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TANZANIA

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JPM projects 8m jobs, 8.0 pc annual growth

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

PRESIDENT John Magufuli has laid out his priorities for the next five years, saying the thrust will be on the transformation of key sectors of the economy. This would include the creation of eight million jobs, supported by an annual growth rate of eight per cent.

He made remarks to this effect here yesterday when inaugurating the 12th Parliament - in a speech that lasted some 85 minutes, saying the government would achieve this by embarking on major investment and rehabilitation projects in partnership with the private sector.

He said that during his second term, the government will invest heavily in improving the business environment

“We have no time to lose in the next five years. I want Tanzanians to live a happier life by having a favourable income”

US govt agency faults Trump's fraud claims

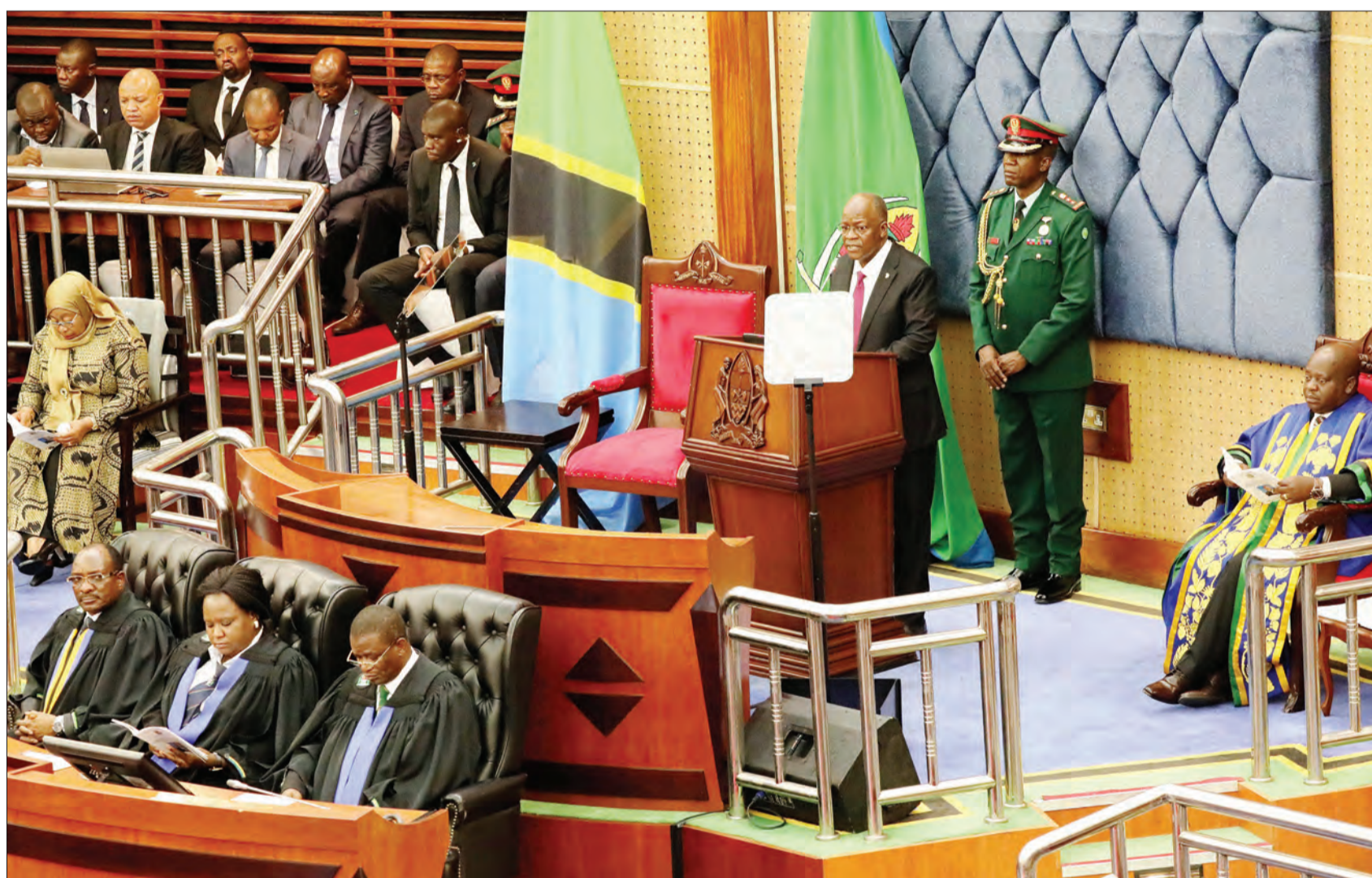
WASHINGTON, DC

THE US Department of Homeland Security, equivalent to a ministry of Home Affairs, has declared that the 2020 presidential election was the "most secure in American history," rejecting incessant claims of fraud by President Donald Trump.

"There is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised," an official evaluation committee announced yesterday.

The joint statement was released by the Election Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council - which is made up of senior

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President John Magufuli inaugurates the 12th Parliament in Dodoma yesterday, the audience including Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan and National Assembly Speaker Job Ndugai. Photo courtesy of National Assembly.

Tourism taking centre stage in govt priorities

● New plan to bring US\$6bn annually from five million tourists

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

THE government intends to invest heavily in the tourism sector in the next five years, the target being to increase the number of arrivals to five million per year by 2025.

Inaugurating the 12th Parliament here yesterday, President John Magu-

fuli said the investments are projected to boost the sector's revenues to US\$6 billion. Recent statistics released by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism show that the number of tourists entering the country increased from 1.3m in 2017 to 1.5m in 2018, with tourism generating \$2.4 billion, a 7.2 per cent

rise from \$2.3 billion in 2017. "Tourism is another industry that we will focus on in the next five years. The industry employs approximately four million people. In the past five years, the sector has grown at a satisfactory rate, with the number of tourists visiting the country increasing from 1,137,182 in 2015

to 1,510,151 tourists in 2019," he said.

Revenue collection from the sector increased from US\$1.9 billion in 2015 to US\$2.6 billion in 2019, he stated.

"I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our Serengeti

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Hawker IDs particulars, photos to ease loan access

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

THE government has unveiled plans to improve small traders' business cards into proper identification documents with holders' personal particulars and photos so as to enable them access loans.

In a speech to inaugurate the 12th Parliament yesterday, President John Magufuli said that small traders now have every reason to smile as they are going to intensely



benefit from their investments.

The new IDs will contain feature personal references of a particular trader and a passport size photo, improving recognition in financial institutions, he said.

"As I promised during the campaign period, in the next five years the government will continue to improve the business environment for small-

scale entrepreneurs including male and female food vendors, hawkers, motorcycle and tricycle riders.

"We will improve the IDs to add traders' photographs and other important information from the National Identity Cards office to enable traders be trusted by financial institutions to access loans to improve their projects," he said.

The president declared that the government will continue to improve the country's macroeconomic and monetary policies, while ensuring that indicators of economic growth like the value of our currency, inflation and interest rates remain in a state of tranquility.

The government will strengthen empowerment pro

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JPM projects 8m jobs, 8.0 pc annual growth

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so as to attract investors from inside the country and the rest of the world.

The government has recognized the importance of having a conducive environment for business and investment operations, so treating investors fairly will spur the country's social and economic development, he declared.

He directed ministers of agriculture, trade and investment as well as livestock and fisheries sectors who will be appointed soon to get prepared for a huge task ahead as the government seeks to totally revamp these sectors.

"We have no time to lose in the next five years. I want Tanzanians to live a happier life by having a favourable income. My government is well prepared to empower farmers to invest in modern farming technologies, farming inputs and all supporting tools to enable them produce quality crops and reap big from the sector.

He noted that Tanzania spends 1.3trillion/- to import food, saying "this is a huge amount, so we should strengthen systems to ensure that we produce enough food within the country. We will invest in irrigation schemes."

In the fisheries sector, the government plans to purchase eight fishing ships for deep sea activity as well as building fish processing factories, with capacity for over 30,000 employment opportunities.

President Magufuli said that all these priorities have been highlighted in the CCM Election Manifesto for 2020-2025.

Other areas of priority include improvement of social services that directly touch the lives of ordinary people like water, electricity, health, education and transport. All are expected to undergo structural adjustments to meet the needs of the majority of the people, he said.

He reiterated that the government will strengthen health services by extending health insurance to the entire population, to enable people "enjoy their lives and spend much time in income generating activities."

On the development of the blue economy, the president said the government will ensure the sustainable use of marine resources for economic growth.

This calls for major investments in maritime transport, coastal tourism and natural gas, which can contribute significantly towards socio-economic development, he stated.

"Other areas for concentration in propelling economic growth include strengthening the financial sector, deepening inclusion of the private sector in economic activity, fighting poverty at individual and national level, improvement of entrepreneurship and strengthening the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF)," he elaborated.

The Head of State further said that in the past five years, the government took a number of measures to ensure that traders and investors operate smoothly, by reviewing policies and laws in the course of implementation of various uplifting strategies.

He pointed at the Blueprint on Regulatory and Licensing Reform, where various laws and policies are being reviewed, including those governing Value Added Tax (VAT), indicative prices for imports, immigration and labour.

Others relate to social security and environmental management, where the review exercise is geared to attracting more local and international investors, he said.

There is also the process of improving infrastructures such as roads, railways, ports and power supply, he said, pointing out that the government has invested much in the aviation and marine sectors by purchasing more airplanes and ships. He urged the private sector to increase investment in the leading growth potential areas to enhance efforts for sustainable economic growth.

Tanzania has a number of investment opportunities with land available for agriculture, livestock keeping and other potentials which are yet to be fully exploited, he said.

Whilst the private sector is recognized as the engine of growth, more work needs to be done to develop meaningful dialogue and partnership between the public and private sectors in policy formulation and critical decision making at initial stages to ensure socio-economic development that is both inclusive and sustainable, he declared.

Despite strides made by the government to fight weaknesses in the public service, bureaucracy and corruption still exists in some government agencies thus thwarting investment efforts, he stated.

Investors and business people have been complaining about the bureaucracy exercised by some public bodies and agencies, where the president vowed to address all of them in the next five years.

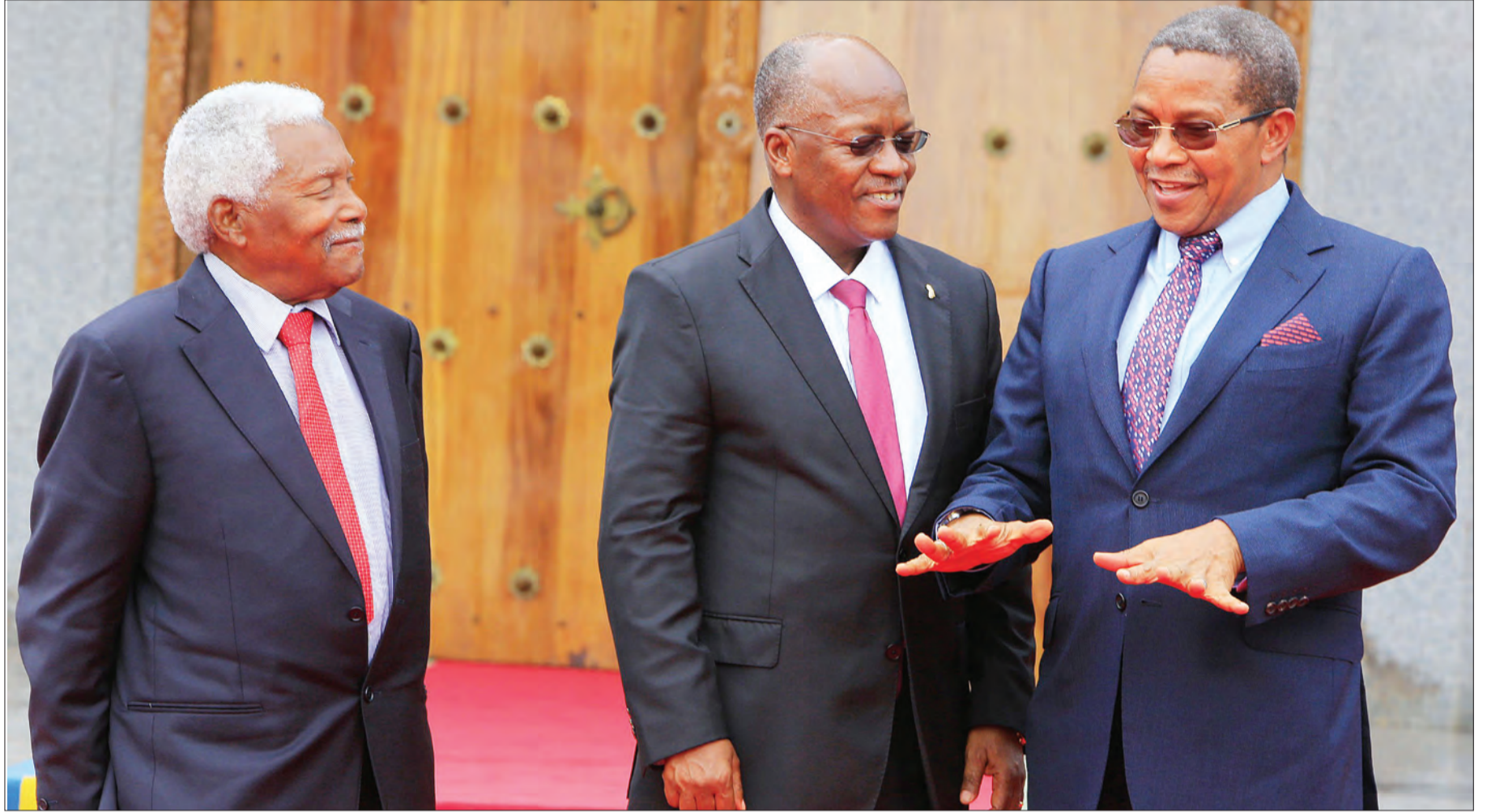
"I want investors to be treated well, that is why I have decided to shift the Ministry of Investment and the Investment Centre (TIC) from the Prime Minister's Office to the President's Office," he pointed out, indicating that from that vantage point he can exercise more effective control on leaders.

"I will act harder towards those who will be found delaying implementation of the government's goals," he warned.

He similarly vowed to defend the country's peace, freedom and the union, working closely with Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Mwinyi to fulfill development plans. "We will not spare anyone who will try to infringe on the peace, unity and union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar," he affirmed.

High profile dignitaries who attended the ceremony included Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan, Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, Zanzibar Second Vice President Hemed Suleiman Abdallah, Chief Justice Prof Ibrahim Khamis Juma and East African Legislative Assembly Speaker Ngoga Martin.

Former presidents Ali Hassan Mwinyi and Dr Jakaya Kikwete were in attendance, as well as former prime ministers John Malecela, Edward Lowassa, Fredrick Sumaye and Mizengo Pinda



Former President Jakaya Kikwete has a word with President John Magufuli and former President Ali Hassan Mwinyi at parliamentary grounds in Dodoma yesterday shortly after the inauguration of the 12th Parliament. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph.

Tourism taking centre stage in govt priorities

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National Park for being named the Best National Park in Africa this year. Leaders in the sector as well as stakeholders have done a tremendous job to achieve this," he said.

He said that his government will take several measures including expanding the scope of tourist attractions, promoting conference tourism and wildlife hunting, enhancing beach tourism plus investing in quality infrastructures to enable tourist sea liners to visit the country and accelerate the promotion of our attractions.

"Similarly, we will mobilize institutions and individuals to establish ranches, farms and zoos, as is the case in other countries, to prevent poaching and promote tourism; but also increase income and employment opportunities for Tanzanians," he specified.

He urged Tanzanians to invest in establishing zoos in their areas as the government has reduced prices for accessing seeds of various animals. "For example, the price of buffalo seed has dropped from US\$1,900 to 200,000/-; eland from US \$ 1,700 to 310,000/- and impala from US\$150 to 90,000/-.

Therefore, I urge my fellow Tanzanians, wherever they are, to seize this opportunity; which will also stimulate the establishment of wildlife butchers," he said.

The government will continue reviewing various taxes and levies to abolish or reduce disturbing taxes, he said.

The president said that the government is prepared to conduct major rehabilitation and expansion of airports so as to boost internal air travel and quicken economic growth.

"We will expand and rehabilitate various airports," he said, listing them

as Kigoma, Shinyanga, Sumbawanga, Tabora, Mtwara, Songea, Iringa, Lake Manyara, Tanga, Musoma, Lindi, Kilwa Masoko, Njombe, Singida and Simiyu. "In addition, we will purchase five new aircrafts so as to improve air travel in the country," he told cheering MPs.

Tourism is the largest foreign exchange earner since 2012, contributing an average of \$2 billion annually or around 25 per cent of all exchange earnings, by Treasury data. This comes to around 17 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 1.5 million occupation outlets countrywide, with 500,000 direct jobs.



Dr Nelson Swai of the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (L) attends to a patient at a health screening camp held in Dar es Salaam yesterday as part of the commemoration of Non-Communicable Diseases Week. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma.

US govt agency faults Trump's fraud claims

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officials from the Department of Homeland Security and the US Election Assistance Commission as well as state-level (provincial government) officials who oversee elections and representatives of the voting machine industry.

"The November 3rd election was the most secure in American history. Right now, across the country, election officials are reviewing and double checking the entire election process prior to finalizing the result," the group said.

"While we know there are many unfounded claims and opportunities for misinformation about the process of our elections, we can assure you

we have the utmost confidence in the security and integrity of our elections, and you should too," it emphasized, without naming the president directly.

"When you have questions, turn to election officials as trusted voices as they administer elections."

They spoke out after Trump claimed without proof that 2.7 million votes for him had been "deleted," and with those claims he has yet to concede to the president-elect, Democrat Joe Biden.

The result of the 3rd November election was projected by all the major US TV networks at the weekend.

As of yesterday, Biden was projected to have won Arizona,

extending his lead by 11 Electoral College votes to a total of 290, with Trump on 217. It is the first time the state has voted Democrat since 1996.

Trump has launched a flurry of legal challenges in key states and levelled unsubstantiated allegations of widespread electoral fraud.

Meanwhile, China extended its congratulations to Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris after days of silence. "We respect the choice of the American people," a foreign ministry spokesman said. Russia said it wants to wait for an "official result."

The announcement marks the most direct rebuttal from federal and state officials of President Trump's unsubstantiated claims of election fraud.

The statement was posted to the website of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), which is part of the Department of Homeland Security.

CISA director Christopher Krebs has reportedly incurred the White House's displeasure over a CISA website called Rumor Control, which debunks election misinformation.

On Thursday, Krebs shared a post by an election law expert that said: "Please don't retweet wild and baseless claims about voting machines, even if they're made by the president."

CISA assistant director Bryan Ware stepped down on Thursday. The White House had asked for his resignation earlier this week, Reuters reported. Krebs

expects to be fired, the news agency affirmed.

Hours before the statement was released, Trump tweeted that voting software used in 28 states had deleted millions of votes for him, but presented no evidence for the stunning claim, which appeared to originate from the obscure TV network One America News and was flagged by Twitter.

The claim was linked to the miscounting of votes in one Republican-leaning Michigan county. Unofficial results initially favoured Biden but were later corrected in President Trump's favour. State election officials acknowledged what had happened, saying human error was to blame, rather than software malfunction.

Hawker IDs particulars, photos ease loan access

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grammes among communities, like providing them with soft loans, maintaining the 10 percent local council earnings cut for loans.

He tasked Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa with this drive as his first assignment, to ensure that empowerment loans benefit the majority of Tanzanians in rural and urban areas.

"Consider the possibility of merging some of the funds to make them more efficient and reduce operating costs. I want these funds to help ordinary citizens, including children, youth and women as well as SMEs," he elaborated.

Along with providing loans, the government will continue to implement various programmes to

enhance skills and entrepreneurial knowledge, to generate self-employment, he stated.

Late 2018, President Magufuli launched the vendors' ID cards programme, along with small-scale entrepreneurs, whose with special taxpayer ID cards were printed in an effort to ease bureaucratic controls and widen the tax base. When handing over the cards to regional commissioners, the president charged them to ensure they are widely distributed and their use is respected.

The ID cards are renewable annually and charged 20,000/-, and relate to anyone running a business with a turnover of less than 4m/- in a year is eligible to have one.



Johansen Kahatano (R), a director with the Land Transport Regulatory Authority (Litra), makes a point on the benefits of using electronic tickets on commuter buses. It was at a transportation stakeholders meeting held in Arusha yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Asraji Mvungi

PS tasks TAWA to come up with better ways to get more tourists

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

TANZANIA Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA) has been tasked to team up strategic players to come up with better strategies to attract more foreign tourists.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Dr Aloyce Nzuki made the call here yesterday when closing a four-day meeting of TAWA officials and heads of various reserve centres from across the country.

He said that tourist hunting in Tanzania has developed over a long period and is now a well established industry and a principle source of income for vast areas of the country. "So, there is a need for TAWA to promote the sub-sector for more economic gains," he said, urging the authority to encourage more investors to invest in the area.

Dr Nzuki asked TAWA to come up with a proposal on tourist hunting promotion by eyeing different international markets as far as Russia, Ukraine, Central and Southern Asia, Australia and Brazil.

"The write up should be with video, which will be sent to different Tanzanian embassies across the globe to lure more investors," he suggested.

The idea, he said should be in line with the government's move to make the sector contribute heavily to the GDP. The country's target is to register 5 million tourists by 2025 from the cur-

rent 1.5million tourists and boost revenues from US\$2.6billion in the next five years.

"That's why it is important for TAWA and other stakeholders to work hard and meet the government's targets," he said.

Tanzania is among the top ten countries in Africa which have recorded the fastest growth in tourism, according to the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index 2019 report released last year.

Within eastern Africa, Tanzania only trails Kenya and Ethiopia and South Africa, Mauritius, Seychelles, Botswana and Namibia in the Southern Africa Development Community (Sadc) region.

The report indicated that Tanzania is 10th in the tourism growth ranking of over 50 African states.

"African countries (including Tanzania) are now reaping the benefits of positive policy changes coupled with increased investments in the sector," the report reads in part.

With the number of expected tourists to the country estimated at 1.5 million this year, tourism remains one of the fastest-growing sectors of the economy.

For years, Tourism has accounted for 17 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) - and is the leading sector in foreign exchange earnings. Last year, it generated over \$2 billion (about Sh4.6 trillion)

Judge: Writing wills key in avoiding inheritance conflicts

By Correspondent George

Sembony, Tanga

TANZANIANS have been called upon to overcome the fear of writing last Will to avoid inheritance conflicts when they die.

Speaking on behalf of the Principal Judge, Eliezer Feleshi, at the launch of the Legal Assistance Service Week in Tanga on Thursday, Senior Judge Amiri Mruma said that so many inheritance conflicts have been reported to flare up soon after

parents have passed away.

"Let us go over the fear of writing our wills. We are not inviting our deaths but the problem of inheritance conflicts would be made easy by the presence of a will written following the laid down rules," he said. He further emphasized that it was not only men that should write wills but women as well.

The Judge also called upon the government and law stakeholders including Law agencies to revisit the inheritance law and others to take into account the rights of children of

children born out of wedlock to inherit properties left by their deceased parents. Judge Eliezer Currently, the law does not say anything on the rights if the children born out of wedlock and most often leaving it to the wisdom of the presiding Judge or Magistrate to decide on the fate of those children.

"There must be a section that clearly recognizes the presence of those children and say clearly what should be done to protect their rights," Judge Mruma said.

Judge Mruma further mentioned administration of inher-

itance as a nagging problem, saying that something must be done to rectify the inheritance administration system so that a particular time is set for delivering the inheritance to respective parties and also showing clearly the percentage of properties that should be given to respective parties. He said the law must particularly show the contribution of each party to the family property so that spouses are given the rightful shares of the property before disposing of the inheritance. He further

urged the courts to adhere strictly to the requirements of the law in appointing administrators to avoid people who do not have a direct interest in the inheritance to usurp the properties leaving spouses and children with nothing.

"A person who is appointed to administer the inheritance must have the determination to administer, collect and distribute the property fairly to respective parties. He commended the law agencies for setting up the Legal Assistance Service week saying such assistance was crucial for

reducing legal wrangles that are being taken to courts of law.

He particularly mentioned the objective of training members of the Ward Council which he said were important in the administration of justice.

"Currently there is no known program for training these members of these councils to enable to give justice to people in need at the local levels.

Earlier, the Tanga Regional Commissioner, Martine Shigela said the hosting of the week at the national level was a blessing to the region which also suffers

from such inheritance challenges that affect mostly women and children.

The Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Amon Mpanju said that week aims at enhancing the performance of the justice system from the local levels. He said that the government recognizes the crucial role being played by the legal assistance Service, saying that was why it was registering them to provide the assistance to ensure that conflicts are solved at the local level.

'Wear helmet' campaign launched for boda-boda

By Guardian Correspondent

THE Automobile Association of Tanzania (AAT) in collaboration with FIA international yesterday launched a campaign for bodaboda riders (motorcycle taxi) and passengers to wear protective helmets.

The launch has been highly supported by Tanzania Traffic Police

Tanzania Traffic Police Assistant Commissioner Mkadam Khamis Mkandam advised 'bodaboda' riders not to carry more than one passenger in a single motorcycle.

Mkadam told bodaboda riders to adhere to rules and regulation of road safety, urging them to take care of road safety as a basis of success for their commercial transport undertakings

He said some bodaboda riders have lost their lives and sustained serious injuries as a result of carelessness for oversight to wear protective helmets.

He thanked AAT and FIA International for facilitating availability of the top quality helmets made under specifications stamped by FIA.

Tanzania becomes the first country in the continent to be availed with the top quality crash helmets, so says Yusuf Ghor, the AAT CEO.

Assistant Inspector of Police Bahati

Nzunda who accompanied Mkadam insisted to motorcycle owners to ensure that whoever they trust to operate bodaboda should have a valid driving license to avoid road fatality.

Ghor said a total of 850 protective helmets to be distributed for Dar es Salaam bodaboda riders.

AAT and Tanzania Police Traffic are right now organizing a date to officially distribute the helmets already available in stock.

However, only one helmet will be given to each bodaboda rider as the stock is not big enough to cater for their passengers.

Present during the launch was retired Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Abel Swai and Coplo Faustina Ntunguru. Ntunguru took her time in exhibiting how best to wear the helmets to selected bodaboda riders that included Said Juma.

Nzunda told bodaboda riders that by wearing helmets there is an assumed 60 percent of avoiding accidents.

AAT and FIA international have been working with an astonishing hand-in-glove cooperation in road safety initiatives.

Over 5,000 bodaboda drivers from Dar es Salaam and Coast Region have already been beneficiaries of road safety lessons over the past five years.

their farms.

