

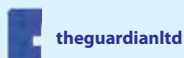


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PRODUCTIVITY



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Boys turn the tables on girls in Form IV results

Bobi Wine turns down results with Museveni in the lead

KAMPALA

UGANDAN opposition candidate Bobi Wine rejected early results declared yesterday and called himself the winner, despite the electoral body saying not all votes had been counted. Wine, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi alleged that Thursday's polls saw the worst vote-rigging in Uganda's history, claiming that he had evidence of fraud.

The 38-year-old former singer-turned-politician has been the main rival to 76-year-old Museveni, who has been in power since 1986 and is seeking a sixth term.

The internet remained down for a third day as vote counting continued, with provisional results from 29 per cent of polling stations giving Museveni an early lead of 63 percent while Wine trailed with 28 percent.

"I am very confident that we defeated the dictator by far. I call upon all Ugandans to reject the blackmail. We have certainly won the election and we've won it by far," he told journalists.

"The people of Uganda voted massively for change of leadership from a dictatorship to a democratic government. But Museveni is trying to paint a picture that he is in the lead. What a joke!" he said.

He said the election was marred by "illegal, high-handed actions which Museveni and his regime

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National Examinations Council of Tanzania executive secretary Dr Charles Msonde announces the results of last year's national Form Four exams at a press briefing in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Lifestyle change vital as NCD deaths rise sharply

By Henry Mwangonde

HEALTH experts have called for intensification of awareness campaigns on regular medical checkups and change of lifestyle following a sharp rise in Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs), now responsible for 33 per cent of all deaths in the country.

At a year-end free screening event to commemorate the role of nurses and midwives in healthcare provision, the Acting Executive Director for

As experts in the sector we have seen the importance of informing the public on the real cause of NCDs, as avoiding such diseases requires commitment to cheaper and affordable lifestyle exposure for everyone, encompassing individuals and eventually the public at large

the Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) Dr Julieth Magandi said there is a need for change of lifestyle or many avoidable deaths will occur.

She said that a well informed public, especially the urban population, has a better chance of changing behavior and get rid of modifiable risk factors, the leading causes of NCD deaths.

"As experts in the sector, we have seen the importance of informing the public on the real

TURN TO Page2

Five-year livestock sector plan eyes quality advance

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

LIVESTOCK experts are burning mid-night oil as implementation begins of a new five-year (2021-2025) sub-sector strategy which seeks to improve quality of animal products for domestic consumption and export.

The strategy, among other issues, is designed to improve breeds of livestock and consequently increase the quality and quantity of meat and milk, plus skins and hides, improving the living standards of farmers through enhanced earnings.

Dr Jonas Kizima, the Director General of the Tanzania Livestock Re-

search Institute (TALIRI), told this paper in an interview that apart from challenges in exports, domestic factories in livestock products category perform poorly due to low production and supply of raw materials.

TURN TO Page2

By Correspondent Theresia Victor

AFTER being outshone for two consecutive years, boys have finally overtaken girls in the national Form Four examination results for 2020 released yesterday.

Dr Charles Msonde, Executive Secretary for the National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA), said in announcing the results of the Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations in Dar es Salaam that

TURN TO Page2



This year good performance has risen by 5.19 percent compared to last year, as 373,958 school candidates passed, equal to 85.84 percent of the 434,654 total number of candidates

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NATURAL GAS

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Boys turn the tables on girls in Form IV results

FROM PAGE 1

boys grabbed seven out of the coveted top ten slots, leaving only three for girls.

This is a coup compared to 2019 results where girls held tight to eight positions in the top ten and left two for boys.

As for the top ten schools, there are six boys' schools and four institutions being either for girls or mixed. This is also a change of positions compared to last year's results in which girls' schools dominated, the top exams administrator intoned.

The top 10 performers are Paul Ruziga (Pandahill-Mbeya), Justina Gerald (Canossa-Dar es Salaam), Timothy Segu (Mzumbe-Morogoro), Isaya Rukanya (Feza Boys-Dar es Salaam), Ashraf Ali (Ilboru-Arusha), Samson Mwakabage (Jude-Arusha), Derick Mushi (Ilboru-Arusha), Laila Atokwete (Canossa-Dar es Salaam), Innocent Joseph (Mzumbe-Morogoro) and LunaGrace Celestine (Canossa-Dar es Salaam).

