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TANZANIA

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## TRANSPORT



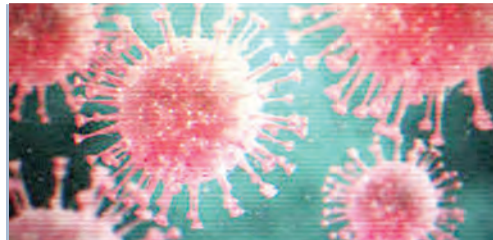
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## Experts baffled after Covid-19 expected cases dwindle sharply

JOHANNESBURG

HEALTH experts in South Africa are baffled at the unexpected sharp fall in new cases of Covid-19 at a time when the country had prepared for the worst.

It is nearly five weeks since the first confirmed Covid-19 case in South Africa, and until 28 March, the daily graph tracking the number of new infections followed a familiar, accelerating, upward curve.

But on that Saturday, the curve suddenly broke sharply - from 243 new cases in one day, to just 17. Since then, the daily average has settled at around 50 new cases.

President Cyril Ramaphosa (pictured) has now suggested that the lockdown of two lockdown is responsible. He has

“It's difficult to predict which road we're going to take - a high, middle or low [rate of infection]. We don't have widespread testing

extended the nationwide restrictions, scheduled to end in one week's time, to the end of the month.

But - as the country and the continent continue to brace for the potentially devastating impact of the pandemic - doctors are struggling to explain what's going on.

The beds are ready. Wards have been cleared. Non-emergency operations rescheduled. Ambulances kitted out. Medical teams have been rehearsing non-stop for weeks. Managers have spent long hours in online meetings drawing up, and tweaking their emergency plans.

But so far, and against most predictions, South Africa's hospitals remain quiet, the

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# Churches alter rules after corona cases, deaths rise



Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania faithful re-enact the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ during Good Friday mass at Dar es Salaam's Azania Front church yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma.

By Guardian Reporter

CHRISTIANS in the country yesterday took to Good Friday prayers with some adjustments to the way services are conducted in an effort to check the spread of the novel coronavirus.

This happened as the government confirmed seven new cases of Covid-19 and two more deaths, bringing the national tally to 32, three fatalities and five recoveries.

Social distancing took centre-stage in churches with the faithful as well as the clergy washing hands before entering the church, the traditional handshakes to wish each other well replaced with a slight bow.

Altars that are manned by a number of priests were yesterday occupied by one or two as the sitting arrangement for the faithful also adhered to one-metre guideline in most churches.

Dr Frederick Shoo, the head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) said that it had issued a directive to all its dioceses to observe safety guidelines issued by the government.

“We have decided to increase the number of services and reduce the number of faithful attending each session,” he explained.

The Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) issued a statement appealing for observance of recommended containment measures set out by the World Health Organization (WHO), the government and health experts regarding social distancing and regular hand washing.

“Apart from seeking divine intervention, we have to play our part by adhering to the guidelines for our safety,” TEC underlined, in the statement read by Bishop Antony Lagwen of Mbulu Diocese on behalf of the Catholic Church nationwide.

Rev Patrick Chalho of Kinondoni Anglican

“We have decided to increase the number of services and reduce the number of faithful attending each session

## CAG: Key public firms struggling to survive

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

NEARLY two dozen top public institutions have been making losses for years due to low performance, inadequate appraisal of projects and lack of alternative sources of revenue, the latest report by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) shows.

CAG Charles Kichere notes in the report that the audit found at least 23 public entities facing financial difficulties, highlighting that it is

“Entities that lack substantive chief executive officers have been under acting CEOs who in most cases retain such positions for long periods

unlikely they will survive without government support. Also, there is a risk that these entities might not be able to deliver on their mandates

effectively.

“I reviewed the financial stability of 140 public authorities and other bodies and noted that 23 entities were continuously making deficits. Eight entities were financed by debts and six entities had negative equity,” he said.

“For example, I noted that the National Housing Corporation (NHC) had 75 uncompleted joint venture projects. Out of these 33 were still in progress while 42

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Church said it was agreed that the sermons be shortened so that people do not spend long periods in one place.

“We have ensured that everybody who entered the church washed their hands and we had the faithful receive the Eucharistic bread in their hand then put it into their own mouth instead of the clergy,” he said.

These adjustments came as a statement released by Ummu Mwalimu, the Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender,

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## PCCB arrest saccos leaders as retired teachers lose millions

By Guardian Correspondent, Sumbawanga

ANTI-GRAFT agents in Rukwa Region are holding leaders of a savings and credit cooperative society (Saccos) operating in Sumbawanga municipality after retired teachers reported losing millions of shillings deposited with the entity.

Detectives from the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) pounced on key leaders of Ushirika wa Walimu wa Akiba na Mikopo (UWAMI) Saccos Ltd in an effort to retrieve millions of shillings deposited by members several years back.

PCCB regional bureau chief Hamza Mwenda



told this paper yesterday that the case came to

their attention after being informed that three of the retirees had since died without recovering their savings.

The graft busters are now seeking to retrieve 45.5m/- whose depositors have so far come out - money that the Saccos has been sitting on for five years.

He named the suspects - also teachers - as Marietha Haule (chairperson), Alexander Zumba, Anicet Lyela and Bernard Msika. A fifth suspect ran away after learning that colleagues were being picked up.

“We arrested and locked them up for four days and they have already released 11,541,750/- which belongs to Saccos members,” Mwenda

said. PCCB gave the leaders one month to raise and avail to the regional bureau the remainder 34m/- to complete the amount owed to 13 teachers who had so far come out and lodged formal complaints.

However, the quartet was arrested again hours after being set free for further interrogation as more complaints against them reached PCCB offices, he said.

The saccos, registered in 2004, has members from primary and secondary schools. Those who complained to the authorities said the monies

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## Churches altering rules after corona cases, deaths rise

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Elderly and Children, said five of the new cases were diagnosed in Dar es Salaam and two in Zanzibar.

The minister said on Thursday that local transmission of the disease was already in place and the country could soon plunge into a more complex community transmission stage.

Mwalimu said yesterday that the two deaths are male Tanzanians aged 51 and 57 respectively whose cases were both reported on April 8.

The five patients are four men aged 68, 57, 54, 41, and one woman aged 35, all residents of Dar es Salaam.

The number of patients now stands at 32 after the Zanzibar minister for Health earlier in the day announced two new cases on the Isles.

"Of the 32 cases recorded so far, five have healed and discharged, 24 are still receiving treatment whereas three have passed on," Mwalimu specified.

Addressing heads of religious organisations, the minister said internal transmission needs the public to avoid unnecessary gatherings or travelling, to villages or towns.

Isles Health minister Hamad Rashid Mohammed announced that cases of novel coronavirus infections reached nine in the archipelago after two more patients tested positive of Covid-19 yesterday.

The two new cases are both from Zanzibar, without a travel background.

Isles opposition leader Seif Shariff Hamad has called on the government to enforce total lockdown to stop further spread of coronavirus.

In his article in African Arguments, a pan-African ideas platform, Hamad who is a past Chief Minister and erstwhile First Vice President in a brief Isles government of national unity called upon governments to implement a universal stay at home order.

It should be accompanied by a coming together of leaders of all sectors of society to develop a plan to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of the crisis and to ensure food security of the people, he stated.

The Union and Isles authorities need to initiate extraordinary measures to mitigate the economic impacts of the global crisis, said Hamad, who was recently voted national chairman for ACT-Wazalendo.

He said the economy was facing significant stresses and strains as a result of the pandemic and there was immediate need to address this.

As of yesterday, total confirmed cases globally surpassed 1.6m with over 97,000 deaths and 366,000 recoveries. More than half of all the confirmed cases were in Europe, with Spain and Italy the worst affected. However, the United States had more than twice as many confirmed cases as any other single country, with over 468,000 cases.

Coffins were being buried in a mass grave in New York City as the death toll from the coronavirus outbreak continued to rise.

The location was Hart Island, used to bury for New Yorkers with no next of kin or who could not afford a funeral, media reports indicated.

## PCCB arrest Saccos leaders as retired teachers lose millions

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are savings that they need to recover whenever they wish to end their membership with the outfit.

However, it took years as they were being given empty promises of 'come next week, come next month' to no avail. "The 13 teachers approached us with complaints that after retiring and ceased to be members of the Saccos, its leaders have been dillydallying on giving them their deposits," the officer said.

One of the retired teachers and former member of the Saccos, Mary Chale told this paper that the leaders

lately ran out of sweet words and resorted to intimidation, telling former members to 'go anywhere you want.'

"Imagine someone sitting on your money for five years and intimidating you as you demand what belongs to you," she said.

Another retired teacher and Saccos member Edward Mwambene said three of their colleagues died of poverty-related causes as the Saccos leaders kept dillydallying on paying up.

"I cry whenever I think of my colleagues who have died before recovering their savings from this organization," he lamented.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa engaged in talks with China's Ambassador to Tanzania, Wang Ke, at Mlimwa in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: PMO

## Experts baffled as cases of Covid-19 dwindle sharply

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anticipated "tsunami" of infections that many experts here have been waiting for has yet to materialise.

"It's a bit strange. Eerie. No-one is sure what to make of it," said Dr Evan Shoul, an infectious disease specialist in the main city, Johannesburg.

"We're a bit perplexed," said Dr Tom Boyles, another

infectious disease doctor at Johannesburg's Helen Joseph Hospital, one of the biggest public hospitals in the city.

"We've been calling it the calm before the storm for about three weeks. We're getting everything set up here. And it just hasn't arrived. It's weird."

Could it be that South Africa's early, and strict lockdown, and its aggressive tracing work, are actually working? Or is this just

a small lull?

On Thursday President Ramaphosa said it was "too early to make a definite analysis," but he said that since the lockdown had been introduced the daily increase in infections had dropped from 42 per cent to "around four per cent."

"I think the more people we test, the more we'll reveal whether it's an aberration, or it's real. The numbers are not

yet there," cautioned Precious Matotso, a public health official who is monitoring South Africa's pandemic for the World Health Organization (WHO).

There is a general acknowledgement here, from the health minister to frontline hospital staff that it is dangerously early to try to reach any firm conclusions about the spread of the virus.

"It's difficult to predict which

road we're going to take - a high, middle or low [rate of infection]. We don't have widespread testing.

"There might be early signs that are positive, but my fear is that people start becoming complacent, based on limited data," said Stavros Nicolaou, a healthcare executive now coordinating elements of the private sector's response.



Muslim Council of Tanzania (Bakwata) leaders in Dodoma Urban District participate in special prayers for divine intervention with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic. The event was held at Jamhuri Secondary School in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

## CAG: Key public firms struggling to survive

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projects were stalled. The corporation is at risk of incurring losses in terms of invested money and expected return from stalled and uncompleted projects," the report elaborates.

Some public authorities operate without oversight bodies or substantive chief executive officers, he said, noting that entities that lack the oversight bodies have increased from 24 reported in 2017/18 to 39 as at 30th June, 2019.

Entities that lack substantive chief executive officers have been under acting CEOs

who in most cases retain such positions for long periods, he further noted.

At the Tanzania Trade Development Authority (Tantrade), auditors noted some anomalies including lack of crucial tools for its functioning such as an established market intelligence system, a robust established section for coordinating training activities, and documented institutional cooperation.

At the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC), auditors noted inefficiency in dealing with investors. For example, the centre does not serve investors within 14 days as provided in the Act and Strategic Plan. It takes 20 days for the centre to process work permits

while the process of fully attending to and providing feedback to an applicant of incentives like customs and excise duties to the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) through TIC takes four to twelve months, the report elaborates.

In the tourism sector, despite government efforts to promote tourism, there are still several factors that pose challenges, including the lack of diversification of tourism products, inadequate promotion and marketing and lack of specified areas for tourism investment.

"The Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) and Tanzania National Parks

(TANAPA) face challenges of controlling human populations that cause massive environmental degradation, increase in human-wild animal conflicts as well as blockage of or diminishing wildlife movement routes," he said.

"Further, I noted slow pace in controlling wide spreading of invasive alien plants at NCAA and low rate of tourists visiting western and southern parts of the country.

The CAG however said that a majority of the authorities delay in implementation of his recommendations, meaning that deficiencies identified have not been addressed and are likely to continue exposing the enti-

ties to the risks of fraud, inefficiencies and the failure to deliver on their mandates.