He said that the government is determined to ensure that all types of fertilizer—DAP, Urea, SA and NPK are available in the southern highlands regions of Ruvuma, Iringa, Njombe, Mbeya, Songwe, and Rukwa—the country's bread basket.

Right now, Dr Ngailo said: "We've 60 per cent of the country's fertilizer demand, and the amount will go up to 80 percent between February and March."

Dr. Ngailo said the present regime led by President Dr. John Magufuli is well-organized to ensure farmers get all kinds of fertilizers on time.

However, he said in an assessment conducted in October this year, Tanzania had more than 65,000 tons of urea fertilizer and for all other fertilizers it reached 252,000 tons where the amount of fertilizer could reach by February 2021.

He added that currently at the port of Dar es Salaam there is a ship anchored and continues to unload 18,000 tons of urea fertilizer while other tons of fertilizer expected to be imported at any time.

For his part, Agriculture Officer, from the Office of the Regional Commissioner of Ruvuma Paulo

Msemwa said the demand for fertilizer in the region is more than 50,000 tons where so far more than 13,000 tons have been imported.

He said fertilizer has been distributed in all parts of the region so he urged farmers to prepare in advance all agricultural inputs to increase production.

Ruvuma region in the two consecutive seasons of the years 2018/19 and 2019/20 has led and ranked first nationally in food production, with the main reason for increasing production being the availability of adequate fertilizer.



Naomi Kaihula (2nd-R), chairperson of the Tanzania chapter of Women in Law and Development Africa (WILDAF), opens the agency's annual general meeting in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Others are director Anna Kulaya (R) and board members Nakazael Tenga (2nd-L) and Ebenezer Mshana. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

'Ruvuma Region has enough stock of fertiliser for next farming season'

By Guardian Reporter

RUVUMA Region has enough stock of fertiliser for the next farming season, executive director of the Tanzania Fertilizer Regulatory Authority (TFRA) Dr Stephan Ngailo has said.

Dr Ngailo made the remarks when he inspected fertilizer godowns in all districts in the region.

"I'm satisfied with the stock of fertilizer available in our godowns," the official said, assuring farmers that the farm inputs are available hence they should continue to prepare

About 200 homes in Dar benefit from offsite sanitation technology

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

OVER 200 households in Dar es Salaam's Buguruni area have benefited from the project designed to collect wastewater from the households by using an offsite sanitation technology.

An offsite sanitation technology is a simplified sewerage system also known as condominium sewerage which is used to collect wastewater from households.

Manager off-grid sanitation services for Dar es Salaam Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (DAWASA) Charles Makoye said in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the first phase of the project was to expand sanitation service coverage in unplanned settlements that constrains construction of conventional sewerage system and other sanitation technologies.

It is a sewerage network constructed using smaller diameter pipes laid at a shallow depth and at a flatter gradient than conventional sewers. It is also a suitable sanitation technology in unplanned areas like Buguruni kisiwani and Mivinjeni discharging wastewater to the existing sewer line.

He said the first phase of the project which cost 17.6 mil/-, involved construction of a sewer network, rehabilitation of latrines and registration of customers in the central billing system at Kombo street.

According to Makoye, the project covered the construction of a simplified sewerage network that involved laying 850m sewer pipes, construc-

tion of 75 junction boxes.

"The initiative also rehabilitated 150 latrines and served 220 families, while improving customer connections," he explained.

The manager said that the initiative which was implemented within ten weeks, involved several processes, including community mobilization and sensitization, collection of demographic information and reconnaissance survey and registration of connected customers.

"Currently, the project has been completed for 80 percent as required by the pre-set objectives and in accordance with the standards and specifications. Latrine inventory and connection of customers is on progress," he added.

The proposed way forward for this project in Buguruni is to continue with up-scaling of the project that will cover more customers in all areas of Buguruni Kisiwani.



Currently, the project has been completed for 80 percent as required by the pre-set objectives and in accordance with the standards and specifications



Tanga regional commissioner Martin Shigella (C) briefs journalists in Tanga city yesterday shortly after opening a meeting for industrialists organised by the Tanzania Trade Development Authority (TanTrade). Others are TanTrade deputy director general Latifa Khamis (R) and Tanga regional assistant administrative secretary Emigidius Kasunzu. Photo: Correspondent Hamida Kamchala

Examine livestock feed production costs, Fisheries PS tells producers

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE government has called on owners of livestock feed factories to examine the chain of costs in order to provide relief

to users without impacting their operation costs.

This aims to empower livestock keepers to use better quality locally produced feed for their livestock produced by government registered factories.

The remarks were given by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Prof Elisante ole Gabriel in Morogoro when closing training seminar for inspectors of livestock feed from Eastern Zone comprising Dar es

Salaam, Morogoro, Tanga, Coast and Dodoma Regions.

He said the price for livestock feed was very high, especially that for chicken feed, hence it would be better for the Department dealing in the development

of livestock feed to make some evaluation to know the true cost in the manufacture of livestock feed.

He said: "The government wants to sit together to review the true production cost chain aimed

at giving relief to both sides, livestock feed users and manufacturers thereof."

He also called on livestock keepers to use feed manufactured by government licenced and recognized factories to avoid

using poor products.

He told the livestock feed inspectors to oversee all the feed produced at factories before reaching users to see whether it satisfies the required quality standards.

Tanga in new efforts to restore defunct factories

By Guardian Correspondent, Tanga

AUTHORITIES in Tanga Region are determined to build factories and resuscitate the defunct ones in a move to support the government's industrialisation agenda.

Regional Commissioner Martin Shigella unveiled the plan here yesterday when speaking to journalists soon after opening the meeting that involved Tanga-based industrialists. The meeting was organised by the Tanzania Trade Development Authority (TanTrade).

RC Shigella said that Tanga had many industries, and it was almost leading in having industrialisation in the country.

"So, we're working hard to revive some of the collapsed industries as well as building the new ones in order to create employments for the residents," he said.

"We're encouraging more investors to come and revive the collapsed industries," he said.

Some of the collapsed industries include tea factories in Korogwe and Lushoto districts.

The RC lauded TanTrade for bringing all business stakeholders under one roof, saying: "This creates a platform for them to discuss some of the challenges and charts ways to address the vice."

He added: "This will make them easily take part at the industrial exhibition next month."

Latifa Khamis, TanTrade deputy director general explained that the aim of the authority is to listen to industry owners' woes and set solutions so that they grow and bring economic developments.

"As we are all aware that Tanga has factories that used to produce its products that were also exported to the East African market. We're here to collect views from industrialists and come up with recommendations on how better they can improve their activities," she said.

Latifa said: "We'll work closely with the region authorities to ensure that they fulfill the President's mission of making Tanzania's industrialization agenda a reality but also added that they will work together to organize major national industrial exhibitions.



Laying of a new water pipe well in progress in Shinyanga municipality on Thursday under the supervision of the Shinyanga Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

'18 pct of COVID-19 deaths in Africa tied to diabetes'

By Guardian Reporter

EIGHTEEN percent of coronavirus deaths in Africa are among patients with diabetes, the World Health Organization (WHO) Africa office has said.

Diabetes is a condition that global studies have found increases the risk of severe illness and death among patients infected with the coronavirus.

The UN health agency said an analysis of 14 African nations that provided information on COVID-19 and comorbidities,

showed people older than 60 years of age face greater risks of complications or death from COVID-19.

"Far too many people are in the dark as to whether they have diabetes. People with this chronic condition suffer a double blow if they are also infected with COVID-19," said Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa. "We must turn this around by investing in early detection, prevention and treatment of diabetes."

The WHO said: "the African region

is also witnessing a rise in diabetes risk factors such as obesity. Increasingly sedentary lifestyle and consuming foods rich in sugar, fats and salt is heightening obesity, ranging from 2.5% of adults in Burundi to 26.9% in Seychelles."

"We must not lose sight of other health challenges as we combat COVID-19. World Diabetes Day is a key moment to call attention to this chronic illness, which is increasingly threatening the lives of Africans," Moeti said.

The findings were released days before World Diabetes Day, marked annually on Nov. 14.

Diabetes is a major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, stroke and lower limb amputation. With early diagnosis and treatment, many of the harmful effects can be delayed or even avoided, said the WHO.

There are more than 1.9 million confirmed COVID-19 cases in Africa with more than 1.6 million recoveries and 45,000 deaths, according to WHO.



As we are all aware that Tanga has factories that used to produce its products that were also exported to the East African market. We're here to collect views from industrialists and come up with recommendations on how better they can improve their activities



Manyara regional commissioner Joseph Mkirikiti (C) attends a meeting on Thursday at which residents of Magara village in Babati District aired their views on a land dispute between them and Manyara Estates. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

African experts call for speeding up of geothermal development

NAIROBI

MORE than 500 energy experts and government representatives from Africa resolved to accelerate geothermal development in the continent.

"The geothermal resources must be anchored in knowledge-based exploration that informs decision makers to develop appropriate policy and regulatory framework," the experts said in a statement.

The experts, who attended the virtual Eighth African Rift Geothermal Conference (ARGeo-C8), said they will collaborate through the newly established Africa Geothermal Centre of excellence to advance development in the geothermal sector.

The experts who also included ministers of energy agreed to foster cooperation especially on developing capacity for geothermal practitioners to attain successful exploration and development.

Juliette Biao Koudoukpo, director and regional representative for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)'s Africa Office, pointed out that the outcomes would contribute to the achievement of Goal 7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), on affordable and clean energy.

"Renewable energy can and will change the African energy challenges and narrative," Koudoukpo said during the closure of the conference.

She observed that energy-use statistics in Africa reveal a worrying scenario since more than 70 percent of Africa is dependent on traditional biomass fuels.

Participants recognized direct use of geothermal resources as a potential game-changer for the economies and livelihoods of rural communities across the continent through meaningful participation of communities in the development and implementation of geothermal projects.

They agreed to work through the newly-launched Africa Women Advancing Geothermal (AWAG) as well as the African Geothermal Association (AGA) to enhance cooperation and information exchange on the continent.

According to UNEP, Africa has 13 percent of the global population, yet its share in global electricity consumption is less than 3 percent, and only 25 percent of people have access to electricity.

The conference, held under the theme "Energy and sustainability, seizing the moment to invest in geothermal resources for sustainable development" was hosted by Kenya in partnership with the UNEP



The geothermal resources must be anchored in knowledge-based exploration that informs decision makers to develop appropriate policy and regulatory framework

FAO calls for making agri-food systems and green spaces part of urban plans

By Special Correspondent

DIRECTOR-General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Qu Dongyu, has called on local governments to make agri-food systems and green spaces part of their plans, policies and actions.

The idea is to make cities more sustainable and inclusive, as well as to create jobs and promote youth engagement, built on a "green industry, a green environment, green products and a green way of lifestyle."

Qu made the call at the opening of the 2020 World Council of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), hosted virtually by the city of Guangzhou, in China, and the Chinese

People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

The theme of the event was The Role of the International Municipal and Regional Movement in COVID Times.

The Director-General highlighted the importance of addressing the COVID-19 pandemic from a long-term perspective.

"In times of emergency, it is easy to fall into the trap of focusing only on addressing the most urgent needs. We need to adapt quickly and face the pandemic in a more holistic way, so that we can build better, more resilient and inclusive urban food systems," said the FAO chief.

He noted that the pandemic has hit densely

populated urban areas "particularly hard", and stressed the importance of leveraging the potential of local and municipal governments to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.

A recent FAO survey on urban food systems and COVID-19, with responses from 77 countries, showed that local governments played an important role in reducing the pandemic's impacts on the functioning of food systems, and health and food security of people. For example, many cities had adopted measures such as monitoring of food markets, and improving access to food for the most vulnerable through e-commerce or temporary food hubs.

"Giving a voice to lo-

cal and regional governments acknowledges the importance of their proximity to the communities, their capacity to mobilize local stakeholders and their ability to rapidly identify the most vulnerable," Qu said.

Why are urban food systems and green areas important?

By 2050, almost 70 percent of the world's population will be living in cities. About 70 percent of all food supplies are consumed by urban dwellers - a number that is steadily on the rise.

Many urban and peri-urban communities are exposed to food and nutrition insecurity; at the same time, they suffer from diet-related non-communicable diseases and increasing overweight and obesity rates.

Expanding cities encroach on natural habitats, and account for about 70 percent of global energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustainable urban food systems and more green spaces, including urban and peri-urban agriculture and forests, are essential for cities, rendering them more resilient in dealing with the impacts of climate change.

FAO actions for a sustainable urban development

FAO's recently launched Green Cities initiative aims to improve the livelihoods and well-being of urban and peri-urban populations in at least 100 cities around the world in the next three years, looking to have 1000 cities join by 2030.

The initiative will support cities to implement innovative and context-specific urban green actions related to food systems and green spaces, including urban and peri-urban agriculture and forest.

It is linked to FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative, which aims to end poverty and hunger, with focus

on countries and regions most in need.

The FAO Framework for the Urban Food Agenda guides local and sub-national governments to integrate sustainable food systems into local policy, planning and action. FAO is implementing the Urban Food Agenda, which is at the core of the of the Green Cities initiative, in more than 20 countries.

Another important FAO action is the city-to-city exchange, which includes South-South and triangular cooperation for scaling up urban food systems actions.

More about the event

The Council was opened by LIU Qibao, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; Mohamed Boudra, President of UCLG; LIN Songtian, President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries; and WEN Guo-

hui, Mayor of Guangzhou.

The opening ceremony was also attended by Antonio Vitorino, Director General of the International Organization for Migration; and Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat; as well as mayors from all around the globe. The opening session was chaired by Emilia Sáiz, UCLG's Secretary-General.

The UCLG 2020 World Council is expected to gather 300 local representatives from cities and regional governments.

During the debates, several participants outlined COVID-19's disastrous impacts on people's lives and livelihoods and the economy; acknowledged the vital role of local and regional governments in tackling these; and reiterated the need for global solidarity to fight against the pandemic and build back better - creating more inclusive, sustainable and pluralistic societies.

East African women's health tech startup secures \$1-million

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

EAST African tech startup, Kasha has received \$1million investment from Swedfund, a Swedish Development Finance institution.

The investment will be utilised to promote the women-focused eCommerce platform's overall aim to ensure that women are provided viable, secure, and easy access to education surrounding their reproductive health, contraceptives, menstrual, beauty, and health products.

In addition, the financial support will assist in expanding Kasha's offering across Kenya and Rwanda.

In an official press release, Maria Håkansson, CEO of Swedfund, explains the objective to strengthen sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and the importance of investing in Kasha.

"Social stigma around sexual

and reproductive health in Africa is very common leading to women not getting access to the right information and safe products to make empowered decisions about their health. Our investment aims to strengthen SRHR - the right to decide over one's own body, sexuality and reproduction are fundamental for the work with human rights, and against discrimination. Kasha is a women-founded and women-led tech company, that strives to make it easier for women, especially low-income women, to access genuine products and information for their health and personal care."

Pioneering inclusivity Kasha was founded in Rwanda in 2016 by two former Microsoft employees, Joanna Bichsel and Amanda Arch. The startup has since expanded to Kenya.

Kasha collaborates with various corporations and organizations that support their vision of

providing underprivileged women with products and services that are of high quality. Targeted at women in underserved communities, Kasha Global allows users to purchase the mentioned items digitally via any type of smartphone. In addition, users are able to make informative decisions on their purchase with accessible educational information detailed with each product available.

Women without an internet connection or a smartphone can still access the digital platform, which contributes to inclusivity in the marketplace by supporting offline and online eCommerce.

The African tech startup's business model focuses on three core factors which include, access to health products, access to health information, employment opportunities, and improved livelihoods for low-income women. Kasha uses female technology known as Femtech to create in-

novative solutions to improve the health of women.

Low-income women located in urban and rural areas, who are unable to access affordable and quality health products, make up 65% of Kasha's customers. Over 200 trained agents who are also low-income women in Rwanda and Kenya, provide Kasha customers with accurate information, aggregate orders, and offer last-mile delivery to customers.

Expanding Kasha

The \$1-million investment received from Swedfund allows Kasha to accelerate growth and impact across Kenya and Rwanda. The probability to improve the platform, and support its expansion into other African countries has increased due to the investment fund.

Joanna Bichsel, Kasha Founder, and CEO said the partnership with Swedfund is crucial in the expansion of Kasha.



William Masimba (R), an official with a community conservation and water sources protection group based in Muheza District, presents environmental hygiene gear to Bombani village group secretary Joyce Chombo on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

AfDB Adesina's road map for rebooting African economies

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

THE economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic are expected to put Africa into its first recession in 25 years and could push 49.2 million people on the continent into extreme poverty by next year.

During a press conference on Thursday, Akinwumi Adesina, president of the African Development Bank, laid out the top four priority areas that African countries should focus on to help economies across the continent rebound.

Investing in infrastructure needs to remain at the top of the agenda, Adesina said. Each year, there is an infrastructure funding gap of between \$68 billion and \$108 billion across the continent. This remains a key impediment to Africa's growth and is driving the continent into debt, he argued. More needs to be done to foster an environment in which the private sector can carry a heavier burden in infrastructure investments, with a need to create more public-private partnerships.

In particular, the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the

need to build up health care infrastructure across Africa to prepare for shocks, including future pandemics.

There is no development of any kind without electricity, Adesina said, adding that this energy needs to be renewable. "We're not investing in coal. Coal is gone," he said.

For example, AfDB has the \$20 billion Desert to Power initiative in the Sahel region that is aimed at creating 10,000 megawatts of solar energy, which would make it the world's largest solar power zone.

The African continent has committed to universal access

to electricity by 2025.

There is a need to mobilize capital on the continent, according to Adesina. There are sovereign wealth and pension funds that invest in money market instruments outside of Africa. That money should be invested locally, he said.

"Even if you earn money, even if you have a good rate of return, then you're gonna pay people an annuity for the rest of their lives. And guess what? They are in places without water, without sanitation. ... That is a miserable retirement," Adesina said.

Ethiopia govt accuses regional forces of committing massacre

ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIAN leaders have accused troops loyal to the troubled Tigray regional government of committing a massacre against civilians and federal forces.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said yesterday that Ethiopian federal troops had "liberated" the western part of Tigray in "a victory for the innocent civilians of Mai-Kadra that were brutally massacred" on Monday.

In a separate statement, Abiy also said "bodies of members of the army, who were shot while their hands and legs were tied", had been found.

Tigrayan officials denied the atrocities.

Witnesses blamed forces loyal to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) for the killings - first reported by human rights group Amnesty International.

And a minister yesterday gave more details about Monday's attack in Mai-Kadra.

Bikila Hurissa accused forces loyal to the regional Tigray government of targeting civilians of non-Tigrayan ethnicity in a methodical way.

Bikila has since told the BBC's Newsday that the attackers had a list of non-Tigrayans to target.

"There was a law enforcement operation in that area in a place called

Lugdi on the route to Sudan and the forces loyal to the TPLF fugitive were severely defeated and these forces were escaping and on their way they entered a civilian village and changed their clothes from the military to civilian clothes and they massacred all the people in the area who are not Tigrayans by ethnicity," he said.

"Our military forces did not enter the town because they were fighting in other towns," he added.

Fighting between government forces and the TPLF broke out last week. Getting information is hard, with phone lines and the internet down.

This would be the first large-scale killing of civilians in the conflict.

There has been long-standing tension between Ethiopia's government and the TPLF, which controls Tigray, the country's northernmost state, and it has boiled over into military clashes, including air strikes by federal forces.

As a result, thousands of civilians have crossed the border into Sudan, which says it will shelter them in a refugee camp.

Amnesty said the killings happened on the night of 9 November.

The human rights group said it had confirmed that "scores, and likely hundreds, of people were stabbed or hacked to death in Mai-Kadra (May Cadera) town in the South West Zone of Ethiopia's Tigray region".



Safia Hashim Makame (L) takes entrepreneurs through the basics of soap making. This was as a seminar held at the Tanzania Media Women's Association (Tamwa) office in Zanzibar on Thursday. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

Women and girls bear brunt of Africa 'transport poverty'

By Special Correspondent,

Johannesburg

LONG queues in the rain, daily four-hour trips in a public taxi, the constant threat of road accidents, and nearly having to use a pen as a knife to fight off an aggressive male passenger.

These are just some of the challenges Busisiwe Nongauza has faced while commuting to and from her job as an insurance underwriter in Johannesburg, South Africa's biggest city.

Nongauza, who lives in Soweto, the country's biggest township, is not alone in her experience.

A new study shows that in

Sub-Saharan Africa "transport poverty" - when inaccessible or unsuitable transport negatively impacts a person's quality of life - disproportionately affects women and girls in terms of harassment, getting to school and accessing jobs.

"Public transport is not safe for women at all. We are powerless," Nongauza, 48, said.

Transport poverty in Africa is linked to unplanned, informally developed urban areas that place vulnerable groups on city peripheries, according to a November report by the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF), a research financing group.

As a result, people who have to travel to the inner city for work can face long, pricey and often dangerous journeys, especially women travelling alone at night.

"This report comes at a critical juncture in African urban transport development as the continent emerges from the COVID-19 crisis," said Gina Porter, a senior researcher at Durham University in Britain and one of the study's main authors.

"It brings together, for the first time, knowledge about transport users' needs and practices in African cities, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups," she said in emailed comments.

According to the report, 70% of Africa's urban population live in informal settlements.

The authors point to the transport challenges faced by women living in these settlements in dozens of African cities, including Tunis, Abuja and Cape Town.

A lack of safe transportation to and from work is linked with almost 16% lower labour force participation for women in developing countries, according to the United Nations' International Labour Organization.

Transport poverty also impacts girls' education, the VREF report says. "Girls face major impediments to travel, like harassment and family constraints

related to the travel risks they are perceived to face," said Porter.

"Pubescent girls' reduced access to secondary education ... clearly impacts massively on their potential opportunities in the jobs market throughout their lives."

Just over a quarter of South African women feel safe walking at night, according to a 2019 index by the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security that measured safety in 167 countries.

Nongauza said it is essential she leaves work before dark to avoid any possible danger on the roads. "I know of a woman who was raped by a taxi driver," she said. "I know we have rights, but

it sometimes feels like we don't."

The potential consequences of not addressing transport poverty are social exclusion, increased poverty and inequality, said Karen Lucas, a professor of human geography at the University of Manchester, who co-authored the VREF study.

This is true not only for women and girls, but also other vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities and LGBT+ people who could face danger and discrimination on the roads, the report says.

"I found it alarming that, in most cases, city plans and transport policies totally ignored the mobility and accessibility needs

of the many people living in informal and slum settlements," Lucas said.

The South African transport ministry was not available to comment. The study calls for governments and the private sector to urgently engage with residents, transport unions and rights groups to better understand the transport needs in their cities.

For example, Lucas noted, authorities need to improve the ease and safety of traveling to, from and within evening markets and introduce measures such as elevated pavements with built-in space for street vending.

Scientists fear continent will lag behind as gene editing transforms food production

BY JOSEPH OPOKU GAKPO

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

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

As GMOs continue to face regulatory barriers that are hampering their acceptance across the continent, scientists are convinced that gene editing offers a new frontier for introducing advanced technology to tackle food security issues in Africa.

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

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

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

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

Zimbabwean scientist Nyasha Mudukuti, who earned a master's degree in plant breeding and genetics, agrees. "I've had the firsthand experience of working on gene editing of crops and plants that are of importance to us as human beings," she said. "So, it's something that I can tell you that we have the science that backs it up. It's safe to use."

Mudukuti said governments need to make existing policies more flexible, or enact new enabling policies, "so that farmers can adopt this if they want to. Let the farmer make a choice for him or themselves about whether or not to use this technology."



Dodoma City Council marketing officer James Yuna (R, gesturing) pictured yesterday pleading with vegetable and fruit vendors who had blocking the Sabasaba commuter bus stand entrance, seriously inconveniencing motorists and various other people. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

EU criticised over surveillance aid in nations where privacy at risk

LONDON

EUROPEAN Union aid has been used to pay for surveillance equipment and training in countries with inadequate safeguards against excessive state snooping, rights groups said on Wednesday, calling for an

end to the "unacceptable" practice.

From training Algerian police on social media monitoring to equipping Niger with phone-tracking tools, the EU has helped numerous nations boost their surveillance capacity in recent years, a report by London-based Privacy International (PI) said.

Despite that, the bloc has no effective controls to ensure its aid is not being used to infringe privacy and other rights in recipient countries, a dozen NGOs said in a letter to the European Commission, urging it to address the issue.

"European governments... must ensure

they are not providing the tools of repression to governments around the world," the 12 European and African civil society groups wrote.

Niger was allocated 11.5 million euros (\$13 million) in EU funds two years ago to buy surveillance drones, cameras and software

to bolster migration controls, said the PI report, which was based on EU documents obtained by the group.

The money also covered the purchase of an IMSI catcher, a tool that allows for covert cellphone tracking, which critics say is overly invasive.



Building transformative change in Africa's smallholder systems

ABIDJAN

THE African Development Bank (AfDB) and the government of Uganda have signed a \$500,000 grant agreement for financing of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to boost business linkages on the East African Crude Oil Pipeline Technical Assistance project.

The project's overall objective is to help develop capacity of local Uganda MSMEs along the East African crude oil pipeline, by enabling them to access new market opportunities, and building linkages with larger, national, regional and international companies. The project aims to support inclusive private sector growth and the creation of an estimated 500 jobs along the pipeline.

Through the Fund for African Private Sector Assistance (FAPA), the Bank will contribute \$500,000 to the project. The Government of Uganda through the Petroleum Authority will provide counterpart funding. A similar project is being finalised on the Tanzanian side of the border.

The grant was provided in response to a request from Uganda and Tanzania for assistance in preparing local business communities to be able to retain a portion of the \$3.5 billion investment in the construction of a crude oil pipeline from Hoima in western Uganda to Tanga, on the Coast of Tanzania, agreed in 2016. This has recently been followed by the signing of an agreement in September 2020 between the two governments, for the project to be undertaken by Total E&P as the lead private sec-

tor developer. The grant agreement was signed on 17 September by Bank Acting Senior Vice President and Chief Finance Officer Swazi Tshabalala on behalf of the African Development Bank, and Matia Kasaija, Ugandan Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The target is to have at least 100 local micro business in Uganda and Tanzania trained to do business on the pipeline project. It is also expected to link at least 70 businesses or other relevant business transactions undertaken on the pipeline. With the increased number of enterprises joining petroleum supplier databases in both Uganda and Tanzania, new job opportunities would also be created for about 500 people.

FAPA is a multi-donor thematic trust fund which provides grant funding for technical assistance and capacity building to support implementation of the Bank's Private Sector Development Strategy. Japan and Austria, and the African Development Bank are active contributors to the Fund, which to date has provided over \$69 million to 87 projects in over 38 countries across the African continent.

