,000 jobs, including 23,000 for impoverished people.

Liu Xiaoying, a woman from Xianxia township of Yudu county who used to work in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong Province with his husband, now works for Chen Donghua's factory in Yudu. Earning 3,000 yuan per month with board and lodging provided, Liu also gets free bus services every week back home to see her child.

This was never possible when she worked away from home. At that time, she and her husband made a total of 6,000 yuan per month, but nothing much was left after they paid rent and other necessary expenses.

She told the People's Daily that her husband was still working out-of-town, but she was trying to persuade him to come back.

"A total of 1.45 million migrant workers from Ganzhou have returned home," said Wu Yuming, deputy director of the human resource bureau of the city. Jobs closer to home also help alleviate rural hollowing, Wu said.

Ganzhou started its heroic fight against poverty since 1990s, and the last 7 impoverished counties of the city were lifted out of poverty this year. From 2011 to 2019, the poverty incidence in Ganzhou dropped from 26.71 percent to 0.37 percent.

Ruijin was the first to eradicate poverty in the city in 2018, and this year, southern Ganzhou also eliminated poverty on its territory. The city has achieved decisive victory on poverty alleviation.

People's Daily



A total of 1.45 million migrant workers from Ganzhou have returned home," said Wu Yuming, deputy director of the human resource bureau of the city. Jobs closer to home also help alleviate rural hollowing

Putin praises China as good example of combating COVID-19

MOSCOW

CHINA sets a good example for other countries of how to successfully contain the COVID-19 pandemic, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said.

"China has shown to the world that one can successfully defeat the coronavirus," Putin said Tuesday during the 12th BRICS Summit hosted by Russia via video conference.

"China's anti-pandemic results are indeed significant and remarkable, setting a good example for other countries," he said.



The BRICS countries -- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa -- should step up cooperation when it comes to fighting the pandemic, he added.

Separately, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova

said Thursday that the two countries have sustained high-level inter-regional cooperation despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Inter-regional cooperation between Russia and China plays a key role in strengthening bilateral relations, Zakharova said at her weekly briefing.

She also noted that participants in the video conference on Nov. 12 on Russia-China inter-regional cooperation in the post-pandemic era expressed the necessity to intensify cooperation on various issues.

Xinhua

COVID-19 deals blow to Saudi Arabia's G20 summit ambitions



This handout picture released by G20 Saudi Arabia on Sept 17, 2020 shows (left to right) Saudi Health Minister Tawfiq al-Rabiah and Finance Minister Mohammed al-Jadaan virtually attending the G20 Joint Extraordinary Meeting of Foreign and Health Ministers to discuss enhancing international cooperation to recover from the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic as well as strengthening preparedness for future pandemics. (File photo)

RIYADH/BEIRUT

WHEN Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter and a leading US ally, took over the G20 presidency in December 2019, hopes in the kingdom were high.

A global summit would help rehabilitate the country on the international stage and turn the world's attention to key reforms launched by de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to open up the kingdom and diversify the economy.

But instead of hoped-for photo ops in opulent palaces, this year's summit is mostly virtual due to COVID-19, dealing a blow to the prince's ambitions in a year of global economic downturn.

Though circumstances are far from ideal, "the show must go on, and Saudis have to make the most of the meeting," said Robert Mogielnicki, a resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington.

Top of the Group of 20 major economies' agenda is a COVID-19 action plan and measures to stem the pandemic's impact on global economies, including debt relief for the poorest countries.

Saudi Arabia's reputation has been

battered since 2018, with a global furor over the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the war in Yemen and the continued detention of women's rights activists arrested that year.

Foreign direct investment, a linchpin of the crown prince's economic reform plans, was also lacklustre, with Investment Minister Khalid al Falih saying he expected a slowdown this year due to the pandemic.

This weekend's Leaders Summit was seen as a chance to showcase the kingdom's budding tourism and entertainment industries: VIP trips were planned to tourism landmarks, including the US\$500 billion Neom city of the future mega-project, two foreign diplomats in the region told Reuters.

Discussions about an in-person summit were still being held in late September, and Saudi and foreign leaders confirmed their physical attendance, the diplomats said. The announcement days later that the summit, chaired by King Salman who had surgery in July, would be held virtually took many by surprise.

The king has hailed the kingdom's G20 presidency as proof of its key role in the global economy. On Thursday, the media minister said that managing the G20 and achieving great results

during the pandemic was a source of pride.

The event's virtual nature does at least align with Saudi Arabia's ambitious digital agendas and technology-focused initiatives, "one bright spot amid the coronavirus-related disruptions," Mogielnicki said.

The kingdom promoted the event at home with a robust media campaign, and on billboards throughout its cities.

Against this backdrop is a flurry of activity by human rights groups and western lawmakers who have called on G20 capitals to boycott the event, renewing global attention on Saudi Arabia's rights record.

Dozens of lawmakers in Britain, the European Union and the United States have called on their governments to press Saudi Arabia on human rights ahead of the summit, or to withdraw. The mayors of London, Paris, New York and Los Angeles have boycotted the event.

Saudi Arabia jailed eight people for between seven and 20 years for Khashoggi's killing. Saudi officials denied Prince Mohammed played a role, but in 2019 he indicated some personal accountability, saying "it happened under my watch."

Agencies

China's regulatory authority accepts Fosun Pharma clinical trial application of mRNA vaccine candidate

THE clinical trial application of the mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 for COVID-19, developed by a subsidiary of Chinese pharmaceutical company Fosun Pharma, was received by China's regulatory authority on Wednesday.

Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical Industrial Development Co, a subsidiary of Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical (Group) Co, has received the "Acceptance Notice", and the clinical trial application for the licensed mRNA vaccine product BNT162b2

for COVID-19 was accepted by the National Medical Products Administration.

Fosun Pharma said in a statement sent to the Global Times on Thursday. BNT162b2, the second vaccine candidate introduced by Fosun Pharmaceutical Industrial, is a preventive biological product intended to be used on people aged between 18 and 85 for preventing COVID-19.

As of Thursday, BNT162b2 is in phase III clinical trial in the US, Germany, Argentina, Brazil, South Af-

rica and Turkey, respectively, and BNT162b2 has been granted Fast Track Designation by the US Food and Drug Administration, Fosun Pharma's statement said.

The application acceptance came after Fosun Chairman Guo Guangchang said he had received news from the two partners - Pfizer and BioNTech - that their jointly developed mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 was up to 90 percent effective based on early data from a phase three clinical trial, far higher than previous

Xi sends congratulatory letter to 5G & industrial internet summit

WUHAN

CHINESE President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory letter to the China 5G + Industrial Internet Conference that opened yesterday in Wuhan, central China's Hubei province.



The integration of 5G and the industrial internet will accelerate the building of a digital China and a smart society as well as the process of China's new industrialization, inject new impetus into China's economic development and create new development opportunities for the world economy under the shadow of the pandemic, Xi said in the letter.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, said he hopes participants of the conference deepen exchanges and enhance cooperation to better empower the real economy, serve society and benefit the people.

Xi stressed that it is of special significance that this conference is held in Wuhan, expressing the hope that Hubei Province and the city of Wuhan could take this conference as an opportunity to carry forward the great anti-epidemic spirit, promote the development of the digital economy, and contribute to the high-quality economic development and the building of a new development paradigm.

While addressing the opening ceremony of the conference via video link, Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, also a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, said that Hubei has maintained good momentum in the development of advanced manufacturing and the digital economy over the past few years.

Liu said Hubei should seize the opportunities and give full play to its comparative advantages while accelerating the development of 5G + industrial internet and advancing the modernization of the industrial chain.

Held for the first time and co-hosted by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the provincial government of Hubei, the conference aims to promote the integrated development of 5G and the industrial internet at a wider, deeper and higher level, and help support Hubei's post-epidemic economic recovery and development.

Xinhua

New York City closes public schools as cases climb

NEW YORK

NEW YORK CITY'S Public school system temporarily closed in-person instruction in the country's largest school district on Thursday because of an increase in coronavirus cases in the city, school officials announced.

The city's 1.1 million students will now be taught entirely online, as most already are.

To keep students spread out, the authorities offered in-person instruction part time, with children logging on from home the rest of the time. At the end of October, about 25 percent of students had gone to class in school this fall, far fewer than officials

had expected.

The switch to all-remote instruction will disrupt the education of many of the roughly 300,000 children who have been attending in-person classes and create major child care problems for parents who count on their children being at school for at least part of the week.

The move came after schools have been open for in-person instruction for just under eight weeks.

Mayor Bill de Blasio had warned of closing all school buildings once the positivity rate over a seven-day rolling average for the disease reached the threshold of 3 percent. The city's health department said it

reached that level on Wednesday.

Over the course of the pandemic, the department's numbers have often differed from that of the state, which said on Wednesday the city had a seven-day rolling average of 2.5 percent.

The city was the center of the nation's epidemic in the spring, and its positive test rate fell dramatically over the summer. The rate has been gradually rising again recently.

Nationwide, the United States' death toll of COVID-19 had passed a quarter of a million people on Wednesday. And 11,529,818 infections had been reported as of Thursday, accord-

ing to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

School officials said the spike in the city does not appear to be caused by the reopening of school buildings, where they said virus transmission had remained very low since they reopened in September. As of mid-week, more than 2,300 students or staff at the schools had tested positive since the start of the school year, city officials said.

Other cities acting

New York City joins other large school districts in cities like Boston and Detroit that have recently canceled in-person learning.

Within the last week, the Clark

County School District, which includes Las Vegas and is the fifth largest in the US, and Philadelphia's public school system both postponed plans to return to in-person learning.

Even as the school system stayed open, nearly 1,500 classrooms went through temporary closures after students or employees tested positive. Officials began instituting local shutdowns in neighborhoods where coronavirus cases were rising rapidly.

The reopening of schools was originally set for Sept 10, but was postponed twice as teachers, safety and some parents said safety precautions and staffing were inadequate.

The teachers' union at one point threatened to go on strike. The city agreed to changes, including hiring thousands more teachers and testing 10 to 20 percent of all students and employees per month for the virus.

Since October, New York state has been categorizing areas of high coronavirus risk with colors: red representing full restrictions, orange lesser restrictions and yellow indicates restrictions could be forthcoming.

Governor Andrew Cuomo warned New York City on Wednesday it was on the verge of entering the orange zone of restrictions.

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Agencies

SPORT



Tigo Tanzania's Eastern Zone Customer Care Manager, Beatrice Kinabo (C), speaks to journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on winners of the firm's campaign, known as 'Jaza Tukujaze Tena', which has had the winners receiving Samsung note 20, ITEL T20 and Tecno mobile phones. A total of 240 people has won the mobile phones. She has been flanked by the campaign's ambassadors, Meena Ally (L) and prominent comedian, Lucas Lazaro Mhaviye 'Joti'. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Tanzania joins fight against use of performance-enhancing drugs in sports

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

THE Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Hassan Abbas, has called on sports associations' officials to be creative and develop strategies for promoting and developing sports in Tanzania.