Water authorities have not fully addressed his recommendations to improve on non-revenue water outlets, he stated.

"For the year under review 20 of the water authorities I reviewed had high percentage of non-revenue water with the total water loss of 155.84bn/- in 2018/19. The loss of 74.14bn/- included in this amount was above the normal loss threshold. I also noted inadequate water service coverage, low water quality and unsatisfactory rate of debt recovery by water authorities, which stood at 106.31bn/- as at June 30, 2019," he added.

## Ugandan officials arrested in COVID-19 purchasing scandal

KAMPALA

FOUR top Ugandan government officials were arrested Thursday following reports they inflated Covid-19 relief food prices.

Analysts say the government's swift response shows the importance it has attached to the crisis.

The defendants worked in the office of Prime Minister Ruhakana Rugunda and ran a program to provide food relief for the most vulnerable amid the coronavirus pandemic. They were arrested for causing government losses in excess of US \$528,000.

On Thursday, the head of the anti-corruption unit in the State House, Edith Nakalema, said she received a directive from President Yoweri Museveni to investigate the way the program was being run.

"We have some clear evidence of the well-known, able and credible suppliers who offered lower prices and the accounting officers in OPM rejected. And they instead took on the higher ones. Some of the people who were given offers to supply, are even not pre-qualified and that's the president's concern," she said.

Government officials arrested include Permanent Secretary Christine Guwatudde Kintu, and Accounting Officer Joel Wanjala, assistant procurement commissioner Fred Lutimba and Martin Owor, head of COVID-19 relief management, were taken into custody.



Zanzibar Health minister Hamad Rashid Mohammed (R) updates journalists yesterday on developments relating to Covid-19 infections in the Isles. He put the total number of confirmed cases so far at nine. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

## 'Contractors and consultants claim outstanding debt exceeding 1trn/-'

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

THE Controller and Auditor General (CAG) has said contractors and consultants claim outstanding debt exceeding 1trn/- due to various services provided in several public projects in the country.

In his annual report for the year ending June 2019, which was handed over to MPs early this week, the CAG showed that arrears increased due to inclusive of penalties amounting to 224bn/- and compensation 13bn/-.

"My review of construction projects relating to roads and airports at Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) revealed significant overdue claims from contractors and consultants amounting to 1.03trn/- as of November 2019 due to late payment of Interim Payment Certificates (IPCs)," said CAG Charles Kichere.

The total outstanding claim was made of principal amount of 794.09bn/-, interest charges of 224bn/- (current year 166.93bn/- plus prior year 57bn/- and com-

pensations amounting to 13.2bn/- from project affected people.

He said that it was revealed that the outstanding claims were caused by under release of funds by the Ministry of Finance and Planning; that eventually inhibited TANROADS to pay the contractors on time and consequently resulted to slow progress of works as well as escalation of project cost due to interest charges.

"In addition, I am concerned that the untimely payment of outstanding claims of the contractors

and consultants may increase the amount of debt due to interest charges which may make the pertinent projects stall or remain uncompleted therefore, denying citizens the intended benefits of the projects," he said.

The CAG further said that his office audited 90 projects implemented in the financial year 2018/2019 which ranges from Agriculture, Education, Energy and Mining, Health, Transport, Water and Social Sector.

Kichere noted that he observed

that the government continues to focus on transforming the agriculture Sector into advanced productivity, commercialized, profitable and surplus producing in order to cater for the domestic and international market but more is still to be done to meet targets.

"During the financial year under review, I audited six projects implemented under the Agriculture Sector with 52.2bn/- being available for use 42.73bn/- was spent remaining with 9.47bn/- for implementation of the outstanding

activities."

In the education sector, auditors covered ten projects under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). During the financial year under review, 402.64bn/- was available for use of which 273.65bn/- was spent remaining with 128.99bn/- for implementing the outstanding activities.

He further said that during the year under review, I observed instances where projects Implementers had unimplemented activities at the year-end due to in-

sufficient release of funds in comparison with the approved budget.

"In order to achieve the Five Years Development Plan Phase II (FYDP II) goals, I am of the view that, government institutions (especially the ones which are implementing the development projects), need to be proactive by having in place strategies that will facilitate growth and industrialization, foster human development and social transformation; and improve the environment for enterprise development," he said.

## Tanzania provides 10bn/- for revival of Tanzania and Zambia Railway Authority

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzanian government has provided a total of 10bn/- to ensure the revival of the Tanzania and Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) and increase its business capital to achieve commercial goals.

Speaking in Mbeya region after inspecting maintenance of two engines that have been fixed with new traction motor, the Minister of Works, Transport and Communications, Eng Isack Kamwelwe said completion of the renovation would increase the freight load to the authority.

"The main purpose of the government investment into the authority is to make sure the railway operates accordingly as well as increase the number of transported cargo. We want TAZARA to continue with the previous five million tonnes freight per year", he noted.

Eng Kamwelwe explained that the provided funds had already been used to purchase forty-two new electrical generating machines that will be fixed on seven train engines.

TAZARA workshop manager in Mbeya region, Eng Ezekiel Mong'ateko said they have completed renovation of two engines and they are expecting to complete repair of another engine by end of this month. He said each of the engines has the capacity to transfer 250 thousand tonnes of cargo per year.

"Completion of these engines will increase the load we need to carry in a year as the load we are now transporting has decreased significantly and does not exceed three thousand tonnes. We are grateful to the government for supporting us financially", said Eng Mong'ateko.

Eng Mong'ateko added that in line with the maintenance of the engines in the region, the authority is continuing the renovation of passenger wagons at its garage in Dar es Salaam. He said the aim is to increase the number of passenger train routes as well as improve service provision.

He added that maintenance of the train engines would the authority have a total of 20 engines.

Tanzania disbursed the funds as per agreements reached between the two countries whereas Zambia will also provide 10bn/-. The two countries agreed to revive the railway line and capacitate it to operate without depending on government funds.

Meanwhile, TAZARA has suspended passenger and cargo transportation services for five days following destruction of infrastructures due to ongoing rains.

The rains have also caused floods at the Usangu valley in Mbarali district and damaged railway infrastructures at Chimala area—some 15 kilometers from the main station.

Minister Kamwelwe visited area insisting TAZARA engineers to speed up maintenance of the damaged infrastructures so that services resume after five days.

He said the government has embarked on improvement of railway transport at various parts across the country to reduce damage of the roads especially when used to transport heavy cargo.



Residents of Vuga ward in Lushoto District pictured yesterday building a temporary bridge in the place of the one formerly there, which has been swept away by floodwaters. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon

## Govt praises China on support to contain coronavirus pandemic

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa yesterday commended the support from Chinese government in boosting efforts to contain the coronavirus pandemic.

During his talks with Chinese ambassador to Tanzania Wang Ke in Dodoma, the Premier said: "We are grateful to the Chinese government for the support towards the fight against Covid-19 including medical supplies and drugs".

He added: "Your contribution is vital since we are now getting experience on how to control spreading of the virus".

According to Majaliwa, both Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar have confirmed cases of coronavirus because the areas are centres of business and receive a big number of visitors. He insisted that visitor's coming to Tanzania from countries that have been hit by the disease are subjected to a 14-day mandatory isolation.

He said the government appreciates the way leaders have sensitised Tanzanians to adhere to the disease preventive measures as issued by ministry of health and experts. He said preventive measures are important in curbing spreading of the pandemic.

PM commended the Chinese government for taking care of Tanzanian students currently in China insisting to receive reports on their development from Tanzania ambassador in China Mbelwa Kairuki.

"Ambassador Kairuki has been updating us frequently on the situation in China as well as the health of our 500 students. We thank you for ensuring Tanzanian students remain safe throughout the pandemic outbreak", he stated.

He said the country is now experiencing what China experienced in previous months whereas it has few patients but with a good number of people on isolation. He said the government tracks and tests all the people who came into contact with the patients every day.

He said various efforts are on-going to contain spreading of covid-19 whereas people have been urged to avoid unnecessary gatherings, wash their hand frequently with soap and running tape water or sanitisers.

"We have closed all the schools and colleges, we have also banned gatherings and sports activities", he added.

The Premier informed that Tanzania has closed its borders following similar measures in neighbouring countries. He said the move is to ensure that all those coming into the country are screened and put on isolation for 14 days.

Ambassador Wang Ke said China does not have new coronavirus cases noting the country is currently implementing measures to ensure no new cases are imported from visitors.

The ambassador said they have re-opened some of the factories following the decrease in new cases. He said the government in China had earlier declared the year 2020 to ensure end of poverty for its citizens, that's why it is struggling to bring the situation into normal and allow industrial operations.

Wang Ke said that China has selected a number of countries which they will be sharing experience on how to tackle the pandemic. She said that health experts from Africa will be sharing experience with their counterparts in China through video conferencing.

"Civil society organizations and business community in China are collecting various equipment that will be given to governments in Zanzibar and Tanzania mainland to boost efforts against Covid-19", she noted.



MV Tanga ferry with abnormally few people on board while moving across Pangani River in Tanga Region yesterday, all thanks to a decongestion strategy being implemented in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

## JNIA arrivals are accorded favourable reception - govt

By Guardian Reporter

PERMENT secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Wilbert Ibuge has said despite closure of the country's boundaries, the few coming visitors are accorded favourable reception in accordance with the laws.

He said the visitors receive treatment as per international standards while taking precaution measures against covid-19 pandemic.

PS Ibuge made the statement yesterday during his visit at the Julius Nyerere International Airport (JNIA). His tour was meant to witness the treatment that visitors arriving from different countries receive as well as the screening procedures they go through.

He said despite closure of the boundaries it was important for the government to make sure that all the visitors are subjected to screening for coronavirus and provided with guidelines on how to prevent themselves from the disease.

The permanent secretary expressed

satisfaction with the services provided to arriving visitors at the JNIA insisting the quality of services are similar to those offered in other countries worldwide. He said such treatment of arriving passengers is meant to protect the visitors as well as Tanzanians from the outbreak.

He called upon JNIA staffs to continue providing services to arriving passengers but consider taking precautions against the disease.

The PS also inspected the building at Terminal I and the Terminal III while accompanied by Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) director general, Julius Ndyamukama.



**PS Ibuge made the statement yesterday during his visit at the Julius Nyerere International Airport (JNIA)**

## Coalition secures grant to support sustainable community network

By Correspondent Gerald Kitabu

THE Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) has recently acquired a grant of 256,539 Euros (equivalent to 650m/-) from Protection Inter-

national - Kenya.

The grant is aimed at supporting THRDC's interventions towards improving constructive collaborations between civil society organizations and national authorities in Tan-

zania, to foster their respective mandates. This project will last for 12 months.

A press statement issued yesterday and signed by THRDC national Coordinator, Onemo Ole Ngurumwa said that through-

out the entirety of this project, THRDC will partner with human rights defenders (HRDs) including women and youth. THRDC will also partner with HRDs networks, networks of national human rights institutions like the

commission for human rights and good governance (CHRAGG), national authorities (policy makers, law enforcement agencies, and judiciary), CSOs, human rights defenders' families and their respective communities,

and the general public.

"It's worth noting that, THRDC has always been a strong advocate for improved relations among human rights defenders, the government and the commission for human rights and good

governance (CHRAGG) in Tanzania. We believe in improved partnerships, for improved national development and the absolute protection and promotion of human rights in Tanzania," he said.

## Coronavirus could push half a billion people into poverty, Oxfam warns

By Larry Elliott

MORE than half a billion more people could be pushed into poverty unless urgent action is taken to bail out poor countries affected by the economic fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic, Oxfam has warned.

Ahead of three key international meetings next week, the charity said the impact of shutting down economies to prevent the virus spreading risked setting back the fight against poverty by a decade globally - and by 30 years in the hardest-pressed countries of sub-Saharan Africa, north Africa and the Middle East.

An Oxfam report published before virtual meetings of finance ministers of the G20 group of leading developed and developing nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, said by the time the pandemic was over half of the world's population of 7.8 billion people could be living in poverty.

The research - conducted by King's College London and the Australian National University - said that a 20% drop in income as a result of a recession caused by Covid-19 would push an additional 548 million people below \$5.50 a day - one of the World Bank's definitions of poverty.

