



## PERFORMANCE



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# Focus on us, TEA appeals to education contributors

And there is an incentive for generous contributors, the DG said, especially a certificate of recognition that can be presented to the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to seek tax relief

By Aisia Rweyemamu

THE Tanzania Education Authority (TEA) has appealed to individuals and companies making various contributions aimed at improving education in the country to direct the same to it and not directly to institutions as is the case now.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday, TEA Director General Bahati Geuzye said although those who direct their contributions to

beneficiary institutions do not break any law. They are however not better placed to know where the actual need is and may end up pumping resources to less deserving schools.

"We receive requests for assistance from needy schools all over the country with details of shortcomings. So when we receive contributions, we first of all refer to the list of applications and prioritize the

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Some members of the CCM youth wing holding pictures of the late Abeid Amani Karume, President John Pombe Magufuli and Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein while marching in support of the Zanzibar Revolution ahead of its 56th anniversary at the Mapinduzi Square in Zanzibar city yesterday. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

## VP warns young politicians against the lust for power

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

VICE President Samia Suluhu Hassan has cautioned young politicians who wish to contest leadership positions to be patient and desist from the lust for power as it destabilizes political parties.

Addressing members of the CCM Youth Organisation (UVCCM) here yesterday ahead of the Zanzibar Revolution commemoration, the VP said the organisation is facing endless infightings due to members whose ambition is to get political power and nothing else.

She said despite that politicians have their eyes on political power, that expectation ought to come later after demonstrating patriotism as well



as willingness and ability to serve fellow citizens.

Suluhu said compared to her days, youth of today lack patience and need to learn from seniors, hence endless conflicts over power—something she said is not healthy not only for the young politicians but for the very political parties they claim to be building.

She acknowledged that youth wings are the furnaces that prepare future leaders but the young aspiring leaders must demonstrate discipline and perseverance to prove that they can indeed be entrusted with national leadership.

Unfortunately, for many young persons who aspire to hold political office don't want to wait for that opportunity to come some other day in the future. They want it today, she said.

"Yes, youth wing is where future leaders are baked but you are full of conflicts because of the lust for power," the VP declared.

She cautioned that the urge by some members to

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## Eating locusts lauded as swarms sweep Kenya

NAIROBI

AN AVERAGE swarm of locusts can eat the same amount of food in one day as about 10 elephants, 25 camels or 2,500 people.

And just before they do that in Wajir, Mandera, Marsabit, Isiolo and Meru, entomologists – experts in matters insects – have advised Kenyans to eat them.

They argue that desert locusts have already destroyed more than 70,000 hectares of farmland in Somalia and Ethiopia, where the invasion started, and if you don't make them a meal, they may deny you one.

But just before you take your basket and head to the fields, you need to know this:

What are desert locusts? The desert locusts are typically shy, solitary insects that become very aggressive when in crowds.

They are brown in colour when they hatch but turn yellow once they mature. Swarms of locusts can migrate more than 130 kilometers in a day.

Are they the same as grasshoppers?

While they appear almost similar, locusts are different from grasshoppers. First, locusts can move very fast and cover a longer distance than hoppers – up to 130 kilometres in 24 hours. They usually fly with the wind.

Secondly, unlike locusts, most hopper species do not eat and destroy crops.

Are locusts edible? Yes, says the Entomologists Society of Kenya.

"We encourage the eating of locusts as part of the management of the pest, as well as the adoption of termites and other insects," says Prof John Nderitu, an

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## Minister sacks NIDA heads for laxity in ID numbers delivery

By Guardian Reporter

HOME Affairs Minister Kangi Lugola has sacked the National Identification Authority (NIDA) regional officer for Ruvuma, Seif Mgonja for delay in distribution of National Identification Numbers (NIN) to residents of the region.

A statement released yesterday by the ministry said the minister released Mgonja from his duties for failing to avail to residents some 14,493 NINs that were processed by NIDA headquarters and forwarded to his office in Songea town since the 31st of December.

The minister also sent packing the NIDA district officer for Namtumbo in the region, Thobias Nangalaba for failing to attend his meeting with regional and district officials despite having been notified. The minister accused Nangalaba of laxity



**I appeal to members of the public to tip off relevant authorities about illegal immigrants so that they are apprehended as they engage in criminal activities**

in the distribution of NIN in the district.

Speaking at a public meeting at Songea municipality's main market, Lugola said the two officers had to go because they did not take seriously their duties and undermined government work.

"The two officers have been going against the government directive to urgently enable residents register their phone lines biometrically. They are not fit to be in office and should give space to others to serve," the minister intoned.

"It is not acceptable that the NIDA regional officer plays around with the people by not distributing the numbers to enable them register their phone lines while aware that the deadline is 20th of this month."

Meanwhile, the minister tasked the regional

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Deputy Minister for Land, Housing and Human Settlements Development Dr Angeline Mabula (C) inspects one of the National Housing Corporation (NHC) houses in Masasi district, Mtwara region yesterday. Left is the firm's communications manager Muungano Saguya. Photo: Correspondent Munir Shemweta

## Focus on us, TEA appeals to education contributors

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most deserving," she said.

The DG argued that TEA has the most accurate information about where support is needed to improve education than any other individual or institution, hence it is better placed to receive and disburse well-meant contributions to improve quality of learning in the country.

"The government created the education fund managed by TEA for the purpose of improving education where there are shortcomings, so we know which areas of the country and schools need that support," she said.

Geuzye said the challenges that need immediate intervention in the country in the area of education are huge but the motivation by members of the public—individuals and corporate—to contribute is low.

"I appeal to all those who have the best interest of our children's education at heart to bring their contributions, financial or materials to TEA," she said.

And there is an incentive for generous contributors, the DG said, especially a certificate of recognition that can be presented to the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to seek tax relief.

Geuzye noted that the authority in collaboration with the Ministry of Education spends funds allocated every year by the government to improve the situation but there remains a mountain of challenges facing many schools in the country.

"The situation is particularly bad in rural areas. I appeal to all those who are willing to contribute to do the same through us," she reiterated.

The DG affirmed that whenever TEA receives a request for assistance, its staff visit the applicant institution for verification before disbursement of resources.

She was speaking at a ceremony to receive 500 iron sheets worth 18m/- from the Yalin Global Group Co., a roofing firm based in Dar es Salaam.

Remmy Siyame, the company representative said that they have provided roofing aid for classroom construction to join government initiatives for improving education all over the country.

"We are looking forward to give more support to the sector, as we expect to provide roofing materials aid in the future," the representative added.



**I appeal to all those who have the best interest of our children's education at heart to bring their contributions, financial or materials to TEA**

## Minister sacks NIDA heads for laxity in ID numbers delivery

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Immigration Office to work day and night in collaboration with the police to nab illegal immigrants living in towns near the border with Mozambique.

"I appeal to members of the public to tip off relevant authorities about illegal immigrants so that they are apprehended as they engage in criminal activities," he said.

He said the police force had succeeded in thwarting serious crimes in the country, as only pockets of petty crimes remain that will also be

eradicated.

"There are no more serious crimes; armed robberies have gone silent so we are now dealing with only small issues," he declared.

Last month, President John Magufuli announced an extension of the deadline for biometric registration of simcards by 20 days, pushing back the

December 31st deadline.

The president had just registered his simcard at his home place in Chato, Geita region, where he said he had granted more days to facilitate registration where circumstances had proved difficult.

He cautioned that after January 20 there will be no further extension,

with the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA) going ahead to switch off simcards not registered biometrically.

It wasn't clear how many of the more than 20m simcards not yet registered by December 15th had been registered subsequently or after the latest extension.

## VP warns young politicians against the lust for power

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get power no matter what has led to the use of dirty tricks and backstabbing, destabilizing factors within the youth movement as a whole.

Suluhu counseled members of the wing to be united and protect the revolution with all they have.

On his part, UVCCM national chairman Kheri James said yesterday

the procession from Unguja South region to Urban West region was part of youth commitment to defending the revolution.

The Zanzibar Revolution Day is a public holiday in Tanzania observed on January 12th, to mark the 1964 revolution that overthrew the Sultan following contested independence from Britain.

## Eating locusts lauded as swarms sweep Kenya

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integrated pest management specialist at the University of Nairobi.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) says locusts are usually stir-fried, roasted or boiled and eaten immediately or dried and eaten later.

Have Kenyans eaten them before?

Again, yes, on the basis of affirmations by Prof Nderitu and other experts.

"The locusts have always been eaten in western Kenya as a delicacy. Half a kilo of termites in Kakamega is more expensive than half a kilo of meat," says the researcher.

"I ate grasshoppers in the early 1960s when I was young. We just placed them in hot ash for five minutes, removed the head and ate them."

According to an elder, Jacob Mate Shiamwama from Ilesi in Kakamega East Sub-County, locusts are considered a delicacy in many communities in the region.

"When locusts were sighted, there would be excitement in the villages," he says.

"People would wait until nightfall, when they had descended and settled on trees and vegetation. They would then collect the locusts and put them in baskets and containers for roasting in pots."

Dr Esther Kioko, a member of ESK, says the insects were turned into food by residents of Machakos County during a locust invasion in the 1940s.

"During the locust invasion of the 1940s, the insects invaded and ate every green plant. My grandmother and other residents

caught and ate the insects. Using the new-found source of food, they survived and were exempted from relief assistance by the colonial government," she says.

The FAO also backs insect eating as part of many of the world's cultures.

"It is estimated that insect-eating is practised regularly by at least two billion people worldwide," the UN body said in a report.

What is their nutritional value?

According to various nutritional researches, a serving of 100 grammes of desert locust provides 11.5 grammes of fat and 286 milligrammes of cholesterol.

The insect also contains varying amounts of potassium, sodium, phosphorus, calcium, magnesium, iron and zinc.

How, then, do you prepare and serve them?

During the invasion in western Kenya, according to elder Shiamwama, locusts were either roasted in the fire or steamed in pots and a little salt added.

The insects can also be fried in oil for a few minutes until they turn brown and crunchy. Onions, salt and tomatoes can be added according to taste.

Moshe Basson, a chef and founder and owner of the Eucalyptus restaurant in the Israeli capital of Jerusalem, says the insects can be added to boiling broth or a tasty soup made of water in which bones, meat or vegetables have been simmered.

"Drop the locusts into a boiling broth, clean them off, and roll in a mixture of flour, coriander seeds, garlic and chili powder.

Then deep-fry them," he told the BBC during an interview on eating locusts after a 2013 locust invasion in Israel.



Dar es Salaam City Mayor Isaya Mwita leaves Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court yesterday. The court dismissed the Mayor's petition. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Uganda at risk as locusts now eat crops in Kenya

KAMPALA

Officials at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have warned that desert locusts could attack parts of Uganda.

"There is a risk that some swarms could appear in northeast Uganda, southeast South Sudan," the January 6th report from Experts at Locust Watch department at Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

According to FAO, this is the worst invasion in 70 years. "Over 175,000 acres of farmland in Somalia and Ethiopia have been destroyed by the locust invasion," the earlier report released in December 2019 from FAO said.

Large swarms of immature locusts moved south in the arid region of Ethiopia and adjacent areas of central Somalia before a major attack in southern Somalia and south east Ethiopia, the report said.

In an earlier statement by the government of Kenya on Jan 4, in Nairobi, swarms of desert locusts started penetrating the country around December 28, last year, majorly affecting northeast counties of Wajir, Marsabit and Mandera.

According to Rtd Col. Cyrus Oguna, the government spokesman, the country has deployed special teams to start aerial spraying in the affected counties.

Vincent Bamulangaki Sempijja, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), in press brief in Kampala on Thursday said that Uganda is still free from massive locusts invasion.

Citing additional support from Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DL-COEA) where Uganda is a member, the minister said the Crop Protection Department at MAAIF is on alert.

He, however, advised farmers to follow the appropriate pest management measures provided through extension workers.

Locusts are a great threat to agriculture and food security. According to information from FAO, a typical desert locust swarm has close to 150 million locusts. The insects migrate with wind and can cover 100 to 150 kilometres in a day.

An average swarm can destroy as much food in a day as is sufficient to feed 2,500 people.

AGENCIES



Minister for Home Affairs Kangi Lugola (L) shakes hands with Ruvuma Regional Commissioner Christina Mndeme at her office in Songea yesterday moments after the minister arrived in the region for one day official visit. Photo: Ministry of Home Affairs

## Majaliwa appeals to illegible Tanzanians to list in permanent voter's register

By Guardian Reporter

Mjini Magharibi.

DAR ES SALAAM and Coast region residents are set to participate in the voters' registration exercise scheduled for February 10 to 16, this year, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) has said.

This follows completion of the improvement exercise of the permanent voters' register in 25 regions in the country ahead of the forthcoming General Elections later this year.

In a statement availed to the media yesterday, the electoral commission stated that it is now finalizing preparations to commence registration exercise in the regions of Lindi and Mtwara before coming to Dar es Salaam.

It further said that on January 23 to February 9 the registration exercise will be conducted in the regions of Morogoro and Tanga.

"In the Ifakara Town Council and Malinyi District Council, the exercise will be held from January 23 to 29 and in the Gairo, Kilombero, Kilosa, Morogoro and Mvomero districts the exercise will be conducted from February 3 to 9, this year," read part of the statement.

The statement noted; "The commission has already accomplished the task in Kilimanjaro, Arusha, Manyara, Simiyu, Mara, Mwanza, Kigoma, Tabora, Songwe, Kagera, Geita, Shinyanga, Katavi, Rukwa, Singida Dodoma, Mbeya, Iringa, Njombe and Ruvuma regions," it said.

In the Isles all regions have been covered including the Kaskazini Pemba, Kusini Pemba, Kaskazini Unguja and

It further said the government will ensure all eligible voters are registered. Eligible voters are those who have attained 18 years or would attain that age before the General Election in October.

The exercise also involves registering all eligible voters who have migrated from their former settlements and those who have lost their voting cards.

"The commission will also come back for verification exercise to give an opportunity for the voters to verify their information," read part of the statement.

Speaking during the launch of the first phase of updating of the voters register, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa appealed to Tanzanians to turn out in large numbers to update their information in the permanent voter register.

The PM insisted that no one would be left behind in the exercise, adding that priority would be given to Tanzanians with special needs.

The PM issued stern warning against individuals planning to register more than once, saying they would be dealt with accordingly by law enforcers.

He commended NEC for adding new polling registration centres, a move he said would reduce congestion during the electoral process, which would be conducted in the whole country.

The National Elections Act requires NEC to update the voter registration two times before new general elections.

In the last general election in 2015, about 23.7 million voters were registered, according to NEC.

## Govt orders use of electronic payment gateway platform

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE government has directed all its agencies, parastatals and institutions to use the introduced Electronic Payment Gateway (GePG) platform to boost revenue collections.

Permanent Secretary in the Finance and Planning Ministry, Dotto James gave the order yesterday in Dodoma when addressing delegates at meeting which brought

together officials from state-owned institutions, agencies and ministry. Participating institutions included those operating in central zone regions and connected to GePG.

The PS was concerned that despite government efforts in improving collection of revenues there are still some public institutions which have not improved their payment systems. He urged institutions to ensure proper preparation of invoices.

James noted that it is important that all the government institutions, parastatals and agencies abide by the laws by ensuring electronic preparation of bills as well as adaptation of the electronic payment gateway.

"With the GePG the government will collect more revenues and be able to offer better social services. To ensure proper functioning of the electronic system, institutions are required to

consult the financial information systems management at the ministry of Finance and Planning," he said.

The GePG was introduced to facilitate all government entities (Central, Local and Agencies) to use single payment platform. The GePG was adopted in 2016 as part of government's efforts to improve revenue collections.

The electronic system is said to plug revenue leakages that caused massive loss of government's revenues.

## Land officers in Lindi region urged to increase the pace of surveying

By Guardian Correspondent Lindi

DEPUTY Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development Angelina Mabula has directed land officers in Mtama District Council, Lindi region to increase the pace of surveying and formalising plots to enable more people to own land and improve their incomes.

According to her, for the past 40 years, the district council had only managed to survey 105 plots thus denying the government a lot of revenues.

She was also saddened to see that only two land title deeds had been prepared for the last year something which shows laxity of the department in Mtama.

Speaking when she visited the office here, Mabula warned of recklessness the land officers in performing their responsibilities.

"Apart from denying the government to get revenues, the challenge also goes further to affect people's economic development by lacking access to loans and engaging in other income generating activities...So we can see how having our land surveyed pays," she said.

Mabula directed the district's executive director to investigate the matter and identify key challenges that thwart land surveying exercise.

The deputy minister further said; "We will not tolerate officials who are not serious in their duties; we want everyone to work hard and fulfill his or her responsibilities on time for the country's development... So the ministry will at any time not hesitate to take disciplinary measures against officials failing to deliver."

Earlier, the Mtama District Council chairman Methew Makwinya and the Mchinga Member of Parliament (MP) Hamidu Bobali told the deputy minister that large land in the district was yet to be surveyed and formalised.

They urged the government to increase number of staff and experts and necessary equipment for the department to deliver best jobs.

The deputy minister also visited land departments in Ruangwa and Lindi districts.

Mabula further said that most of the loopholes were caused by recklessness of the officers in the department for failing to fulfill well their duties.

"We have problems in issuance of land title deeds to customers and collection of land tax thus denying the government revenues...This should be changed, I want all customers who are yet to be given their deeds, be given immediately," Mabula told land officials in the two districts.



**We will not tolerate officials who are not serious in their duties; we want everyone to work hard and fulfill his or her responsibilities on time for the country's development...**



Ministry of Finance and Planning Permanent Secretary Doto James speaks at the launch of the Government e-Payment Gateway (GePG) mobile app in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

## Zanzibar Revolution: Police confident of peace and security

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE police force has assured Tanzanians of their safety and security during celebrations of the Zanzibar Revolution Day observed on January 12th every year.

Addressing journalists yesterday, police force spokesperson, David Misime said security organs are determined to protect people and their properties during the important

celebrations.

"We will ensure security and safety of every Tanzanian because we want them to celebrate in peace", he said adding each of the security organs have been directed to concentrate on particular places throughout the celebrations.

He however urged the public to continue promoting and protecting peace and security during the celebrations.

"As we are all aware that January 12 is a very special day to mark the Zanzibar revolution. So it better to commemorate in a peaceful way, the general public should cooperate with the police force to ensure our country remains peaceful, whenever you notice anything that threatens safety and security, report it to the responsible bodies," he added.

He said that the revolution day is imperative as it represent the country's

history.

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Simon Sirro commended President Magufuli for improving the police force while capacitating it with all essential needs and infrastructures to enable it implement its duties smoothly.

"A total of 400 new houses for police officers have been constructed across the country and the officials are now living in conducive environment," he added.

# Expansion of Tanga port raises new hopes of shipping companies - agents

By Guardian Correspondent, Tanga

TRADERS and shipping agents have hailed the progress of the rehabilitation and expansion work of Tanga port, saying that once completed will enable the port handle large ships, save time and ultimately double government revenue collections.

The port is now under expansion to increase berths and its depth from the current 3.5 metres to 15 metres. Dredging will increase the port's handling capacity to one million tonnes per year.

A statement from Sturrock Grindrod Maritime, one of the largest shipping and logistics companies states that the expansion of the port has raised new hopes of shipping companies to use the port.

Vitalis Mokiwa, Sturrock Grindrod Maritime supervisor for Tanga region said that the company is well prepared to utilize the opportunity by increasing the number of ships.

"Once completed, the port will bring

a number of opportunities because more ships will be docking here...the expansion of berths is also another new services which we are going to experience here as it will simplify and reduce time of serving the ships," he noted.

Mokiwa noted that most of shipping companies usually like to send their ships in places with efficient services avoiding spending much time and levies.

According to him, time management is very important especially for traders, so with Tanga port providing its series timely will at large point attract more ships to dock thus improving the country's income.

He further noted that port remains key economic gate with the major improvements continued to be done will enable it contribute well in the country's development.

Tanga port has also been earmarked for Ugandan petroleum product importers and other cargo going to Kampala through Tanzania.