Abbas made the statement in Dar es Salaam on Thursday while opening a meeting, which involved sports stakeholders from across the country, to deliberate on efforts to contain use of performance-enhancing drugs in sports.

Speaking at the meeting, he stressed that each of the sports associations' officials should fulfill his or her role in the initiative.

According to him, the officials' active participation in the fight against use of performance-enhancing drugs in sports will see Tanzania get rid of inconveniences the country's athletes stand to face when they feature in international competitions elsewhere.

Director of Sports in the Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports,

Yusuph Singo, noted the National Anti-Doping Organization is currently working on drafting regulations that will be formalized.

Singo further pointed out that the government will in future enact legislation for regulating betting in the country.

Tanzania Olympic Committee (TOC) Secretary General, Filbert Bayi, thanked the government for successfully signing the agreement for the fight against the use of performance-enhancing drugs in sports in 2017.

Bayi stated that Tanzania was one of few countries that had not yet signed the agreement.

Abbas told sports associations' officials that he has planned to visit various sports associations in the country from next month.

He noted the visit targets to understand the challenges and strategies for promoting sports.

Abbas insisted that the government wants to leave lasting legacy in sports, noting the sports associations' officials can issue recommendations on what should be done to develop sports in the country.

Tokyo Olympics: Q&A on vaccines, fans, qualifying and costs

TOKYO

WE'RE at the halfway point. The Tokyo Olympics were postponed eight months ago, and now are to open in eight months: July 23, 2021. Crunch time is coming.

Tokyo organizers and International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach have spoken vaguely about how the games can take place in the midst of a pandemic. Plans and dozens of "scenarios" have been drawn up about COVID-19 countermeasures: possible quarantines, vaccines, safe distancing, and making the Athletes Village a safe "bubble environment."

These ideas will have to become concrete solutions beginning next month and into early 2021.

Hanging in the balance are 11,000 Olympic athletes and 4,400 Paralympians. The IOC depends on the games since 91% of its revenue is from selling TV rights and sponsorships.

Here are some questions and answers about where the Olympics stand on several fronts.

Q: Bach was in Tokyo this week and said vaccines and rapid testing are on the horizon, which he believes will make it much easier to hold the games. Will athletes be required to take a vaccine to compete?

A: Bach says "no." But athletes and any official or fan going to Japan will be under pressure to get vaccinated. Officials are suggesting athletes will face a 14-day quarantine after entering Japan.

IOC vice president John Coates said the IOC and national Olympic committees will be looking for "role models" among athletes to encourage vaccination. Bach says healthcare workers are a priority for the vaccine ahead of athletes. IOC officials have also suggested vaguely that the Switzerland-based body will pick up some of the vaccination costs.

As is often the case, there has been nothing specific.

Q: Will fans be allowed into venues?

A: We still don't know. Bach says he expects a "reasonable" number of fans to be able to attend events. There is still no decision announced on allowing thousands of fans from abroad to attend. There is the health issue. But there is also pressure on the operating budget to allow as many fans as possible. The budget foresees \$800 million in revenue from ticket sales – the third largest income item. Japan has been successful holding sports events with some fans, at times at the 70-80% capacity level.

Q: How many athletes have already qualified for the Olympics.

A: Officials say 57% of the slots are full. So many have not yet qualified, and many qualifying events have been scrapped by the pandemic. It's clear athletes in some countries have a better chance to train than others. This could leave an uneven playing field and could also force some slots in the Olympics to be awarded without a traditional qualifying event. This is part of the "collateral damage" to the Olympics from the pandemic.

Q: Who is paying for the delay and the rising costs?

A: The IOC, organizers, and local politicians seldom talk about the costs. Japan says it's officially spending \$12.6 billion to organize the Olympics. But a government audit last year said it was twice that. All but \$5.6 billion is public money.

Over and above this, the delay is reported in Japan to cost \$2 billion to \$3 billion. No one in authority has offered an official number. The IOC has said it will chip in about \$650 million toward the delay but has given few specifics.

A University of Oxford study says these are the most expensive Summer Olympics on record.

Organizers recently announced they found simplification savings of about \$280 million – about 2% of the official outlays. Tokyo said the Olympics would cost \$7.3 billion when it was awarded the games in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 2013.

SPORTS

What has gone wrong with Namungo



Namungo FC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

WHEN Namungo FC hit the headlines with back-to-back promotions in Tanzania's soccer leagues, construction of own stadium, the club's bus and attracting several sponsors, there was hope for good things to come from the Lindi-based club.

Yet after only one complete topflight season, Namungo FC has been turned into an average team, competing for nothing.

What Namungo FC is going through is a true reflection of the state of most local clubs.

At the start of the season, Namungo FC head coach Thierry Hitimana insinuated some people within the club were interfering with his job and this seems not to have gone down well with the club. He was favourite for the axe right from the start.

The Burundian coach successfully secured topflight promotion and guided them to a fourth-place finish on the Vodacom Premier League (VPL).

He also helped them make it to the previous season's Azam Sports Federation Cup final where they lost to Simba SC but clinched the CAF

Confederation Cup ticket.

It is important that Namungo FC hires club administrators who have the necessary skills and knowledge.

If this does not change then it will not be a surprise to see the club fight to escape relegation in the near future.

It is hard to find some semblance in the current outfit with the squad that finished impressively in their debut topflight campaign.