The FAPA portfolio includes regional and national projects aimed at improving the business environment, strengthening financial systems, building private sector infrastructure, promotion of trade and development of Micro-, Small- and Medium- Enterprise. Additional information on FAPA can be obtained from the following link <https://bit.ly/36x47fl> or contact to FAPA Secretariat at AFDB.ORG for specific requests.

New portal tracks policies and trends impacting forests in central Africa

BY GLORIA PALLARES

CENTRAL Africa is home to the Congo Basin, the largest tropical forest on the African continent, a major carbon sink.

It is an important biodiversity hotspot that covers over 200 million hectares, spreads across six countries, and supports the livelihoods of about 60 million people dependent upon it for food, energy and jobs. Critically endangered animals such as lowland gorillas, and more than 10,000 endemic tropical plant species depend on its lush ecosystems for their survival.

Despite the Congo Basin's central role in the regional economy, obtaining regional-level data can be difficult for governments, donors and implementing

partners, seeking to make informed decisions on the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems.

The Observatory of Central African Forests (OFAC), which was created over a decade ago to address that challenge, has now launched an analysis portal that keeps track of policies and trends to examine their impact on forest ecosystems at the regional, national and local levels. The objective of the digital platform is to provide a single-entry point through which researchers and decision-makers can access information on the subject and follow emerging trends.

Read also
Visit the platform
"We strongly encourage

political and technical experts to make the most of the high-quality data available in the platform," said Raymond Ndomba Ngoye, executive secretary of the intergovernmental organization Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC), during the launch at the Global Landscapes Forum Biodiversity Digital Conference.

"The new tool is expected to make an important contribution toward regional cooperation and harmonization of sectoral policies among the 10 member states of COMIFAC," he said.

The data are also important from an economic development perspective, said Honoré Tabuna, Commissioner for the Environment, Natural Resources,

Agriculture and Rural Development at the Economic Community Central African States (CEEAC). "Data production is essential for the development of a natural-resource-based economy in Central Africa, especially, around protected areas."

Mostly funded by the European Union, the portal features key data such as production, certification, export, transformation and trade volumes of timber, as well as conservation policies and the contribution of forests and biodiversity to national economies.

It also provides a wealth of interactive maps, satellite imagery, visualizations and filters to help users navigate and interpret the data, said OFAC technical assistant Quentin Jungers.

"The platform is currently focused on forest management and biodiversity conservation at the regional, national and local level, including protected areas and forest

concessions. We are working to incorporate analyses on legal frameworks and climate change, and we shall soon provide data at the landscape level," Jungers said.

It comprises a database of more than 650 environmental and development initiatives in the region, which are valued at 6 billion euros (\$7 billion) and represent 80 donors and 324 implementing agencies. It also includes a multimedia library with 1,200 scientific, technical and policy documents. Most of the data are open source.

IMMEDIATE APPLICATIONS

"The new portal responds to the various needs of users: reviewing management plans; analyzing cross-border issues; defining baselines; evaluating policies and monitoring the efficacy of management strategies," said OFAC data management analyst Donald Djossi.

Among the target users are researchers who are working on ma-

nor assessments of the region.

"Our upcoming report 'State of Protected Areas in Central Africa,' will greatly benefit from the data and analyses on the new platform," said coordinator of the OFAC support project (RIOFAC) Florence Palla.

The expert underscored the importance of data for the implementation of the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework - a global roadmap for the next decade to be agreed during the U.N. Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP15) in Kunming, China, in 2021.

Senior scientist and hub leader with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Richard Eba'a Atyi, agreed on the importance of reliable data, and noted he will also benefit from the new portal for the production of the upcoming report "State of the Forests in Central Africa," in 2021. The publication will explore

such issues as forestry plantations, REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation), zero deforestation commitments and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Creating and maintaining a data portal on forests is not a simple task, Djossi said. "We must thoroughly follow up with countries to ensure data have been collected in an adequate way and are reliable," he said, alluding to challenges in accessing some of the data.

For Philippe Mayaux, biodiversity team leader at the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, the effort is well worth it: "Good political and technical decisions require good information and, in the past, we didn't always have it."

The data provided by OFAC is of utmost importance to monitor forestry, climate and biodiversity policies."

Africa's entrepreneurs fill gaps in continent's Covid-19 response

BY ANNA PUJOL-MAZZINI

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

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

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

"We realise these innovations have made a huge difference. We are fighting Covid-19 in the context of weak health systems," Moredreck Chibi, WHO's regional

innovation adviser for Africa told the Telegraph. "Governments, besides locking down early, had limited options to leverage other than innovation to address the pandemic."

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

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

models to adapt to a new normal.

In Nigeria, health investment company Flying Doctors set up mobile Covid-testing booths, which separate the sample collector from the people being tested. These have boosted testing while protecting health workers, a scarce resource in the country. Start-ups and developers, working alongside health authorities, have seized the opportunity to help CREDIT: AFP

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

"When we had the first case, it was apparent to many of us that we would have to leverage innovation to make people's lives easier in the new way of living: lockdowns, disrupted supply chains, working from home, distributing

PPE..." said Ronald Osumba, director of the iGov digital start-up accelerator in Nairobi.

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

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

Now some countries like Kenya and South Africa are seeing surges in positive cases following recent reopening of airports and businesses. While they prepare for a second wave, they are wary of the economic fallout of lock-



downs, particularly on the poorest who tend to work in the informal sector and little access to social security. "The current crisis is upending livelihoods, damaging business and government

balance sheets, and threatening to reverse sub-Saharan Africa's development gains and growth prospects for years to come," the World Bank said in a report in September.

Intra-African trade will now protect Africa from volatile global markets

BY KAREN KANDIE

TRADE is often heralded as the most viable route to developmental success in Africa. However, as Africa's trade capacity has expanded, the dynamics have largely remained the same - with trade outflows heading to advanced economies such as the UK, US and China, and inflows coming from the same advanced economies.

As per the African Development Bank, intra-African trade constituted a meager 16.6 per cent of total African exports in 2017, as compared to intra-European trade of 69 per

cent, intra-Asian trade of 59 per cent and intra-American trade of 31 per cent. This presents a significant opportunity for expanding intra-African trade, provided that existing headwinds are navigated skilfully.

The African Union's determined effort to take a stab at the intra-African trade question culminated in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement of March 2018.

The AfCFTA, if successfully implemented, would transform Africa to the largest single free trade area in the world, with a customer base in excess of one billion people, and an

annual GDP of over \$3 trillion. This would be achieved through the removal of 90 per cent of the tariffs imposed on goods traded within Africa, the progressive liberalisation of trade in services, and the elimination of non-tariff trade barriers.

AfCFTA's clarion call, supported by policy initiatives such as the Protocol for Free Movement of Persons, Right to Residence and Right to Establishment and the Single African Air Transport Market, is for Africa to look inward for its success.

Rather than remain vulnerable to global supply

shocks, as has been seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, the oil slump of 2014 and the global financial crisis of 2008, Africa ought to strengthen linkages within its borders that serve the interests of the African populace.

Increased investment in intra-African trade would produce a positive catalytic effect to Africa's growth story. Specifically, increased intra-African trade has the potential to shift the narrative from Africa being a net exporter of commodities and raw materials to a hub of innovation and value adding products and activities.

It's time to get serious in addressing the leading killer

ROAD traffic injuries cause considerable economic losses to individuals, their families, and to nations as a whole. These losses arise from the cost of treatment as well as lost productivity for those killed or disabled by their injuries, and for family members who need to take time off work or school to care for the injured. Road traffic crashes cost most countries 3 per cent of their gross domestic product. The Global status report on road safety 2018 suggests that the price paid for mobility is too high, especially because proven measures exist. Drastic action is needed to put these measures in place to meet any future global target that might be set and to save lives.

Unfortunately, road traffic crashes are now a routine occurrence, with a staggering 3700 fatalities each day -- that's one death every 24 seconds. The Global status report on road safety, launched by WHO in December 2018, highlights that the number of annual road traffic deaths has reached 1.35 million. Road traffic injuries are now the leading killer of people aged 5-29 years. The burden is disproportionately borne by pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, in particular those living in developing countries.

The report also indicates that progress to realise Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.6 -- which calls for a 50 per cent reduction in the number of road traffic deaths by 2020 -- remains far from sufficient.

More than half of all road traffic deaths are among vulnerable road users: pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. Pedestrians, cyclists, and riders of motorized 2- and 3-wheelers and their passengers are collectively known as 'vulnerable road users' and account for half of all road traffic deaths around the world. A higher proportion of vulnerable road users die in low-income countries than in

high-income countries.

Since the adoption of the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 43/53, the observance has spread to a growing number of countries on every continent.

The Day has become an important tool in global efforts to reduce road casualties. It offers an opportunity for drawing attention to the scale of emotional and economic devastation caused by road crashes and for giving recognition to the suffering of road crash victims and the work of support and rescue services.

A dedicated website was launched to make the Day more widely known and to link countries through sharing common objectives and the remembrance of people killed and injured in crashes.

The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, officially proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in March 2010, seeks to save millions of lives by building road safety management capacity; improving the safety of road infrastructure; further developing the safety of vehicles; enhancing the behaviour of road users; and improving post-crash response.

Also, to highlight the plight of children on the world's roads and generate action to better ensure their safety, the UN organises the Global Road Safety Week.

The objectives of the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims 2020 are to provide a platform for road traffic victims and their families to: remember all people killed and seriously injured on the roads; acknowledge the crucial work of the emergency services; draw attention to the generally trivial legal response to culpable road deaths and injuries advocate for better support for road traffic victims and victim families; promote evidence-based actions to prevent and eventually stop further road traffic deaths and injuries.

We should strengthen tolerance by fostering understanding among cultures and peoples

WHAT is tolerance? It is the prerogative of humanity. We are all full of weakness and errors; let us mutually pardon each other our follies -- it is the first law of nature. The International Day for Tolerance is now celebrated on November 16 every year, in recognition of the Paris Declaration which was signed that day in 1995 by 185 member states.

The United Nations is committed to strengthening tolerance by fostering mutual understanding among cultures and peoples.

This imperative lies at the core of the United Nations Charter, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is more important than ever in this era of rising and violent extremism and widening conflicts that are characterized by a fundamental disregard for human life.

In 1996, the UN General Assembly invited UN member states to observe the International Day for Tolerance on 16 November. This action followed up on the United Nations Year for Tolerance, 1995, proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993 at the initiative of UNESCO, as outlined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and Follow-up Plan of Action for the Year.

In 1995, to mark the United Nations Year for Tolerance and the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, UNESCO created a prize for the promotion of tolerance and non-violence.

The UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence rewards significant activities in the scientific, artistic, cultural or communication fields aimed at the promotion of a spirit of tolerance and non-violence.

The prize is awarded every two years on the International Day for Tolerance, 16 November. The Prize may be awarded to institutions, organisations or persons,

who have contributed in a particularly meritorious and effective manner to tolerance and non-violence.

Education for tolerance should aim at countering influences that lead to fear and exclusion of others and should help young people develop capacities for independent judgement, critical thinking and ethical reasoning. The diversity of our world's many religions, languages, cultures and ethnicities is not a pretext for conflict, but is a treasure that enriches us all.

In 1994, UNESCO marked the 125th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth paving the way for the proclamation of 16 November as the International Day for Tolerance by the UN. This illustrative book pays tribute to the values of the Mahatma of peace, non-violence and equality.

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1995 the United Nations Year for Tolerance with UNESCO as the lead organisation. It had invited the Economic and Social Council to consider the matter in an earlier session.

The idea and practice of tolerance was widely promoted in schools in many member states. Tolerance was held to be an 'endangered virtue' in many parts of the world, particularly those who were under racial and religious wars, such as those in Bosnia and Rwanda.

UNESCO said that five key planks were required to overcome intolerance: law, education, access to information, individual awareness and local solutions. Tolerance is thus a political, legal and moral duty to protect and preserve human rights.

In 1995, a press conference was held at the United Nations by 12-year-old Mark Semotiuk who launched his book '401 Goofy Jokes for Kids' which united kids from Ukraine, Canada and the United States, as one of the symbols for the United Nations Year for Tolerance

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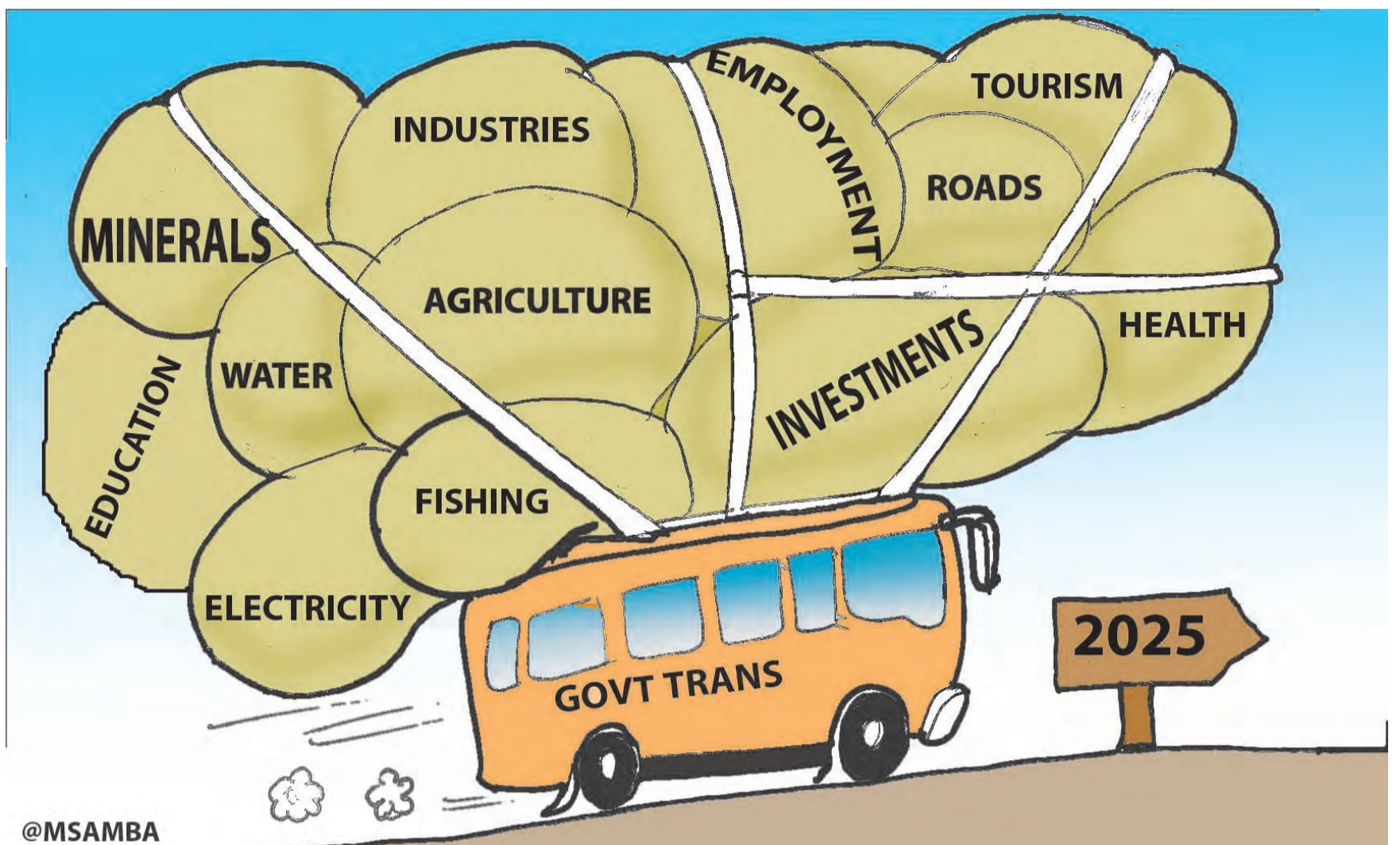
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Can EU green deal help boost Africa's green and digital transformation?

By Ameenah Gurib-Fakim

Africa needs to become a science and innovation leader, to create youth jobs and prepare for challenges such as climate change. Africa has hundreds of vibrant innovation hubs and hundreds of millions of youth whose potential is straining to be unleashed. All that remains is to provide the enabling environment for them to flourish and to change the situation where Africa has high demand for development but low supply of science, technology and innovation (STI).

This imbalance is dramatic when the continent is dealing with COVID-19, desert locusts, hurricanes, floods and other climate-change threats to ecosystems and biodiversity. Ageing leaders must also handle a youth bulge that promises either positive change or social and political instability.

Africa clearly needs to accelerate its transition to the innovation-led, knowledge-based, job-creating green economy envisaged in the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063. Doing so requires new levels of internal political will and coherent external support, such as from the European Union's Green Deal initiative.

Africa has long recognized the importance of STI to sustainable development -- it set the target of allocating 1 per cent of gross domestic product to scientific and technological development as far back as 1980.

Africa is also keenly aware of the need to prepare the youth for the future automated world of work -- Agenda 2063 aims for 70 per cent of high-school graduates entering tertiary education, and 70% of them graduating in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

This ambition springs from structural



reality -- the prevalence of raw material exports and low value-added manufacturing has not favoured local research and development (R&D).

There is very low uptake of STEM at secondary and tertiary levels and fewer than 100 researchers per million inhabitants in most African countries -- about 12 times less than the world average. Average gross expenditure on R&D is about 0.5% of GDP (with much external funding) against a world average of 2.2 per cent.

African countries recorded 1,330 patent registrations in 2017 compared with 116,359 in Europe and 592,508 in Asia. At current trends, Africa will remain a big importer and weak producer and user of STI.

Africa needs to buck the trends and accelerate implementation of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024), the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25) and the Continental Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

These strategies promote rising investment in the youth and in STI for faster progress in key sectors including agriculture, energy, and infrastructure. They will help retain a critical mass of high-calibre scientists and researchers.

They also facilitate public and private sector synergies that generate innovation for development.

Africa's STI needs range from biotechnologies (including genetic engineering, bioinformatics, and bioprocess engineering) and digital technologies (including artificial intelligence, big data analytics) with multiplier effects for clean and green transitions and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These include development of drugs (SDG 3 on health); efficient surveillance and biocontrol of desert locusts and other pests (SDG 2 on zero hunger); efficient management (bio-remediation) of chemical pollution (such as oil spills) and ocean acidification that threaten marine ecosystems (SDG 14 on life below water); and greater carbon capture from buildings, agriculture and production systems, along with production of drought-resistant seeds and animals (SDG 13 on climate action).

Getting there requires supportive infrastructure such as broadband, reliable water and electricity, good roads, modern laboratories, and tax incentives for private sector innovation. Promising research also needs further support to produce innovations that deliver returns on investment.

Imperative of a national census

A reliable census is desirable for proper national planning. The United Nations (UN) recommends a national census enumeration at least once every 10 years. Nigeria's case is a marked departure from that prescription. It is against this background that we commend the recent approval of N10 billion to enable the National Population Commission (NPC) continue its Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD) in 546 local government areas across the country. But this is just the beginning of a long process. While the acting NPC chairman, Eytayo Oyetunji, may have pledged the determination of the commission to providing accurate, reliable and up-to-date demographic data for national planning and development, nobody is certain as to when that would be, given the huge financial outlay involved in the manner census is conducted in Nigeria.

For sure, we stand for a proper census

because once the baseline demographic footprint of a nation is done properly, subsequent demographic changes can be determined almost accurately through satellite imaging and statistical projections.

Population updates can then be carried out through mandatory birth and death registrations, patterns of migration such as internal displacements or the attraction of economic opportunities in parts of the country, etc.

And in recommending that countries should conduct a census every 10 years, the UN believes that will allow for the capture of changes in structure and movement of population. But census has always been a problem in Nigeria.

Our census trajectory is mired in controversies such that the country went as far as annulling two of them (1973 and 1991). From the 1953 census done by the British to that of 2006, all ended up in controversy. That explains why we have

relied on estimates and projections that are not very helpful for national planning.

Figures from the last census conducted 14 years ago revealed that Nigeria's total population was 140.43 million people. Although there was no census in 2016, there was a projection by the NPC that the population had risen to 193.39 million people.

The 2020 estimates by the NPC is 210.39 million people while that of the United Nations is 206.14 million. Many would wonder why a simple 'headcount' is such a difficult thing to do in Nigeria.

It is due to the distortion of our federal structure since population determines how much each state and local government gets from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) disbursed monthly by the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) to the federating units, among others.

EU Green Deal support can cover some R&D costs, enabling African firms to develop and own digital and green technologies, thereby escaping the trap of acting as simple channels into African markets.

The continental strategies promoting public and private sector synergies will help grow the number of firms producing and owning green technology inventions and innovations for local and global markets.

The EU is committed to strengthening research, innovation and teaching capacities within Africa, along with harnessing the interaction between education, science, technology and innovation for improved learning.

It also aims to help Africa onto a sustainable trajectory of low-carbon, climate resilient and green growth to accelerate the green transition and expanded energy access.

The African Continental Free Trade Area is in turn poised to boost demand and attract finance for diversified products, backed by STISA-24, higher production standards and stronger intellectual property regimes. Africa's basic challenge is to get things done.

It needs to stimulate R&D guided by its development plans and largely funded from domestic resources. It needs a clear implementation strategy, with solid data for rigorous monitoring and evaluation. Africa also needs leaders able to distill appropriate policies from scientifically literate advisors.

Mauritius is something of an example. This small island state has endured increasing frequency and intensity of economically devastating cyclones and other extreme weather events. In response, it is converting the challenge of climate change into opportunities for advanced research and resilience building.

There are other political considerations such that over the past 14 years, Nigeria had on several occasions rehashed and made feeble attempts at conducting a credible census.

A former Chairman of the NPC, Festus Odimegwu, once declared that Nigeria's census "figures are just estimates; nobody knows whether the population is 120 million, 150 million, 200 million -- not Nigerian, not the NPC, the UN, the World Bank. Unless you conduct a proper census, which has never been done without political interference, it is not possible to know."

Odimegwu is right. Yet, at no other time is a real census desirable than now to help for proper national planning. Many have expressed concern that a three per cent annual population growth rate which is higher than GDP growth rate is a time-bomb.

World Children's Day: Child rights and aftershocks of Covid-19 pandemic

By Mark Tomlinson

As we now know, children are spared the worst ravages of the direct impact of Covid-19. Unfortunately, they are experiencing some of the most extreme effects of the indirect consequences of the pandemic and, in terms of the longer-term aftershocks, they are likely to carry the heaviest burden of all.

World Children's Day is commemorated in November of each year (countries differ on the specific day). The day aims to promote children's welfare and it is possible to trace its roots back to the 19th century. In its current form, the focus is on achieving and securing child rights. On 20 November 1959, the UN General Assembly formally adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child - 20 November was also the day when, in 1989, the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

In South Africa, we celebrate National Children's Day on the first Saturday in November each year to highlight progress towards the promotion and realisation of the rights of children. The CRC codifies both the involvement of children in decisions that affect them but also sets standards for health, education and social services.

At first blush it would appear that a convention on the rights of children is simple and easy to support - after all, who does not love and support children? But as is the case with most things, it is somewhat more complicated than that. The complexity is exemplified by the refusal of the United States to ratify the CRC.

For a long time, the only three countries that had not ratified the CRC were Somalia, South Sudan and the US. But even here it is more complicated than it might first seem. The US has in fact signed the Convention (an endorsement of its principles), but has refused to ratify it (thus committing themselves to being legally bound to its provisions).

It is not the only treaty that the US has not ratified - others include the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The refusal to ratify is largely based on a fear among conservative Republicans that this would signal the giving up of American sovereignty, thus opening up the US to lawsuits to pay for its provisions.

What about World Children's Day in 2020? A pandemic year with over a million deaths, eight million infections, and a global economy brought to its knees. As we now know, children are spared the worst ravages of the direct impact of Covid-19. Unfortunately, they are experiencing some of the most extreme effects of the indirect consequences of Covid-19 and, in terms of the longer-term aftershocks of the pandemic, they are likely to carry the heaviest burden of all. It has been estimated that in the worst-case scenario, reductions in coverage of maternal and child health interventions due to the pandemic might result in an additional 1 million child deaths and more than 50,000 additional maternal deaths.

As economies continue to struggle, it will be the poor (in rich countries) and poor countries where the impacts are going to be felt most. One area that is impacted most quickly (and the impacts are already being felt) is that of food. Globally, millions of children and families are food insufficient. One



of the more insidious effects of chronic undernutrition is child stunting, which is implicated in a host of difficulties across the life course - not least of which is the capacity of children to benefit from schooling.

It is estimated (and this was before the pandemic) that globally, 250 million children (43%) younger than five are at risk of not reaching their developmental potential due to the impact of stunting and poverty. Most children in South Africa have lost at least half a school year or more. This is likely to lead to devastating consequences across a number of cognitive and social domains.

For children in Grade R and Grade 1-2, who are learning the basic skills of numeracy and literacy, interruptions to laying down the foundations of these skills will be profound. And this will be in addition to the already shocking figure of 78% of Grade 4 learners being unable to read for meaning in 2016.

But as important as numeracy and literacy are, education is also about learning how the world works, about peer engagement, about friendships and learning about self-control and reciprocity in relationships. School closures, lockdown, and teacher absenteeism

due to Covid-19 illness is likely to pose significant challenges for years to come.

But what does this somewhat bleak picture have to do with children's rights? I would suggest that we pay lip service to the notion of child rights, but routinely fail to act in concrete ways to ensure that we achieve them. We write songs about how "children are our future", we produce memes of "cute children" but given our treatment of children in so many places, it would not be far-fetched to say that for many there is some ambivalence about children.

In most countries of the world (and South Africa is one of the worst), more than 70% of children will be violently disciplined by caregivers. Children are beaten at home and at school and witness high levels of interpersonal violence in their communities and homes. But, instead of widespread condemnation of corporal punishment in homes and schools, what we routinely hear is statements like "my father beat me" and "I turned out okay".

How do we ensure that Children's Day and children's rights do not simply remain a glorious set of principles that we speak about

fervently once a year, but continue to inflict violence on vast swathes of the world's children? I would suggest that one way to ensure that child rights stand a chance of becoming realised is to put children and adolescents at the centre of all planning, across all ministries, all of the time.

This may appear absurd at first. What does legislation governing mining rights have to do with children? What does planning of new roads have to do with children? But when a government puts children at the forefront of how they structure their budgets and at the core of how they plan their programmes, there is a meaningful and profound shift in almost everything.

When roads are planned with children in mind, then roads become connectors - connectors of people to one another, of children to their schools, of families and communities to places of work and health seeking. The roads are still built and are still available for commerce.

And when the damage to children of familial alcohol abuse and junk food are placed at the core of our decisions about legislation to limit harmful advertising, then banning

alcohol advertising becomes a no-brainer and limits on fizzy drinks and junk food advertising is a natural next step.