For poor people in poor countries who are already struggling to survive, there are almost no safety nets

The meetings of the G20, the IMF and the World Bank will discuss plans to offer debt relief to the world's poorest countries and whether to increase the funds available to the IMF through the creation of special drawing rights (SDRs), a form of international currency that can be used to help struggling countries. The UN, which says \$2.5tn is needed to support developing countries through the crisis, says nearly half of all jobs in Africa could be lost.

Oxfam called for an emergency rescue package that would enable poor countries to provide cash grants to those who have lost their income and to bail out vulnerable small businesses. The charity said the money would come from a variety of measures, including the immediate cancellation of \$1tn worth of developing country debt payments and the creation of at least \$1tn in SDRs.

A proposal to create \$500bn of SDRs is being blocked by the US on the grounds that some of the money would go to Iran. A more limited plan for debt relief, which excludes payments owed to private creditors, is up for discussion.

José María Vera, Oxfam's international interim executive director, said: "The devastating economic fallout of the pandemic is being felt across the globe. But for poor people in poor countries who are already struggling to survive, there are almost no safety nets to stop them falling into poverty."

"G20 finance ministers, the IMF and the World Bank must give developing countries an immediate cash injection to help them bail out poor and vulnerable communities."

Many wealthy nations, including the UK and the US, have introduced large-scale economic stimulus packages to support business and workers, but Oxfam said most developing nations lacked the financial firepower to follow suit.



**G20 finance ministers, the IMF and the World Bank must give developing countries an immediate cash injection to help them bail out poor and vulnerable communities**



Pearl millet farmer Cecilia Machite inspects her crop at Hombolo on the outskirts of Dodoma city yesterday. The drought-resistant crop has proved a boon to farmers in the few parts of the country where it is grown. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

## Experts study banana disease in Tanzania

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

RESEARCHERS are challenges against 'banana wilt disease' that affects the growth of banana, a major source of food and income for millions of small holder farmers.

The disease called 'fusarium wilt', a soil borne fungal is being spread by the fungus called fusarium oxysporum fsp Cubense (Foc). It enters the roots systems of banana plants and blocks the uptake of nutrients and water.

The research is conducted by researchers from the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and the CGIAR research program on roots, tubers and banana (RTB).

The disease causes yellowing of leaves, splitting of the pseudostem,

and eventual death of the banana plant.

It is difficult to control as it cannot be managed by synthetic pesticides/fungicides and therefore continues to spread easily as farmers exchange planting materials (banana suckers), water and movement of people and equipment.

A statement issued by IITA yesterday in Dar es Salaam said all traditional East Africa highland cooking bananas including Mchare in Tanzania and some desert bananas like Sukari Ndizi are susceptible to this disease.

However, it was observed that only some of the plants die after infection.

The researchers sought to understand why this is so by studying the microorganisms bacteria

and fungi, surrounding the roots as well as in the roots and soil. This is known as the soil microbiome.

Systems agronomist for IITA who led the study, Manoj Kaushal said: "This study allowed us to have a better understanding of the root microbiome in banana that can be harnessed to develop new disease management tools in Mchare based on beneficial microorganisms (endophytes and biological control agents) for smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa".

The researchers suspect that the interaction between the soil microbiome and the banana plant may provide some defense against the fungal pathogen. And if this is the case, this may pave the way for the development of

bio-control products to protect banana against the disease using soil microorganisms.

In their research, they were able to establish a link between the levels of microbiome diversity with the plants resistance to the invasion of the pathogen in the roots.

The researchers profiled the root microbiome of banana both with and without symptoms of the disease. Each sample showed substantial differences in the community composition and species abundance.

The beneficial bacteria identified in the root samples included actinomycetales which are known to produce various metabolic compounds that helps to suppress various plant and soil borne pathogens.

Others were pseudomo-

nadales, well-known to be responsible for beneficial plant-microbe interactions, and streptomycetaceae, which are known to produce antagonist compounds against various plant pathogens.

The institute said future research will be focused on the isolation, characterization, and screening of various indigenous microbial strains with the target to develop a product from the microbial strains (single or consortium) that will provide enhanced tolerance against banana Fusarium wilt disease to boost the production of banana in the region.

The IITA banana research program aims to improve soil health and increase the yields of the EAHB more sustainably.

# 'Land dispute pending before the court'

By Guardian Reporter, Mbeya

AGRICULTURE minister Josephat Hasunga has called upon TARI-Uyole and the residents to be patient as the land dispute is pending before the court and that the court has not yet made a decision, saying the government has started to take measures to resolve land dispute within the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) Uyole Centre.

The land which residents claim belong to them was being used by the research institute to conduct crop researching.

Speaking during one day official tour in Mbeya Region, the minister (pictured) urged the institute to temporarily stop conducting research activities at the area as the government works to come up with a solution. The minister was accompanied by Mbeya regional commissioner Albert Chalamila and members of the region's defence and



security committee.

He however called upon the residents to stop agricultural activities at the disputed area as they wait for the court's judgment. He also banned them from harvesting some of the crops planted on the farm.

The residents are complaining of delayed compensation since when the

government announced to take over the land. In January this year, the villagers wrote to Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture complained to have not received the monies despite the fact that TARI had already started conducting activities on the farm.

The disputed land measuring 8.52 hectares was previously used by the

villagers to cultivate food and cash crops. Some of the villagers used their farms for grazing.

Chalamila called upon the villagers to be patient and wait for the government and court's decision.

According to Chalamila the court might also rule in favour of the villagers, hence the need to be patient.

TARI was established to enhance and strengthen of agricultural research activities in Tanzania.

It is a semi-autonomous body under the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for all agricultural research activities conducted by the National Agricultural Research System (NARS).

Its goals include contributing to increased agricultural productivity through development and deployment of improved agricultural knowledge and technologies by adopting innovation systems approach.



Mkomazi National Park senior official Abel Mtui (2nd-R) briefs Same district commissioner Rosemary Senyamule (4th-R) on recent developments at the border between the Tanzanian wildlife sanctuary and Kenya's Tsavo National Park. The DC toured the area on Thursday. Photo: Godfrey Mushi

## Rukwa RC appeal for leaders to get tougher at land borders

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

RUKWA Regional Commissioner Joachim Wangabo has called upon local leaders in the region to ensure they sensitize people to be at the forefront in controlling illegal entrance of foreigners in the region.

The RC said up to now the region has quarantined 49 people whereby out of the number, only 13 people entered the country through the various ports and official borders.

Wangambo therefore called upon the leaders to sensitize people to ensure they report anyone they suspect to have entered into their areas without passing through official borders.

He claimed that some visitors from neighbouring countries have been entering the region through dump ports within Lake Tanganyika.

"You should tell them to go through the official borders so that they go through the required covid-19 screening procedures. We need to be cautious and test all the visitors since our region has a number of entries and borders various countries," he said.

The RC made the remarks when addressing the village and street leaders during a meeting aimed at sensitizing the regional residents on the steps to take as precaution

against the coronavirus.

In his remarks the regional immigration officer for Rukwa Elizeus Mushongi warned against misuse of powers by the leaders who he accused them of allowing foreigners to enter the country without following legal procedures.

"You receive various foreigners from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia, worse enough you become custodians officials, this is not proper because all the visitors should pass through legal routes and make sure they are tested for coronavirus", he said.

In her welcoming remarks, the Ward councillor (special seats) Christina Simbakavu said there are some people whose relatives reside in neighbouring DRC.

She said: "These people cross the border during night to greet their relatives in DRC, we must control the trend since it poses health risks to our people especially during this time when the country struggles to contain the pandemic outbreak".

Korongwe Ward Councillor, Venus Bamilitwaye called upon local leaders to work closely with the villagers to ensure no foreigner enters the country without relevant permits. He urged the residents to tip off authorities whenever they suspect the presence of unfamiliar faces at their specific localities.

## Ethiopia MPs approve 5-month coronavirus state of emergency

ADDIS ABABA

THE Ethiopian Parliament has approved the five-month state of emergency declared to fight coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

The Council of Ministers led by PM Abiy Ahmed on Wednesday declared the measure to control the spread of the virus and reduce its impact on the country.

Ethiopia's current tallies stand at 56 confirmed cases, out of which four have recovered and two have died. Two of the patients have been repatriated weeks back.

Abiebie Adanech, Attorney general disclosed yesterday that the Covid-19 State of Emergency (SOE) will be supervised by the Council of Ministers & Ministerial sub committees - the later to be established on an as and when basis.

Previous State of Emergencies have been overseen by Command Posts (CP), which have often been accused of gross abuse of rights including targeted arrests and use of lethal force against persons believed to flout the orders.

Meanwhile, Ethiopia's Chief Justice has disclosed that federal courts will start listening to domestic violence cases that arise from the stay at home order occasioned by a state of emergency declaration.

CJ Meaza Ashenafi disclosed through Twitter: "Considering the possibility of an increase in domestic violence during the 'Stay At Home' period, a decision is made for federal courts to entertain charges of domestic violence as an urgent type of case."

## STAR GENERAL INSURANCE TANZANIA LIMITED



### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

#### STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

NOTES	2019 Tzs 000	2018 Tzs 000
<b>EARNED PREMIUM</b>	<b>2,593,080</b>	<b>1,598,391</b>
LESS: OUTWARD REINSURANCE	(1,327,382)	(571,299)
<b>NET EARNED PREMIUM</b>	<b>1,265,698</b>	<b>1,027,092</b>
Investment income	128,939	161,849
Commission earned	416,553	172,430
Other income	16,992	4,016
Claims incurred	(121,370)	(394,987)
Operating and other expenses	(1,158,831)	(999,137)
Commission paid	(458,555)	(221,058)
Operating profit (loss)	89,426	(249,794)
Finance costs	-	(2,105)
Profit (Loss) before Tax	89,426	(251,899)
Tax	(32,589)	64,211
<b>Profit (Loss) after tax</b>	<b>56,837</b>	<b>(187,688)</b>

#### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

NOTES	2019 Tzs 000	2018 Tzs 000
<b>CAPITAL EMPLOYED</b>		
Share capital	1,333,400	1,333,400
Contingency reserves	541,734	498,648
Share premium	16,139	16,139
Accumulated profit (losses)	(126,845)	(140,596)
	<b>1,764,428</b>	<b>1,707,591</b>
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>		
<b>Assets</b>		
Equipment	23,332	8,426
Intangible Assets	169	338
Receivables arising out of reinsurance arrangement	196,668	153,820
Receivables arising out of direct insurance arrangement	31,421	348,533
Reinsurers' share of technical provision and reserves	1,283,630	967,253
Deferred acquisition costs	31,814	35,795
Other receivables	114,108	93,847
Current Income tax	-	14,311
Deferred tax	377,005	333,901
Investment	44,328	44,328
Government securities	1,054,907	804,686
Deposits with financial institutions	1,563,801	1,376,389
Cash and bank balances	83,036	50,931
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>4,804,219</b>	<b>4,232,559</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Unearned premium	1,337,153	831,518
Outstanding claims provisions	1,025,527	1,459,650
VAT	43,925	12,853
Current tax payable	39,561	-
Creditors arising out of reinsurance arrangement	508,582	145,766
Other payables	85,043	75,179
Bank overdraft	-	-
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>3,039,791</b>	<b>2,524,967</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,764,428</b>	<b>1,707,591</b>

The financial statements on pages 13 to 37 were approved for issue by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by:

*Mr. Peter M. Kapata*  
Director  
Date: 19/03/2020

*Mr. Rajesh Badiani*  
Director  
Date: 19/03/2020

#### TATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER, 2019

Year ended 31st December 2019	Share capital Tzs 000	Contingency reserve Tzs 000	Share premium Tzs 000	Retained earnings Tzs 000	Total Tzs 000
At 1st January 2018	1,333,400	470,544	16,139	75,196	1,895,279
Net profit for the period	-	-	-	(187,688)	(187,688)
Issue of shares	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to contingency reserve	-	28,104	-	(28,104)	-
<b>At 31st December 2018</b>	<b>1,333,400</b>	<b>498,648</b>	<b>16,139</b>	<b>(140,596)</b>	<b>1,707,591</b>
At 1st January 2019	1,333,400	498,648	16,139	(140,596)	1,707,591
Profit for the year	-	-	-	56,837	56,837
Transfer to contingency reserve	-	43,086	-	(43,086)	-
<b>At 31st December 2019</b>	<b>1,333,400</b>	<b>541,734</b>	<b>16,139</b>	<b>(126,845)</b>	<b>1,764,428</b>

#### CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	NOTES	2019 Tzs 000	2018 Tzs 000
<b>Operating activities</b>			
Cash generated from operations	25	386,599	(301,989)
Finance costs		-	(2,105)
Investment and other income		128,939	161,850
Tax paid		(21,821)	(13,130)
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>		<b>493,717</b>	<b>(155,374)</b>
<b>Investing activities</b>			
Purchase of equipment		(24,531)	(2,125)
Purchase of Intangible assets		-	(506)
Sale proceeds on disposal of vehicle		553	500
Increase in government securities		(250,221)	238,770
Increase in deposit with financial institutions		288,844	(478,810)
Investment in shares		-	(410)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<b>14,645</b>	<b>(242,581)</b>
<b>Increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>			
Cash and cash equivalent at 1st January		351,665	749,620
Cash and cash equivalents at 31st December	24	<b>860,027</b>	<b>351,665</b>



Water minister Prof Makame Mbarawa washes his hands as precaution against Covid-19 shortly before a meeting with Tanga Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority officials in Tanga city earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

## Covid-19: Kagera RC bans lake shore gatherings during Easter

By Guardian Correspondent, Bukoba

IN efforts to control the spread of Covid-19 infections Kagera regional commissioner Brig general Marco Gaguti has directed relevant authorities to ensure that no one should be seen on the shores of Lake Victoria during Easter holidays.

