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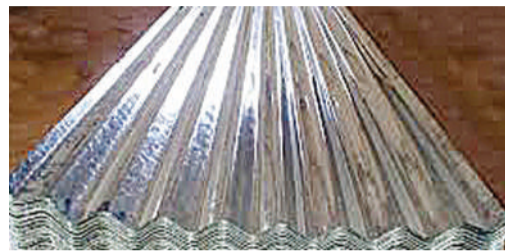
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TANZANIA

SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER, 2020

MANUFACTURE



SUMA JKT SETS UP IRON SHEET FACTORY IN DODOMA PAGE 2

AGRICULTURE



PROJECT TO IMPART SKILLS TO YOUTHFUL BRAINS PAGE 3

TRANSPORT



TAZARA EMPLOYEES SALARY DISPARITIES RESOLVED PAGE 4

BUSINESS



COUNCIL PROVIDES INTEREST LOANS TO VULNERABLE GROUPS PAGE 5



TikTok explicitly calls out white nationalism, white genocide theory



Page 13

JPM unveils horticulture cargo flights plan

By Henry Mwangonde, Arusha

CCM presidential candidate Dr John Magufuli yesterday promised that, if he is re-elected, the government will buy new cargo planes for exporting horticultural produce by direct flights to international markets.

Addressing a rally at the Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium here, he said his plans are to boost the horticulture sector by putting in place reliable transportation of flowers and fruits.

He said robust horticulture in addition to already thriving tourism can unlock the potential of Arusha as an agro-commercial hub.

For this reason he intends to purchase new cargo planes for Air Tanzania (ATCL) upon re-election, and the construction of new passenger buildings at the Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA) and Arusha airport.

There is a lot to be done to make Arusha a great city and a commercial hub for the country," he declared, noting that Arusha has the potential to produce more than it is doing now if facilities like roads and airports are im-

TURN TO Page2



There is a lot to be done to make Arusha a great city and a commercial hub for the country

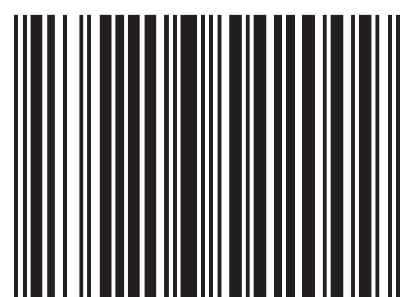
Govt in three seed farms revival plan

By Guardian Correspondent, Songwe

THE Agricultural Seed Agency (ASA) has embarked on revival and expansion of seed farms for strategic crops to enable farmers get improved seeds at affordable prices.

The first to be revived is Mbozi Seed Farm in Songwe Region, occupying 700 hectares of land and is expected to massively boost the agency's production capacity.

TURN TO Page2



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CCM presidential candidate Dr John Magufuli exchanges greetings with former Prime Minister Edward Lowassa (C) and former CCM Secretary General Abdulrahman Kinana shortly after addressing a campaign rally in Arusha city yesterday. Photo: State House

Health insurance and malaria key in 39 billion/- Swiss grant



Salum Mwalimu, Chadema presidential candidate Tundu Lissu's running mate, has a word with residents of Guliguli village in Maswa District yesterday while on his way to Marwilo village in Kisesa District for a campaign rally. Both districts are in Simiyu Region. Photo: Correspondent Francis Dande

By Getrude Mbagu

THE government has received two grants totalling 39bn/- from Switzerland for malaria eradication efforts and wider health insurance coverage in rural areas.

At the grant agreement signing ceremony in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Treasury Permanent Secretary Doto James said that the grant will be directed to the Health Promotion and System Strengthening (HPSS) project and the malaria elimination project.

In the first agreement, the Swiss government has injected 9.75m Swiss francs (equivalent to 24.5bn/-) for the health systems project, while in the second agreement Switzerland issued 6m Swiss francs (equivalent to 15.08bn/-) for malaria erad-

TURN TO Page2

It's death sentence for village chairman's murder convict



By Guardian Correspondent, Tarime

A SITTING of the High Court in Musoma has sentenced a resident of Mbirikiri village in Tarime District to death by hanging after finding him guilty of killing a village chairman with a poisoned arrow.

Reading the sentence in Tarime town where the court sat on Thursday, Judge John Kayoza said the prosecution had proved beyond reasonable doubt that Ghati Gibiti killed Mbiriki-

ri village chairman Mwitwa Mirumbe with the crude weapon.

"The prosecution has proved without a doubt that you committed the crime of premeditated murder; the court hereby sentences you to death by hanging," the judgement intoned.

The capital punishment should serve as a lesson to others, as an elected civic leader was killed while undertaking his official duties in 2017.

During the hearing, the prosecution led by state attorney Jesse Temba

brought three witnesses who told the court how Gibiti attacked Mirumbe. Gibiti did not bring any witnesses to say otherwise.

Earlier, Temba told the court that on the fateful day—15th March, 2017—the village chairman, accompanied by three other people, visited Gibiti's home with regard to a court case he was involved in as a surety for his relative who was facing poaching charges.

He narrated that the accused person that Gibiti had bailed out disappeared,

and efforts to have Gibiti produce him in court failed - and that is when the chairman took action.

He said the deceased went to Gibiti's house in the company of three local militiamen with intent to have him appear at the local government offices, as he was not available on several summons.

"So, on that day, Mirumbe and the three civic militiamen took Gibiti's

TURN TO Page2

GAS EXPLORATION

Page 3



IRRIGATION SCHEMES

Page 4



DEAF ASSOCIATION

Page 5



MINORS' RIGHT

Page 6



Govt in three seed farms revival plan

FROM PAGE 1

Inspecting initial works on the farm on Thursday, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Gerald Kusaya, said the objective is to end national dependency on seeds from foreign multinationals firms.

"The government is determined to increase seed availability at affordable prices so that farmers can boost production and incomes. This is vital as part of on-going efforts to transform farming in the country," he said.

He challenged the agency not to relax but keep working hard as the government relies on it as regards the production of seeds. The ministry will ensure that all government seed farms owned are placed under the agency and are cultivated to capacity in order to generate sufficient seed tonnage, he said.

For her part, ASA Chief Executive Officer Dr Sophia Kashenge told the top ministerial official that the agency is working round the clock to enhance seed production and at recommended quality. She said similar revival and expansion projects are set to take place at Kilimi farm in Nzega District, Tabora Region and Msimba farm in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region, explaining that the target is to fully utilize ASA land resources

for greater seed production.

The initiative started with ASA's Mwele Seed Farm located in Mkinga District, Tanga Region where the agency planted just 100 acres in the 2018 growing season, she said, noting that the revival process goes along with enhanced security to protect the farms from encroachments by land grabbers.

"These farms are increasingly being encroached owing to the fast growing population. It is high time that the seed farms are properly protected as they are prone to grabbing," she further noted.

"These farms create employment opportunities and community-building for villagers around the fields. They provide a buffer for pollution and thus improve the environment, health and well-being of the people by functioning as a land-based carbon sink," the CEO declared. With mandate to produce seeds on behalf of the government, ASA is ranked eighth out of 167 seed companies operating in the country and contributes 28 per cent of locally produced seeds.

The ministry is implementing a 10-year agriculture improvement strategic plan, seeking to lift the country's seed production to satisfy local demand and export quality seeds to nearby markets.



Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein updates journalists at Zanzibar State House yesterday on oil and natural gas exploration in the Isles. Photo: Zanzibar State House.

JPM unveils horticulture cargo flights plan

FROM PAGE 1

proved.

The horticulture sector has in the past five years grown from \$412m to \$779m in exports, providing jobs for upwards of four million people, he pointed out.

On tourism, Dr Magufuli said 80 per cent of tourists who visit Tanzania visit Arusha, with current plans envisaging increasing flows to five million, after reaching two

million presently.

He said that if re-elected, he will finalize the renovation of the Arusha-Sakina-Tengeru road, the Arusha bypass road and Usa river to Kidege road.

Other roads slated for renovation are Arusha-Kibaya to Kongwa in Dodoma and the Arusha-Kisongo bypass, intended to ease motor vehicle movement in the northern city.

He also hinted at plans in the next five

years to create the number of billionaires in the region through artisanal mining especially for tanzanite.

Dr Magufuli however, said the region has not done enough on wheat production, as the country was importing 800,000 tonnes of wheat at a cost of 1.3trn/- annually at present.

He directed the contractor of the Arusha water project to finish the project before the end of this year. The project is

meant to double the water supply to the city, as it will be producing 150m litres of water annually upon completion.

He said he was expanding the port of Tanga to ease fuel prices in Arusha by lowering haulage costs of imported oils.

The president is today expected to launch the Dar es Salaam-Tanga-Arusha railway line here, recently revamped after lying dormant for nearly 30 years.



Finance and Planning ministry permanent secretary Doto James (R) and Switzerland's Ambassador to Tanzania, Didier Chassot, exchange documents in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly after signing a 24.5bn/- agreement on the strengthening of health systems in Tanzania and a 15.08bn/- one on malaria eradication in the country. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Court rules it's death sentence for man found to have killed

FROM PAGE 1

donkey in the hope that he would present himself to the authorities," he said.

"As they were on their way back to the office, Gibiti emerged from the bush and attacked them with poisoned arrows, one of which pierced Mirumbe's thigh and caused his death."

The three militiamen appeared as state witnesses to win the conviction of Gibiti, who was all tears after the sentencing, while Mirumbe's relatives who thronged the courtroom celebrated with chants of "justice has been served."

Health insurance and malaria pivotal in 39bn/- Swiss grant

FROM PAGE 1

"While we sign these grant agreements today, we remember that on 6th of October 2020 our two governments signed two grant agreements worth CHF 17.8m (equivalent to 44.1bn/-). Therefore within October 2020, we have signed grant agreements worth 33.55m Swiss francs (equivalent to 83.69bn/-)," he said, expressing profound gratitude for the gesture of support. CHF abbreviates 'Confederation Helvetica Franc,' that is, currency of the Swiss federation.

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen public health systems in respect of the improved Community

Health Fund, and support the creation of nationally-led think tank structures on the subject.

This includes forming a steering committee to identify knowledge gaps relevant to the nationwide deployment of improved community health funds, enhancing the Jazia prime vendor system and health technology management, he said.

In relation to malaria eradication, the grant will help to capacitate the National Malaria Control Program to reduce malaria deaths to zero and expand malaria free zones to half in the country by 2030 through continuous zonal mapping of infection risks.

"It will also support efforts to em-

power the government to effectively engage in cross border cooperation through regional economic entities to implement inter-sectoral strategies preventing the re-introduction of local malaria transmission," he elaborated.

Academic institutions, in collaboration with Swiss partners, shall via the grant continue providing high quality data and experience to optimally inform global malaria control and elimination policies, for accelerated progress towards the 2030 malaria free zones goal.

He said Tanzania and Switzerland have an outstanding relationship, which is growing as reflected by the increase in the number of bilateral de-

velopment projects, ongoing projects and others in the pipeline. Ongoing projects and programmes amount are worth 65.3m Swiss francs (164.12bn/-) and completed projects' value reach 59.87m Swiss francs (150.87bn/-) in grants.

The Treasury top official observed that improvements in the provision of health services contributed to an increase in life expectancy from 50.2 years in 1990 to 63.1 years in 2015 and 65 years in 2018.

"This is attributed to the increase in the number of health facilities by 25 per cent, from 7,014 in 2015 to 8,800 in 2020," he stated.

Likewise, the government has con-

tinued to improve health services provision by supplying medicines, equipment and medical equipment, reagents and health experts at various health facilities, he stated.

For his part, Swiss Ambassador Didier Chassot said that his government is happy working with Tanzania to ensure that people have access to quality health services.

"The HPSS was initiated in 2011 for the purpose of improving the community Health Fund so that basic health insurance is accessible to more citizens. We understand that with the increase in the premium from 10,000/- to 30,000/- per household of six people, this has slowed down the enrolment

of people in the scheme. So with this support, we hope that the coverage will improve and reach more households in the county," he explained.

The malaria project has a very high impact for the benefit of Tanzania as it will include large scale case management and testing of novel biolarvicides to fight the disease, he stated.

Dr Leonard Subi, the Director of Preventive Services in the Ministry for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, said the government will take necessary measures to ensure successful implementation of the programmes to achieve intended objectives.

China donates 150m/- for equipment to contain raging fire on Mount Kilimanjaro

By Correspondent James Kandoyo

EMBASSY of China to Tanzania and Chinese contractors have donated 150m/- to the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) so as to procure firefighting equipment to contain the inferno on Mount Kilimanjaro.

Speaking at the handing over ceremony yesterday in Dar es Salaam, Wang Ke, Chinese ambassador to Tanzania said the donation aimed to support the government to contain fire to

mitigate damage to the natural vegetation in the world-heritage site.

Ke said the donation was also the response to the call made by Dr Hamis Kigwangalla, the minister for Natural Resources and Tourism to stakeholders to support containing the fire.

The envoy added that even during the earthquake that hit the Kagera region four years ago, the Chinese embassy in collaboration provided medical materials and dispatched a team of

medical experts.

"Today's event reflects the friendships between the two countries. The two countries are so much willing to support when others are in danger," she said.

According to the envoy, the donation also reflects the responsibility of Chinese contractors companies in the country.

For his part, the Zone Senior Conservation Commissioner from TANAPA Herman Batiho thanked the embassy and said the donation will be used effec-

tively to contain the fire that destroyed 95.5 out of 1700 square metres.

He said the fire outbreak had ecological and weather impacts since it has posed a serious threat to the flora and fauna surrounding Africa's highest mountain peak as well as eruption of carbon dioxide

"The 90-95 percent of the fire is under control. However, the support from our friends, the Chinese Embassy and the contractors companies will help us

to procure equipment to contain the fire and even when it erupts in future," he assured.

According to the commissioner, a team of 300 people firefighters, emergency responders and volunteers from the College of African Wildlife Management (CAWMSO) were still on the mountain to contain the fire and prevent the new outbreak.

On October 11, this year it was reported that firefighters and a legion of first responders in Tanzania were battling a raging in-

ferno on Mt. Kilimanjaro, which has been spreading posing a serious threat to the flora and fauna surrounding Africa's highest mountain peak.

The fast-spreading bushfire, believed to be fueled by soaring temperature and high winds, erupted near Whona camp - a stopover used by tourists and hikers - and efforts to contain it are underway, authorities said on Monday.

Pascal Shelutete, TANAPA's Senior Assistant Commissioner,

said in a statement that firefighters, emergency responders and volunteers from the College of African Wildlife Management (CAWMSO) have joined forces with local residents to battle the blaze, whose source is still unknown. No casualties have been reported so far.

"We are taking all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of our visitors and their property, without jeopardizing ongoing tourism activities in the area," he said.

Sanitation and hygiene related diseases under control in Tanga Region - RMO

By Correspondent George Sembony, Tanga

COMMUNICABLE diseases that are caused by poor sanitation in Tanga Region have decreased significantly due to adherence to hygiene measures including washing hands, the Regional Medical Officer (RMO), Dr Jonathan Budemu has said.

Dr Buhemu told journalists yesterday here during the meeting organised by Tanga Press Club (TPC) to discuss on the impacts of COVID-19.

According to him, measures taken by the government and the Health sector to counter Covid 19 such as washing hands have helped to reduce possibilities of infection.

"Diseases caused by poor sanitation such as diarrhoea, cholera and dysentery have decreased by almost 14 per cent from 34 during that period," said Dr Budemu, calling on the maintenance of the culture of washing hands and general sanitation to avoid recurrence of such diseases or eliminate them altogether.

Clarifying on communicable diseases situation in the region, the Regional Health Officer, Jumanne Magoma said that statistics show that communicable diseases have decreased comparing the period of January to September 2018/19 and the same period 2019/20.

"Use of flowing water to wash hands

among households has increased from 17 per cent to 42 per cent, thanks to measures taken to promote washing hands during the Covid 19 era," he advised.

He said that the use of handwashing water facilities in public institutions has reached 95 per cent.

Magoma called on the public to continue to wash their hands not only as a measure against COVID 19, but to protect themselves against other communicable diseases that are still rampant in the society such as diarrhoea, dysentery and cholera.

"People think that the corona explosion of over but it is not only corona that we are guarding against. Other communicable diseases are still rampant. So it is crucial to continue to maintain the culture of washing hands and other sanitation measures," Magoma said.

Observation made by this paper in Tanga city shows that most people and institutions that maintained buckets and soaps for washing hands have abandoned them. Some have literally decided to keep those buckets away while some of them are still in place but empty.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that four per cent (4) of all deaths worldwide are the result of waterborne diseases like diarrhoea,



China's Ambassador to Tanzania, Wang Ke (2nd-L), and China Contractors Association chairman Zhang Junle (L) present a dummy cheque for 150m/- to Tanzania National Parks northern zone senior commissioner Herman Batiho yesterday to help in procuring equipment to contain the Mount Kilimanjaro fire. Photo courtesy of Chinese Embassy

We'll watch voters' behaviour too, declares election agency

By Beauty Mwakatobe

(TUDARCo)

ACTION for changes, a civil society organisation- observing next week's general election, yesterday said that it will closely and keenly watch the behaviour of voters.

Addressing reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the organisation's executive director Martina Kabisama said voters also have a responsibility to ensure peaceful and credible polls.

"We will closely keep an eye to all players involved in the election including the National Electoral Commission (NEC) officials, police and the voters as well," she said.

She said the institution is one of 245 institutions accredited by the NEC to provide voter education nationwide, and has also succeeded in being among the 95 institutions accredited to watch the 2020 general

election.

"So as an institution that will watch the general election this year we ask the administrators, voters, candidates, clerks, state agencies all to ensure that the elections are fair and peaceful, as we will be very careful in our observation at all levels involved," he said.

Kabisama said that one of the fruits of the recommendations they have made based on their views on past elections is the change in the day of voting, as statistics

show that the election was held on Sunday which is a worship day for Christians.

She added that the organization is committed to the task of observing with due regard for dignity, citizenship and humanity by not taking sides on any political issue.

"We will report whenever we see indicators of peace breaching as well as open corruption in the polling stations. We will report the incidents to the State agencies as we work collaboratively with them," she added.

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TANZANIA SOCIAL ACTION FUND



Ref. No. CAC.256/297/22

Date: 23rd October, 2020

CALL FOR INTERVIEW

The Executive Director of Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) would like to inform all the applicants applied for vacancy posts advertised on 10th June, 2020 by TASAF that the interviews are expected to be conducted from 31st October to 11th November, 2020 at The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy - Kivukoni Campus, Vocational Educational Training Authority (VETA) Headquarters Dar es Salaam, TASAF Offices Old Kilwa Road/ Malindi and Public Service Recruitment Secretariat (PSRS) Offices, Kivukoni Dar es Salaam.

All shortlisted candidates are instructed to consider/observe the following general conditions:-

- An Aptitude test (written interview) will be conducted on **Saturday** 31st October, 2020 at The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy - Kivukoni Campus;
- Practical interview for Driver and Motor Vehicle Mechanic will be conducted on **Saturday** 31st October, 2020 at VETA Headquarters Dar es Salaam;
- Oral Interview will be conducted from 3rd to 11th November, 2020 at PSRS Offices, Kivukoni Dar es Salaam;
- All applicants must come along with an identity card. The acceptable identity cards are among the following: Citizen Identity Card, Driving License, Voters Registration Card, Passport, Resident Identity Card or Office Identity Card;
- Applicants must bring original certificates of the following depending on the required qualification in respective cadre applied for:-
 - Postgraduate/degree/Advanced Diploma/Diploma/Certificates;
 - Postgraduate/Degree/Advanced Diploma/Diploma Transcripts;
 - Form IV and form VI National Examination Certificates;
 - Professional Registration and Training Certificates from respective registration or regulatory bodies, (where applicable); and
 - Birth certificate;
- PHOTO COPIES OF THE FOLLOWING CERTIFICATES IS STRICTLY NOT ACCEPTED:-**
 - Form IV and form VI results slips;
 - Testimonials and all partial transcripts;
- Certificate of verification from the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) for those candidates whose certificates are from foreign examination bodies for ordinary or advanced level education;
- Certificate of verification from the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) and National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) for professional certificates from foreign universities and other training institutions;
- Presentation of forged certificates and other information will necessitate to legal action;
- TASAF will not bear any cost for candidates participation in the interview;
- For all candidates whose names do not appear on this list should consider themselves not successful.

More details are available in TASAF Website: www.tasaf.go.tz

Ladislau J. Mwamanga
Ladislau J. Mwamanga
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Oil and gas exploration in Zanzibar show insights discoveries - Dr Shein

By Guardian Correspondent, Zanzibar

INITIAL results of oil and gas exploration in Zanzibar have shown insights that could lead to oil and gas discoveries in the Indian Ocean archipelago.

Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein revealed this here yesterday when speaking to journalists on the research carried out by RAKGAS Company of Ras Al Khaimah United Arab Emirates (UAE).

He said that studies carried out in Pemba-Zanzibar blocks through Full Tensor Gradiometric Survey and 2D Seismic Survey show the big possibility of availability of rocks that has enough hydrocarbons—naturally-occurring compounds and form the basis of crude oil, and natural gas.

"This is due to the fact that all the surveys that there is a signs of Petroleum System Elements (PSE). This is a good news to us," DrShein said.

He further said that report from the Full Tensor Gradiometric Survey show that there are three areas that have rocks rich of oil and gas which include Makoongwe island in Pemba, Tumbatu in Unguja

North West and eastern part of Unguja.

According to him, five areas were detected to have oil and gas resources through 2D Seismic Survey. Those areas include north-east of Unguja island and southern part of Pemba island as well as north-west of Unguja, north-west of Pemba and southern part of Pemba Island.

In total, he said: "All those areas show that there are geological structures that have the capacity of storing natural gas of about 3.8 trillion cubic feet (tcf).

This indicates that there is a possibility of discovering natural gas of about 30 percent, the amount which is big when using 2D seismic," he added.

He however revealed that the amount of gas can go up to 45 percent, when using high-precision 3D seismic technology to shale gas exploration.

RAS Gas continues with oil and gas exploration in shallow depth in the ocean though seismic in areas where there indicators of having the two resources, as well as engaging in identification of well location and exploration well drilling, he said.



Asas Dairies Ltd managing director Fuad Abri (L) briefs CCM Central Committee member Job Ndugai (R), who visited the firm's dairy products factory in Iringa municipality on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

Firm embarks on a project to impart agricultural skills for youthful brains

By GetrudeMbagu

A DAR ES SALAAM based-Malembo Farms Organisation has embarked on a project aimed to capacitate secondary and college students on smart agriculture so as to prepare have positive mindset on commercial farming.

Lucas Malembo, managing director of the organisation said that the project is aimed to ensure that more young graduates employment themselves in agriculture and thus fight employment crisis in the country.

In an interview with The Guardian recently Malem-

bourged the government and education institutions to incorporate agriculture in primary schools curriculums and thus train the children intensively on smart farming.

"We provide them proper skills and right information over the agriculture and its whole value chain. Malembo Farm see it very important to re-introduce agriculture subject in schools to enable students get extra skills while in school, which would help them after completing school," he said.

According to him, having more youth who engage in agriculture would earn them and raise econ-

omy of not only their families but also the nation.

Statistics show that each year 900,000 young Tanzanians enter the job market that is generating only 50,000 to 60,000 new jobs.

He said that the country needs to undergo youth mindset transformation to change negative perceptions towards agriculture in a bid to attract more youths in agribusiness undertakings, a move that will curb the current unemployment challenge.