Perhaps the fourth-place finish of last season might have also got into the administrators' heads and they thought it would be easy. There was an air of arrogance in their statement when they let go of top scorer, Reliants Lusajo, who signed for Dar es Salaam Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC before the 2020/21 VPL's kick off.

Namungo FC administrators decided to recruit and offload several players without consulting the coach.

When the management of the club just does things without hearing from the technical team, trouble lies ahead.

Hitimana was not told that there are players leaving, he was never consulted in the signing of some big names in the squad. This was a recipe for disaster.

Little did the cocky Namungo FC management know most success stories are so hard to replicate especially in the competitive football landscape.

They are learning the hard way, that is only if they are actually taking lessons on what is going on.

Getting to the top is one thing, staying there is a completely different ball game.

Leicester City FC, which won the 2015/16 English Premier League, barely managed to stay afloat in the subsequent season.

One has to work harder to stay at the top. Working hard is a humbling experience. In contrast, Namungo were arrogant

and thought they could easily replace certain individuals without paying a heavy price.

Decisions seem to have been taken haphazardly, without direction and often with the financial merits in mind.

One should take a look at the club's goalkeeping situation, in which they find themselves with two foreigners competing for the number one spot.

While competition and squad depth are good, Burkina Faso's Nouridine Balora and Burundi's Jonathan Nahimana competing for the goalkeeping role does not make financial sense in the current climate where the club is reportedly struggling with payment issues.

And as evident from the current position on the VPL log, Namungo, placed ninth, are struggling in this campaign after garnering a paltry 14 points from 10 matches.

Hitimana is gone but it would be foolish to assume he was the chief cause of Namungo FC's problems.

Whoever dreamed that it would be just to fire Hitimana for Namungo FC's problems to be solved, will quickly realize that he is wrong.

What is true is that the squad, despite having strong names like Shiza Kichuya and Adam Salamba, does not offer depth.

This continues to affect the club and, consequently, the work of any coach who will lead the team, as is the case with the sacked Hitimana.

Karatu venue to host 2020 CECAFA U-20 Championship opener, final

By Correspondents Marc Nkwame and Ismail Tano

ARUSHA'S Black Rhino Academy Stadium, a modern venue found in Karatu District, will host the opening match of the forthcoming Council for East and Central Africa Football Associations (CECAFA) U-20 Championship.

Over 270 delegates from the nine countries are set to participate in the CECAFA U-20 Championship, whose opening event is scheduled to be whistled out in Karatu on Sunday.

The Black Rhino Academy's venue is among the two venues in Arusha on which the regional football football extravaganza is going to be staged.

"The Black Rhino Academy Stadium of Karatu is probably the best venue in the country after Dar es Salaam's Benjamin Mkapa Stadium," Arusha Regional Commissioner, Idd Kimanta, stated.

Kimanta noted that the championship's opening match will see Tanzania's U-20 team, Ngorongoro Heroes, host Djibouti U-20 team.

The Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium, located at the heart of Arusha city, is the championship's other venue.

There will be two matches played per day, the first from midday (1.00pm) and the second from 4.00pm.

Running between November 22 and December 2, 2020, the CECAFA U-20 Championship will bring to Arusha teams from, among other African countries, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan and hosts, Tanzania.

The Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) previously confirmed the Confederation of African Football (CAF) has ordered that the CECAFA U-20



Tanzania's U-20 soccer team, Ngorongoro Heroes.

Championship should be played behind closed doors in the wake of the global efforts to fight against Covid-19 pandemic. The CECAFA U-20 Championship's matches will be played in three groups' fixtures.

Group A comprises Tanzania, Somalia and Djibouti, Group B has been made up of Uganda, Burundi and South Sudan, while Group C teams are Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan.

After the Tanzania's Ngorongoro Heroes' opening match against Djibouti U-20 team in Karatu on Sunday, Kenya will play against Ethiopia the following day at Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium in the afternoon.

Uganda is also to play against South Sudan at the same venue later in the evening.

Meanwhile, a 25-man squad making Ngorongoro Heroes has been unveiled by TFF.

Players making the Ngorongoro Heroes are Zuberi Foba from Azam FC, Rahim Abdallah from KMC FC, Razack Shekimweli from Mtibwa Sugar, David Kameta from Simba SC, Paschal Gaudence from Azam FC, Omary Jumanne from Mtibwa Sugar, Laurent Alfred from Azam FC and Samwel Jackson from Ifehu FC.

Others are Anderson Solomon from Dodoma Jiji FC, David Bryson from KMC FC, Shabani Kingazi from Mwadui FC, Yunus Abdulkarim from Yanga, Joseph Mkere from Mtibwa Sugar, Frank Kahole from Mtibwa Sugar, Khefflin Salum from Azam FC and Kassim Shabani from Police Tanzania.

Abdul Suleiman from Coastal Union, Tepsi Evans from Ifehu FC, Abdulrazzak Mohammed from Mbeya City FC, Kelvin John from England's Leicester City Academy, Neno Modest from Coastal Union, Nassor Saadun from MFK Vyscov of Czech Republic, Gadi Mussa from African Lyon, Anuar Jabir from Dodoma Jiji FC and Ben Antony from SV Wilhelmshaven of Germany also make the list.

This year's CECAFA U-20 Championship will have only one team to be fielded by the hosts.

In the previous years' competitions, which took place in Tanzania, the hosts fielded two teams from Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

With the hosts fielding one squad, Ngorongoro Heroes, therefore, have players from Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

Flying bottles, airport redtape, blaring music part of African football DNA

JOHANNESBURG

'DIRTY tricks' are an unfortunate part of the African football DNA with bottle-hurling spectators, airport redtape and blaring music among methods used to intimidate visiting teams.