The RC issued the directives when conveying Easter greetings to citizens, the holiday that begins this Sunday, saying people should celebrate the holiday at home with their families.

"Due to the challenge we face, as the Regional Commissioner for the region order for suspension all activities involving gatherings at lake shores which have traditionally been large gatherings, especially during the night, and I ask wananchi to celebrate the holidays in other friendly areas without large gatherings," he said.

He also ordered the suspension of gatherings in entertainment halls and added that even though business activities have not been closed but huge gatherings in business areas are also not allowed.

erings in business areas are also not allowed.

In the meantime, the Kigoma Regional Commissioner Brig Gen (Rtd) Emmanuel Maganga has directed defense and security organs in the region to beef up security in areas set aside as quarantine areas following reports that some people who have been isolated in the areas were spotted looking for food in the streets.

Maganga revealed this during his visit at Kibirizi Port on Lake Tanganyika that caters for boats that carry goods to Burundi and Congo DRC.

He said sailors have to abide by quarantine procedures in the allocated areas in order to ensure their own safety and that of other people.

The RC also refused request from boat transporters to quarantine them in their own vessels.

The Kigoma Regional Medical Officer Simon Chacha said up to now the region has 61 people under quarantine including sailors of vessels that sail to neighbouring countries.

# Singida Region establishes seven quarantine centres

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

SINGIDA region has established seven quarantine centres with the capacity to accommodate 73 beds that will be used to keep people suspected of being infected with Covid-19 pandemic.

Singida regional malaria coordinator, Dr Abdallah Balla, said Singida regional has identified the isolation units with

caution since there are so far no Covid-19 patients in the region. He said the preparations will enable authority to put into mandatory isolation any suspected coronavirus patients.

According to Balla, the isolation centres include Ihanja health centre in Ikungi district which has 12 beds, Kinampanda health centre in Iramba district with 12 beds and St Gasper Itigi hospital which will have

the capacity to accommodate 11 people.

Others are Mwiboo health centre in Manyoni district, Mkalama district hospital, Singida regional hospital and Mtipa dispensary in Singida municipality.

Earlier, chairman of the ruling party's women wing in Singida region, Jenny Kessy commended the regional medical chief for providing education to women in the region on how

to protect from the spreading pandemic.

"We are grateful to the office of the regional commissioner for ensuring women are educated on the disease because they are the main service providers at family level. We will consider the Covid-19 preventive measures and adhere to guidelines provided by Health Ministry", she said.

CCM women wing chairman from Ikungi district, Aziza Ally

urged fellow women to make sure they protect their children from the disease. She insisted to parents to ensure that children remain indoors throughout the school closure period.

"It is our responsibility to protect children against the pandemic, as guardians we should guide them to be able to properly follow the preventive measures", she said.

On Thursday, Members of Parliament advised the govern-

ment to come up with a national homeschooling and distance learning strategy to enable pupils and students who are at home as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic to continue learning.

The lawmakers asserted that as the country struggles to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus with schools closed, parents are stranded with no idea of the future of their children's education.

Hawa Mchafu (Special Seats,

CCM) said that the government can arrange TV or radio programmes and use teachers to handle such distance learning for children for a few hours every day.

"The government has to take this matter seriously to support children by coming up with educational technologies to provide remote learning opportunities for primary school children and those in secondary schools as well," she said.

## African energy chamber appoints Rogo president for eastern Africa region

By Guardian Reporter

THE African Energy Chamber has appointed Eng Elizabeth Rogo, Founder and CEO of TSAVO Oilfield Services as its president for East Africa representing the chamber across the region, including Tanzania, Kenya, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi.

Elizabeth Rogo's appointment comes at a strategic time when African energy markets need leadership and unity to preserve the continuity of operations across segments of the industry as oil prices crash and economies suffer from lockdowns.

It also represents the continued growth of the African Energy Chamber across the continent, especially in a region with so much potential as East Africa.

In her role, Elizabeth Rogo will be contributing to key development priorities for the chamber, especially when it comes to developing local content and building domestic capacity, promoting women in the energy sector, supporting entrepreneurship across the region, advocating for policy reforms and ease of doing business, and promoting investments in oil & gas and key segments of the power industry such as geothermal and renewables.

NJ Ayuk, executive chairman at the African Energy Chamber said: "We could not be more delighted with this appointment.

Elizabeth Rogo is a representation of African entrepreneurship in the sector and a true expert when it comes to East Africa and local content development. She is an inspiration for many young women in our industry, and a true pan-Africanist.

She will head our activities in East Africa at a time when the region's energy industry is entering a new era of growth and diversification and we look forward to her journey with us". "It is an honour for me to be joining the African Energy Chamber and to give a stronger voice and representation to Kenya and the whole of East Africa in the global energy scene," Elizabeth Rogo said.

She added: "There is a lot to be done in our region when it comes to local content development across the value-chain and the adoption of the right policies to promote investment. I look forward to my work with the African Energy Chamber and to further contribute to the growth of our energy industry in the region".

East Africa is a very diverse energy frontier and one of the most attractive for investments worldwide. It comprises both well-established oil producers like South Sudan and upcoming ones like Kenya and Uganda.

It is also home to world-class gas discoveries in Tanzania, and a key promoter of gas-to-power projects and strategies.



**It is an honour for me to be joining the African Energy Chamber and to give a stronger voice and representation to Kenya and the whole of East Africa in the global energy scene,**



A Tanzania Rural and Urban Roads Agency technician works on a drainage system along a street in Dar es Salaam's sprawling Kariakoo market zone yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## Group supports orphans against Covid-19 pandemic

By Correspondent Michael Sikapundwa, Morogoro

TANZANIA Moja Movement, a youth group with branches across the country has donated various protective gear to support over 50 orphans against covid 19. Dar UI Muslimeen orphanage centre is located at Karume Street in Morogoro

town.

The items worth 400,000/- will be used by the children to protect themselves against coronavirus, according to the group spokesperson, Innocent Kembo.

Kembo said the monies have been contributed by group members in Morogoro region to protect themselves during the covid-19 pandemic. He said

children at the centre require support from other people to protect themselves against the disease.

"The funds will be used to purchase coronavirus protective gear such as hand washing soaps, sanitisers and buckets. We have directed that part of the money be used to procure food staffs and clothes", he noted.

One of the group members, Wambura Mirumbe said they are determined to enhance the fight against poverty through the provision of various societal groups in the region.

He said even the late father of the nation, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere emphasised on people to fight against the three enemies namely ignorance, diseases and

poverty.

"We are youth and our target is to support the majority Tanzanians especially the underprivileged and those living in difficult conditions.

We are planning to provide support to different youth groups in Mara region before end of this year", said Mirumbe.

## Air Zimbabwe ready to place some employees on leave due to virus

Godfrey Marwanyika

ZIMBABWE'S troubled national airline will place some of its employees on indefinite unpaid leave from April 23 as the coronavirus pandemic have grounded its operations.

"This decision has been made after evaluating all the available and possible options," Air Zimbabwe said in staff rationalization circular to all its employees obtained by Bloomberg and confirmed by the airline.

Air Zimbabwe has been under administration since Oct. 2018, but has so far failed to secure any potential suitors.

Health professionals in

Zimbabwe have sounded the alarm over the country's limited capacity to test people for the new coronavirus, warning that a lack of critical equipment and infrastructure shortages may result in many cases being undetected.

Zimbabwe reported its first case on March 20 and so far, it has tested only 392 people for COVID-19, the highly infectious respiratory disease caused by the new coronavirus.

The country - which has only one COVID-19 test centre, in the capital, Harare - has confirmed 11 cases, including three deaths.



This 'sandwiching' style of transport is illegal but it has become such common practice and taken such deep roots with motorbike taxis (bodaboda) in Tanzania, particularly in urban areas, that few consider it a serious problem any longer. Even worse, only the rider has a helmet on! This scene was captured at a Kinondoni section of Dar es Salaam's Kawawa Road yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## Flash floods in Sunbawanga leave hundreds homeless

By Guardian Correspondent,

Sumbawanga

MORE than 540 residents in Nkasi and Kalambo districts, Rukwa region have been forced to relocate after their homes were surrounded by water due to overflowing of Lake Tanganyika.

According to the villagers, the area experienced such floods in the past 30 years where it mostly affected residents of Kipwa and Nkasi villages.

The floodwaters from Lake Tanganyika has also affected infrastructures including a fresh fish market at Kipili village in Nkasi district.

"Businesses have also stopped at the modern fish market in Kasanga ward", said Kalambo District Commissioner, Julieth Binyura adding that residents at Kipwa village experienced floods during the El-Nino rains in 1997/1998.

She said that water at Lake Tanganyika had exceeded its

normal level resulting into floods which destroyed all 90 houses at Kipwa village. She said the only structures which had not been affected by the floods are school buildings and dispensaries.

"We do not have any recorded deaths due to the floods and we are yet to evaluate the cost of property and items destroyed,

she said noting that affected families had been provided with alternative shelters at schools.

Binyura appealed to companies, civil society organizations and individuals to provide support to the flood victims. She said the villagers' foods including livestock were swept away by floods.

John Simulanga from Kipwa village said: "We are in need of food and shelter. We also want the government to assist us with fishing gear and boats".

Some interviewed fishermen said their businesses had been largely affected, noting they had temporarily suspended fishing activities at the shore.

Kirando Ward Councilor, Kaku-li Seba told this paper that the overflowing waters from Lake Tanganyika had also reached villages located far from the water source. He said the floods had affected a fuel selling station as well as Nkondwe beach and a hotel.

## Mhenda villagers call for govt intervention over land dispute

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

VILLAGERS at Mhenda in Kilosa district, Morogoro region have called upon the government to intervene in a land dispute that has lasted for over 14 years between the villagers and owner of the 623 acres farm.

The villagers are concerned that Mhenda farm which is under the investor-Salehe Mohamed Gaidi was previously owned by the village government. They claimed to conduct agricultural activities at the farm which has now been restricted by the owner.

Speaking at a rally, the villagers said the dispute has affected most of the families because almost all the villagers depended on agricultural activities to generate incomes. The villagers claimed to have been conducting agricultural activities at the farm since 1975 but they were barred from cultivating on the land in 2006.

Salma Jumbe a resident of Mhenda village said: "I have lived at this village since 1974; I used to grow cotton on the farm. The late founder of the nation, Julius Kambarage Nyerere visited the village and allowed us to conduct agricultural activities on the farm".

A resident, Fabian Mapunda said: "We are planning to start farming on the farm even without permission from the village government. The investor has yet developed the farm; it is time we are allowed to conduct farming activities on the farm.