Tanzania Education Authority director general Bahati Geuzye (2nd L) receives part of a donation of five tons of iron sheets worth 18m/- from Yalin Global Company Ltd representative Remmy Siyame in Dar es Salaam yesterday aimed at supporting the construction of classrooms in the country. Others are the firm's director Lingyao Zheng (R) and the authority's director of resources and education support Waziri Salum. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Guardian Reporter

EAST African Community (EAC) constitutional experts are set to hold national stakeholders consultations for drafting the EAC political confederation constitution from 14 to 20 January 2020, in Burundi.

The objective of the consultations, which will be held in Bujumbura, Gitega, Ngozi and Makamba, is to obtain stakeholders' views on their interest and other key issues that will better inform the drafting of a model political confederation and subsequently a confederal constitution in line with the principle of a people-centered

## Experts to hold national stakeholders constitution consultations in Burundi

Community.

The national stakeholder's consultations are also expected to enhance awareness on the ongoing Constitutional making process for transforming the EAC into a Political Confederation, as well as prepare the public in general to give their inputs into the draft Constitution once it will be drafted.

"National stakeholders' consultations will ensure participation of EAC citizens in the integration process and particularly the political federation pillar," said EAC Secretary General, ambassador Liberat Mfumukeke.

"The drafting of the EAC Political Confederation Constitution is being undertaken by a team of Constitutional

Experts nominated by the Partner States. The 18-member team is chaired by Justice Dr Benjamin Odoki, the Chief Justice Emeritus of Uganda," said Ambassador Mfumukeke, adding that it was anticipated that the Confederation Constitution-making process would be completed by 2022 with its adoption by the Summit.

Burundi President, Pierre

Nkurunziza is expected to launch the Burundi stakeholder's consultations on 15th January, 2020 in Gitega.

The team of constitutional experts held the first national stakeholders consultations for drafting the EAC Political Confederation Constitution in the Republic of Uganda in November 2018, which forum also served as the launch of the process.

The Political Federation is the fourth and ultimate pillar in the EAC integration process after the Customs Union, the Common Market and the East African Monetary Union.

In May 2017, the Summit of EAC Heads of State agreed on the Political Confederation as a transitional model to the Political Federation.

In February 2018, the Summit through the Council of Ministers constituted a team of 18 Constitutional Experts and Legislative Draftspersons to draft a Constitution for the Political Confederation. The team was tasked with developing a Draft Constitution for consideration by the Summit.



Employees at work during the ongoing expansion of Shekilango road at Sinza Mori suburb in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Nakumatt's fall linked to money laundering, poor corporate governance

NAIROBI

The curtain finally fell on Nakumatt Supermarkets after creditors of the company resolved to dissolve what, until recently, was the leading retail chain and brand in East Africa.

Before the company was finally dissolved, doubts lingered on whether Peter Kahi and Atul Shah, the two receivers who have been running the distressed company for more than one year, would even scratch the surface and provide answers to the biggest question surrounding the Nakumatt saga: How billions of shillings from goods and inventory disappeared into thin air.

Kahi and Shah (not to be confused with Nakumatt's managing director Atul Shah) from PKF Consulting are now headed to the courts in a bid to liquidate the company.

Whichever way you look at it, the imminent liquidation is an unfair outcome for suppliers and other creditors, parties who, in good faith, gave the supermarket chain inventory, capital, and accommodation, and innocent investors who bought the company's commercial paper from the capital markets.

And, in a bitter twist, the perpetrators of the fraud will ride off into the sunset.

As of December 2015, Nakumatt had 65 stores in the African Great Lakes

countries of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania. It employed over 5,500, and had gross annual revenue in excess of US\$450 million. At that time, it had plans to enter other African countries and to increase the number of stores in the countries where it already had a presence. In October 2017 the company ran out of funds and did not pay rents or wages. 60 stores were closed. As of August 2018 there was just five stores all of which were in Kenya. Nakumatt now has less than 200 Employees.

On 23 August 2008, Nakumatt opened its first store outside Kenya in the Union Trade Center, in Kigali, Rwanda. In June 2009, the first Nakumatt store in Uganda opened

on Yusuf Lule Road on Kololo Hill, in central Kampala, the capital city. In November 2010, Nakumatt expanded its footprint in Kampala by acquiring Payless Supermarket, a Ugandan supermarket chain with two stores in the Kampala suburbs of Bugoloobi and Bukoto, bringing the number of stores in Uganda to three. The initial investment in the store in Kololo was approximately US\$3 million. The two Payless Supermarket stores cost an estimated US\$650,000. Nakumatt plans to expand the new stores at a later date. In February 2016, the retail chain announced plans to open five new stores outside Kenya during the first half of the year. AGENCIES

## Miguna woes: Court summons AG Kairuki

NAIROBI

A court has summoned Attorney-General Kihara Kariuki or a senior official from his office to explain why orders directing the government to facilitate lawyer Miguna Miguna's return have been ignored.

Justice John Mativo noted yesterday that the government has disobeyed several orders on the matter.

But the government, through State Counsel Christopher Marwa, said that Dr Miguna's passport expired in March 2018 and he has not applied to renew it.

Marwa also said that Dr Miguna can use his Canadian passport to gain entry into Kenya or seek renewal of his passport locally or at any Kenyan embassy abroad.

Through lawyer John Khaminwa, Dr Miguna said court orders exist not for cosmetic purposes, but to be obeyed.

Lawyer Miguna Miguna, who is returning from exile in Canada, says he has been barred from boarding a flight from Berlin, Germany, to Nairobi.

Dr Miguna's journey suffered a blow Tuesday morning after Lufthansa Air refused to allow him on board following a red alert issued by the Government of Kenya, he said.

Dr Miguna had successfully made the first leg of his journey, from Canada to Germany, and was preparing to board at Berlin TXL Airport when he was informed of the restriction.

In the red alert, the government warned the airline against flying the lawyer to Kenya or any other African country.

"In fact, the Kenya Government has demanded that Lufthansa must refund my fare. They have demanded that Lufthansa should not fly me into any other African country, either," Dr Miguna said in an interview with local radio station Hot 96.

"Lufthansa flight manager is saying that the government of Kenya must

send official communication to Lufthansa at Frankfurt office before I can be allowed to fly to Kenya or any other African country."

A section of Kenyans living abroad have taken issue with the continued standoff between the government and fiery lawyer Miguna Miguna who is currently holed up in Germany.

Meanwhile, a UK-based pressure group calling itself "Diaspora For Change" said in a statement on Thursday that there was an increasing tendency by the political class to emasculate independence of the Judiciary by refusing to uphold court orders and comply with the rule of law.

"We are gravely concerned by the decision of the Jubilee government in Nairobi to resort to illegally continuing with its policy of forced exile of its critic, human rights and civil society leader Miguna Miguna. Despite several court orders requiring the government to allow, facilitate and not to interfere with the return of Miguna Miguna ... the leadership has refused to comply and continues to flagrantly disobey these court orders," the statement signed by Hezekiah Owili, Aggrey Kikaya and Sebastian Onyango on behalf of Diaspora for Change, said in part.

They said the trend by the government was worrying Kenyans at home and abroad as it sets a bad precedent.

"It implies that the law in Kenya can be applied selectively at the whim of the political class. This should worry not only Miguna but all Kenyans from all walks of life, especially those in the diaspora who hold dual citizenship ... We demand that Mr Miguna Miguna is allowed free and unconditional return to his homeland."

The government on Wednesday distanced itself from Miguna's travel woes saying

AGENCIES

# Govt instructs review of NHC houses prices

By Guardian Reporter, Mtwara

THE government has ordered the management and board of directors of the National Housing Cooperation (NHC) to review prices of its houses constructed in the outskirts of cities across the country.

Deputy Minister for Land, Housing and Human Settlement Development, Angelina Mabula (pictured) made the remarks yesterday when speaking shortly after inspecting one of NHC's house projects in Masasi district, Mtwara. During her tour in the region, Mabula is also expected to meet workers of the land departments.

Mabula's directive follows complaints from Masasi Members of Parliament, Dr Rashid Chuachua and Jerome Bwanausi of Lulindi constituency who raised concerns over high prices of the houses which have been constructed purposely for civil servants.

According to the legislators a single house is sold at 54m/-.

"It is important that you revise the house prices especially those built in the outskirts including the ones in Masasi district, the board and management should make sure the houses are sold to avoid losses," said Mabula.

She said if selling them becomes more difficult, there should be a plan to give them to people on lease agreement. She said allowing civil servants to rent the houses will reduce housing problem to workers especially in Masasi district.

She however cautioned NHC to build houses in accordance with demand to avoid spending money on unprofitable projects.

NHC Public Relations Manager, Muungano Saguya said they are about to complete construction of houses. He said the project will cost 600m/- upon completion adding that the houses will be ready in the next six months.

Saguya informed the Deputy Minister that the 54m/- price per house was reached after considering construction cost. He said the cooperation is willing to lease the houses to civil servants who will be ready to enter into contract with NHC.

Mabula also toured Nanyumbu and Tunduru districts to inspect implementation of various projects in the lands sector.

In the two districts, she was saddened with poor collections of revenues through different land levies as well as poor documentation of files. She urged officials in the land departments to put in place proper arrangement for storage of documents and sensitize people to pay land levies to boost collections.



**It is important that you revise the house prices especially those built in the outskirts including the ones in Masasi district, the board and management should make sure the houses are sold to avoid losses**



Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children Umyy Mwalimu addresses Mkwakwani secondary school students in Tanga region yesterday shortly after the donation of 20 computers for the city's 10 secondary schools. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

## Youth counselled to utilise empowerment funds allocated by district councils every financial year

YOUTH have been advised to form entrepreneurship groups to be able to benefit with the 10 percent empowerment funds allocated by district councils every financial year.

Through the groups youth are also positioned to secure loans from banks and financial institutions.

Lilian Lambo, Coordinator of entrepreneurs training working with a private organisation that deals with empowering youth—Tanzania One Movement based in Mwanza aired the advice when speaking during training to young entrepreneurs from Mirongo ward.

The training included disabled

entrepreneurs and women groups who will later benefit with business loans. She said district councils are required to set 10 percent of its annual revenues for provision of loans to special groups whereas 4 percent is for youth, 4 percent for women and 2 percent for people with disabilities.

She urged youth to be innovative and come up with business ideas and projects that will improve their welfare. She urged them to grab opportunities in the government through the Ministry of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy

Parliamentary Affairs, Labour Employment Youth and the Disabled). "There are many opportunities within the government but you need to form groups to easily secure business loans," she said.

Mirongo ward community development officer, Wande Peter said those eligible for government loans includes entrepreneurs aged 35 and above and that one should own a business or be in a registered group.

Peter said some entrepreneurs fail to secure loans due to poor knowledge on

preparation of business plans.

Senior official from the Ministry of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy Parliamentary Affairs, Labour Employment Youth and the Disabled), Elisha Magodola said the government will continue to provide training to entrepreneurs with the aim of increasing productivity.

The training to young entrepreneurs was sponsored by Special Seats MP, Halima Bulemba (CCM) in collaboration with Tanzania One Movement. Similar trainings will be provided to youth across the country.



Small sticks of meat roasted on charcoal popularly called 'mishikaki' on sale along Mabibo road at Urafiki market in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam yesterday. Street food if not well prepared could be health hazard. Photo: John Badi

## Water minister to Shuwasa board: Collect at least 700 million/- monthly

By Guardian Correspondent, Shinyanga

WATER Minister, Prof Makame Mbarawa (pictured) has directed the new board of Shinyanga Water and Sewerage Authority (SHUWASA) to properly supervise the authority's revenue collections to ensure at least 700m/- is collected monthly.

Prof Mbarawa threatened to dissolve the board if the targeted revenue collections are not met.

He made the statement when addressing new SHUWASA board members in Shinyanga town. The minister noted that poor revenue collections affect government efforts to expand the region's water network to reach all the residents.

"You should work to enhance revenue collections to at least 700m/- per month or otherwise I will dissolve the board. Collected revenues should be used to pay the Lake Victoria water distribution authority to enable it expand services," said the minister.

He added that the monies are also enough for implementation of new projects insisting them to consider giving tenders to local contractors.

He warned board members to avoid using collected revenues for their per diem payments and travel cost, instead help SHUWASA to increase the number of customers.

New Board chairperson, Mwamvua Jilumbi assured the minister to work on all the directives calling for cooperation from SHUWASA officials and customers. She urged water users to ensure timely payment of monthly bills for the authority to be able to



improve services. SHUWASA Director, Flaviana Kifizi said the authority has been tasked to provide services to residents of Tinde, Didia and Iselamagazi which were previously getting services from the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA).

According to the Director, SHUWASA collects 497,891,531 per month whereas 5 percent of the funds is used for improvement of services which includes expansion of water distribution network. Mbarawa

**You should work to enhance revenue collections to at least 700m/- per month or otherwise I will dissolve the board. Collected revenues should be used to pay the Lake Victoria water distribution authority to enable it expand services**

## Zimbabwe for strengthened economic relations with Angola

LUANDA

THE strengthening of economic relations between Angola and Zimbabwe will be relaunched by the joint cooperation commission, the Zimbabwean ambassador Thando Madzvamuse said recently in Luanda.

Speaking to the press, following a

courtesy meeting with MPLA Vice-President Luisa Damião, the diplomat spoke of the need to review the terms of the joint committee meeting, whose last session was held 17 years ago, so as to define new areas of cooperation, with reciprocal gains for both peoples.

Among the potential areas of cooperation, he pointed out agriculture

to ensure the welfare and food security of both peoples, as well as the education and mining sectors.

He thanked the Angolan initiative to end economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe, adopted by the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Zimbabwe's ambassador to Angola expressed support for anti-

corruption efforts in Angola.

Situated in Southern Africa, like Angola, the Republic of Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in the south of the mainland, between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers. It is bordered to the north by Zambia, north and east by Mozambique, South by South Africa and west by Botswana.

# Mkalama district's procurement unit in trouble following corruption claims

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

DEPUTY Minister of State in the President's Office responsible for Public Service and Good Governance, Dr Mary Mwanjelwa (pictured) has directed the Head of Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Mkalama district to investigate the district's procurement department following allegations of misuse of public funds.

Dr Mwanjelwa gave the directive when addressing public servants in Mkalama district on Friday. She said there have been fraud allegations especially in the procurement department during implementation of development projects.

The Deputy Minister noted that officials in the department are said to offer various tenders to contractors without following procedures and that there have been frequent incidences where construction materials are stolen in a suspicious manner.

She insisted that the government will make sure all the monies allocated for development projects are spent accordingly since it aims at improving provision of social services to Tanzanians. She said in Mkalama district the government is implementing various projects including construction of hospitals, expansion of health centers and

construction of markets.

"Public servants should avoid involving themselves in bribe as well as ensure proper use of funds. The fifth phase government will not tolerate any civil servant proved to be involved in the misusing of public funds," said Dr Mwanjelwa insisting the government wants to work with diligent and honest people who adhere to public servants ethics.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Minister ordered Mkalama District Executive Director to remove from payroll all the workers with forged academic certificates.

The directive came after the Malela primary school head teacher asked the Deputy Minister to announce the plight of a teacher who is said to own fake academic certificates. He claimed the teacher in question is in dilemma because he has not received suspension letter from the ministry.

Responding, Dr Mwanjelwa urged Mkalama DED to immediately work on the matter and give feedback to her office.

Dr Mwanjelwa is in Mkalama district for official purposes including inspecting implementation of development projects as well as listening to citizens' opinions on the implementation of Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF).



St. Anne Marie Academy head teacher Gladius Ndyetabura presents cash prize to his nine students who emerged top ten victors at the national level in Standard Four examinations at the school in Dar es Salaam yesterday. The school emerged number one in Dar es Salaam regional and number one in Ubungo district and 9th at national level. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

# Masasi development college honours govt's efforts to revive the institution

By Guardian Correspondent, Masasi

THE Folk Development College (FDC) in Masasi district, Mtwara region has commended the government for capacitating it with 570m/- for construction and rehabilitation of various buildings in the college.

Speaking here recently, Alfani Mshana, the rector of the college said that the funds have come at a right time when the college is facing a number of challenges including deteriorated infrastructures. "Most of the infrastructures such as dormitories

and classrooms at the colleges were in bad situation something which was also thwarting the college's efforts from effectively carrying out its responsibilities," Mshana said in an interview with this newspaper.

He said that construction has already commenced involving building of six new buildings including dormitories and rehabilitation of other buildings.

"The project is expected to be completed soon...we expect that once completed the building will improve learning and teaching environment thus raising performances in

examinations," he added.

Mshana added that improvement of the college also increase its quality and thus attract more people to study there. Currently, the college has 300 students.

According to him, communities in the southern regions are yet to recognize the potential available in the college thus failing to enroll their children in the institution.

"The school offers a lot of courses ranging from vocation training, tailoring, cookery, mechanical and electrical engineering and so many related courses, the college

has produced a number of quality graduates who are now employed in various institutions with others being in self employment," he said.

The head of the college further said that the institution also faces other challenges including shortage of lectures appealing for the government to also help them address the problem.

Maliki Liyanga, one of the lectures at the college commended the government for its continued support to ensure that the college increases working efficiency and produce more quality manpower to serve the nation.



Vehicles drivers negotiate their way through a large pothole at Ng'ombe river bridge which links Kijitonyama Ali Maua and Tandale kwa Mtogole and also debris carried by flood in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: John Badi

# Three prison warders held for ferrying foreigners to Nairobi

NAIROBI

THREE prison warders have been arrested for allegedly transporting foreigners from Garissa to Nairobi illegally.

Constable Abdulahi Ali Hassan, Corporal Ibrahim Adow and Sergeant Simon Kyalo Mwendwa were captured at Mutwang'ombe in a multi-agency crackdown along the Mwingi-Garissa highway on Thursday.

Detectives said they were ferrying six juveniles and two adults, all of the Somali origin in a GK lorry. The vehicle also had other prison officers headed to Nairobi for the annual Prison Sports Competition.

None of the foreigners had identification documents and the wardens could not account for them, the Star learnt on Friday.

Some Sh18,000, suspected to have been transportation facilitation money, was recovered from the sergeant.

The arrest happened barely two weeks after Commissioner General of Prisons Wycliff Ogallo warned prison officers not to engage in criminal activities.

Ogallo, in a memo to regional prisons bosses dated December 31, 2019, directed them to instil discipline in those they were in charge of.

"It has been observed more lately that our staff are getting more and more engaged in unbecoming conduct

and behaviour," the commissioner noted.

"Besides the acts/commissions being criminal in nature, they are giving the service a bad image. This cannot be entertained any longer," the prisons boss said.

Some prisons officers had prior to the memo been arrested for ferrying bhang, impersonating police officers, reckless shootings, conmanship and uttering false documents.

The crimes were committed in collusion with rogue police officers and criminals. The criminals in uniform use their paramilitary training to murder, rob, kidnap and extort the public. They have also been involved in gunrunning and drug trafficking.

"This is a clear manifestation of lack of proper supervision from the basic level of corporals to a higher level of duty officers, security officers and officers in charge," Ogallo's memo said.

On December 27, 2019, police sergeant Morris Mugambi and a prison warden Stephen Kamau were arrested at Lerata on the Isiolo-Moyale highway with 20 kilogrammes of bhang in a government vehicle.

The prisons boss directed that all officers be supervised and monitored "in all manners appropriate" before, during and even after deployment.

"This will help in curbing these unwanted and unwarranted vices."

# NGO plans to establish youth community development facilitation cycles in Mafia District

By Beatrice Philemon

ACTIONAID Tanzania is expecting to establish youth community development facilitation cycles in Mafia district, Coast region to enable the youth to discuss different issues relating to their rights as well as those affecting them in doing businesses.

ActionAid Tanzania project

coordinator, Samwel Mesiak said the cycles will be established at all levels. He said so far 46 youth from 23 villages in Mafia have been trained on their rights and how to establish the cycles at the village level.

The training was provided through the Local Rights Programme (LRP) executed by ActionAid Tanzania in Mafia, he noted.

Mesiak explained that the cycles are part of the organisation's new strategy to help youth speak in one voice and be heard by the government. He said the cycles provide forum for youth also air their challenges.

"By speaking in a single unified voice they can affect policy makers and reduce the major impediments that affect them in businesses and other

issues," he noted.

He called on youth engaged in fishing activities 'boda boda' riders, farming activities and other businesses to make best use of the platform to discuss issues affecting their businesses and submit them to responsible authorities.