Decisions about mining rights and fracking will be informed by their potential impact on children, families and communities and not simply the profit motive of multinational conglomerates and lobbyists.

In February 2020, in the early days of the pandemic, we launched "A Future for the World's Children?" - a World Health Organisation-UNICEF-Lancet Commission. In it, the case was made for a global movement for change, one that placed children and adolescents at the centre of all that we do and invited children to become meaningful stakeholders in decisions about their lives. Covid-19 has only made this more urgent. What is good for children is good for societies.

If we do not do this, and urgently, we will carry a burden across the coming generations, and the notion of "child rights" will remain a platitude rolled out for its emotional resonance once a year and at UN commemorative days, but will stubbornly remain out of reach.

By Special Correspondent

Regulating social media in Nigeria

THE Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, took the campaign for social media regulation to the National Assembly last week, using the near-anarchy that dovetailed the #EndSARS peaceful protest as justification. The minister told lawmakers that fake news on social media inflamed the violence that engulfed Nigeria for more than one week, leading to the murder of 22 policemen and about 50 other persons.

In order to drive home his perspective, Lai Mohammed used extreme examples, saying, "If you go to China, you cannot get Google, Facebook or Instagram but you can only use your email because they have made sure that it is regulated. In June this year, there was a riot in Ethiopia when a popular musician was killed. What Ethiopia did to curtail the crisis that followed was to shut down the social media for two days, even when Ethiopia hosts the AU." Accusing the social media as purveyors of 'fake news', the minister called on the National Assembly to support an impending social media policy. Previously, the National Assembly had come up with related Bills for 'Protection from Internet Falsehood and Manipulations,' and 'National Commission for the Prohibition of Hate Speech,' both of which met with stiff resistance.

Lai Mohammed harped on the negative side of social media. The fact that social media has been used to spread misinformation, disinformation and mal-information is not in doubt. But in many parts of the world, governments have used social media to their own



advantage. Primarily, through social media, the government could gauge the pulse of the society in enacting public policies. Also, the social media comes in handy for crisis communication, as seen in its use to disseminate COVID-19 safety protocol. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control effectively used social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram in creating awareness about the dead-

ly coronavirus. It comes in handy in building trust among the people and setting the records straight, where issues are misunderstood or where wrong information is shared on social media. In essence, social media, as an addition to information dissemination platforms, has its positive uses.

The minister's renewed call for a regulatory framework may be justifiable if its objective is not to

stifle voices of dissent or to effectively put in place measures for internet censorship. In many quarters, this is the interpretation given to the government's campaigns for legal instruments against social media. For instance, security operatives have used the Cybercrime Act to arrest journalists, accusing them of cyberbullying or cyberstalking, for writing critical reports. This is totally unacceptable. There

is enough space in the country's libel or slander laws for the prosecution of journalists who violate laws guarding the practice of journalism. Also, for most of the issues categorised as 'fake news' by the minister, there is enough room for the prosecution of those who share harmful or violent contents in the Cybercrime Act and/or Evidence Act. Cybercrime Act takes care of forgery, falsehood, identity theft, and obscenity, like pornography. The Act also forbids the sharing of racist or xenophobic materials and has imposed a fine of N10 million or five years imprisonment for anyone found guilty of such offences. It even allows for the interception of electronic communication, if such order is given by a judge.

If the current laws are inadequate and the minister insists on a social media policy, the government should, as an act of good faith, liaise with those in the industry on how to work out a better approach to protect the public from harmful content. That means the government should, first and foremost, engage social media companies with its concerns and work out how such concerns could be taken care of. Also, the government must invest in digital literacy, by enlightening Nigerians on how to verify the contents they access on the social media.

Fortunately, there are many easy-to-use tools available on the internet for verifying photographs, videos, audios, websites, and social media handles that share suspicious content.

Such should be done in collaboration with institutions that are actively engaged in fact-checking in Nigeria. Also, it is important for the government to meet with stakeholders to determine the social media code of practice, and what should be regulated.

Building rural women's resilience the UN way in the wake of COVID-19

STATEMENT by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director, on the International Day of Rural Women (October 15, 2020)

IN rural Xiaruoyao, China, 45-year-old pig farmer Yan Shenglian is part of her village's Covid-19 management team, giving temperature checks and recording vehicle information at local checkpoints to help reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

In Tanzania's Iringa region, the outbreak of Covid-19 prompted 28-year-old Stella Nziku to join the Mufindi Women's Network to raise awareness of gender-based violence. And in Itá, Paraguay, 50-year-old Mirian Cáceres is coping with the pandemic's impact on her livelihood as a potter by organising soup kitchens to alleviate hunger.

The vital roles of rural women as farmers, workers, entrepreneurs, community leaders and first responders during crises are key to building peaceful, prosperous and sustainable societies. The Covid-19 pandemic threatens to roll back these significant contributions, which is why we must double our efforts to build rural women's resilience to current and future shocks.

Discriminatory gender norms and resource constraints compound the negative effects of Covid-19 on rural women's lives. Already, before the pandemic, women across the world did more than three times the unpaid care and domestic work as men. In rural areas, this is exacerbated by lack of infrastructure and insufficient access to clean and safe water, sanitation and energy. Something as essential to hygiene and safety as frequent hand-washing with soap, is no simple matter in many locations.

The gender digital divide in rural areas has magnified women's and girls' marginalisation, limiting their access to distance education, essential services, digital finance and life-saving information during the crisis.

The shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls, which has been rising in situations of lockdown, must also be overcome as a matter of urgency. Rural women and girls are even more at risk of experiencing violence, yet less likely to receive the support they need due to lack of essential services, legal remedies and justice.

To address these gaps and respond to the pandemic, millions of rural women worldwide have organised protection, support and relief.

In Liberia, the National Rural Women

Association, with the support of UN Women, is communicating vital Covid-19 information in rural communities. Through the Rural Women's Economic Empowerment joint programme, run by FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP, rural and indigenous women in Guatemala, Nepal and Kyrgyzstan are producing masks as a community service and to earn an income, and disseminating health information, preventative measures and essential goods.

To sustain the livelihoods and food security of rural women and their families during the crisis, social protection must be expanded in ways that intentionally respond to women's needs. But this is not yet happening to the extent needed.

UN Women and UNDP's Covid-19 Global Gender Response Tracker shows that only 10 per cent of social protection and labour market measures are aimed at women – for example, cash transfers or food assistance that directly target women, support to women entrepreneurs and informal traders with grants and subsidised credits, or keeping childcare services open during lockdown to help relieve unpaid care burdens. It is critical that economic stimulus and recovery packages reach rural areas as well as urban settings to keep rural women and their households afloat.

On this International Day of Rural Women, our commitment to leave no one behind has never been more urgent. We must use this crisis as an opportunity to direct attention and resources to empower rural women and eliminate the long-standing obstacles to their progress, so that we can emerge from Covid-19 as a stronger, better balanced, resilient and caring society.

The experience in Kenya

Data recently published by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics highlights the disparity between those living in rural and urban settings. The data further shows that women in rural settings are significantly less empowered when it comes to education, employment and health.

Increasing the empowerment of rural women is a priority at the international level, and it is why institutions like the United Nations (UN) place primacy on supporting women in agriculture.

Following are some examples of how rural women can be empowered and their value to the country's society as a whole.

Daily sales grew from Ksh2,000 to



Ksh30,000

Lenah Mwangi of Nakuru County began as a trainer of trainers (TOT) when she joined the Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA) in 2018. The alliance was set up by six agri-focused organisations, including the UN World Food Programme, to build resilient value chains and link up public and private sectors.

"I started by buying pesticides, which I would sell to my neighbours and my mother's friends. I got my customers by word of mouth. I also introduced my mother to the modern way of farming. Though it was difficult at first because she was used to the traditional methods, she began embracing it as she saw my yield was better. This increased my customer base as neighbours also wanted to learn modern farming methods as they had seen the benefits from my farm."

A gleeful Lenah continues to narrate: "In March 2020, I entered into a co-financing partnership to refurbish and restock my agrovet shop. I contributed Ksh20,000 to the required Ksh120,000, and the rest came from FtMA.

"In 2019, my best daily sales would range from Ksh2,000 to Ksh5,000, and I would feel I had really achieved a lot. However, after the training and credit support, my daily sales grew and today I clock in around Ksh30,000. This grows to Ksh40,000 during peak planting seasons.

"This year has actually been the best for me, especially in the planting seasons of April and May, as I earned a profit of Ksh40,000."

Raising awareness

Last year, UN Women partnered with the Agricultural Fi-

nance Corporation in Kenya to deliver a series of training sessions around the country, for grassroots women farmers.

The lack of information available to women, coupled with traditional norms, severely limit their ability to own land and enjoy economic independence.

Flomena Tendet lives in Uasin Gishu, operating a small farm which produces avocados, eucalyptus and pine nuts. She is married, and although her husband's name is on the title deed of the land, the ownership of the business is shared. She explains that this kind of partnership is not common in the region.

She says: "Women traditionally do not own titles here, which causes problems. I was renting land, but I had to give it back to the landowner."

"I used to train women in Mount Elgon, but here, they are not so receptive. Traditions do not allow for it."

"Many women are simply not aware of the opportunities to access credit. Many things are secretive. People are not open to tell others about training opportunities. This is the first training I have attended since I moved here in 2005. The information does not reach women. Some men believe that women will become arrogant towards the husband if they receive training."

Raising awareness about credit opportunities and developing their businesses and administrative skills are the building blocks for women to gain economic empowerment.

Community leadership

Rural women are the backbone of Kenya's society and

can be relied upon to protect their communities.

Tecla Chumba of the Lembus tribe set up a community forest association and asked the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to give each member half an acre of land and tree seedlings that they could plant alongside their own crops.

But then, the KFS decided to lease the land to a company interested in planting and harvesting trees, denying the community forest association the right to do shamba. Chumba, together with the National Alliance of Community Forests Associations Kenya, took KFS to court, and won.

"Local communities have to be involved in decisions about forests that affect their livelihoods. The Forest Conservation and Management Act 2016 says that Kenya Forest Service has to respect public participation," says the mother of four from Narok County.

Communities like Chumba's are supported by the United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. The programme aims to bring a human rights-based approach to envi-

Tribute to President William V. S. Tubman

Rev. Dr. Samuel E. Vaniseo

NATIONAL unification was one of the greatest achievements of the late President William V. S. Tubman. I was a child in elementary school when President Tubman died. I remember when he was alive, we, younger kids used to hand-out in the Executive Mansion during Flag Day celebration. It was there that I first rode in an elevator. The staff were kind and generous to children.

The first time I came up close to the president was when he laid in his casket at the Executive Mansion. Children were allowed in to view his remains. Children were respected in those days. I stuck my head under the crossed swords above the casket and looked in the president's face. He did not open his eyes nor say a word because he was dead. Regardless, as a child, I was glad I saw the president. I cherished that moment so much.

The anti-Tubman discourses that came up later had an impact on me too. We were told that Tubman had all the resources, yet he failed to develop the country. We believed that he usurped the nation's resources selfishly. Some contended why only Tubman's birthday is a celebrated holiday. Recently I have been following similar discussions in the print and electronic media. So out of mere curiosity I decided to check things out objectively and dig deeper into the Tubman story. What I found was pleasantly shocking to me. His birthday is November 29th. So, I write this tribute to President Tubman as my small contribution to his presidential history.

Of course, there were political, economic, and social misdeeds during Tubman's regime. Critics, both Liberian and foreign, have scolded him in different details. Liberian authors like D. Elwood Dunn, Omari Jackson, and others have responded adequately to the



criticisms in their own way. It is not my plan to repeat what they did. I only hope to provide a different perspective to the Tubman story—details that historians missed or concealed. All things considered, if the truth is to be told, it should be acknowledged that President Tubman did so much more for the country than all the presidents before and after him combined.

The Misunderstood President

Dr. Marguerite Cartwright, a renown international journalist of the "Negro History Bulletin", visited Liberia occasionally in the 1950s. She wrote in one of her reports that "William V. S. Tubman and his role in Liberia are... greatly misunderstood." She went on to say, "The jaunty cigar-smoking President of the small West African nation is one of the least known ... in the sense that 95% of what is known about him is incorrect" (The Negro History Bulletin, Vol. 22, 1959).

What did he really do? Why was he misunderstood? That is theme of this writing. But first, what was Liberia like before Tubman be-

came president? What did he inherit?

Liberia Before President Tubman

Tubman became President when Liberia was 97 years old in 1944. Within three years Liberia would celebrate her centennial (100 years) anniversary. Regrettably, at 100 years, there were no semblance of development: no Capitol Building, no modern Executive Mansion, no Temple of Justice, no electricity, no water or sewer system, no JFK Hospital. There was no Law school or medical school. There was no Ducor Intercontinental Hotel, no modern school buildings, and no Monrovia City Hall. Monrovia consisted mainly of Ashmun Street, Gurley Street, Center Street, Snapper Hill, almost all dirt roads.

The year Liberia celebrated her centennial anniversary, the Journal of Negro History, described the country as "incredibly backward." Historians who covered the same period concluded similarly. Here are some examples:

Education researchers Emmanuel B. Waydon, Lui Ying, and Barbara L. Ketter jointly re-

ported that "Nothing much happened to Liberia's education ... until 1955 when William V.S. Tubman was president." They also affirmed that it was Tubman's Integration Policy that extended government's education programs to indigenous Liberians (Educational Research International Journal (Vol 5(1)).

S. Jabaru Carlon, author of Black Civilization and the Problem of Indigenous Education in Africa: The Liberian Experience, wrote that "Most of the early schools that existed in the Liberian Republic were along the coastal areas ... attended mainly by settlers' children and their wards."

Economically, the outlook was just as dismal. According to a report on Liberia's economy in The Journal of Modern African Studies (Vol II, 1973), for the first 100 years, the country was judged as "incompetent." Income for the government depended largely on hut-tax forcefully acquired from the natives who received no benefits in return. (M. B. Akpan in the Canadian Journal of African Studies Vol 7, 1973). Healthcare was just as grim.

On top of all that, Liberia was deeply segregated up to 1944. Until then, the settlers treated the natives worse than the British and French treated their black subjects in Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast. The League of Nations found Liberia guilty on charges of abuse which lead to the resignation of President Charles D. B. King in 1930. The tension between the government and natives resulted in several tribal unrests. Particularly, 1910 to 1920 witnessed much bloodshed from revolts of the Grebos, the Krus, the Golahs, and the Kpelles.

Appeal From His Father

Historian Hassan B. Sisay (in "Big Powers and Small Nations," 1985) wrote that William V. S. Tubman's grandfather was allegedly beaten to death by natives during an uprising. Later, in a similar event, Tubman's father Alexander Tubman was nearly killed. But he was rescued by

a native man named Dyne Weah. On his death bed, according to Sisay, Alexander appealed to young William Tubman, that if he could, to do everything in his power to unite the settlers and the natives.

All of that social, economic, and educational complex, to say the least, plus \$1.5 million in government's coffers, plus the uncertainties of World War 2, was the Liberia Mr. William V. S. Tubman inherited as president in 1944.

Within 20 years of Tubman's regime, most of the same news agencies that previously described gloom in Liberia, were overflowing with amazing headlines on Liberia. In 1959 the Negro History Journal carried a report under the title, "Liberia and Capitalism" that said, "Recently, in an impressive article in the ... Wall Street Journal, Liberia comes in for high praise and is called the most impressive showcase for capitalism in Black Africa."

Lawrence A. Marinelli wrote in the Journal of Modern African Studies (1964) that "There was unprecedented expansion in all areas of the economic life of the nation." He goes on to say, "... The benefits have been tremendous for the country and its citizens. Schools, and hospital are being built on an unprecedented scale." Eight years later in 1972, in the same journal, Louis Belekly stated that "In focusing on Liberia, we find that this country has experienced a remarkable rate of growth during the last two decades, despite her many incapacitating circumstances." Louis further wrote, "The rate of expansion of the economy of Liberia during the decades preceding the 1961 surpassed that of almost any other country in the world. ... It can, therefore, be safely said that Liberia has not only been growing but also developing."

Public banks urged to share funding fairly, as climate change batters poor farmers

ROME

AS the world's 450 public development banks held their first summit this week, committing to put the global economy on a greener and more resilient path, data showed poor communities hit hard by climate change are receiving little financial help.

Less than 2% of climate finance

goes to small-scale farmers in developing nations, despite their vulnerability to worsening extreme weather and their crucial role in feeding billions of people, said a new report on Thursday.

Funds to tackle climate change topped an average of half a trillion dollars in both 2017 and 2018, yet only \$10 billion of that went to smallholder farmers

each year, according to research from the U.N. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Climate Policy Initiative think-tank.

That is "a small fraction" of the hundreds of billions of dollars needed annually to help them adapt to climate change, added the report, the first detailed analysis of climate finance flows to

farmers on the ground.

"It is unacceptable that the people who produce much of the world's food - and who are at the greatest mercy of increasingly unpredictable weather - receive the least support," Margarita Astralaga, a director at Rome-based IFAD, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The latest figures on climate fi-

nance for developing nations, released last week by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, showed that in 2018, 70% of the total went towards reducing emissions, with only 21% for adaptation.

In October, international researchers urged donors to end hunger and tackle climate change by nearly doubling their

funding to help small farmers.

Worldwide, an estimated 2 billion people grow crops on about 500 million farms of less than five hectares, providing up to 80% of food produced in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, IFAD says.

Rising temperatures, erratic weather and disasters, including more frequent droughts and floods, have destroyed crops and

livestock on many such farms, said Astralaga, IFAD's director of environment, climate, gender and social inclusion.

IFAD wants both governments and private investors to channel more money to these farmers so they can adapt to weather shifts as well as curb planet-warming emissions from their work, she said.

YANGAMBI: Planting the roots of vegetation classification in Africa

BY AHTZIRI GONZALEZ

BEGINNING in the late 19th century, effective classification of Africa's bounteous vegetation became a major preoccupation for European geographers and botanists. Seeking to gain a better understanding of the vast territories that their countries had colonized, they hoped to contribute to more efficient land use, resource and environmental management. Yangambi is a town in Isangi territory of Tshopo province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

But they soon realized they faced an enormous task. Africa is a megadiverse continent. From the East Sudanian savanna to the Central Zambesian miombo woodlands, Europeans found themselves describing and mapping a diversity of vegetation types on a scale unlike any other in the world.

Scientists embarked on ambitious efforts to produce useful literature and vegetation maps, but due to lack of international cooperation, divergent methods and concepts made it impossible to systematically classify the work done by different authors.

To deal with these challenges, in 1956 the Scientific Council for Africa South of the Sahara (CSA) convened a phytogeography conference held in the Belgian Congo's Yangambi Research Station (in what is now Democratic Republic of Congo).

Located near the city of Stanleyville (now Kisangani), at the heart of the Congo Basin's dense evergreen rainforest, Yangambi served as the headquarters of the National Institute for Agronomic Study of the Belgian Congo (INEAC). Founded in the 1930s, it soon became Africa's most reputable tropical forestry and agriculture research center, hosting hundreds of scientists and technicians specialized in diverse disciplines such as botany, climatology, silviculture and ecology.

The Yangambi Conference, which spanned 10 days, was the first attempt to address language divergences between English- and French-speaking scientists and to promote collaboration between colonial powers. Notable participants included forester André Aubréville and explorer Théodore Monod from France, and botanists Ronald William John Keay and Paul Westmacott Richards from Britain, as well as a dozen government representatives from Belgium, France, Britain, Portugal, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi), and the Union of South Africa (now Republic of South Africa).

The conference concluded with an international agreement that recommended a unified nomenclature and definition for tropical and subtropical Africa's types of vegetation. This classification served as the foundation for the first



bilingual 'Vegetation Map of Africa South of the Tropic of Cancer', published by UNESCO, the U.N. cultural agency, in 1958.

"Unlike other initiatives, the Yangambi classification did not focus on listing species, but instead gave detailed descriptions of the vegetation of each type of forest," said Hans Beeckman, head of the wood biology service of Belgium's Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA). "This information remains very useful to quantify forests' biomass and map carbon stocks."

Following a series of revisions to address the agreement's shortcomings, in 1983 British forester Frank White published a new ver-

sion of this map. Ever since then, numerous publications have suggested changes and additions, but the Yangambi classification remains the basis of all modern systems. "The Yangambi agreement had a great influence on the following generations of foresters studying the African continent," said Robert Nasi, director general of the Center for International Forestry Research. "The switch of focus from botany (looking at species) to phytogeography (vegetation types) was really a tipping point for forestry and vegetation ecology."

In recognition of Yangambi's scientific contributions to reconcile biodiversity

conservation with sustainable use, in 1978 UNESCO declared 235,000 hectares of forest in Yangambi a Man and Biosphere Reserve. Following decades of budget cuts and neglect, Yangambi is once again positioning itself as an important center for the study of Africa's forests. Since 2007, CIFOR has received funding from the European Union to lead several projects aimed at consolidating Yangambi's role as an "open air laboratory" at the heart of the Congo Basin.

An outstanding example of international academic collaboration between Congolese and foreign institutions, these inter-

ventions focus on applied research to protect DRC's rich biodiversity and improve the livelihoods of rural communities.

Researchers from the RMCA and the University of Kisangani (UNIKIS), for example, are studying how to support the natural regeneration of *Pericopsis elata*, an endangered tree species with a high value in the timber market. This research has been facilitated by the recent construction of a wood biology laboratory in Yangambi.

Moreover, experts with the Meise Botanic Garden and the Congolese Institute of Agronomic Research (INERA) are studying Yangambi's wild coffee species in a quest to support Robusta coffee growth in a climate change context, and potentially contribute to develop the country's coffee industry. They are also digitizing and modernizing the dried plant collection found in Yangambi's herbarium - a rare botanical treasure of 150,000 specimens.

CIFOR, INERA, and UNIKIS experts are also studying local forest product value chains, including charcoal, timber and wild meat. Their goal is to promote sustainable production, transport and trade to support local populations to improve their livelihoods, while mitigating negative environmental impacts.

Finally, this year Belgium's Ghent University (UGhent) and INERA are inaugurating an Eddy Covariance tower in Yangambi - a first in the Congo Basin - which will measure greenhouse gas exchanges between the forest and the atmosphere. The data produced will be crucial to better understand forests' contribution to mitigate climate change.

"Yangambi is the cradle of forestry research in the Congo Basin," said Chadrack Kafuti, a Ph.D. student at UGhent. "Because it is home to so many archives, samples and experimental plots - some of them dating from 70 years ago - it is the perfect place for foresters to study the evolution of trees and forest dynamics."

Egypt hopeful Congo AU presidency delegation will help in Nile Dam crisis

CAIRO

EGYPTIAN President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi hosted November 4 a high-level Congolese delegation headed by Fortna Beasley, special adviser to the president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

During the meeting, Beasley conveyed a message to Sisi from Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi, expressing deep appreciation for Egypt's unlimited support to maintain peace and stability in the DRC and its tireless support at all regional and international forums, Egyptian presidency spokesman Bassam Rady said in a statement. The delegation further praised the distinguished fraternal relations and friendship between the two countries and expressed the DRC's willingness to further boost bilateral ties at all levels, especially in areas regarding development.

For his part, Sisi stressed that Egypt will continue to support the DRC at all levels in order to achieve stability, development and progress, as part of the distinguished historical relations between the two countries that represent a model for cooperation and joint coordination within the African continent.

Rady said the meeting touched on a number of issues of common interest in the African arena, especially as the DRC gears up to take over the presidency of the African Union (AU). Sisi affirmed Egypt's support to the DRC during its upcoming presidency of the AU. He also expressed confidence in Tshisekedi's success to assume this important responsibility to lead joint African action over the next year.

Huriya Mujahid, professor of African political systems and thinking at Cairo University, told Al-Monitor that Egypt seeks to build strong relations with all African countries. "Egypt is currently expanding the base of its relations with the African continent."



After assuming the AU presidency in February 2021, the DRC will have a role in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) crisis between Egypt and Ethiopia, Mujahid said, adding, "It (Congo) is one of the Nile Basin countries and may end the conflict between the two (Egypt and Ethiopia)."

The AU's decision in the GERD crisis is not binding, and the parties to the conflict enjoy discretion to approve it or reject it. But the DRC seems adamant to exploit its relationship with Egypt and Ethiopia to solve the dispute.

Amani al-Taweel, director of the African program at Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, praised Egypt's relationship with the DRC. "The DRC has supported the Egyptian state in the Entebbe Agreement and in the Nile Basin issue. It is true that the AU presidency has no powers to end the GERD crisis, but it may give a consultative opinion," she told Al-Monitor.

Taweel believes the DRC will have a positive role in favor of Egypt in the GERD. "The crisis between Egypt and Ethiopia needs an intervention by the international community alongside the AU."

For his part, Mustafa el-Gamal, director of the Arab and African Research Center, told Al-Monitor that Egypt supports the DRC in many issues and also in the presidency of the AU, with the aim of completing the Congo River project. "This project will benefit Egypt in the future, although it is costly and agreements with river basin countries and execution will take a long time."

Gamal believes the AU will not make any decision on the GERD issue. "In the event a decision is made

on the issue of the GERD between Egypt and Ethiopia, it will not be implemented. Egypt chaired the AU but failed to raise the GERD issue since it was convinced this will not help to resolve the crisis. Egypt was in a critical situation and couldn't raise the GERD issue during its presidency of the AU."

He said the conflict over the Nile River water between Egypt and Ethiopia will only end when the two countries reach a political solution, through arbitration, or following the intervention of the US or the UN Security Council. "Egypt will suffer water scarcity if Ethiopia completes the GERD construction," he warned.

Meanwhile, Mohamed Abdel-Karim Ahmed, research coordinator for the Africa unit at the Institute for Future Studies in Beirut, argued that Egypt has been following a positive diplomatic approach with the DRC since Sisi took office for many reasons.

He explained to Al-Monitor that Egypt is seeking to dismantle the alignment of the Nile Basin countries behind Ethiopia, which it succeeded to do to a large extent. "Cairo also seeks to boost its presence on the [African] continent alongside one of the most important allies of the US in sub-Saharan Africa (the DRC) after the demise of the Kabila regime in 2019."

Having legislation on online forex trading, key in developing sector

By Christopher Makombe

FOREX trading is increasingly becoming a popular venue across the world for people to earn a living. Few individual retail forex traders have been operating in online forex trading in Tanzania via International brokers for some time now.

It is the availability of internet access and leverage in the forex industry that has attracted many individual traders who could not otherwise get involved due to capital or infrastructure constraints.

The real forex trading should involve a trader actually trading currencies in the global financial markets via broker platforms.

Any other form such as networking marketing where individuals get paid by adding members in the chain using the name forex trading do not represent forex trading by forex trading we mean buying and selling of global currencies in anticipation of future increase or decrease in value of those currencies via brokers platforms with a view of making profits.