According to Mapunda the government should intervene the matter because the investor had failed to develop the farm for many years now.

"Nothing is going on at the farm, we want our farms back because we do not have other farms to grow food and conduct other businesses", he said.

Mhenda village chairman, Franco Stando warned the residents from taking the law into their hands and the village government is work on the matter. He urged them to be patient as they are consulting officials at the regional level.

"Let us be patient as we wait for the regional government's decision, taking laws into our hands will disrupt the whole mediation process which started some years back", said the village chairman noting in 1985, the late Nyerere allowed the villagers to conduct activities on the farm.

Mhenda Ward Councilor, Japhet Kageuka said his office received an official letter from the villagers and forwarded it to authorities at district and regional level. He said they have also formed a committee which will later this month meet with the Kilosa District Commissioner.

Reached for comments, the investor, Salehe Mohamed Gaidi claimed to legally inherited the farm from his father. He claimed to have all the land ownership documents including a title deed.

"I have a title deed which is signed by land commissioner; the High Court of Tanzania had once ruled on the dispute and declared me as legal owner of the farm. My father bought the farm in 2006", he explained.

In 2016, Morogoro opting to implement land use tenure supporting programme (LTSP) to end land disputes in different parts of the region.

The programme was established by G-8 countries to exercise transparency in land use issues to end up conflicts that have resulted into deaths, injuries and loss of properties when happened.

Having been established on the 16th February this year under the sponsorship of the United Kingdom (UK), Denmark and Sweden, the programme was firstly implemented in three districts namely-Ifakara, Ulanga and Malinyi.



Zelothe Steven, CCM's chairman in Arusha Region, takes a precaution against Covid-19 by washing his hands just before attending the burial of a member of the party at Kiutu in Arusha city on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

## Malawi announces new strict Covid-19 lockdown: Funerals to be allowed with 50 people

LILONGWE

THE Malawi's special cabinet committee on coronavirus (Covid-19) has announced strict new curbs on life to tackle the spread of the outbreak.

Announcing the measures, the committee chaired by Minister of Health Jappie Mhango said the country faced a moment of national disaster and that government is also stopping all social events, including weddings, religious gatherings and other ceremonies - but funerals will be allowed.

In his remarks, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development Ben Phiri said among others, bars and any social gathering have been banned during the virus crisis. The only services that are exempt from the lockdown suspension include, health and sanitation services, pharmaceutical and drug stores, utility services and veterinary services, grazing of cattle and operation of maize mills.

The cabinet committee said funerals will still be going ahead and shall be attended by not more than 50 people.

Among the new lockdown measures, no restaurant shall be allowed to operate except on condition that they offer services on take away basis.

All mobile markets have been suspended. These include Bembeke, Thabwa and Kampepuza. Minister Mhango said these measures are under constant review and could therefore be subject to change.

Malawi was one of the last African countries to detect cases of the virus, announcing its first three on 2 April.

The number of recorded infections has

since risen to eight, with one death.

Malawi has not registered any positive virus case in the last 24 hours, Principle Secretary for Health Dr. Dan Namarika said on Thursday.

Scientists have said each person with coronavirus infects 2.5 people and that takes about five days. This means, over a period of 30 days, more than 400 people will have been infected as a result of that one person.

If a person halves their social exposure, that first infection leads to only 15 infections after 30 days.

# The Guardian

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SATURDAY 11 APRIL 2020

Taking A New Look  
At The News  
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

## We need to get tougher at all our border points

**B**ORDERS are geographic boundaries of political entities or legal jurisdictions, such as governments, sovereign states, federated states, and other subnational entities. Borders are established through agreements between political or social entities that control those areas; the creation of these agreements is called boundary delimitation.

Some borders—such as a state's internal administrative border, or inter-state borders within the Schengen Area—are often open and completely unguarded.

The Schengen Area is an area comprising 26 European states that have officially abolished all passport and all other types of border control at their mutual borders. The area mostly functions as a single jurisdiction for international travel purposes, with a common visa policy.

Other borders are partially or fully controlled, and may be crossed legally only at designated border checkpoints and border zones may be controlled.

As COVID-19 spreads around the world, many countries are adopting different measures in order to contain the virus.

From a total lockdown to the closure of land, sea and airports and aggressive quarantine of patients across the world, countries are racing against time to contain the deadly virus.

The tough decisions taken by some countries appear to be yielding results but unfortunately many countries are also facing challenges with measures they have instituted to combat the coronavirus.

One such measure that appears to be posing serious problems is the porous land borders of African countries.

In order to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus, several regions in Tanzania have directed the closure of the regional borders.

Tanzania borders Kenya and Uganda on the north, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the

west, and Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique on the south. To the east it borders the Indian Ocean.

Unfortunately however, reports we are getting indicate that both human and vehicular movements are creating problems for security agencies manning the border posts.

Security personnel in charge of the borders are facing a herculean task in controlling bodaboda riders who use unapproved routes in the areas.

Similar reports from other parts of the country which is worrying because the activities of the bodaboda riders in the country pose a great danger to other citizens.

COVID-19 poses a particularly dire threat to all countries and if efforts being made to contain it are disregarded, then it would be difficult to win the fight against the virus.

It is important for the security agencies to mount surveillance on bodabodas and other users of unapproved routes in order to stop them from breaking the rules.

The current battle against the pandemic needs the cooperation of all citizens and anyone who is caught flouting the measures instituted to contain the virus must be punished severely.

This is because, not only are they putting their lives in danger but they risk spreading the disease and that would be disastrous for the country that is trying hard to prevent the spread of the disease.

We urge the security services particularly to draw from the significant experience of other countries in controlling their borders to prevent their citizens from flouting the measures instituted against the disease.

We also call on the government to adopt tough measures and to severely deal with members of the public who would take the law into their own hands and behave in a manner that puts the rest of the people in danger.

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## Green counter-revolution in Africa?

By Jomo Kwame Sundaram

IN 2006, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation jointly launched the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). The African Green Revolution Forum claims AGRA is the "world's most important and impactful forum for African agriculture".

The initial AGRA goals - to reduce food insecurity by half in at least 20 countries, to double the incomes of 20 million smallholder families by 2020, and to ensure at least 15 countries achieve and sustain a Green Revolution - have been revised to "increase the incomes and improve food security for 30 million farming households in 11 African countries by 2021".

In Eating Tomorrow: Agribusiness, Family Farmers and the Battle for the Future of Food, Timothy A. Wise argues that many millions of dollars spent on fertilizers and seed subsidies in Africa - and favoured by African politicians seeking rural votes - have not delivered their promised outcomes.

Without publicly available evaluations of its effectiveness by either AGRA or donors, Wise estimated cereal output rose by only 33 per cent in the 13 AGRA countries between 2006 and 2014. As land planted with cereals has increased, actual land productivity gains were more modest.

### Agrarian reform or regression

Wise shows how transnational giants gain from farm input subsidy programmes. Without the subsidies, increased output rarely generated enough additional income to justify farmer purchases and application of commercial fertilizers and other inputs.

Subsidies have induced farmers to plant AGRA promoted crops, especially maize. After structural adjustment killed research in Africa in the late 20th century, promoting maize, well researched elsewhere, was tempting, but often meant abandoning nutritious, drought-tolerant traditional crops.

But even where yields and net incomes rose, increases often diminished once soils were depleted. Julius Sigei, a newspaper agriculture editor, notes that Kenyan farmers pro-



duce only a fifth of US maize yields on comparable land and a third of Chinese levels as soils in Kenya are too poor to sustain higher yields while increased fertilizer application raises soil acidity.

Although water was crucial for the Asian green revolution and is necessary for effective fertilizer application in Africa - long subject to accelerating desertification, and increasingly to uncertain rainfall and droughts, due to global warming - AGRA efforts to improve water supplies have been modest.

Food and agriculture expert, Marnette Maetz cautions, "it is risky to use fertiliser if you don't have cash and are not sure about rain". Hence, in the African context, he favours 'associating' leguminous with other crops and developing neglected, drought-resistant, traditional food crops.

### Dubious gains

Probably inspired by the neoliberal mantra of 'vampire states' exploiting farmers, and expecting markets to work better without governments, AGRA has promoted public-private partnerships, and may even have enabled land grabbing by the private sector.

Whereas Asian governments provided a broad range of crucial infrastructure and services - such as credit and agricultural extension - with AGRA, these have been less, with transnational agribusinesses getting millions of dollars in subsidies for synthetic fertilizers and 'miracle seeds'.

Instead, Wise found that actual productivity and income gains were mainly in countries supporting technology

adoption with government-sponsored agricultural input subsidy programmes (FISPs), and not those relying on large AGRA investments alone.

Experienced Malawian agricultural analyst Mafa Chipeta observes "what little increased yield comes from subsidised inputs is often lost as predatory buyers beat down weak and balkanised farmers on produce price. Unless governments intervene to stabilise markets, the subsidy programmes will not help farmers."

### Agribusiness transnationals

In some countries, transnationals have influenced national policies and laws in their favour, e.g., by seeking to outlaw farmers exchanging and selling seeds for planting. Such seed policies leave farmers with little choice but to purchase high-cost seeds and agrochemicals every season.

Thus, agribusiness transnationals, such as Monsanto and Yara, have not only benefited from subsidies from governments, official aid and philanthropies, but also abused their monopolistic perches in developing country markets, at the expense of farmers, consumers and governments.

In this connection, Chipeta astutely observes that "subsidies seem to help more the input sellers and the produce buyers, with farmers as mere conveyors for subsidies". For Wise, the Green Revolution has become a "high-input treadmill" on which farmers and their governments are "running without getting anywhere".

Although the input sup-

port programme and Food Reserve Agency in Zambia took 98 per cent of the government budget for poverty reduction, according to Wise, "78 per cent of family farmers are ... in extreme poverty, living below \$1.25 a day". Clearly, "farmers and consumers weren't the main beneficiaries of Zambia's 'poverty reduction' programmes in agriculture".

With trade liberalization and the retreat of the state accelerated by structural adjustment, Africa was transformed from net food exporter to net food importer, becoming more food insecure. Nevertheless, African family farmers still produce four fifths of the food consumed on the continent.

Despite its much smaller population, Africa is overtaking Asia as home of the most poor people in the world. Meanwhile, AGRA's promised African green revolution has failed, while inducing subsidy dependence, and reducing crop, food and dietary diversity, but little for agricultural climate resilience.

### Food systems approach

Meanwhile, following its World Food Summits from 1996, the Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has promoted a comprehensive 'food systems' approach.

In October 2019, the UN Secretary-General announced that it would host a Food Systems Summit in late 2021 to maximize the benefits of such an approach, embed food systems transformation initiatives around the world in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and promote growth on inclusive and sustainable pathways that address climate change.

Incredibly, the principal partner appears to be the World Economic Forum, with the UN's Rome-based agencies serving as a pliant secretariat. Unlike FAO's earlier summits, which had a unifying concept of food security, and built consensus among stakeholders on food systems for nutrition, the 2021 summit seems to eschew inter-governmental collaboration.

The Secretary-General's decision to name the AGRA head as his Special Envoy for the Summit preparation process suggests an intention to make it a largely private sector-led affair. Civil society organizations working for years on these issues are understandably outraged with its likely implications.

As the ultimate owners of the United Nations, Member States may respond to such erosion of multilateralism and its remaining institutions, through various inter-governmental channels, to ensure that the Summit involves a truly inclusive and transparent process that effectively energizes initiatives to ensure food systems drive Agenda 2030.

## Human space flights mean much

**T**HE International Day of Human Space Flight is the annual celebration, held on April 12, of the anniversary of the first human space flight by Yuri Gagarin. It was proclaimed at the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly on April 7, 2011, a few days before the 50th anniversary of the flight.

Yuri Gagarin crewed the Vostok 1 space flight in 1961, making one orbit around the Earth over 108 minutes in the Vostok 3KA spacecraft launched by Vostok-K launch vehicle.

In the Soviet Union, April 12 was commemorated as Cosmonautics Day since 1963, and is still observed in Russia and some former Soviet states. Yuri's Night, also known as "World Space Party" is an international observance initiated in the United States in 2001, on the 40th anniversary of Gagarin's flight.