ActionAid Tanzania in Mafia is also expecting to establish student

parliaments at district level to help students understand and demand for their rights.

"So far we have 16 student parliaments at various primary schools, we aim to a total of 23 parliaments in 23 villages", he noted.

According to him, the students parliaments are the best platforms whereby students can be heard but

also express their opinions about education and human rights issues. He said parliaments help pupils to develop their talents, work as a team and learn to listen from others.

"Most pupils are now confident when speaking in public, it has also enhanced their relationships with parents because at times they attend meetings together", he said.

## Govt assures contractor of timely payments

By Guardian Correspondent

THE government yesterday assured payments for the contractor Dott Services constructing 50 kms from Mtwara - Mnyavata road which is to be completed in three months timeframe.

Deputy minister of Works, Transport and Communications, Elias Kwandikwa said the government will soon disburse all the remaining 89bn/- so that the road becomes passable throughout the year.

He made the statement when inspecting implementation progress of the project which is expected to boost the economy of Mtwara residents.

"We are aware of the delays in payments. We are going to settle all the payments for the road to be completed within the timeframe agreement", said the deputy minister.

He said according to the government's decision to construct the road at tarmac level was meant to enable residents to use it for social services and economically as well as to ensure reliable transport services especially during rainy seasons.

"We are targeting to make Tanzania an industrialised nation, we should make sure we improve all infrastructures to facilitate transportation of agricultural

goods to market and factories", said Kwandikwa.

Mtwara District Commissioner, Evod Mmanda said completion of the road will facilitate transportation of goods and passengers in southern zone regions as well as neighbouring countries.

Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) Manager in Mtwara region, Eng Dotto Chacha informed the deputy minister that construction of Mtwara - Mnyavata road had reached 75 per cent whereas over 40 kilometers had been constructed at tarmac level.

He said the contractor is expected to complete the remaining part of the 50 kilometers stretch within three months. He said the contractor is also finalising installation of traffic sign boards and symbols.

Director of Dott Services, Raj Prudhvi promised to finish the remaining job and hand over the project to the government after three months.

The Mtwara - Mnyavata road is part of the 200 kilometers - Mtwara - Newala - Masasi road which is economic viable to the residents. The road is mostly used by cashew farmers from Nanyamba, Tandahimba, Newala and Masasi districts.



A mountain of garbage abandoned at Bonanza market at Chamwino in Dodoma yesterday which is eyesore to the road users, businessman and residents and also a potential source of danger to public health. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

By Guardian Correspondent, Kongwa

KONGWA District Commissioner Deogratius Ndejemi has urged parents to make sure all Form One students selected to join secondary education in 2020 were registered before the end of this month.

He made the statement yesterday when inspecting construction progress for various school structures within the district. He said the projects are implemented to ensure eligible students join secondary education studies before end of January.

"I am satisfied with construction of classes at most of the schools. We have enough classes to accommodate all

## Parents urged to register all children for school

the Form One students", he insisted adding the district had put in place strategies to ensure no child fails to join secondary school over lack of classes.

Ndejemi said since the government is implementing the free education policy, there shouldn't be any excuses for parents who will fail to purchase school uniforms for their children.

The government issued Circular 5 in 2015 which implements the Education and Training Policy 2014 and directs public bodies to ensure that secondary education is free for all children.

This includes the removal of all forms of fees and contributions. Tanzania is among the countries that have signed and agreed to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and among them is the number four goal regarding the provision of quality education.

According to him, Kongwa district had a shortage of 37 classes at its secondary schools but it has managed to construct them within a short period. He noted that at some schools they had turned teacher's offices into classes,

only to make sure all the students are accommodated.

He commended Speaker of the National Assembly, Job Ndugai for providing 6m/- to support the construction of classes. He said the district is continuing with construction of 292 classes for primary and secondary schools.

Some of the schools which faced acute shortage of classrooms are Chitego and Kibaigwa secondary schools.

Announcing the 2020 Form One

selection in Dodoma, Minister of State in the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government, Suleiman Jafo said more than 58,000 primary school pupils who passed the 2019 Standard Seven national examinations will not join secondary schools this January over lack of classrooms.

Minister Jafo directed District and Regional Commissioners facing shortage of classrooms to complete construction of the remaining rooms by February 29, 2020. He insisted on

regional and district administrative secretaries to ensure the directive are implemented accordingly for students to join Form One by March 2, 2019.

According to him, the number of pupils who missed chances to join secondary school in Arusha are 4,739, Dar es saalam (5,808), Iringa (3,480), Kigoma (12,092), Lindi (1695), Manyara (728), Mara (9,493), Mbeya (2,716), Pwani (2,918), Rukwa (686), Simiyu (6,616), Songwe (4,684) and Tanga (3,044).



Rice traders display their merchandise while waiting for potential customers at Kaumu central market in Masasi district, Mtwara region earlier this week. One kilogramme of rice goes between 1,700/- to 1,800/- Photo: Correspondent Hamisi Nasiri

## DRC changes measles strategy amidst world's largest outbreak

KINSHASA

THE death toll from the measles outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo reached 6,000 this week. As the cases mount, the government and global health partners have called for a reframing of the response, including expanding the ongoing vaccination campaign to include older children.

Since the beginning of last year, about 310,000 suspected cases of measles have been reported across the country - figures that are underreported, according to Médecins Sans Frontières. It's the largest outbreak in the country in decades, with a higher fatality rate of cases than previous years. It's also the worst outbreak of the disease in the world, amid an unprecedented rise in measles cases globally.

This deadly outbreak of this highly contagious disease has been overshadowed by the Ebola crisis in the eastern part of the country, meaning there has been less attention and resources available for the measles outbreak, according to Dr. Vincent Sodjinou, incident manager for measles in DRC for the World Health Organization. The Ebola crisis in the country has claimed over 2,200 lives. The same areas hit by Ebola have also had measles cases, he said. This has been a challenge for health workers because Ebola and measles patients have similar symptoms.

As the measles outbreak rages on, the DRC government and global health partners are reexamining their approach and have approved a new response plan this week for the next six months, which aims to put an end to the outbreak. "This new plan has taken into account lessons learned from the previous plan," Sodjinou said.

Some of the weaknesses in the response at the national and provincial levels include inadequate mobilization of resources, the limitations on the vaccination campaign to only include children under 5, late positioning of vaccines, weak integration of nutrition interventions into the response, low involvement of community and religious leaders, as well as weak surveillance in some areas, said Dr.

Xavier Crespin, chief of health at UNICEF in DRC.

In 2018, routine measles immunization coverage in DRC was only 57%. Some of the reasons behind low levels of vaccination in the country include shortages of the measles vaccine in the country and lack of access for many people to health facilities, according to MSF. There is also a need to keep the vaccine cold for maximum effectiveness, which is challenging in rural areas.

In Ebola-affected areas, limited capacity of health workers has led to a decline in measles immunizations. In July, the first measles vaccination campaign to occur in an area of active Ebola transmission was launched. Because measles vaccination campaigns involve the congregation of people to receive the immunization, health workers have taken extra steps to ensure these meeting sites have not led to increased transmission of Ebola, Sodjinou said.

Over the past year, the DRC Ministry of Health, WHO, Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, and other partners have vaccinated 18 million children under the age of 5 against measles in response to the outbreak.

But as the cases continue to mount, it has become clear to responders that this limited vaccination campaign isn't sufficient to contain the disease. A quarter of the reported caseload include children older than 5 years old. Because of this, children up to 14 years old are now included in the vaccination campaign.

"We need to target these children to be sure that the circulation of the virus is interrupted," Sodjinou said. The new response plan aims to vaccinate at least 95% of children aged 6 months to 14 years old by June, Crespin said.

While measles vaccination is part of the routine immunization package in DRC, the recommended second dose is not currently provided, Sodjinou said. This is problematic because young children aren't always immune to measles after the first dose, he said. The new plan also intends to roll out a second dose for children across the country.

## AU confident of peaceful elections in Ghana

ACCRA

THE African Union (AU) is optimistic Ghana will hold a peaceful and successful general election this year.

While acknowledging that the contest will be intense and fierce, the AU remained "confident that Ghana will pull it off successfully since we have no doubts about the country's credentials as far as elections are concerned," the Deputy Chairperson of the AU, Kwesi Quartey.

He was speaking in sidelines of a meeting organised by the Diaspora Africa Forum (DAF) under the auspices of the AU in Accra last Tuesday.

The meeting was to use the diaspora agenda as a vehicle to speed up

economic acceleration and tourism revenue generation among AU member states.

The meeting also honoured Quartey for the various roles he had played in getting many diaspora returnees attaining Ghanaian citizenship, as well as ensuring diasporan issues becoming a feature on the AU calendar.

Quartey said Ghana was aware of its reputation in the conduct of fair elections and indicated that the AU was expecting the country to chalk another success.

He, however, stressed the need for the government to put in place the requisite measures to ensure that the December 2020 general election would promote democratic governance

reflective of the country's values of a peaceful democratic nation.

While admitting that security during elections was of concern to the AU, Quartey said the AU started issuing out security alerts to member states so that governments take the necessary steps to forestall election-related violence.

"We know the contest will be intense and fierce but the only way out is to have an election that is transparent so that even the loser will acknowledge they lost in a transparent manner," Mr Quartey noted.

Quartey said the negative consequences of elections on the continent would derail the AU's Agenda 2063 which is aimed at promoting

prosperity and the wellbeing for all citizens.

The violence that marred the January 31, 2019 parliamentary by-election in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency in the Greater Accra Region, Quartey stressed, ought to be an eye-opener for the government to address the problems it exposed.

"While we were saddened by those events, we believe the outcome will serve as a tool on which authorities could build their security preparedness programme," Quartey emphasised.

He remained optimistic that Ghana would once again organise a peaceful election worthy of emulation among AU member states.

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## Suicide prevention should be a national priority

**S**UICIDE is the act of intentionally causing one's own death. Mental disorders, including depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, personality disorders, anxiety disorders, and substance abuse—including alcoholism and the use of benzodiazepines—are risk factors. Some suicides are impulsive acts due to stress, such as from financial difficulties, relationship problems such as breakups, or bullying. Those who have previously attempted suicide are at a higher risk for future attempts. Effective suicide prevention efforts include limiting access to methods of suicide—such as firearms, drugs, and poisons; treating mental disorders and substance misuse; careful media reporting about suicide; and improving economic conditions. Even though crisis hotlines are common, they have not been well studied.

The most commonly used method of suicide varies between countries, and is partly related to the availability of effective means. Common methods of suicide include hanging, pesticide poisoning, and firearms. Suicides resulted in 828,000 global deaths in 2015, an increase from 712,000 deaths in 1990. This makes suicide the 10th leading cause of death worldwide.

Approximately 0.5 per cent of people die by suicide. In a given year this is roughly 12 per 100,000 people. Rates of completed suicides are generally higher among men than among women, ranging from 1.5 times as much in the developing world to 3.5 times in the developed world. Suicide is generally most common among those over the age of 70; however, in certain countries, those aged between 15 and 30 are at the highest risk. Europe had the highest rates of suicide by region in 2015. There are an estimated 10 to 20 million non-fatal attempted suicides every year. Non-fatal suicide attempts may lead to injury and long-term disabilities. In the Western world, attempts are more common among young people and among females.

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## Registering pupils without birth certificates is simply logical

**A**N ongoing drive to register mobile phone simcards on the basis of biometric identification accompanied by national identification numbers seems to have altered attitudes somewhat. It is becoming a misnomer for anyone to register for anything significant without a number or something similar, such that pupils being admitted to Standard One have to get the dispensation of the minister, where they lack birth certificates. That looked astonishing to many people.

The Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Governments), Selemani Jafo had to make an intervention or say a clarification during a tour of Bahi district in Dodoma region where he witnessed registration of primary school pupils and Form One students at various public schools.

He told school authorities that there have been complaints from people across the country that their children were being prevented from joining primary schools over lack of birth certificates.

There was an effort to get birth certificates for under-five children in particular, but definitely not an order not to receive school children without having a birth certificate. Nothing is risked in not having the certificate, as it is a formality to help school and other authorities to keep records.

The minister pointed out that a birth certificate is the right of every child, in which case it is an added plus to what there is already about any child—starting from breastfeeding to vaccination, onward to birth certificate and pre-school facilities, etc. In that case it ought not to be a hindrance to registering for school when it happens not to have been collected or delivered as yet.

It isn't a requirement as the child - or

the parent - won't do anything wrong due to that detail.

Minister Jafo thus directed headteachers to conduct the registration exercise fully, by ensuring that all eligible children are registered while their parents complete procedures to acquire their birth certificates. Nor shall anyone expect that they are constantly reminded to do so, as schools have parental meetings where such issues can be raised, or emphasized. Pressuring the little ones about such details is next to mere harassment, as it isn't their fault, surely.

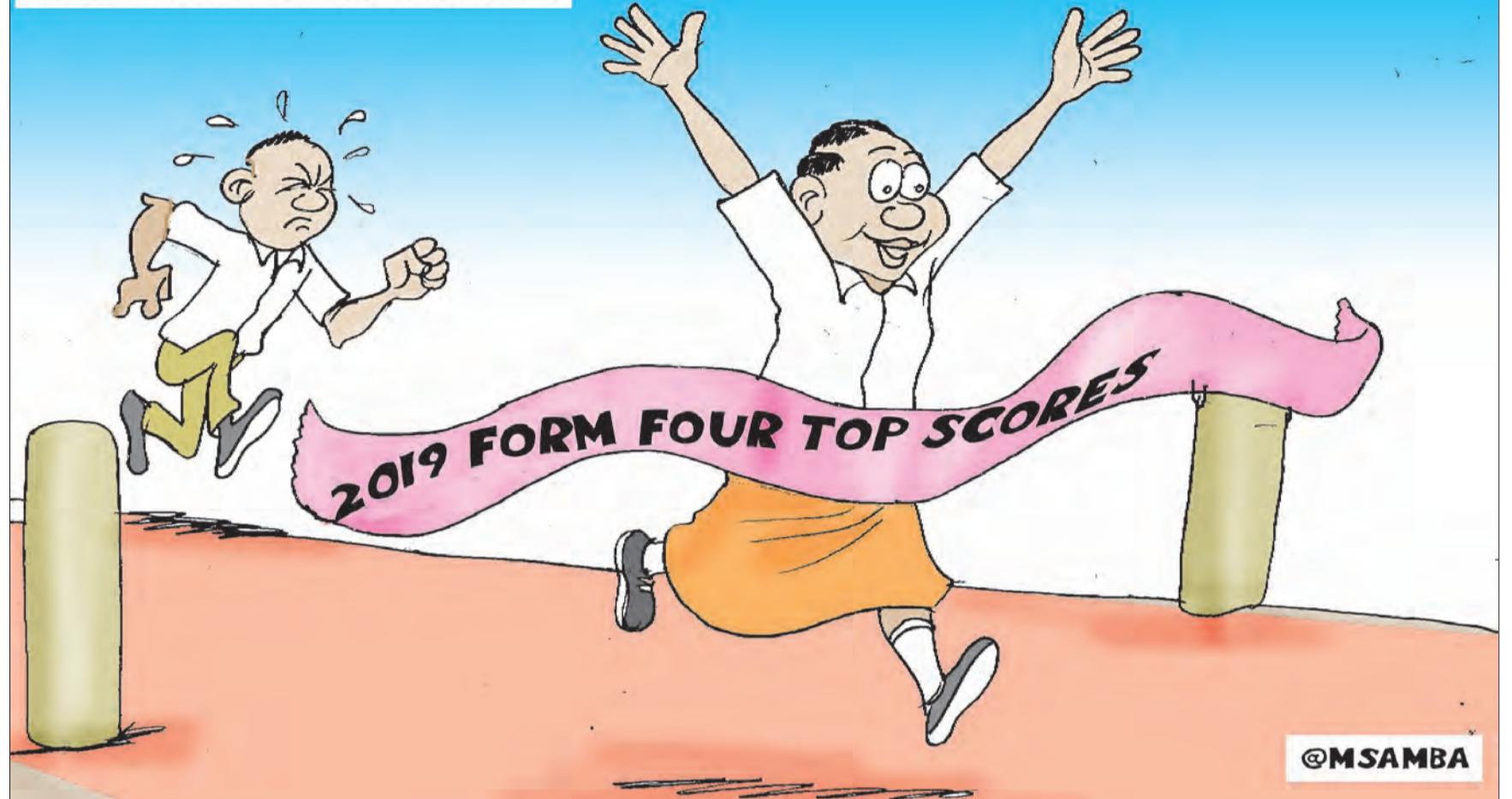
At times there are disputes between adults that lead to children not getting birth certificates in time, especially disputation about parentage, on the father's side.

A proper birth certificate isn't just a record of when the child was born, the facility of delivery and the mother, and perhaps the health condition at that moment. It is the proper identification that the child is given, and so to speak it is unalterable, and thus the possibility of tedious mind games that adults play on the issue, around cardinal issues of 'hide and seek'.

The same requirement of registration definitely applies to those being admitted to Form One, where the minister insisted on headmasters to receive Form One students unconditionally, urging parents and guardians to ensure their children report to particular schools on time.

It is a directive that must have been received squarely and pointedly, to avoid disturbing pupils and students for the little reason. At a time when the government is making effort to ensure there is free education for all children up to secondary school, some authorities may cling to formalities to hinder these goals, or even to solicit a bribe for a pupil to be admitted. That ought to stop.

## NATIONAL EXAMINATION



BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**T**HE menace of drugs in Nigeria has become very disturbing not only to the authorities but to the citizenry especially with its prevalence among the youth. To underscore the challenge, the Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire recently disclosed that an estimated 14.5 million people are addicted to various forms of drugs. The minister, who spoke at a national summit on menace of drugs and substance abuse among the youth, said many Nigerians between the ages of 15 and 64 are addicted to cannabis, amphetamines, opioids and cocaine.

To underscore the gravity of the problem, another report by the European Union (EU) put the number of drug users in Nigeria within the same age bracket at 24.4 per cent or 14.3 million people. The data, from the results of the National Drugs Use Survey for 2018 by the European Union, reveals that the prevalence of drug use in Nigeria is more than twice the global average of 5.6 per cent. The report further highlights a considerable level of abuse of psychoactive substances like cannabis and the non-medical use of prescription opioids (mainly tramadol, and to a lesser extent, codeine).

Indeed, in Nigeria today, hard drugs, ranging from cannabis-often called Indian Hemp, to cocaine, heroin and amphetamines - are increasingly available on the street and abused by both the young and the old. Although there are no reliable statistics, there

# Hooked on drugs



is no doubt that drug abuse is linked to the continued upsurge in criminal activities across the country. Many cases of rape, cultism, kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, banditry and even car crashes feed on the ready availability of these illicit substances in the street. Many homes, families, relationships and careers have been shattered by those who find it difficult to wean themselves of the stuff. The menace has created an unacceptable burden on individuals and the society at large. As the Director General of the National Agency for Food and Drug

Administration and Control (NAFDAC) Professor Mojisola Adeyeye put it, drug abuse is undermining efforts to deepen socio-economic development and "is associated with crime and lawlessness."

A dichotomy in the prevalence of drug use was found between the North and South geo-political zones. The highest prevalence of drug use was found in the southern part of the country. People who inject drugs, according to the report, constitute a sizable proportion of high-risk drug users in Nigeria with one in five high-risk drug users injecting drugs. The

most common drugs injected in the past year were pharmaceutical opioids, followed by cocaine and heroin while overall, more men were injecting drugs.

To address the rising wave of drug menace especially among the youth requires the proactive efforts of both government and the citizenry. There is the urgent necessity to develop awareness programmes to address issues of substance use and abuse and to remove barriers towards seeking care for these problems. These programmes should also address the inability of the youth to perceive addictive behaviours as a health risk. Parents and support persons' involvement and engagement in youth programmes should be strengthened further as it improves communication and better decision-making for youth health issues. Family-based prevention programmes emphasising parenting skills, training or improving family functioning, communication and family rules regarding substance abuse also need to be introduced.

It is time we woke up to this challenge that poses danger to the future of the country. More should be done to create awareness on the danger of drug abuse. And as drug experts have suggested, the authorities should strengthen drug control policies while more counselling and treatment services should be created.