Online forex trading offers the following benefits-income generation for Tanzanian citizens once traders become profitable and start making money from the markets.

Registered companies, investment funds and large corporate can also open margin accounts with brokers and start trading on their own funds and generate income for investors.

It provide employment opportunities for traders themselves but also staff who will be employed to work in new brokerage firms to be opened and in forex investment funds.

Tanzanians who are ready to learn and take risks in the financial markets through online forex trading regardless of their age, race or sex can be trained to trade for themselves.

The good thing about forex trading is that capital requirement can be affordable (in some brokers one can start with as low as 200,000/- since the use of leverage allows traders to trade more than their initial investments. The most important thing before getting involved in forex is to educate you on the subject; one needs proper education and mentorship to succeed in forex trading.

It also widens financial inclusion by allowing more Tanzanians to participate in the global largest financial market of foreign exchange through own trading or investment in forex funds.

This sector has a potential of providing employment opportunities to more than 10 000 Tanzanians at a minimum. The government should expedite the legislation on online forex trading so that people can start taking advantage of the opportunities available in the forex industry. It is also important to note that forex market is the largest financial market in the world.

Online forex trading increases

Tanzanians competence in the regional as well as international markets. Instead of sitting and watching citizens of other nations taking advantage of global markets, Tanzanians will become part of that development and take full benefit from it.

It can be easily done since it does not need huge infrastructure investment to start. You just need access to the internet and proper education on the forex markets. In addition trading business does not need traditional business requirements of marketing costs, looking for customers

Emergence of respected and influential traders from Tanzania who are able to compete at global level and generate income for themselves and thus improving overall wellbeing of the people

Income generation for the government in form of taxes from profitable traders as well as brokerage companies

But, challenges of online retail forex trading include lack of regulation on online forex trading in Tanzania.

This has stopped a number of international forex brokers who would like to come and start business in this country, lack of advanced financial markets understanding and education among citizens regarding retail online forex trading opportunities and challenges. However this gap can be filled once the regulation is in place to provide guidance, absence of trading capital among traders.

Amidst blame game: The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on international relations and multilateral diplomacy

By Josephus Moses Gray

DIGGING deep into the layers of critical and intellectual reflections, we are succinctly reminded that the former President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln once said, "America will never be destroyed from within." And so, it seems at present, the United States is consumed within through its own difficulties, as a result of the unprecedented devastation due to the novel coronavirus.

The pandemic is truly global catastrophe causing both short and long-term disruption and suffering, ultimately economic loss and tragically human casualties. Perhaps, the prestige of the powers prestige is suffering a severe blow due to the coronavirus, with people across the globe changing the perception about big powers and capacities toward difficult time such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as isolations and lockdowns have become ubiquitous; Associate Professor of International Relations and Foreign Policy Studies of the University of Liberia Graduate School, Dr. Josephus Moses Gray, PhD provides an in-depth analysis of the effect coupled with the consequence of COVID-19 pandemic and catastrophe it poses for the planet and humanity.

Globally, COVID-19 is a test of legitimacy for every government and political leader. But the pandemic at the moment is being used as a political and economic weapon to illegitimize other states and leaders, while other bureaucrats, politicians and foreign capitalists are using the novel coronavirus pandemic to dent the legitimacy of other nations and world leaders, with the aim of shooting their ways to political leadership or gain influence for self-benefit. It is a glimpsing fact that governments that failed to act timely and decisively are likely to suffer the repercussion, and bound to face masses' wrath. In most cases, they are voted against as demonstrated by visible scenarios across the globe, with political leaders face a decisive repercussion. Governments and policy-makers across the globe are scrambling to find ways out to mitigate the enormous damage with individual state's economy headed into a decline and the numbers of vast unemployment.

In short, the blame game COVID-19, the claims and counter-claims are gradually surging what seemed to be a new cold war that would see a huge wave of international isolation and bigotry against other states and nationals, while overcoming world poverty remains the decisive issue for humanity. The threat of new cold war is not just about the United States of America and China, it is about all of our futures, it's a threat to the whole of humanity. But what is the alternative to the threat of a new cold war? It is to jointly work together to fight the pandemic, to oppose war and any form of racism, to fight abject poverty and huge unemployment, and to work together for peaceful economic development and win the fight against COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic can be defeated through greater solidarity and cooperation, not isolating other nationals or ruining other countries to score political benefits, but mutually working together to contest the plague. It appears that China has won the war against the novel coronavirus and has joined forces with dozens of other nations to put up a fierce fight to defeat the pandemic.

Instead of fostering global cooperation and globalization, the pandemic gradually promotes disintegrative tendencies within the international system as continents, regions, states and governments seek to limit or disconnect themselves from others international players, actors, stakeholders and other nationals., but sincere and collective action should be taken to reaffirm commitment to supporting multilateralism and safeguard international system, and oppose unilateralism.

The coronavirus is a major challenge facing humanity and poses a huge threat to the safety of people's lives, to their mental and physical health, and to the social and economic development of all countries and regions. The COVID-19 pandemic had already created significant shifts in people's behavioral patterns, interactions, movement, and if we failed to collectivize our focus against this uphill battle against humanity and all the values we stand for, indeed, it could transform our daily lives in the long run, including keeping or following social distancing guidelines, hand washing, using sanitizer frequently, more often and stockpiling essentials like food or water. The challenges that the COVID-19 poses to established political systems and institutions, leadership structures and measures need to be reviewed and enforced forcefully. But the moment to start reflecting and planning is now and change begins with understanding, questioning and reflecting.

The recognized fact is COVID-19 pandemic affects every sector of the world, but it has more impact on some societies and governments than on others due to different scenarios such as illiteracy, persistent denial, poor health system, traditional belief and unwillingness to accept change and respect lockdown measures, thus putting great number of the population of countries at huge risk. Other leaders attach added importance to power and authority regarding their images rather accepting the facts. For those who are not taking this scourge lightly, are equally aware that this menace is unconcerned about sex, color, race, creed, borders, age, status or fame. Countries that do not have a health system can hardly shelter their population. In some parts of the world like African and South America, access to health services is a luxury, not a right. Even more so are hospitals and intensive care units.

Without doubts, Like any previous, the COV-



Presidential staffs watch a screen showing G-20 virtual summit to discuss the coronavirus disease outbreak at the presidential Blue House in Seoul, South Korea. (File photo)

ID-19 pandemic also presents both a challenge and an opportunity for the poorest nations to try and strengthen governance, programs and direct more support towards health care, train more health practitioners and doctors, and strengthen diplomatic ties with economically productive nations, not just any other states, to support domestic programs and productive investment and governance programs. Most often, the ordinary masses wondered if government does care for the health needs, well-being and one would also question if the leaders are capable of protecting them.

The pandemic is completely out of control in the US and is rising internationally and hitting Western Europe very firmly, but when the US and European countries applied some lockdown measures; there was a decline in the number of reported cases. But the Covid-19 pandemic cases in the U.S. are now rising vertiginously, presenting unimaginable human catastrophe for U.S., Brazil, India, France, Great Britain, Spain, Italy, Germany, Kingdom of Belgium and Eastern European countries such as Russia Federation. The Covid-19 policies adopted by these countries appeared to be a disaster for humanity and pose a catastrophe for the planet and humanity.

However, the scale of the COVID-19 should serve as a wake call for global powers and nations to build an open world economy, enhance macroeconomic coordination, and jointly keep global industrial and supply chains stable and unclogged. There was always an argument that the existing world order cannot change because only a momentous war has done that in the past and wars have become impossible, but the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the current world order, with the emergence of new power from the global south.

On the other-hand, the impact of the coronavirus will result to several states losing their dominance in the international sphere and in a negative twist, the weakened nations might be compared to compromise their internal and external sovereignties by seeking to normalize relations with the bigger powers on the global stage to the disadvantage of the weakened states, and could become truly subservient to these powerful countries. Others are arguing that relations between the big powers likely to become more cordial for better cooperation among states.

However, the poverty-driven nations with humblest economic need to manage their own recovery effectively and adequately, instead of being meek to the influential nations and governments, the less developed and poverty-stricken nations need to engage the power states from a position of a united front and strength. It appears that such scenario perhaps be considered as overoptimistic.

It is likely that the global pandemic will definitely be classed or considered as a non-state actor in international politics and could affect regional integration especially free movement and trade as new rules gradually come into play. The fragile and poorest ones particularly third world countries are expected to suffer the repercussion of the global pandemic. Africa hosts the world's poorest nations with miserable poverty, bad governance, weak democratic and economic institutions, except if disadvantaged ones adopt the process of solidarity and cooperation with other big powers.

Fortunately, one can envisage the greater use of technology by state to regulate trade and travels and with higher institutions bolstering their scientific curricula with new innovations. Global value chains will be transformed while big powers are certainly will encourage self-sufficiency and a strategic reconsideration of the nature of their relations with other states and non-state actors, economic, politics, social policies and foreign relations. But in certain instances, there would be erosion of the concept of sovereignty. But responses to

the coronavirus have differed greatly from country to country, as isolations and lockdowns have become ubiquitous, however, even then there is great variance in their severity. The COVID-19 pandemic might also reorient wider attitudes about how a particular government and state should treat public health issues, and that if there's anything that could highlight the interdependence the world is facing, it's this present situation.

Therefore, our new embrace of interdependence could drive us to demand a more supportive social safety net, since there may be more opportunities for multilateralism for countries to network effectively and strategically join forces to address the huge economic challenges; this will needs people with the rightful expertise and qualifications to interact and engage big country to help defeat the coronavirus. Counties need to amalgamate forces, demonstrate. Several studies have shown that both China and Africa face the formidable task of combating the virus while stabilizing the economy and protecting people's livelihoods, and the two must always put their people and their lives front and center, mobilizing necessary resources, stick together in collaboration, and do whatever it takes to protect people's lives and health and minimize the fallout of COVID-19.

According to Ross (2020), 84% of the world's population lives in developing countries, revealing that life expectancy in a low-income economy is 17 years less than in a high-income economy. China's raised over 860 million people out of World Bank defined poverty - over 70% of all those lifted out of poverty in the world.

China is doing its utmost to prove that it has overcome the crisis and in the short term, it is first to gradually resume business as usual, although not at the same pace, despite being the first to be hard hit by the coronavirus.

The COVID-19 started as a calamitous for China where the first case and death were reported, but within two to three months, China was able to shape up to be a movement of strategic opportunity, a great turning point in the flow of human history and the world order. Most importantly, the virus set in motion a global competition to trim the pandemic. It became apparent that China does have the ability to intervene in other countries' situation in combating COVID-19.

The Chinese Government has captured the attention of many African countries including Liberia due primarily to Beijing's reasonable approaches towards socio-economic and structure development, and the ways in which the Chinese Government practices win-win diplomacy and is foreign aid's policy.

Beijing's "win-win" diplomatic style has featured greater accommodations with several African countries like Liberia. Chinese government growing popularity in Liberia is due to the soft power approach in the region and the speed at which it response to developmental requests by unpunished countries like Liberia.

China and Africa are faced with both historical opportunities for greater development and unprecedented challenges that without doubts are turning into prospects for both countries and peoples. In contemporary history, China and Africa shared similar experiences, both having suffered from aggression, plunder, and enslavement by colonialists. Therefore, the Chinese people and the people of Africa have all along rendered each other solidarity and support and shared weal and woe in their struggles against imperialism and for national independence and liberation.

The Chinese Government has captured the attention of many African countries including Liberia due primarily to Beijing's reasonable approaches towards socio-economic and infrastructural development, and the ways in which the Chinese Government practices win-win diplomacy and its foreign aid's policy towards Africa. Beijing's "win-win" diplomatic style has featured greater accommodations with several African states, governments and leaderships including Liberia.

China and Africa have shared historic facts-China is the world's faster developing economic and hold the world's largest population, while Africa is the host of abundant rich natural resources, brilliant cultures, hard-working, talented and courageous people and a significant contributor to the advancement of human civilization and world development. Africa is one of the cradles of mankind.

China and Africa have since then become all-weather friends that understand, support and help each other. China and Africa "have always belonged to a community of shared

values and fruitful future" and "have always been good friends who stand together through thick and thin, good partners who share weal and woe, and good friends who fully trust each other despite changes in the international landscape.

Both Africa and Chinese leaderships should adhere to the principles of good governance which include sincerity, inclusiveness and respect for the rule of law, practical results, affinity, and good faith and uphold the values of friendship, and shared interests. From the early days of the rise of Pan-Africanism in the 20th century to the formation of the Organization of African Unity in 1963 which now gives birth to the African Union (AU) in 2002 in Libya, the African continent seeks strength through harmony and accomplishing renaissance of civilization, has long been a cherished aspiration of the African people. The people of Africa have made great efforts on the path of a united front through unity, thus leaving behind glorious pages of success and notable endeavors.

China has a major diplomatic presence in Africa. In fact, Beijing is more widely represented in Africa with missions on the ground than is the United States. Beijing, which has diplomatic relations with Fifty-one continent's fifty-three countries, maintains an embassy with an accredited ambassador in 48 of them. China maintains offices of a commercial counselor in 40 of those countries and seven consulates general in five of them.

China and Africa have shared comprehensive consensus on major international issues, common interests and a willingness to deepen their cooperation. The rapid development of the Sino-Africa relationship reveals on-going transitions that facilitate the move towards a new strategic partnership. China also emphasizes the notion of "respect" for African countries, embodied in its policy of noninterference in the domestic affairs of sovereign countries and in an approach to conflict resolution on the continent that is seen as much less confrontational as Western interventions.

Unlike the Western donors who tend to impose Western values like democratic ideas on Africa, China invest and provide aid without much preconditions and interference in their internal affairs, therefore, it is not unimaginable that China is regarded by Africa as a more cooperative and valuable partner to the West.

Besides providing loans, China also invests in infrastructure development and many high-visibility projects, that the African leaders generally in favor. Physical infrastructure constructions have been long neglected if not avoided, by Western donors. Also, Chinese investors are highly reputed by the African of their rapid completion of infrastructures with acceptable qualities. China has educational relationships with 50 African countries and keeps increasing her assistance on training and education to African countries. In 2005, China also hosted the Sino-African Education Minister Forum. In 2007, there are around 5,900 students from Africa studying in China, with most of them receiving scholarships provided by the Chinese government.

In his recent well-delivered paper regarding the extend of COVID-19, President Xi Jinping propounded that China will continue to do whatever it can to support Africa's response to COVID-19 and will lose no time in following through on the measures that he has announced at the opening of the World Health Assembly, and continue to help African countries by providing supplies, sending expert teams, and facilitating Africa's procurement of medical supplies in China.

He indicated that in the face of COVID-19, China and Africa have offered mutual support and fought shoulder to shoulder with each other. "China shall always remember the invaluable support Africa gave us at the height of our battle with the coronavirus. In return, when Africa was struck by the virus, China was the first to rush in with assistance and has since stood firm with the African people", President Jinping has indicated.

According to the Chinese President, in the face of COVID-19, China and Africa have enhanced solidarity and strengthened friendship and mutual trust. "Let me reaffirm China's commitment to its longstanding friendship with Africa. No matter how the international landscape may evolve, China shall never waver in its determination to pursue greater solidarity and cooperation with Africa".

BUSINESS

LINGUA FRANCA

MPs to transact business in Kiswahili on Thursdays

NAIROBI

National Assembly sessions will be transacted every Thursdays afternoon in Kiswahili in line with provisions of the Constitution that recognises it as a national language.

Article 120 of the Constitution stipulates that the official languages of Parliament shall be Kiswahili, English and Kenyan sign language. The lawmakers may conduct the business of Parliament in English, Kiswahili and Kenyan sign language. President Uhuru Kenyatta will, this afternoon, launch the Kiswahili version of the rules of procedure or Standing Orders of Parliament.

The launch of the Kiswahili version of Standing Orders will pave the way for the National Assembly to dedicate every Thursday afternoon sitting as a day when MPs transact all business in the language. Mr Kenyatta is scheduled to address a Joint Sitting of Parliament to deliver this year's State of the Nation Address.

He will also use the occasion to unveil the first Kiswahili version of House rules. A task force National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi appointed devel-

oped a bilingual version of the House rules and a Kiswahili only version.

According to the task force report on the translation of the 5th Edition of the English version of the National Assembly Standing Orders to Kiswahili, the rules of procedure help define the character of a Parliament by describing the rights and obligations of elected parliamentarians, set out the manner in which business is to be conducted, and ensures some form of management of the House is in place. "At the same time, the rules must show to the wider public that Parliament works fairly and effectively," the taskforce says in the report seen by Business Daily.

The seven-member taskforce chaired by Kipkemai arap Kirui was tasked with developing a Draft Translation of the Standing Orders which was to be subjected to internal review by departments and directorates of the National Assembly and Members of the Procedure and House Rules Committee, and later to an external (both local and regional) peer review, and validation by Kiswahili language experts and translators from various Kenyan and Tanzanian Universities



National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi.

INNOVATION

Researchers develop special cotton face mask that can be disinfected even by sunlight

NEW YORK

A new type of cotton face mask created by scientists is more than 99% effective against viruses and bacteria upon activation by daylight.

It's been proven in several studies that face masks help to limit the spread of the new coronavirus as the virus is mainly transmitted through respiratory droplets (when people cough, sneeze, or talk) and personal contact.

Although masks protect the people wearing them by reducing the number of droplets from others reaching their respiratory tract, evidence suggests that different types of masks yield different results. More than this, live bacteria and viruses can easily stick to the surfaces of masks, and be transferred elsewhere as soon as the wearer touches or removes it.

Taking this into consideration, researchers from the American Chemical Society developed a special kind of cotton face mask that kills up to 99.9999% of bacteria and viruses within 60 minutes of daylight exposure. How to avoid 'maskne'

The coronavirus pandemic has seen many counties make wearing a face covering in public mandatory. For many, this hasn't posed any problems, aside from some mild annoyance, but for those with sensitive skin, it has brought about a new irritating co. Their findings were recently published in the journal ACS Applied Materials & Interfaces.

Peixin Tang, Gang Sun, Nitin Nitin,

and colleagues aimed to develop a new cotton fabric that would release reactive oxygen species (ROS) when exposed to daylight, killing microbes attached to the fabric's surface. They also wanted the fabric to be washable, reusable, and safe to wear.

This invention would also be convenient as wearers could disinfect the mask during their lunch hour outside in the sun. The same effect could also be achieved by spending longer periods of time under office or building lights, which are much less intense than sunlight.

"Cotton fabrics with durable and reusable daylight-induced antibacterial/antiviral functions were developed by using a novel fabrication process," the researchers wrote. The process, they explained, involved attaching positively charged chains of 2-diethylaminoethyl chloride (DEAE-Cl) to ordinary cotton.

Following this, they dyed the modified cotton in a solution of a negatively charged photosensitiser (a compound that releases ROS upon exposure to light), which attached to the DEAE chains by strong electrostatic interactions.

A fabric made with a dye called rose Bengal as the photosensitiser was found to kill 99.9999% of bacteria added to the fabric within 60 minutes of daylight exposure, and inactivated 99.9999% of T7 bacteriophage (a virus thought to be more resistant to ROS than some coronaviruses) within 30 minutes.

INSPIRATION

Mother of twins defies poverty to return to university

CAPE TOWN

Siphokazi Ntsomi, a courageous mom of twin boys, tells Parent24 that she dropped out of university over nine years ago - when she fell pregnant.

At the time she was in her third year of pursuing her bachelor's degree in education, but she had to look for a job to support her two baby boys. She managed to get a contract job, but that soon ended and there was nothing there after, she says, but an unpaid and unrelated internship that solidified her commitment to a career in education.

Relying on her mother's old age pension grant, together with the boys' grant which was R280 per child at the time, was not easy for her. "I used to buy the box of nappies from the shop, with the change I would buy milk."

The boys' father is also unemployed, but she tells us that her "motto was not to remind him about the responsibility he knows about. When he can contribute towards the children, he will do it." Despite the tight finances, she tells us that she and the twins are happy and well.

And now that the boys are old enough, she has decided to go back to school to complete her studies, and she believes that nothing can stop her. Parent24 editor Elizabeth Mamacos chats to Nal'ibali's Western Cape Pro-

vincial Support Coordinator, Bulelani Futshane, about the importance of reading to children.



Siphokazi looked after her twins using the a grant.

vincial Support Coordinator, Bulelani Futshane, about the importance of reading to children.

Ntsomi says that she does not have funding but decided

that she was not going to allow that to stop her. "Funding will find me on the way," she believes. As she finishes her second attempt at her second year of a Bachelor of Education

at CPUT this year, she is juggling online schooling and motherhood. Ntsomi says it is challenging, not to mention the struggles presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, but she is

doing her best as a mother and student.

The determined mom tells us that what motivated her to go back to complete her studies was her love for teaching, and that even when she was job searching all she wanted to do was to teach, and nothing else. Despite her struggle for funding and having to repeat her second year instead of just finish her third year now, she is determined to complete her studies and be the teacher that she wants to be.

We asked Ntsomi why she was so determined to be a teacher, she explained how after she finished high school she got a teaching assistant job, and she loved it. Her passion even landed her to the principal's office as she recalls the principal saying, "We have been teachers for years but we have never seen a person who is so passionate like you. What are your thoughts about the future? Why don't you do teaching?"

One thing that sets her apart is that she has a gift, she reveals: she can read children's emotions. Ntsomi plans to also study psychology one day, so that she can focus on helping many other children as she honestly loves it and believes that she is the right person for it.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How 21-year-old found her footing in the Rwanda cosmetics business

KIGALI

Feeling at odds with what you see in the mirror can make it a bit challenging for many, to step out the front door and feel confident about the day ahead.

Seeing how improving her skin and hair boosted her confidence, Cheyenne Muvunyi, a 21-year-old businesswoman, realised the need to help others dealing with hair and skin problems. Last year, she founded a haircare and skincare company 'Glow Force', that sells locally made plant-based products at an affordable price.

"A lot of people think about skincare and haircare to be a shallow thing to find importance. But growing up, and my experience in school, I know that things like acne really affect who you are. It's a very superficial thing but quite deep in the sense that the way you look can affect your confidence, if you have skin issues.

"There are studies that link confidence to work output and school performance. I recognised it as a very important issue like any other. And also because improving my skin and my hair boosted my confidence, helped me start my YouTube channel and after understanding how important it is, I wanted to help others," she says.

Start-up story With the help of the internet, Muvunyi had been formulating her own organic skincare products for herself, made from natural oils, shea butter and clays and would often share with her friends.

"Glow Force started off based on a need that I had, and recognised with peers, that it was difficult to get the haircare and skincare products that we needed. We were always sending somebody from abroad to bring us what worked for us. After so much frustration I thought, 'let me be part of the solutions to this,'" she says.

The positive results were an assurance that she had found something she could pour all her passion into. But even though she'd had the magic "light-bulb moment" the first hurdle was finding the capital to begin her venture.

"When I wanted to start my company, I told my parents with the hope that they would support me financially, but they didn't really see the vision that I had and thought that it would be a very



21-year-old Cheyenne Muvunyi is the founder of 'Glow Force' that sells organic hair and skin care products.

short-lived business. So I had to save every bit of money which eventually accumulated to buy a few bottles and ingredients.

"With a lot of research, I was able to get a supplier who got me high quality ingredients at a fair price and they helped me out. Once I was ready to take that leap, I announced the business on Instagram," she shares.

In this age, social media has been a vital marketing tool and luckily for her, her experience working in social media management at some local companies gave her an idea of how social media works - not just for her brand as a video blogger, but also to run her new business.

Soon enough, overwhelming demand was streaming in and to supply that demand, she borrowed some cash from a cousin whom she says having used her products believed in the business and gave her the extra boost to soar.

Her hair products cater for natural and relaxed hair while her bestseller,

the face serum, has ingredients that are specifically targeted to people who have acne and hyperpigmentation that they want to get rid of. For Muvunyi though, it's not just improving and marketing the products that matters to the business. Educating her clients on general skin and hair health is vital in seeing positive results.

"A lot of our clients have been consistent for a long time. We make it a point to not just make our social media page a marketing tool, but also an educational platform where we advise and remind followers that skincare is not just about the products but also a reflection of what they eat and drink," she says.

She adds, "Also, people assume that some of the products we sell have bleaching properties because they fade hyperpigmentation and that the products work for certain skin tones. This is where I use Instagram as an educational tool that there is correlation between skin tone and its health.

"I have people who write to me demanding for a date and a time when the results will be visible once they use our products. I have to explain to them that it's about patience, consistency and that our products are not a magical solution."

For the past one year, Muvunyi has been handling the entire production and packaging process with the help of her sister at their home. With the growing demand, however, she is in the process of investing in bigger and better equipment to cater for a wider clientele.

"A lot of our clients find the products sold out, a very stressful experience so starting next month, I want to make many products to reach as many people. Another expansion process is shipping products abroad because I have been getting orders from people from different parts of the world. "Also we want to do a rebranding as well as marketing campaigns to reach a wider audience," she says of her plans.

TALENT

Lawyer finds her harmony in music

NAIROBI

Among the features in Wandiri Karimi's pleasantly fizzy demeanour, none sticks out quite like her guileless, contagious laugh. The director of Kenya Conservatoire of Music says her life is orbiting a jubilating space at the moment, an admission that is, by many yards, uncommon during this Covid-19 season. She just turned 40.

When she joined the prestigious music school as its director in 2016, this wasn't just a career move for Karimi. She was "going back home" to an institution she had joined as a six-year-old girl. "It was a special moment for me," she says with an explosion of nostalgic glee. "I wanted to have conversations about music and performing arts education, especially by involving young people in our projects."

Didn't she feel intimidated by the institution's 76-year history?

Not at all, she says, noting that her parents taught her integrity, industry, and compassion, values that have been handy in her role. "My parents were always present during my performances. They provided emotional and material support that I needed to pursue my interests," she narrates.

There's something wonderfully heartening about how Karimi sees and interprets her world through music. She's sentimental about music: not in a melancholic way, but an intimately practical sense. Her life is intricately plotted as though in musical notes.