April 12 was also the date of the first Space Shuttle launch, STS-1 of Columbia in 1981, which is also commemorated on this date.

Human spaceflight also referred to as manned spaceflight is space travel with a crew or passengers aboard the spacecraft. Spacecraft carrying people may be operated directly, by human crew, or it may be either remotely operated from ground stations on Earth or be autonomous, able to carry out a specific mission with no human involvement.

The first human in space was Yuri Gagarin, who flew the Vostok 1 spacecraft, launched by the Soviet Union on 12 April 1961 as part of the Vostok programme.

Humans have flown to the Moon nine times from 1968 to 1972 in the United States Apollo programme, and have been continuously present in space for 19 years and 151 days on the International Space Station. All human spaceflight has so far been

human-piloted, with the first autonomous human-carrying spacecraft under design starting in 2015.

Russia and China have human spaceflight capability with the Soyuz programme and Shenzhou programme. In the United States, SpaceShipTwo reached the edge of space in 2018; this was the first crewed spaceflight from the US since the Space Shuttle retired in 2011. Currently, all expeditions to the International Space Station use Soyuz vehicles, which remain attached to the station to allow quick return if needed. The United States is developing commercial crew transportation to facilitate domestic access to ISS and low Earth orbit, as well as the Orion vehicle for beyond-low-Earth-orbit applications.

While spaceflight has typically been a government-directed activity, commercial spaceflight has gradually been taking on a greater role. The first private human spaceflight took place on 21 June 2004, when SpaceShipOne conducted a suborbital flight, and a number of non-governmental companies have been working to develop a space tourism industry.

NASA has also played a role to stimulate private spaceflight through programs such as Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) and Commercial Crew Development (CCDev).

With its 2011 budget proposals released in 2010, the Obama administration moved towards a model where commercial companies would supply NASA with transportation services of both people and cargo transport to low Earth orbit. The vehicles used for these services could then serve both NASA and potential commercial customers.

Commercial resupply of ISS began two years after the retirement of the Shuttle, and commercial crew launches could begin by 2020.



# Tanzania to boost palm oil production to reduce edible oil import dependence

By Guardian Correspondent

**T**ANZANIA Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) has established six district councils in Kigoma region to grow a total of 10.5 million tenera seeds variety on an area that covers 73,314 hectares. This is only half way of about 114,000 hectares of land in Kigoma region which is suitable for oil palm production. If the area will be utilised well, definitely the nation will be able to reduce edible oil import dependence in the country.

If the improved tenera variety seedlings which produce 5 times higher palm oil per hectare compared to locally grown dura will be well managed by the six district councils of Kigoma, adhering to good agricultural practices, they are enough to produce a total of 366,570 metric tonnes which actually surpasses the current country's 365,000 metric tons of edible oil imported from outside Tanzania, mainly Malaysia and Coast Rica.

In other words, it means that if only six district councils of Kigoma can manage well the 73,314ha of tenera variety and produce 366,570 metric tonnes, it is possible for the country to produce more than 570,000 metric tonnes of vegetable oil which actually required every year.

According to TARI's director general Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo, the country has the capacity to produce only 40 percent of 570,000 metric tonnes where as 60 per cent is actually imported from other countries.

Importation of this costs approximately T.sh 443 billion annually but basically if Tanzania can effectively and efficiently use this potential land and produce TENERA locally, we can be able to meet the requirement and

produce surplus for export.

The current situation in the six district councils in Kigoma region

In each of the six district councils in Kigoma region, TARI has supplied thousands of pre-germinated seeds. Citing an example, Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo explained that in Uvinza district council alone, TARI supplied a total of 35,000 pre-germinated seeds but amount germinated was 26,054 which is equivalent to 74.4 percent.

In Kigoma district council, TARI supplied a total of 36,000 pre-germinated seeds but the amount germinated was 22,468 which is equivalent to 62.4 percent.

In Kigoma Municipal council, TARI supplied a total of 30,000 pre-germinated seeds, but the amount germinated was 11,023 which is equivalent to 36.7 percent. Amount supplied in Kasulu town was 30,000 but amount of seeds germinated was 9,356 which is equivalent to 31.2 percent.

TARI also supplied a total of 30,000 pre-germinated seeds to Buhigwe district council but amount of seeds germinated was 9,344 which is equivalent to 31.1 percent. Kasulu district Council received a total of 30,000 seeds but the amount of seeds germinated was 8,000 equivalent to 20 percent.

Uvinza district agricultural, irrigation and cooperative officer (DAICO) Engineer Masolwa Salum said that oil palm has become one of the priority and strategic crops in the district.

"After TARI has supplied these seeds, we convened a meeting with all school head teachers, coordinators, institutions and farmer groups. They committed themselves on the number of seeds each the institution or farmer groups should take and

work on. Before they were given, they were required to bring commitment letters to ensure the seeds would be managed well and would all germinate," he said.

He said the pre-germinated seeds were all distributed to Nine Primary schools, five secondary schools and four farmer groups. Salum requested TARI to supply extra 22,000 pre-germinated seeds for the district council.

"I commend TARI Kihinga for technical backstopping. We have been working with researchers from this centre very closely that's why you can see these fruitful results," he said.

Uvinza district executive director Weja Lutobolwa Ng'ollo said that the district has done well because of high level commitment. The district has bigger agricultural land and the oil palm project is working very closely with researchers and other stakeholders.

He said so far the district has saved more than 156m/- shillings from receiving 26,054 seeds from TARI. Such money would have been used to buy the seeds from private oil palm seed companies.

Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo commended commitment and the efforts being taken by all six district councils in Kigoma and called on the authorities to increase commitment and to set aside adequate budget for dissemination and management of the Oil Palm Seedlings.

"These efforts of multiplying and disseminating the improved seeds of Oil Palm at local government authorities and to farmers in Kigoma and elsewhere is basically trying to address the issue of importation of vegetable edible oil from Malaysia and some other countries like Costa Rica, which, in recent years has cost the nation billions of shillings,"



TARI director general Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo (R) and TARI board chairman Dr. Yohana Budeba (Left in black dress) admires one of oil palm group farmers belonging to 'Nguvu Kazi Farmers' Group' at Nguruka Itebula village, Uvinza district in Kigoma region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

he said.

TARI's board chairman Dr. Yohana Budeba who also spent a week long in the field to talk to different institutions, and the farmers' groups on the achievements made and challenges they faced, lauded the institutions and all district councils for hard work and for adhering the Prime Minister's directives.

He called on the government institutions to ensure the surrounding communities are part of the beneficiaries of the improved TENERA seedlings.

"We are heeding the government di-

rectives. I have come to see for myself the progress of this oil palm project in your respective areas. You have done a very good work, and keep it up," he said.

As board chair, you have encouraged me to supervise TARI properly so that together we can register more achievements and attain the main goal of addressing the problem of importation of vegetable edible oil in the country, he added.

Tanzania Agriculture Research Institute (TARI) has put in place a new comprehensive Oil Palm Seed Road Map

(OPSRM), which, among other things, will ensure production and dissemination of a total of five million improved seeds of oil palm variety called tenera by June this year. We are also planning to produce and disseminate 20 million improved seeds in four years time.

The new OPSRM also involves further studying of the characteristics of tenera parents that is dura and pisifera to get the best tenera progenies to be used to raise the yield from 5 metric tonnes per hectare to 9 metric tonnes for our farmers, he added.

## Humanitarian spirit shall be cherished in midst of Covid-19 pandemic

By He Yin

"CHINA, which upholds the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind, would like to share its experience in disease prevention and control with other countries, launch joint research and development of medicines and vaccines, and offer as much assistance as possible to countries that are affected by the disease."

Chinese President Xi Jinping's remarks at the recent G20 Extraordinary Leaders' Summit on COVID-19 well explained to the world China's highly responsible actions. China, always actively promoting international cooperation to combat the virus and offering assistance to other countries with humanitarian spirit, is showing its caring and respect for lives.

As the novel coronavirus has taken the life of many, the world must seize every minute and do everything it could to both defeat the virus and care for the people. It is a time when humanitarian spirit is particularly needed - every life shall be taken care of; every individual shall be respected; and every patient shall be treated.

To protect people's lives and health calls for humanitarian spirit, and so does the global victory over the pandemic. "We must come to the aid of the ultra-vulnerable - millions upon millions of people who are least able to protect themselves," said United Nations (UN) Secretary General Antonio Guterres when launching a COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

The UN has allocated \$75 million for emergency response to protect the worst-affected in the pandemic and to support water supply and health services.

The world must react with solidar-

ity to cope with the pandemic. China, securing a phased success in epidemic control at home, is doing its best to offer assistance to the world with the humanitarian spirit. It has dispatched medical expert teams to Iran, Iraq, Italy, Serbia, Cambodia, Pakistan, Laos, Venezuela and the Philippines, and offered material assistance to 120 countries and four international organizations. Besides, it also shared its epidemic control experiences with over 180 countries and 10 international and regional organizations.

China's anti-virus international assistance is the most intensive and wide-ranging emergency humanitarian operation since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The country has earned wide applause from the international society.

China's timely assistance received warm response. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban received Chinese assisting expert teams and supplies at the airports. Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen livestreamed the arrival of the Chinese experts in Phnum Penh, which was watched by 600,000 people online. Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio noted that Chinese experts and the supplies they brought would save Italy.

Such appreciation fully proves that China is doing the right thing, and the humanitarian spirit of the Chinese aid is well respected.

A just cause should be pursued for common good. To offer assistance for those in need is a fine tradition of the Chinese nation.

Over the past 70 years of China's foreign aid, the country has always adhered to internationalism and humanitarian spirit and offered assistance within its capability to the



Chinese medical team members meet with Iranian medical experts in Tehran, Iran, March 7. Photo: Xinhua

countries threatened by natural disasters and major epidemics.

It has offered sincere aid in multiple deadly emergencies, such as the Indian Ocean tsunami, Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the major earthquake in Nepal.

China never sits back and watch when its friends are in trouble, or attaches any string to its foreign aid - this is what the country values.

The arrogance and prejudices of

some Westerners, as well as their narrow-minded geo-political calculations that distort China's humanitarian aid and smear the country's kind acts, are totally tarnishing the humanitarian spirit.

The world witnesses that China has gone in harm's way with bravery to protect the lives and health of the people around the world, which signals the significance of the vision of building a community with a shared

future for mankind, and marks concrete actions to build the vision.

China's practices demonstrate its love for the world, and shines with the humanitarian spirit which is also a part in the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

People and their lives are the most valuable, and this should be always remembered in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. Solidarity and

cooperation remain the most powerful weapon, and humanitarian spirit deserves particular attention.

As long as countries around the world prioritize people's lives and health, and take action to cooperate without ideological prejudices, they can build strong cohesion in enhancing international cooperation and jointly achieve the final victory over this major infectious disease.

Global Times

# China advances international cooperation through sharing of COVID-19 information

Since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19), China has timely released information, shared epidemic control experience, and advanced international exchanges and cooperation. The country's efforts in the global fight against the coronavirus has been applauded and widely recognized by the international community.

## BEIJING

CHINA on Monday released a detailed timeline of its response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), chronicling the main facts and measures it has taken in the global joint anti-virus efforts.

The document, titled "Timeline of China releasing information on COVID-19 and advancing international cooperation on epidemic response," stressed China's timeliness, openness and transparency in notifying people at home and abroad in its fight against the coronavirus.

The timeline, recording major events from late December 2019 to March 2020, offered a glimpse of how China has timely released information, shared experience, and advanced international exchanges and cooperation.

The COVID-19 epidemic, a major public health emergency, has spread the fastest, caused the most extensive infections and been the hardest to contain since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the document said.

With joint efforts of the whole nation, the positive trend in preventing and controlling the epidemic has been constantly consolidated and expanded in China, and the restoration of normal production and daily life has been quickened, according to the timeline.

The timeline noted a "formidable challenge" to global public health security as the pandemic has been spreading rapidly in the world.

According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), COVID-19 has affected more than 200 countries and regions with over 1.13 million confirmed cases by Sunday.

"Virus knows no national borders, and the epidemic distinguishes no races," the document said, adding only with solidarity and by cooperation can the international community prevail over the pandemic and safeguard the common homeland of humanity.