According to him, this can be done through provision of education to youth on entrepreneurship initiatives through training,

practical field work and making an easy access to capital through provision of loans with lower interest rates and grants to attract their effective involvement in the agribusiness.

"Our organization is doing its best to change youth mindset, we have training a number of young people in the country who managed to transform their lives, so I hope if these efforts will be accelerated, the country could witness rapid change of the sector," he said.

He said that the programme has started with Advanced-Level and university students and plans are underway to bring it

down to primary school pupils.

The training classes are usually conducted during weekends and on weekdays when schools are closed for leave and students spend about two hours a day for the training.

"During the training students are taken through technical know-how on growing vegetables and fruits for commercial purposes, poultry farming as well as entrepreneurship education," he said.

One of the project beneficiaries, Sheila Kambi, a Form-Six student at Benjamin Mkapa High School has started capitalizing on agriculture while she looks

ahead for joining higher education.

"My expectation from this practical-oriented training on agri-business is to get skills that would help me create my own job instead of depending on being employed," she said.

Sheila believes that the engaging in agribusiness would make her overcome the challenge of unemployment when completes higher education.

Despite her busy schedule in class, Sheila still finds time to pursue agri-business short course offered by the Malembo Farms agri-business consulting firm.

According to Sheila, the training classes have taught her the importance of applying technology and best farming practices if someone wants to reap big in the agriculture sector.

Early this year, Malembo Farms Organisation in collaboration with other stakeholders embarked on a new project dubbed 'NdotoYangu' which is aimed at to capacitate higher learning students on self-employment, particularly in agri-business.

The project aimed to cover six regions, where over 70 universities will be reached in a new push to curb unemployment crisis in the country.



Dr Ghirmay Andemichael (L), the World Health Organisation's liaison officer in Zanzibar, pictured yesterday presenting a donation of medical equipment and supplies to Zanzibar's Health ministry Director General, Dr Jamala Adam Taib. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

Tazara workers' salary disparities in Zambia and Tanzania resolved

LUSAKA

THE Tanzania Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) has resolved the salary disparities between its workers in the Zambian and Tanzanian regions.

In August this year the Ministry of Labour and Social Security ordered TAZARA management to resolve the discrepancies to ensure remuneration parity between TAZARA workers on the Zambian side with their counterparts in Tanzania.

This was after the Ministry found TAZARA with a case to answer for underpaying its workers on the Zambian side by more than 80 percent thereby breaching the provisions on Section 5 of the Employment Code Act No. 3 of 2019 which prohibits discrimination in employee remuneration and compels an employer to pay employees equal wages for work of equal value.

Crews and Allied Workers Union of Zambia (CRAWUZ) President Bevis Silumbe has confirmed the development to ZANIS in Kapiri Mposhi yesterday.

Silumbe said the resolution of the matter which has been an outstanding grievance since 2014 meant that TAZARA workers on the Zambian side will now be paid at the same rate with their Tanzanian counterparts.

Currently, the lowest paid TAZARA worker on the Zambian side gets as low as K1,900 while their counterpart in Tanzania gets an equivalent K3,700

per month despite being bound by the same employee collective agreement.

He further disclosed that TAZARA will also implement the policy guide on the review of the exchange rate in paying workers once there was the depreciation of either currencies by more than 20 percent.

"TAZARA has been disregarding the mandatory review of workers' salaries once there was depreciation on the two currencies of Zambia and Tanzania to ensure parity in payments, so this will now be implemented through this resolution," Silumbe said.

Silumbe noted that the resolution which will take effect in January 2021 will be a motivating factor for workers at TAZARA.

"This landmark resolution entails that workers from both Zambia and Tanzania will enjoy the same working conditions and will be equally paid for work value," Silumbe said.

He commended government and Labour Commissioner, Givens Muntengwa for providing the roadmap and facilitating the resolutions to address the matter.

TAZARA Human Resources Manager Bright Mulamba implored TAZARA workers to avoid persistent work stoppages noting this will affect the productivity of the railway company to sustain its wage bill following the implementation of the new resolutions.

Thousands of farmers in Mbarali District benefit from improved irrigation schemes

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbarali

FARMERS in Makangalawe and Isenyela irrigation scheme in Mbarali District, Mbeya Region have been equipped with prerequisite farming knowledge and skills so as to enable them increase production and thus reap big from the sector.

The group has also been trained on best ways to strengthen their irrigation Union for close supervision on proper utilisation of water.

These are the ones benefiting from the Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and

Growth (REGROW) Project.

Speaking during the training session held here recently, technical coordinator of the REGROW project, Eng John Nyamhanga reminded farmers to properly utilise the water resource to fight scarcity in the future. He said that the REGROW project seeks to strengthen the management of protected areas and promote nature-based tourism in Southern Tanzania - known as the "Southern Circuit" and contribute to the diversification of livelihoods in selected communities.

IT is mostly targeting the development of tourism programs for local communities living neigh-

bours to wildlife parks in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania where tourism and tourist businesses are far less developed. "The project aims to support communities protect natural vegetation and water resource but also make good use of irrigation infrastructures to improve farming," he said.

Eng Nyamhanga noted that irrigation is a promising way of raising agricultural productivity. It increases farm yields mightily, allowing two crops to be cultivated at ago and it allows crops to be grown throughout the years.

"Protecting water resource should be a matter of priority; all farmers should work and put an eye

to ensure that the water resource is used properly. We have to also ensure that we protect water sources and natural vegetation for our development," he said. According to him, the project also works to ensure that farmers and residents have access to water even during dry season.

For his part, irrigation engineer for Mbarali District, Karoli Lihala said through the implementation of the project, irrigation infrastructures will be improved which includes construction and rehabilitation of canals.

Rahim Mbule commended the government for investing in the irrigation schemes saying that the

infrastructures will enable farmers have flow of water throughout the year.

"The project has brought a huge relief to a number of farmers who have been grappling for years to get enough water for their crops," he said.

The REGROW project which is implemented by the government of Tanzania will also finance the diversification of livelihoods in selected communities neighbouring four priority Protected Areas (PAs) made up of Mikumi National Park, Ruaha National Park, Udzungwa Mountains National Park, and the northern photographic zone of the Selous Game Reserve.

Council provides 5.2bn/- zero-interest loans to vulnerable groups in Dodoma

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

DODOMA City Council has dished out 5.2bn/- loans without interest to various groups of women, youth and people with disabilities in the past five years.

The Head of Dodoma City Community Development Department, Shari-fa Nabalanganya disclosed this yesterday at a meeting for the preparation of Dodoma Festival to congratulate the fifth phase government.

Nabalanganya said in the last five years the groups in the City have benefitted from zero-interest loans that have given them economic freedom.

She said in the past groups for the disabilities for example used to ask for alms in the streets due to lack of capital for starting various projects, now the loans have assisted many of them to conduct small businesses.

She said the City Council begun providing loans to the groups in 2015, and added that in the past they were also being provided with loans but there was no law compelling the council to issue loans.

She said this month they expect to provide 545m/- to 67 people, 45 to purchase motorcycles and 21 for purchase of Bajajs.

Speaking on behalf of beneficiaries from council loans, Christopher Dionis, a disabled youth thanked the government for zero-interest loans.

He said the loans have enabled them start poultry projects, and now they produce chicks and eggs as well as chickens.

“Our group received 30m/- which we will repay without interest, and no one from our group is now interested in being employed, as we get money from our projects, sometimes more than those employed in the public sector,” Dionis said.

The coordinator of the festival Simon Mwapagata said the aim was to congratulate president John Magufuli for his accomplishments in the last five years.

“The non-political festival will be held on October 24 this year in Dodoma and the chief guest will be the Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa.



Our group received 30m/- which we will repay without interest, and no one from our group is now interested in being employed, as we get money from our projects, sometimes more than those employed in the public sector



Brigita Stephen (L), Vodacom Tanzania's Coastal and Dar es Salaam zone head of sales, cuts a ribbon yesterday to launch a modern shop the firm has opened in downtown Dar es Salaam in celebrating the 20th year of its operations in the country. She is with retail shops manager Vanessa Mlawi. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Deaf association calls upon members to vote in Wednesday's General Election

By Guardian Correspondent, Mtwara

THE deaf association in Mtwara Region has called upon its members to make sure they practice their constitutional right by voting for perfect leaders on Wednesday's general election.

The association's chairman, Farida Suleiman told this paper

that they have educated members on the importance of voting, urging them to massively come out and elect leaders of their choice. She said that people with hearing impediments have been mostly left aside during the electoral process.

“We have educated them and we expect them to cast their votes on October 28, 2020. We

have put in place an arrangement to assist them throughout the voting process,” she said calling upon people with disabilities to also make sure they practice their constitutional rights.

Farida added that people with disabilities including the deaf have the right to choose their leaders. She said that various ef-

forts have been done to ensure the participation of people with disabilities and special groups in elections.

There are a total of 17,630 people with hearing impediments in Mtwara Region, according to the 2012 national census.

Kassim Mchindula is the coordinator of a project designed to enhance the participation

of people with hearing impediments in elections, he said the association has successfully reached almost all the deaf in Mtwara Region.

He said they were turning up in big numbers during the educational programmes that indicate they will also fully participate in the election process.

He said following the pro-

vided education, most of them are expected to vote on October 28, 2020. In August this year, the Tanzania Constitutional Forum (Jukata) challenged electoral bodies and political parties to ensure participation and support to aspirants with disabilities and those from special groups.

Jukata is currently working towards formalisation of an Inclu-

sive Policy for Women, Youth and People with Disabilities (PWDs) in electoral processes as well as in top decision-making positions within the government and political parties.

According to Jukata there is no equal representation at political parties' top management positions with PWDs being left aside.

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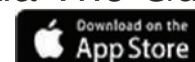
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New capital fund of US\$30-million launches for Southern Africa SMEs

By Special Correspondent

SECHA Capital - a Southern African investment impact firm that provides long-term capital to established SMEs, has announced the closure of its second fund worth \$30-million to support established SMEs in the region.

The fund adopts an impact investment model and aims to accelerate the growth of the selected SMEs, fostering economic growth within the small business sector.

Rushil Vallabh, a co-founder and managing director of Secha Capital comments on the launch of a second fund in supporting SMEs, saying: "Fund one was always proof of concept: Can we complement growth capital with human capital to solve SME pain points and accelerate growth? Our portfolio data is a resounding yes. It is now time to replicate and scale this investment model across Africa. We need to grow the Secha team to help more SMEs."

Titled Secha Capital Impact, it is a Southern Africa early-stage operations-focused impact private equity fund. This is the second round of funding launched from the investment firm and will invest up to R12-million into established Southern African SMEs.

The fund adopts an impact investment model and aims to accelerate the growth of the selected SMEs, fostering economic growth within the small business sector. Secha Capital Fund I resulted in the

overall success of the selected participating SMEs. Nombuso Nkambule, the co-founder of Secha Capital, points out that the fund made a concerted impact on the SME sector and increased business growth, and facilitated the creation of employment opportunities.

"Our first fund, which established proof of concept, invested in a range of African businesses, from plant-based haircare brand, nativechild, to networking marketing company, WUKINA, which empowers women to start their own businesses selling high-quality wigs. These companies have grown over 10x and created over 100 jobs since we invested." Unlike other investment firms, Secha Capital has established itself as a company that supports SMEs as operators and not as investors.

"We find and fund SMEs that others do not. We write smaller, but more impactful checks and then get Africa's best and brightest to actually join the SME team," explains Vallabh.

Secha Capital's team works with selected entrepreneurs to upscale their SME efficiently, increasing overall revenue, sales, and employment opportunities as a result.

With smaller funds, the model adopted at Secha is unique as it aims to invest in a deeper pipeline of established SMEs in large, fragmented sectors that have been founded by previously ignored entrepreneurs.



Dodoma regional sheikh Mustafa Rajabu (L) briefs journalists in Dodoma city yesterday on the proceedings of a meeting of regional and district Muslim Council leaders whose thrust was on encouraging people to take full part in the October 28 General Election. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

Children's council to push for minors' rights in Iringa

By Correspondent Friday

Simbaya, Iringa

IRINGA District in collaboration with stakeholders has established a children's council aimed at promoting rights and wellbeing of minors within the public and private sectors.

Iringa District Commissioner Richard Kasesela has hailed various stakeholders including SOS Children's Villages Tanzania and World Vision Tanzania for facilitating the creation of the platform that will help address issues pertaining to children's rights and wellbeing, hence re-

duction of violence against children in the district.

Speaking yesterday at the inauguration of the council, he said the presence of the Children's Council would help address the problem of violence against children in the council.

He said children need to be given enough space to get involved in the decisions that affect them, to contribute to the implementation of their rights and to help monitor efforts to ensure that services meet the required standard.

Kasesela observed that children's councils should be expanded to reach communities

where such opportunities do not exist and to enhance their engagement in local government authorities (LGAs), adding that he wants to see every village and every ward forming forums (councils) that will help children to report the actions of some people who do not wish them well.

"I would like to commend our development partners in Iringa district, especially the non-governmental organisation SOS Village Children's Tanzania for combating violence against children by supporting the government in achieving the goals," said DC Kasesela.

According to the SOS Iringa coordinator Gilbert Raymond, through the Education and Child Protection Project, in collaboration with the government through the district community development department they have made it possible to form the district Children's Council as a Children's body.

He said they as SOS were able to form two councils in two wards of Iringa district council, which have helped reduce acts of violence against children.

Raymond added that the involvement of children in councils which is one of the catalysts has led to a decrease in child

abuse cases as they have been reported quickly and on time.

He also explained that the presence of councils at the ward level has significantly helped to reduce acts of violence against children, where children have been reporting such cases to the child and women's protection and safety committees in Iringa district.

"In Iringa council we have been able to form two children's councils in two wards which through our indicators have seen a decrease in child violence in those wards, with the presence of a district council to further support," said Raymond.

He added that the existence of a district council as a children's tool, will enable children to recognise themselves and their rights and make parents and guardians realise their responsibilities.

For her part, Iringa District Community Development Officer, Saumu Kweka thanked various stakeholders including SOS and World Vision for facilitating the creation of the district children's council in collaboration with the government.

She said the aim of creating the council was for children to have their own tool to talk about their issues relating to protec-

tion and their rights.

Kweka said that children with their own tool will be free to talk about their own issues as there are issues that they themselves will discuss with the council so that they can be resolved by us.

However, Kweka said that the role of the council is to unite and build Tanzanian children in a better democratic environment and to have the experience to participate fully.

She also said that in the council, the children will be involved in various policy and decision-making processes to properly protect and defend the rights and interests of children.

UMD presidential candidate vows to do away with RCs if he wins election

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

UMD presidential candidate Khalfan Mazhuri has said if elected he would abolish positions of regional commissioners and introduce a federal system of government.

Mazhuri was addressing a campaign rally at Ipagala Ward here mid this week, adding that his party's main policy would be that of a federal system of government.

He said the current system of government with regional commissioners has been causing great inconveniences to the people as they cannot hold them accountable when they err.

"In my administration, a region will be autonomous under the person elected by the people of the region and if they see that he does not deliver they can remove him as opposed to the current system where the regional leader is the appointee of the president," he said.

He said the federal system of government has performed well in many countries in the world, hence he believes it can also work in Tanzania to bring rapid

development to the people.

He said his administration will have a small regional council that will elect the regional leader who will be called 'governor'.

"As of now, even a ward administration that wants to conduct its own affairs, a person is brought to lead it, and becomes answerable only to his appointing authority," Mazhuri explained.

In regard to various inconveniences facing Dodoma residents including water supply, he said when elected all these would end.

"There are still the water supply challenge in many rural areas in this region, elect me and I will end that," he added.

In regard to women who are humiliated when pursuing their rights, he said he would look for lawyers to provide them with legal assistance to get those rights.

He said he would also establish a fund to assist small entrepreneurs who would be receiving loans with zero interest.

On farmers, he said if elected he would defend farmers by removing the arrangement whereby the government sets the prices for the crops they cultivate.



Seif Gulamali (L), who is vying for the Manonga constituency parliamentary seat on the CCM ticket in the upcoming (October 28) General Election, in a tête-à-tête with a resident of Simbo village in Igunga District on the sidelines of a campaign rally he addressed on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Seize opportunities in vocational training, Ambassador Iddi tells youth in Zanzibar

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR'S Second Vice President Amb Seif Ali Iddi has called on the youth to grab various opportunities in vocational training as that was the only way to rescue themselves from the unemployment challenge facing them.

He said this is a result of efforts by parents and guardians to enroll their children into

technical schools for their economic wellbeing and that of the nation as a whole.

Iddi was speaking here mid this week to the youth who graduated from technical schools in Zanzibar and Pemba, adding a graduate from these colleges has greater chance of being employed compared to a university graduate who has to work hard to be employed.

He said 2000-2020 Zanzibar Development

Vision had targeted to increase employment opportunities in the tourism, agriculture and other sectors.

He said the aim was to reduce unemployment rate from 17.1 per cent to 10 per cent, adding that in accomplishing that the Zanzibar government established a job programme for the youth that was to look for their own needs in various production sectors including fishing, agriculture,

livestock keeping, foundry and arts, entertainment and sports.

He said since the government has implemented its responsibility for training the youth, it was now their turn to work hard in the fields they had studied.

Giving report on the training the Managing Director of Zanzibar Vocational Training Authority Dr Bakari Ali Silima said a total of 660

youth from all Zanzibar districts participated in the training. He said the development of vocational training in the country concentrated in the changes in the industrial economy through electronics, sewing, decoration and carpentry.

He said Zanzibar Vocational Training Authority has added a new programme next year in the fisheries as the nation has already directed itself in the Blue Economy.



NMB Bank Plc's Ruaha Branch manager, Focus Lubende, has a word with his subordinates in Iringa municipality yesterday on ways to ensure the commemoration of Customer Service Week adds meaning to their activities. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Barrick Gold all out to step up exploration in Tanzania

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

BARRICK Gold Corporation yesterday said that Tanzania has awarded the 10 new exploration licenses to the Canadian miner and it plans to spend \$8 million to carry out exploration in the country this year.

Barrick oversees the management of its assets in Tanzania through Twiga Minerals Corp, a joint venture formed last year between the company and the government of Tanzania.

Twiga Minerals manages the Bulyanhulu, North Mara and Buzwagi mines in Tanzania. "We are gearing up to potentially make North Mara and Bulyanhulu into a combined Tier One complex, capable of producing at least 500,000 ounces of gold annually for more than 10 years in the lower half of the industry's cost profile," Barrick Chief Executive Officer Mark Bristow said in a statement.

Barrick said it would also be looking to expand the life of operations as well as other new Tanzanian opportunities within the Twiga framework.

According to him, barely a year after it was established, Twiga Minerals Corporation has demonstrated the value-creating capacity of a true partnership between a mining company and its host nation, Barrick president and chief executive Mark Bristow said here today at a press briefing following his quarterly mine visits.

Twiga is a joint venture between Barrick and the government of Tanzania, and oversees the management of Barrick's assets in the country as well as the implementation of the economic benefit-sharing agreement. It was formed

when Barrick took over the operations of the former Acacia Mining in September last year and subsequently entered into a framework agreement with the government. In terms of the agreement, Barrick will pay the government \$300 million to settle past disputes with Acacia.

In addition to the first \$100 million tranche of the settlement, Barrick's assets in Tanzania have since paid more than \$200 million to the government in taxes and royalties, and last week Twiga declared a maiden interim dividend of \$250 million.

"The fact that so much value has been delivered in such a short time is a tribute to the power of what I believe is the first partnership of its kind in Africa. With the framework agreement now fully implemented, we have settled most of the landowner disputes and are well on our way to ensure that we are fully compliant with our environmental permits as well as with the government's local content legislation," Bristow said.

"A rehabilitated and re-energized North Mara is ahead of plan in the year to date and Bulyanhulu has resumed underground mining operations and is scheduled to restart processing of underground ore by the end of 2020 as a long-life underground mine. We are gearing up to potentially make North Mara and Bulyanhulu into a combined Tier One complex, capable of producing at least 500,000 ounces of gold annually for more than 10 years in the lower half of the industry's cost profile. We shall also be looking to expand the life of operations as well as other new Tanzanian opportunities within the Twiga framework."

Entrepreneurs tackle Covid-19 language challenges to create jobs

By Special Correspondent,

Johannesburg

THE Innovation Hub is home to many an enterprising and creative entrepreneur. Two young entrepreneurs, in particular, are doing their part to help alleviate South Africa's most pressing challenges: managing the Covid-19 pandemic in our country and the knock it has taken on our economy.

Sylvester Msuthwana,

founder of Patient Health, currently being incubated in TIH's Maxum Smart Business Incubator programme, recently launched a proudly-South-African multilingual Covid-19 assist platform.

The platform digitally tracks, monitors and stores screening data of people visiting public spaces such as schools, businesses and healthcare facilities.

What differentiates this platform from other Covid-19 tracking platforms

is that it is available in all eleven official South African languages, with an audio option for the visually impaired.

"Research shows that second-language learners' poor reading comprehension is often because of limited vocabulary. Greater vocabulary makes comprehension easier. We have, therefore, made it possible for people to complete their screening questionnaire in their home language," explains Msuthwana.

The platform is paid for on a monthly subscription basis. A unique link is sent to the registered organisation, which then gets distributed to visitors for use when entering the premises.

It is important to note that all visitors are screened, and details are accurately recorded according to the requirements of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The information is securely stored, and a customised dashboard allows the organisation access to downloadable records.

Another young South African entrepreneur who has risen to the challenge and made a difference by creating jobs in a harsh economic climate is Phillip Enock, founder of ShareTrip, offering group travel experience.

The new company, also incubated in TIH's Maxum Smart Business Incubator Programme, has already created 18 jobs.

"Covid-19 has allowed us to re-think our problems and also recalculate our solutions. As innovators, it has allowed us to forecast the future of travel and tourism," says Phillip Enock, Founder of Share-

Trip.

ShareTrip is a travel app that allows users to plan their trip as well as choose the activities that they would like to do at each location in advance. It enables a group of people who want to take a trip to have a shared experience.

"Travelling in a group is much more affordable," explains Enock. "ShareTrip makes this process more convenient as costs can be shared on the app, allowing everyone to plan their travels and share responsibilities effectively," he adds.

Enock's inspiration comes from his nomadic upbringing. His pas-

sion for travelling made him realise that those around him did not travel because of how costly it could be. A part of the company's success is that the team uses forecasting models to help create pricing trends for future travellers - making ShareTrip's app accurate and convenient for travellers to use.

ShareTrip boasts features such as an extensive library of different itineraries that users can choose from - and the option to share this experience with others on social media. The app is not yet available for mobile, but it is freely accessible from the web.

Rufiji DC challenges loan beneficiaries to ensure they make timely repayment

By Guardian Correspondent, Rufiji

RUFJIJI District Commissioner Patrick Sawala has challenged women, youth and people with disabilities groups to ensure timely loan repayments.

He cautioned that failure to repay the interest free loans would see beneficiaries arraigned. He said timely repayment of the loans enables the district to offer similar financial assistance to the remaining groups.

Sawala made the statement here yesterday when speaking at a ceremony to hand over loans to 25 groups of women, youth and the disabled, all from Rifiji District. Each of the groups received more than 1m/-.

"You must repay the loans on time to enable the government to attain its targeted goals of empowering people economically", said the District Commissioner noting the law requires each of the districts across the country to set aside 10 percent of its internal revenues for issuance of loans to special groups.