## Nigeria and the cost of running government

BY ODILIM ENWEGBARA

**W**ITH respect to our debt problem I am expecting the 2020 budget to address it.

One of the ways to do that should be to organize a national debt emergency policy summit. This should involve all the public and private stakeholders from federal to states.

Having said that, let me remind us once again that Nigeria's problem is not that its national debt is excessive. After all among peer economies we are the least borrowed especially in GDP ratio. In fact, from debt to GDP and especially external to domestic debt ratio we are an under borrowed economy.

Having said that, Nigeria's debt problem is dangerous. It is not only because we have been borrowing at such high cost to revenue (i.e. like a company borrowing at higher rate than profit). It is dangerous because having been borrowing for consumption

rather than for growth-driven project investments, we do not generate any revenue from consumption to service the debt let alone for repaying the loan. That is what is making our debts bad and dangerous especially in the sense that these debts cannot be serviced without our further borrowing.

So, two things need to happen quickly in our debt economy if we want to get out of our present high debt service obligations and low capital budget spending.

First, we must reduce our high cost of running government. The law must insist on minimum of 50% capital spending or else such a budget should not be passed by lawmakers. Besides all budget spending should be fully in public domain with all the details.

Can we imagine the case of bringing to an end the current jamboree public servants are used to enjoying, including free cars, at the expense of growing the social side of the economy? This and other wastages should stop if we

want to reduce the current high cost of running government which is the cause of our recurrent deficits driven and borrowing.

Second, we must begin to migrate from our present outdated manual tax collection and remittance to what is now the best practice, which is electronic tax collection and remittance.

Using electronic VAT collection and remittance, for example, will increase the country's current VAT receipts by as high as more than 500%.

Besides, our VAT rate should not be less than 10%. This is because we have the lowest VAT rate among peer economies. Take South Africa. Because South Africa has its VAT at 15% in 2018 it generated a whopping \$25 billion from VAT alone against Nigeria's N1.1 trillion (\$3.2 billion) even though South Africa's economy is smaller than Nigeria's.

With VAT increased to at least 10% and with electronic VAT introduced, no doubt, more VAT receipts will

mean more money going into public treasury which should be made to go straight into essential economic development projects and social security programs.

If we want to invest wisely and for a healthy and productive citizens we should make sure that such programs should include rural water, public healthcare, public schools, and public transportations.

But to make all these possible and truly dynamic, we need to drastically reduce the current federal overbearing influence on the economy. Let states be more actively involved in their daily economic decisions; and let regional economies emerge to reinforce state economies.

This should be the only arrangement that will trigger the kind of speedy economic growth we badly need to reduce our high level of unemployment and grow social prosperity through social inclusive programs and projects.



By Gerald Kitabu, Kigoma

## Kigoma AMCOS cry out for loans to boost oil palm farming

**A**gricultural Marketing Co-operative Societies (AMCOS) in Kigoma region that have heeded the directive of the Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa that required them to seriously engage into agriculture to revamp the oil palm production have made an appeal to the Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB) to supply them with soft loans to fruitfully revamp the crop.

The chairman of Mahembe AMCOS Ltd, which constitute 13 Co-operative societies Hussein Ally Buchunguka said that access to loans situation is discouraging because they have made several applications, all in vain.

Vividly irked by the situation, Buchunguka said that when they apply for the loan from TADB, the response has been negative and completely discouraging. Citing an example, he said that at one point, the AMCOS were told openly that they are still fragile, have not grown into the business that they should be, adding that they can't pay back the loans as currently there is no reliable market to sell their oil palm.

Mahembe AMCOS Ltd chairman Buchunguka said: "We were told that our AMCOS is not yet grown enough to qualify for the loans. There are no readily available markets for the oil palm. Some of your farmers may fail to pay back the loans," he said.

Citing an example, he said the AMCOS started applying



Mahembe AMCOS members at one of their colleagues oil palm farm when TARI, Kigoma regional government and media visited their farms to see the progress. Photo by Gerald Kitabu

for loans from TADB since October 2019 after fulfilling all the conditions required to get the loans including depositing an advance of 10 percent, but until now they have not received the loans.

He said after making several follow-ups, they were told that the TADB was in the final stages of getting an investor who would provide the market for the farmers' crop and other value chains but until

now there is no good feedback.

"We have heard that the investor has been found. But there is also no good feedback from him," he said.

He said lack of the loans have discouraged many farmers as oil palm farming need intensive care including application of fertilizer. Citing an example, he said that lack of loans from TADB has forced some farmers to abandon

the oil palm agriculture and others to engage into small scale agriculture which is unprofitable because they can no longer manage to cultivate large farms.

"If you go to the oil palm fields you will realize that only those who have financial muscles are the ones who are managing well this type of agriculture, but those who have no money, their crops are weak and the leaves have

turned yellow," he said.

"It is good that the Kigoma Regional Agricultural Advisor is here with us. I kindly ask you to make close follow up on this loan matter so that the farmers can access and expand their farms," he added.

Paulina Cosmas, also oil palm farmer from Mahembe in Kigoma district council called for deliberate and concerted efforts to inter-

vene so that credit facilities could be made available for the farmers to excel in oil palm agriculture.

She said that Kigoma farmers are willing and have responded very well to the directive of the Prime Minister to engage into oil palm production but credit facilities are letting many people down.

"We had very high expectation from this crop and we support the government's efforts of revamping the crop but I think the problem of lack of loans will discourage many farmers," he said.

"The profit accrued from the Oil Palm is used to improve our lives including taking our children to school. So we think that there is a need for the loan solution," he added.

"We used to grow exclusively Dura type with low yielding potential in old farms. This caused low oil palm yield in many farms but now we have received Tenera variety with higher oil palm production from the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI). We have been sensitized enough. We commend TARI's efforts but without loans to improve our agricultural system, we will not increase productivity," she said.

According to Director General of Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute, Dr. Geoffrey Mkamillo, Kigoma has an area of about 114,000 hectares of land which is suitable for oil palm pro-

duction saying if it can be utilized well, definitely the nation will be able to reduce or eliminate importation of vegetable edible oil in the country.

He said other regions which are also suitable for production of oil palm in this country are Kyele in Mbeya, districts of Coastal region such as Mkuranga, Kibiti and Bagamoyo, Tanga region, Morogoro and Zanzibar adding that if efforts are put together, it is real possible for the country to produce enough and surplus vegetable edible oil.

With available opportunities we have, especially if we can use oil palm and also some other crops like Sunflower, Sesame, Groundnuts, Soybeans and Coconut it is possible for the country to be able to produce more than 570,000 metric tonnes of vegetable oil which actually is required per year. Currently Tanzania only produces 40 percent of the required edible oil while 60 percent is actually imported from other countries, said Dr Mkamillo.

According to Kigoma Regional Agricultural Advisor, Joseph Lubuye the problem of access to improved seeds has been addressed through collaborative efforts between the regional government and TARI Kihinga.

He said that regarding the problem of lack of loans from TADB, he would convene a meeting that would bring together the AMCOS chairman Hussein Buchunguka and Kigoma region TADB manager Peter Mbezi to iron out the loans issue.

## Australia's bushfires bring mounting pressure to reduce greenhouse gases

SYDNEY, Australia

**A**s nature's fury wreaked havoc across Australia, reducing to ashes all that came in its way - people, flora, fauna, picturesque historic towns and villages once popular with local and overseas tourists - it was unlike anything the country had witnessed before. The staggering scale and intensity of the devastation could best be summed up as apocalyptic.

Bushfires, not uncommon in Australia's vast woodland, scrub or grassland areas, started early in September with summer still few months away (December - February), igniting a fresh debate on the country's woeful record on climate change. 2019 was the country's driest and hottest year on record with the temperature reaching 1.52 °C above the long-term average.

With temperatures soaring close to 50 °C, parched land, low humidity, strong winds fuelled the fires that since September have claimed 24 lives, including three volunteer firefighters, and razed more than 6.3 million hectares of land. Thousands have been rendered homeless and there has been a heavy toll on wildlife.

For Diana Plater, a writer, who grew up witnessing bushfires in the regional towns of New South Wales (NSW), the magnitude and persistence of the fires raging this southern summer was unimaginable. Two years ago, she trained to be a volunteer firefighter to help her small community in the scenic valley of Foxground, two-hour drive south of Sydney.

The NSW Rural Fire Ser-



vice is one of the world's largest volunteer-based emergency services with over 70,000 men and women volunteers, who have played a crucial role in helping affected communities. Plater told IPS, "I believe it is important to be physically and mentally strong and practical and you learn this as a firefighter. It is exhausting but the camaraderie and humour we share keeps us going."

Scientists and environmentalists have been warning that global warming will increase the intensity and duration of fires and floods, mounting pressure on Australia to do more towards cutting greenhouse gas emissions. In 2019, 61 percent of Australians said "global warming is a serious and pressing problem", about which "we should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs". This is a 25-point increase since 2012, according to the 2019 Lowy Institute poll findings on climate change.

Australia has set a target to cut emissions by 26 percent of 2005 levels by 2030. At the 25th United Nations Climate Change Conference in Madrid in December 2019, one of the major sticking points was Australia wanting to use an expired allocation of credits (often referred to as "carryover credits") - which is an accounting measure where a country counts historical emissions reduction that exceeded old international goals against its current target.

According to Climate Council, Australia's leading climate change communications organisation, "After successfully negotiating extraordinary low targets under the Kyoto Protocol (Australia's 2020 target - 5 percent below 2000 levels), the Australian Government is planning to use these expired allocations from an entirely different agreement to undermine the Paris Agreement as well. The Australian Government's use

of disingenuous and dodgy accounting tricks to meet its woefully inadequate 2030 climate target is irresponsible because it masks genuine climate action".

Australia has one of the highest per capita emissions of carbon dioxide in the world. It contributes 1.3 percent to global emissions with a relatively small population of about 25 million people.

Australia is also the world's largest exporter of metallurgical coal, accounting for 17 percent of world production in 2018, and is the world's second-largest thermal coal exporter, exporting 210 million tonnes in 2018-19 valued at AUD 26 billion.

Environmental groups argue that it is feasible for Australia to move to a low carbon economy and the country has huge potential for solar power and wind energy.

Former Australian Greens

Party leader and veteran environmental activist, Bob Brown told IPS, "We need leadership in a global climate crisis, beginning with no more coal mines or gas or oil wells, but transferring to renewable energy. This is the sunny country and we have fantastic solar technology. We have the ability to become world leaders in both the technology and its application and the export of that application to countries like India."

The economic impact of the Australian bushfire crisis will be huge as so many properties have perished in the fires. "The insurance claims will be enormous, but so too will be the permanent climate change-related rise in insurance premiums going forward. The destruction and disruption of businesses in regional NSW and Victoria is ongoing for many months, again this cost is huge, but unquantifiable," Tim Buckley, Director of Energy Finance Studies at the Institute

for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), told IPS.

The fires have been devastating for livestock, wildlife and their habitat. World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Australia's Senior Manager Land Clearing and Restoration, Dr Stuart Blanch told IPS, "Until the fires subside the full extent of damage will remain unknown. Many forests will take decades to recover and the fires are worsening Australia's extinction crisis".

Professor Chris Dickman from the University of Sydney estimates that 480 million native mammals, birds and reptiles have been affected by fires in NSW alone since September 2019. This includes the death of thousands of koalas, along with other iconic species such as kangaroos, wallabies, gliders, kookaburras, cockatoos and honeyeaters.

The koala, an arboreal mammal endemic only to Australia, is highly susceptible to heat stress and dehydration. Images of burnt koalas being rescued have been heartwrenching.

Deborah Tabart, chairman of the Australian Koala Foundation, had warned in May 2019 that the marsupial was "functionally extinct".

"We now stand even more firmly on that position. The heat, no water in river systems (which are so important to a healthy koala habitat), drought, mismanagement of water and unsustainable use of the environment are all key players in this catastrophe. Bushfires have decimated koala's natural habitat. We immediately need a Koala Protection Act," she told IPS.

The acrid bushfire smoke blanketing cities and towns

has exposed people to very high levels of air pollution over extended time periods.

Bruce Thompson, Dean of the School of Health Sciences at Swinburne University said, "The smoke generated by the current bush fires is a very serious health issue especially for those with respiratory conditions such as Asthma, Emphysema, Bronchitis and even upper respiratory conditions such as laryngitis. The central issue is not only the large particles that are inhaled but more importantly the very fine particles that are less than 2.5microns (pm2.5). These particles cause inflammation and get inhaled very deep into the lungs causing the lung to become inflamed. They also can cross over from the lung into the bloodstream and cause inflammation in areas such as the heart."

The bushfires have also impacted drinking water catchments. Professor Stuart Khan, Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at the University of New South Wales said, "While rainfall is desperately needed to help extinguish fires and alleviate the drought, contaminated runoff to waterways will present a new wave of challenges regarding risks to drinking water quality.

"Bushfire ash is largely composed of organic carbon, which will biodegrade in waterways, potentially leading to reduced oxygen concentrations and poor water quality. Ash also contains concentrated nutrients including nitrogen and phosphorus, which may stimulate the growth of algae and cyanobacteria in waterways".

At the time of press more than 100 fires were still raging in south-eastern Australia.

Agencies

# More than bricks: How international law protects cultural sites

BY MIA SWART

Iran is home to some of the world's most ancient historical sites. Among them are 24 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the ancient ruins of Persepolis, the grand mosque of Isfahan and the Golestan Palace in Tehran where Iran's last shah was crowned in 1967.

When, in a tweet on Sunday, US President Donald Trump threatened to target 52 Iranian sites, including some of cultural significance, if Tehran retaliated over the assassination of top Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani, it sparked an international outcry. Legal scholars, national security experts and politicians in the US and beyond, condemned the threat.

Trump wrote in his tweeter account: "...hundreds of Iranian protesters. He was already attacking our Embassy, and preparing for additional hits in other locations. Iran has been nothing but problems for many years. Let this serve as a WARNING that if Iran strikes any Americans, or American assets, we have..."

"...targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD. The USA wants no more threats!"

Shortly afterwards, the Pentagon distanced itself from it, with US defence secretary Mark Esper saying the military had no plans to bomb Iranian cultural sites.



The site of Persepolis in Iran. File photo

On Tuesday, Trump appeared to retreat. Speaking to reporters in the Oval Office, he said: "You know what, if that's what the law is, I like to obey the law. But think of it: They kill our people, they blow up our people and then we have to be very gentle with their cultural institutions. But I'm OK with it. It's OK with me."

The threat prompted global condemnation, with allied countries including Britain immediately distancing themselves from it. But why are cultural sites so significant and why did Trump inspire such outrage?

A war crime  
According to Mark Drumbl, Professor of International Law at Washington and Lee University, Trump's threat to destroy cultural property is "hugely problematic".

"This is forbidden under various branches of law and amounts to a war crime," Drumbl explained.

Prohibitions against destroying cultural heritage have existed since the 1907 Hague Convention, which requires parties to an armed conflict to take "all necessary steps" for the protection of "buildings dedicated to religion, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not being used at the time for military purposes".

Despite this, international courts have only recently started to prosecute this particular war crime. The first such conviction at the International Criminal Court (ICC) was in the case of Ahmad Al-

Faqi Al-Mahdi. In 2016, the Malian member of al-Qaeda-linked group Ansar al-Dine was convicted of the war crime of attacking buildings of religious and historic importance in the Malian city of Timbuktu in 2012.

Colonialism and cultural heritage

According to Eleni Polymenopoulou, an assistant professor of law at Hamad bin Khalifa University in Qatar, the reason for the "slow implementation of the law on cultural property is that colonial states ... [long opposed] the idea of protecting cultural property".

"Rather than protecting cultural property, colonial states have typically looted it," she explained.

"The protection of heritage and even the illicit appropriation of cultural objects, such

as the Parthenon marbles, is still today largely perceived by states as a matter of diplomacy rather than one that triggers international legal responsibility."

But, Polymenopoulou added: "The destruction of cultural or religious heritage is an integral part of armed conflict, and in certain extreme conditions may even constitute cultural genocide."

"[Trump's threats] remind one of the destruction of the Two Buddhas of Bamiyan by the Taliban regime. In a way, Trump's threats are legitimising the destruction of heritage by ISIL."

International conventions  
In addition to the 1907 Hague Convention, the 1977 Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions prohibits "any acts of hostility directed against the historic

monuments, works of art or places of worship which constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples".

The 2016 US Department of Defense Law of War Manual, an internal directive providing the department's view of the law of war, also contains extensive provisions on the protection of cultural property.

Although the US is not a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which makes intentional attacks on historical monuments a war crime, the US is a party to the 1954 Hague Convention on Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which the Senate approved in September 2008.

Since under certain circumstances the Rome Statute allows the ICC to exercise jurisdiction over crimes committed by states that are not party to the ICC, acts of destruction of cultural property by the US could potentially be tried by the ICC.

Kristin Hausler, Dorset Senior Fellow at the British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL), explained that the "protection of cultural heritage has ... become an intrinsic part of the fight against terrorism" - something the US has itself pointed out.

"When explaining the US vote in favour of UNSC Resolution 2347 in March 2017, the first resolution dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage from destruction, the US mentioned the trafficking in antiquities by Abu Sayyaf, the now deceased high-ranking ISIL official," Hausler said.

"Push of a button"  
For Wayne Jordash QC, a UK barrister and specialist in international criminal

law, the protection of cultural heritage is tied to the survival of groups.

"For many, especially indigenous people, the links between land, culture and survival of the group are especially strong and in need of the same protection as crimes that have traditionally been the core concern of international criminal law," he said.

The protection of cultural property is linked to the "common heritage of humankind", a principle of international law that says cultural or natural elements of humanity's common heritage should be protected from exploitation and held in trust for future generations.

Christine Anagnos, the director of the New York-based Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), an organisation of art directors from the US, Mexico and Canada, explained: "Cultural sites around the world form part of our shared human heritage and must be protected, even in times of conflict. All are precious, and any steps to harm them violate both a fundamental sense of human dignity and violates international law."

For Drumbl, protecting cultural property is just as important as preserving human rights: "Cultural property is seen as part of the biodiversity of the human condition, what differentiates us from other species, and to destroy it is to wipe out part of ourselves."

A country's cultural, artistic, religious and historical spaces should, he argued, be "off limits from the threats of wanton destruction by the simple push of a drone button".

Agencies

By Rashid Abdallah

## Can Africa really benefit from Brexit?

In August 2018, then-Prime Minister Theresa May became the first British leader in five years to visit sub-Saharan Africa, making a three-day trip that included meetings with the presidents of South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya.