By upholding the vision of building a community with a shared future for humanity, China has been timely releasing information on COVID-19 since the onset of the epidemic in an open, transparent and responsible manner, unreservedly sharing with the WHO and the international community its experience in epidemic response and medical treatment, and strengthening cooperation on scientific research, said the document.

It has also provided assistance to all parties to the best of its ability, according to the document.

## INFORMING PUBLIC AT HOME

According to the timeline, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission sent out an urgent notification to medical institutions under its jurisdiction on Dec. 30, 2019, about an outbreak of pneumonia of unknown cause in the city.

Upon the report of the outbreak, the National Health Commission (NHC) dispatched a working group and an expert team to Wuhan to



guide epidemic response and conduct on-site investigations.

One day later, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission released its first briefing about the outbreak of pneumonia of unknown cause on its website, in which it confirmed 27 cases and told the public not to go to enclosed public places or gather. The public were also advised to wear face masks when going out, according to the timeline.

Starting Dec. 31, 2019, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission released briefings on the pneumonia outbreak in accordance with the law, according to the timeline.

The NHC started to update via its official website and its new media platform the epidemic information on a daily basis since Jan. 21 and had updated 71 times by March 31.

## SHARING INFORMATION GLOBALLY

Since the outbreak, the Chinese government has released information about the epidemic in a timely, open, transparent and responsible manner, actively responded to concerns of all sides, and enhanced cooperation with the international community, the timeline noted.

China's regular informing of the outbreak with the WHO, relevant countries and regions and China's Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan came on Jan. 3, 2020, according to the timeline.

Also starting Jan. 3, China began to inform the United States of the pneumonia outbreak and response measures on a regular basis.

On the same day when an expert evaluation team from the NHC initially identified a new coronavirus as the cause of the epidemic on Jan. 8, heads of China and U.S. CDCs talked over phone to discuss technological exchanges and cooperation.

Starting on Feb. 3, the English official website of the NHC started to release epidemic information simultaneously, updating the data for 58 times by March 31.

From Jan. 3 to Feb. 3, China had given the United States briefings on the epidemic information and control measures in China for 30 times, including sharing with U.S. CDC project manager in China information about China's diagnosis and treatment guidelines, prevention and control guidelines, and the linkage of the novel coronavirus database that

Lithuanian health officials and experts attend a video conference with Chinese health officials, experts and their counterparts from Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries in Vilnius, Lithuania, March 13, 2020. [Photo/Chinese Embassy in Lithuania/Xinhua]

China shares with the world in real time.

Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke over phone about the epidemic with dozens of leaders of countries and regions as well as international organizations, including U.S. President Donald Trump and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

During a phone call with U.S. President Donald Trump on Feb. 7, Xi said that with an open, transparent and responsible attitude, China has kept the WHO as well as relevant countries and regions, including the United States, posted on the epidemic, and invited WHO and other experts to conduct field visits in Wuhan.

The NHC gave briefings on China's anti-epidemic efforts and measures at the first meeting of the APEC health working group on Feb. 8, according to the timeline.

On Feb. 12, specialists from the NHC joined a China-EU teleconference on COVID-19 related technical exchanges, introducing the latest developments of the epidemic, prevention and control measures, and the situation of international cooperation.

Starting Feb. 16, the China-WHO joint expert team, which consists of 25 experts from China, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea (ROK), Nigeria, Russia, Singapore, the United States and WHO, conducted a nine-day field visit in China, inspecting cities including Beijing, Chengde, Guangzhou and Wuhan.

Under China's joint prevention and control mechanism of the State Council, a press conference has been held every day since Jan. 27, updating data on a daily basis, including new confirmed cases, severe cases, deaths and suspected cases, and giving briefings on the country's measures to fight the epidemic and minimize its impact on social and economic development.

By March 31, 65 such press conferences under the mechanism had been held, with officials of 69 departments having answered 779 questions raised by Chinese and foreign report-

ers at the conferences, according to the timeline.

The NHC shared on Feb. 25 updated technical guidelines on COVID-19 response with a number of countries and regional organizations, according to the timeline.

## RESEARCH COOPERATION

In the global fight against the coronavirus, China has attached great importance to the role of scientific research, with scientists releasing their latest research results of the new virus, according to the timeline.

China has timely shared with the world the whole gene sequence, primers and probes of the coronavirus, and shared diagnosis and treatment guidelines and other technical documents with more than 100 countries and over 10 international and regional organizations around the world, according to the timeline.

By carrying out timely technical exchanges with the international community, such as the WHO, the United States, and countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America, Chinese scientists and health experts worked with global peers to share their knowledge about the virus to help countries develop testing kits and adopt responsive measures.

After the China CDC succeeded in isolating the first novel coronavirus strain on Jan. 7, an expert team from the NHC made public of the pathogen two days later, saying a new type of coronavirus was initially identified as the cause of the viral pneumonia in Wuhan.

On Jan. 12, the China CDC, the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and the Wuhan Institute of Virology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, as designated agencies of the NHC, submitted to the WHO the genome sequence of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), which was published by the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID) and shared globally.

A number of papers on the latest research results by the

Chinese scientists and health specialists were published by the journals Nature, Science and other medical publications over the past three months, according to the timeline.

As Chinese researchers and doctors deepened their understanding of the coronavirus, the NHC updated different versions of guidelines on diagnosis and treatment of the COVID-19 and shared them globally.

## ASSISTANCE TO OTHER COUNTRIES

While 1.4 billion Chinese are pulling together to contain the COVID-19 domestically, China has also helped other countries fight the pandemic to the best of its capacity after it peaked at home, providing medical supplies or sending medical experts to other countries, according to the timeline.

China announced a donation of 20 million U.S. dollars to the WHO on March 7 to support its international cooperation in the fight against COVID-19.

A spokesperson for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs said at a press conference in Beijing on March 8 that while overcoming its own difficulties, China is willing to provide masks and other medical protection materials to relevant countries to support them in fighting the COVID-19 epidemic.

According to the timeline, the first batch of Chinese medical experts carrying China-assisted medical supplies arrived in Italy on March 12. More medical experts and supplies from China arrived in Italy later to help with its epidemic prevention and control efforts.

Medical experts and supplies from China were also sent to countries such as Iran, Iraq, Serbia, Cambodia, Pakistan, Laos and Venezuela.

By March 31, the Chinese government had provided material assistance including medical masks, N95 masks, protective suits, nucleic acid testing reagent and ventilators to 120 countries and four international organizations, according to the document.

In the meantime, local governments in China had donated

medical supplies to more than 50 countries. And Chinese enterprises donated medical supplies to more than 100 countries and international organizations.

## GLOBAL RECOGNITION

According to the timeline, the WHO released on Jan. 9 on its website a statement regarding a cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan, saying that preliminary identification of the novel coronavirus in a short period of time is a notable achievement.

On Jan. 13, the WHO issued another statement on the discovery of the novel coronavirus cases in Thailand, pointing out that China's sharing of the genome sequence enabled more countries to quickly diagnose patients.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Jan. 24 thanked on social media the Chinese government for its cooperation and transparency, saying that the Chinese government has been successful in isolating and sequencing the virus very quickly and has shared that genetic sequence with the WHO and the international community.

Apart from the WHO, a number of foreign leaders appreciated China's efforts in dealing with the COVID-19 in openness and transparency when they visited China or talked with Chinese leaders over phone.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Germany appreciates China's efforts to respond in a timely manner, stay open and transparent, and actively carry out international cooperation during a phone conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Jan. 22.

On Feb. 24, the China-WHO joint expert team held a press conference in Beijing, at which the team members said China's unprecedented public health responses to the COVID-19 outbreak have yielded notable results in slowing the spread of the epidemic and blocking human-to-human transmission of the virus, preventing or at least delaying hundreds of thousands of cases. **Xinhua**







## GENEROSITY

# Meet Luiza, a yoga teacher giving free lessons during the lockdown

## KIGALI

With the Prime Minister's order to remain indoors as part of the measures to stop the possible spread of the new coronavirus, one has to find ways to keep busy and avoid boredom, while making the most of time at home.

There are a couple of fun things one can do at home, alone or with the family that can also benefit one's health. For yoga enthusiasts, this is the time to make use of that mat, as Lori Luiza, a certified yoga teacher and birth worker, says.

Luiza says anybody can do yoga and for those who want to try it, this is the time. You don't have to be super flexible or strong. "Yoga is a spiritual and ascetic discipline which includes breath control, meditation, and adoption of different postures and is practiced for mental, emotional, and physical health. It is great for all ages, religious backgrounds and athletic ability. You don't have to be super flexible or strong to practice."

The 25-year-old is a certified

yoga teacher and birth worker. Originally from Upstate NY, USA, but now living in Rwanda, Luiza is a 200-hour certified yoga teacher who has started an online yoga class on Instagram to help people as they stay inside their homes.

"Right now people around the whole world are affected by COVID-19. Many are forced to stay inside their homes and are looking for ways to connect with others, relieve stress, anxiety and stay healthy. I was thinking of ways to provide yoga classes during this time and decided to teach my first live online yoga class on Instagram this past week. I saw that over 80 people were watching my class live from Rwanda, the U.S. and even Ireland."

"I teach vinyasa yoga as well as meditation classes. Vinyasa means 'movement on the breath'. Each movement is done on an inhale or exhale," she adds. She became certified through the Yoga Alliance in May of 2019 with Jai Yoga School in Upstate NY and has been teaching ever since.

"By teaching this live class, I realised how powerful social media can be. Social media,



The 25-year-old is a certified yoga teacher and birth worker.

like anything else, can be used to spread negativity and fear, but if you use it right, it can also be used to connect people in positive ways that we could never imagine."

"I plan to teach more online classes so I can better serve the global community as well as make yoga more accessible to everyone," Luiza says. Having

been impacted by yoga herself, she believes people's lives and health can be made so much better by making the practice a routine. She started practicing yoga to manage her anxiety.

"I was experiencing general anxiety as well as full blown panic attacks that even sent me to the hospital a few times. Once this started happening to me, I

realised I needed something to change in my life. I then began to practice yoga regularly, as I had done in the past and noticed how great it made me feel."

"Once I began this journey of yoga, I noticed my anxiety and panic attacks slowly started to fade away and today I can say that I haven't had a panic attack in almost two years," she recalls. Since then, Luiza has never looked back.

"This is why I decided to become a yoga teacher and why I dedicate myself to it regularly. Even though I had never thought I would be a yoga teacher, my passion has turned into my career," she states. She disagrees with people who think yoga is merely a sport like others, because she thinks practicing yoga is a lifestyle, not just about losing weight and gaining flexibility.

"If practiced regularly, we begin to feel more energized all of the time, we think more positively, we are calmer, more rational and our perspectives and mood change. We start seeing ourselves and the world differently in the best of ways," she adds.

"The word yoga literally

means "to yoke" or to combine. What we are combining in yoga is our mind and body. In daily life we don't take the time to focus inward because we are always focused on outward things such as going to work, running errands, being with friends and family and planning for the next day," she explains.

She says that practicing yoga allows people to bring their awareness and attention inward so that we can find a deeper connection with ourselves. Luiza usually teaches public classes weekly at Waka Kimi, Waka Town, and Heaven Fitness (The Retreat). She also does private groups and one-on-one sessions. Sometimes she teaches in Gisenyi for different business events and wellness retreats. Some of Luiza's students doing

yoga. Luiza is also a birth doula and is currently working on her childbirth educator certification. She supports pregnant women and their partners with educational, emotional and physical support during pregnancy, labour and delivery. Her plan is to start teaching prenatal and postnatal yoga very soon.

## RESTRICTIONS

## Mozambique: Masks to be mandatory in transport, crowded places

## MAPUTO

The use of masks on transport and in crowded places in Mozambique is to become mandatory, in the latest government measure aimed at preventing the spread of the new coronavirus in the country.

The measures are included in a new decree that amends some articles of a first document approved by the government on 2 April, according to Filimão Suaze, spokesman for the cabinet, which met in Maputo on Wednesday in extraordinary session.

"The big issue facing the government is the protection of human life and all these measures aim to protect people," Suaze said. "In the meantime, this combination must be made without creating situations of economic crisis."

In addition to the use of masks on public and private transport, the decree suspends the ban on taxi services by motorcycles and bicycles, after a number of protests on the part of operators, mainly in country's central and northern provinces. Under the new measures, such services may operate, but only with drivers and passengers using masks.