He elaborated that each of the groups receives a certain amount of money whereas women get 4 percent, and two percent of the fund goes to people with disabilities.

He said the district has been supporting the special groups financially with intentions to improve their welfare. He said there were a number of successes recorded in the 2019/2020 fiscal year as well as in the first quarter of the 2020/2021 financial year.



Omari Juma (2nd-L), headmaster of Dar es Salaam's Hazina Primary School, presents a gift earlier this week to one of the school's outgoing Standard Seven pupils. The pupil, Harris Edward, has qualified for Form One enrolment at the city's Feza Boys Secondary School after passing a special interview. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

African and US development financiers promise to attract greater private sector capital to Africa

By Special Correspondent

THE continent's largest development finance institutions have emphasized that a sustained and collaborative approach among development partners to scale up project development activities, will boost the number of bankable projects attracting investor interest and contribute to closing the infrastructure finance gap in Africa.

They spoke during a panel event to discuss their organisations' role in post-COVID-19 environment, convened on October 16, as part of a day-long public forum on investing in Africa's future, organised by the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) and the Atlantic Council. The event had over 2000 participants.

Launched at the end of 2019, the DFC has an investment cap of \$60 billion and has selected Africa as a priority region for future investments.

African Development Bank Acting Senior Vice President Bajabulile Swazi Tshabalala, was joined by Samaila Zubairu, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Africa

Finance Corporation (AFC); Admassu Tadesse, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (TDB), and Alain Ebobissé, Chief Executive Officer Africa50, for the hour long session, which was moderated by Edward Burrier, Executive Vice President of Strategy at the DFC.

The panelists highlighted the importance of project development and a supply of bankable projects as being key for private sector investors. This requires an active approach in investing capital into the early stages of project preparation and accepting the risk, which has been one of the most important deterrents to attracting foreign investment into Africa. Most of the participating institutions offer a wide variety of financial instruments and products to help de-risk such investments.

In Rwanda, Samaila Zubairu spoke of the AFC's Kigali Innovation City (KIC) technology hub project, which is already changing the narrative about Africans only consuming technology rather than being developers. "It's risky business, but extremely impactful," Zubairu said.

His comments were echoed by Admassu Tadesse, who said the "blended" returns of dividends and the development impact of some of these projects made any risks worthwhile.

For Alain Ebobissé, Africa 50's unique niche which is focused on solving Africa's infrastructure gap through a strong emphasis on both the project development and project financing of infrastructure projects, ensures a healthy supply of bankable projects through the mainstreaming of project preparation activities. "We develop very close relationships with our government shareholders and as a result project implementation is speeded up - especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic."

The Acting Senior Vice President, Swazi Tshabalala spoke about how the African Development Bank's High 5 priorities represent a significant investment opportunity for US investors in a variety of projects spanning several sectors such as energy, agriculture and food security, regional integration and private sector. More significantly, in the context of the current pandemic, enhancing Africa's health infra-

structure, water and sanitation is key.

Tshabalala noted that following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 2019 with DFC, the two institutions are currently collaborating on energy projects in Senegal and Madagascar. "We see that as the beginning of our stronger engagement and partnership," she said.

The Bank's Africa Investment Forum is playing an important role in helping to channel critical capital flows to the continent by targeting the multi-trillion-dollar global institutional investor base. Tshabalala also highlighted the growing partnership on the Africa Investment Forum with the other institutions represented on the panel and their collective efforts to bring bankable projects to private sector investors.

Asked about how the Bank balances its sovereign lending against private sector needs, Tshabalala said sovereign lending was crucial, "especially in the development of basic infrastructure that is a pre-requisite for development." This also includes the provision of concessional financing to transition countries through the African Development Fund.

Closer statistics-development links a must for African govts

INFORMATION development aims to provide authoritative coverage of current developments in the provision, management and use of information and communication technology. The main focus is on the information needs and problems of developing countries. Information development focuses on the development of information systems, services and skills, and the role of information in personal and national development.

In 1972, the United Nations General Assembly decided to institute a World Development Information Day coinciding with United Nations Day on October 24. The General Assembly had the object of drawing the attention of world public opinion each year to development problems and the necessity of strengthening international co-operation to solve them.

The day was further recognised as the date on which the International Development Strategy for the Second Nations Development Decade was adopted in 1970.

On May 17, 1972, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) proposed measures for information dissemination and for the mobilisation of public opinion relative to trade and development problems. These became known as resolution which the UN General Assembly passed on December 19, 1972. This resolution called for introducing World Development Information Day to help draw the attention of people worldwide to development problems. A further aim of the event is to explain to the general public why it is necessary to strengthen international cooperation to find ways to solve these problems. The assembly also decided that the day should coincide with United Nations Day to stress the central role of development in the UN's work. World Development Information Day was first held on October 24, 1973, and has been held on this date each year since then.

In recent years many events have interpreted the title of the day slightly differently. These have concentrated on

the role that modern information-technologies, such as the Internet and mobile telephones free from digital divide can play in alerting people and finding solutions to problems of trade and development. One of the specific aims of World Development Information Day was to inform and motivate young people and this change may help to further this aim.

Information can be thought of as the resolution of uncertainty; it is that which answers the question of "what an entity is" and thus defines both its essence and nature of its characteristics. It is associated with data, as data represents values attributed to parameters, and information is data in context and with meaning attached. Information relates also to knowledge, as knowledge signifies understanding of an abstract or concrete concept.

In terms of communication, information is expressed either as the content of a message or through direct or indirect observation. That which is perceived can be construed as a message in its own right, and in that sense, information is always conveyed as the content of a message.

Information can be encoded into various forms for transmission and interpretation (for example, information may be encoded into a sequence of signs, or transmitted via a signal). It can also be encrypted for safe storage and communication.

The uncertainty of an event is measured by its probability of occurrence and is inversely proportional to that. The more uncertain an event, the more information is required to resolve uncertainty of that event. The bit is a typical unit of information, but other units such as the nat may be used.

The concept of information has different meanings in different contexts. Thus the concept becomes related to notions of constraint, communication, control, data, form, education, knowledge, meaning, understanding, mental stimuli, pattern, perception, representation, and entropy.

UN Day should focus on achievements, challenges and prospects for change

THE United Nations officially came into existence on 24 October 1945. In 1947, the United Nations General Assembly declared 24 October, the anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations, as which shall be devoted to making known to the people of the world the aims and achievements of the United Nations and to gaining their support for its work.

In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a further resolution declaring that United Nations Day shall be an international observance or international holiday and recommended that it should be observed as a public holiday by United Nations member states.

The first event called United Nations Day was a World War II Allies' day of solidarity and military parades launched by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt tied to US Flag Day on June 14, 1942, six months after the Declaration by United Nations. It was observed in New York City as the 'New York at War' parade, in London, and by the Soviet and Chinese governments.

It was observed throughout World War II, during 1942-1944. Prior to the foundation of the UN itself, it was not directly connected to the current international observance.

U.N. Day has traditionally been marked throughout the world with meetings, discussions and exhibits about the achievements and goals of the organisation. In 1971, the General Assembly recommended that member states observe it as a public holiday.

Several international schools throughout India and other countries throughout the world would also celebrate the diversity of their student body on United Nations Day (although the event is not necessarily celebrated on 24 October). Celebrations of

ten include a show of cultural performances in the evening and a food fair, where food is available from all over the world.

In the United States, the President has issued a proclamation each year for United Nations Day since 1948. In Kosovo, United Nations Day is an official non-working day, as the province is administered by the Interim Administration Mission.

In the Philippines, local schoolchildren customarily dress in the national costumes of member states and hold a programme on U.N. Day, which is the last school day before semester break. Individual students, classes, or grade levels are assigned a country to represent and study; students handcraft their assigned country's flag, and prepare cultural presentations and food as part of the day's educational activities.

The Charter of the United Nations (also known as the UN Charter) is the foundational treaty of the United Nations, an intergovernmental organisation. It establishes the purposes, governing structure, and overall framework of the UN system, including its six principal organs: the Secretariat, the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Trusteeship Council.

The UN Charter mandates that the UN and its member states maintain international peace and security, uphold international law, achieve higher standards of living for their citizens, address economic, social, health, and related problems, and promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

As a charter and constituent treaty, its rules and obligations are binding on all members and supersede those of other treaties.

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We are causing climate change, and climate change is costing us

By Nana Sifa Twum

THE good old book, "The Bible," says, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." The 31st verse of the opening account of creation has it that "God saw all that he had made, and it was excellent. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day."

Indeed, the environment at the beginning was superb, and there was nothing like a decay. Bible historians reckon that even leaves did not fall until the sin of the first two people were committed. Still, as the population started growing, human activities also expanded, which had a devastating effect on humanity.

The common knowledge we have is that every single human activity has something to do with things around him, especially the vegetation and, by extension, the environment.

When man engages the environment, there is always either a positive or negative impact, sometimes not visible. However, it is still an impact which, by and large, has consequences that cannot be quantified.

Human activities have largely contributed to the huge change in the environment, some places in a positive way, and others in a negative way. The negative aspect has brought about a significant change in the global climate matters. The climate across the globe has become a huge social, economic, and political agenda.

"Climate change" they call it refers to any long-term change in climate, which also causes adverse effects on the lives of people dwelling on this planet. Some of such effects can be said to include warming, cooling and other changes besides temperature.

With this, the changes in the climate affect the air we breathe both indoors and outdoors. The experts say warming and cooling temperatures as well as shifting weather patterns, can exacerbate air quality. This can also lead to severe health issues such as asthma attacks and other respiratory and cardiovascular health effects.

Drought, flooding, quality water supply, food and agriculture situations and the devastating impact on the global ecosystems, among others, are all here with us.

On the continent of Africa, flooding is the most prevalent disaster caused by climate change. The northern part of Africa for instances,



is the first most prevalent, while the second most common is in East, South and Central Africa, and the third most common is in West Africa. This is per the Africa Water Development Report (AWDR, 2006).

"In North Africa, the 2001 disastrous flood in northern Algeria resulted in about 800 deaths and an economic loss of about \$400 million. In Mozambique, the 2000 flood (worsened by two cyclones) caused 800 deaths, affected almost 2 million people of which about 1 million needed food, 329,000 people were displaced and agricultural production land was destroyed."

Already, Ghana has experienced its fair share of devastating effects of climate change, with the three northern regions most affected. In recent times, more than 100 people have died through heavy rains and flooding. About 20 people are reported to have died in these parts of the country as a result of the most recent torrential downpour. In all, these huge amounts of resources and time are spent to help alleviate the hardships of the victims.

The northern part of the country appears very vulnerable with threats of desertification, extreme weather conditions with higher incidences and more prolonged periods of flooding and droughts. At certain times of the year, there are high records of temperatures amidst unpredictable rainfall patterns.

Circumstances are such that such human activities are worsening climate issues. Farming, fishing, driving, logging, mining, travelling, building, among many others, are contributory factors. Air pollution activities normally provide deadly results such as emissions of all kinds. It is believed that such negative outcomes have been strong agents in the destruction of valuable natural protective elements like the ozone layer.

ous impacts, with droughts, floods, and sea erosion as the main drivers. The most affected sectors in Ghana include the economic, social, and infrastructural groups. The cumulative effects on these sectors determine the impacts and vulnerabilities of various livelihoods groups and places in the country."

Indications are that Ghana's situation regarding climate change is anticipated to affect socio-economic infrastructures such as road, water resources, energy supplies, crop production and food security.

These are the repro effects of the smoking cars on the roads, the burning vehicle tyres used for various commercial activities such as preparation of meat, indiscriminate dumping of refuse, excessive felling of trees, all forms of mining activities, the releasing of carbon into the atmosphere, the use of atmospheric unfriendly electronic and electrical gadgets.

For now, there is no found antidote to the trend. Climate change matters are worsening by the day. Governments and other international organisations such as the United Nations are just struggling to halt or at best, minimise it.

This year alone, several climate change summits have taken place around the globe. Such delivers a significant step up in national ambition and private sector action on the pathway to the key 2020 climate deadline.

At the global level, the United Nations in September organised one to demonstrate a "surge of engagement to reduce emissions and protect people against increasing impacts of climate change."

It was concluded at the summit that "The UN estimates that the world would need to increase its efforts between three- and five-fold to contain climate change to the levels dictated by science - a 1.5°C rise at most - and avoid escalating climate damage already taking place around the world."

Here in Ghana, a more pragmatic measure supported by the meaningful national policy must be in place to check the unprecedented and alarming trend of climate change. This must be done urgently or we as a people face the very looming and unpleasant consequence of climate change. This is because the handwriting is so clear on the wall and we must act now.

The urgent need for us to make the world a better place than we met it is now relevant than ever.



The corporate females

The office might be an interesting place and a great second home for some, it also serves as an ample learning environment.

This is a place you will learn interpersonal skills, how to deal with very diverse personalities around you literally! especially fellow women.

You will build friendships, allies and even woes sometimes.

You will learn who to avoid, who to keep close, who to tell what and who not to tell a thing, people skills to be precise.

Mark you it's where you will learn that people are never the same and for you to survive in that professional space, you really need to establish who is who and how do deal with all of them.

So what corporate female are you?

The loyal one

Ma'am has been working in that office, same department for the past ten years and she doesn't seem to be leaving any time soon. She knows everything about everything including where the boss' extra pair of socks is kept and the days to keep off the washroom from its pungent smell. She knows all the dirty and success secrets that could earn her a high position in another competing company but she's still there, she's loyal remember? She is married to the company and has been faithful through thick and thin as per their vows. She has seen employees come and leave as she graciously watches. She is the 'last woman standing'.

The Trend Setter

The fashionista, this lady has three other pairs of shoes under her desk, each for a different occasion or purpose. The lady you keep asking, 'hizi perfume zako tutazipata wapi? She has an attitude that matches her



looks; fierce and bold. She knows her way around the office and work just as she does with her hair. Beauty with brains yey!

The Silent one

She is quiet most of the times and you probably know nothing about her apart from her name and her post at the office. It's boy until she has to sign

a form that you rush to her desk to ask, 'hi! Kwani you are married?!' 'Yes, I even have a two year old kid' she responds. This could be someone you've worked with for more than six months yet you remain oblivious of who they really are. She really is a mystery and that makes her magnetic and fun to watch

from a far.

The smiley and happy face

She has this extraordinary charm and energy that amuses everyone. You just don't understand where it all comes from. She is joyous, even on Monday morning; the long dreadful Monday, the mis-

erable Monday. Yep! She will still have something to be all flowery about. She is the kind who shouts 'hiiii' to everyone and readily offers free hugs. You possibly would envy her free spirit. She's a happy soul to reckon with and the office gem altogether.

The Care-free, free spirited one

She doesn't really care how everyone thinks of her or even of her dress code. One day she is dashing and gorgeous and the next, she comes with her big unkempt hair like a crown on her head while wearing the same top she wore the previous day. Her schedule is unpredictable because she is in office for two days before disappearing for the rest of the week. No one really questions her because well, she delivers! Her work is on point and the management doesn't want to lose her either.

The story-teller

She is the power house of the office, always alive and kicking regardless of the office mood. She's also the first one you'd notice upon entering the office. She is loud and never lacks a story to tell. It would either be

a hot gossip story or what happened to her mother in law or just complaining about this or that. She gracefully works from one desk to another with her cup of tea and a snack, creating conversations with anyone who can spare her some minutes. The office is probably boring without her because the pin-drop silence is not your norm anymore.

The manipulative kind

She knows your weak point and also everyone else's in the office. She is cunning and knows how to take advantage of others, sometimes while you remain unaware of her tricks. She can get you to do her work, to cover up for her mistakes or her absence or entirely throw the blame at you when she is obviously the one at wrong. She can play you at your own game and you won't even know what hit you.

Holy Mary

She is helpful, kind and very reliable. She keeps her word and keeps time. She is loving and lovable and that automatically makes her an easy target for manipulation. Her compassionate

self is soon turned into a door mat as people take advantage of her humble self that is hesitant to ever say no.

The lazy load

Never keeps time. Never finishes the work. Never takes responsibility. Never keeps promises. Just never...The rest of you are still wondering how she is in the payroll to date literally!

Employee of the year

She is witty, smart and creative. The office regard her highly because her brain spills wisdom and spells intelligence. She is strategic and determined in her work. The management value her presence and thoughts because they definitely know she is the gem of the office.

Well, When it's about women, it even gets more interesting because hey! We are all different shades of the same species. Maybe that's why you will never hear the men say, 'all women are the same'. We range from the weird to the witty to the sly to the shy. The list is endless. We are just rare and beautiful all in our own unique ways and spaces even in the career world.

What's left to say about the US election?

BY JON ALLSOP

A little over a month ago, Drew Magary decided to ditch the regular politics column he was writing for GEN because, he said, writing it sucked.

He elaborated: "I'm out of political opinions. The kind of torpid recycling of stances you see from David Brooks and other professional thought havers? I'm no different."

Magary listed the basic ideas and themes that he found kept recurring in his work, including "Trump is a Nazi" and "the pandemic deaths here are his fault".

Writing about politics every week in 2020, he added, "is like your old man catching you with a pack of Marlboros and forcing you to smoke the entire thing in one sitting to make you sick".

As I've written repeatedly in this newsletter, there is too much news right now - a historic, interconnected crush of major crises and events that has defied adequate engagement.

And yet Magary, perhaps paradoxically, is right: when it comes to politics in general - and Trump in particular - much of the crush of news is intensely repetitive and flows naturally to the same basic set of damning conclusions.

Trump has recently once again trashed his top coronavirus expert, Dr Anthony Fauci, calling him a "disaster"; once again trashed CNN, calling its journalists "dumb bastards"; once again trashed NBC's Kristen Welker, who will moderate the next Trump-Biden debate, on Thursday last week; once again held irresponsible rallies; once again danced to "YMCA"; and so on, ad nauseam.

As Quinta Jurecic put it in an Atlantic column that appeared not long after Magary's, Trump is actually really boring. "The president is a man without depths to plumb," she wrote, adding: "What you see is what you get, and what you get is the same mix of venality, solipsism and racial hatred that has long been obvious."

Jurecic raised an important question that, to my mind, strikes at the heart of the too-much-news/Trump-is-boring paradox: "What happens when politics is crucially important, but there is little original to say?"

If much of the media coverage of recent days, particularly on TV, is any guide, it seems like the answer is: go



through the motions. It feels like we're in a holding pattern, waiting.

Election Day is still two weeks away, yet there's so much early voting going on - and all the votes could take so long to count -that the concept of 'election day', as a climactic event, feels thin.

Entering the final stretch, and with ever-fewer votes up for grabs, Biden is pretty quiet and Trump and his allies are insisting on a rerun of the 2016 campaign. (But his/her emails; lock him/her/them up.)

Many in the media seem willing to indulge that strategy, supplement-

ing it with their own relitigation of 2016 media coverage, polling errors, and so on.

We're debating about the debates again. Many outlets are - quite rightly - busy fine-tuning election models and plans for election night/week/month coverage, and war-gaming possible election outcomes.

While we wait for it all to play out, many of the denizens of media Twitter have been chewing over unrelated controversies -none of which, of course, has anything at all to do with said war-gaming exercises, no sir.

In late September and early this

month, after Trump repeatedly refused to commit to a peaceful transfer of power should he lose this coming month - a key reason for all the fine-tuning and war-gaming - it was big news; the Times gave it the full-width AI headline treatment.

Trump is still threatening not to accept the result - he did so at a weekend rally in Michigan, for instance - yet when he does it now, it seems barely to merit a headline at all.

And it's not just election-related news that can feel grimly repetitive. The coronavirus is once again surg-

ing; national politicians once again can't agree on a stimulus bill to aid the millions of Americans whose livelihoods have been hammered by the pandemic. These developments are still driving coverage, but much of it - at the topline level, at least - often feels flat, subdued, weary.

When it comes to Trump's antics, the repetitiveness is, to a great extent, the point, and it's okay not to fall for all of it all of the time. But some Trump storylines - his ongoing threats to the election perhaps chief among them - merit prominent repetition, even if their details don't meaningfully change.

Trump attacking the integrity of the vote in relatively consistent language is a much bigger deal than him deploying a newer, ruder insult for CNN. The threat of the virus merits reiteration, too. It doesn't care how tired and bored we may be.

To that end, it's vital that we find fresh, compelling ways of telling these stories; ways of cutting through the repetition to communicate the urgency of the stakes.

The ever-climbing coronavirus death toll is a repetitive story -but each individual death is not. The victims of the virus and Trump's atrocious management of it only get to live and die once.

The economic impacts of the pandemic feel repetitive - but every job, or health-insurance plan, or apartment lost is a tragedy, if not an emergency, for those who have to live through it.

The same is true of voter suppression; it's not a new story, but every voter only gets one vote per election. If they're wrongly denied the chance to cast it, that's a scandal, each and every time it happens.

There's much good coverage out there illustrating the human stakes of our overlapping crises - from gut-wrenching obituaries, to portraits of people who are struggling, to surveys and analyses quantifying the scale of the pain.

Too often, though, such coverage seems stuck below the crust of the news cycle, with its cyclical talk of rallies, debates and polls. There is still too much urgent news to report right now. In the two weeks before -polling day, we shouldn't waste any of our capacity on the boring, just because it's about the election (in the traditional, stultifying sense of that term) and we feel compelled to cover it.

Death and hardship are election stories, too. Jurecic aptly puts it: "The work of people who write and talk and make art about politics is valuable because it helps other members of society make sense of their shared world and, if that work loses depth or relevance, democratic culture in the US diminishes".

"The perception of reality should never take precedence over reality itself, but national political coverage does precisely that," Magary notes.

Covid-19 has made newsbrands remarkably more desirable with advertisers wary of disinformation

By Charlotte Tobitt Twitter

A SENIOR ad account director has urged newsbrands to "capitalise on this moment" as Covid-19 disinformation means that brands are becoming more wary of spending with online platforms.

Demi Abiola, UK publishing director at PHD Media, said advertisers' understanding of the impact of where they put their money has been brought into "clearer focus" since the start of the pandemic.

Abiola made the comments on a panel discussion meant to promote Newsworks' World Without News survey, which found that two-thirds of Brits - and 77 per cent of those under 36 - appreciate journalism more since Covid-19 hit.

The study also found that 70 per cent of people believe a world without journalism would harm democracy and that 63 per cent feel less anxious when they read a newspaper compared to stories on social media.

Abiola said newsbrands were "firmly back on the agenda" because they are built around trust and transparency.

He said this makes them incredibly more desirable in the current climate, especially as brands now have to be more visible and transparent than ever themselves.

"It's vitally important for newsbrands...to capitalise on this moment because with this acute focus on brand safety and environment we really need to be talking about... in the overall media mix, why they're so important," Abiola said.

He elaborated: "If you look in terms of scale, context and fairness, that's what really makes them stand out. They don't want to be associated with fake news, they don't want to be associated with disinformation, so what we really need to do as a publishing industry, as a news industry, is really sing loud and sing proud, and say why we're a great medium to be advertising with at the moment given all of this disinformation that's happening on other media platforms."

Abiola also urged advertisers to "re-appraise and re-evaluate the importance of reliable context and carefully curated content" and shout "about how having newsbrands and investment in high-quality environments is really important".

In its report, national newsbrand marketing arm Newsworks said: "It's easy to think of newsbrands as offering a channel in which to make announcements about a product or service. However, this misunderstands the role they play in society and the mindset people are in whilst reading the news."

"Newsbrands are the place where thinking happens, where new ideas are evaluated and understood. They offer brands a chance to be present as minds are being made up."