Mbeya-based Saint Francis has regained its regular number one position from which it was dethroned last year by Kemebos (Kagera) which is in fourth position this year.

Number two is Ilboru (Arusha) followed by Canossa (Dar es Salaam), Bethel Sabs Girls (Iringa), Feza Boys (Dar es Salaam), Ahmes (Coast), St Aloysius Girls (Coast), Marian Boys (Coast) and St Augustine Tagaste (Dar es Salaam).

This year good performance has risen by 5.19 percent compared to last year, as 373,958 school candidates passed, equal to 85.84 percent of the 434,654 total number of candidates, he said, noting that 193,672 girls passed exams, equivalent to 85.44 while 180,286 boys passed, edging the girls with 86.27

per cent pass level.

In 2019 the total number of passing candidates stood at 340,914 and equal to 80.65 per cent of the total, he stated.

Candidates who achieved good grades (grade one to three) was 152,909 which is equal to 35.10 percent for the girls at 66,899 (29.5 per cent of candidates) and 86,010 for boys (41.17 per cent of total number of candidates).

"For last year candidates who achieved grade I-III were 135,301 equal to 32.1 percent and that shows the quality of performance has increased by 3.9 percent," Dr Msonde affirmed.

In the examination, a total of 490,213 candidate were registered for the form four examination with 258,323 being girls (52.7 percent) and boys were 47.3 percent of the registered candidates.

School candidates were 448,220 and independent candidate were 41,993 while results for 215 candidate were deleted for cheating during examination.

"We have put on hold the results of 252 candidates who couldn't finish all their examinations due to health issues. They will be granted another chance to redo the exams as soon as they are well," he added.



For last year candidates who achieved grade I-III were 135,301 equal to 32.1 percent and that shows the quality of performance has increased by 3.9 percent,



Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan chairs a Cabinet meeting at Chamwino State House in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: VPO

Lifestyle change vital as NCD deaths rise sharply

FROM PAGE 1

causes of NCDs, as avoiding such diseases requires commitment to cheaper and affordable lifestyle exposure for everyone, encompassing individuals and eventually the public at large," she said.

Dr Magandi said that in efforts to combat the diseases, health workers must advise patients whenever they

visit clinics often at the onset of one or other type of NCDs.

During the two days free screening exercise, MNH aims to cover 300 individuals from areas surrounding the Mloganzila branch of the hospital and offer lifestyle change advice, she stated.

In 2019, the government launched a national plan to contain the alarming rate of NCDs in the country.

This came amid revelations that

NCDs are now becoming the leading killer, projected to attain 55-percent mortality cause by 2025 at the current trend.

What is most challenging in government intervention is that most patients report to hospitals when they are already affected by up to 70 percent, hence the plan to enhance civic education on lifestyle change.

Health experts say the rapid

increase in non-communicable diseases was a sign of health system failure as such patients pose challenges for treatment since handling such cases takes a long time.

The main thrust in the plan is to collect data during the first phase of implementation on the number of cancer cases and several other NCDs for appropriate intervention, they added.

Bobi Wine rejects election results as Museveni leading

FROM PAGE 1

of blood have undertaken to set stage for the worst rigging this country has even witnessed."

He said he would detail the irregularities once the internet was restored.

Wine told reporters that he believes the internet and social media shutdown was being used to block communication and as a way of compromising the vote. The opposition presidential candidate also previously alleged there was rigging and that his agents and representatives have continued to be arrested.

But the chairman of the electoral commission, Simon Byabakama, has said that the onus is on Bobi Wine to provide evidence that there was rigging. Byabakama said all candidates had agents who witnessed vote

counting at district tally centres.

Only two polling stations in the country reported major irregularities and voting was cancelled there. At one of the polling stations, someone ran away with a ballot box.

Meanwhile, vote counting in the Uganda vice-president's Bukoto county central constituency has been stopped after results from two polling stations were disputed. Vice-President Edward Ssekandi was trailing in the preliminary results that had been tallied before counting stopped. Ssekandi has been the Bukoto central MP for 26 years.

His challengers are Richard Ssebamala, Majellan Kazibwe, Evelyn Namaganda, Fredrick Ddembe Luswata and Godfrey Sseremba Mayanja.