The issue came to the fore this week when a Gabon squad including Arsenal star Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang were forced to sleep on the floor at a Gambian airport before an Africa Cup of Nations qualifier.

Gambia say the visitors did not comply with coronavirus-related health regulations while Gabon insist they were treated "inhumanely" to weaken them ahead of a top-of-the-table clash.

Gabon lost the match 2-1 after a howler by goalkeeper Anthony Mfa Mezui gifted Gambia a goal and the teams now share first place with two matchdays remaining.

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) have ordered a probe into an incident which cast the sport in a bad light after Aubameyang tweeted footage of players sleeping on a hard floor.

Here, AFP Sport highlights some of the 'tricks' used by hosts to physically and mentally upset opponents in the belief that it will help them win matches.

Airports

What happened to Gabon is commonplace with various tactics used to delay the departure of teams to their accommodation.

For example, if an English-speaking side arrives in a French or Arabic-speaking country without an interpreter, they are easy prey.

Airport officials who understand English suddenly cannot speak one word of the language when problems arise over passports, visas or other documentation.

These issues are often deliberately created with the aim of delaying the visitors indefinitely, causing

extreme frustration.

Transport

As teams leave the airport terminal expecting to see a modern, air-conditioned coach that will transport them to the hotel, they may get a rude awakening.

Clubs have relayed horror stories of ancient, barely-functioning vehicles with insufficient seating, no air conditioning and windows that do not open, creating an oven-like atmosphere.

As if that is not sufficient 'punishment', the driver may choose a much longer route than necessary, adding to the discomfort of the sweltering delegation.

Then, adding insult to injury, some vehicles break down and it can take hours for alternate transport to arrive and continue the journey.

Hotels This is a key 'battleground' for those determined to make life as unpleasant as possible for visiting national teams and clubs.

There have been endless tales of long delays at reception, lifts not working, and rooms full of cockroaches with just a trickle of cold water, or none at all.

Television sets sometimes do not work, nor do landline telephones, and the aim is to make life extremely frustrating, leaving many footballers already thinking of the flight or drive home.

A Zimbabwean side visiting west Africa complained of four adults being allocated to each double bed, female prostitutes banging repeatedly on doors demanding money and blaring music disturbing sleep.

Training

Footballers already fed up after airport delays, inadequate transport and undesirable accommodation, just want to start training.

But 'dirty tricks' operators have more shocks in store, starting with another needlessly long journey in a vehicle with no air conditioning and closed windows.

AFP

National team soccer defies pandemic, fuels clubs tensions

GENEVA

AMID a coronavirus spike across Europe, the international soccer break proved to be a notable success for national teams.

The 162-game group stage of the Nations League was completed this week with only two matches canceled and the Final Four lineup confirmed.

Top-ranked Belgium and recent World Cup champions France, Spain and Italy all qualified for a mini-tournament next October in a competition still struggling for acceptance in a congested soccer calendar.

However, dozens of players are returning from national team duty either infected with COVID-19 or facing periods in quarantine ahead of league games this weekend, fueling the endless "club vs. country" tensions.

"The current situation is not acceptable (for domestic leagues and clubs)," Bundesliga CEO Christian Seifert said Thursday.

The Champions League and Europa League also resume next week.

Still, there were some immediate rewards for keeping Europe's national teams active amid a public health crisis. The four remaining places at next year's European Championship were also confirmed and the integrity of seedings for the World Cup qualifying group draw on Dec. 7 was maintained.

FINAL FOUR

For most of Europe, the recent Nations League schedule was about promotion and relegation between the four tiers, a scramble for ranking points and projecting playoff paths toward the next European Championship or World Cup.

For four elite teams, there is an extra trophy to play for. Italy will host a mini-tournament in October to crown the next Nations League champion. And earn extra money.

At the inaugural Final Four, Portugal earned 10.5 million euros (\$12.4 million) in prize money for winning, compared to 7 million eu-

ros (\$8.3 million) for fourth-place Switzerland.

The Final Four had been scheduled for June 2021, but was pushed back because of the postponed Euro 2020.

WORLD CUP QUALIFYING

Stripped of its usual glitzy ceremony, the European qualifying group draw will be modest for the COVID-19 era.

FIFA will host the event at its Zurich headquarters with no team coaches or international media.

The unofficial seeding pots include Belgium, France, England, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Croatia, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands in Pot 1.

The 55 teams will be drawn into five groups of five teams, and five more of six teams. There are some security restrictions as well, including separating Russia and Ukraine, and Serbia and Kosovo.

The 10 group winners will directly qualify for the 2022 tournament in Qatar. Three more places will be decided in playoffs in March 2022.

VIRUS CASES

Ukraine is expected to be punished by UEFA on Friday for failing to play Switzerland in the Nations League on Tuesday. The entire Ukraine squad was put in quarantine by Swiss health officials after several players tested positive.

Ukraine can expect the same 3-0 forfeit loss that Norway got on Wednesday for failing to send a team to play Romania. The result could relegate Ukraine to the second tier instead of Switzerland.

CLUB vs. COUNTRY

Every top European club was obliged by FIFA to release players for 10 days to join national teams for competitive games in Europe, South America and Africa, and friendlies elsewhere.

Many players will bring back infections or quarantine restrictions. A positive test while with Uruguay for World Cup qualifying has forced Luis Suarez out of Atletico Madrid's match against his former club Barcelona this weekend.