The report pointed to IPA TouchPoints data released in September that found a 9 per cent increase in trust in national newsbrands during lockdown, despite declining levels of trust in media and advertising over the past decade.

The study showed how the rise in the use of news aggregators "serves to further highlight the significance of



news brands" - particularly among younger audiences.

It found that 56 per cent of news consumers agreed that apps such as Apple News and Google News have made them take more notice of newsbrands. This figure rose to 64 per cent for the under-35s.

Moreover, 59 per cent of Brits and 69 per cent of under-35s said that news aggregators had helped them appreciate newsbrands more.

Newsworks also claimed that under-35s were "the most likely to change their opinion and behaviour based on what they see and read from newsbrands".

Denise Turner, insights director at Newsworks, meanwhile tried to debunk what she called the myth that appreciation of journalism will fall away after the coronavirus pandemic is controlled.

She said: "The pandemic has been unprecedented times, but if you remember back all that time ago we had Brexit and that seemed to be an obsessive focus to people. Readership has been growing over time. We saw spikes during

the heat of the pandemic but they haven't fallen away again.

"I don't think it's necessarily the case that it will all fall away again after the pandemic. I think it's building habits that will stand the test of time."

Some 80 per cent of respondents in the survey said it was easier to chat to other people when they were up to date with the news - and that newsbrands were better at helping people connect than social media.

Seven-in-ten people said they trusted newspapers "to be on top of all the news stories at the time" and 82 per cent were impressed with the variety of news, including stories they had not previously heard about, featured in newsbrands. A further 82 per cent said news helps them make sense of complex issues, with 76 per cent finding it useful to have analysis of news stories in their newspaper, and 80 per cent saying it was a "good way of knowing what other people think".

Some 63 per cent agreed that they identify with their newspaper's point of view, with Turner noting that we are

now a "nation of portfolio readers" who seek out a more diverse range of voices.

This means more cross-readership: for example, she said that around half of Times readers will also read the Express every week.

Ian Murray, executive director of the Society of Editors, said the report's "heartening" results "give a lie to those who would constantly attack the mainstream media - be they politicians, influencers, celebrities, those with power and authority - as vessels of misinformation and so-called fake news".

"The public, it appears, thinks otherwise," he added.

Press Gazette Daily

Election reporting lessons from the Dominican Republic and Haiti

By Indhira Suero Acosta

AS journalists from around the world navigate the final weeks of a contentious US presidential election, with the Covid-19 pandemic raging, they could learn a thing or two from their peers in the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Following a postponement in May due to Covid-19, the Dominican Republic held a presidential election in early July. This was a day after reaching a new record for confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the country.

For Dominican and Haitian media alike on the island of Hispaniola, the election presented significant challenges and opportunities for reporters and their newsrooms.

They scrambled to improve safety measures and protect journalists reporting in the field, while adjusting their reporting approaches, navigating newsroom finances and collaborating.

Safety measures

For their election coverage, Dominican newspaper Listin Diario divided its team into two groups: those who would report from home and those who would work in the newsroom.

In addition to social distancing by staff, the newsroom enhanced its sanitary measures. This included regularly fumigating its office space, completely disinfecting the entire building once a week, and purchasing masks and protective suits.

Listin Diario increased its support to employees by holding virtual interviews and editorial meetings, clarifying for reporters when in-person reporting was necessary, and listening to the team to better understand their needs.

The newsroom also raised awareness about COVID-19 among staff. "We had to be very emphatic in recommending that they do not overexpose themselves," said chief editor Juan Eduardo Thomas.

Avoiding avoidable or unnecessary exposure to Covid-19 was very important for Mayelin Acosta, a reporter for the Hoy newspaper. Hoy provided its staff with protection and disinfection materials, all right, it was ultimately up to reporters to ensure that they followed safety protocols and monitored their own wellbeing.

This extended past the election. "After covering the elections, I was attentive to see if there were any symptoms, and avoided going to the newspaper every day," said Acosta.

Editorial planning

Another Dominican newspaper, Acento, began to plan its election coverage in January. The team had to navigate not only a state of emergency due to the coronavirus

but also a month-long postponement of municipal elections in February, allegedly owing to an electronic glitch.

"We reorganised the team, rethought our work schedules, and then made a plan in which we had to prove that the agility of digital was above any obstacle," said director Fausto Rosario.

Acento created communication platforms for assigning tasks and updating news. Every reporter had responsibilities, and there was a coordination team comprising the deputy editor, the editor-in-chief, and the evening and night newsroom coordinator. Like other media, they stopped covering smaller-scale activities they typically reported on in the past.

Sustainability

Strained newsroom finances during the pandemic further complicated reporting on the election. In March, for instance, at least seven clients decided to abandon their advertising contracts with Acento.

Luckily, Acento had already been working on new monetisation options. Among them was the creation of a crowdfunding option for readers - it was called Colabora con Acento - which solicited donations through PayPal.

"COVID-19 pushed us to try that option. And it has taught us a reality: the audience appreciates our work, to the point of collaborating with our sustainability," said Rosario.

Thanks to the contributions, Acento was able to distribute a special bonus to reporters following their work on the elections.

Citizen journalism and reporting in-person

As the only correspondent for the television show Al Rojo Vivo, Laura de la Nuez works with topics that tend to be out of the ordinary. She often collaborates with journalists at other networks, and relies on videos uploaded to social media to support her reporting.

"Regular people catch the fresh news in a particular town, especially in places where journalists do not arrive quickly," said de la Nuez, adding: "Videos sent by non-journalists were the ones that helped me to cover the elections."

In reporting in-person on polling day, she advised that journalists should be prepared to navigate large groups of voters, including those who may not be practising social distancing.

In the Dominican Republic, the country's Central Electoral Board did not communicate clear information to citizens on how best to maintain their distance at polling stations, said de la Nuez. Journalists were tasked with carrying out their work in less than ideal circumstances while ensuring that their own safety wasn't compromised.



Collaboration

In Haiti, a group of journalists decided to launch Desisyon RD 2020, a programme in Haitian Creole, to broadcast the developments of the Dominican elections. Ives Marie Chanel, a journalist, said this allowed them to identify opportunities for collaboration.

"It helped us discover the potential that exists for the coverage of binational news and issues. We are talking about coverage

by more than 30 radio stations, and television channels," said Chanel, adding: "The event also triggered much more interest among Haitians for the Dominican news."

The initiative brought together outlets and journalists from both Haiti and the Dominican Republic for the first time. Experts on election-related topics also participated, analysing election results and their impact at the binational level.

For Chanel, collaboration is essential - especially as the coronavirus pandemic has

imposed limitations on common reporting practices. The media in other countries can learn from the Desisyon RD 2020 experience, and collaborate to collect and disseminate information at the local and regional levels during coverage of future elections.

"It makes it easier for us to achieve our goals and sometimes opens up new horizons," said Chanel.

Indhira Suero Acosta is a cultural journalist and ambassador for Sembramedia in the Dominican Republic. She is a former Fulbright scholar and creator of Negrita Come Coco, promoting popular culture and Afro-descendants.

IJNet

By Guardian Reporter

African countries should embrace 5G roll-out

WHILE the rest of the world races to deploy next-generation 5G wireless technology, Africa is lagging behind, mainly because of poor consumers' inability to pay for fast data services and devices. A report on 5G in Africa by GSMA, a global trade organisation for mobile operators, estimates that only seven African countries, including South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, will have 5G by 2025. And this will account for only 3 pc of mobile data compared to 16 pc globally. Trade association GroupeSpéciale Mobile Association expects that by 2025, just seven out of 46 countries in sub-Saharan Africa will have 5G technology. The association estimates 5G will account for just 3 pc of mobile connections on the continent that year, versus 16 pc of connections

world-wide. Once 5G has taken off in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, the annual gain from mmWave 5G will grow much faster from 2026 onwards, closing the gap between the early and late adopters. Currently, the 5G technology in Africa should not just target consumer devices directly, since most Africans keep devices for around 4 or more years. In the African market, there should be some clear business models in using 5G for fixed wireless access or using a Customer Premises Equipment and certain specific industry use cases such as in tourism, hospitality, mining and media broadcasting. The myth that 5G is too expensive because of hardware and technology should be busted. In

fact, a large proportion of the cost comes from obstacles such as approval process and way leaves. A key solution to the business model challenge in Africa is to reduce the costs of the network, from the spectrum to the backhaul and to the taxes imposed on operators, data, mobile money and devices. Governments can play a key role in helping solve these barriers by taking a leadership position and commitment to provide such support, 5G is a truly revolutionary technology. Lagging behind during 3G and 4G era doesn't necessarily stop a society from making the most of 5G. Unlike previous generations of mobile technology, which tended to introduce a single novel feature for users (3G let you walk and talk,

2G let you send texts, 3G got you onto the internet, and 4G let you stream), 5G promises a whole suite of dramatic improvements. It uses entirely new wireless infrastructure to achieve speeds up to 100 times faster than 4G and promises to nearly eliminate any processing delays. It will also kickstart the internet of things, since it was designed to connect billions of machines, appliances, and sensors at low cost without draining their batteries. 5G brings many changes that fits the need of African countries just fine. While 5G sets the stage for new opportunities across many fields, its three main advantages enhanced Mobile Broadband (eMBB), Ultra Reliable Low Latency Communications (URLLC),

massive Machine Type Communications (mMTC) will bring disruption to industries that many African countries aims to develop, such as: **Manufacturing** Strengthening manufacturing sector and self-sufficiency has been given more priority since the COVID-19 outbreak. 5G is poised to help manufacturing production operations become more flexible and efficient, while also improving safety and lowering maintenance costs. Energy and utilities Critical infrastructure like energy and utilities will benefit from 5G technologies, which could create more innovative solutions in energy production, transmission, distribution, and usage, as well as the next wave of smart grid fea-

tures and efficiency. **Agriculture** Farmers worldwide are using technologyIoT (Internet of things) to optimize agricultural processes including water management, fertigation, livestock safety, and crop monitoring, the report noted. 5G could enable real-time data collection, allowing farmers to monitor, track, and automate agricultural systems to increase profitability, efficiency, and safety. 5G can better prepare Africa even for the next pandemic The potential for innovation through digitization is huge within the healthcare industry, and this will be accelerated through the introduction of 5G technology. Within the Southern African context, this could be particularly

beneficial as healthcare via mobile devices will allow for those in remote areas to access life-saving assistance. 5G technology will also allow for real-time access of health data, the use of wearable technology and even bring closer the reality of remote surgery. Through augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), 5G can assist with the training of medical professionals remotely. As the youngest continent, Africa will satiate the need of a growing population with infrastructure such as 5G. Projected population growth will put a strain on the existing general infrastructure, and the growing urbanization trend will drive service provider investment in key areas. Furthermore, rising youth population will drive the uptake of mobile broadband services and affordability is also driving the in-

Kenya's time-honored wood carving culture in peril amid urbanisation

NAIROBI

KYALO Ndaya uses his chisel to outline the design of an animal on a piece of wood, thereafter he picks another hand tool and embellishes striking details onto the new sculptor that has since taken its intended form. Wood carving is ingrained in Ndaya's life, a passion passed down from his father who learned it from his father. The middle-aged man comes from the Akamba community that inhabits lower eastern Kenyan counties where wood carving is a cherished cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the old-age practice faces extinction in the face of the emergence of more lucrative jobs and unwillingness of the younger generation to learn how to carve. "My children have never shown any interest in learning my art albeit they love my work and celebrate my skills. It saddens me that they will not inherit my artistry," Ndaya said. The Kamba community has for more than a century practiced wood carving for leisure and income generation. Over the decades, wood carving has slowly but steadily permeated throughout Kamba land, an area largely unable to sustain farming year round due to its harsh climatic conditions. Joseph Mutuku, a manager in a society tasked with marketing handicrafts in Wamunyu town located in the expansive Machakos County, attributes the lack of interest among the youth to meager earnings from the trade and lack of a steady market.

"The current generation wants instant gratification, which may not lie with crafting in the present year because products sometimes take months or even years before they are purchased," said Mutuku. "Out of 2,061 members registered under the society, only 600 are below 30 years. I reckon the numbers might go lower than this in the coming years," he added. The youngest member of the society said that he learned of the trade from his grandfather at a tender age and plans to continue carving even with the pull of more enticing jobs. "I understand my friends may not appreciate my work that may seem less glamorous to them. Despite this, I will continue to craft mavis (the local name for sculptors) because I feel more bonded to my culture," said Mutuku. He said that sensitization to encourage the uptake of wood carving in technical schools is one way of luring more people back to carving. Mutuku said the National government should vigorously promote trade with foreign countries to widen the market for wood carvings. On the other hand, Ndaya is convinced that if young people embrace modern ways of carving like using machines they will find the vocation more enjoyable and profitable. The well-acclaimed carving society utilizes machines for cutting wood and sandpapering to achieve perfection. Additionally, the society prides itself for exporting both miniature and large sculptors. The carved items range from household utensils, images depicting animals and cultural norms of different



communities in Kenya.

Central to wood carving is environmental preservation. At Wamunyu wood carvers, the artists came together to establish a tree nursery to replenish what they take from nature. The nursery constitutes of fast-maturing trees which they sell to other woodcarvers outside the marketing body and the community at large. "The tree nursery idea was birthed when the govern-

ment banned logging of indigenous trees such as mahogany which we used for carving. On account of that we started planting trees that take a shorter period to mature such as the jacaranda and acacia," said Mutuku. The seedling project teems with about 20,000 tree species. The government in 2018 announced a ban on tree felling in community and public forests to help deal with devastating impacts of climate change like droughts.

DRC: A tower to measure impact of tropical forests on climate change



By Inès Magoum

PERHAPS the solution to the problem of climate change could come from tropical forests, such as the Congo Basin. According to the scientific community, this tropical forest in Central Africa is an important carbon sink. For example, a "carbon-flow" tower was recently commissioned in the locality of Yangambi in the DRC. Objective: to understand the role of tropical forests in the fight against climate change. "How do tropical forests contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change?" To answer this question, the international scientific community decided to study the exchange of greenhouse gases between the forest and the atmosphere in the Congo Basin,

located in Central Africa. "We know that the preservation of forests in Central Africa is crucial in the fight against climate change, but until now their contribution and potential as carbon sinks has probably been underestimated," says Pascal Boeckx, a professor at the University of Ghent in Belgium. The new studies are being carried out in a 'carbon flow' tower in Yangambi, in the Tshopo province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The recently inaugurated research centre is a project undertaken by various international institutions, including the University of Ghent in Belgium, the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the R&D Company and the Regional Post-

Graduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests (ERAIFT), in partnership with the National Institute for Agronomic Studies and Research (INERA). According to Cifor, the "carbon flow" tower is the first step in a major project to enhance the value of the tropical forest of the Congo Basin, the second largest in the world after the Amazon in Latin America. The centre is currently managed by Congolese technicians working with Irena. **An initiative supported by the EU and Belgium** The 55 m high "carbon flow" tower (15 m above the forest canopy) supports the Yangambi research station, which carries out studies on climatology.

The tower will fill a huge data gap on the importance of African rainforests in capturing global carbon emissions, changes in local and regional rainfall patterns, and the effect of forest degradation and deforestation on global warming. According to Cifor, all the data produced will be open and free of charge for the international scientific community. The initiative is part of a project funded by the European Union (EU) and Belgium to make Yangambi a scientific hub for the benefit of the populations and biodiversity of the DRC. "This tower will place the DRC at the forefront of scientific research in the global fight against climate change and, in particular, its consequences in the tropics," says Jean-Marc Châtagnès, EU ambassador to the DRC.

Canton Fair hosts online matchmaking events to improve efficiency for global buyers and exhibitors

By Agencies

THE organizer of Canton Fair, China Foreign Trade Centre, together with its partners and overseas chambers of commerce, has launched several virtual business matchmaking events in France, Ukraine, Tanzania and the United Arab Emirates, in an effort to build online communication platforms to improve efficiency for global buyers and exhibitors. The 128th Canton Fair Hosts Online Matchmaking Events to Improve Efficiency for Global Buyers and Exhibitors. Among featured guests attending the online event were Chen Ruhua, Counselor of the Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy in France, Xiaoqing SU-PELLEMELE, Secretary-General of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Paris Ile-de-France, Thomas Badr Manakut, Senior Manager of the Finance Department of Bank of China Paris Branch, and Zachy Mbenna, Acting Executive Director, Tanzania Private Sector Foundation. The online events are part of a new program brought forward by the Canton Fair to offer both suppliers and buyers screen-to-screen opportunities to gain an in-depth understanding of each other's offerings and demands. "The coronavirus has significantly disrupted global economic and trade activities, and consequently widened the gaps of international supply chains. The 128th Canton Fair has initiated a business matchmaking program by building an online communication platform to facilitate global buyers seeking business partnerships in China when offline trade fairs are extremely limited," said Yu Yi, Deputy Director General of Foreign Affairs Office of Canton Fair, "We aim to provide both Chinese and global companies the opportunities to engage new international markets."

The virtual conferences connected nearly 200 buyers from France, Tanzania, UAE and Ukraine, with 16 Canton Fair exhibitors which presented their products ranging from home appliances, building materials, lighting products, textiles to machines and hardware equipment. Many exhibitors participating in the event said that the program has opened up a channel that enables them to promote their companies and products to global buyers and reach target markets faster and more efficiently. Alexander Sainz, a buyer from France, said the event "gathered many excellent Chinese companies which brought a variety of quality-made products. I am very interested in many products presented at the event and looking forward to exploring more business opportunities with them at the Canton Fair in the following days", he added. "Tanzania has a population of nearly 60 million, and there is a strong demand for agricultural machinery, textiles and other manufacturing products from China. As a member of the EAC and SADC, Tanzania has large market capacity and geographical advantages," Zachy Mbenna said. "Canton Fair has been playing an important role in helping companies in Tanzania procure high-quality products from China. The presentations of exhibitors at this business matchmaking event were brilliant, demonstrating the unique charm of the Canton Fair. We believe that it will undoubtedly attract more Tanzanian buyers to attend the online Canton Fair in the future," he added. The matchmaking events are an innovative attempt at this Canton Fair to help companies explore international markets and improve trading efficiency, building a fast track for suppliers and buyers to reach pragmatic trade deals.

By Gerald Kitabu

Smallholder farmers want state and non-state actors to promote decent work in agriculture

Sustainable development Goals (SDG 8) states very clearly that each nation and relevant regional and district authorities should promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, ensure full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Like any other nation, Tanzania need to continue playing the role of decent work for all in achieving sustainable development as highlighted by this Sustainable Development Goal 8.

Decent work, employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue represent integral elements of the new 2030 Agenda for the sustainable development. Furthermore, crucial aspects of decent work are broadly rooted in the targets of many of the other 16 goals.

At a recent two-day meeting organised and conducted by Action Aid in Dar es Salaam recently, smallholder farmers said although they constitute a large number of productive work force, their efforts and rights have always been undermined by system of male domination.

Citing an example of agriculture, they said that women faced several problems and lived in the community where there are no conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

The meeting brought together smallholder farmers from different geographical settings to build their capacity on the new concept of decent work in agriculture.

Mwanaidi Musa Itembe from Msimbazi village, Singida district council said women work hard in agriculture producing food for the family, but men comes in at harvesting period.

She said men go as far as selling the crops from the field without knowledge of wives and children. "At time of shortage of food or hunger, men tend to run away and leave children behind with poor wives," she said.

Sarah Selemani from Mvumi, Kilosa Morogoro said that for a long time women have been running agricultural activities which are not in the form of decent work. They are exploited and even when they are sick, they will be forced to go in the field, a situation that puts their health at risk.

Eddah Salaini from Olasiti Aru-



Head of programmes and Policy of Action Aid, Jovina Nawenzake (left) lead smallholder farmers from different regions in one of the discussions during the meeting to analyse decent work in agriculture in Dar es Salaam. Photo by Gerald Kitabu

sha and Yusta Abdalah from Makang'wa village, Chamwino called on the government and other stakeholders to intervene and provide education so that men can change their mindset.

"If we will not address these problems facing women such as lack of equality and rights which constitute decent work, women will always be working for men," said Eddah.

Decent work, employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue represent integral elements of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, crucial aspects of

decent work are broadly rooted in the targets of many of the other 16 goals.

In an interview during the smallholder women farmer forum to analyse decent work in agriculture in Dar es Salaam, the National Programme Coordinator-ILO Maridadi Phaniel said that the standards and fundamental principles and rights at work should be promoted to all. There should be creation of greater opportunities for both men and women to decent employment and income.

"We must enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all and strengthen

tripartism and social dialogue. These are the four pillars of the decent work agenda which are also the strategic objectives of the ILO," he said.

He called on women to unite and form groups so that institutions, organisations and civil society organisations can easily reach, educate them, empower them to understand their rights.

Action Aid's head of programmes and Policy Jovina Nawenzake said agriculture can be an important engine of growth and poverty reduction. But the sector is underperforming in many countries in part because women, who are often

a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy, face constraints that reduce their productivity. She said aggregate data shows that women comprise about 65 percent of the agricultural labour force in Tanzania and elsewhere in Africa but their time and energy invested in productive work have never yielded desired results.

She called on all people and relevant authorities to take concerted and concrete measures required for enabling women exercise their rights and access, own assets and properties.

"We understand that the international community includ-

ing the ILO recognises that women have the right to decent work. Women must understand their position that they are equal with men. Here we are not only talking about women right, but also productive work that observes conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity," she said.

She said women doing formal and informal work have all in one time or another been subjected to harmful traditional norms which end up infringing their rights.

"We have inherited an exploitation system from ancestors and sometimes, you find a married woman been subjected to these problems but cannot decide otherwise because she is afraid, and sometimes she would tell you that she has no means, she has to stay to protect her marriage and children," she said.

There is a need for the government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to advocate for decent work, continue building capacity and providing education to different groups of women and promote equality, equity and conditions of freedom, he added.

Amne Manangwa and Elias Ntinda from Action Aid said Tanzania has socially progressive laws and policies that recognize equal rights to decent work in agriculture and land rights between men and women, however, the reality is that few women have secure rights to land and decent productive work in agriculture.

Citing an example they said smallholder farmers especially the rural women play a major role in farming but faces major constraints in accessing productive resources.

They called on the government and other stakeholders to give priority gender issues and observe fundamental principles and rights at work especially to put emphasize on the rights to decent productive work in agriculture.

Women have their basic right including decent work. Therefore, community should pay special attention to the vulnerability of women at different stages of the life cycle, including all social and economic sectors such as agriculture. Formal equality of rights as well as substantive equality should be observed at any time.

The community need to promote pro-poor land laws and policies, promote responsive land based investment with special focus on women and the youth.

By Xie Yihui

Today's advertising landscape is fraught with challenges: the death of third-party cookies, a depressed advertising market, advertising revenues going to platforms instead of publishers, just to name a few.

In a panel discussion at Digital Media Asia 2020 earlier this month, advertising and publishing experts highlighted the importance of data-driven solutions, publisher alliances and creating new business models to compete for a share of the advertising pie.

The coronavirus pandemic drives digital advertising trends. As more people stay home and online owing to Covid-19, advertisers have, in turn, accelerated their moves into the digital space.

London-based marketing agency Zenith says declines induced by Covid-19 have started to ease with advertising spend beginning to return. It forecasts a 5.8 per cent recovery in global advertising spend for the incoming year.