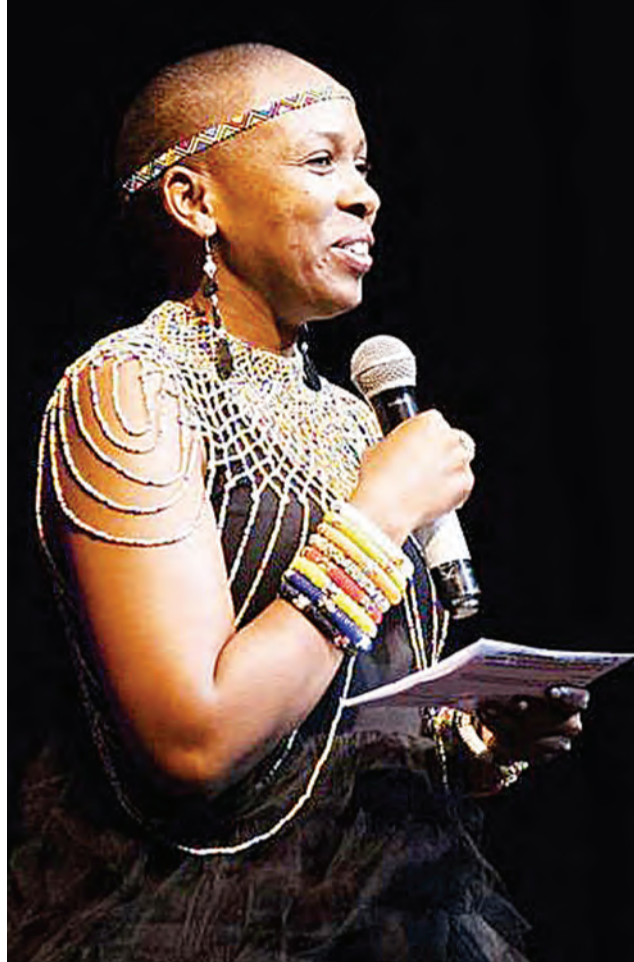
Being born in a family that supported art education was her best gift, she tells me. "I was allowed to think around things in a creative way. I studied law out of choice, hoping to use it to do what I'm passionate about."

Karimi has been an active musician and guitarist since her twenties, with performances during concerts, auditions, TV shows, workshops and festivals in several countries. She says learning music is incremental and, more than two decades later, she's still learning it. "I can play acoustics, electric and classical guitars. I'm also learning bass guitar."

Four years ago, she founded the Women's Orchestra, a community of women in performing arts from diverse backgrounds. This outfit mentors performers throughout the year with presentations during the International Women's Day.

I wonder what song speaks to her 2020. "Brighter Day by Sauti Sol," she erupts, explaining that music has been her healing potion this year. "It was scary at the beginning of the pandemic. But in the grand scheme of things, people are discovering new things about themselves and spending more time with family now than before."

She tells me that if Covid-19 had happened when she was 20, her outlook would be different. "I choose to look at it through the lens of the opportunities this period has yielded. Creatives have had more time to work on their crafts. I've also written more songs in the last few months than I'd done in the last five years."



Wandiri Karimi, Director of Kenya Conservatoire of Music and founder of the Women's Orchestra.

That and gratitude, which has been her way of unlocking cheer during this dark, agonising time. "I'm now less grumpy about things that may not be working." On her genre preferences, she says: "I listen to all types of music. My space right now though is Afrocentric music and especially from our region. It speaks to me in a spiritual way about who we are."

An intellectual property (IP) lawyer and consultant, Karimi is a member of the Copyright Tribunal. Having been in the industry for more than three decades, she's witnessed firsthand its

transformation. Does the local music scene inspire her?

"We didn't have many options in the 1990s. My playlist today's full of songs from East Africa. We have more offerings in both urbane and vernacular music." Collaborations with other institutions on multiple music projects, music tours to schools and working with a supportive team have been the highlights of her tenure so far.

Is Kenya Conservatoire of Music a good employer? "That's for sure. A good student comes from a

good teacher. Our teachers in different departments are so passionate about what they do. They own the process." Would she have the same sentiments if she were among the more than 35 teaching staff at the school? "I've been a teacher here; so, yes."

With Covid-19 usurping nearly all human activity the world over, music training hasn't been spared either. For the school of music, this is the first time they've done online music classes, "a possibility we'd never thought of." When I ask her what she's fallen out of love with in recent years, her demeanour contours. "Nothing," she says with strenuous finality. "I'm doing more music, reading and working out the same way I've been doing for years. Even during lockdown, I tried not to disrupt my life so much."

Her universe is aligning, both professionally and socially. "At this stage in my life, I'm finding myself doing things that I enjoy more without trying so hard." Is it luck, I wonder loudly, to which she quotes Chris Rock. "I don't have a job: I have a career. Not everyone gets to do what they love." Her metric of success? Being in the spaces that she wants to be and doing what she's passionate about.

"This way, I listen to the universe about new opportunities and the need to move on when some doors close." How philosophical, I observe. "My father (Jesse Mugambi) is a professor of philosophy, so it's not a choice," she says whooping with laughter.

Besides music, I'm curious to understand what stimulates her. For the mother of two sons aged 10 and seven, family is priceless. "My sons glean lessons from the life I lead. There's a glow that comes from knowing you've a responsibility to create a better world for your children."

For 18 months now, fitness has been a part of her lifestyle, with "obvious results". She says she's happier and more fulfilled now. "The routine has also made me more disciplined in other areas of life." Music training, I remind her, is an expensive affair, and often a preserve of the elite. She doesn't deny. After all, she's where she is owing to the music programmes she went through as a child.

What then is she doing to change this exclusivity, if at all?

"During our Kenya School Concert Tour, we visited different counties including Siaya where students with no music training or facilities at all were able to learn about performing arts," she recounts. "As an institution, we're in discussions with partners to develop programmes that target children from all backgrounds, not just the elite."

The new Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), she notes, is an equaliser and a new dawn for Kenyan learners, especially those with musical and other talents. "If implemented properly, with the right partnerships, it will allow our children to gain from the same instrument support that we've been providing to schools."

Everything she has done so far is worth its weight in gold, she tells me. So, what does she see looking into the next 10 years? "I'll be 50," she says after momentary consideration. "I see women in their 20s and 30s actively participating in performing arts and having robust careers." She regrets that few women are able to sustain their careers in the creative space after 30, even fewer beyond 35. "In 10 years, we shouldn't talk about harassment or the unfortunate things that happen to women in the industry. It should be a liberating space for all."

PROJECTION

Key trends set to influence social investments in African nations

ADDIS ABABA

Pan-African network for social investors Africa Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA) recently launched its inaugural report on the state of social investment financing in Africa.

The report forms part of its efforts to address information gaps on social investments financing, particularly in areas such as philanthropy, impact investing, private capital deployment and corporate sustainability programmes across Sub-Saharan Africa.

"Africa needs an estimated \$500bn-\$1.2tn annually between now and 2030 to meet its SDG financing gap. With traditional sources of social investment like aid and government funding unlikely to fill this gap, we need to turn to the global financial and capital markets for the requisite investments," says Dr Frank Aswani, CEO of AVPA.

"This demands a good understanding of the social investment landscape on the continent and increasing collaboration amongst social investors by breaking down existing silos between providers of grants, debt and equity. We are taking the first step in this direction with this study. It provides a baseline against which we can track future progress and key trends that will influence the increased flow of capital into social investments in Africa while working collaboratively to identify programmatic interventions for creating increased social impact."

The recently concluded Independent Philanthropy Association of South Africa (IPASA) Symposium provided an opportunity for funders to unpack some of the challenges and lessons learnt from Covid-19 and how these could help funding practises in the future...

Social capital providers mapped The report presents findings of an eight-month study across 18 countries in Africa - six each in West, East, and Southern Africa. AVPA conducted the study in partnership with Intellectap, the advisory arm of The Aavishkaar Group, which works to build businesses that can benefit the underserved segments across Asia and Africa. It mapped providers of social capital - financial, human and intellectual, their investment strategies, and opportunities for collaboration amongst the various investors.

The findings highlight, among other things, what is currently happening, who are the key players, what are their current approaches to investing, what challenges are they facing, and the opportunities they are seeing. It also identifies additional areas of future research while making recommendations of opportunities to create a stronger ecosystem for increased capital flow and social impact on the continent. Many social investors in Sub-Saharan Africa operate in silos, necessitating strategic interventions to bridge gaps across the different types of capital and investment strategies.



Dr Frank Aswani, CEO of AVPA.

RELIEF

Easing of alcohol sales restrictions a welcome relief for industry

JOHANNESBURG

In his national address last night, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced an easing of some lockdown restrictions, including the hours when alcohol can be sold by liquor stores.

Liquor trading returns to pre-lockdown hours, with bottle stores and other retailers now able to sell liquor for off-site consumption over the weekend and during all licensed trading hours. Since the start of Level 1 on 21 September, licensed outlets have only been allowed to sell alcohol for home consumption on weekdays from 9am to 5pm.

The latest gazette states that the sale of liquor is now permitted: by licensed premises for off-site consumption, is permitted during licensed trading hours - subject to the laws governing such licenses; and by a licensed premises for on-site consumption is permitted, subject to strict adherence to the curfew. The amendment to the regulations is effective from today, 12 November 2020.

The alcohol industry has welcomed the normalisation of liquor trading hours, and said it's committed to partnering with Government to save businesses and jobs in the sector while ensuring safety, responsible trading, and the sensible consumption of alcohol during the joint effort to fight against the pandemic and to begin to rebuild the economy.

Kurt Moore, CEO of the South African Liquor Brandowners Association (SALBA), said, "The alcohol industry acknowledges the challenges facing the Government in its efforts to stem the pandemic



Patricia Pillay, CEO of the Beer Association of South Africa.

and prevent the possibility of a second wave of infections. We welcome the President's stated goal to save lives and protect livelihoods through focusing on restoring, recovering and rebuilding the economy."

Moore said the industry is working across the value chain to ensure the sector can begin to rebuild and to make its valuable contribution to the revival of the country's economy. "This

move comes as a welcome relief to our sector which is endeavouring to recover from the two waves of bans on formal sales of alcohol during the lockdown," he added.

Rico Basson, managing director of Vinpro, said the normalisation of trading hours would help in the wine sector's recovery. "The wine industry welcomes the fact that both on-consumption and off-consumption sales are

now permitted," he said. "Wine sales at cellar door make up a large portion of their revenue and the resumption of normal trade, especially now the tourism season is approaching, is critical. The survival of the wine industry and wine tourism is essential for economic recovery, including 290,000 employment opportunities, but also for the cultural heritage it brings to brand South

Africa," Basson added.

Patricia Pillay, CEO of the Beer Association of South Africa (Basa), commented, "Beer is the biggest category of SA alcohol and a major contributor to the country's economy and as Basa we are committed to supporting the president's rapid economic growth plan. We are also going to continue to work with social partners in curbing the harmful use of alcohol. We encourage all

consumers to drink in moderation and also explore no and low alcohol products that have been introduced into the market."

According to Basa, as a result of continued lockdown restrictions, 15% of craft breweries have been forced to close down over the past few months. Many breweries that have managed to stay open have been forced to retrench staff, resulting in hundreds of job losses across the sector.

Lucky Ntimane, convener of the Coalition of Liquor Traders, welcomed the decision. "Our network of some 34,000 taverners across the country welcomes the lifting of trading restrictions which will substantially ease the heavy economic stress the sector has been under. We have been working tirelessly to ensure traders comply with Covid-19 protocols and have been vocal in condemning irresponsible behaviour to prevent a second wave of infections."

Moore added, "The liquor industry remains committed to continuing to work closely with the Government and traders to ensure compliance with the gazetted provisions. These rules include making sure that outlets do not allow in patrons at more than 50% of the capacity of the venue. They need to insist on wearing facemasks and obeying the curfew."

"We continue to call on the traders and consumers alike to abide by all the lockdown rules and make sure that the drinking occasions do not contribute to the spread of infections and unnecessary burden on the health system." The industry urges consumers to call the Consumer Goods Council hotline on 0800 014 856 to report any violation of the regulations.

EXCITEMENT

Why Kamala Harris's suffragette white suit is a beacon of hope for the future

WASHINGTON

When Kamala Harris took to the stage on Saturday for her first speech as vice president-elect, she sent out a strong message to women across the world. With a Jamaican father and Indian mother, Harris is breaking multiple barriers as the first ever woman, first ever Indian-American and first black American to serve as vice president.

With so much history resting on her shoulders, Harris honoured the women that came before her in her speech, including her late mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, who left India for the US at the age of 19. She also singled out the countless black, Asian, Latina, white and Native American women "throughout our nation's history who have paved the way for this moment tonight." "Women who fought and sacrificed so much for equality, liberty and justice for all," Harris added.

For the speech, Harris wore a white trouser suit by US designer Carolina Herrera. The New York label has long been favoured by former first ladies such as Michelle Obama, Jackie Kennedy, Laura Bush and the



US Vice President-elect Kamala Harris.

outgoing Melania Trump, and in wearing it, Harris not only declared her support for American labels, but also established a clear link between herself and the White House. The wardrobe choice also echoed similar choices by Hillary Clinton, Geraldine

Ferraro and Nancy Pelosi, all Democrats who have tried to smash the glass ceiling of US politics.

The trouser suit has long been a staple of power dressing and, by choosing to wear white, finished with a demure cream pussybow

blouse, Harris again looked to the past. As Twitter users noted in their droves, the colour nods to the suffragettes who, according to the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage, adopted the colour during their campaigning for women's votes more than a century ago, as a symbol of "the quality of our purpose."

The founder of the British movement, activist Emmeline Pankhurst, would address crowds wearing a white duster coat, making herself easier to see, as too did Emily Davidson, the campaigner who propelled the struggle on to the world stage by stepping in front of King George V's horse at the 1913 Derby.

In acknowledging those before her, Harris thanked "all the women who worked

to secure and protect the right to vote for over a century: 100 years ago with the 19th Amendment, 55 years ago with the Voting Rights Act and now, in 2020, with a new generation of women in our country who cast their ballots and continued the fight for their fundamental right to vote and be heard."

"Tonight, I reflect on their struggle," Harris continued. "Their determination and the strength of their vision – to see what can be unburdened by what has been – I stand on their shoulders." In her closing comments, Harris acknowledged that a seismic shift had taken place in US politics, and expressed hope for the future. "I may be the first woman in this office," she said. "[But] I won't be the last."

FASHION

Kylie Minogue strikes a pose in Saudi Arabian label Ashi Studio

BEIRUT

She's famous for tracks such as Spinning Around, and that's just what Mohammed Ashi is probably doing right now. The Saudi Arabian designer, who helms Beirut-headquartered label Ashi Studio, has dressed Kylie Minogue for a newly released photo shoot.

The Australian singer, 52, sports a plumed jumpsuit by the regional brand as she poses against a glittering backdrop in the image. The shoot was featured in The Guardian's Weekend magazine, as the Can't Get You Out of My Head star promoted her new album, Infinite Disco.

The couture one-piece was crafted with white feathers, the designer revealed on Instagram. Ashi Studio, which has also dressed stars including Sonam Kapoor, Sarah Jessica Parker and Cardi B, was founded in 2007.

The label most recently scored a starring role in Ellie Goulding's latest music video, with the British singer-songwriter wearing a golden gown from the spring / summer 2020 collection in the clip for Love I'm Given.

Queen Rania also donned the label for an official portrait to mark her 50th birthday

in August, choosing an elegant white dress from the brand. "Her Majesty Queen Rania chose to wear Ashi Studio's long-sleeved crepe gown with embroidery and button detail for her 50th birthday press release photos," the designer told his 830,000 Instagram followers at the time.

"I am very honoured Her Majesty Queen Rania chose to wear this regal dress, which was designed to radiate power. I wish her Majesty a happy birthday." Ashi Studio further kitted out Beyoncé for the star's recent Black is King film. The label provided the singer with a black feathered piece that "took 70 hours of work."



Kylie Minogue wore Ashi Studio for a recent magazine shoot.

ALERT

Girls three times more likely than boys to experience cyberbullying

NEW YORK

According to the National Center for Education Statistics in the US, girls are three times more likely to experience cyberbullying than boys. While boys are prone to physical bullying, girls are more inclined to relational bullying.

This means that girls are more likely to be socially aggressive, using peer exclusion to ostracise others from activities and social circles. Spreading rumours is another form of bullying more commonly used by girls. Overall, relational bullying is subtle and can go unnoticed for a long time.

"It's important to make your teen girls aware of cyberbullying and equip them to deal with it if needed," says local author, Despina Senatore. Senatore is the author of Soar!, the guidebook that seeks to help teen girls navigate adolescence through practical examples and resources.

"Things have changed since we were children and our kids are bullied in invisible ways that can leave them despondent, depressed or suffering from anxiety." Below she provides some tips to help your teen girl cope with bullying.

It's not you, it's them

Most bullies pick on others because they are often unhappy with themselves and are trying to hide their fears and insecurities. Even though it's not comforting at the time, your teen girl should remember being bullied is not her fault nor is there something wrong with her.

Tell someone

If she's getting bullied, she should confide in a trusted adult. Sharing will help her feel

less alone and scared, and an adult can help her to report the bullying.

Social media security settings are important

She should keep her passwords safe and not share them with anyone. Tighten up security settings to make sure that only her friends can engage with her content. Likes on social media posts aren't the be-all and end-all. She should never share personal information like her phone number or email address to social media.

Keep a record

If someone is cyberbullying her, she should take screenshots and keep it in a safe place. This will come in handy if she wants to report the bullying.

Don't respond or retaliate

It's tempting to want to respond, but the best thing is not to. Bullies often want a reaction from their victims and will leave them deflated if they don't get any.

Block the bullies

There's no shame in blocking anyone on social media or WhatsApp if they are sending hurtful messages.

Report the bullies

All social media sites have policies against abuse, and victims can report abusive accounts directly to the sites.

Stay off anonymous sites

Teenagers should stay away from anonymous websites. It's a paradise for bullies and trolls because they can hide behind their fake online personas.



ISIDINGO MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

ITV

ITV	Capital
<p>MONDAY 09 Nov</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 09:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 ITV Top 10 rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera News 12:30 Mtego rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Mjue Zaidi 13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:10 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:10 Aibu yako rpt 18:15 Mapishi 18:45 Kesho leo 19:00 Afya ya Jamii 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:05 Dakika 45 22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTV</p> <p>TUESDAY 10 Nov</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 09:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 The Base rpt 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Frustrated teens react after experiencing cyberbullying.

WORLD

AMERICA'S CHOICE 2020: Joe Biden cements victory by winning Arizona, but Trump still refuses to concede

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT-ELECT Joe Biden cemented his U.S. electoral victory by capturing the battleground state of Arizona late on Thursday, but the official transition to his administration remains stalled as President Donald Trump refuses to accept defeat.

Biden was projected to win Arizona after more than a week of vote counting from the Nov. 3 election, Edison Research said. He becomes only the second Democratic presidential candidate in seven decades to win the traditionally Republican state.

Biden's win in Arizona gives him 290 electoral votes in the state-by-state Electoral College that determines the winner.

Biden had already cleared the 270 vote threshold to win the election, setting him on course to be sworn in on Jan. 20. Arizona's 11 additional electoral votes put any longshot challenge by Trump even further out of reach.

Biden also holds a lead of more than 14,000 votes in the uncalled state of Georgia, nearly certain to survive a manual recount. Nationally, Biden is winning the popular vote by more than 5.3 million votes, or 3.4 percent

age points.

Trump, a Republican, has claimed without evidence that he was cheated by widespread election fraud, but his legal challenges have failed in court and state election officials report no serious irregularities.

In order to stay in office for a second term, Trump would need to overturn Biden's lead in at least three states, having failed to find evidence that could do so in any of them. States face a Dec. 8 "safe harbor" deadline to certify their elections and choose electors for the Electoral College, which will officially select the new president on Dec. 14.

Trump's refusal to accept defeat has stalled the process of transitioning to a new administration. The federal agency that releases funding to an incoming president-elect, the General Services Administration, has not yet recognized Biden's victory.

Biden's pick for White House chief of staff, Ron Klain, told MSNBC on Thursday that starting the transition is particularly crucial now, as the Biden administration will inherit a coronavirus vaccination campaign as soon as he takes office.

"The sooner we can get our transi-

tion experts into meetings with the folks who are planning a vaccination campaign, the more seamless the transition to a Biden presidency from a Trump presidency can be," Klain said.

Regardless of the impediments, Biden will sign a "stack" of executive orders and send high-priority legislation to Congress his first day in office, Klain said.

"He is going to have a very, very busy Day One," Klain said, citing a return to the Paris accord on climate change, immigration reform, strengthening the "Obamacare" healthcare law and environmental protection as issues Biden would address on Jan. 20.

REPUBLICANS DIVIDED

Biden was set to meet with transition advisers again on Friday as he maps out his approach to the pandemic and prepares to name his top appointees, including cabinet members.

Most Republicans have publicly endorsed Trump's right to pursue court challenges and declined to recognize Biden as the winner. But more signs of dissension began emerging on Thursday.

Party figures such as Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu and Karl Rove, a top adviser to former President George W. Bush, said Biden should be treated as the president-elect.

Meanwhile, a number of Republican senators said the Trump administration should allow Biden to receive classified intelligence briefings, though they stopped short of explicitly calling him the winner.

The incoming commander-in-chief is typically given

the briefings to ensure national security is not compromised during the transition. "I don't see it as a high-risk proposition. I just think it's part of the transition. And, in fact he does win in the end, I think they need to be able to hit the ground running," Senator John Cornyn told reporters.

The top House Republican, Kevin McCarthy, opposed the idea, suggesting Trump could still prevail.

"He's not president right now," McCarthy said of Biden. "I don't know if he'll be president January 20th."

Democrats have assailed Trump, and the Republicans giving him cover, for undermining the country's institutions. In an interview that will air on CBS' "60 Minutes" on Sunday, former President Barack Obama said Republicans were walking a "dangerous path" by endorsing Trump's baseless claims of voter fraud.

Biden has taken a measured approach, saying this week he viewed Trump's claims as "embarrassing" but insisting he was not worried about the impact on his transition to the White House. His legal advisers have dismissed the Trump lawsuits as political theater.

Disagreements with Obama led to sour relations with US, says Kremlin MOSCOW

DISAGREEMENTS that emerged during the administration of Barack Obama have led to the current degradation of relations with the US, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in an interview with the RT TV channel.

"The president met him (Joseph Biden), but still, mostly he was meeting with his superior then (Barack Obama), so the dialogue was mostly with Obama.

That wasn't an easy dialogue, especially the last six months of Barack Obama's presidency," the spokesman said. He noted that "there were a lot of disagreements that were probably a harbinger of the degradation that occurred in our relations during Trump's presidency."

Russia would prefer to see a US president who would be eager to reanimate bilateral relations, the presidential spokesman stated.

"We will be interacting with any president who will be elected by the Americans themselves," he said, adding that this is precisely what the Russian leader, Vladimir Putin, said more than once. "Of course, we would like to see a president who would wish to reanimate bilateral relations somehow."

"We will show respect for any choice of the American people," Peskov quoted Putin as saying. The Kremlin official stressed that Russia had never interfered in US internal affairs and would never interfere in the future, but it would not tolerate US meddling in its own affairs, either.

"I believe, this should have become clear to the man in the street by now," he noted.

Congratulations to president-elect

"The Russian president will certainly send a congratulatory message to the candidate who will be declared president-elect," Peskov said, adding that "it will be done after the official results of the election are announced."

"As far as we understand, no one has been declared president-elect so far," Peskov stressed.

At the same time, he did not say what Russia would do if the election's results were challenged in court. "It's not our business to decide when to announce the official results," the Kremlin spokesman noted.

US take on its global role

The United States as a former hegemon in the international scene finds it hard to adjust itself to the realities of multipolarity, which results in the collapse of international institutions, Dmitry Peskov elaborated.

He warned against focusing entirely on Russian-US relations and called for taking a broader look at the situation, in particular, the fact that the world was in the process of transition from the bipolar system to a multipolar one.

"This is a very painful process. The former single pole resists this, although I do not know whether this resistance is conscious or subconscious. The former single pole has problems with getting accustomed to a new system of coordinates," Peskov said.

Agencies

Kenya's surging COVID-19 infections risk derailing transformation agenda

NAIROBI

KENYAN President Uhuru Kenyatta said on Thursday that a sudden increase in the number of COVID-19 positive cases in the country and fatalities has placed new hurdles towards realization of the country's socio-economic transformation agenda.

Kenyatta said during a televised address to the nation that the pandemic had reversed economic progress achieved in 2019 besides wreaking havoc on livelihoods. "The pandemic has slowed down economic growth and disrupted provision of critical services like health and education. We must not backtrack in our commitment to defeat it and hasten our recovery," said Kenyatta.

Kenya's total COVID-19 caseload reached 66,723 on Thursday after 919 people tested positive to the disease while national fatalities rose to 1,203 after 23 patients succumbed to the virus.

The country's positivity rate rose from 4 percent in late September to the current 17.5 percent amid concern that flouting of containment measures is to blame for the spike. Kenyatta on Nov. 4 announced new measures to curb the spread of coronavirus including extension of night curfew hours, a halt on phased reopening of schools and greater uptake of remote work in the public sector.

He acknowledged the heavy economic toll the pandemic has on his agenda for growth, shared prosperity, stability and peace, adding that its containment was interwoven with his legacy.

Xinhua

Musk says he may have COVID-19, calls tests 'extremely bogus'

By Bloomberg

TESLA Inc's Elon Musk tweeted he may have COVID-19 and renewed his conspiratorial posting about the virus that has infected almost 53 million people.

"Something extremely bogus is going on," the chief executive officer wrote late Thursday. "Was tested for COVID four times today. Two tests came back negative, two came back positive."

The billionaire said he took a series of rapid antigen tests, which produce results within 15 minutes and are cheaper but less reliable than polymerase chain reaction tests. He's now

waiting for results from the latter type of test, which take longer to process.

Musk, 49, wrote that he was experiencing symptoms of a typical cold, describing them as "nothing unusual so far."

The CEO has at times been dismissive and sowed doubts about COVID-19, questioning the virality of the disease and claiming fatality rates are overstated. In March, he predicted there would be close to zero new cases in the US by April. Roughly 150,000 cases are now being reported in the country each day.

Musk travels regularly on his private jet between work sites for Tesla and the rocket company he runs,



Space Exploration Technologies Corp. His plane touched down in Berlin last week, where he conducted in-person interviews with applicants to work at the factory Tesla is building near the German capital.

Germany has been struggling to contain a second wave of the virus and this month closed bars, restau-

rants and leisure facilities, while keeping businesses open. Chancellor Angela Merkel's government has urged citizens to keep social contacts to a minimum and avoid non-essential travel.

Tesla was forced to temporarily halt work at its just-opened plant near Shanghai early this year, though it was the shutdown of its main factory in the US that stoked controversy. The company resisted idling the facility until local officials called the facility in Fremont, California a public health risk.

Musk then ranted about shutdown orders, calling them fascist and undemocratic. After the California

county where the factory is located initially told Tesla it couldn't reopen, the company sued and the CEO threatened to relocate operations to other states. Production restarted before the county gave the go-ahead and the suit was later dropped.

Tesla emerged from the shutdown on a tear from a stock-market perspective, displacing Toyota Motor Corp in July to become the world's most valuable automaker. While the company reported record quarterly vehicle deliveries last month, it's acknowledged it will be difficult to reach its target to hand over 500,000 cars to customers this year.