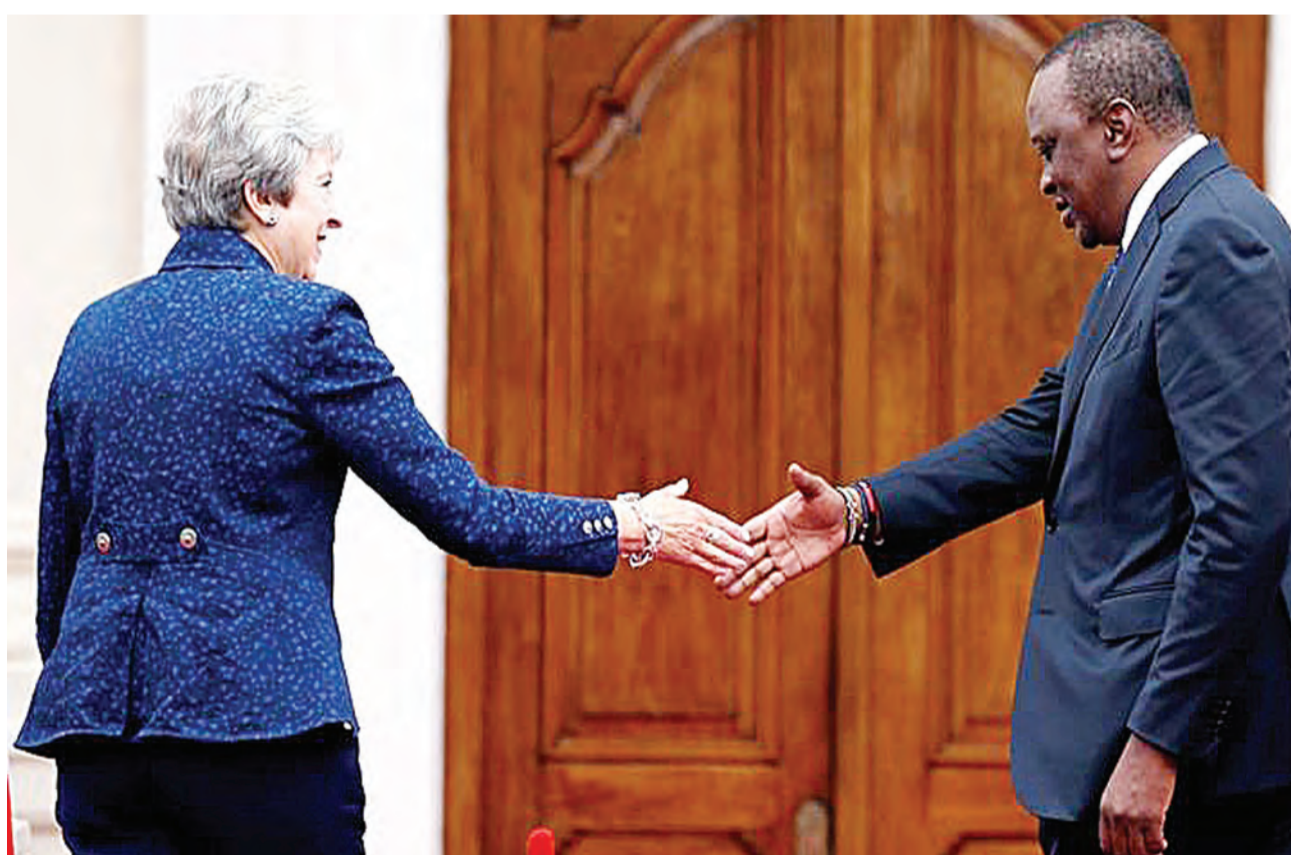
May was on the continent to boost post-Brexit trade and convince African leaders that the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union would provide their nations with new and lucrative trade and investment partnerships with the UK.

In a speech in Cape Town, she pledged four billion pounds (\$5.3bn) in support for African economies, to create jobs for young people. She also pledged a "fundamental shift" in aid spending to focus on long-term economic and security challenges rather than short-term poverty reduction.

May's promise to create a "global Britain" that views Africa as a primary trade partner triggered excitement and expectation on the continent. However, her May 2019 resignation and Boris Johnson's rise to power put the realisation of a stronger relationship between post-Brexit Britain and Africa into question.

Unlike May, Johnson barely showed any interest in Africa, instead focusing his attention solely on convincing the British public that he is the right man to "get Brexit done".

Nevertheless, African leaders, especially the ones



Then British Prime Minister Theresa May is greeted by Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta at the State House in Nairobi, Kenya August 30, 2018. File photo

from former British colonies who already have significant trade relations with the UK, doubled down on their efforts to charm Britain into making them primary trade partners after Brexit.

Following Boris Johnson's stunning electoral victory on December 12, for example, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari swiftly sent him a congratulatory message, wishing the prime minister well and expressing his hopes for stronger ties between Nigeria and the UK.

Ghana's Nana Akufo-Addo also offered his congratulations to Johnson, saying, "we have an opportunity, togeth-

er, to renew and strengthen the relations between our two countries, focusing on enhancing trade and investment, and scaling up prosperity for our peoples".

Buhari and Akufo-Addo's statements were not empty pleasantries, rather they were expressions of an ever-growing belief across the continent that post-Brexit Britain could provide a quick fix for stagnating African economies.

It is still questionable, however, whether the anticipated new relationship will ever materialise and, perhaps even more importantly, whether Africa will be

able to benefit from it if and when it does.

First of all, it is highly unlikely that Johnson is going to give priority to securing new deals with African nations following his country's imminent exit from the EU. After all, the populist prime minister never embraced his predecessor's dreams for a "global Britain" and focused instead on building closer ties between London and Washington.

Moreover, many African countries currently have preferential access to the UK because of trade deals hashed out over the years with the European Union,

such as Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and the Everything But Arms (EBA) initiative. Following Brexit, it may take considerable time for each nation to replace these with equivalent or better deals, and they may be forced to pay increased tariffs for their exports to the UK in the process.

But even if a new partnership between the UK and African nations does miraculously take shape soon after Britain's exit from the EU, it will not be easy for a continent weighed down by multiple domestic challenges to make immediate gains.

A significant percentage of any gain African nations may make from a lucrative trade partnership with post-Brexit Britain, for example, will immediately be cancelled out due to their existing debt to the continent's mega-investor, China. While Chinese debt cannot stop Africa from forming new partnerships, it will indeed make any future deal less profitable.

But beyond the debilitating effects of the Chinese debt-trap Africa is currently in, there are other, and entirely home-grown reasons why Africa will likely not be able to capitalise on Britain's imminent exit from the EU.

In the recent past, African countries have signed countless cooperation agreements with nations across the world, from the EU to the US and Turkey. Every country in the world, after

all, wants a share of Africa's rich resources. But, despite the plethora of investments, African countries sank ever deeper into poverty. Today, Africa is the world's second-fastest-growing region, and yet 100 million more Africans live in extreme poverty today compared with the 1990s. Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, is home to the largest share of people living in extreme poverty.

The main reason behind African nations' inability to reap the rewards of international cooperation and investment is corruption. Cooperation with post-Brexit Britain, therefore, can yield significant dividends for Africans only if African countries clean up their acts on the domestic front.

Most African countries are blessed with huge reserves of precious natural resources as well as young and capable populations. Moreover, they have long been receiving financial support from the international community. While all this could not have reversed all the damage colonialism has done to the continent, under better domestic conditions, it could have triggered an economic boom and carried most African nations out of poverty.

That boom, however, failed to materialise. Elites across the continent chose to line their pockets rather than help elevate their nations. Corruption flourished, and tax revenues and for-

eign aid were diverted into the bank accounts of the select few while masses were left to fend for themselves with little to no support from their governments.

If African leaders want to form a genuinely beneficial partnership with post-Brexit Britain, they need to devise a new approach to fighting corruption. Furthermore, they need to start exercising fiscal prudence and entrenching good governance. As long as the upper echelons of African societies remain rotten, a hike in British investments and trade, however significant it may be, will not help the peoples of Africa.

In 2012, Nigeria was estimated to have lost over \$400bn to corruption since independence. In 2018, it was ranked 144 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's Perception of Corruption Index. Many other African countries experience similarly high levels of corruption and bad governance. Equitable development will remain a mirage in such an environment even if these countries were to make a deal with God, not merely with the UK.

It is naive to believe that corrupt African leaders who have led their countries to destitution will allow the benefits from a future UK trade deal trickle down to regular Africans in need and elevate the continent. It is true that Brexit can be an opportunity for Africa, but only if the continent's leaders finally move away from corruption and start working to help their people rather than themselves.

## 35 Al-Shabaab militants killed in lower Jubba

MOGADISHU

Somali special forces backed by international partners killed 35 al-Shabaab extremists on Tuesday in an operation in Lower Jubba region in southern Somalia, a military official confirmed on Wednesday.

Hassan Mohamad Aden, commander of the Danab Forces in Jubbaland State, said a joint operation was conducted by Somali army and international partners in Lafta Anole neighborhood in Lower Jubba.

"Following a tip of from the residents, our forces launched an attack in the area killing 35 al-Shabaab militants including senior members," Aden said.

Residents told Xinhua there was heavy gunfire that caused panic in the area.

"Al-Shabaab extremists in the village were attacked by government forces," said Safi Bilan, a resident. "There was also airstrike which caused many casualties."

The latest operation came barely four days after Somali special forces killed 30 al-Shabaab militants in the country's southern region of Lower Shabelle.

Somali forces have intensified their operations against the militants in southern regions where al-Shabaab holds large swathes of rural areas, conducting ambushes against government forces.



Al-Shabaab militants

Happy birthday, Emma! meet one of Kenya's oldest women

NAIROBI

Emma Wangechi, who was born at Gikondi village in Nyeri County, is not your ordinary centenarian.

The 100-year-old woman is a staunch Catholic and believes her faith is one of the reasons she has lived that long.

We could not independently verify Wangechi's age, but if her family is to be believed, that would make her one of the oldest women not just in Ichuga village in Nanyuki, where she currently lives, but also in Kenya.

According to family records, she was born on January 3, 1920. But that is not all.

The elderly woman's memory has not deserted her because she can still recall events from her past.

One of the most vivid memories is that of Blessed Irene Stefani Nyaatha, whose history had a lot of significance to Catholic faithful in Gikondi village, Mukuru-ini.

It's in Gikondi where Sr Irene dedicated her life to serve the poor and the sick.

Wangechi fluently recites prayers and songs she learnt from Sister Nyaatha in Latin language in Gikondi, where the nun frequented.

Before cutting her birthday cake last Friday, the centenarian narrated how Sr Nyaatha loved to tie her horse at an ancient croton tree at their homestead before starting her mission of spreading the gospel.

Wangechi's second-born, Annah Wahitu, 72, recalls how she used to wake them very early every Sunday to pray before proceeding for Mass. "You can joke with mum on anything but not her religious belief," she said.

Father Peter Githinji, the postulator in charge of causes of saints, beatification and canonisation at the Archdiocese of Nyeri, said the old Wangechi has been a key pillar for the Catholic Church.

But the celebrations' climax was attained when Wangechi wrote a brief letter to President Kenyatta, urging him to continue entrenching peace in the country.

AGENCIES

## Look at me now! From untrained teacher in rural Zambia to project manager, thanks to UNFPA grant

KIGALI

A UNFPA-supported nursing programme scholarship that Danny Chikonde received when he was just 22 years old has helped change not only his life, but also that of his siblings. At the time he was working as an untrained teacher in his home district. Today, he is a manager.

Now the Health Project Manager for Discover Health, implemented by John Snow, Inc., Chikonde, 40, remembers the role UNFPA played in kick-starting his career.

He was born in Mukushi, a rural district in Zambia's Central Province, and was the sixth of ten children in his family. Yet his parents divorced when he was five years old, leaving his mother to fend for herself and her children.

"The scholarship covered my tuition and upkeep. I was also able to care for my siblings as my mother had passed away," Mr. Chikonde

says.

On graduating, he found work as the manager of a rural health centre in Mujimazovu in Solwezi. With his earnings he was able to pay for his younger siblings' education and living expenses, as well as that of an older brother, all of whom were living with him.

"When my mother passed away, my first-born sister was heading our family. But she didn't have much as she was working as a secretary at the Road Department in the capital, Lusaka. I had to step in," he says.

Choosing to delay having children

Today, Chikonde is married with an 18-month old daughter. He delayed marriage and children because he wanted to ensure that his siblings were old enough to fend for themselves first, he says. He also credits the UNFPA youth programmes that he was exposed to while in college for his decision.

Chikonde has a Bachelor's Degree in Project

Management and plans to pursue a Master's Degree in Public Health. He proudly represented his organization at the biggest AIDS conference, the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA), in Kigali, Rwanda, from 2-7 December.

Asked what his message is for young people, he says: "It's important to be determined and focused. Never lose hope - opportunities are there. You just need to find them."

He emphasizes the importance of belonging to a network of like-minded people and to recognize which one will give you a platform to excel.

**Engaging young people**

At ICASA, the African Youth and Adolescents Network on Population and Development (AfriYAN) and Safeguard Young People (SYP) programme urged young people to take charge of their lives and prioritize their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

In discussion with UNFPA Regional Director for West and Central Africa, Mabingue Ngom, AfriYAN representative Millicent Setaile acknowledged UNFPA's work in enhancing the lives of adolescents and young people. "Young people are meaningfully involved at ICASA and its thanks to UNFPA," she said.

**Africa can benefit from China-Africa trade expo, says expert**

Meanwhile, an expert this week urged Zambia and other African nations to utilize the first China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo and gain tangible benefits.

Naison Ngoma, Copperbelt University Chancellor, said in an interview that China has demonstrated all it takes by building road infrastructure in Zambia to indicate the Asian country's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations.

"It was China that came

to the aid of Zambia by constructing a railway line to the sea coast for last four decades and to date the railway line still remains a vital route for exports and imports of goods," he said.

He said China assisted Zambia in a most profound way.

The expert expressed optimism that China's agenda for Africa will benefit most African states.

The first China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo opened Thursday in Changsha, capital of central China's Hunan Province.

The three-day event has attracted more than 10,000 guests and traders, including those from 53 African countries, according to the organizing committee.

International organizations including the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the World Food Programme, and the World Trade Organization, have sent representatives to the expo.

AGENCIES

## WEF '20: Realising stakeholders capitalism will require new breed of leaders in Africa

JOHANNESBURG -

Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy is one of the great classics in twentieth-century social science and I continue to look at this well-penned book as the greatest to provide solutions that emanate from radical capitalist and radical Marxist theorists and practitioners.

Economist Joseph Schumpeter's book novel the view of democracy; its heretic analysis of the workings of the capitalist economy; and its provocative argument that capitalism is bound to disappear—not because of its failure, but because of its success.

Economist and Engineer, World Economic Forum (WEF) Founder and Executive Chairman, Professor Klaus Schwab is partly in agreement with the views of Schupetter on the theme of Redefining capitalism.

Schumpeter highlights that capitalism collapses in every ten to fifteen years and it will always develop new models on how to regenerate its existence in society and negotiate to mainstream new faces that are generally embraced by society to front them in national podiums as directors of their companies and so on.

Communities and youth in Africa need corporates that have great societal values to operate with mindfulness and have a sustainable relationship with all stakeholders. Corporates in Africa don't respect government and society, it doesn't invest in youth mainly during this fourth industrial revolution era where retraining is the main solution to drive society and economies forward.

Redefining capitalism will be embraced in America and Europe, but the same corporates in those markets will not implement those values that will be resolutions of the Davos conference expected to produce a Davos manifesto 2020 January 20 till 24.

The Davos society has shaped debates in several themes that seek to address economic challenges on global competitiveness, shared value, corporate citizenship, now shareholder capitalism which will lead corporates and society to consciousness and mindfulness for ethical considerations in business.

It's so profound when young Schumpeter, who was born in 1883 in the small town of Triesch, the son of a textile manufacturer, writes a compelling case joining three facets of Capitalism which we can agree that he comes from that womb and he might have observed the injustice of capitalism and his love for society made him to embrace socialism and suggest a model of democracy for parties to have inclusivity on matters that govern us all.

The world had proven to us all that there is no better capitalism and also there is no better socialism, however, when integrated thinking and mindfulness is prioritized, a mixed version of the two, create a system that values society and also

ensure that capital is served with its expected bottom line.

Capitalism is an economic system which the government plays a secondary role. People and companies make most of the decisions and own most of the property.. The means of production are largely or entirely privately owned by individuals or companies and operated for profit.

Every 10 years we witness leaders in Asia, Africa, Europe and Americas setting up political economy strategies to bring about relief, recovery and reform, economic crisis such as trade wars, geopolitics, but the fast-changing world exposes leaders four-month after elected as presidents that situations had changed and the past solutions cannot be applied to solve current and future challenges.

Presidents, Ministers, Premiers and other members of parliament

are expected to possess a high level of wisdom and knowledge in the times we are living at, the criteria of selecting such leaders must change as the global problems continue to be more complex every five years.

There is a huge gap between government leaders and corporate leaders, these create problems in society as corporates always negotiate better propositions and government will realise that BEE transactions failed in 20 years, while large corporates benefited massively. We have more reasons to give society to elect great leaders now, after seeing the excuses of creating jobs being huge in South Africa, Nigeria and the rest of Africa markets.

We will not realise shareholder capitalism or shared growth and value while negotiators from governments are always weaker to their corporate counterparts, signalling remain a painful exercise, power always plays a vital role.

The enormous dimensions of finance capital concentrated in a few hands and creating an extraordinarily dense and widespread network of relationships and connections which subordinates not only the small and medium, but also the very small capitalists and small masters, on the one hand, and the increasingly intense struggle waged against other national state groups of financiers for the division of the world and domination over other countries, on the other hand, cause the propertied classes to go over entirely to the side of imperialism.

African youth unemployment rate is very high including South Africa and Nigeria, youth needs jobs and corporates reserves are higher the past 15 years in South Africa and also global institutional investors asset under management are about 120 trillion dollars as per McKinsey reports 2017, which is not sustainable for our future, mainly because such funds are placed in passive investment that is not impacting communities.

## South Africa has huge 'green fuels' potential but it needs to act now

By David Richard Walwyn and Rod Crompton

South Africa needs to seriously start thinking about shifting its energy focus. This is for two reasons.

The first is that the country's important exports - coal and platinum - face potential collapse with the imminent shift of global energy markets. A number of factors are driving this.

The move away from vehicles powered by petrol and diesel to ones powered

by electric batteries is gathering pace. Two thirds of the demand for platinum depends on combustion engines where it is used for the hardening of spark plug tips and in vehicle exhaust autocatalysts.

The second major reason that the country needs to re-focus its energy situation is there's a major switch from coal to renewables underway in the world. And South Africa itself can't continue its current levels of dependency on coal. South Africa

is the 14th largest emitter of carbon dioxide, and on a per capita basis, the 10th largest emitter. It leads the pack in Africa, and already faces considerable environmental issues in Mpumalanga, where state energy provider Eskom's coal fired power stations and Sasol's coal-to-liquid plant are located.

Sasol and Eskom account for more than 50% of the country's carbon emissions.

It can address both these challenges by pursuing a feasible solution waiting to be exploited. The country could make use of its natural comparative advantages in wind and solar power to generate electricity. By linking these accessible resources to technologies such as Fischer-Tropsch, it's in an ideal position to open another chapter in export-led economic development.

The Fischer-Tropsch technology was developed to exploit coal by converting the mixture of carbon

monoxide and hydrogen - produced by heating coal at high temperature in a process known as gasification - to liquid fuels. The process was introduced into South Africa in the 1950s to reduce the country's reliance on imported oil. Sasol is now a global leader in the technology and has more experience than any other company in the conversion of hydrocarbon gas to liquid fuels.

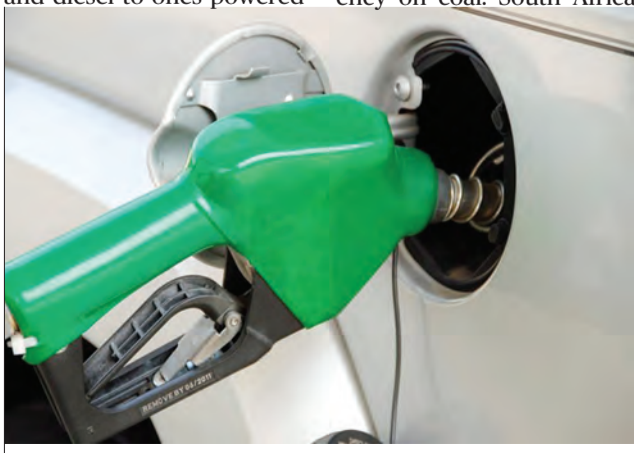
Moving in this direction also presents a golden opportunity for South Africa to transition from being a key contributor to global warming to becoming a key contributor to global emissions reductions.

South Africa can use its supply of solar and wind to produce hydrogen from water in a process known as hydrolysis. A cheap and reliable source of hydrogen is essential for the production of green fuels. To date, this technology has been

too expensive. But advances in fuel cells have made large-scale hydrogen production cheaper and more accessible. More importantly, if the hydrogen is made with renewable energy, it is a "green" feedstock.

The green hydrogen can then be combined with carbon, captured from existing flue gas or from the air, to make liquid fuels and petrochemicals using Fischer-Tropsch technology. The present Sasol technology relies on coal as the source of carbon and is unsustainable. The possible innovation - which South Africa is in a prime position to exploit - will be to combine green carbon with green hydrogen to make liquid fuel.

There are substantial export opportunities for such "green" fuels and petrochemicals. This market could generate export revenue to replace lost revenues from declining coal and platinum exports.



# 'Unprecedented terrorist violence' in West Africa, Sahel region

## UNITED NATIONS

The top UN official in West Africa and the Sahel updated the Security Council on Wednesday, describing an "unprecedented" rise in terrorist violence across the region.

"The region has experienced a devastating surge in terrorist attacks against civilian and military targets," Mohamed Ibn Chambas, UN Special Representative and Head of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), told the Council in its first formal meeting of the year.