Against this backdrop, publishers are seeing new demands from advertisers, according to Michael Stephenson, Chief Sales Officer of commercial Australian free-to-air television network Nine Entertainment. He said common themes emerged during Nine's conversations with advertisers.

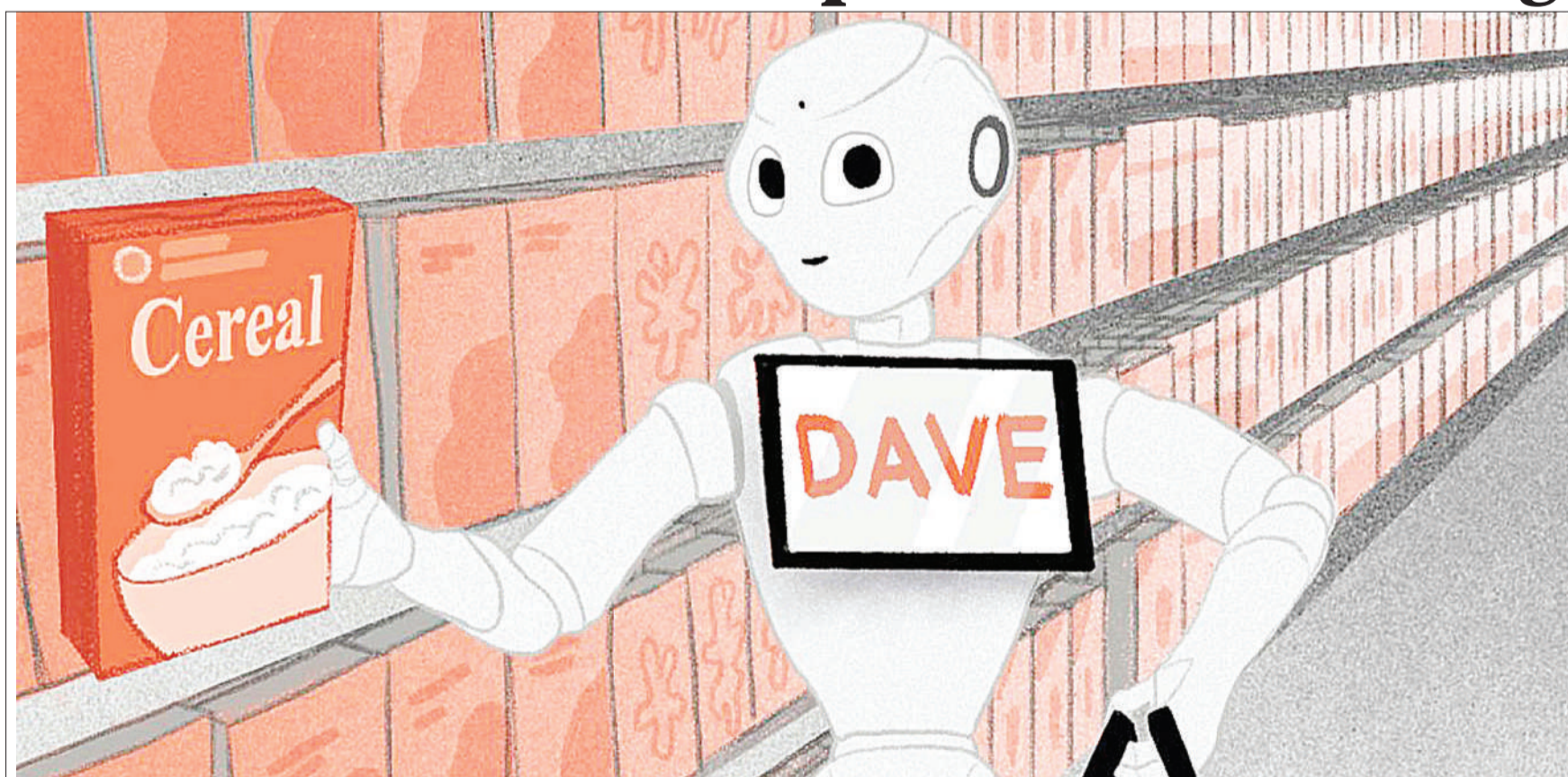
"We were hearing that marketers had an absolute, unwavering obsession with customers and personalising their experience," Stephenson noted.

With respect to meeting the demand, multi-faceted digital transformation Nine's story provides a good example of how the digital evolution of advertising has played out.

It happened over many years, with each step paving the path for future advancement. In the past five years, Nine has transformed from a television business into a fully digital one. This September, it deepened its digitalisation by partnering with Adobe, creating a new system called Audience Match.

This system offers the opportunity for Nine to compete with the big tech companies, as advertisers can now target advertisements to end users across

Data-driven solutions highlighted as experts deliberate on future of premium advertising



its different screens - connected televisions, computers and tablets - just like how they target users across different Google properties.

"Every single day advertisers can communicate with known audiences, known customers, not anonymous devices, across every screen," Stephenson said.

Each end user is identifiable thanks to Nine's mandatory sign-in system implemented in 2016. "Furthermore, it does it

within a very safe environment that complies with brands, data privacy and governance requirements," he said.

Over in Indonesia, GDP Network is in the process of rolling out its new private advertisement network among some of the companies under its parent company, GDP Venture.

GDP Venture is a venture builder and investing company with more than 50 media, entertainment, commerce, data, and AI

companies in its portfolio - including IDN Media and Kumparan, to name a few.

"Implementing data culture into organisations takes time. It took us two trials, over the course of a year to build all these data points and inventory," GDP Network CEO Antony Liem said.

GDP Network now has more than 64 million unique users and over 1 billion monthly impressions, spread across 16 of its network companies.

Similar to Audience

Match, GDP Network allows marketers to segment audiences and target certain users based on first-party and third-party data. The same technology also helps their media companies to understand their audience.

Earlier this year, GDP formed the Publisher Network Alliance, in which data-driven marketing, such as programmatic video advertisements and programmatic performance, are incorporated across the board.

"Advertisers are much more stringent about spending. They want to be sure of the return on their marketing investment, so data-driven marketing is the way to do it," Liem notes.

Similarly, MediCorp established a partner network two years ago to the great benefit of its advertisers. First, it creates a brand-safe experience as advertisers are aware of the portfolio of platforms.

Secondly, the alliance allows advertisers to target

audiences across traditional and digital media platforms, covering a wider demographic space, making cross-platform audience optimisation possible.

Lastly, the advertisers can tap into the expertise of publishers to understand local consumer habits and content preferences, enhancing the media companies' ability to monetise for the advertisers.

Indranil Sarkar, Vice President of Partnership & New Business at MediCorp, encouraged every publisher to start considering collaboration - saying: "It could be a smaller publisher alliance. It could be a startup alliance; can be anyone who has a dedicated audience. Think about your collaboration as broadly as possible."

In addition to striking a deal with peers in the industry, MediCorp took it one step further by collaborating with e-commerce companies to create new revenue streams.

It collaborated with Singapore e-commerce site Lazada for its 9.9 sale. The five-day campaign combined the convenience of e-commerce offerings with entertaining content to maximise the customer experience.

In another successful venture, MediCorp joined hands with real estate agencies and a property portal in organising Singapore's largest virtual real estate show.

Tapping into its own strengths, MediCorp enhanced engagement through its extensive audience reach across different platforms, contributing to the partners' revenue growth.

Sarkar emphasized the importance of unlocking business models, especially in difficult times, noting: "There are always things that are emerging. And sometimes crisis is a great time."

● A WAN-IFRA (World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers) dispatch. Xie Yihui is a student at Yale-NUS College.

BUSINESS

INGENUITY

Man who lost job during lockdown turns to funny placards to raise funds

CAPE TOWN

Lusisindo Malgas and his signs are a familiar sight at the traffic lights along the R27, which passes through Dolphin Beach, Table View and Sunningdale. "Need petrol 4 my Porsche," "Let's do lunch, u buy" and "Will cut Malema's hair for R20" are on some of the signs he holds.

Malgas's upbeat demeanour is also infectious, despite the fact that he lost his job as a packer and misses his children, who had to be sent to their grandmother in the Eastern Cape. When he realised he would have to beg for money, he decided to add a sprinkle of humour to an otherwise bleak situation.

How will I survive?

"When I lost my job, I was like what

am I going to do? How am I going to survive? All I know is how to make people laugh and how to talk to people. I had no choice but to work and put food on the table," he told BackaBuddy.

Many people sleep at one of the intersections he stands at, and some play chess to pass the time or walk through traffic to ask for spare change. A BackaBuddy campaign to help Malgas, with a fundraising goal of R250 000 for a house in Khayelitsha, was set up with the help of Brendan Cottle who was moved by Malgas's story.

Cottle explained that Malgas would like to buy a house for himself and his children. He wants to move out of Du Noon because it is not safe there, and relocate to Khayelitsha. He also hopes to transfer his placard wit to a T-shirt range.



Lusisindo Malgas stands at traffic lights in the Table View and Blouberg area with his funny slogans and hopes potential donors will drop him a note or two.

CENSURE

TikTok explicitly calls out white nationalism, white genocide theory

BEIJING

TikTok has overhauled its community guidelines to better tackle coded language and symbols that help spread hate speech.

The company announced in a blog post on Wednesday morning that it "will stem the spread of coded language and symbols that can normalize hateful speech and behavior." The announcement comes shortly after TikTok joined the European Commission's Code of Conduct on Countering Illegal Hate Speech Online.

The company says it will address the spread of white nationalism, white genocide theory, Identitarianism (an anti-immigration movement spreading in parts of Europe and elsewhere), and male supremacy. Business Insider has previously reported that Identitarianism was linked to the 2019 Christchurch shooting, where a self-proclaimed fascist killed 49 people in a number of New Zealand mosques.

White supremacists have used TikTok to push their beliefs.

The app, which was criticized in August by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an organization devoted to tackling anti-Semitism and hate, has faced issues with white supremacists and nationalists using coded messages to perpetuate their



Members of the Proud Boys, a far right organization dedicated to fighting with leftists, hold a rally on September 26, 2020 in Delta Park, on the northern edge of Portland, Oregon.

beliefs.

The ADL highlighted examples of TikTok posters using hashtags like "2316" (the numeric symbol for white power) and "88", which is often used to circumvent moderation and is linked to the phrase "Heil Hitler."

"I do think this is an effort worth commending and it appears to be

well aligned with what other platforms grappling with similar issues are tackling," said Sabrina Ahmad, an MSc graduate from the Oxford Internet Institute who studied the cultural implications of content moderation.

"I think it's worth acknowledging, however, the same way Facebook

did that with any significant change in content moderation policies such as these, that TikTok won't be getting it right the first time, and that there's a good possibility that they won't ever get it right fully."

TikTok also said it would be taking "further action" to remove misinformation and hurtful stereotypes

DIVERSITY

Themed books and crafts are all the rage among modern Muslim parents

ABU DHABI

My toddler's favourite toys include a mobile phone that plays the (frankly nauseating) track Baby Shark and an interactive Dora the Explorer book.

She's learning her ABCs, but eventually I'd like for her to learn the Arabic alphabet - the foundation of the Quran. And while she toddles around my prayer mat and babbles something that vaguely sounds like "Bismillah," I'm eager for her to grasp the meaning of the word.

So when I came across a colourful image on Instagram of The Bismillah Book for children - an under-the-sea-themed sing-along publication - I was intrigued. Evidently, I'm not the first parent to search for accessible tools that will help teach the values and pillars of my faith to my child. It turns out that a number of UAE entrepreneurs are at the forefront of a burgeoning books and activities market centred on making Islam relatable and enjoyable for young Muslims.

Islamic books and crafts for children

"The need of the hour definitely points towards value-based content based on a spiritual upbringing," Mehnaz Anshah, co-founder of Bismillah Buddies, which produced The Bismillah Book, tells The National. "We've found a great community of like-minded parents who share our concerns regarding the future of our children and the world they are growing up in." Bismillah Buddies began as a playgroup, which then expanded to meet an increasing demand.

"We are mums with growing children and changing needs," Anshah says. The start-up now sells storybooks and craft kits centred on spirituality. "We feel Islamic education should be on a par with everything else that children are learning. It should be joyful and engaging. We want our children to be proud of their religious identity. This can happen only if they truly connect to faith, at a fundamental level, in a manner that is relevant to them."

Titles from Bismillah Buddies Little Seekers of Deen is another concept that began as a playgroup in the UAE. Early this year, Dubai resident Fiza Hameed began organising meet-ups with structured activities related to



'The Alhamdulillah Book', published by Bismillah Buddies, helps children develop mindfulness and gratitude.

faith for children.

"As with everything, Little Seekers was put on hold in March due to the pandemic. The safest way to continue creative Islamic education for young children was to bring it to their doorsteps," Hameed says.

Hameed is now in the process of launching Salaam Seekers - monthly boxes containing Islam-themed craft activities and books. She experimented with a trial run this summer in the lead-up to the Hajj and Eid Al Adha. Though it's one of the five pillars of Islam, the Hajj was closed this year to non-residents of Saudi Arabia because of the pandemic. So to make its spirit more accessible, Hameed's box offered an interactive Kaaba activity in which children could paint the shrine and then perform circles around it, emulating the tawaf ritual of the pilgrimage.

The box also contained two books, an activity involving stringing cards emblazoned with "good deeds" on a banner, and a kit to make prayer beads. Hameed plans to formally launch Salaam Seekers in the next few months, with

boxes planned around building mosques and performing the ablation and prayers. "Young Muslims today are very curious. Their minds are like sponges, so I strongly believe in making Islamic knowledge accessible to them," she says.

Sara Alikhan, head of Islamic studies at Dubai College, says that from a teaching perspective, tools such as these are invaluable for instilling religious values in children. "Historically, apart from the textbooks, there haven't been too many resources to supplement Islamic lessons. However, there are now many high-quality picture books, puzzles and games that make learning Islam more enjoyable. The quality of resources being produced helps to bridge the gap between the materials available in other subjects across the curriculum," Alikhan explains.

Festive home decor Education is not the only realm where there is demand for Islam-themed products. Parents are also increasingly seeking decor to make their homes more festive, especially during religious holidays

such as Ramadan and Eid. Bismillah Buddies for instance, sells banners, cards, cupcake toppers and gift boxes emblazoned with "Eid Mubarak" in English and Arabic, and some of Hameed's boxes include themed DIY decor. In fact, contemporary decor designs inspired by Islam started trending in Europe and North America before picking up steam in the Middle East.

Former Dubai resident Zainab Merali founded My Little Ruhm in 2017, when she was decorating her nursery but could not find tasteful Islamic decor locally. "Being from Canada, I knew that modern Islamic home decor existed in abundance in North America and the UK, and that there was ironically a gap in the UAE," she says. This niche has expanded over the past few years, she says. "There has been exponential growth in both demand and availability in the last three years alone, due to social media platforms."

Islamic identity Merali says that for faith-based businesses, there is often a deeper motivation than just making money from sales.

"We wanted our products and toys to be safe and sustainable, so they are made of natural materials, and most items were developed and handcrafted by working mothers who were empowering themselves and giving back to the communities through their businesses," she explains.

Muslim mothers are the pioneers of these enterprises, eager to teach Islamic values to their children in vibrant and refreshing ways that may not have been taught to them by their own parents. Traditional Islamic discourse can be difficult to break down for a younger audience, especially for non-Arabic speakers, so distilling messages of the faith in a way that is positive and motivating is a concept that resonates with many modern-day Muslim parents.

"The idea is to make children proud of their Muslim identity, and see Islam as a loving religion - one that is practical, beautiful and fun," Merali says. "But for this, they need access to products that speak to them and make them want to become active participants in developing their Islamic identity."

about Jewish, Muslim and other communities, including misinformation about prominent Jewish people, who are often subject to anti-Semitism.

However, the app's internal content moderation policies, used by those policing posts, already guards against this. A version of TikTok's content moderation policies, dating from late 2019 and seen by Business Insider, encourage moderators to delete "content depicting stereotype of a protected or identifiable group" under its hate speech section.

At the same time, TikTok is also beefing up its response to anti-LGBTQ+ content, including any videos that promote conversion therapy. TikTok declined to provide examples of the type of content it would be taking down as a result of the updated policies. Its announcement comes a week after Facebook announced it would ban Holocaust denial content, after the site's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, confirmed his "thinking has evolved."

TikTok won't ban commu-

nities who reclaim banned phrases

The app says it is also introducing more nuance to its content to allow reclaiming of previously contentious words and phrases. "Language previously used to exclude and demean groups of people is now being reclaimed by these communities and used as terms of empowerment and counter-speech," the company said. TikTok is trying to train its content moderation teams in different countries to understand better the nuance around the way these terms and phrases are used.

"If a member of a disenfranchised group, such as the LGBTQ+, Black, Jewish, Roma and minority ethnic communities, uses a word as a term of empowerment, we want our enforcement teams to understand the context behind it and not mistakenly take the content down," the blog post read.

"On the other hand, if a slur is being used hatefully, it doesn't belong on TikTok," the company added. "Educating our enforcement

teams on these crucial distinctions is ongoing work, and we strive to get this right for our community."

"TikTok's efforts to train its moderators in cultural nuance and contextualizing speech is laudable, but a bit of a moving target," said Ahmad. "These efforts would probably be more effective if they started hiring (or continued to hire) on-the-ground moderators who already belong to those communities or regions and who can better understand the evolution of speech and symbols within those groups."

A former TikTok content moderator, who asked not to be named because they signed a non-disclosure agreement when departing the company, questioned whether this was truly a change in policy. "None of that is new, alongside the policies that impact the distribution of LGBT content which are also not new," they said. "Hate speech is hate speech and there isn't sudden enforcement due to a new coalition, it was always against the policy."

LIBERATION

Young woman banks on talent to secure freedom

SAN FRANCISCO

What better way to express appreciation for one's mother than to write a book about her, mixing fact with fiction to create a full picture of who that mother was, or might have been had she fulfilled all that she was capable of becoming.

In Alka Joshi's best seller novel, *The Henna Artist*, the writer did just that! With her formidable imagination (honed at Stanford University and San Francisco College of Art), she creates a charming and captivating tale about a young woman, Lakshmi, who at 17 rebels against her culture by fleeing an abusive marriage. Making her way to Jaipur, the busy capital of Rajasthan (where Joshi grew up until age nine, after which her parents relocated to the US), Lakshmi lands on her feet.

Having a talent for art that evolves into her becoming a highly sought-after henna artist, she also knows how to heal using local plants and indigenous wisdom. Granted, she started her practice in the 'red light' district where prostitutes used her potions to stay childless, her status is elevated when one of her major clients, Samir, promises to connect her with elite who love henna.

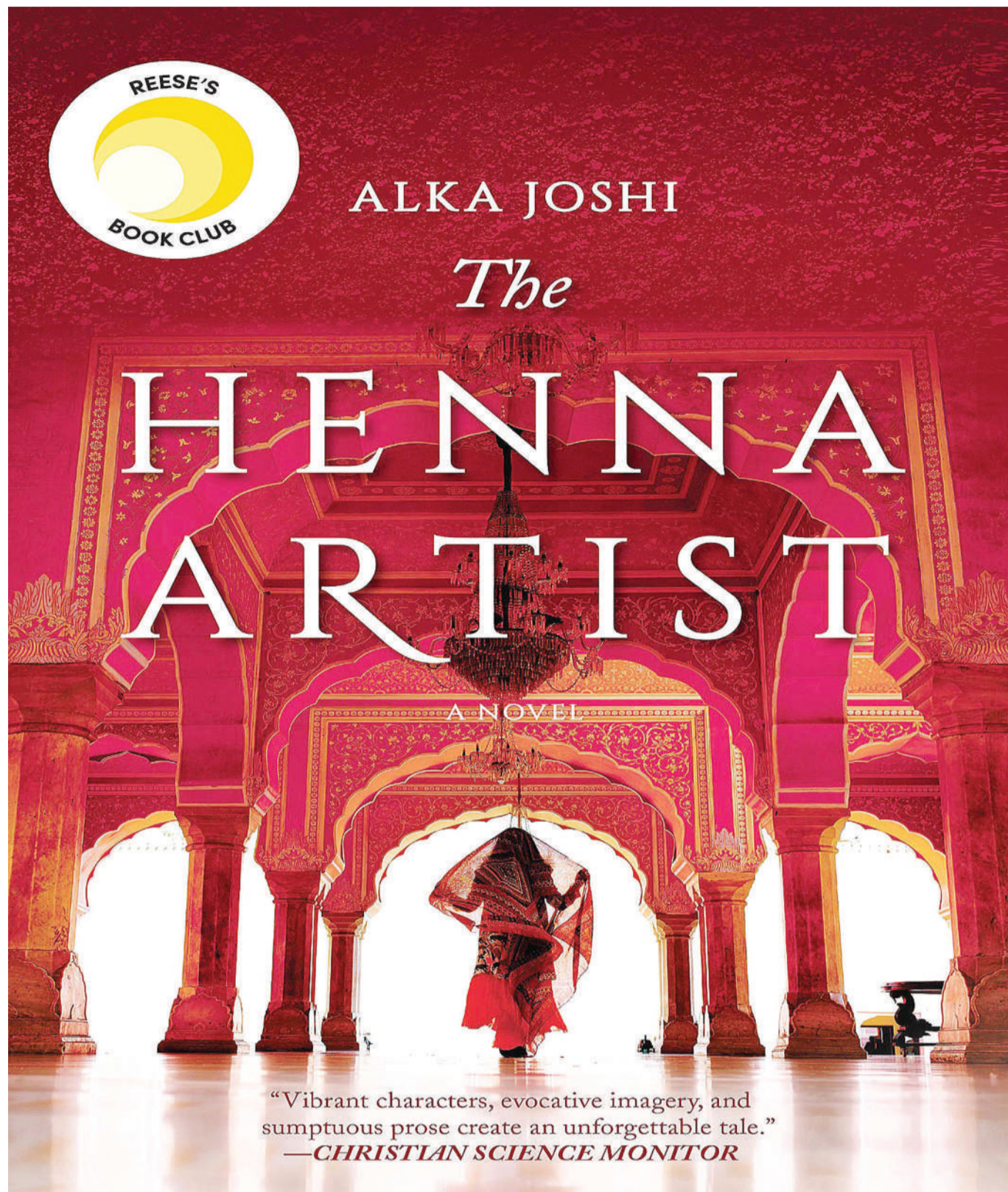
This leads to her working for the wife of the late Maharaja, where she proves the potency of her healing powers. But the life of the hard-working Lakshmi is turned upside down when, first, her husband, Hari, tracks her down, and then, the sister she never knew she had, shows up.

Rada is only 13, but she absorbs city life like a sponge. She's precocious but impulsive and so naïve that she gets pregnant by an upper-class lad who has no intention of marrying this star-struck little girl. What's worse, Lakshmi has been matchmaking with his parents to help arrange a marriage that is meant to be a commercial coup.

What Joshi does so beautifully is reveal all the complexities of class and caste in the post-colonial India of the 1950s. Lakshmi comes from the highest Brahmin caste. But her father was a poor schoolteacher whose fate was sealed once he protested against the British prior to Independence. As such, Lakshmi grew up well-read but dirt-poor. Her story is also set at a crossroads where the traditional and the modern, the old and new India collide.

We watch the clever, ambitious Lakshmi navigate these social divides with finesse, charm, subtly and a touch of magic. Her number one resource is her skill as a henna artist, which surpassed other women's artistry. But the fragility of her social status is quickly exposed once her sister's caprice leads to the crumbling of her henna career. Ultimately, it's Lakshmi's skill as a traditional healer that proves to be what sustains her and has the most enduring value in the end.