Agencies

Confronting central authorities' overall jurisdiction over HKSAR leads to dead end

HONG KONG

SOME opposition lawmakers in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Wednesday staged a farce of the so-called "resignation en masse" following the disqualification of four members of the Legislative Council (LegCo).

Such move is blatantly challenging the authority of the HKSAR Basic Law and the decision of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, exposing those LegCo members' true agenda of confronting the central au-

thorities' overall jurisdiction over Hong Kong.

The NPC Standing Committee's decision, with unchallengeable authority, provides a solid legal basis for regulating and dealing with matters concerning the qualification of LegCo members.

It's a necessary move for the HKSAR government to maintain constitutional order in the HKSAR and fully demonstrate the impartiality and authority of the rule of law by announcing the disqualification of Dennis Kwok Wing-hang and three other LegCo members in accordance with the law.



Law-breaking acts entail legal consequences. It is a basic norm for any society ruled by the law.

It's natural and justified for the four LegCo members to face disqualification after they have recanted, undermined the HKSAR

Basic Law, and showed disloyalty to the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China.

However, some LegCo members from the opposition camp smeared the central government's exercise of its legitimate constitutional power as "political suppression."

Their real intention is to confront the public, fiddle with "right and wrong," stir up populist sentiments, create chaos, smear and slander the "one country, two systems" practice.

What they are doing, like begging external forces for interven-

tion and even sanctions, will only jeopardize the hard-earned stability in the HKSAR.

Hong Kong is an inseparable part of China, thus staying loyal to the motherland and Hong Kong is a fundamental requirement of the Constitution and the HKSAR Basic Law.

Such opposition figures disregard the basic requirement of being loyal to the motherland as holders of public office, or even going further to collude with external forces to intervene in Hong Kong's affairs.

Xinhua

China to enter new stage of development under new five-year plan

FIVE years may seem a drop in the ocean of history, yet it is long enough for China to secure decisive achievements on its journey of development.

During China's 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020), the country witnessed remarkable economic performance.

From 2016 to 2019, the average annual growth rate of China's economy reached 6.7 percent. Its GDP is expected to exceed 100 trillion yuan (about \$15 trillion) in 2020.

During the period, 55.75 million poor people in China's rural areas were lifted out of poverty, the number of people covered by basic medical insurance exceeded 1.3 billion, while that of people covered by basic old-age insurance reached nearly one billion.

Meanwhile, China has attained prosperity and development in cultural undertakings and industries, maintained harmony and stability in the society, and achieved major strategic results in COVID-19 epidemic prevention and control.

Such practical and tangible results and changes have fully shown that after its development during the 13th Five-Year Plan period, China has reached new heights in terms of its economic and technological strength as well as comprehensive national strength, and taken a new and huge step forward in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Economic and social development cannot be judged simply by its total volume,

speed, and scale, but also its quality, efficiency and structure. Both the quantity and quality of economic growth should be taken into consideration.

From 2015 to 2019, the value added of China's strategic emerging industries registered an average annual real growth of 10.4 percent, signaling continuously optimizing economic structure.

During the period, the country increased efforts in pollution prevention and control and significantly improved the ecological environment. It has taken the strongest pollution treatment measures in the world.

Over the past five years, China has witnessed the completion of a number of important domestically built equipment, such as aircraft carriers, large amphibious

aircraft, and the Beidou-3 Navigation Satellite System.

At the same time, new industries and new forms of business such as big data, cloud computing, and 5G communications services have continued to emerge in the country.

An economic system and a development mode underpinned by innovation are taking shape.

The vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and inclusive development has not only been warmly welcomed and strongly supported by the public, but played an important role in all aspects of economic and social growth and guided the development that features higher quality, greater efficiency, more fairness, more sustainability and is safer.

Behind the economic performance, a series of in-depth institutional changes are taking place in China, cultivating institutional advantages for the long-term development.

China has achieved major breakthroughs in comprehensively deepening reform. While focusing on supply-side structural reform, the country has taken moves across the board, achieved breakthroughs in many areas of reform, and obtained decisive results in key sectors.

The country has also made significant progress in comprehensively advancing the rule of law. It has intensified efforts in ensuring scientific legislation, strict law enforcement, judicial impartiality and universal law abiding. The country's efforts to build a country, government, and

society based on the rule of law have been mutually reinforcing.

Besides, China has reached major results in comprehensively governing the Communist Party of China (CPC) with strict discipline.

While making sure that officials don't dare to, are unable to and have no desire to commit corruption, the country has launched an education campaign on the theme of "staying true to our founding mission" among all Party members.

In general, China has accelerated the modernization of the national governance system and governance capabilities, and further exhibited the strengths of the leadership of the Party and the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

People's Daily

Australia scraps plans to allow foreign students back

SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA will not allow foreign students to return as Canberra prioritises the return of locals stuck overseas, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said yesterday.

Australia has since March closed its borders to all non-citizens and permanent residents in a bid to slow the spread of COVID-19.

With foreign students worth about A\$35 billion (US\$25.3 billion) a year to the Australian economy, Canberra had hoped to slowly allow overseas students to return in 2021. Trials began earlier this year.

But with thousands of Australians wanting to return, Morrison said there is not enough quarantine facilities.

"There is a queue, and Australians are in the front of the queue," Morrison told reporters in Canberra.

Australia caps the numbers of locals allowed to return home each week in order to minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Once locals arrive, they enter hotel quarantine for two weeks.

Australia on Friday was on course to record a sixth straight day without any locally acquired infections. Australia has recorded about 27,700 COVID-19 infections and 907 deaths, far fewer than many other developed nations.

The continued ban on foreign stu-



dents deepens a financial black-hole facing Australian education providers, estimated to be worth between A\$3.1 billion and A\$4.8 billion this year alone, Catriona Jackson, Chief Executive of Universities Australia, told Reuters earlier this year.

Educational think-tank the Mitchell Institute earlier this week estimated there would be 300,000 fewer international students, half the pre-coronavirus numbers, in Australia by June 2021 if border restrictions remained.

Australia's most populous city, Sydney is expected to see a decline of more than 70,000 students, Mitchell Institute said.

Several leading universities have announced sweeping job cuts in a bid to reduce costs.

In October, Morrison's government said it will spend A\$1 billion to support university research amid the fall in overseas students. **Agencies**

Zuckerberg defends not suspending ex-Trump aide Bannon from Facebook

PALO ALTO

FACEBOOK FB.O Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg told an all-staff meeting on Thursday that former Trump White House adviser Steve Bannon had not violated enough of the company's policies to justify his suspension when he urged the beheading of two senior U.S. officials, according to a recording heard by Reuters.

Zuckerberg acknowledged criticism of Facebook by President-elect Joe Biden but said the company shared some of the Biden team's same concerns about social media. He urged employees not to jump to conclusions about how the new administration might approach regulation of social media companies.

Bannon (pictured) suggested in a video posted on Nov. 5 that FBI Director Christopher Wray and government infectious diseases expert Anthony Fauci should be beheaded, saying they had been disloyal to U.S. President Donald Trump, who last week lost his re-election bid to Biden.

"I'd put the heads on pikes. Right. I'd put them at the two corners of the White House as a warning to federal bureaucrats. You either get with the program or you are gone," Bannon said in the video.

Facebook removed the video but left up Bannon's page, which has about 175,000 followers. Twitter TWTR.N banned Bannon last week over the same content.

"We have specific rules around how many times you need to violate certain policies before we will deactivate your account completely," Zuckerberg said. "While the offenses here, I think, came close to crossing that line, they clearly did not cross the line."

Facebook spokesman Andy Stone said the company would take further action against Bannon's page "if there are additional violations."

A Bannon spokeswoman said his comments were "clearly meant metaphorically" and alluded to a reference Bannon had made the day prior to the treason trial of Thomas More in Tudor England "for rhetorical purposes."

"Mr. Bannon did not, would not and has never called for violence of any kind," the spokeswoman, Alexandra Preate, said in a statement.

Last Friday, Facebook took down a network of other Bannon-linked pages that were pushing false claims about the presidential election, after they were flagged to the world's biggest social media company by activist group Avaaz.

Avaaz said seven of the largest pages had amassed nearly 2.5 million followers. Stone said Facebook had removed "several clusters of activity for using inauthentic behavior tactics to artificially boost how many people saw their content."

Zuckerberg spoke on the issue at a weekly forum with Facebook employees where he is sometimes asked to defend content and policy decisions. A staff member had asked why Bannon had not been banned.

Another employee asked how Facebook was handling criticism of Facebook by Biden and members of his team. Biden told the New York Times in December last year that he had "never been a fan of Facebook" and considered Zuckerberg "a real problem." **Agencies**



Build on twenty years of proud achievements and open up a new chapter in China-Africa relations

Remarks by H.E. Wang Yi State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs

At the Reception Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation 12 November 2020

Distinguished Guests,

Friends,

Good evening! It is a great pleasure to join you in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

Twenty years ago, shortly after the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Chinese and African leaders gathered in Beijing to inaugurate FOCAC. A new era was thus opened for China-Africa relations. Over the two decades, by acting along the prevailing trend of peace, development and cooperation, FOCAC has established itself as a pacesetter for cooperation with Africa, a champion of multilateralism, and a fine example of mutually beneficial cooperation.

Over the past 20 years, FOCAC has come a long way in strengthening China-Africa solidarity and friendship. It has grown into a big family where all are equal members bound by brotherly ties and treat each other with respect, regardless of size or strength. We have carried forward the profound friendship forged in our struggles for national liberation. We have firmly supported each other on issues concerning core interests and major concerns. We have stood together in upholding the banner of multilateralism, fairness and justice. Together, we have elevated the international standing and influence of developing countries and safeguarded the overall interests of the developing world.

Over the past 20 years, FOCAC has come a long way in boosting common development of China and Africa. In 2019, trade between China and Africa hit US\$208.7 billion, and total Chinese FDI in Africa reached US\$49.1 billion, grown by 20-fold and 100-fold respectively compared with 20 years ago. We have jointly formulated and implemented the ten cooperation plans (adopted at the Johannesburg Summit) and the eight major initiatives (adopted at the Beijing Summit). Dozens of economic and trade cooperation zones and industrial parks are up and running across Africa. China has built for Africa over 6,000 kilometers of railways and the same mileage of roads, nearly 20 ports and over 80 large-scale power plants, and more than 130 medical facilities, 45 stadiums and 170 or so schools. These infrastructures have made a big difference in Africa's economic and social development. The African Union (AU) Conference Center, the Mombasa-Nairobi railway, and the Maputo-Katembe Bridge, key projects in Africa's drive to achieve the "Century Dream", have been dedicated one after another, and stand as monumental symbols of the shared development of China and Af-



rica.

Over the past 20 years, FOCAC has come a long way in enhancing the friendship between the Chinese and African peoples. Mechanisms, such as the Think Tank Forum, the People's Forum, the Press Center and the Youth Festival, are playing a greater role as bridges of friendship. To date, China has provided some 120,000 government scholarships, and opened 61 Confucius Institutes and 44 Confucius Classrooms in 46 African countries. As many as 21,000 Chinese medical personnel have worked, or are working, in 48 African countries, providing treatment to around 220 million African people. When West Africa was raged by Ebola in 2014, over 1,000 Chinese health professionals defied the dangers and rushed to their help. Today, facing COVID-19, China and Africa have again come together in a joint fight. Last June, President Xi Jinping and African leaders convened an extraordinary summit, sending a powerful message of shared commitment to defeating the virus with solidarity. Time and again, we have supported each other through thick and thin, forging an enduring China-Africa friendship that continues to grow from strength to strength.

Friends, China is the world's largest developing country. Africa is the continent with the largest number of developing countries. While the past two decades have been extraordinary for FOCAC, they have also seen the Chinese people striving for national rejuvenation and African countries pursuing strength through unity. In this great historical journey, China and Africa have always been there for each other. We have shown the world that with hard work, countries who are still in the process of development can build a better life for their people; and with self-reliance and exploration, China and African countries can find our own path toward prosperity that suits our national conditions.

Friends, The world is undergoing changes unseen in a century, and COVID-19 is accelerating the evolution of the international order. The new challenge calls for new responsibility, and the new situation calls for new actions. How to make sure that China-Africa

relations will seize the trend of the times and scale new heights? How to build on our achievement and further upgrade and enhance China-Africa cooperation? How to enable FOCAC to meet the challenges and achieve progress in creative ways? To answer these questions, China would like to share the following propositions with our African friends.

First, we need to strengthen solidarity and build a stronger community with a shared future. At the 2018 FOCAC Beijing Summit, leaders of China and Africa agreed to build a stronger China-Africa community with a shared future. The new international circumstances we face today further underscore the importance of this strategic decision, a decision that has become more relevant than ever. We must remain guided by the principle of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith and the principle of pursuing the greater good and shared interests. We need to firmly support each other in safeguarding national sovereignty and dignity, in independently pursuing a development path suited to national realities, and in protecting legitimate rights to development and achieve national rejuvenation together through joint efforts.

Second, we need to tide over the current challenge together and build a China-Africa community of health for all. China will continue to work with Africa to fully deliver on the outcomes of the FOCAC Beijing Summit and the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity Against COVID-19, with greater focus on public health, economic reopening and improvement of livelihoods. I would like to reaffirm China's firm commitment to making its vaccines a global public good. When the development of the vaccines is completed and they are available for use, China will actively consider providing them to African countries in need to help secure an early victory against the virus.

Third, we need to pursue win-win cooperation to build a China-Africa community of development for all. China will continue to support Africa in enhancing infrastructure, advancing industrialization and building up capacity for independent develop-

ment. China welcomes the development of the African Continental Free Trade Area, and will provide cash assistance and capacity-building training to its Secretariat. China and Africa need to deepen free trade cooperation and better connect industrial and supply chains so that Africa can better access the vast China market and join the international economic circulation. China is also ready to work with Africa on a framework of strategic cooperation on climate change to jointly tackle this challenge.

Fourth, we need to embrace our responsibilities and work toward a community with a shared future for mankind. China and Africa are staunch supporters of multilateralism and important forces for world peace and development. We need to take on our historic duty to firmly safeguard the UN's central role in international and multilateral affairs, defend basic norms governing international relations, and uphold multilateralism, fairness and justice. We must work in concert in addressing global challenges and participating in global governance. By doing so, we will bring about a more equitable and reasonable international order and an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.

Friends, FOCAC is a valuable asset for China and Africa. We must keep pace with the times to ensure that the Forum remains a shining example of China-Africa relations. The next FOCAC meeting is scheduled to be held next year in Senegal. China is ready to work with Africa to make good preparations on the arrangements and deliverables of the meeting. We hope the meeting will create greater synergy between China's second centenary goal and the AU's Agenda 2063, form new consensus on China-Africa solidarity, explore new cooperation areas, and bring new benefits to the Chinese and African peoples. We hope the meeting will take the China-Africa comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership to a new height.

Friends, We live in a new, momentous era. We are standing at the threshold of a new chapter to be added to history. No matter how the world may change and no matter what challenges may come up ahead, cooperation between China and Africa will never stop, and the efforts to build a better and stronger FOCAC will never stop. Let us join our efforts to stand up to challenges, strive for high quality in our cooperation and open up a far brighter future for China-Africa relations.

Now, please join me in a toast. To the long-standing friendship between the people of China and Africa.

To the peace and development of the world, and

To the health and happiness of all the brothers and sisters present.

Cheers!

Thank you!

Putin played key role in brokering Nagorno-Karabakh armistice, Kremlin says

MOSCOW

THE role of Russian President Vladimir Putin in resolving the conflict in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh was key, intense work that spanned many days

preceded the settlement, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday in an interview with RT.

"This role was key," he noted. "Many, many days of hard work preceded the signing, sometimes even round-the-

clock work, it was President Putin's work."

According to him, the Russian leader "spent a lot of time on the phone" to hold talks with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

"I reiterate, it did not take one day," Peskov added. Renewed clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia erupted on September 27 with intense battles in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh. On November 9, Russian President

Vladimir Putin, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan signed a joint statement on a complete ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh starting from November 10. **Agencies**

WHEN the International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation, INBAR, was established back in 1997, by nine countries, we had a simple mandate: to promote the use of bamboo and rattan for sustainable development.

Bamboo and rattan are some of the most valuable non-timber forest products in the world. They're fast growing, versatile and can support the livelihoods of millions of people, many of them in very poor rural communities. As we show at INBAR, bamboo and rattan are also important nature-based solutions for some of the key challenges facing our world, including land degradation, climate change, plastic pollution and biodiversity loss.

As an intergovernmental organization, made up mainly of developing countries from the Global South, INBAR provides an important network

Build a greener, fairer society: Director General of INBAR

for sharing technologies and experiences related to bamboo and rattan use. In the past 23 years, our work has generated hundreds of thousands of jobs and contributed to the formation of national and international standards and policies regarding bamboo and rattan.

China now boasts the world's biggest bamboo and rattan sector, and exports a huge range of products around the world. China is also one of the most innovative bamboo and rattan economies. In my time as Director General of INBAR, I have visited factories which are using these plants to produce everything from flooring and furniture to paper and plastic alternatives. I have even seen wind tur-

bine blades and composite pressure pipes made from bamboo!

The secret to this success is strong support at a national and local level. China was one of the first countries to create a national bamboo strategy, and to prioritize the production of bamboo and rattan as more sustainable alternatives for timber.

In China, since the 1980s, government and private sector investments in the bamboo sector have resulted in a huge increase in jobs - from 1981 to 2016, the annual value of the bamboo sector increased from just \$160 million to \$35 billion. This has led to the generation of millions of formal jobs in the bamboo sector across the south of the country, bringing many people out of poverty. In fact, Chi-

nese President Xi Jinping made his famous comment, "Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets", in Anji, which is a key bamboo county in Zhejiang province.

Chishui, a forested mountainous area of Guizhou, is part of a UNESCO heritage site. Residents are taking up bamboo weaving and crafts instead of traditional forms of livelihood like mining or logging. Chishui is a great example of how bamboo can support "ecological civilization".

In recent years, we have seen more and more international interest in the concept of "nature-based solutions": protecting and restoring natural systems which can also support humans in various ways. Actually, China has already been saying this

for more than a decade, when it talks about "ecological civilization".

China is taking a leading role in promoting "nature-based solutions" for climate change and sustainable development. It is the host of the next UN conference on biodiversity in Kunming, and helped establish the "Nature-Based Solutions Coalition" with New Zealand at the UN Climate Summit in 2019. The International Horticultural Exhibition 2019, Beijing, China last year was a great example of China's focus on green development.

China's policy with regard to poverty alleviation is a good example to the entire world, especially developing countries. A lot of our training

programmes include a visit to China, where beneficiaries can see the bamboo and rattan sector up close, and be inspired by some of the work being done.

Bamboo and rattan are ubiquitous resources across the Global South. They connect some of the most remote rural communities around the world, from the Asia-Pacific to Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. They really are ideal materials for South-South cooperation. Through INBAR's work, countries as far apart as Colombia and Nepal are sharing knowledge about earthquake-resistant bamboo housing, and a bamboo charcoal kiln design first created in India is now being replicated across countries in East Africa.

As with many things, this year COVID-19 has unfortunately interrupted the flow of training participants to



Yanga's newly recruited winger, Said Ntibazonkiza.

Ntibazonkiza set to start training at Yanga next week

BY CORRESPONDENTS ISMAIL TANO AND ADAM FUNGAMWANGO

YANGA's newly recruited winger, Said Ntibazonkiza, is set to start training at his new club on Tuesday next week.

The outfit's registration committee chairman, Hersi Said, said the Burundian winger's official contract with the club begins on November 17, this year, when the international matches are over and, after that, he will join his new club.

Ntibazonkiza's contract with his current side, Burundi's Vital'O, expires on November 17, and the player, who is also a member of Burundi's national team, will turn up at Yanga after the completion of the international matches.

The winger was roped in by Yanga shortly after he had played for Burundi's national team in an international friendly clash against Tanzania's Taifa Stars, which took place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on October 11.

Burundi's national team cruised to 1-0 victory over Taifa Stars in the duel, which served as the squads' preparations for Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

Gymkhana Club to host 2020 BQ Junior Open tournament

BY CORRESPONDENT JOSEPH MCHEKADONA

THIS year's edition of the BQ Junior Open tournament will be held at end of this month in Dar es Salaam, organizers have disclosed.

Salum Mvita, one of the tournament's organizers, said the tournament will be held from November 28-29 at Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club (DGC) courts.

Mvita said invitations have been extended to all regions where tennis is played in the country.

He mentioned the regions as Simiyu, Morogoro, Arusha, Coast Region, Mtwara, Mwanza and Kilimanjaro.

The organizer thanked BQ Contractors Limited for sponsoring the event for the eighth year and he asked junior tennis players to register before deadline.

He netted the goal which separated the two teams with a dipping shot that left Taifa Stars keeper, David Kissu, helplessly sprawling on the turf.

Ntibazonkiza, who is deployed in the attacking midfield role, impressed Yanga officials that opted to meet him and seal his move to the club.

The player will be eligible for the team once the side acquires his International Transfer Certificate (ITC).

Said further allayed Yanga members and supporter's fears the club's midfielder Carlos Fernandes, who was injured, will still be sidelined.

The official stated the midfielder is now in good shape, noting he will return to action on November 22.

Yanga will entertain Namungo FC in a Vodacom Premier League clash in Dar es Salaam on November 22, after the international matches are over.

"He had started training before the VPL match against Simba, the coach opted out of fielding him in the game but he is now in good shape, hopefully we should see him play on November 22 if the coach will put him in the matchday squad," Said stated.

"We are pleased to inform you that BQ Contractors Limited have agreed to sponsor a Junior Tennis Open tournament at DGC from 28-29 November, the players aged 6-18 are encouraged to join the junior tournament," he stated.

"This will be the eight year BQ Contractors Limited sponsors a tennis tournament at DGC, we are very thankful to BQ Contractors Limited for their support," he said.

He said junior tennis players will compete in age categories of U-6, U-8, U-10, U-12, U-14 and U-18 and there will also be singles and doubles matches.

Mvita also said there will be wheelchair tennis tournament. The official could not disclose awards which will be presented to winners, promising to make them public soon.

VPL big guns to again clash in transfer market

BY CORRESPONDENT NASSIR NCHIMBI

WITH the December transfer window drawing closer, Vodacom Premier League (VPL) big guns, Simba SC and Yanga, have continued to show dominance, with either club showing interest in signing a player from the opposing team.

Yanga have continued to show interest in signing Simba SC's roving midfielder Clatous Chama, whose contract with the club will expire at the end of this season, making him a free agent.

The player, who won the previous season's domestic top flight's best player prize as well as the league's best midfielder award, has raised fears that for Simba SC fans due to his great contribution to the club's success.

Simba SC still needs Chama amid rumours the midfielder is attracting interest from rivals, Yanga.

Yanga have expressed an interest in roping the midfielder in so that they can bolster their midfield and win the league



Simba SC information officer, Haji Sunday Manara.

title this season after missing out on the top honour for almost three years.

Simba SC through the team's prominent information officer, Haji Sunday Manara, has been able to refute the rumours and said the midfielder is still the team's player and will continue remaining at the club for the next season.

Chamais currently in Zambia serving country's national team 'Chipolopo' in the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

Simba SC has also sought to frustrate Yanga's plan to sign Chama by expressing interest in signing Yanga's midfielder Mukoko Tonombe, who joined the team from DR Congo's AS Vita Club.

Although Yanga through the club's registration committee's chairman, Hersi Said, have made it clear that the team have a running contract with the player until 2022.

Fears have gripped Yanga fans over the rumors, given they are still smarting from the team's loss of winger

Bernard Morrison to their rivals, Simba, earlier this season due to contract problems.

Yanga supporters fear that there would be a recurrence of the issue, if Mukoko joins Simba due to the same issue that happened to Morrison.

Mukoko, who emerged as the best player of the VPL match between Yanga and Simba which took place in Dar es Salaam on November 7 and ended in 1-1 draw, was presented with cash prize totaling 1m/- by KCB Tanzania, the VPL co-sponsors.

The gifted defensive midfielder will greatly benefit Simba if he will move to the outfit, given the squad has weaknesses in the department.

All answers will be presented to domestic soccer followers when the December 15 transfer market resumes and find out which team will lose players and which team will keep theirs.

Simba SC focuses on VPL preparations

BY CORRESPONDENTS ISMAIL TANO

THE 2020/21 Vodacom Premier League (VPL) defending champions, Simba Sports Club, on Wednesday, started training for the league's games, with players participating in the training being the ones who were present after a three-day break issued immediately after playing against Yanga.

Simba SC is on November 16 expected to play a friendly match against African Sports from Tanga, which one of this season's First Division League (FDL) teams.

The friendly match will be played at the Azam Complex, Chamazi, in Dar es Salaam, kicking off at 5pm, and entrance fee will be 3,000/- for the rest of the venue and 5,000/- for VIP seats.

Apart from the team's players, who went to play for their respective national teams in the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers, and those who were injured, the rest will be attending training.

Among the players, who



Simba SC players take part in training in Dar es Salaam early this week to shape up for the Vodacom Premier League (VPL) games.

will be present at training, are Benno Kakolanya, Ally Salim, Paschal Wawa, Kennedy Juma, Larry Bwalya and Ibrahim Ajibu.

Others Bernard Morrison, Miraji Athumani, Hassan Dilunga and Charles Ilanfy. Simba SC's assistant coach, Selemani Matola, will also not be in the squad.

Simba SC head coach, Sven Vandebroek, despite missing the

players, will also provide a chance for a few players from the outfit's youth team to be substitutes for those who will start in the next week friendly.

Simba SC's players that have headed for their respective national team's participation in the AFCON qualifiers are Francis Kahata and Joash Onyango, who were called for Kenya's Harambee Stars, Luis Miquissone who plays

for the Mozambique national team, and Chama, who was called for Zambia's national team.

Others are Aishi Manula, Shomari Kapombe, Mohamed Hussein, Jonas Mkude, Erasto Nyoni, John Bocco, Mzamiru Yassin, Said Hamis all being named in Tanzania's national team squad.

Meddie Kagere, who has recovered from an injury, will play for Rwanda's national team.

Zanzibar golf club hosts Chief Executive Officers' Luxury Retreat Golf Day

BY CORRESPONDENT NASSIR NCHIMBI

OVER 50 golfers have already confirmed their participation at this year's CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) Luxury Retreat Golf Day which is set to take place in Dar es Salaam today.

The annual tournament is set to take the Sea Cliff Resort and Spa Golf Club

in Zanzibar by storm.

According to Sea Cliff Golf Club Manager Elias Soka all preparations for the one-day tournament, including a draw, were almost complete by late Wednesday.

Soka confirmed that over 50 golfers from nine different countries have already registered for the tournament.