"The humanitarian consequences are alarming", he spelled out.

In presenting his latest report, Chambas painted a picture of relentless attacks on civilian and military targets that he said, have "shaken public confidence".

A surge in casualties The UNOWAS chief elaborated on terrorist-attack casualties in Burkina Faso Mali and Niger, which have leapt five-fold since 2016 - with more than 4,000 deaths reported in 2019 alone as compared to some 770 three years earlier.

"Most significantly," he said, "the geographic focus of terrorist attacks has shifted eastwards from Mali to Burkina Faso and is increasingly threatening West African coastal States".

He also flagged that the num-

ber of deaths in Burkina Faso jumped from about 80 in 2016 to over 1,800 last year.

And displacement has grown ten-fold to about half a million, on top of some 25,000 who have sought refuge in other countries.

Chambas explained that "terrorist attacks are often deliberate efforts by violent extremists" to engage in illicit activities that include capturing weapons and illegal artisanal mining.

Intertwined challenges Terrorism, organized crime and intercommunal violence are often intertwined, especially in peripheral areas where the State's presence is weak.

"In those places, extremists provide safety and protection to populations, as well as social services in exchanged for loyalty", he informed the Council, echoing the Secretary-General in saying that for these reasons, "counter-terrorism responses must focus on gaining the trust and support of local populations".

"Farmer-herder clashes remain some of the most violent local #conflicts in the region" said SRSG Chambas to the #UNSC

The Special Representative outlined that governments, local actors, regional organizations and the international community are mobilizing across the region to respond to these challenges.

On 21 December, the ECO-WAS Heads of State summit



A girl runs outside a small community school in Korioume, Mali, where children lack basic equipment, including notepads and pens. Parts of the school have been attacked and in 2013 the village was a Jihadist stronghold. FILE PHOTO

"adopted a 2020-2024 action plan to eradicate terrorism in the sub-region", he said.

Calling "now" the time for action, Chambas drew attention to the importance of supporting regional Governments by prioritizing "a cross-pillar approach at all levels and across all sectors".

Turning to farmer-herder clashes, which he

maintained are "some of the most violent local conflicts in the region", the UNOWAS chief highlighted that 70 per cent of West Africa's population depend on agriculture and livestock-rearing for a living, underscoring the importance of peaceful co-existence.

The Special Representative also pointed to climate change, among other fac-

tors, as increasingly exacerbating farmer-herder conflicts.

"The impact of climate change on security also spawns a negative relationship between climate change, social cohesion, irregular migration and criminality in some places", he upheld.

Stemming negative security trends

The UNOWAS chief

noted that in the months ahead, Togo, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and Niger would be democratically electing their leaders and maintained that "all-too-worrying" security trends must not distract from political developments.

"Unresolved grievance, incomplete national reconciliation processes and sentiments of manipula-

tion of institutions and processes carry risks of tensions and manifestations of political violence", he warned.

In the months ahead, Chambas stressed that UNOWAS would continue to work with partners on the national and regional levels to promote consensus and inclusiveness in the elections.

"As UNOWAS' mandate is renewed, we count on the Council's continued full support", concluded the Special Representative.

AGENCIES

# Can UN development be reformed? Not at this rate

## GENEVA

Like his predecessors, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has been pushing a reform programme to help the organisation adjust to the demands of contemporary global governance.

Over nearly 75 years, the UN has innovated and adapted. At first, humanitarian assistance was not envisaged to go beyond the needs of people displaced by global conflict. Yet that programme now disburses nearly \$30 billion a year through its largest field agencies, growth that has led to some radical changes in the organization.

The UN's peacekeeping practices also had to be invented and have since adapted to intrastate conflict and global terrorism. Human rights was initially a verbal aspiration only.

But with the Universal Declaration in 1948, they have been enshrined in many covenants and treaties that have been overseen since 1993 by a high commissioner and a well-staffed office in Geneva.

That leaves the fourth pillar of development, where services, training and research are administered by more than 30 separately managed organizations and a similar number of departments, institutes and commissions.

The development system cries out for reform, but progress is continually frustrated by inertia. This sprawling organizational domain originally comprised the first specialized agencies, some predating the creation of the UN itself, and "brought into relation" with the organization in 1945.

Their parallel, independent existence has defied attempts to

bring coherence into the UN's development work, particularly as the "development system" grew.

More specialized agencies joined the family, and many UN funds and programs were established to respond to newly perceived development challenges, dispersing the UN's development efforts further.

The UN Development Program (UNDP) was intended to act as principal funder and coordinator of the system. But each agency and organization of the system began to supplement its financial needs by going directly to the UN's main donor governments, as UNDP became its own separately funded implementing agency. As a funding rival, UNDP could no longer be considered a useful coordinator.

What has emerged is an extensive web of patronage underpinning UN development. Northern

countries patronize the UN selectively through their preferred organizations and funding patterns, to align with their own agendas.

Today, four-fifths of funding through the UN development system is earmarked by donors, while core funding has shrunk concomitantly.

For their part, the governments of the Global South - and individual ministries in them - have also developed preferential relationships with individual UN organizations. So, whether patrons and patronized, member states see advantages in a disjointed UN system that keeps expanding in response to their demands and lacks a central blueprint.

Consequently, member states are largely satisfied with the status quo and reluctant to support more consolidation and coherence and less wasteful



duplication and overlap.

More is better than less, and change is not primarily motivated by cost-effectiveness, which would be required for any organizational reform.

The pervasive patronage system goes a long way in explaining why conservatism prevails in intergovernmental discussions on reform. So why pursue reform if many of the member states are opposed?

The answer is that even if cost-effectiveness does not drive change, the fact remains that the UN could do more with less in the development domain, and it is for the UN organizations themselves to strive to be more valuable for "we, the peoples," particularly in helping countries to achieve their own 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A high-level panel in 2006 proclaimed the shortcomings of the UN development system as "Ineffective governance . . . policy incoherence, duplication and operational ineffectiveness . . . competition for funding, mission creep and outdated business practices."

Ten years later, many of the same sentiments were echoed by an independent team of advisers. The latest reforms proposed by Guterres fully acknowledge the problems, but can they be resolved?

Take funding. Unwinding the patronage system will mean first shrinking the preponderance of conditional funding by donor governments. A new "funding compact" has been drawn up that

aims to increase core funding from 20 to 30 percent and encourage more pooling of donor resources. It's a start, although there is not much optimism that even these modest goals will be achieved.

Next, consolidation. The system is too large and unwieldy. The many governing bodies need to acknowledge their common interests and combine their oversight functions, reducing the tendency for the same governments to speak with different voices on different boards.

Again, the prospects for more united governance are not promising. Meanwhile, atomization at the field level has increased, with evermore numbers of representative offices, now over 1,400.

The answer has been to "deliver as one" with closer collaboration within country teams. In the latest reform, the transfer of responsibility for field coordination has been removed from UNDP and given to UN resident coordinators, reporting solely to the deputy secretary-general, Amina Mohammed.

These coordinators will also be given more staff and resources. These are positive steps. However, fewer than half of the developing countries have signed up to the One UN concept, favoring the patronage system.

A larger systemic challenge persists. Each of the main functions of peace operations, human rights, humanitarian relief and development in the UN system are still managed by separate clusters of entities, with separate funding sources and separate lines of vertical

communication.

Except for a few crisis-prone countries, these functions are managed in isolation from one another.

So while development is "sustainable," it does not incorporate considerations of rights inherent in the UN's own concept of human development. There are humanitarian coordinators in addition to resident coordinators for development. Peace operations are still mainly concerned with mobilizing armed personnel.

Belatedly, there are new attempts at management reform, which is welcome. But here, again, there are flaws, starting with senior appointments. While the current secretary-general was appointed through a more meritocratic process, there has been no departure from the double jeopardy that allows the veto-wielding powers - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States - to choose both their own top posts and the incumbents in the UN secretariat.

Management comes from the top, and this second form of UN patronage hurts chances for a more effective UN. Considerations of geography and gender cannot take precedence over the "highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity" enshrined in the language of the Charter.

"Reform, that you may preserve," said Thomas Macaulay, the British politician and essayist, nearly 200 years ago. The continued life of the UN, particularly in development, depends on its ability to change.

Agencies

## THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD =035=

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

3 letter word: LEO, ASS, FED,  
 4 letter word: EARS, SHIM, PINE, SPOT, DATE, STUD  
 5 letter word: RAMBO, RAISE, MORAL, HREOC, ARISE  
 6 letter word: ELOHIM, ISRAEL, OEDEMA, EITHER ARIOSO, SPRITE  
 7 letter word: PREEMPT  
 8 letter word: EOLITHIC, OMPHALOS  
 10 letter word: SIMPLIFIED

Clues: Across  
 1. Enjoyable (8)  
 5. Annual (6)  
 8. Remains (7)  
 9. Occasion (5)  
 10. Donkey (3)  
 11. star (3)  
 12. twelve-month period (4)  
 15. narrow opening in coastline (5)  
 16. Statement of beliefs (5)  
 17. Celebratory procession (6)

Down:  
 1. Development of group (9)  
 2. Atmosphere we breath (3)  
 3. Even one or little (3)  
 4. Renters of property (7)  
 6. Accept (5)  
 7. Boundaries (6)  
 10. like a senior woman (5)  
 13. affirmation in prayer (4)  
 14. Warehouse (5)  
 15. Thought (4)  
 16. Large female quadruped (3)

WORD FIT CROSSWORD

3. LEO 4. EARS 5. RAMBO 6. ELOHIM 7. PREEMPT 8. EOLITHIC 10. SIMPLIFIED

1. ENJOYABLE 2. ATMOSPHERE 3. EVEN 4. RENTERS 6. ACCEPT 7. BOUNDARIES 10. SENIOR 13. AFFIRMATION 14. WAREHOUSE 15. THOUGHT 16. QUADRUPED

## BUSINESS

## RELATIONSHIP

# Trump says China trade deal may be signed shortly after January 15

## WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump, who announced last month that the Phase 1 trade deal with China would be signed on Jan. 15, said on Thursday the agreement could be signed "shortly thereafter."

In an interview with the ABC TV affiliate in Toledo, Ohio, Trump said: "We're going to be signing on January 15th - I think it will be January 15th, but shortly thereafter, but I think January 15th - a big deal with China."

Trump announced the Jan. 15 signing date in a tweet on Dec. 31.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for clarification of Trump's comments.

The Phase 1 deal, struck last month, is expected to reduce tariffs and boost Chinese purchases of American farm,

energy and manufactured goods while addressing some disputes over intellectual property.

Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, head of the country's negotiating team in Sino-U.S. trade talks, will sign the deal in Washington next week, China's commerce ministry said on Thursday.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for clarification of Trump's comments.

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U.S. President Donald Trump rallies with supporters in Toledo, Ohio, U.S. File Photo.

## ECONOMY

# World Bank projects 6pc growth for Kenyan economy

## NAIROBI

Kenya's growth is projected to accelerate slightly in 2020, according to World Bank Group's economists, partly supported by increased credit flow to businesses amid more favourable weather.

The economy is predicted to expand by six percent this year, multilateral development bank says in the latest Global Economic Prospects report, a 0.1 per cent upgrade from its previous forecast in June 2019.

The bank estimates growth at 5.8 percent in 2019, reduced from 6.3 percent the year before on the back of reduced agricultural production due to delayed rainfall.

The bank's economists, however, see increased public borrowing as a downside risk to its growth projection for Kenya, with expansion forecast to slow to 5.8 per cent next year.

"In Kenya, growth is expected to remain solid, but soften somewhat as accommodative monetary policy does not fully offset the impact of a fiscal tightening," the bank says in the report released late Wednesday.

The report said moderate inflation, a measure of the cost of living, which averaged 5.2 per cent last year helped the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) adopt an accommodative monetary policy stance to stimulate economic activities.

Such stance characterised by lower short-term interest rates as a result of a central bank cutting its benchmark lending rate to signal commercial banks to follow suit and boost the supply of cash by it making it less expensive. The CBK last November cut its benchmark lending rate to 8.5 percent from nine percent for the first time since May 2018.

The accommodative monetary policy was, nonetheless, not effective due to legal ceilings on interest rates



A modern World Bank complex in Nairobi. File photo.

charged by commercial banks, controls which were scrapped last November after a three-year stint.

A consensus growth outlook based on an analysis of growth forecast from some 14 global banks, consultancies and think tanks by Barcelona-based FocusEconomics has forecast Kenya's economy to expand by 5.8 per cent this year.

"One bright spot (in sub-Saharan Africa) will be Kenya, where balance sheet issues are easing," John Ashbourne, senior emerging markets economist at UK-

based research firm Capital Economics said in a note on December.

"Strong import demand (due to capital intensive-projects such as standard gauge railway), poor harvests, and elevated government spending led to wide fiscal and current account deficits in recent years, but we think that these will now narrow as fiscal policy tightens and work on costly infrastructure projects slow." It states.

## FINANCE

# US dollar to dominate in directionless forex market

## BENGALURU

THE U.S. dollar, which has dominated currency market trading for the last two years, looks set to do so again in 2020, according to the latest Reuters poll of foreign exchange strategists.

While most of those who forecast spot FX rates are still clinging to a view that the euro may edge up slightly by the end of the year, when asked about the overall trend, few say the well-established dollar dominance is about to quickly fade.

Part of that stems from the recent flare-up in tensions between the United States and Iran, with investors piling into safe-haven assets such as the yen, which hit a three-month high on Wednesday. That has parallels with market behaviour during bouts of worry about the U.S.-China trade war last year.

Despite repeated calls for a weaker dollar from analysts throughout last year, the greenback ended 2019 without losing any ground against most currencies. It is now expected to go on a winning streak for at least six months.

About 60 per cent of analysts in the Jan 6-9 Reuters poll who answered an additional question - 32 of 57 - said the dollar will continue to dominate the market either from six to 12 months or for more than a year. This time last year, over 60 per cent of forecasters said the dollar's rally had already stalled.

"Your forecast is one thing and your conviction levels another, and I think you can hear my conviction levels are pretty



U.S. dollar banknote is seen in this picture illustration. File photo.

weak," said John Hardy, head of FX strategy at Saxo Bank, citing the plunge in currency volatility late last year that left currency markets mostly rudderless.

"We all have to be a bit humble and see how this year shapes up."

However, with U.S. economic growth forecast to moderate this year and at the same time growth in other major economies expected to bottom out, the dollar could lose some of its shine.

"We're not telling investors to go out and buy euros. What we're telling investors is that the U.S. is converging back to Europe, there are tentative signs across the data set that Europe is stabilizing," said Jamie Fahy, global macro and asset allocation strategist at Citi.

"Broadly speaking, we're looking at the big picture

theme of U.S. exceptionalism probably reversing."

In a sign of dollar fatigue setting in, speculators have cut back their bets in favour of the greenback to the lowest in two months, according to the latest data from the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

But there is no clear consensus on which currency or currencies could take the dollar head-on.

Indeed, when analysts were asked which currencies were better poised to outperform the U.S. dollar this year, there was a near split among the poll respondents.

Twenty-seven of 62 chose emerging market currencies, while 22 opted for developed ones. The 13 others said no currency was likely to knock the dollar off its perch.

The euro, which has the potential to dent the dollar's strength, has fallen on hard

times, losing nearly 7% over the past couple of years.

However, analysts still expect the common currency to gain about 2% to trade around \$1.13 in six months and then end the year nearly 4% higher at \$1.15. It was last changing hands around \$1.11 on Thursday.

But much will depend on how euro zone economies perform.

"If the U.S. has to cut rates because it's under severe downward pressure in terms of growth and global growth is weak then it is harder to argue that the euro is going to see any material rebound," said Tim Riddell, macro strategist at Westpac.

Over two-thirds of analysts who answered a separate question said central bank policies and economic performance were likely to hold more sway on currency markets this year.

The remaining ones chose safe-haven buying and/or political tensions.

That comes despite political tensions in recent years shoring up demand for safe-haven bets like dollar- and yen-denominated assets.

Broadly, the more liquid and volatile Japanese yen was forecast to strengthen around 3 per cent by end-2020. The other popular safe-haven bet, the Swiss franc, was expected to rise by a touch less than 1% against the dollar in a year.

"Hopes for some reprieve from trade tensions reduced demand for safe haven assets into the final months of last year," said Jane Foley, head of FX strategy at Rabobank.

"Not only is this set to reverse in 2020 if China-U.S. relations sour again, but Iranian-U.S. tensions have already lifted demand for the yen on the spot market."

# Wall Street notches records on trade optimism, Apple gains

## NEW YORK

MAJOR U.S. stock indexes registered record closing highs on Thursday as optimism about a U.S.-China trade deal firmed and as Apple and other market heavyweights posted strong gains.

Also helping the market were easing concerns over tensions between the United States and Iran. U.S. President Donald Trump refrained from ordering more military action, and Iran's foreign

minister said the missile strikes on Iraqi bases that house U.S. forces had "concluded" Tehran's response.

Apple Inc gained 2.1% on twin support from data showing iPhone sales jumped more than 18% in China in December, as well as a price target hike by Jefferies on expectations of a strong finish to 2019. The S&P 500 technology sector .SPLRCT rose 1.1%, the top gainer among sectors.

The financial index .SPSY

ended up 0.77% after bullish brokerage comments on Citigroup Inc and Goldman Sachs Group Inc ahead of their earnings next week.

On trade, China's commerce ministry said Vice Premier Liu He will sign a Phase 1 deal in Washington next week.

Trump said his administration will start negotiating the Phase 2 trade agreement soon but that he might wait to complete any agreement until after November's

presidential election.

"Some of the things that have been worrying the market have gotten pushed to the side of the table," said Peter Tuz, president of Chase Investment Counsel in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 211.81 points, or 0.74 per cent, to 28,956.9, the S&P 500

gained 21.65 points, or 0.67%, to 3,274.7 and the Nasdaq Composite added 74.18 points, or 0.81%, to 9,203.43.

Investors have been closely monitoring tensions between the United States and Iran after the U.S. killing of a top Iranian general last week and Iran's retaliatory measures this week.

Among the day's decliners was the department store operator Kohl's Corp, which slid 6.5% after reporting lower holiday season

sales and warning of full-year earnings coming in at the bottom end of an already lowered forecast. Smaller rival J.C. Penney Co Inc tumbled 10.8 per cent after disappointing same-store sales numbers.

With the fourth-quarter earnings season kicking off next week, analysts expect profits for S&P 500 companies to drop 0.6% in their second consecutive quarterly decline, according to IBES data from Refinitiv.

Advancing issues outnumbered declining ones on the NYSE by a 1.35-to-1 ratio; on Nasdaq, a 1.40-to-1 ratio favored advancers.

The S&P 500 posted 78 new 52-week highs and no new lows; the Nasdaq Composite recorded 152 new highs and 14 new lows.

Volume on U.S. exchanges was 7.30 billion shares, compared with the 7.06 billion-share average for the full session over the last 20 trading days.

# World stocks hold onto gains, dollar under pressure

LONDON

World stocks clung to recent gains on Monday following healthy advances in Asia on hopes for a U.S.-China trade deal, a more optimistic growth outlook and a softer dollar, while the euro climbed to a 4-1/2 month high.

Yet European stock markets failed to follow the lead and took a breather following last week's record highs.

The pan-regional Euro Stoxx 600 STOXX was down 0.3% while Germany's DAX .GDAXI slipped 0.5%. Banks .SXP7, which had been lagging the 2019 rally, were the only sector to mark small gains in thin year-end trading.

"Investors appear to be growing a tad apprehensive about chasing the record setting U.S. equity market risk-reward premise into year-end," Stephen Innes at AxiTrader wrote in a note to clients. "Much focus continues to fall on the abundance of liquidity offered up by the Fed as a critical driver behind the late-season equity market window dressing."

Many Asian bourses had marked healthy gains with Chinese blue chips .CSI300 roaring 1.5% higher, bolstered by a report that 2019 retail sales are forecast

to rise 8% and expectations that a new benchmark for floating-rate loans could lower borrowing costs and boost flagging economic growth.

Yet Japan's Nikkei stock index .N225 finished its last trading day of the year down 0.76%. The index gained 18.2% in 2019 after dropping 12.8% last year.