The Henna Artist is set in India, but its theme of a young resourceful woman rebelling against convention and wanting freedom, a fulfilling career, and financial independence is universal. The fact that the novel is already translated into 18 languages confirms it.

Alka Joshi's best seller novel, *The Henna Artist*.

Tighter aflatoxin checks loom for Ugandan maize

NAIROBI

Maize imports from Uganda are expected to significantly drop as the government moves to enforce tighter aflatoxin checks on the commodity from the neighbouring country in the coming few months.

Maize traders will be required to show a certificate from a competent authority showing that the grain from Uganda is free from the cancer-causing toxins. Ugandan maize has recorded high levels of aflatoxin and millers, especially the large ones, have been reluctant to use the grain.

"Soon we are going to make it mandatory for maize traders from Uganda to produce a certificate that indicates whatever they are bringing to Kenya is free from aflatoxin," said Leonard Kubok, Head of the Food Crops Directorate. The recommended levels of aflatoxin in a sample of grain is 10 parts per billion with any grain that exceeds that considered unsuitable for human consumption.

At the same time, National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) is setting up five analytical labs in the country to step up aflatoxin checks in maize. NCPB currently has only one testing lab in Nairobi with four more expected to be put up in Kitale, Machakos and Nakuru.

NCPB regional manager for North Rift Gilbert Rotich said the agency will start testing maize as a requirement before buying the grain from farmers. Aflatoxin has not been one of the parameters in quality checks for maize that the agency has been buying from farmers. NCPB has been grading the produce basing on the percentage of diseased, discoloured and broken grain as well as checking on the levels of moisture.

The government has stepped up war on aflatoxin and recently it announced a partnership between private firms and NCPB in distribution of Aflasafe - a biochemical product used in suppressing the levels of aflatoxin in crops by up to 70 percent.

INNOVATION

Liberty Life rolls out critical illness cover

NAIROBI

Liberty Life Assurance has launched a critical illness product, Hekima plan, that eases the financial costs borne by families when critical illness strikes.

The plan whose minimum term is five years with a maximum period of 16 years is available to all adults aged between 18 years and 60 years. The premiums to be paid depend on sum assured and terms of the cover.

The firm said the launch of the product follows a study that revealed a rising worry among Kenyans of the heavy financial burden that befalls them when terminal ailments such as cancer, heart attacks, stroke and major organ failure strike.

In case of such an ailment being diagnosed during the term of the cover, beneficiaries will receive 30 percent of the lumpsum lessening the financial burden brought about by such illness. Besides the listed beneficiaries drawing a lumpsum amount on the death of the assured, they can also benefit from payments to the assured in case of a job loss or disability.

Disabilities covered under Hekima plan include the permanent loss of sight in both eyes and hearing in both ears, permanent loss of speech, major burns, loss of two limbs and inability to take care of themselves. In case of no ailment reported at the end of the cover, the beneficiary will enjoy a 10 percent cashback of the cover amount, it says.

ABNORMAL

Woman leaves husband for best friend's dad who's 30 years older

JOHANNESBURG

The pair have now been dating for 18 months and say they couldn't be happier. Anda says, "When Shelby came home for her step-mum's funeral - I promised I will look after her dad.

He suffered a heart attack in 2015 and needs to take medication, so I would pop in to make sure he had done so. I'd met him before, but it was only briefly and I never fancied him. But while checking in on him, I began to like his charm."

Two months later, the couple expressed their feelings to Shelby and her other two siblings. "We didn't sleep together until we had got the OK from Shelby. It was important for me to get her blessing as I would hate to break up our friendship," says Anda. "She was weirded out and found it strange at the start. But she could see that we are both happy and understands you can't help who you fall in love with."

Anda fell completely 'head over heels' for Robert, which prompted her to leave her husband of three years. "I left my ex for him as he made me feel special and happy. Robert may be 30 years older, but he doesn't show it," Anda says. "Shelby and I are still super close, but out of respect, I don't tell her the details about her dad and I."

Anda slams rude strangers who assume she is a 'gold digger'. "People sadly assume you are with an older man for money. But it couldn't be any further from the truth - I work hard for my own money," she says. "I don't know why it is so hard to believe we have things in common and are in love."



Anda Melton with her 58-year-old boyfriend, Robert.

DEFENCE

Fashion council head condemns critics of Primark's 'modest' fashion range

DUBAI

The founder of the Dubai-based Islamic Fashion Design Council has backed British retailer Primark's launch of its range of attire for Muslim women after critics branding its use of the term "modest" as "outdated."

The high-street chain has unveiled its affordable range called the Modest Collection in its autumn and winter series. A backlash brewed from some that claimed the word 'modest', which is derived from the industry term Modest Fashion, should have been dropped years ago.

Modest Fashion describes clothing for women wishing to wear enveloping clothes, often guided by reasons of faith. Alia Khan, founder of the Islamic Fashion Design Council, this week welcomed Primark's launch, hailing it as a win for Muslim women.

Nafisa Bakkar, who was recognised in this year's Forbes under 30 list for media and marketing, started the clothing website Amaliah to address the difficulty Muslim women face when looking for clothes that are modest yet fashionable. She has felt the term needs an



Alia Khan, chairwoman of the Islamic Fashion and Design Council, is photographed in Dubai.

overhaul. "A well known fashion brand announcing a modest collection feels so dated to me now. Do we still use the term 'modest fashion'?" she tweeted. During a webinar event on Modest

Fashion, held by the cultural heritage organisation the Zay Initiative, Ms Khan said Primark's initiative should be welcomed, and the collection demonstrated that Muslim voices were be-

ing heard. "We cannot get into semantics. We should be grateful and appreciative," she said. "We do not need to denote the fashion as modern or chic, we have just

won a mini-battle and manufacturers now recognise it as a legitimate market.

"Who are Primark and Dolce & Gabbana catering for? Us, because we have heard and we are getting the respect we want. Is this really the time for this silly conversation? It is like going back to the darkness," Ms Khan said.

"We have come from having to rummage to find the perfect dress only to find it had short sleeves or was backless. We said 'why should we layer? We are buying three outfits for every one piece our mainstream colleagues are'. Do you really want us to go back now and have to rummage through Primark to find something suitable to our guidelines? I'm not going to take this [criticism] seriously." She said she was open to ideas for the term Modest Fashion to be rebranded.

"We have to cut everybody some slack, we need to come up with a defining category for this market, it will be a fashion whatever term we use, if we call it 'decent' fashion we will be criticised," she said. "We are open to suggestions. Maybe we have a competition on what to call it."

Dr Reem El Mutwali, who has collected and preserved the history of the

UAE's national dresses, said Primark's initiative has received "many positive" comments. "What is observed is that 'modest' is a growing phenomenon and it is happening among women of different faiths," she said.

"The reality is that everyone has their own idea of what modest fashion means to them. This runs alongside people's personal preferences of colour and style. It is such a broad idea that becomes very narrow inside those two words. "Commerce and trade is constantly fuelled by nuances to promote more consumer spending."

Primark's Modest Collection is available in 91 stores across Europe. "We believe that Primark is for everyone, and we strive to provide our customers with choice, the store told The National.

"Our Modest Collection caters to anyone seeking affordable, trend-driven fashion which enables varying degrees of modest dressing. "It includes a range of versatile pieces with longer sleeves, higher necklines and lower hems, offering endless outfit opportunities for our customers to feel comfortable and stylish, while also tapping into the season's biggest trends."

RESTORATION

Lebanese yoga teacher rebuilds Beirut studio thanks to kindness of strangers

BEIRUT

Hala Okeili was two minutes away from her house when the Beirut blast tore the city apart on August 4. The explosion site was a mere 500 metres away from where she lived, and her first thought was that her husband, house help and their cat had likely all perished.

Despite being so close to her destination, reaching home was a struggle, surrounded as she was by rubble and injured people. When she finally made it - by which time she had learnt that her husband was alive but severely wounded - Okeili found her home completely damaged.

"I could not comprehend what had happened to us. I knew my husband was hurt, but I could not get there to help him for the first few hours. I also did not expect that the house would be gone entirely - with no facade and lots of blood. Everything was destroyed. I did not even think of my yoga studio at that time," says Okeili, a corporate lawyer and founder of Sarvam Yoga studio.

"I went into survival mode for three days and immersed myself in saving what I could. Simultaneously, I was trying to find an operating room for my husband." Hospitals in Beirut were overwhelmed with casualties, and Okeili's house help and cat were not found for 48 hours. "Nothing can ever explain what we felt and lived through during those days."

While Okeili was in hospital for her husband's surgery, her friends spent the day cleaning and fixing her house. "If it were not for Lebanese solidarity, we would have lost all hope. Humanity is all we have left," she says. "My mother, my best friend and four

men I hired were working like machines, under pressure because there was a possibility that the building would collapse."

Towards the end of the day, an exhausted Okeili called for help from her balcony to a young man in the street. "Suddenly, 15 young boys and girls lined up at my door. They assisted us and then went to support someone else."

Such random acts of kindness turned out to be a guiding light for Okeili, with the solidarity she experienced first-hand giving her the strength to carry on. She decided to rebuild her yoga studio, which was also destroyed in the blast. Her friends helped her set up a GoFundMe campaign, and donations started pouring in from around the world. "I cannot believe how generous people have been. Without their support, we would not reopen. We would not even find hope."

In order to repay such kindness, Okeili began conducting free classes, both from a rooftop in Ras Beirut and via Zoom, to give thanks to the people who stood by her. "The free classes were just a small token of my appreciation. The community has been very generous to us, so I wanted to return the love."

Okeili reopened her studio this month. "It took longer than expected because of the enormous amount of destruction, but we've freshened it up with lighter colours in the hope for new beginnings."

"If it were not for yoga, I would have lost my mind. To have your husband severely injured and lose your house, all your belongings, your business and your husband's business in the blink of an eye could drive anyone mad," says Okeili.



Okeili learnt the principles of yoga in India and returned to Beirut to open Sarvam Yoga studio.



ISIDINGO MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

ITV	WEDNESDAY 21 Oct	THURSDAY 22 Oct	FRIDAY 23 Oct	SATURDAY 24 Oct	SUNDAY 25 Oct	CAPITAL
MONDAY 19 Oct 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 Mjuzi 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 Afiya 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	WEDNESDAY 21 Oct 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 Movie 12:30 Kipindi maalum rpt: Twende pamoja 13:00 Dakika 45 14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 14:45 Movie 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Korean drama rpt: The great queen Seonduk 19:00 Ijue Sheria 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco 21:30 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 22 Oct 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 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Ripoti maalum 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 Usafiri wako 19:00 Kipindi maalum: Twende pamoja 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:00 Malumbano ya hoja 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 DWTW	FRIDAY 23 Oct 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	SATURDAY 24 Oct 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 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt 11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt 12:15 Great Queen Seonduk 13:00 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang 13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe 16:20 Igizo: Mtego 17:00 Shamsam 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 25 Oct 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: Nurse Bandia 14:00 Tamasha la Michezo 15:00 Mwangaza 16:00 The slave hunter 16:45 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	CAPITAL Mon 19 Oct 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: Itohan 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 Sat 24 Oct 08:00 Al Jazeera 09:00 Rev rpt 09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt 10:30 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 16:30 Capchat rpt 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 Innovation 19:30 Jagina rpt 20:00 Series: Itohan 20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny 21:30 Capital Prime 22:00 Turning the spotlight rpt 22:30 Eco@Africa 23:00 Al Jazeera Wed 21 Oct 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: Itohan 16:30 Innovation rpt 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 Sports Gazette 19:30 Chetu ni chetu 20:00 Series: Itohan 20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny 21:30 Capital Prime News 22:00 Dakika 45: 22:45 The Decor 23:15 Al Jazeera Thurs 22 Oct 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: Itohan 16:30 Business edition rpt 17:00 In good shape

WORLD

AMERICA'S CHOICE 2020: In final Trump-Biden showdown, less chaos but plenty of clashes

NASHVILLE

US President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden offered sharply contrasting views on the still-raging coronavirus pandemic at Thursday's final presidential debate, seeking to persuade the few remaining undecided voters 12 days before their Nov 3 contest.

Trump, a Republican, adopted a more restrained tone than he did during a chaotic first debate in September, when he repeatedly interrupted Biden. But Thursday's clash still featured plenty of personal attacks between two men who evince little respect for each other, and Trump kept fact-checkers busy by leveling unfounded corruption accusations at Biden and his family.

The absence of disruptions yielded a more substantive debate over a range of topics including the economy, race, climate change, healthcare and immigration. But the coronavirus, which has killed more than 221,000 people in the United States, loomed over the proceedings as it has throughout the

campaign.

The televised encounter in Nashville, Tennessee, represented one of Trump's last remaining opportunities to reshape a race that national opinion polls show he has been losing for months, though the contest is much tighter in some battleground states likely to decide the election.

"Anyone who's responsible for that many deaths should not remain president of the United States of America," Biden said.

Trump, who has put his stewardship of the economy at the center of his campaign, defended his approach to the outbreak and said the country could not afford to close businesses again despite fresh surges.

"We're learning to live with it," said Trump, who has played down the virus for months. "We have no choice."

"Learning to live with it?" Biden retorted. "Come on. We're dying with it."

Trump asserted that the virus was "going away", several US states reported record single-day increases in COVID-19 infections on Thursday, evidence the pandemic is accelerating anew.



US President Donald Trump (left), Democratic Presidential candidate, former US Vice-President Joe Biden (right) and moderator, NBC News anchor, Kristen Welker (center) participate in the final presidential debate at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, on Thursday. (AFP)

Trump, whose instinct remains to run as an outsider, portrayed Biden as a career politician whose nearly 50-year record was insubstantial. But he did not lay out a clear agenda for a second term, while Biden returned again and again to Trump's four years as president, pointing to the economic damage the virus has done to people's lives.

After an opening segment on the pandemic, Thursday's clash pivoted to rapid-fire exchanges over whether either candidate had improper foreign entanglements.

Trump repeated his accusations that Biden and his son Hunter engaged in unethical practices in Ukraine. No evidence has been verified to support the allegations, and Biden called them false and discredited.

Trump's effort to uncover dirt on Hunter Biden's Ukraine business ties led to the president's impeachment. The president and his children have been accused of conflicts of interest of their own since he entered the White House in 2017, most involving the family's international real estate and hotel businesses.

'Malarkey'

Biden defended his family and said unequivocally that he had never made "a single penny" from a foreign country, before pivoting to accuse Trump of trying to distract Americans.

"There's a reason why he's bringing up all this malarkey," Biden said, looking directly into the camera. "It's not about his family and my family. It's about your family, and your family's hurting badly."

He accused Trump of avoiding paying taxes, citing a New York Times investigation that reported Trump's tax returns show he paid almost no federal income tax over more than 20 years.

"Release your tax returns or stop talking about corruption," Biden said.

Trump, who has broken with decades of presidential precedents in refusing to release his tax returns, said he had paid "millions". He again said he would release his returns only once a longstanding audit was completed.

The candidates argued over foreign policy, immigration and - after months of anti-racism protests - race relations, with Biden saying Trump was "one of the most racist presidents" in history.

"He pours fuel on every single racist fire," Biden said. "This guy has a dog whistle as big as a foghorn."

Trump responded by criticizing Biden's authorship of a 1994 crime bill that increased incarceration of minority defendants while asserting that he had done more for Black Americans than any president with the "possible" exception of Abraham Lincoln during the US Civil War in the 1860s.

Agencies

Chinese UN mission rejects US ambassador's accusations

UNITED NATIONS

A SPOKESPERSON for China's Permanent Mission to the United Nations on Thursday rejected accusations against China made by the US ambassador to the United Nations.

US Permanent Representative to the United Nations Kelly Craft published an article on Wednesday, viciously attacking cooperation between China and the United Nations, the spokesperson said.

"The article disregards facts and features lies, twisted logic, ideological bias and Cold War mentality. It is an embodiment of McCarthyism in the new era. We firmly reject it."

By bragging about how the Trump administration is fighting "China's ploy to control the UN," the US envoy might intend to show a report card. However, the article is, in fact, a self-confession of the US creating divisions and confrontation at the United Nations, and a diagnosis of the US foreign policy being seriously ill, according to the spokesperson.

China is a force for peace, justice and progress that can be relied on. China's support for the United Nations meets the shared

aspirations of the international community and serves the common interests of all countries.

As a permanent member of the Security Council and the second-largest contributor to the UN regular budget, China is a strong supporter of the United Nations and a staunch defender of international fairness and justice, said the spokesperson.

The values and proposals championed by China at the United Nations are consistent with the purpose and principles of the UN Charter. China's foreign policy is always on the right side of history and in line with the trend of the times and the will of the overwhelming majority of countries.

The United States, on the other hand, has become isolated. Its unilateral acts of bullying have been rejected by the international community, said the spokesperson.

China is actively engaged in the work of the United Nations in all fields. China's participation in UN management and fulfillment of its due responsibilities and obligations fully comply with relevant UN regulations and procedures. International staffs from China are an integral part of the UN team.



Kelly Craft, United States Ambassador to the United Nations

These men and women who work hard to strengthen multilateralism and the United Nations deserve to be respected. Craft's accusations against the integrity of international staffs from China are politically biased and utterly unfounded, said the spokesperson.

The UN system currently has 2,531 staff members from the United States, including 19 at undersecretary-general and assistant secretary-general levels, more than any other member states and far outnumbering China. By Craft's logic, the integrity of American staffs should perhaps be questioned, the spokesperson said.

The United States, by frantically attacking other countries, will not solve any of its problems, nor will it make itself great. More and more countries are alleging that the United States is the biggest troublemaker in the world.

It keeps withdrawing from international treaties and organizations, and makes selective use of international bodies to stage its political show to serve the purpose of its domestic politics, said the spokesperson.

In the 21st century, the world needs no cold war, but cooperation. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations needs no confrontation, but solidarity. We urge certain US politicians to wake up and reverse course, said the spokesperson.

Xinhua

WHO roots for rapid diagnostic tests to boost COVID-19 war in Africa

NAIROBI

THE World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday urged African countries to scale up adoption of rapid diagnostic tests in order to boost the war against COVID-19 pandemic in the continent.

Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa, said the continent's ability to minimize the pandemic's toll on livelihoods

and healthcare infrastructure lies in rapid testing targeting high-risk demographics. "The widespread use of high-quality rapid testing in Africa can revolutionize the continent's response to COVID-19," Moeti said in a statement issued in Nairobi. She said that WHO recommended antigen-based rapid diagnostic tests could be a game-changer in Africa's battle against the coronavirus amid sporadic

flare-ups.

Many African countries have been grappling with COVID-19 testing bottlenecks linked to shortage of reagents, swabs, dysfunctional laboratories and personnel gaps.

Statistics from WHO indicate that only 12 countries in the continent have reached the recommended threshold of ten tests per 10,000 people per week in the

last month. According to WHO, Senegal, which is a trailblazer in diagnostics, is testing 14 times less than Netherlands while Nigeria which is Africa's largest economy is testing 11 times less than Brazil.

Moeti said that widespread use of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) that requires modern laboratories, expertise and reagents, has limited Africa's capacity to detect coronavirus in a larger

population. She said that rapid tests unlike PCR are user-friendly, cheaper, faster and ideal for high-risk groups like essential workers, frequent travelers and residents of urban informal settlements. "Most African countries are focusing on testing travelers, patients or contacts, and we estimate that a significant number of cases are still missed," said Moeti.

Xinhua

China will never stop its pace of reform, opening-up

CHINESE President Xi Jinping recently delivered a major speech at a grand gathering marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in south China's Guangdong province.

He made major strategic deployment for the SEZ's reform and opening-up on a higher level for the new era, and declared China's resolution and confidence to deepen its reform and opening-up and share more development dividends with the world.

"The world economy is currently facing complicated challenges. By no means should we be stopped by the reversing trends and tides. We should choose the right side of the history to unwaveringly expand opening-up in an

all-round way, and promote the building of an open world economy and the building of a community with a shared future for mankind," he said at the gathering.

Shenzhen has accomplished in four decades what took other metropolises around a hundred years to complete, which marks a miracle made by the Chinese people in the history of the world's development.

Shenzhen's achievements are a reflection of the historic changes and results made by China since the reform and opening-up. During the past 40 some years, China has been pursuing devel-

opment with its door wide open, and made an impressive transition from being a largely closed society to one that's open to the world in all respects. The country is always active in promoting economic globalization, and has made its due contribution to the common development of mankind.

The keen appreciation and accurate grasp of the trend of the times are a key reason for China's success. In the new era, the country will keep conforming to the trend of history, and actively respond to and seek changes to proceed with the time. At present, the world is going through changes unseen in a cen-

tury, and the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the changes. China has been and will always maintain firm confidence and concrete actions to promote high-quality economic development and achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

China, calmly responding to the headwinds against economic globalization and the severe situation of the sluggish world economy, is taking more forceful measures to deepen its reform and opening-up with firmer confidence, which has won appreciation from the world.

Since this year, China has optimized

its mechanisms and systems of market-based allocation, and issued a master plan for the Hainan free trade port. Besides, it lowered tariffs for a part of imported commodities, actively expanded imports, and further shortened its negative lists for foreign investment market access. It established new free trade pilot zones and issued a plan on implementing pilot reforms in Shenzhen to build the city into a demonstration area of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the next five years.

The concrete steps for China to comprehensively deepen reforms and expand opening-up prove to the world

that no matter how international situations change, the country will always remain firm in its commitment to pursuing development and create new space for common development.

Opening-up brings progress and cooperation leads to win-win results. China, enjoying a momentum for long-term growth and strong development resilience, is accelerating the establishment of a "dual circulation" development pattern in which domestic economic cycle plays a leading role while international economic cycle remains its extension and supplement, which has not only opened space for China's economic development, but also injected impetus into the recovery and growth of global economy.

People's Daily

Nigerian president urges end to protests, warns state will act

BY BLOOMBERG

NIGERIAN President Muhammadu Buhari called for an end to mass protests against police brutality in which dozens of people have died, as he warned the authorities will act to protect lives and property.



Addressing the nation on state television, Buhari said protesters should "resist the temptation of being used by some subversive elements to cause chaos" and undermine democracy. "For you to do otherwise will amount to undermining national security. Under no circumstances will this be tolerated."

It was the first time Buhari has addressed protesters directly, one of their key demands since the rallies began two weeks ago. He's largely remained silent through the growing crisis, mainly using aides and statements to deliver his response to calls for reforms.

The protests that erupted in Africa's biggest economy on Oct 5 have spread to about half of Nigeria's 36 states, posing the most serious challenge yet to Buhari's authority. They've also dealt another blow to an economy that was already reeling from the coronavirus pandemic.

Weaker currency

The unrest and the authorities' increasingly heavy-handed response has begun to unnerve financial markets, with the naira dropping as much as 1.2 percent against the dollar on Thursday.

The risk premium that investors demand to hold Nigeria's dollar debt rather than US Treasuries has widened 20 basis points this week, while the average for African nations narrowed two basis points, according to JPMorgan Chase & Co indexes.

The streets of Lagos and Abuja, the capital, were largely devoid of protesters on Thursday, and demonstrations in the southern oil-producing Rivers and Delta states that erupted on Wednesday have also died down. At least 10 states have imposed curfews.

Most of the demonstrators are young adults who don't appear to have a clearly defined leadership structure and communicate using social media, which the government says has frustrated efforts to negotiate with them.