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi (R) engaged in prayers alongside, among others, former Zanzibar President Dr Salmin Amour Juma (2nd-R) shortly after they held private talks at the latter's Zanzibar residence yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

Five-year livestock sector plan eyes quality advance

FROM PAGE 1

"The strategy seeks to enable stakeholders in the meat and dairy chain to improve their performance by adopting better technologies and practices so that they can meet the local and export demand," he said.

Despite Tanzania having the second largest number of livestock after Ethiopia, with cattle alone numbering over 32 million head, productivity remains low because the animals are mainly traditional and husbandry largely pastoralist.

Stephen Michael, the acting director for production and marketing in the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, says Tanzania is currently producing some 11.7 million pieces of hides and skin yearly whereas during fiscal 2019/20, around 701,679.1 tonnes of meat was processed.

"We currently produce 350,000 litres of milk per day through formal collection systems, but there is potential for up to 600,000 litres by 2025," he said.

Dr Kizima said that the envisaged

strategy will help livestock keepers embrace genetic hybrid animals, access the best animal health services, animal feeds, animal husbandry infrastructure, along with improved milk handling and modern grazing systems.

There will be campaigns targeting pastoralists to persuade them to adopt best animal feeding programmes to increase animals' health and productivity, he stated.

"We are planning to establish centers for excellence for varied livestock breeds in different zones

for availability of raw material for industries in the various industrial zones," he elaborated.

Ministry data shows that the number of hybrid dairy cattle increased from 783,000 in 2017/2018 to 1,294,882 in a 2018/19 survey.

Baliya Luyombya, the Acting Director for the Livestock Institute Training Authority (LITA) said the institute was finalizing plans to start training young graduates in livestock science with best animal keeping practices.

The development is partly meant to comply with a directive by President John Magufuli on the revival and promotion of industries depending on livestock products in the next half decade.

In his remarks when inaugurating the 12th Parliament, the president said in the next term of government seven major abattoirs will be constructed in different regions with capacity to slaughter up to 6,700 cattle and 11,000 goats daily.

The construction of the abattoirs was purposeful for enabling the

country to improve performance and quality of meat as well as hides and skins.

About 90 per cent of animal skins produced in Tanzania are substandard due to poor slaughtering methods, he stated.

The government was moving to motivate investors within and outside the country to chip-in and invest in meat industries, the leather sector and auxiliary industries using other animal products like hooves, he added.