Easing trade war worries have offered a lift to global equities this month, putting MSCI's global equity index .MIWD00000PUS on track for a 3.8% rise in December - its fourth straight month of gains.

U.S. futures ESQ1 NQCL YMC1 also pointed to a higher open after the S&P 500 .SPX and the Dow Jones Industrial Average .DJI closed at records on Friday.

In currency markets, the dollar index - measuring the currency against a basket of rivals - weakened 0.1% to 96.793 .DXY in its third straight session in the red. Thin end-of-year volumes exacerbated the broad weakness in the greenback which on Friday suffered its biggest one-day fall since June.

"The U.S. dollar is the worst performing G10 currency overnight," said MUF's Fritz Louw. "The main drivers of the weaker dollar have likely been risk appetite holding up in the wake of comments from the U.S. pertaining to a Phase



The German share price index DAX graph is pictured at the stock exchange in Frankfurt, Germany. File Photo

One trade deal recently as well as the U.S. Federal Reserve's continued repo operations."

The weak greenback helped other currencies shine. The euro climbed as high as \$1.121 its strongest level since mid-August. Sterling also benefited, rising 0.2% to \$1.322 GBP against the dollar. Yet the pound was flat against the euro at 85.38 pence amid concerns that Britain could

be headed for a disruptive "hard Brexit" at the end of 2020.

China's yuan held below the key level of 7 per dollar, rising in offshore markets to 6.9752 CNH its highest since Dec. 13.

In fixed income markets, rising risk appetite saw euro zone bond yields rise across the board, with most 10-year bond yields two basis points higher on the day. Germany's Bund yield stood

at -0.23% DEIOYT=RR, heading back toward recent six-month highs.

The softer dollar also lifted commodity markets with gold XAU= hitting a two month peak.

Oil prices held near three-month highs with traders also keeping a close watch on the Middle East following U.S. air strikes in Iraq and Syria against Kataib Hezbollah, an Iran-backed militia group. U.S. officials said on

Sunday that the attacks were successful, but warned "additional actions" may be taken to defend U.S. interests.

Global benchmark Brent crude LCOCL traded at \$68.33 a barrel and U.S. West Texas Intermediate CLCL stood at \$61.74.

Oil prices were also supported by a bigger-than-expected decline in crude inventories in the United States, the world's biggest fuel consumer.

# Mediaset seeks shareholder approval to ease pan-European plan

MILAN

Italy's biggest commercial broadcaster Mediaset has called a shareholder meeting on Friday over governance tweaks needed to ease a pan-European expansion plan which its second-largest investor Vivendi is fighting in court.

Controlled by the family of former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Mediaset last year approved a plan to merge its businesses in Italy and Spain under a Dutch-based company, called MediaForEurope (MFE). The broadcaster wants to use the new entity to pursue tie-ups with European peers to take on competition from streaming apps such as Netflix and web giants like Google. But French media group Vivendi, led by billionaire Vincent Bolloré, opposes the plan saying the governance structure of the new entity would strengthen Berlusconi's grip on the company.

In response to Vivendi's legal challenge, a Spanish court has provisionally put the merger on hold, while a decision by a Milan court over the French group's request to suspend the deal is still pending.

To increase the chances the Milan judge will rule in its favor, Mediaset called an extraordinary shareholder meeting for Jan. 10 to approve changes to the bylaws of MFE suggested by the court.

Vivendi however said in a letter to Mediaset's board last month that the proposed changes failed to address its concerns and called for a broader overhaul.

Doubts over the future Mediaset's pan-European plan increased after Mediaset and Vivendi failed to resolve their multiple legal disputes, including the one over MFE, with an out-of-court agreement.

Vivendi and Mediaset have been at odds since the French conglomerate withdrew from a deal to buy Mediaset's pay-TV unit and then built up a 29% stake in the group, which the Italian broadcaster considers hostile. Two thirds of that stake is held in a trust following a ruling by the Italian telecoms watchdog over Vivendi's excessive presence in the country's media and telecoms sectors given its 24% stake in Telecom Italia.

The Berlusconi family's holding company, Fininvest, holds 45.8% of Mediaset's voting rights, meaning it will almost certainly get its way on Friday, despite Vivendi's opposition if it bars the trust from voting as it has done in the past.

Mediaset's board will take a decision on whether to exclude the trust ahead of the shareholder meeting. The deadlock with Vivendi is weighing on Mediaset shares, which fell 5.5% in 2019 against a 27% rise in Italy's mid-cap

# US refinery sales hit the brakes, with 5pc of capacity on block

NEW YORK

FROM coast to coast, U.S. refineries are available for the taking, but nobody is buying.

With the news that Royal Dutch Shell Plc is looking to unload its Anacortes, Washington, facility, there are seven different U.S. refineries on the block now, accounting for about 5 per cent of U.S. crude oil processing capacity, according to available data.

Even with U.S. energy production at an all-time record, these properties, located from Washington state to Pennsylvania, are having trouble finding bidders because of unfavorable locales, worries about falling margins, and the coming restart of nearby facilities in the Caribbean that will add to competition, bankers and analysts said.

Just one U.S. refinery transaction closed last year: Chevron Corp's purchase of a Houston-area plant from Petrobras.

Prior to that, a flurry of corporate mergers saw independent refiners Alon, Western and Tesoro acquired by rivals. The consolidation left some acquirers, like Marathon Petroleum, with limited appetite or ability to consolidate the sector further.

"When some of your really big companies have stopped buying refineries, that really slows things down," said Matthew Blair, head of refin-



The Philadelphia Energy Solutions plant refinery is seen in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S. File photo.

ers equity research at Tudor Pickering Holt & Co.

In addition, new international shipping fuel regulations, known as IMO 2020, and the U.S. renewable fuels standard that requires

refineries to blend biofuels into their gasoline pool, has proved a deterrent, as both are seen as potentially detrimental for refining margins.

Last week, Exxon Mobil Corp said fourth-quarter

results would decline from the year-earlier period, citing weak margins in refining and chemicals.

PBF Energy Inc announced plans to buy a San Francisco-area refinery from

Shell in June, but that transaction has still not closed as expected. The company was not immediately available to comment.

CVR Energy Inc, which operates two refineries, said in

an October conference call that it failed to find a buyer for the company due to valuation disagreements.

East Coast assets have proven particularly tough to unload, as they lack both the scale of U.S. Gulf facilities and access to U.S. crude production. They also face competition from two shuttered Caribbean plants due to restart in coming months that have easier access to overseas crude and more flexible fuel distribution systems.

Philadelphia Energy Solutions put its 335,000-bpd refinery up for sale as part of a bankruptcy proceeding, and is expected to review bids in an auction next week. However, only one bidder has said it plans to revive refinery operations at the site, which shut last year after a fire.

Delta Airlines retained bankers to help sell its Trainer, Pennsylvania refinery almost a year ago, but has not found a buyer.

Exxon Mobil's Billings, Montana refinery, which has access to local crude and logistics systems, may not sell if a buyer is unwilling to pay a premium for the plant, people familiar with the process said.

Beyond market risk, potential buyers must contend with environmental risk due to liability, and the possibility of high-profile disasters like last year's blaze at Philadelphia Energy Solutions.



The Mediaset tower is seen in Cologno Monzese neighbourhood Milan, Italy. File photo.

# GM's 2019 China sales drop for second year on weak economy

SAN FRANCISCO

Alphabet Inc's Waymo said on Thursday that arbitrators had finalized a judgment of \$128 million, plus undisclosed legal costs and interest, against two former employees who went to rival Uber Technologies Inc.

The decision is the latest defeat for

Uber in a multi-pronged legal battle with Waymo over the development of self-driving vehicle technology. Last year, Uber said it could have to pay the entire judgment as part of indemnification pacts with the two workers.

The company did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Google, which spun off Waymo in 2016, alleged that year that engineer Anthony Levandowski and business leader Lior Ron breached various contracts as they brought Waymo employees and technology to Uber.

Waymo won an interim judgment last March, with Levandowski liable for \$127 million, while he and Ron were

together on the hook for a further \$1 million, according to previous disclosures.

The company last month was then awarded the legal fees, attorneys' fees and prejudgment interest, but the amounts were redacted in state court papers filed on Thursday in San Francisco.

Waymo said it was seeking court approval to publish the figures.

Ron remains at Uber. The company fired Levandowski in 2017 and said last year it would pursue reimbursement from him. Attorneys for Levandowski did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Waymo settled a related lawsuit

against Uber by securing a 0.34% stake in the company and an agreement that Uber would stop freely using Waymo technology.

Levandowski is separately fighting a federal indictment on charges of stealing trade secrets from Google's self-driving car efforts.



WORLD

France, others line up to probe plane crash in Iran blamed on missile

DUBAI

FRANCE said yesterday it was ready to join the investigation into the crash of a Ukrainian airliner in Iran that killed all 176 people aboard, after Canada and others said the plane had been brought down by an Iranian missile, probably by mistake.

Ukraine said it could not rule out a missile strike but that had not been confirmed. Iran denied a missile brought down the Boeing 737-800 shortly after take off.

French agency BEA helped analyze data from the flight recorder of a crashed Boeing plane in Ethiopia last year. Iran's state television showed footage purportedly of two black boxes, the voice and flight data recorders, from the Ukrainian plane.

The Ukraine International Airlines flight to Kiev from Tehran crashed on Wednesday, as Iran was on alert for a U.S. military response hours after firing missiles at U.S. targets in Iraq.

The incident adds to international pressure on Iran, after months of tension with the United States and then tit-for-tat military strikes. Washington killed an Iranian general last week in a drone attack in Iraq, prompting Tehran's missile launches.

In social media posts, ordinary Iranians voiced anger at their authorities for not closing the airport after Iran's missile launches. Scores of those on board

were Iranians with dual nationality.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, citing intelligence from Canada and other sources, blamed an Iranian missile for bringing down the plane that had 63 Canadians on board, although he said it "may well have been unintentional."

"The evidence indicates that the plane was shot down by an Iranian surface-to-air missile," he said.

France said it was ready to join Canada and other nations contributing to the investigation. "It is important that as much clarity as possible is made and as quickly as possible," French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said.

MISTAKE An Iranian official had earlier said France might be involved as it was one of the countries where the plane's engines are made.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said a missile strike could not be ruled out but it had not been confirmed.

A U.S. official, citing satellite data, said Washington had concluded with a high degree of certainty that anti-aircraft missiles brought down the plane in error.

A U.S. official said data showed the plane airborne for two minutes after departing Tehran when heat signatures of two surface-to-air missiles were detected. There was an explosion



Debris of a plane belonging to Ukraine International Airlines, that crashed after taking off from Iran's Imam Khomeini airport, is seen on the outskirts of Tehran, Iran on Wednesday. Nazanin Tabatabaee/WANA (West Asia News Agency) via REUTERS

in the vicinity and heat data showed the plane on fire as it fell. U.S. military satellites detect infrared emissions from heat. The New York Times said it had obtained a video appearing to show an Iranian missile hitting a plane near Tehran airport.

U.S. President Donald Trump told reporters he did not believe the crash of the airliner was due to a mechanical issue, saying "somebody could have made a mistake - on the other side."

A defense expert said the plane's radar signature would have been similar to a large U.S. military transport plane.

Iran denied the Ukrainian airliner had been hit by a missile, saying such reports were "psychological warfare against Iran."

"All those countries whose citizens were aboard the plane can send representatives and we urge Boeing to send its representative to join the process of investigating the black box," government spokesman Ali Rabie said in a statement.

COOPERATION

Iran's civil aviation organization said in an initial report less than 24 hours after the incident that the three-year-old airliner, which had its last scheduled maintenance on Monday, encountered a technical problem after takeoff and was heading

to a nearby airport before it crashed.

Investigations into airliner crashes require cooperation of regulators, experts and companies across jurisdictions. They can take months and initial reports in 24 hours are rare.

Iran said bodies and body parts recovered from the site of the crash were taken to the coroner's office for identification.

Ukraine has outlined four potential scenarios, including a missile strike and terrorism. Kiev said its investigators wanted to search the crash site for possible debris of a Russian-made missile used by Iran's military.

The Transportation Safety Board of Canada said it was making arrangements to tour the site after an Iranian invitation.

The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said it had designated an accredited representative to join the probe and was determining the level of participation.

Boeing said it would support the NTSB. The company is still reeling from two deadly crashes of 737 MAX planes, including the one in Ethiopia, that led to the plane's grounding in March 2019.

The 737-800 that crashed was built in 2016 and is the prior generation of the 737 before the MAX. Agencies

US Chamber urges Washington to tear down trade barriers

WASHINGTON

US Chamber of Commerce on Thursday urged the US government to retain its role as a champion for free trade, tear down barriers to trade and limit the use of tariffs.

"Let's not forget, American businesses and consumers pay the tariffs," Thomas Donohue, CEO of US Chamber of Commerce, said at the chamber's 2020 State of American Business event.

The phase-one trade deal between the United States and China, expected to be signed next week, "will begin to reduce harmful tariffs," Donohue said, noting that "both countries deserve credit" for reaching the agreement.

Donohue said the chamber has been a strong proponent for progress toward a comprehensive trade deal with China, urging the two sides to continue negotiations, resolve remaining issues and restore commercial relationship, which is "in both nations' interests."

The chamber's CEO praised the imminent passage of the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, and called for new negotiated agreements with Britain, European Union, Japan, Brazil and "burgeoning markets in Africa."

"Engaging with the world is our best strategy for strong national security and lasting prosperity," said Donohue, noting that staying engaged in the world also means remaining committed to the multilateral organizations and trading arrangements that the United States helped build.

He was referring to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Appellate Body, which no longer has enough judges to review dispute rulings due to US blocking of the nomination of new judges.

"We're very, very concerned about that, particularly with the questions of the judicial issues that at least provide a process to adjudicate differences without making an argument," Donohue told reporters at the event.

"Let's not shutter the WTO Appellate Body. Such drastic action doesn't serve America's interests," said Donohue.

Xinhua



Containers of China COSCO Shipping Corporation Limited are seen at the Port of Long Beach, Los Angeles County, the United States, on Feb 27, 2019. XINHUA

FAO: World food prices climbed to 5-year high in Dec

ROME

WORLD food prices climbed to their highest levels in five years in Dec. 2019, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on Thursday.

The latest increase marked the end of an up-and-down year for the FAO Food Price Index: prices climbed over the first five months of the year, then fell for three consecutive months before rising for four straight months to close out the year.

In December, the index rose 2.5 percent compared to November, and was more than 10 percent higher than at the start of the year and at its highest point since Dec. 2014.

Vegetable oils and sugar were the main products pushing the index higher in December, rising 9.4 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively. The FAO said that sugar prices climbed as Brazilian growers used more of their supplies to make ethanol for fuel.

Prices for grains and cereals -- the main components of the index -- climbed a modest 1.4 percent, more or less offsetting a drop in prices in November. Prices for rice and corn were almost unchanged compared to November. The grain and cereal index finished the year 0.9 percent lower than at the start, despite an increase in December.

Dairy prices rose 3.3 percent in December. Meat prices, meanwhile, were unchanged compared to November.

The monthly FAO Food Price Index is based on worldwide prices for 23 food commodity categories covering prices for 73 different products compared to a baseline year.

Xinhua

NHK says Japan seeks Interpol Red Notice for Ghosn's wife

By Bloomberg

JAPAN is seeking an Interpol "Red Notice" for Carole Ghosn, the wife of Carlos Ghosn, the latest move by the country to put pressure on the former auto executive after his surprise escape from trial.

Investigators have already asked International Criminal Police Organization for the notice, which could restrict Carole Ghosn's movements outside of Lebanon, where she joined her husband, national broadcaster NHK reported, citing unidentified sources.

A representative for Japan's Ministry of Justice declined to comment on the report. Interpol didn't respond to a request seeking comment.

Interpol has already issued a Red Notice for Carlos Ghosn upon the request of the Japanese government.

If one is granted for Carole, it would make it difficult for her to leave the Mediterranean country, although, as Interpol stresses, "a Red Notice is an international wanted persons notice, but it is not an arrest warrant."

Ghosn, the former chairman of Renault SA and Nissan Motor Co., made his way to Beirut at the end of December after fleeing Japan to



escape what he called the country's "hostage" legal system.

He is accused of financial misconduct by Japanese prosecutors, charges he has consistently rejected since his November 2018 arrest.

Prosecutors in Japan had issued a warrant for Carole's arrest earlier this week, saying that she gave

false testimony in court last April.

That means she could be arrested if she returns to Japan. Ghosn had been barred from meeting his wife while he was on bail in Japan, because authorities believed she had been aiding him in covering up for his crimes.

That was the "straw that broke the camel's back" in his decision to flee, Ghosn told Fox Business Network's Maria Bartiromo.

Ghosn's family views the arrest warrant as an effort to intimidate him before his press conference in Beirut on Wednesday, according to a person close to the family who asked not to be identified discuss-

ing private conversations.

Carole was truthful in her testimony, the person said. Ghosn was re-arrested in Japan in early April just after announcing plans to speak to journalists there.

The Ghosns were together when he was arrested last April for the fourth time, during an early morning raid into their apartment.

Carole has said that her privacy was invaded in the process, with a female prosecutor waiting for her as she exited the shower.

Her Lebanese passport and mobile phones were confiscated by the authorities, according to Ghosn's lawyers. Agencies

China's battle against poverty 'a huge success' - Egyptian parliamentarian

CAIRO

CHINA'S efforts in fighting poverty has been "a huge success", making the country a major contributor to the world's poverty reduction endeavors, said Tariq al-Kholy, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Committee in the Egyptian House of Representatives.

By continuing with such efforts, China is expected to wipe out extreme poverty in 2020, al-Kholy told Xinhua in a recent exclusive interview.

High poverty rates are recorded in many countries, the Chinese experience in tackling the severe

problem is an "inspiration to the world," he said.

Calling China's anti-poverty accomplishment a "real miracle", he said China lifted over 800 million people out of poverty during the past several decades, representing over 70 percent of global poverty reduction.

Al-Kholy (pictured) took part in the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China in 2019. He said after 70 years China is making success in its main challenge which is lifting the people from the depths of poverty.

He attributed the success to the



reform and opening-up policies, noting that China witnessed rapid growth during the past four decades.

The Egyptian parliamentarian hailed the Belt and Road Initiative, a project that aims at bringing win-win interests for countries.

Egypt and other countries along the Belt and Road will achieve economic gains from the project, he added.

Having visited China for five times since 2017, al-Kholy said his interaction with Chinese officials and society has left him a very positive impression about the country's development at all levels.

The Egyptian parliamentarian said what impressed him most during his China visits was that the country is maintaining rapid technological progress while preserving its cultural heritage.

Japan PM heading to Mideast as planned ahead of SDF dispatch

TOKYO

JAPANESE Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is proceeding as planned with a trip to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Oman from the weekend, ahead of dispatching a warship and patrol planes to the Middle East and despite heightened tensions in the area.

Media had reported this week the trip would be cancelled as tensions rose in the region after the US killing of Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani and a retaliatory missile attack by Iran on US forces in Iraq.

But Abe will visit the region as intended from Jan 11-15, chief cabinet

secretary Yoshihide Suga said at a news conference yesterday.

"Given the rising regional tensions, this trip is taking place to exchange opinions with these three nations as one part of Japanese diplomacy aimed at diffusing the overall situation," Suga said.

Suga declined to give details when asked how the decision to keep the trip scheduled had been made other than saying it was based on studying the regional situation.

Opposition politicians had criticized reports of the trip's cancellation given there was no change in plans to send Japan's Self Defence Forces there, a move they oppose due



to the increasingly fraught situation in the area.

Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono was set to issue the deployment order later on Friday for the warship and two P-3C patrol planes for information gathering to protect Japanese ships in the Middle East, from which Japan gets nearly 90 percent of its crude oil.

Under the plan, which was approved by Japan's cabinet late last month, a special order will be issued by the Japanese defense minister to allow the forces to use weapons to protect ships in danger if there are any emergencies.

In May and June 2019, there were

several attacks on international merchant vessels in the region, including the Japanese-owned tanker Kokuka Courageous, which the United States blamed on Iran. Tehran denies the allegations.

The planned operation is set to cover high seas in the Gulf of Oman, the northern Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and Suga said Abe would be explaining the mission to leaders in the countries he visits.