The largely peaceful demonstrations persisted even after Buhari promised to disband a police unit at the center of the brutality allegations. He reiterated the government's commitment to further police reforms on Thursday, as he also highlighted government youth-development programs.

Buhari's speech will do little to appease the protesters and demonstrations are likely to continue once curfews are lifted, said Cheta Nwanze, an analyst at Lagos-based SBM Intelligence.

"The president's speech was essentially a middle finger to Nigerians," he said. "In saying nothing of note, and refusing to show any empathy for the plight of the people he purports to govern, he has alienated a generation that is really motivated by high youth unemployment and a sharply rising cost of living."

Agencies

Kurds would have never released IS militants without US insistence, says diplomat

MOSCOW

KURDS in northeastern Syria would have never released militants of the terrorist organization Islamic State (outlawed in Russia) from jails without being prompted to do so by the United States, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told a news briefing on Thursday.

She stressed that last week's release of 600 Islamic State terrorists at the decision of the self-proclaimed administration in northeastern Syria aroused quite a few questions in Moscow.

"Obviously, the Kurds would have never done that without being prompted by the Americans," she said. "Dangerous consequences of that hardly explainable step were obvious. They've surfaced before long."

Zakharova (pictured) said there had already been reports of an upsurge in operations by Islamic radicals, who were infiltrating into areas controlled by the legitimate Syrian authorities and entering into combat clashes with the Syrian military.

"Russia stresses its invariable and fundamental position, its gist being support for Syria's unity and respect for its territorial integrity and sovereignty," Zakharova said.

"We have been systematically urging Damascus and self-proclaimed authorities in the northeast to conduct a constructive dialogue with the aim of finding mutually acceptable solutions in the interests of the local population and the whole country."

Agencies





Citizens watch a robot that provides financial services at the Fuzhou Strait International Conference & Exhibition Center, main venue for the 3rd Digital China Summit, October 11. (File photo)

3rd Digital China Summit wraps up in Fuzhou

THE 3rd Digital China Summit concluded in Fuzhou, capital of east China's Fujian province, on October 14.

Over 8,000 participants attended the main forum and sub-forums of the summit and more than 200 companies exhibited their latest digital technologies and results.

A total of 426 projects in the digital sector involving an investment of 331.6 billion yuan (about \$49.5 billion) were signed at this year's Digital China Summit.

The COVID-19 epidemic has underlined the necessity and urgency of digital transformation.

The application of big data and artificial intelligence (AI) has greatly improved China's capacity for prediction, diagnosis and treatment of the COVID-19 pandemic, said Zhong Nanshan, academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering as well as recipient of China's Medal of the Republic, via video link during the summit.

"At the very beginning of the outbreak, we learnt about the incubation period and clinical features of the disease based on the big data on more than 1,000 COVID-19 patients across the country, which played an important role in the early diagnosis and identification of the epidemic," Zhong noted.

"During the epidemic, we called Chinese families and informed them about epidemic prevention and control with the help of AI technology," said Liu Qingfeng, chairman of iFLYTEK Co. Ltd., a Chinese information technology company.

The technology has enabled the company to inform the first one million families within six hours, according to Liu, who disclosed that the technology has served 59 million person-times of people across the country.

How should China continue stimulating the vitality of digital technologies in the future?

Huawei's rotating chairman Xu Zhijun spoke highly of China's efforts to speed up the construction of new infrastructure.

In the short term, new infrastructure can help stabilize the economy and ensure steady growth; in the long run, new infrastructure can stimulate more new demands, create more new forms of businesses, and release more driving forces and potential in promoting the upgrading of economy, laying a solid foundation for digital transformation in various industries and the high-quality development of different cities, he explained.

Robin Li, chairman and CEO of Baidu, believes that smart economy will be the new label on China's digital economy in the next 10 years, as all sectors, industries and fields will be developing toward intelligentization.

In the first half of this year, China's online retail sales increased by 7.3 per-

cent year on year, according to Xi Dan, senior vice president at Tencent, who pointed out that digitalization in the entire consumer side is still accelerating.

Xi talked about the new changes brought about by digital economy to the consumer side, among which digital consumption's expanding into new markets in lower-tier cities and rural areas represents both a new trend and new vitality of the economy.

Farmers in remote areas began to sell agricultural and sideline products through the Internet and shops in small cities are rapidly recovering with the help of digital platforms, Xi noted.

During the recent combined National Day and Mid-Autumn Festival holiday, the total WeChat payment transaction volume in third-tier cities and below rose by 50 percent, he added.

The achievement expo of the 3rd Digital China Summit, which demonstrates the digital life in the future, had been very popular among visitors since its opening.

As an important part of the summit, the achievement expo covered an area of 56,000 square meters and gathered 257 enterprises and government departments at home and abroad.

The achievement expo included seven major theme zones featuring such topics as the role of digital technologies in the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic, digital economy, and digital society, as well as three sections for the release of relevant achievements.

The expo has comprehensively shown China's achievements in the digitalization, internetization and intelligentization in various sectors during the country's economic and social development.

Over 50 percent of the new technologies and products released at the expo were introduced to the public for the first time.

The benefits of digitalization are mirrored in the smarter lifestyle of people, such as intelligent garbage classification and targeted power grid services.

A technology company in Fuzhou introduced a smart waste sorting bin at the expo. The dustbin can automatically open after the device or scan the QR code on the dustbin.

Thanks to its intelligent system, users can know the weight of their waste, track the recycling process of recyclable waste, and get detailed information about the recycling network system.

With the help of new technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and AI, staff workers at the State Grid Fujian Electric Power Co., Ltd. could quickly locate the addresses of clients with electricity demands through a power supply capacity visualization platform and promptly make a power supply plan for these clients based on big data-driven maps.

People's Daily

Kremlin hopes Russian, US experts to secure one year for New START negotiations

MOSCOW

KREMLIN hopes that an experts meeting on extension of the New START Treaty will take place shortly.

"First, we must agree, we must avoid any preconditions; we hope that such an experts meeting will take place shortly and we will be able to at least secure this year for negotiations, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists yesterday, underscoring that "this is very important."

On October 16, Russian President



Vladimir Putin proposed to extend the New START without preconditions for

at least one year.

According to the Russian president, additional time will make substantial negotiations possible. In addition, the Russian Foreign Ministry expressed Moscow's readiness to freeze its nuclear arsenals for this one year, if the US agrees to no further preconditions.

The New START has been signed in 2010. The Treaty remains in effect for 10 years, unless replaced by a new agreement. It could be extended for a maximum of five years, if both sides agree.

Agencies

Xi: China won't let sovereignty, security interests be harmed



BEIJING

PRESIDENT Xi Jinping said yesterday China will never allow its national sovereignty, security and development interests to be undermined.

China will never allow any forces to violate or separate its sacred territory, Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, said at a meeting in Beijing to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Chinese People's Volunteers entering the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea.

Attendees paid tribute in silence to martyrs in the war at the meeting.

China never seeks hegemony or expansion and firmly opposes hegemonism and power politics, Xi said. Chinese people are firm and confident while looking ahead to the bright prospect of the national rejuvenation, he said. Xi said the practices of black-mailing, blocking and exerting maximum pressure on other countries lead nowhere.

Seeking peaceful development and

win-win cooperation is the right way forward, while pursuing unilateralism, protectionism and extreme egoism leads nowhere, he said.

Important milestone

During the meeting, Xi said the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea defied the invasion and expansion of imperialism and safeguarded the security of New China. The war also safeguarded the peaceful life of the Chinese people, stabilized the situation in the Korean Peninsula and upheld peace in Asia and the world, Xi said.

He said the great victory of the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea will be forever etched in the history of the Chinese nation and the history of peace, development and progress of humankind.

He paid the highest tribute to revolutionary forefathers, saying those who contributed to the victory of the war have never been forgotten.

The great victory of the war is a declaration that the Chinese people have stood firm in the East, and an important milestone in the Chinese nation's march toward the great rejuvenation, Xi said.

Great friendship

The people and armies of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) forged great friendship in the war, Xi said.

During the war, the Chinese People's Volunteers (CPV) received care and support from the party, government and people of DPRK, Xi said.

Chinese and DPRK people and armies went through thick and thin, forging great friendship with blood in the war, he said.

Together, they defeated their armed-to-teeth rival and shattered the myth of invincibility of the US army.

Stronger nation

The president called for continuous efforts to build up China's comprehensive national strength, and faster moves in modernizing national defense and the armed forces.

He also stressed upholding the leadership of the Communist Party of China and making the party even stronger.

He stressed the principle of people first, saying that everything should be done for the sake of the people and should rely on the people.

Xinhua

WHO roots for rapid diagnostic tests to boost COVID-19 war in Africa

NAIROBI

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday urged African countries to scale up adoption of rapid diagnostic tests in order to boost the war against COVID-19 pandemic in the continent.

Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa, said the continent's ability to minimize the pandemic's toll on livelihoods and healthcare infrastructure lies in rapid testing targeting high-risk demographics.

"The widespread use of high-quality rapid testing in Africa can revolutionize the continent's response to

COVID-19," Moeti said in a statement issued in Nairobi. She said that WHO recommended antigen-based rapid diagnostic tests could be a game-changer in Africa's battle against the coronavirus amid sporadic flare-ups.

Many African countries have been grappling with COVID-19 testing bottlenecks linked to shortage of reagents, swabs, dysfunctional laboratories and personnel gaps.

Statistics from WHO indicate that only 12 countries in the continent have reached the recommended threshold of ten tests per 10,000 people per week in the last month.

According to WHO, Senegal, which

is a trailblazer in diagnostics, is testing 14 times less than Netherlands while Nigeria which is Africa's largest economy is testing 11 times less than Brazil.

Moeti said that widespread use of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) that requires modern laboratories, expertise and reagents, has limited Africa's capacity to detect coronavirus in a larger population.

She said that rapid tests unlike PCR are user-friendly, cheaper, faster and ideal for high-risk groups like essential workers, frequent travelers and residents of urban informal settlements.

Xinhua

Pompeo and Sudanese PM discuss removing Sudan from state sponsors of terrorism list

WASHINGTON

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday discussed delisting Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism and Sudan-Israel relations in a phone conversation with Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

"Secretary Pompeo and Prime Minister Hamdok welcomed President Trump's commitment to move forward with rescission of Sudan's State Sponsor of Terrorism designation, a monumental step forward in the bilateral relationship," the State Department said in a statement.

The two agreed on the importance of the rapid passage of legal peace legislation by the Congress, the statement added. Pompeo also applauded Hamdok's "efforts-to-date to improve Sudan's relationship with Israel and expressed hope that they would continue."

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday that he would remove Sudan from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list after Sudan pays 335 million U.S. dollars to American victims.

Citing U.S. officials, media reported that Sudan's removal from the list paves the way for the normalization between the Arab state and Israel, which Trump would tout as another foreign policy achievement with the presidential election only two weeks away.

Hamdok stressed earlier this month that the delisting and the issue of normalization with Israel should be addressed separately. Pompeo told reporters Tuesday at a press bring that the United States had begun the process to remove Sudan from the list.

"We also are continuing to work to get every nation to recognize Israel ... that certainly includes Sudan," he added. Reports are saying U.S. officials were traveling with an Israeli delegation to Khartoum on Wednesday. Xinhua

China-Kenya handshake of equals to bring win-win cooperation, says Chinese ambassador

NAIROBI

THE China-Kenya handshake of equals shall bring win-win cooperation for partners, the Chinese Ambassador to Kenya said on Thursday.

Zhou Pingjian said in a commentary published in the Daily Nation newspaper that the fruitful and wide-ranging cooperation between China and Kenya is a vivid epitome of and stands out in Sino-Africa cooperation.

"The China-Kenya relationship, already upgraded twice in recent years, is at its best," wrote Zhou and observed that no country can achieve desired development without requisite infrastructure.

"And as I understand, infrastructure is topmost on the list of the foundations for socio-economic transformation according to Kenya Vision 2030," the envoy said.

He said that infrastructure connectivity is part of the Eight Major initiatives of the 2018 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Summit. "I am all too glad to learn that several development projects in Kenya are in partnership with China. What we have gone through together shows we are more than partners; we are comrades-in-arms," Zhou said. Xinhua

UK signs trade deal with Japan as Brexit talks heat up

By Bloomberg

THE UK signed a trade deal with Japan on Friday, its first with a major economy since Brexit, as the clock runs down on British efforts to reach an agreement with the EU by the end of the year.

In a ceremony in Tokyo, UK International Trade Secretary Liz Truss and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi put their names to the pact, which was reached in principle in September, about three months after formal negotiations began.

The deal largely preserves the terms under which the UK traded with Tokyo as part of the EU, according to Japan's Ministry of

Foreign Affairs. It's expected to boost Britain's GDP by 0.07 percent compared to 2018 levels over the next 15 years, the UK government has said.

"It used to be said that an independent UK would not be able to strike major trade deals, or they would take years to conclude," Truss told reporters after the signing. "But today, we proved the naysayers wrong with this groundbreaking, British-shaped deal that was agreed in record time."

The agreement will also help open the way for the UK to join the Comprehensive Trans-Pacific Partnership, Truss added.

Motegi reiterated that Japan will continue to support a UK



British Secretary of State for International Trade Elizabeth Truss (left) and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi exchange documents during a signing ceremony for economic partnership between Japan and Britain in Tokyo yesterday. (PHOTO / AFP)

to join the TPP, which is a trade agreement involving 11 countries across the region, including Australia, Vietnam and Canada.

Yesterday's pact improves access to the UK market for Japanese train cars and some auto parts, and adds rules on digital trade and financial services.

The UK Department for International Trade said it provides bespoke benefits that go beyond the EU deal, including in areas such as digital and data, financial services, food and drink, and creative industries.

While the economic impact is modest -- the UK is Japan's 18th-largest trade partner -- the accord with the world's third-larg-

est economy is a bright spot for Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who promised that Brexit would be an opportunity for Britain to strike better deals as an independent country.

The signing came as Johnson's government restarted negotiations with the EU Thursday, in a bid to avoid tariffs and quotas being reimposed when the UK departs from the single market and customs union on Dec 31.

Japan publicly opposed Brexit ahead of the 2016 referendum and has lobbied against anything damaging the interests of the 1,000 or so Japanese businesses in the UK, including carmakers like Nissan Motor Co. and Honda Motor Co. that rely

heavily on trade with the EU.

The UK said 99 percent of exports to Japan will be tariff-free under the deal, which will add 15.2 billion pounds (US\$20 billion) to annual trade with the Asian nation.

The Japan-UK agreement is set to be approved by Japan's parliament in a session starting next week, enabling it to come into effect Jan 1.

"This is a manifestation of the determination of Japan and the United Kingdom to carry on vigorously promoting free trade," Motegi told reporters after the signing, adding it would help ensure a "seamless transition" for Japan-U.K. trade following Brexit. Agencies



Azam FC keeper, David Kissu.

Azam FC keeper now sets clean sheet record in VPL

BY LYDIA SOSPETER (TUDARCO)

AZAM FC keeper, David Kissu, has set a record in keeping clean sheet in this season's Vodacom Premier League (VPL).

The keeper, currently the preferred first choice goal tender at the Dar es Salaam-based outfit, has spent 540 minutes between the posts without conceding a goal in the side's matches.

He has now edged Biashara United goalkeeper, Daniel Mgoro, in keeping clean sheets in the league's games.

Kissu, recruited by Azam FC during this season's main transfer window from Kenya's Gor Mahia, has managed to stay between the posts in seven matches and has conceded two goals in two of the seven matches.

He had featured for other Tanzanian clubs, Njombe Mji FC and Singida United, before jetting off to Kenya to play for the country's football powerhouse, Gor Mahia.

He let in two goals in a VPL game against Kagera Sugar, played at Azam Complex in Dar es Salaam and ended with Azam FC winning 4-2.

Biashara United's Mgoro has, in seven matches, conceded goals in two of the matches.

He was between the posts when Biashara United took on Simba SC in Dar es Salaam, the latter won 4-0.

The promising keeper also played for the Mara club in a VPL match against Tanga's Coastal Union, which had Coastal Union winning 3-0.

Mgoro has five clean sheets in the league. In the previous season, he registered 18 clean sheets and was one of the goalkeepers contesting for the season's best goalkeeper award.

Simba SC goalkeeper Aishi Manula laid his hands on the previous season's best goalkeeper award.

He had three clean sheets in five matches he played for his outfit that went on to clinch the domestic top flight top honour.

In this season's VPL matches that had Kissu keeping clean sheet, Azam FC won 1-0 against Polisi Tanzania.

Azam FC later cruised to 2-0 victory over Coastal Union and the former then posted a comprehensive 3-0 victory over Mwadui FC. The three games were played at the familiar Azam Complex.

In other league matches, which ended with Kissu boasting of clean sheet, Azam FC posted 1-0 victory over Mbeya City FC at Soikoine Stadium in Mbeya.

The Dar es Salaam outfit then cruised to a 2-0 victory over Mbeya's Ihefu FC at the latter's backyard.

Kissu moreover showcased his goalkeeping heroics when Azam FC beat Prisons 1-0 at Nelson Mandela Stadium in Rukwa.

Vivien Bahati, Azam FC's assistant coach, said Kissu's prowess is there for everyone to see, noting the goalkeeper should nevertheless not be the only performer who deserves praise.

Bahati pointed out Kissu's ability to keep clean sheet results from team work spirit shown by all players in the team, thus, everyone in the club deserves praise.

The coach said Kissu needs to perform well and defend his record.

Azam FC currently enjoys the driver's seat in the VPL after collecting 21 points from seven games.

The side boasts of having registered victory in all seven games it has participated in, amounting to 630 minutes of action.

Celebrities unite to various get-out-the-vote efforts



This combination photo shows Justin Bieber, from left, Dua Lipa and Demi Lovato who will take part in various planned events urging Americans to vote. (AP Photo)

NEW YORK

IN the final days before the U.S. election, celebrities from Kerry Washington to Billie Jean King and Danai Gurira are urging Americans to vote. Here are some of the free, nonpartisan efforts:

– Stars like Demi Lovato, Justin Bieber, Amy Schumer, Chelsea Handler, Mark Ruffalo, Dua Lipa, Vic Mensa, Uzo Aduba, Mandy Moore, Russell Westbrook, Jack Black and Common are backing a virtual rally on Saturday called "Vote With Us." The three-hour event will stream at 3 p.m. ET/Noon PT on www.votewith.us and simulcast across YouTube. "March For Our Lives" activists Emma González and David Hogg will also attend.

– The hourlong "Every Vote Counts: A Celebration of Democracy" will be hosted by Alicia Keys, America Ferrera and Kerry Washington. There will be appearances by Amy Schumer, Chris Rock, Cobie Smulders, Coldplay, Condoleezza Rice, Eva Longoria, Jennifer Lopez, John Kasich, Kelly Clarkson, Leonar-

do DiCaprio, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Natalie Portman, Shaquille O'Neal, Tan France, Wilmer Valderrama, and performances by Keys, Dan + Shay, Offset and Shawn Mendes. It's on CBS and CBS All Access on Oct. 29 at 9 p.m.-10 p.m. ET/PT.

– The theater world has its own push with "Act Out: Vote 2020," a night of music and short monologues. It's being led by playwright and "The Walking Dead" star Danai Gurira, Tony Award-winning director Stephen Daldry and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner playwright Lynn Nottage. There will be performances by Yvette Nicole Brown, Ryan J. Haddad, Brian Tyree Henry, Lloyd Knight, Sandra Oh and Ephraim Skyes. The event will be available to stream for free on Oct. 29 at 9 p.m. ET and then live on YouTube until Nov. 2.

– The NFL's voting campaign includes Seattle Seahawks head coach Pete Carroll and quarterback Russell Wilson, San Francisco 49ers tight end George Kittle and Atlanta Falcons running back Todd Gurley. There's also an "Latinos Vote" extension cam-

paign with NFL legends and celebrities encouraging the Latino community to vote that includes Victor Cruz, Roberto Garza and Wilmer Valderrama.

– Theater producer Dale Mott and composer Nolan Williams Jr. have tapped their contacts to create a rousing musical video to encourage voter participation. "I Have A Right To Vote" video features "Hamilton" original cast member Christopher Jackson, tennis great Billie Jean King, entertainer Billy Porter, chef Carla Hall and others reciting the words of voting rights icons including John Lewis, Frederick Douglass and Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

– Singer Demi Lovato, actor Halle Berry and Olympic figure skating star Adam Rippon are sending voice messages to LG-BTQ voters and allies in the battleground states of Texas, Ohio and Pennsylvania about early voting, voting deadlines and the issues at stake in this election. It's part of a push by GLAAD.

– Even Donald Duck is championing voters. The musical animated short "Everybody Gets a

Vote" debuts Oct. 25 on Disney Junior YouTube and DisneyNOW and Nov. 1 on Disney Junior. It's designed to encourage kids aged 2-7 to develop positive attitudes about themselves and as a member of a community. In the video, Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Mira, Vampirina and baby Kermit determine that a vote is the fairest way to choose a playtime game.

– Jason Alexander, Mayim Bialik, Yvette Nicole Brown, Tim Daly and other actors put on chicken costumes for a new ad urging people to vote. The public service announcement is paid for by the nonprofit entertainment advocacy group The Creative Coalition. The message: "One vote could make the difference between a chicken or a fox guarding our hen house."

– Virgin Hotels, Sir Richard Branson's lifestyle hotel brand, has launched a "Don't Sleep on Voting" campaign in partnership with The Source. The social media based campaign will roll out daily video messages on Instagram from the likes of rapper, singer and record producer Vic



Yanga forward, Yacouba Songne (3rd L), attempts to get the better of Polisi Tanzania players when the teams locked horns in a Vodacom Premier League clash, which took place in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

McLaren protecting drivers even more after COVID 'wake up call'

LISBON

McLAREN are tightening procedures against COVID-19 to protect Formula One drivers Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris after what team principal Andreas Seidl called a "wake-up call" in Germany two weeks ago.

Champions Mercedes had two positive cases of the new coronavirus at the Nuerburgring ahead of the Oct. 11 race, and had to isolate team members and fly in replacements from England.

Racing Point's Lance Stroll and his team owner father Lawrence then tested positive at home in Switzerland on the Sunday.

"What happened at the Nuerbur-

gring, that's just another wake-up call for the entire team to make sure we don't get complacent," Seidl told reporters in a video conference at the Portuguese Grand Prix.

"We did some additional measures now for here again, in terms of even separating the people even more as far as it is possible in the offices and in the garages.

"We did another step also with the drivers to separate them even more from the team during the race weekend, simply to make sure we do what is possible," added the German, whose team are fourth and in a tight battle for third.

Formula One is operating in 'bub-

bles', with teams tested every five days and kept apart in the paddock. They are also keeping replacement staff on standby.

The governing body has tightened procedures since the Nuerburgring, with nobody allowed into the paddock without having produced a negative test result on site.

Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff said at the Nuerburgring that six times champion Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas, first and second in the championship, were isolating as much as possible to prevent the virus impacting the title race.

"The drivers are the most restricted of the whole group, of the whole

team," said the Austrian.

"It's certainly not a great situation for them because you almost need to live like a hermit and that's what they are doing."

The original season start was delayed to July by the pandemic, with the Australian opener in March called off when a McLaren team member contracted the virus.

Meanwhile, in 24 years on Friday, with six-times Formula One world champion team mate Lewis Hamilton second fastest.

The Finn has made a habit of going quickest in the first session of the race weekend, doing so eight times in a row even though the only prac-

tice two weeks ago at the Nuerburgring was on the Saturday due to bad weather.