On the other hand, the government has suspended the article that forced van and bus operators to carry only one third of the normal capacity, so allowing them to take up to the maximum capacity of the vehicle, but again with everyone wearing masks.

The number of officially registered cases of infection by the new coronavirus in Mozambique rose to 17 from 10, but there is still no record of any death from Covid-19 in the country, the Ministry of Health announced on Wednesday. The country is in a state of emergency that is to run to the end of April, with recreational spaces closed and a ban in force on all types of public and private events and gatherings.

During the same period schools are closed and no visas will be issued for foreign nationals seeking to enter the country. The number of deaths caused by Covid-19 in Africa so far exceeds 500, with more than 10,500 cases of infection recorded in 52 countries, according to the latest pandemic data for the continent.

The new coronavirus responsible for the Covid-19 pandemic has so far infected more than 1.4 million people worldwide, of whom more than 82,000 have died. Of the cases of infection, some 260,000 are considered cured. After the outbreak broke out in China in December, it spread worldwide, leading the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare a pandemic situation.



**The big issue facing the government is the protection of human life and all these measures aim to protect people," Suaze said. "In the meantime, this combination must be made without creating situations of economic crisis**

## CONCERN

## EFF and City of Ekurhuleni respond to Ramaphosa's call for salary cuts

## CAPE TOWN

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) as well as Ekurhuleni mayor Mzwandile Masina have quickly answered the call by President Cyril Ramaphosa to take pay cuts to contribute to the Solidarity Fund - aimed at acquiring resources to help combat the scourge of the novel coronavirus.

In a statement shortly after the president announced that the lockdown would be extended for an additional two weeks, the EFF said all its public representatives - including MPs, MPLs and councillors - would contribute a third of their salaries to the fund.

"In this regard, the mandatory party levy deducted from our public representatives will not be deducted in the period where we will be contributing a third of our salaries to the Solidarity Fund. Our public representatives will continue to closely monitor all spheres of government against all forms of corruption and violation of procurement laws and regulations," the statement read.

Meanwhile Masina said he would be donating 33% of his monthly salary over the next three months. Senior Ekurhuleni officials including the city manager, chief financial officer and



SA President Cyril Ramaphosa.

members of the mayoral committee, Speaker and Chief Whip would donate between 15% and 33% of their salaries.

The mayor said discussions were underway for department heads to donate 25% and

divisional heads 12.5% over the same period. Ramaphosa announced on Thursday night during an address to the nation that he, together with his cabinet, deputy ministers and premiers, would take a

one-third cut in their salaries for the next three months, which would be donated to the Solidarity Fund.

The fund has so far raised around R2.2 billion, with half of that already allocated to buying

sterile gloves, face shields, surgical masks, test kits and ventilators, he said. "It will also allocate funds for humanitarian relief to vulnerable households, in addition to the R400m set aside by government for Social

Relief of Distress grants. We are calling on other public office bearers and executives of large companies to make a similar gesture and to further increase the reach of this national effort," he said.

Several governments have already made salary adjustments to aid their economies during the lockdown. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, African presidents including Nigeria's Muhammadu Buhari, Rwanda's Paul Kagame and Malawi's Peter Mutharika together with their Cabinets have each taken salary cuts.

While the EFF welcomed the extension of the lockdown, the party questioned if government had taken adequate measures to mitigate against the economic and subsistence consequences on ordinary people. The red berets called on government to impose an interest-free payment holiday for three months for all people who cannot afford to make the monthly payments due to the lockdown.

"The president and Covid-19 Command Council are tip-toeing around the financial services sector and are afraid to provide decisive and clear direction that will insulate our people from the economic jeopardy of further exclusion and repossession of their vehicles, businesses and houses. This points to the reality that the financial services sector, particularly banks, have disproportionate political control of the elected government," the party said.

## CHARITY

## Jumia offers 100,000 masks for health workers

## NAIROBI

E-commerce firm Jumia Kenya has donated 100,000 face masks to the Covid-19 National Response Committee, which was set up to gather resources for combating the spread and

impact of the virus. Jumia Kenya managing director Sam Chappatte said the contribution, which was received by Amref Health Africa and Red Cross, was made in recognition of the need to support community health workers at the frontline in fighting the disease,

Kenya has 179 confirmed cases, according to the health ministry announcement on Wednesday. The ministry projects that cases could hit 10,000 by the end of April, if social distancing and hygiene measures are not adhered to.

"Frontline workers across the country are protecting us and leading the fight against Covid-19. These heroes deserve our full support - and it is with this aim that we are making a small contribution to the fight," Mr Chappatte told the Business Daily on Thursday.

He added that "e-commerce platforms like Jumia, with cashless payments and contactless delivery capabilities, are uniquely positioned to be part of Kenya's response strategy to this pandemic. And stand ready to serve."

Jumia's donation adds to the re-

ceipts from development partners, local firms, individual Kenyans and multinational companies. Salary cuts for top government officials including the president and his deputy, the three arms of government and counties will also flow to the response fund.













## SPORT

A tribute to Pape Diouf, Africa's pioneer into European football

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

## International return for Kolpaks would need CSA to 'swallow their pride' - Harmer

CAPE TOWN

THE loss of the Kolpak route into English cricket could be to the benefit of South Africa, although it would require CSA to build bridges with the players who have stepped away from the international set-up. That is the view of Simon Harmer, the off-spinner who gave up on his South Africa career to join Essex in 2017 and has since flourished in county cricket, this week being named one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year for 2019.

Harmer, 31, has taken more than 200 first-class wickets in three seasons with Essex, helping them to two County Championship titles and also captaining the team to the T20 Blast trophy. And while Keshav Maharaj has performed well as South Africa's first-choice spinner, the Test team has suffered a dip in form, losing each of their last three series - most recently a 3-1 home defeat to England.

The UK's expected departure from the EU has clouded the issue of Kolpak status, however. Harmer is contracted to Essex until the end of the 2022 summer, but may have to feature as an overseas player from next year - something which would potentially allow for a South Africa comeback. Speaking to ESPNcricinfo for a forthcoming edition of the Switch Hit podcast, Harmer admitted he had not given up on the thought of playing international cricket again, but said it would require CSA to be "proactive" on the matter.

"There haven't been any proactive discussions from Cricket South Africa's side about what would happen," he said. "And obviously, I don't know how happy Essex would be if there was a three-month tour during the English summer, to just release me and be like, yep, you can go. So I think my main responsibility lies for the foreseeable future with Essex."

"I think there'd need to be a lot of discussions between Cricket South Africa and what they were willing to put on the table before I would consider that option but it's still a long way off yet and a lot can change."

Although there had been talk towards the end of last season about Harmer qualifying to play for England through residency, the complexities of the UK visa system have rendered that an unlikely outcome. Harmer's tier five visa does not allow him indefinite leave to remain, meaning he cannot buy property in the UK, while his girlfriend is only able to visit during the summer on a six-month tourist visa.

"It started in the press, with people who didn't really know how it all worked saying that I'd become England qualified in 2020, and was the plan? Or can we get him involved? So I think it's all talk. The way that the visas are structured at the moment, the power lies with the ECB. All the Kolpak players are currently on a tier five visa, which means that you would have to be in the UK for 10 years before you could apply for indefinite leave to remain. There is the possibility of moving to a tier two visa but the ECB doesn't want to explore that."

"English cricket has given me the opportunity to become a better person and a better player. So I would ultimately like to get a British passport and naturalised in the UK, especially for my future family. But there's a lot of unanswered questions and a lot of dead ends at the moment. So I think in terms of playing for England, as far as I'm aware, that's off the table for the foreseeable future."

Harmer, who was in South Africa during the southern summer playing in the Mzansi Super League, watched as CSA went through significant restructuring - including appointing Graeme Smith as director of cricket and Mark Boucher as head coach of the men's team - and suggests "they are starting to move in the right direction". Repairing relations with players who have turned Kolpak, such as himself, Kyle Abbott, Duanne Olivier and numerous others, could be the next step.

AGENCIES

## Dar soccer clubs yet to match top African outfits, says Manara



Younga midfielder, Haruna Niyonzima (L), dribbles past KMC FC forward, Hassan Kabunda, when the two teams clashed in a Vodacom Premier League duel, which took place at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

SOCCER outfits in Tanzania have no financial muscle to compete with fellow top African outfits for continental titles and honours in CAF tournaments, Simba SC information officer, Haji Manara disclosed.

In a monitored interview with Arusha-based radio station held on Thursday, Manara said local teams' investment has yet to reach the heights of many top African football giants.

He said with the current investment in domestic football it is a far fetched dream to reach the levels of such top African football giants like Egypt's Zamalek and Al Ahly, Morocco's Raja Casablanca, Democratic Republic of Congo TP Mazembe, Tunisia's Esperance, South Africa's Orlando Pirate and Kaizer

Chiefs and other giants. Young Africans SC (Younga), Azam FC and Simba SC are so far local clubs that are financially stable but Manara said the squads do not have the purchasing powers to compete with other top African sides.

"I don't want to live in 'fool's paradise' where one believes that anything can be achieved, there are some other things which cannot be achieved, the

football investment in the country is just small, we can not compete with other top African teams which make huge investment," he noted.

"The sides buy top players at more than \$500,000 while majority of the local clubs can splash USD 20,000 to buy a player and sometimes such a player is mediocre, given he has failed to play top football."

"Last week I saw a

local newspaper article linking us (Simba) with a player from Enyimba FC of Nigeria, we can not compete with Enyimba on the market, they are a big side with big investment, they are capable of buying a player of their choice," he said.

Simba SC had in the 2018/2019 season reached the last eight of the CAF Champions League which is regarded as a great indicator of success and

a measure of progress in football. Manara though described this achievement as a fluke.

"Our teams can reach any level of CAF club competitions by fluke, they can even win the events' trophies but it is through fluke, not design. After that glory the owners (top African clubs) will come and take it, that is how our football is," he said.

He, however, said there is a need for good investment for local teams to reach the levels of other top African teams. Manara issued the comments when he was commenting on the 20bn/- which Simba SC investor Mohamed Dewji invested into the club.

He could not directly say if the 20bn/- was deposited into the club accounts, but said Simba are getting the interest of more than 130,000m/- every month.

The Simba SC official also disclosed that his club annual budget is 5bn/- not 1.3bn/- as it has been reported in the media.

"One of the agreements was that the investor (Dewji) should open a fixed account and we will get the interest, whether the money was deposited or not, is not the issue," he noted.

"We are getting something like 139m/- every month from that account, that money is complementing our budget which is 5bn/- annually, we get sponsorship money from Sport Pesa, Azam Media, Mo Energy and other sources but that money is not enough, we complement it with the money from the bank interest," he said.

## Ally Choki targets solo career

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika



Ally Choki

FAMOUS dance artiste, Ally Choki, is targeting to go for a solo career after his contract with Mwanza-based band Super Kamanayola had come to an end.

Choki had been performing with the band from 2018.

The musician, who rose to fame in domestic dance music scene with African Stars Band, pointed out he does not harbour plans to sign contract with any other band, given he wants to rest and seek to make the most of his talent.

"It is too early to contemplate on my next step in music, but I have no plans to perform for a band," he noted.

He disclosed he wants to rest and he will then announce his next step.

He pointed out domestic dance music encounters plenty of challenges that include lack of considerable air time in radio stations and televisions.

Choki disclosed he has thus felt he should give himself time to think of his next move.

"What matters most is I do not want to be employed by a band because I have performed for bands for many years, I should rather go for solo career," he noted.

He pointed out he still has what it takes to perform well in the music industry and he has much potential.

He was adamant he will keep on putting his skill to show even when he is old.

"Fans that know me well hardly doubt my potential. I'm thus sure they will fully support me when I plan to get back to the industry the same way they are doing now," he stressed.

Choki has performed for various bands which include African Stars, nicknamed 'Twanga Pepeta', TOT-Plus and Extra Bongo, a band he had formed and excelled with in dance music.

There had been rumours that Choki is planning to bring Extra Bongo Band back after his contract with Super Kamanayola Band had ended.

He has nevertheless quashed the rumours, insisting he has no plan to bring Extra Bongo Band back.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