Simeone has a great chance to finally end Atletico jinx vs. Barca



Diego Simeone

By Graham Hunter, ESPN Spain writer

TWO days before Christmas will mark Diego Simeone's ninth anniversary as manager of Atletico Madrid. So glorious has been his era, the greatest in this club's 117-year history, that the combative Argentinian's achievements seem endless. They're not, of course, but it wouldn't be hard to be seduced by the illusion.

Count them up: Six European finals, four trophies hauled back to Madrid from Monaco, Tallinn, Bucharest and Lyon against Chelsea, Real Madrid, Athletic Club and Marseille. Exemplary. While the two Champions League final defeats still sting like salt in an open wound, perhaps scarring him for the rest of his life, they nevertheless form part of the hundreds of millions of euros his work, in partnership with German "Mono" Burgos, has earned the club.

Simeone's tenure is marked not simply by Atleti punching hugely above their weight in the transfer market -- repeatedly trading superbly, as well -- but by the fact that Los Rojiblancos have never, in their entire history, seen such revenue flood the club's coffers. It's true that this has catalysed an unheralded acceptance of risk, like huge salaries and two deals, Thomas Lemar and Joao Felix, that smashed Atleti's prior transfer records. But Simeone has remained a money-making machine for the men who employed him.

I believe Simeone is the best-paid football coach in the world and Atleti have never disputed reports that his contract, which runs until summer 2022, is a basic €22 million.

He won the club he loves their first Spanish league title since 1996. Nirvana!

He ended the brutal 14-year hoodoo that rivals Real Madrid held over them: Atleti were not only incapable of winning in that time, but fully deserved the infamous banner "Searching for a worthwhile rival so that we can have competitive derby matches again -- apply here" that Los Blancos' fans held up just before the Simeone effect hit home and Atleti began to win routinely again, a process that began with victory in the 2013 Copa del Rey final in the Bernabeu in Jose Mourinho's last match in charge.

The Simeone-ification of Atleti has seen them win in Porto, Milan, Rome, London, Eindhoven, Lisbon, Leverkusen, Moscow, Liverpool and Istanbul, a record for which even coaches considered "great" would give their eye teeth. But the thing this savvy, durable, warrior coach cannot do for love nor money, despite twice knocking them out of the Champions League and winning the title with a 1-1 draw at Camp Nou, is beat Barcelona in La Liga.

By definition (or else they wouldn't have been champions), Madrid's red-and-white team didn't need to beat Tata Martino's Blaugrana in 2013-14, but that won't wash this time. That campaign was a three-way race; 2020 is a battle royale where there are, arguably, as many as six title contenders: La Real, Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla, Villarreal and Atleti.

Laugh if you want, dismiss the dark-horse outsiders this early if you dare. But this will absolutely not be a season in which the fourth-place team (Athletic in 2014) will be 20 points off the winner and 17 points adrift from the teams that finished second and third. This is a league in which every single crucial point won is like freeing a prisoner onto whom your enemies desperately want to hold.

If Simeone can end the single most embarrassing statistic of his entire managerial career -- anyone who thinks that it's losing two Champions League

finals to Madrid can go and take a running jump -- by beating Barcelona at the Wanda Metropolitano on Saturday night, the celebrations won't simply be about tucking another record into his photo album. Instead, it will be a firm declaration of title credibility.

Let's put some meat on these ugly bones.

- In La Liga, Simeone's Atleti have played Barcelona 17 times, with 11 defeats and six draws

- Goals scored: 13. Goals conceded: 27.

- Atleti have kept a clean sheet once.

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- Atleti have kept a clean sheet once.

The most common storyline? It's 2-1, which with the other three 1-0 defeats, four 1-1 draws plus a 0-0 draw, all help suggest how little it would have taken over the past nine years to inch from tight draws or single-goal defeats to glorious, jinx-ending victory. Still, it's never happened.

Overall, it's not quite as heinous a record as the one Simeone came in to shatter -- that 14-year, all-competition quivering wreck-fest against Madrid -- but it's still very poor. Simeone, devastating

kryptonite to most of the elite coaches around Europe, has failed to defeat Pep Guardiola, Tito Vilanova, Tata Martino, Luis Enrique, Ernesto Valverde or -- yes it's true, folks -- Quique Setien while they've steered a variety of Barcelona teams through good times and bad.

Of course, the principle thorn in Simeone's side has been a fellow Argentinian -- how ironic that is.

Lionel Messi has 15 goals or assists across Barcelona's through-thick-or-thin domination of Atleti in Spain's Primera Division since 2011. He's scored penalties and direct free kicks, he's scored or assisted in the final seconds to turn defeats into draws, draws into wins and every so often, he's created all-time outright masterpiece goals like the one that won this fixture, at the Metropolitano, last time it was played.

Remember it? Barcelona weren't particularly impressive or insistent throughout, completing loads of passes but about 70% of them going square or backwards, with Koke playing catenaccio-close to Messi until the 41st minute of the second half.

It took a loose cross-field pass from Lemar, Sergi Roberto nodding the ball down to Frenkie de Jong in open space, an Ajax-esque probing run from the Dutchman and Messi screaming for it on the right wing.

Once delivered to his feet, with Atleti's midfield puffing furiously even to get back within visual range, never mind prevent catastrophe, Messi took the ball for an infield sprint, made Thomas Partey and Saul inadvertently play Twister with one another, played the one-two pass off Luis Suarez and laser guided a left-footed shot that screamed in an outside-to-in arc past the bemused, and fully stretched, Jan Oblak.

Mario Hermoso put his head in his hands, Felipe leaned down to beat the turf, Oblak booted the ball away in impotent fury. As for Simeone? He started to go into arm-waving, voice-shredding defiance mode, realised he'd witnessed utter footballing genius and ... he applauded.