The Friday morning prowess has not translated into wins on Sunday, however, with Bottas 69 points adrift of Hamilton after 11 races.

Hamilton, who was 0.339 seconds slower than Bottas's best effort of 1:18.410 on medium tyres around the undulating Algarve International Circuit near the southern city of Portimao, has seven wins to Bottas's two.

The Briton will be chasing a record 92nd career win on Sunday, having matched Michael Schumacher's all-time milestone at the Nuerburgring on Oct. 11.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen was best of the rest on a cloudy morning, clocking a time 0.781 slower than Bottas but on hard tyres, with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc fourth as the field came to terms with a new track on the calendar.

Verstappen's Thai team mate Alexander Albon was fifth on the timesheets with McLaren's Carlos Sainz sixth.

Renault's Esteban Ocon suffered an apparent engine problem at the end of the session.

The last Portuguese Grand Prix was held at Estoril, near Lisbon, in 1996.

REUTERS



La Liga president Javier Tebas says Lionel Messi should think carefully before leaving Barcelona. (Agencies)

Wobbling Real Madrid offers Koeman chance for Clasico vindication

BARCELONA

RONALD Koeman will know Barcelona can plunge Real Madrid into crisis on Saturday but for him a first Clasico as coach is more about vindication.

Inflicting a third consecutive defeat in a week on Madrid at Camp Nou would create the sort of turbulence for their opponents that Barca have grown only too used to in recent months.

But as much as cranking up the pressure on Zinedine Zidane and gaining an early boost in La Liga's title race would be welcome, Koeman might claim the biggest rewards from a victory.

Barcelona's new coach, appointed in August, has overseen a mid-dling start to the season, with three wins, a draw and a defeat meaning the trajectory of his project is not yet clear.

Most encouraging has been Koeman's faith in youth, which has been repaid handsomely as Ansu Fati, Francisco Trincao and Pedri have all delivered more than expected in attack.

Ansu is the most established of the three, the 17-year-old who set more records by scoring again in the Champions League on Tuesday and has been arguably Barcelona's stand-out performer so far.

"We go into it with the maximum motivation possible," said Fati. "It's a Clasico, a game I have always dreamed of playing in."

So impressive has he been that it would be a surprise if Ansu was not in the starting line-up this weekend.

But Trincao and Pedri would be braver calls, especially considering those they would replace.

The most pressing issue of Koeman's tenure is currently Antoine Griezmann, who is now on his third coach at Barcelona but still yet to find anything close to top form.

- 'Means nothing' -

Griezmann's problems have not all been of his own making. He was played out of position for much of last season while his controversial arrival prompted speculation about his relationship with teammates and Lionel Messi in particular.

Juve play catch-up on AC Milan before Barca showdown

MILAN

JUVENTUS warm-up for their Champions League clash against Barcelona with a Serie A home tie against Hellas Verona on Sunday, trying to close the gap on leaders AC Milan.

Zlatan Ibrahimovic's AC Milan, who next host Roma, are flying high, the only team with maximum points after four games.

Andrea Pirlo's Juventus are coming off back-to-back league draws against promoted Crotone 1-1 last time out and 2-2 at Roma, with two red cards in as many games.

The nine-time reigning champions are fifth in the table, four points behind Stefano Pioli's Milan.

Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo remains a doubt having returned another positive test for

But it is becoming more difficult to justify the Frenchman's underwhelming performances and it was telling on Tuesday when Koeman left him on the bench for the duration of Barca's 5-1 win over Ferencvaros, that it was not clear if he was rested or dropped.

"It means nothing for the Clasico," said Koeman.

Perhaps he believes Griezmann needs some tough love, a spell out of the team to make him want to prove himself again. Perhaps the likes of Trincao are now viable alternatives for his spot.

"Antoine knows his situation. The only thing he can do is work hard to change it," Koeman said.

The merits of the decision will be defined by the result and in that regard, there will be scrutiny on Messi too, whose contribution is so often decisive.

Koeman's approach with Messi, at least in public, has so far been straightforward. He has praised the Argentinian, but as much for his dedication and workrate as his creativity.

The strategy appears to be to appreciate Messi when it is warranted but to frame his performances more in the context of the team than his genius as an individual.

"His performances can be better," said Koeman on Monday. "But seeing the player every day, he is happy, training well, focused and wants to play and be the captain of the team. In that sense I have no complaints."

There have certainly been times when Messi has looked frustrated, not least in the 1-0 loss against Getafe last weekend when Barcelona managed only two shots on target.

A long, aimless ball chipped into the box in injury-time could not have been further from the DNA Barca claim to identify with.

But ponderous possession had also become a problem long before Koeman's arrival and a more direct approach can create more space, in which the likes of Messi and Griezmann can thrive.

A positive performance against Madrid will give Barcelona momentum ahead of their trip to Juventus in the Champions League on Tuesday. And for Koeman, the benefits would last even longer.

AFP

Premier League race wide open after early-season stumbles

LONDON

FIVE games into a Premier League season full of goals and drama, each of the traditional 'big six' have dropped at least five points, and the title race is wide open.

Unbeaten Everton and Aston Villa are the surprise pace-setters and with a gruelling schedule of European games under way, the odds of a shock title winner have tumbled.

AFP Sport looks at the runners and riders.

Liverpool Three weeks ago the title looked like Liverpool's to lose after an impressive start to their title defence.

However, a 7-2 thrashing at Villa knocked the champions off course and the loss of Virgil van Dijk, likely for the rest of the season, is a devastating blow.

Liverpool, who lack options in central defence, still have the firepower to mount a title challenge but they have already dropped the same number of points as they did in their first 28 league games last season as they cruised to a first league title in 30 years.

Manchester City City and Liverpool have been dominant over the past three seasons but there are big questions over Pep Guardiola's defence despite a £100 million (\$131 million) outlay on defenders in the transfer window.

Leicester won 5-2 at the Etihad last month, while goalkeeper Ederson made a string of important saves to salvage a 1-1 draw at Leeds and ensure a 1-0 victory over Arsenal.

A short pre-season, coronavirus infections and injuries have also hampered City but they are now the bookmakers' favourites, with a deep squad and title-winning know-how.

Chelsea

The Blues' £220 million splurge in the transfer market has so far only reaped two wins from their opening five league matches.



Could the loss of Virgil van Dijk cost Liverpool the Premier League title? (Agencies)

Defensive problems remain an issue for Frank Lampard, who has seen his team throw away four points in 3-3 draws against Southampton and lowly West Brom.

But the solidity shown in a 0-0 draw against Sevilla in the Champions League in midweek showed better times could be ahead once new goalkeeper Benjamin Mendy, experienced centre-back Thiago Silva and England left-back Ben Chilwell bed in.

Lampard also has an enviable array of new attacking talent. If they click Chelsea remain title contenders despite the slow start.

Manchester United What a difference four

days may have made for United's season and the future of Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

From the despair of a 6-1 home humiliation by Tottenham, the Red Devils bounced back to win 4-1 at Newcastle and then ran out impressive 2-1 winners away to Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League.

Another famous night in Paris for Solskjaer's men showcased the talent they have when given the space for Marcus Rashford, Anthony Martial and Bruno Fernandes to counter-attack, but United desperately need to find consistency.

Tottenham At half-time of last week's

clash against West Ham, social media was abuzz with talk of Jose Mourinho's free-scoring Spurs mounting a title challenge, before their lead disappeared in a crazy finale.

However, Tottenham are just five points off the top and the form of Harry Kane and Son Heung-min, who already have 18 goals between them this season, together with the returning Gareth Bale, give Spurs fans reasons to dream.

Arsenal

The Gunners would be happy just to return to the Champions League for the first time in five seasons but they could perhaps set their sights higher, looking the most solid of the big six

under Mikel Arteta.

Despite facing Liverpool and City away in their opening five games, only Villa have conceded fewer goals.

New signing Thomas Partey will offer more of a goalscoring threat from midfield, while a soft Europa League draw should allow Arteta to prioritise the Premier League until the New Year.

Outsiders?

Can Everton maintain their impressive start to the season under Carlo Ancelotti?

With James Rodriguez pulling the strings and Dominic Calvert-Lewin banging in the goals, the Goodison Park faithful will dream of a first top-flight title since 1987.

Aston Villa, who escaped relegation on the final day of last season, have started with four straight wins while 2016 champions Leicester are also sitting pretty.

Fixtures

Today West Ham v Manchester City (1130), Fulham v Crystal Palace (1400), Manchester United v Chelsea (1630), Liverpool v Sheffield United (1900)

Tomorrow

Southampton v Everton (1400), Wolves v Newcastle (1630), Arsenal v Leicester (1915)

Monday

Brighton v West Brom (1730), Burnley v Tottenham (2000)

AFP

Clasico still the biggest game in the world, says La Liga president Tebas

MADRID

"THE Clasico is still the Clasico," says La Liga president Javier Tebas.

"For the league it's another match but for intrigue and international appeal, it's the two biggest clubs in the world going face to face. It's still the most important club game in the world."

On Saturday, Barcelona and Real Madrid go face to face in the biggest football stadium in the world too, but almost all of the 99,000 seats at Camp Nou will be empty.

In sporting terms, it would be hard to find a more dramatic event reduced so dramatically, as clear a demonstration as there could be of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

"Any football match without fans loses a fundamental part of the game," Tebas says, in an exclusive interview with AFP.

"But we've had more than 300 games played without fans and we've seen the players still provide a spectacle on the pitch. In fact the television numbers prove it. People are still watching."

La Liga usually estimates a potential Clasico audience of 650 million worldwide and predicts greater numbers this weekend, given other sports in many countries remain suspended.

"Only the 70,000 who should be in the stadium will be missing," Tebas says.

Yet it is those fans that bring emotion and meaning, with their absence perhaps felt even more keenly at a time when the allure of these teams on the pitch is not what it once was.

The decline began before the crisis but it has also been exacerbated by it.

The transfer window was an exercise in cutting costs as Madrid went without a single new signing for the first time in 40 years and although Barca bought, they were more desperate to sell, allowing Luis Suarez to join title rivals Atletico

Madrid.

"They showed good judgement," says Tebas. "With the lack of income it would be crazy if they were buying at the same level as before."

- 'Messi should think carefully' -

Lionel Messi remains the crown jewels for the Clasico and La Liga, and it was no surprise when the Spanish league sided with Barcelona in the dispute over his contract in August.

"We've been lucky to enjoy him for so many years but Messi should think very carefully about what he does next," Tebas says.

"If Messi left Barcelona, that reputation he has now and that has worked so well for him would be very damaged.

"It's true he could get a better offer financially but the reputation he has after more than 20 years, I think he has to hold onto that."

If Messi leaves next summer when his contract expires, it will most likely be to Manchester City

and the Premier League, another boost for La Liga's rival that has been seemingly immune to the pandemic.

"It wouldn't be a drama," says Tebas. "Cristiano Ronaldo left, Neymar left, Neymar went to PSG and I haven't seen the French league reaching a super level because of him."

"That's the reality. People who think the players are the ones who define a competition are wrong and I'm glad they think that way because they won't grow."

But there is concern about the might of the Premier League, whose spending reached 1.4 billion euros in the summer, dwarfing the 412 million spent by clubs in La Liga.

"I was surprised," says Tebas. "Given the current economic climate it seemed excessive."

Liverpool and Manchester United were also reported on Tuesday to be leading discussions over a new European Premier League, which would in-

volve 18 of the continent's biggest clubs playing each other.

"It's the perfect project to lose money," says Tebas. "Do you know how many people in Spain watched Dinamo Kiev against Juventus? Less than 50,000."

"More than 50,000 watch our second division games. A match between Barca and Eibar will get 1 million."

"The national feeling for football is hugely important, and what happens in that league of stars when someone is 10th or 15th? If Real Madrid are 10th, let's see then who goes to the Bernabeu."

"There are many television companies who tell me they wouldn't put one euro into that project because the audiences would drop. It's an idea for dreamers, all theories, no reality."

The more immediate challenge for Tebas is to keep La Liga float, as coronavirus infections continue to rise across Spain.

- 'Difficult to have fans' -

For the first time since March, limited numbers of Spanish fans returned last weekend to some lower division games, where protocol depends on local health authorities rather than central government.

But a return in the top two tiers is not close. "Until there is a vaccine I think it will be very difficult to have fans in stadiums," said Tebas.

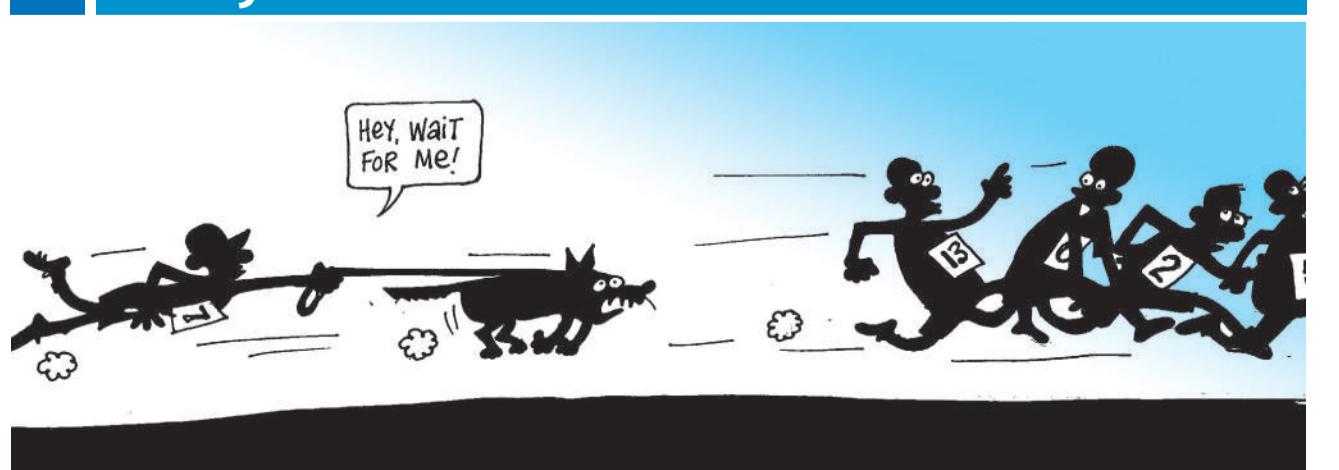
"And in the short-term it is not a priority. The priority is the competition continues. We don't think we should put too much pressure on the government."

Yet there will be pressure from La Liga clubs, who Tebas estimates lost 600 million euros last season and will lose another billion euros if this season ends without fans.

And there is no back-up plan for another suspension. "There are no spare dates," Tebas said. "We have to assume there won't be another stoppage."

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



Dar company to support Lipuli FC

SPORT

Premier League race wide open after early-season stumbles

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Tanga's Twiga Girls' all-rounder, Nasra Nasoro, put impressive performance for the team to help them post victory over Kilumeru Girls in a 2020 Women Cricket Premier League's match, which took place in Tanga recently.

Twiga Girls stretch winning run in 2020 Women Cricket Premier League

By Guardian Reporter

NASRA Nasoro and Sharifa Iddi put their batting prowess to show and steered Twiga Girls to a comprehensive 37-run victory over Kilumeru Girls in a 2020 Women Cricket Premier League's Group B duel, which took place in Tanga early this week.

Tanga-based Twiga Girls are, as a result, keeping on putting pressure on Group B leaders, Dar es Salaam's Academy Girls.

Both teams have posted six points but Academy Girls boast of a better net run rate, 1.4167.

They have won three games they have played, amassing 428 runs and leaking 343 runs, remaining as the only team that has yet to lose a match.

Twiga Girls have posted victory in three games and loss in one, recording 391 runs and conceding 376 runs to post 1.1650 in net run rate.

Twiga Girls raced to 123 runs for four wickets in 20 overs after they had won the toss and chose to bat.

Opening batters, Saumu Deo and Saumu Godfrey, managed several good knocks, seeking to see to it Twiga Girls get off to a good start.

The openers' stints though were brought to an end after seven overs, with Saumu Deo notching 11 runs, her fellow opener scored 14 runs.

Jenipher Gabriel had a frustratingly short spell at the crease, as she was sent back to the pavilion after two knocks, leaving the team with 32 runs after seven overs.

Nasra and Sharifa later held the side's innings, cracking balls all over the pitch to end with impressive double digit figures.

Nasra was the outfit's top run getter, posting unbeaten 42 runs which included five fours, Sharifa ended with 32 runs which consisted of three fours.

Kilumeru Girls' Sabrina Salimu and Aisha Mohamed took two wickets apiece, striving to see to it the squads frustrates Twiga Girls' efforts to end their innings with an imposing score.

Aisha conceded 17 runs in four overs, Sabrina conceded 30 runs in four overs.

Kilumeru Girls found the going tough in the chase, ending with 86 runs for seven wickets in 20 overs.

Kilumeru Girls had Sabrina and Aisha to thank for the team's ability to end with the score, given they were the batters with a performance worth writing home about.

They had a wobbly start to the chase, following quick dismissals of key performers, Agness Joseph and Linda Justine.

Agness was dismissed by Twiga Girls' Nasra with two runs to the former's name.

Linda could not do much either given she notched nine runs and was dismissed by Jenipher Gabriel in the following ball, leaving their squad with 22 runs after four overs.

Aisha was the top run getter in the innings as she posted 26 runs which included four fours.

Sabrina recorded 18 runs which consisted of two fours. Kilumeru Girls' efforts to chase Twiga Girls' score ended in vain, given the remaining batters failed to live up to expectations.

Marry Justine and Anna Joseph closed the innings out with three runs not out and two runs not out respectively.

Mwanini Ahmed had an impressive bowling spell given she took two wickets and leaked seven runs in four overs, helping Twiga Girls foil Kilumeru Girls' chase.

By Correspondent Friday

Simbaya, Iringa

FIRST Division League (FDL) club, Lipuli FC of Iringa, yesterday signed a one-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a Dar es Salaam-based company, VunjaBei Group Tanzania, to provide the club with various sports equipment including jerseys, socks and football boots.

The agreement was



Lipuli Football Club

signed at Lipuli FC offices, Samora Street in Iringa, by the club's Chairman Ayubu Kiwele, on behalf of the outfit, and VunjaBei Group Tanzania's Manager, Fadhil Ngajilo, who represented the firm.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by the outfit's lawyer Jackson Chaula.

VunjaBei Group Tanzania has also been tasked with selling Lipuli FC jerseys.

Speaking at a press conference held the same day, Lipuli FC boss Kiwele said that the agreement was for providing the club with jerseys and various sports equipment throughout the year. He said that the outfit, which took part in the 2019/20 Vodacom Premier League (VPL), was relegated to the FDL at the end of the season.

Lipuli FC is now playing in the FDL's Group A, seeking to gain promotion to the Vodacom Premier League.

Kiwele clarified that they had been in talks with the company for a long time and the jerseys have already been made and will be sold in all VunjaBei stores.

Regarding the benefits of the contract, the Lipuli FC boss explained to the

company that the latter will be dressing the club's players for the whole year.

The company will also be presenting other sports equipment such as socks, goalkeeper's jerseys and football boots to the club.

He added that his club hopes to launch the new jersey during the 'Lipuli Day' celebrations which are expected to take place at Samora Stadium in Iringa on October 27.

He noted that during the 'Lipuli Day' there will be a friendly match between Lipuli FC and one of domestic outfits.

Kiwele pointed out they will use the opportunity to launch Lipuli FC new jerseys, urging the region's soccer followers to attend the event in great number and support their team.

The VunjaBei Group Tanzania's Manager, Ngajilo, thanked the club for agreeing to work with them to ensure the side moves forward and returns to the VPL.

He said that the contract aims at providing

Lipuli FC with sports equipment to ensure the team climbs the ladder this year.

"Vunja Bei Group has signed an agreement to sell Lipuli FC jerseys. Each of the jerseys will be available for 20,000/-," he disclosed.

"In Iringa, the shop is located at Uhindini Street. We have sponsored the team by providing them with all equipment for the entire league season," Ngajilo stated.

Lipuli FC is currently positioned third in this season's FDL's Group A, with African Sports of Tanga occupying the top spot, followed by Mbeya Kwanza FC in the second spot.

Other outfits, which took part in the 2019/20 season's VPL and were relegated to the FDL, are Singida United, Alliance FC, Ndanda FC and Mbaao FC.

The Iringa club had enjoyed a 17-year spell in the Tanzania Premier League and had to miss out on the 2020/21 VPL season because of the relegation to the FDL.

Azam FC starlet signs for Israel club

Nassir Nchimbi, TUDARCo

TANZANIA's soccer side Azam FC's midfielder, Novatus Dismas, has been sold to Israel club Maccabi Tel Aviv after he had successfully passed his trials at the club.

The 18-year old midfielder won the Best Young Player award for the 2019/20 Vodacom Premier League, while turning out for Mara's Biashara United on loan.

His trials at Maccabi Tel Aviv, which started early this season, have turned out to be fruitful.

According to Azam FC Information Officer, Thabit Zakaria, Dismas' senior team's trials at Maccabi Tel Aviv were successful, prompting the Israel outfit's bosses to communicate with Azam FC officials and sign the Tanzanian teenager.

"He did well in the first trials for the youth team and when he got a place in the senior team, he was able to do well as well," Zakari disclosed.

"We have reached a good agreement with the club, so for now he will be Maccabi Tel Aviv's player. So the main thing is to see how he can do well," he said.

Dismas spent the 2019/20 season on loan at Biashara United, he helped the Lake Zone club avoid relegation to the First Division League (FDL).

The season saw the talented, versatile player win the Vodacom Premier League's Best Young Player.

He was one of the young-



Novatus Dismas

sters at Azam FC's junior development program alongside players including Shaban Chilunda before both were promoted to the outfit's senior team.

Dismas becomes the second player to be sold by Azam FC this season.

A few weeks ago, the outfit sold striker Chilunda to Moroccan premier league

club, Mouloudia d'Oujda.

Chilunda also had a stint in Spain, turning out for CD Tenerife which plays in the country's second tier, La Liga 2.

KMC FC eyes Yanga scalp in 2020/21 VPL

By Lydia Sospeter (TUDARCo)

DAR ES SALAAM's Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC has set up camp in Mwanza to prepare for a Vodacom Premier League (VPL)'s tie against Yanga, which will be played at CCM Kirumba Stadium tomorrow.

The KMC FC had, in their previous clash, posted 1-1 draw with Coast Region's Ruvo Shooting at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday.

It was a second consecutive draw for KMC FC given they were held to a barren draw by Coastal Union at the same venue last week.

The KMC FC meets Yanga, now under the tutelage of Burundian Cedric Kaze, who came out on top in a league clash against Polisi Tanzania, which took place at Uhuru Stadium on Thursday.

Yanga edged Polisi Tanzania 1-0, with midfielder Mukoko Tonombe scoring the goal which separated the two sides.

Christina Mwangala, KMC FC Information Officer, said that her club's preparations for the coming game well underway and they believe they will emerge victorious in what promises to be a tricky tie.

She stated: "The squad is in good shape and it is continuing with training to prepare for our match against Yanga, every player is aware of his responsibilities and the readiness is great."

"Our failure to get good results in the match against Ruvo Shooting does not mean that we have failed, we have not given up and we will continue to fight for victory in our coming matches," she said.

Yanga are placed second in the VPL table, recording victory in five outings and draw in one to collect 16 points.

The VPL table has KMC FC settling for the sixth spot, winning three matches, conceding defeat in two games and settling for draw in two outings to collect 11 points.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