He said that the tourna-

ment is open for ladies and men, CEOs, diplomats and other golfers from around the globe.

He mentioned countries that have representatives in the tournament as neighbouring Kenya, Uganda and Malawi.

Other golfers come from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Scotland, England, Germany and Korea.

He insisted that the door

is still open to those wishing to take part at the luxury retreat event which, he said, will be played in stable ford format.

"We invite golfers based in Zanzibar, Mainland Tanzania and all over the world to come forward and register as the door is still open to those wishing to play in the event," he said.

According to Soka, the

tournament has received massive support from firms and institutions, namely Park Hyatt Zanzibar, Moelectro, Sayona, Kiboko Plastics, MELIA Zanzibar, Johnnie Walker, Sea Cliff Resort & Spa of Zanzibar, ZMMI Wines & Spirits, Sea Cliff Court Hotel & Luxury Apartments, Auric Air and Cape Town Fish Market.



An anti-Olympic protester stands outside the Yoyogi National Stadium in Tokyo on Sunday, Nov. 8, 2020. About 30 anti-Olympic protesters showed up Sunday outside the gymnastic event. They distributed leaflets and warned IOC President Thomas Bach in their handout that they would be around when he arrives "to deliver our message to cancel the Olympics." (AP Photo)

Critics speak out on Tokyo Olympic costs, pandemic, fairness

TOKYO

THREE-TIME Olympic champion gymnast Kohei Uchimura wants the postponed Tokyo Olympics to happen next year. But he's also talked openly about the skepticism in Japan where enthusiasm is muted by health risks, billions of dollars in taxpayer bills, and questions why the Games are a priority amid a pandemic.

Polls over the last several months show Japanese – and Japanese companies – are divided about holding the Games, or doubtful they should be held at all.

"Unfortunately, 80% of

the Japanese don't believe that the Tokyo Olympics can take place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic," Uchimura said after a one-day exhibition gymnastics meet last weekend.

"I would like people to change their minds from: We can't hold the Olympics to – how can we do it?"

Postponed 7 1/2 months ago, the Olympics have been rescheduled to open on July 23, 2021. Despite the public's ambivalence, the International Olympic Committee and Japanese organizers have unwavering support from Japan's

ruling party and Tokyo's municipal government. The messaging is molded around the Games overcoming the odds – a heroic endeavor by Japan to lift global spirits, thanks to the Olympics.

Should Japan fail, Asian rival China would take the stage six months later with Beijing's Winter Olympics opening Feb. 4, 2022.

But there is a tiny murmur of resistance to the Olympic behemoth, particularly as the virus spikes around the world.

There are fears of letting 15,400 Olympic and Paralympic athletes en-

ter Japan, joined by tens of thousands of officials, coaches, VIPs and media; not to mention the possibility of allowing foreign fans to attend.

"We should be talking about whether the Games are something we should forge ahead with in this way," Genki Sudo, a national legislator, told The Associated Press in an interview.

Sudo, a former mixed martial artist, wrestler and kickboxer, argues the Olympics won't be fair to the athletes. Some can practice, but many can't because of the pandemic.

He even half-jokingly suggested the Games should be held remotely, like a Zoom meeting.

"If the training environment is so different, is that fair? It's absolutely not fair," Sudo said at his Parliamentary Upper House office adorned with pull-up bars.

About 57% of the qualification spots for Tokyo have been filled. Matt Smith, the head of World Rowing, said a few days ago that completing the qualification was "really getting urgent."

What to look out for in Nations League finale

LONDON

DESPITE many criticising the decision to go ahead with the tournament during the coronavirus pandemic, amid travel difficulties, matches behind closed doors, and with injuries piling up, the UEFA Nations League limps to a finish over the next week.

AFP Sport looks at some of the issues to be decided in the coming days:

- Covid and injuries take toll -
For the third month running European national teams are playing a double-header of Nations League matches, and many are throwing in friendlies too, despite the ongoing complications caused by the health crisis.

England feared their game against Iceland next Wednesday might be moved to a neutral venue because their opponents are due to play Denmark away three days earlier.

Denmark is the subject of a UK travel ban due to concerns over a new strain of Covid-19 linked to mink farms, and the idea of England moving the Iceland game to a neutral venue in Germany or Albania had been raised.

However, the UK government issued a travel exemption to the Icelandic side and the game will go ahead at Wembley.

Elsewhere, players are absent after testing positive for Covid-19, among them Eden Hazard, who is set to miss Belgium's games with England and Denmark.

Niklas Sule, Kai Havertz and Emre Can are missing for Germany, while Edin Dzeko is out for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Wissam Ben Yedder for France.

And it's not just the players: Italy coach Roberto Mancini also had to go into quarantine after contracting the virus.

Then there are the injuries, with players struggling to keep up with the demands of a packed schedule.

England's Liverpool defender Joe Gomez this week succumbed to a serious knee injury. Spain's Ansu Fati and Germany's Joshua Kimmich also suffered knee injuries just before this international break.

- Will holders Portugal reach finals? -

The winners of the four groups in League A will advance to the finals, which UEFA has pencilled in for October next year.

Man Utd's Woodward 'absolutely' backs Solskjaer

LONDON

MANCHESTER United chief Ed Woodward says he is "absolutely" behind manager Ole Gunnar Solksjaer amid a poor start to the season that has seen the club slip to 14th in the table.

Victory at Everton before the international break gave the Norwegian some breathing space and Woodward insists he remains committed to keeping the 47-year-old in charge.

"While there is still hard work ahead to achieve greater consistency, we remain absolutely committed to the positive path we are on under Ole as the team continues to develop," said Woodward, speaking as the club released their latest financial results.

"We miss playing in front of our fans and we are working hard together with our governing bodies

Portugal are the holders after winning the inaugural edition on home soil in 2019, and the reigning European champions face World Cup holders France in Lisbon on Saturday in a crunch game -- whoever wins will be through to the finals, while a draw keeps things alive until the final Group 3 matches on Tuesday.

Poland, Italy and the Netherlands are all fighting it out in Group 1, while Belgium are in pole position in Group 2 and can knock out England with a win in Leuven on Sunday. Denmark are still in contention in that group too.

In Group 4, just one point separates Spain, Germany and Ukraine with two rounds left. It could all come down to Spain's clash with Germany in Seville on Tuesday.

- Scotland, Wales to join elite? -
Hot on the heels of their penalty shoot-out win over Serbia which secured qualification for Euro 2020, a rejuvenated Scotland can clinch promotion to the elite League A.

Steve Clarke's side currently top League B, Group 2 by four points from the Czech Republic. A win in Slovakia on Sunday will therefore do the job, otherwise they have another chance to secure top spot in Israel on Wednesday.

Wales are hoping to secure first place in League B, Group 4, with a one-point lead over Finland and home games against the Republic of Ireland and the Finns to come.

- World Cup incentive -
While the likes of Scotland and North Macedonia qualified for Euro 2020 after coming through play-offs based on performance in the last Nations League, there is an added incentive in this edition related to the 2022 World Cup.

Qualifying for Qatar 2022 will start in March, with 10 group winners advancing to the finals.

The 10 runners-up will go into the play-offs, where they will be joined by the best two Nations League group winners (based on overall rankings) who did not directly qualify or reach the play-offs.

A total of three World Cup spots will be available through the play-offs, so Qatar remains a long way off, but this is still an extra reason for the likes of Scotland, Wales and others to top their Nations League groups.

and relevant authorities to ensure that fans can safely return as soon as possible."

United's financial strength continues to take a hit from the COVID-19 pandemic that has seen matches played behind closed doors since March. The UK will remain in a nationwide lockdown until at least Dec. 2 and fans are unlikely to return to Old Trafford until well into the new year.

"While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause significant disruption, we are optimistic that the recovery and normalisation phase is gradually coming into view," said Woodward. "The club's resilience and our strong commercial business continue to provide a solid foundation and gives us confidence in our long-term outlook beyond the pandemic, both on and off the pitch."

(Agencies)

Aubameyang hits back at Kroos' mask criticism

LONDON

ARSENAL captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang has defended his goal celebrations that involve him wearing the masks of different superheroes after being criticised by Real Madrid midfielder Toni Kroos.

Speaking on his Einfach mal Luppen podcast, Germany international Kroos said this week that he was not a fan of the former

Borussia Dortmund striker's celebrations and did not believe it was the behaviour of a good role model.

"By the way. Does this @ ToniKroos have kids? Just to remember I did it for my son few times and I will do it again," Aubameyang said in a post on Twitter that was accompanied by a picture of him in a cape, as drawn by a child.

(Agencies)

How are teams adjusting to more penalties and who are the best takers?

BY JAMES OLLEY, SENIOR WRITER, ESPN FC

PENALTY taking has never been more important than it is in 2020. The introduction of VAR across Europe's top leagues, combined with revisions to the handball law, have contributed to a dramatic increase in the number of spot kicks awarded throughout the game.

There have been 41 penalties in 78 Premier League matches this season. By comparison, there were only 92 awarded in all 380 games of the 2019-20 campaign. If referees continue to make decisions at the same rate, it projects to a staggering 195 penalties in 2020-21, and nowhere has the impact of more penalties been clear than in the interpretation of a handball.

Figures show that the rewriting of the handball law in 2019 have played a key role, not to mention the way VAR adjudicates each decision. Serie A and La Liga implemented the new law immediately, but the Premier League allowed referees to continue with a more relaxed approach until this season.

A revised interpretation of the handball law was first used at the 2018 World Cup in Russia, which was then used by most of the major leagues in 2018-19 when there were 37 penalties awarded for handball in Serie A and 35 in La Liga. In England, sticking with a more traditional interpretation, there were just 14.

But penalties rocketed after the handball was officially revised in the Laws of the Game ahead of the 2019-20 season, making the rule much stricter. There were 57 in Italy and 48 in Spain, but just 20 in the Premier League -- again, due to a more traditional interpretation.

Even in the Bundesliga, which saw the fewest penalties awarded among the top five leagues last season, the frequency of spot kicks has doubled in the early part of this season.

FIFA has called for greater uniformity and Premier League referees are now told they must award fouls for handballs, regardless of intent, whenever a player has made their body "unnaturally bigger." A classic example of this came on Nov. 8 when Joe Gomez was adjudged to have handled Kevin De Bruyne's cross as Liverpool drew 1-1 at Manchester City.

"It's frustrating and I know they've made an adaptation to the rule, but at some point you have to look at the game in real time," Gomez after the match. "Anyone in slow motion can say, 'Yeah, it's hit his hands,' but judge a scenario for what it is and that's not being done at the minute."

The referees agree too. This is why the IFAB (International Football Association Board) will discuss a proposal from UEFA -- supported by the Premier League -- to return to a more liberal interpretation of the handball rule when the technical committee meets on Nov. 23 to discuss changes to the Laws for 2021-22. UEFA is concerned as the Champions League reflects the trend too: in the past two seasons, there were 12 penalties awarded for handball (out of 111 total) but there have already been 11 in the first three matches of 2020-21 (36 penalties in total).

The end result is that taking penalties has become a key skill that increasingly determines a team's success. So, how are teams trying to sharpen their spot-kick skills, who are the best players from 12 yards and how are they so effective?

There is only one man to start with when discussing the art of taking penalties in English football: Gareth Southgate. The former centre-back missed the decisive spot kick in England's Euro '96 semifinal defeat to Germany, cementing the cornerstone of a historic barrier he has subsequently tried to break down as manager.

Few people have examined the psychology around penalties as much as Southgate, mindful of taking over an England team that exited major tournaments in 1990, 1996, 1998, 2004, 2006 and 2012 due to their failure of nerve from 12 yards.

Under Southgate's guidance, England won their first penalty shootout at a World Cup by beating Colombia in the round of 16 stage two years ago. It was the culmination of an exhaustive body of work that included



Gareth Southgate, left, famously missed a penalty for England in 1996, but is trying to break the national team's issue with penalties as their manager in 2020. (Agencies)

practicing penalties at the end of training sessions to replicate the fatigue of extra time, detailed instructions on the walk-up to the penalty spot, overall mental preparation, a more intensive study of opposing goalkeepers and perfecting multiple penalties under pressure rather than relying on just one preferred kick.

But how does that work evolve over time? After all, the numbers show that the most popular takers are now deployed more often for club and country, leaving a real danger of becoming predictable in their approach.

"The regular penalty takers would carry out that work on their own, really," Southgate told ESPN last week. "I think players practice, and you're always willing as coaches to lend them time on that, but those regular takers have dedicated routines they are comfortable with, they know the sort of preparation they want to go through, they know how many they want to practice, they know how they want to practice them."

"They've got a very clear picture in their mind and where we've tried to affect people's thinking is with those that don't take as regularly, because I think if you start to mess with technique that doesn't need fixing, then you can probably only make that worse."

"[For] our regular takers, we facilitate the practice and are there to make some observations, but really, we have got some players with very, very good records for their clubs -- [Marcus] Rashford and [Harry] Kane in particular -- and they just continue to practice with another group who are also looking to take penalties with their clubs, or take them less regularly for their clubs. We're fortunate to have some very good executors of that skill, really."

Southgate adopted a forensic approach to puncture a collective psy-

chological fog that left a generation of England players framing penalties as a lottery rather than an executable skill, and Kane perhaps embodies this better than most. The 27-year-old has scored 22 of his past 23 penalties in all competitions and has been known to practice up to 50 spot kicks in a single session. His unerring accuracy from 12 yards was a key factor in England reaching the 2018 World Cup semifinals.

Frank Lampard was part of the generation after Southgate that battled inner demons from the penalty spot, playing in two tournaments that ended with shootout failures, scoring himself in the Euro 2004 quarterfinal defeat vs. Portugal, only to miss in the 2006 World Cup quarterfinal exit, also against Portugal. Yet Lampard was remarkably consistent at club level, netting 43 out of 50 attempts in the Premier League. Only Alan Shearer (55) has scored more in the competition's history.

"You're actually not going to get the best answer from me because I'm quite superstitious about penalties: I was as a taker," Lampard told ESPN. "Maybe that was part of my process of taking them. I probably did adapt my style over the course of my career depending on form, if I missed any, my position, which at times I focused on a lot and then came away from that."

"Because I was like that as a player, I tend not to go too much into the head of the penalty-takers in our team. I trust them, their style and the way they take them. That's why they are in those positions. I let them get on with it -- I won't discuss anything more in terms of going forward."

Players must rely to an extent on instinct and out-thinking previous patterns because of the exhaustive video analysis work done by top clubs. And with more penalties being awarded, there is more evi-

dence available.

Watford goalkeeper Ben Foster saved a penalty against Blackburn in the Championship on Oct. 21, and he explained to ESPN how he managed to predict where Adam Armstrong was going to shoot.

"As a goalkeeper, you're not expected to save a penalty but there's loads of little tricks and stuff you can do to try and just gain that little bit of advantage," he told ESPN. "We always watch the penalties from the player that normally takes the penalty -- we'll watch his previous kind of nine or 10 penalties wherever it is."

"I try and just pick up a few tells or a few clues. The Blackburn one was a prime example. On the videos he put six to the right and two to the left. And the two that he put to the left, he did this little like jig, this little shuffle, and then moved into the penalty. As soon as I saw him do that, I thought 'you're going to my left here,' even though he preferred the right, and thankfully it was a lovely height for me to save it."

Those players that thrive in this highly scrutinised, technologically advanced era are finding the right balance of routine and unpredictability to stay one step ahead of the rest.

Top 11 penalty takers since 2017 (league matches only)

1. Ciro Immobile, FW, Lazio: 26 scored from 28 taken (92.9% success rate)

The Lazio striker has missed only twice since 2017 and maintained the second-highest conversion rate despite taking the highest number of anyone in Europe's top five leagues.

2. Cristiano Ronaldo, FW, Juventus: 22 from 25 (88%)

Ronaldo inevitably took on penalty duties at Juventus after leaving Real Madrid in 2018, missing one in his final year in Spain

before two failures for the Bianconeri against Verona and Sampdoria.

3. Luka Milivojevic, MF, Crystal Palace: 19 from 21 (90.5%)

Has missed only twice since joining Palace from Olympiakos in 2017. The Serbian midfielder boasts a higher conversion rate than Ronaldo, but sits below him having taken four fewer spot kicks.

4. Sergio Ramos, DF, Real Madrid: 15 from 16 (93.8%)

The centre-back has the highest conversion rate of any player to have taken more than 11 penalties and netted a high-pressure spot kick in his 45th Clasicos last month.

5. Neymar, FW, PSG: 13 from 14 (92.9%)

Like Ramos, the Brazilian would be higher if there were a bigger sample size, but PSG have been awarded only 13 league penalties since 2017. The one he missed in Ligue 1 was the last one he took, against Saint-Etienne in December 2019.

6. Robert Lewandowski, FW, Bayern Munich: 16 from 18 (88.9%)

The Polish goal machine has the best conversion rate of any player to have taken more than 20 penalties, but the relatively small number Bayern Munich have earned denied him top spot.

7. Dani Parejo, MF, Villarreal: 16 from 18 (88.9%)

The 31-year-old has yet to take a penalty this season, with Santi Cazorla first choice at Villarreal, and the veteran midfielder missed his last one in La Liga for his former club Valencia. That said, Parejo's consistency gets him on the list.

8. Fabio Quagliarella, FW, Sampdoria: 22 from 27 (81.5%)

A veteran now, aged 37, but still prolific from 12 yards. However, five misses, three of which came last season -- against Atalanta, Brescia and Parma -- damaged his conversion rate.

9. Jamie Vardy, FW, Leicester City: 18 from 22 (81.8%)

The former England striker scored one and missed another in the same game against Wolves last weekend but is usually reliable from 12 yards.

10. Lionel Messi, FW, Barcelona: 13 from 16 (81.3%)

It would be churlish to describe any part of Messi's game as a weakness, but penalty taking has never been his strongest suit.

11. Harry Kane, FW, Tottenham: 10 from 11 (90.9%)

Kane would be much higher on this list were penalties in European competition and internationals included. Doesn't just score, but usually rifles the ball past helpless goalkeepers.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

What to look out for in Nations League finale

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Senzo Mbatha

Yanga now condemn Senzo Mbatha's arrest

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YOUNG Africans (Yanga) have strongly condemned the arrest and questioning of their chief administration and technical advisor Senzo Mbatha for match-fixing allegations levelled against him by their traditional rivals, Simba SC.

In an official statement issued by the club in Dar es Salaam on Thursday, the side, through its website, said it sees the arrest and questioning as a breach of the football code that wants all football matters be handled by football authorities.

In anguish, the Jangwani Street-based club feared the move would tarnish the image of the club and the Tanzanian football, which is rapidly developing.

Mbatha, a South African soccer official, appeared at the Oyster Bay police station in the city to record statements over the allegations.

Although the police are yet to confirm why Mbatha was specifically questioned, Yanga have confirmed the match-fixing allegations were made against their official.

"Yanga are shocked and disappointed by the events that occurred yesterday (November 11), when our club's official was taken in by the authorities for alleged match-fixing," Yanga said in the club's website.

"Circumstances leading to these revelations are disappointing and are an indication of malicious intent, planned strategy to tarnish the image of our club, our official's name and to put Tanzanian football into questioning."

"We strongly condemn the actions of the perpetrators of the propaganda."

"We hereby assure our fans, members, sponsors and stakeholders that Yanga will cooperate with the relevant authorities dealing with this matter."

"We are also in support of the code that states all football matters should be held by football authorities."

Though Simba SC have said nothing about it, the disputes might be sparked by the squad's losses to Tanzania Prisons and Ruvo Shooting in this season's Vodacom Premier League (VPL) matches.

The two consecutive defeats saw Simba SC part ways with the team's manager Patrick Rweyemamu and the goalkeepers' trainer Muharami Mohamed.

Mbatha that had earlier been hired by Simba SC as Chief Executive Officer, was then hired by Yanga after the expiry of his contract with the former.

That is understood to have developed more friction between the most successful Tanzanian clubs.

As Mbatha moved to Yanga, the club's former winger, Bernard Morrison, moved to the opposite direction and Yanga are still contesting circumstances that the Ghanaian signed for Simba SC.

The Morrison issue has not been fully settled up to this point and the new match fixing allegations may end up creating more friction between Simba SC and Yanga. Yanga hosted Simba SC in the VPL clash, which took place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in the city two weeks ago and had the outfits settling for 1-1 draw.

Morrison missed the clash, which took place before an international break, due to a three-match ban he was handed by Tanzania Football Federation (TFF).

Despite remaining unbeaten in the 2020/21 season, Yanga sit second in the VPL standing, which is led by Azam FC, after playing 10 matches.

Tanzania's U-17 girls out to stun Zambia in 2020 COSAFA U-17 Women Championship final



Tanzania's U-17 women soccer team's players celebrate when they notched a goal against Zimbabwe U-17 women team in the 2020 COSAFA U-17 Women Championship's tie, which took place in South Africa last week. Tanzania's U-17 women football team won 10-1.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

TANZANIA'S national U-17 women soccer team will today afternoon take on Zambia in the final of the 2020 COSAFA U-17 Women Championship final in

South Africa.

Head coach Edna Lema's side lost only one game on their way to the final and will be hoping they

can shock the favourites, Zambia, and win the title.

Tanzania U-17 women soccer team beat Comoros 6-0, hosts

South Africa were handed a 6-1 hiding, Zambia gave them a reality check with a 2-1 loss before they humiliated Zimbabwe in their last outing.

Coach Edna admits Zambia are a good side but she is confident her squad has what it takes to stun the favourites and claim the COSAFA U-17 Women Championship title.

The achievement will help the national U-17 women side emulate the Tanzania U-20 women side that claimed the COSAFA U-20 Women Championship, which took place at the same Nelson Mandela Bay venue last year.

"Football is a game of mistakes, we lost 2-1 to Zambia in the early rounds and now we are going to meet in the final. We have to play well because Zambia has a good team and we also have a good team. I am sure we are going to beat them," said head coach Lema ahead of the final.

In striker Aisha Masaka, who

has netted nine goals, they have the tournament's leading scorer and she is hot favourite for the player of the tournament award.

Zambia came into the tournament as favourites and have justified that tag so far.

They are the only unbeaten side in the tournament and will be eyeing an even stronger showing against a tougher Tanzania who are participating for the first time.

The Tanzania U-17 women side alongside the senior national women team, Twiga Stars, have taken part in the southern African region competition as the guest teams. Unfortunately, Twiga Stars were eliminated in the group stage of the 2020 COSAFA Women Championship.

Tanzania first appeared in the COSAFA Women's Championship in 2011 and made a strong impression, walking away with a bronze medal.

Caravans Cricket Club, Aga Khan SC in pursuit of 2020 Kazim Nasser Div A tourney trophy

By Guardian Reporter

CARAVANS Cricket Club will be out to clinch the outfit's first piece of silverware this season as the side takes on Aga Khan SC in the 2020 Kazim Nasser Memorial League (KNML) Division A final in Dar es Salaam tomorrow.

The sides had an impressive outing in the competition's league matches, which involved top domestic cricket sides, to book a place in the semi-finals.

Caravans Cricket Club and Aga Khan SC finished first and second respectively in the tournament's table, followed by Gymkhana Cricket Club and Aces Cricket Club in the third and fourth spots respectively, to wrap up the semi-finalists list.

The top two teams had collected eight points and were, in this case, separated by net run rate.

Caravans Cricket Club locked horns with Gymkhana Cricket Club in one of the last four stage ties, which took place on November 1 and saw the former beat the latter by five wickets.

Gymkhana Cricket Club posted 137 runs all out in 41.2 overs once the team won the toss and chose to bat first.

Vishal Patel, who registered 47 runs, and Abdulrahman Akida that recorded 22 runs were the batsmen that managed to hold their own against Caravans Cricket Club during the former's turn with the bat.

Gokul Das led Caravans Cricket Club's bowling onslaught and finished with four wickets, giving away 19 runs in 7.2 overs.

Jayaraj Malayil chipped in with two wickets, giving away 29 runs in nine overs.

Caravans Cricket Club, in response, exhibited their virtuosity, cruising to the victory for the loss of five wickets in 37.1 overs.

Jitin Singh, Das and Kheel Suchak were impressive at the crease, seeing to it Caravans Cricket Club punishes Gymkhana Cricket Club with every mistake the batsmen made in their bowling spell and helped the former tame the latter.

Singh scored 27 runs, Das notched 28 runs whereas Suchak had the best innings in the chase,



Aga Khan SC's batsman, Arshaan Jasani (L), in action against Aces Cricket Club when the sides locked horns in the 2020 Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) Caravans T20 Cup tournament's last four stage's duel, which took place in the city last weekend. Aces Cricket Club won the clash.

notching 30 runs which consisted of three fours.

The other semi-final ended with Aga Khan SC, led by gifted player Arshaan Jasani, cruising to six-wicket victory over Aces Cricket Club and booking a place in the final.

Aces Cricket Club went in to bat first and ended with 139 runs all out in 45.2 overs. Aga Khan SC mounted a successful chase, posting 141 runs for the loss of four wickets.

With both Caravans Cricket Club and Aga Khan SC boasting of depth in batting, plenty of scintillating displays at the crease are expected to be on show in tomorrow's final.

Caravans Cricket Club is, on the one hand, expected to field the likes of Ivan Ismail, Kassim Nasor, Suchak and Singh on Sunday to see to it the squad amasses a convincing score during their turn with the bat.

The Caravans Cricket Club batsmen should though brace for stiff opposition from fearsome Aga Khan SC's bowling unit that is led by Vipin Abraham and Aahil Jasani.

The Aga Khan SC's bowlers have overall enjoyed a good outing in this year's top tier of the KNML, given they have seen to it the squad keeps the rest of the participating teams' batsmen in check on the team's way to making it to the last four stage and eventually

the final.

Arshaan Jasani is, on the other hand, expected to be a key player for Aga Khan SC in its quest for a second trophy this season.

The club's second-string squad, Aga Khan SC B, lifted this year's KNML Division A1 top honour, commanding 73-run victory over Union SC in the final which took place in the city last weekend.

Arshaan has, in Aga Khan SC previous nine matches, played as an opener in 50-over and 20-over tournaments, he has had unbeaten stint six times.

The showing proves the promising batsman is playing to make his team win games.

Arshaan has posted 262 runs in five innings in this season's DC Caravans T20 Cup tournament, commanding unbeaten spell in three innings.

In this season's KNML Division A competition, he has notched 190 runs, posting three not out performances in four innings. The displays speak volumes on the youngster's temperament and class.

He is not like the flamboyant batsmen of the current era at the domestic level but he has been quite effective for his club.

He is currently the top batsman in the 2020 KNML Division A League, he is neck and neck with Gymkhana Cricket Club's skipper, Abhik Patwa, who is widely regarded as one of the best batsmen at the domestic level.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