The whole thing was absolutely amazing and a microcosm of the nine-

year grip Barcelona have exerted on this fixture while winning five League titles to Atleti's one.

I call their rivalry ironic, because just imagine if Messi's "Holy Grail" task of trying to win Argentina the World Cup had a young Simeone behind him in midfield. Or if Simeone the coach had been at the helm for Argentina during Messi's golden years.

They are perfect partners in both those respects, but seem doomed to be respectful foes, with one of them distinctly holding the upper hand. But now, things are different -- or at least Simeone, Oblak, Felix, Koke and Marcos Llorente need to make it so. That the game is on a Saturday after the usually impactful international break, slightly favoured Atleti, at least until Suarez tested positive for COVID-19.

Atletico are at home, thus avoiding any further travel: they'll get to face Messi when he's, at best, tired and jet-lagged.

Peru vs. Argentina finished around 3:30 a.m. on Wednesday morning, Spanish time. With general post-match faffing-about and an absolute minimum flying time of 13 hours while Messi travels direct from Lima to Barcelona in a private plane, carrying Lucas Ocampos, Guido Rodriguez and Nehuen Perez back to their various La Liga clubs, he'll be landing in his home city in the early evening, not far short of 72 hours before events at the Metropolitano kick off.

That's horrible. It's also assuming (fingers crossed) he's neither injured nor exposed to the coronavirus.

What a blow that this will not be the first time that Messi and Suarez have faced one another in club football. Suarez has played against Kozakken Boys, Libya, FK Gomel and Tahiti more than he's faced FC Barcelona (once each and zero respectively).

Yes, he's 34 in January and would have had the same threat of tiredness, jet-lag as Messi, in addition to a tougher match against Brazil. Yet this was to be his first chance to stick it to those at Barcelona, even those who've recently abandoned the club, who didn't think him worth retaining. Would you have bet against him scoring?

Perhaps we've moved into Antoine Griezmann territory now. He broke his drought, against Real Betis, last time out and instead of Suarez, it's the Frenchman who has a glaring chance to damage his former club. But Atleti, to me, look favourites here. They're driven by a mix of needing to win and it seems, the knowledge of how to do it. More than that, I reckon that the addition of Geoffrey Kondogbia just made Atleti title favourites.

Their midfield, already ferocious, now has the figurehead who can win tackles and drive forward into the spaces where matches are won. He'll also add an aerial threat, the odd goal and has a pretty good record against Barcelona, losing two of his last seven matches against them.

With no Ansu Fati or Sergio Busquets for the Catalans, and only one point gained from their last six available away from home, with Marc-Andre ter Stegen working absolute overtime in order to keep opponents from scoring -- this truly needs to be the moment when Atleti survey the arriving force from the north and decide that they can, and will, impose themselves.

Back when Simeone marched Atleti to the title six years ago, his mantra was "one game at a time" in reference to never getting ahead of themselves. This season, with a glaring chance of repeating that La Liga triumph, this single match in November can't be anywhere close to title crucial. But victory would leave them nine points clear of Ronald Koeman's side and would also become a hugely important building block in Atleti's self-confidence and determination.

Contrastingly, if this isn't the moment to put Barca to the sword after years of trying and failing to do so in La Liga, then ... when Simeone, when?

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Simeone has a great chance to finally end Atletico jinx vs. Barca

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Former Namungo FC head coach, Thierry Hitimana.

Moshi tennis club set for 2020 BQ Junior Open tournament

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

KILIMANJARO's Rafiki Foundation tennis team's coach, Charles Laizer, has said he has assembled a good squad for the coming BQ Junior Open tournament slated for the end of this month at Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club (DGC).

Laizer said he has named 12 players, noting he is confident that they will perform well at the tournament which will be played from November 28-29.

The coach said his players have been training well ahead of the tournament and his main focus is on building self belief and team spirit ahead of the competition.

He thanked the outfit's sponsors, Dekker Chrysanthen Tanzania, for supporting the team's trip to Dar es Salaam for the tournament.

"The players trained very well, I'm confident of seeing them record good results at the tournament, currently we are only polishing up on some areas, but overall, the outfit is in good spirit ahead of the next weekend tournament," he stated.

"I'm also very grateful to our sponsors Dekker Chrysanthen Tanzania for their support to the team."

He named the 12 players from Rafiki Foundation team as Emmanuel Lema, Irene Kweka, James Mbaga, Erick Kessy, Clinton Kaungu, Rachel Swai, Naitoti Singo, Nasha Singo, Irene Munishi, Dorine Munishi, Hillary Ndossi and Ruki Kapofi.

Kilimanjaro will as well have the UWC tennis team in the Dar es Salaam competition, with Ethan Matoli as the squad's only player.

One of the BQ Junior Open tournament's organizers, Salum Mvita, said preparations for the tournament are going on very well.

"Preparations for the BQ Junior Open tournament are going on very well and we expect more than 80 juniors to compete at the event which is taking place for the eighth year in a row," he said.

In a previous interview, Mvita disclosed that invitations have been extended to all regions where tennis is played in the country.

He mentioned the regions as Simiyu, Morogoro, Arusha, Coast Region, Mtwara, Mwanza and Kilimanjaro.

Mvita thanked BQ Contractors Limited for sponsoring the event for the eighth year and asked junior tennis players to register for the showdown before the deadline.

"We are pleased to inform you that BQ Contractors Limited has agreed to sponsor a junior open tennis tournament from November 28-29 at DGC, the players aged 6-18 are encouraged to join the junior tournament," he stated in the invitation extended to the regions.