The patrol planes will leave Japan on Jan 11 and start their mission in the area later this month, while the warship is likely to leave Japan early in February, media reported.

Agencies







In this Sept. 24, 2018 file photo, Bill Cosby arrives for his sentencing hearing at the Montgomery County Courthouse, in Norristown, Pa. Cosby has appealed a court decision last month that upheld his conviction for drugging and sexually assaulting a woman at his home. He filed his latest appeal Thursday, Jan. 9, 2020, with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which does not have to take the case. Cosby is serving a three- to 10-year prison term at a maximum-security state prison in Pennsylvania. (AP Photo)

## Bill Cosby asks Pennsylvania high court to review conviction

BY MARYCLAIRE DALE

COMEDIAN Bill Cosby filed an appeal Thursday of a court decision last month that upheld his conviction for drugging and sexually assaulting a woman at his home.

The latest appeal – filed with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which does not have to take the case – focuses on four key trial issues, including the judge's decision to let five other accusers testify and to send Cosby to trial despite what he called a binding agreement with an earlier prosecutor that he would not be charged in the case.

Cosby, 82, is serving a three- to 10-year prison term at a maximum-security state prison in Pennsylvania. His lawyers called the 2004 encounter consensual, but a jury found otherwise in April 2018, convicting him on all three felony counts in the first celebrity trial of the #MeToo era.

The appeal was filed as jury selection gets underway this week in the case that launched that national movement of people coming forward with accounts of sexual assault or harassment. Movie mogul Harvey Weinstein has been charged in New York with raping one woman sexually assaulting another. Several other women are expected to testify about similar experiences with Weinstein.

Cosby had been a mentor to the accuser whose allegations formed the basis of the case against him. Andrea Constand at the time was on the staff of the women's basketball team at

his alma mater, Temple University.

In the filing, Cosby's lawyers said the rulings upheld by the state Superior Court last month would have "far-reaching consequences for all future criminal proceedings, including those that proceed outside the national spotlight."

They include the judge's decision to let jurors hear portions of Cosby's deposition testimony in a related civil suit Constand filed. In the deposition, Cosby acknowledged giving Constand three pills before the sexual encounter and spoke of giving quaaludes in the 1970s to another accuser before engaging in sex with her.

Given the current cultural context, lawyer Brian W. Perry wrote that allowing other accusers to testify in a sex assault case "flips constitutional jurisprudence on its head, and the 'presumption of guilt,' rather than the presumption of innocence, becomes the premise."

Cosby's lawyers, in the appeal, also challenge his classification as a sexually violent predator subject to lifetime supervision when he leaves prison.

Cosby, asserting his innocence, has said he will never express remorse to the parole board and therefore expects to serve the entire 10-year sentence.

The Associated Press typically does not name people who say they have been victims of sexual assault without their permission, which Constand has granted.

AP

## R. Kelly girlfriend pleads not guilty to battery charge

CHICAGO

A FIGHT between two of R. Kelly's girlfriends inside the embattled singer's Trump Tower condominium led to a domestic battery charge against one of them and sent the other to the hospital, Chicago police said Thursday.

Joycelyn Savage, 24, was taken into custody after allegedly punching a 22-year-old woman in the face Wednesday, police said. She was charged with misdemeanor domestic battery.

Savage's hands were shackled as she appeared in Cook County Circuit Court on Thursday to plead not guilty to the charges. The assistant public defender representing Savage asked that she be released on a recognition bond, and Judge Erika Orr agreed.



In this Feb. 23, 2019, photo, Joycelyn Savage, right, a girlfriend of R. Kelly, leaves the Leighton Criminal Courthouse in Chicago following the R&B star's first court appearance on sexual abuse charges. Chicago police said Thursday, Jan. 9, 2020, that Savage was taken into custody Wednesday, Jan. 8 after allegedly punching another girlfriend of R. Kelly's in the face inside the embattled singer's Trump Tower condominium. Savage was charged with misdemeanor domestic battery. (AP Photo)

been living with Kelly before he was jailed last year on sexual abuse and other charges, began shortly after 2 p.m. when police were called to the Trump Tower building for a "battery in progress" involving two women. Officer Anthony Spicuzza told the Chicago Tribune.

The women were separated and when officers arrived, the 22-year-old woman told them that she and Savage had an argument that became physical when the older woman allegedly hit her in the face.

Savage, whose home address is listed in the same block as Trump Tower, fled but later turned herself in to police and was arrested on signed complaints, authorities said. She has a court date scheduled for Feb. 6 at the county's domestic violence courthouse.

The younger woman was taken to Northwestern Memorial Hospital, where she was listed in good condition, Spicuzza said.

"It was a battery; it was a fight, but I don't know what condition she's in," Fire Department spokesman Larry Merritt said, adding that the injuries were not life-threatening.

A series of videos posted to Instagram show the 22-year-old woman angrily confronting Savage before a scuffle broke out between the two. In one video, the 22-year-old told officers she was in the unit with a few other people when Savage and another woman – a "handler" for Kelly – arrived to pick up Kelly's "awards and his Grammys and stuff," the Chicago Sun-Times reported.

"She came to me and attacked me and I had to defend myself," the 22-year-old told police, alleging that Savage hit her with her hands and her phone and tried to kick her, as well.

AP

## Westbrook scores 34 in return, but Thunder roll past Rockets



Houston Rockets guard Russell Westbrook (0) drives against Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (2) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Jan. 9, 2020, in Oklahoma City. (AP Photo)

OKLAHOMA CITY

THE Oklahoma City Thunder spoiled Russell Westbrook's return.

Westbrook scored 34 points, but the Thunder beat the Houston Rockets 113-92 on Thursday night.

Westbrook was a league MVP and two-time scoring champ for the Thunder before being traded to the Rockets last summer for Chris Paul and draft picks.

The fans remember him as the star who stayed after Kevin Durant left for then-rival Golden State in 2016, and they showered him with appreciation before the game. There was a tribute video, then loud cheers as he was introduced with enthusiasm, in the same manner as a home Thunder player. The crowd stood, cheered loudly and even chanted M-V-P as the announcer moved on to other players.

Westbrook even ran over to a corner of the court and exhorted the crowd before the tip, just like he did when he played for the Thunder.

"Some things you can't put into words," Westbrook said. "I've been here for so long and so many great memories, great people. The absolute best fans in the world because they come with it, and tonight they came with it."

The atmosphere also lifted the Thunder.

"The energy was amazing," Paul said. "Our first nationally televised game and Russ being back so we knew that the crowd - I mean the crowd is always great, but we knew it was going to be a different energy tonight

with Russ' first game back here and I mean, you've got to get excited during the player intros. Shai (Gilgeous-Alexander) and I were just sitting over there talking about, you know, 'All right, let's get to it.'"

It was a strange day for Westbrook. He said he had never even seen the visiting locker room during his 11-year run in Oklahoma City. It was a bit odd for him early in the game when the crowd that he so often riled to a fever pitch was cheering for the other team during a run that put the Rockets on their heels.

"Definitely different, but once you start hooping and competing, you kind of zone it out a little bit," he said.

Westbrook scored 18 points in the first half, but the Thunder led 60-48 at the break after shooting 53.8% from the field. The Thunder extended their lead throughout the second half. Westbrook was subbed out with 7:18 remaining.

Danilo Gallinari led the Thunder with 23 points and 11 rebounds and Gilgeous-Alexander added 20 points.

Houston's James Harden, who entered the night averaging a league-best 38.5 points, was held to 17 on 5-for-17 shooting.

After the game, Westbrook embraced several Thunder players, then went over and hugged Thunder owner Clay Bennett. He acknowledged the crowd one last time before he exiting on the opposite end of the floor from his days as a Thunder player.

Westbrook was the last remaining player from the team that began playing in Oklahoma City in 2008 after the franchise left Seattle.

"I don't regret one thing being here in Oklahoma City," he said. "I don't regret signing back, I don't regret staying here. I don't regret anything that I did here. I feel like I left everything out on the floor every single night and did what I could for the city."

Meanwhile, in Minneapolis, with Karl-Anthony Towns sidelined for nearly a month, the Minnesota Timberwolves have had to find ways to make up for his scoring. They've also tightened things up on the defensive end in their star big man's absence.

That was certainly the case again Thursday night against Portland.

Andrew Wiggins scored 23 points, Gorgui Dieng had 12 points and 10 rebounds and Minnesota shut down the Trail Blazers 116-102.

Minnesota smothered the Trail Blazers all night. The Timberwolves held Portland to 13 points on 6-of-22 shooting in the second quarter, the fewest points the Blazers have scored in a quarter this year.

"We have discovered our identity that our defense is going to carry us," said Timberwolves guard Josh Okogie, who had two steals and two blocks. "That's just what we have to be every night."

Damian Lillard led Portland with 20 points and eight of the team's 14 assists. CJ McCollum and Hassan Whiteside each added 15 points.

Thursday was the last game of a five-game trip for Portland.

"Overall we were a little bit tired," Lillard said. "It's usually like that at the end of the trip, when you know you're going

home after the game, been on the road for a long time and we just didn't have the kind of energy that we needed tonight."

The Timberwolves took control with a big run to start the second quarter. Led by Keita Bates-Diop and Wiggins, Minnesota used a 20-4 run to turn an eight-point deficit into a 46-38 lead.

The Wolves' lead grew to as much as 27 in the third, allowing coach Ryan Saunders to play his backups for the entire fourth quarter.

"They gained the momentum right at the start of the third quarter, and all of a sudden it's a 20-point game," Portland coach Terry Stotts said. "It is pretty deflating when that happens."

Minnesota entered Thursday's game with the best defensive rating in the league since Dec. 26 and was holding opponents to an average of 103.6 points. That defense was on display against Portland in the second quarter.

The Wolves had four steals - two by Robert Covington - and turned four Portland turnovers into eight points during the dominant second quarter. Minnesota outscored the Blazers 31-13 in the second to take a 59-47 lead.

"We're a better offensive team when we defend," Saunders said. "We had a number of guys step up. Holding a team like that to 13 points in a quarter, that's a big credit to that locker room."

Minnesota put up 41 points in the third quarter as the Timberwolves went on cruise control. Wiggins scored nine of his 23 points in the third.

AP



This week's SportPesa Jackpot bonus winner, Oliva Andrea Shirima (R), gets a dummy cheque of 5,334,294/- from SportPesa's Chairman of Board of Directors, Tarimba Abbas, at the company's offices in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Oliva has been the first woman to win the bonus this year. The SportPesa Jackpot cash prize currently stands at 392,233,700/- . PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT



# SPORT

Liverpool march towards history as top-four race heats up

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## TPC keen on promoting sports among women with disabilities

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA Paralympic Committee (TPC) has said it has plans to create awareness on the importance of engaging women with disabilities in sporting activities.

Tuma Dandi, TPC secretary general, in an exclusive interview, said they have noted with great concern that the country has very few disabled women involved in sports.

Dandi said Tanzania has not put much emphasis on sports especially to people with disabilities and in many societies it is treated as inhuman to involve women with disabilities into sports.

He said TPC is working closely with International Paralympic Committee (IPC) which is advocating for more disabled women participating in sporting activities as stipulated on article 30 of the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The TPC official said sports are important to all human beings but they are more significant to disabled persons as success gives them self-confidence.

Dandi said he is aware of the challenges which hinder women with disabilities from participating in sports.

He added the TPC, though, is ready to change those mindsets, saying sports play a major role in rehabilitating people with disabilities into society.

He asked the society to embrace inclusive sports programs as it is essential that everyone that makes up a community is equally important regardless of gender, race, physical or mental disability.

"We strongly believe that everyone has something to contribute to society what we need to do is give them the space, opportunity and platform to show their talents," he added.

"With support from Germany-based institution, Agitos Foundation, and National Sports Council (NSC) we have been organizing seminars and meeting which are aimed at sensitizing disabled women on the importance of sports."

"The aim of those seminars and meetings are to encourage them (women with disabilities) to be involved in sporting activities," he said.

He said TPC believes that through civic education on the importance of sports to people with disabilities the mindset of many people will change.

He further he said some communities look down on people with disabilities and even parents and guardians of disabled children often see them as a burden.

Children with disabilities are, for that matter, kept or left at home, denying them social engagement with their peers and, in most cases, sports events.

The TPC official said they will start with schools before reaching family level and he is hopeful that the civic education will make many female disabled people to love sports.

He pleaded with the public to opt out of either discouraging or frustrating women with disabilities from engaging in sporting activities, saying nowadays sports are a source of income.

"We know that there are cultural and mind-set barriers which hinder people with disabilities, especially women from engaging in sports, as the association we are geared to change that," he disclosed.

"Sports has a rehabilitative influence, not only on the physical body, but the mind as well."

"Moreover, sports teach independence while encouraging team work, sports can be a space where those with and without disabilities can equally participate, demonstrating what real inclusion looks like to those who would try and keep them segregated," he said.

He disclosed that organizers of Tokyo Paralympic Games have asked TPC to prepare more women disabled athletes for the games.

Tanzania, though, currently has only three female athletes with disabilities, namely Bedina Nyinyimbe, Sauda Njopeka and Bernadeta Kinyero, who can ably represent the country at the Tokyo Paralympic Games.

## Simba, Yanga, Azam FC handed home draws in Federation Cup last 32



Yanga players take part in drills in Dar es Salaam to prepare for this year's Azam Sports Federation Cup third round clash against Iringa United, which took place in the city on December 21 last year. Yanga won 4-0. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

THIS year's Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) round of 32 draw was conducted in Dar es Salaam yesterday afternoon with no seeding taking place among teams from the Vodacom Premier League, First Division League (FDL) and the Second Division League (SDL).

The final spots for the round of 32, slated for January 24-26, were completed over the past month, and the stage features nine FDL sides and SDL teams joining the remaining 17 Vodacom Premier League sides.

Defending champions Azam FC will take on Friends Rangers at Uhuru Stadium in the city.

The two sides are known to have played against each

multiple times in friendlies every season, making this one of the most played fixtures in Tanzania.

Last season's losing finalists Lipuli were drawn at home too, with a tricky last 32 outing against SDL side Kitayosa SC from Kilimanjaro.

Simba are at home against Mwadui who are the only side to have claimed maximum points

against the former, popularly known as 'Msimbazi Reds', in this campaign so far.

The tournament's 2015/16 season champions, Young Africans (Yanga), were drawn at home too, with a tricky last 32 outing against Prisons.

Last month Yanga claimed a hard fought 1-0 victory over Prisons in a Premier League match played at Samora Stadium

in Iringa following the banning of the dilapidated Mbeya's Sokoine Stadium.

Namungo and Biashara United will face each other in an all-Premier League clash while Panama FC and Mtwivila tie guarantees there will be a SDL side in the round of 16.

There will be two all-FDL ties, Stand United will be away to Majimaji FC and Ihefu FC are set to host Gipco.

In total, there are four all-Premier League ties in the round of 32. Police Tanzania and Mbeya City FC were two other VPL teams drawn against each other

All the ties are to be played over the weekend of January 24-27.

ASFC last 32 draw:

Gwambina vs Ruvu Shooting, African Sports vs Alliance, Polisi Tanzania vs Mbeya City FC.

Ndanda FC vs Dodoma FC, Majimaji FC vs Stand United, Ihefu FC vs Gipco, KMC FC vs Pan Africa, Panama vs Mtwivila

Namungo FC vs Biashara, Mtwila Sugar vs Sahare All Stars, JKT Tanzania vs Tukuyu Stars.

Simba SC vs Mwadui FC, Yanga SC vs Tz Prisons, Azam FC vs Friends Rangers, Kagera Sugar vs Mighty Elephant, Lipuli FC vs Kitayosa FC.

## Rukwa set to host 2020 Federation Cup final

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA Football Federation (TFF) has announced that this year's Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) final will be played in Sumbawanga, Rukwa in May.

The federation's Director of Competitions, Salum Madadi, disclosed at the ASFC draw for round 32, which took place in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the final will be held on May 30 and he has advised Rukwa regional football association to look for the venue where the final will be held.

"As everyone is aware the last year's Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) final was held in Lindi and this year's final will be played in Sumbawanga, Rukwa on May 30. I have instructed the Rukwa regional football association to look for the venue which the finals will be played," he said.

In the draw for the competition's round of 32 all matches have been scheduled for January 24-26 at difference venues.

Many games involving Dar es Salaam-based teams will be played at Uhuru Stadium.

The yesterday draw saw many Premier League teams being paired against lower leagues' sides, with



Tanzania Football Federation (TFF)'s Director of Competitions, Salum Madadi.

only three elite teams facing each other.

Simba will play Mwadui, Young Africans (Yanga) will take on Prisons, Mbeya City will come up against Polisi Tanzania.

Azam Football Club are the competition's defending champions. They beat Lipuli FC 1-0 in the final, which took place at Majaliwa Stadium in Lindi.

The defending champions will play against Friends Rangers at Uhuru Stadium.

In other fixture, Namungo will play against Biashara United, Mtwila Sugar will come up against Sahare All Stars and JKT Tanzania will

lock horns with Tukuyu Stars.

Other games which will also be played on the same dates are Kagera Sugar vs Mighty Elephants, Lipuli vs Kitayosa SC, Gwambina vs Ruvu Shooting, African Lyon vs Alliance FC, Ndanda FC vs Dodoma FC, Majimaji vs Stand United, Ihefu vs Gipco FC, KMC FC vs Pan Africans and Panama vs Mtwivila City.

On top of taking home cash prize, medals and trophy, the ASFC winners represent the country at Confederation of African Football (CAF) Confederation Cup.

## Labuschagne aspires to Virat Kohli's all-forms mastery

SYDNEY

HAVING dominated the home Test summer, Marnus Labuschagne wants to become a multi-format master in the vein of Virat Kohli, Kane Williamson, Joe Root and his friend and team-mate Steven Smith as he embarks on a first ODI tour for Australia to face India on the subcontinent.

It was in the 50-over game that Labuschagne first showed promise as a busy middle-order batsman, winning player of the tournament in the domestic limited-overs tournament in 2016 for Queensland before being part of the National Cricket Centre intake the following year.

He subsequently earned his chance for Australia in Test matches, making a quantum leap during the 2019 Ashes in England and then carrying on to still more masterful displays against Pakistan and New Zealand. Now, granted the chance to be part of Australia's white-ball squad for the first time, Labuschagne has revealed the long-term consistency and a role across formats for the national team are his major goals for the future.

"You look at the guys I look up to and aspire to - Steve Smith, Virat Kohli, Kane Williamson, Joe Root. They've been doing it for a very long time, five, six years they've been consistent, not just in one format, but two or more formats," Labuschagne told ESPNcricinfo before departing for India. "So for me personally there's a lot to learn and a lot to grow, because I've had some success this summer but the real challenge for me is to be more consistent going on and being able to keep putting continued performances on the board."

"If I can continue to do that, then that's obviously going to be the challenge for me, and getting an opportunity in this one-day series is an opportunity for me to show a slightly different part of my game that we haven't seen

this summer, but that's a really exciting challenge too."

As an example for the type of adaptable, evolving batsman Labuschagne would like to be, he admitted that the standard set by Michael Hussey for Australia, where he started life as an opening batsman but developed into a player capable of playing just about any role in the top six, while also adding power to his game to dominate the back end of an innings, was a hard one to ignore.

"With the opportunities that might come in the next few months, we'll have to see, but definitely Michael Hussey is a great person to learn from," Labuschagne said. "The way he played the one-day game, the way he finished off the innings and the way he probably started his innings. There are a few similarities there, but I'm definitely not comparing myself to Michael Hussey. My job is to just enjoy these next couple of weeks and then we'll go from there."

"I can't look too far ahead of myself and that's one thing I've been able to do the whole summer, keep it really clear, take it game by game, enjoy the moment, make sure I'm really well prepared and really ready to go, but not getting too far ahead of myself is a really key thing for me."

The likelihood for Labuschagne is that he will play a somewhat different role for Australia than for Queensland, where this season he batted at No. 3. With Aaron Finch, David Warner, and Smith seemingly locked into the top order for Australia, Labuschagne, Peter Handscomb, Alex Carey and Ashton Turner will be juggled in the remaining spots. Labuschagne's wrist spin bowling, part of the reason he was chosen for Australia's Test side in the first place, will also be a factor, particularly in the absence of Glenn Maxwell's off-breaks.

AGENCIES

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