"This will be the eighth year BQ Contractors Limited sponsors a tennis tournament at DGC, we are very thankful to BQ Contractors Limited for their support" he said.

He said junior players will compete in age categories of U-6, U-8, U-10, U-12, U-14 and U-18 and there will also be singles and doubles matches.

Mvita also said they will be in a wheelchair tennis tournament. The official stopped short of disclosing awards which will be handed over to winners, promising to make them public soon.

Meanwhile, Arusha Gymkhana Club (AGC) has disclosed it will not send its players to the tournament as the players will be occupied with academic assignments.

Goodluck Mollel, AGC head coach, said the club's management agreed not to send the players, so as to give them opportunity to prepare for the examinations, the management has promised to send a strong team to other future events.

"We planned to send more than five players and they were all training, but as you know many students will be sitting for the final examinations this month end, the AGC management agreed not to send the players, so as to give them opportunity to prepare for the examinations, the management has promised to send a strong team to other future events," he said.



Rafiki Foundation Tennis team in group photo after taking part in one of recent tournaments. The Moshi-based team is expected to field 12 players at the coming BQ Junior Open tournament which is to take place at Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club (DGC) courts. PHOTO: COURTESY OF RAFIKI FOUNDATION



Yanga's Vice-Chairman, Fredrick Mwakalebela.

Yanga now appoint new Acting Secretary General

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

YANGA have appointed Hajji Mfikirwa as the club's new Acting Secretary General, replacing suspended Simon Patrick.

The outfit's Vice-Chairman, Fredrick Mwakalebela, said yesterday Mfikirwa, who had been serving as the side's Director of Finance, will serve the new post in an acting capacity up to the time the club either name the new Secretary General or reinstate Patrick.

Yanga suspended Patrick from his post due to, according to the club, misconduct.

The Jangwani Street-based club then formed a committee for probing Patrick, who also dou-

bled as the outfit's lawyer.

Mwakalebela said Yanga trust Mfikirwa as a person that is fit for the post due to his dedication and passion for the club.

"We have formed a committee which is probing on the alleged misconduct committed by our former Acting Secretary General, once the committee comes up with final report, we will let the public know the action which the club will take and Patrick's future," he said.

"For the time being, Mfikirwa will serve as our Secretary General on an acting capacity, we have faith and trust in Hajji as he has passion for the club, we hope he will take our team to the next desired level," he said.

Meanwhile, Mwakalebela has

asked the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) to speed up hearings in the cases Yanga has lodged to the federation.

He mentioned the cases, which are pending at TFF, as that of Yanga keeper Ramadhan Kabwili, who alleged that there are some officials from Simba SC who wanted to bribe him ahead of the two clubs' Vodacom Premier League (VPL) game in the 2018/19 season.

The media, on Thursday, reported that Patrick was, among others, accused of not handling the wrangle involving the club and Ghanaian winger, Bernard Morrison, who has been roped in by Simba SC this season.

Patrick is also alleged to have a close friendship with some of

top Simba SC leaders, it is alleged that they have been having meetings at unnamed club in the city.

He was reported in the media to have said that he did his best on Morrison's issue as he reported the matter to relevant authorities, among others, TFF and Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

He noted he moreover met Simba SC officials at the said location as he was fulfilling his assignments.

The other case is that of Morrison, which has Yanga complaining that his contract with Simba SC has many shortfalls.

He said if TFF will not address the Morrison case soon, Yanga fear the contract maybe rectified to suit Simba SC's needs.

Namungo FC clarifies on Hitimana's contract termination

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi
NAMUNGO FC early this week parted ways with coach, Thierry Hitimana, after the club's poor run of results in the 2020/21 Vodacom Premier League (VPL).

Hitimana, a former midfielder for Rwandan side Rayon Sports, was fired on Wednesday for what the club had termed as poor performance in the ongoing domestic top flight.

After 10 matches into the new season, Namungo FC, which finished fourth last season, has only managed to pick up 14 points and the squad is currently sitting ninth in the league standing.

The Rwandan tactician, however, against all odds, guided Namungo FC to the final of the previous season's Azam Sports Federation Cup and conceded loss to Simba SC.

The milestone has automatically secured Namungo FC a ticket to this season's CAF Confederation Cup.

Hitimana had initially made it clear that Namungo FC has this season found it difficult to replicate their previous season's exploits due to the growing competition within the league.

He disclosed the side's players lacked adequate preparation for the season, much as sporting activities had been put on hold for almost three months in Tanzania with a view to fighting coronavirus pandemic.

"Actually, for the 2020/21 season we have started badly, it is a bad wind that has hit us but the main reason is the short preparation, as well as the players not having a good connection," he said before he was fired.

On November 18, Namungo FC through the outfit's Chairman, Hassan Zidadu, made it clear that the outfit terminated Hitimana's contract because of poor performance.

"We have reached an agreement to terminate the contract with Hitimana as the team did not have a good run of results in the VPL," he stated.

"Currently the team is camping in Zanzibar and is under head coach, Hemed Morocco," he said.

Namungo FC will start quest for continental football glory against South Sudan's Al Rabita in the preliminary round of CAF Confederation Cup at Azam Complex in Dar es Salaam between November 27-29.

Morocco, former assistant coach at senior national soccer team, had also coached several VPL clubs including Mwadui FC and Coastal Union.

Flexibles by David Chikoko



We have reached an agreement to terminate the contract with Hitimana as the team did not have a good run of results in the VPL