BANK

Tariff Guide

SERVICE	TZS	USD/EURO	KES	GBP
STATEMENTS				
Monthly Statement	free	free	free	free
Duplicated Statements per page (excluding community account)	1500 per page	1.30pp	78pp	0.70pp
Interim Statement per page (excluding community account)	1500 per page	1.30pp	78pp	0.70pp
ATM VISA DEBIT CARD				
ATM Card Issuance (for the first time)	free	free	n/a	n/a
ATM withdrawal from KCB ATMs (per transaction)	800	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
ATM withdrawal from Non-KCB ATMs (Tanzania)	2500	1.3	n/a	n/a
ATM withdrawal from Non-KCB ATMs (International)	6500 per each 400,000 limit	3.3	equivalent	equivalent
ATM mini statements	550	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
Daily Limit	1000000	equivalent	50000	equivalent
Minimum withdrawals	5000	equivalent	n/a	n/a
ATM Card Replacement (lost/ destroyed cards)	15000	13	n/a	n/a
Blocking/unblocking ATM cards	free	free	free	free
Card Renewal	15000	13	n/a	n/a
STANDING ORDER				
within KCB	2500	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
Outward to other banks	5000	3	n/a	n/a
Setup/Amend Standing Order	6500	7	500	4
Unpaid Standing Order (penalty)	10000	10	500	10
CHEQUES				
Unpaid Cheque (insufficient funds) - Outward	15000	13	n/a	n/a
Unpaid Cheque (insufficient) - inward	65000	52	n/a	n/a
Unpaid Cheques - technical	15000	15	n/a	n/a
USD unpaid cheque	52	52	n/a	n/a
Counter Leaves	13000	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
Bankers Cheque	26000	26	n/a	n/a
Stop payment-per set up	25000	25	1300	13
New cheque book retail	600 per leaf	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
TT's INTERNATIONAL				
Outward	50USD(TZS equiv- alent)	50USD(Euro equivalent)	equivalent	equivalent
Inward TT (excluding community accounts)	13USD (TZS equiv- alent)	13USD(Euro equivalent)	equivalent	equivalent
Recall of funds/Cancellation of TT	10USD (TZS equiv- alent)	10USD(Euro equivalent)	equivalent	equivalent
Amendment of TT (Customer induced)	10USD (TZS equiv- alent)	10USD(Euro equivalent)	equivalent	equivalent
TRANSFERS LOCAL				
KCB to KCB	1500	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
EFT (KCB Tanzania to any local bank)	3500	3	n/a	n/a
TISS/local TT (excluding community account)	10000	13	n/a	n/a
East African Payments (EAPS)	10000	n/a	870	n/a
MINIMUM A/C OPENING BAL- ANCE				
Current Account-Compa - ny(SME&CORPORATE)	100000	100	5000	13
Current-Personal	50000	100	5000	65
Mapato Account	10000	10	500	10
KCB Junior Account	10000	10	500	10
KCB Student Account	10000	10	500	10
KCB Simba Savers	50000	50	n/a	n/a
A/C CLOSURE				
Closing account	35000 before 6months, free after 6 months	39	2200	26
OTHER SERVICES				
Search of old documents	15000	13	900	10.5
Forex Cash Deposits (smaller denominations below US \$ 50)	n/a	8% for denom- inations that are less than USD 50	n/a	8% for denomina- tions that are less than USD 50
Dormant Account Activation	free	free	free	free
ACCOUNT MAINTAINANCE FEES				
Counter Withdrawals (excluding: Simba,Cub,Community & Student accounts)	<10million 1500 >10million 0.1% max 20000	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
Ledger Fees - Current Accounts (excluding community and salary)	personal current account 10,000, business 20,000, corporate account 30,000	personal current 10USD/Busi- ness 16USD/ Corporate 20USD	700	personal current 10GBP/Business 16GBP/Corporate 20GBP
Ledger Fees - Savings Accounts (excluding Simba, Cub, salary & Student Accounts)	1200	7	176	7
THIRD PARTY ENCASHMENT				
withdrawal fee to be paid by the beneficiary	6500	13	450	7
SALARY PROCESSING				
Salary processing	2600	equivalent	130	equivalent
CERTIFICATE OF BALANCE				
Balance of Account (Flat fee per certificate)	39000	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
Auditors Confirmation (flat per certificate)	30000	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent
Reference Letters	30000	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent

TRADE FINANCE	
IMPORT LETTER OF CREDIT	
LC ISSUANCE/extension/increase amount	1.3% Per Quarter
Normal Amendment	130 USD
Release Commision/lc document processing	20 USD
RETIREMENT	0.30% minimum 100 maximum 200
CANCELTION	260 USD
EXPORT LETTER OF CREDIT	
ADVISING	200 USD
NEGOTIATION	0.60% min 200 max 300
DISCOUNTING	0.80%
AVALIZATION	0.80%
DOCUMENTS FOR COLLECTION	
Documents HANDLING FEE	150 USD
COURIER	150 USD
GUARANTEE	
Issuance fee	1.30%
AMENDMENT/Reduce of amount	130 USD
DISCREPANCY	55 USD
EXAMINATION	
OTHERS	
SWIFT	50 USD
Tracer	50 USD
COURIER	150 USD
MOBILE BANKING CHARGES	
Balance enquiry	300
Mini statement	300
Invite Friend	free
Cheque book	300
Stop cheque	300
Stop card	300
Change Pin	free
Full statemet	500
Transaction alert (debit)	50
BILL PAYMENTS	
TANESCO(LUKU)	1.1% of the transacted amount
DAWASCO	1300
DSTV	Free
STARTIMES	Free
ZUKU	Free
SMILE	Free
UHURU	Free
AZAM	Free
SASATEL	Free
SEND MONEY TO E-WALLET	
Mpesa	
Airtelmoney	
Tigo Pesa	0-50,000=1000, 50,001-100,000=1,500, 100,001-300,000=2,500, 300,001-500,000=3,500, 500,001-1,000,000=5000
Eazzy Pesa	
Hallopesa	
T Pesa	
FUNDS TRANSFER	
Own accounts	500
KCB accounts	700
INTERCOMPANY TRANSACTION CHARGES	
Inter-company cash withdrawals charges,applicable in Kenya,Uganda,Tanza - nia,Rwanda and Burundi	Up to 60 USD charge 4 USD Between 251-1250USD charge 13 USD Between 1251-6250 USD charge 26 USD Between 251-1250 USD charge 13 USD Above 6250 USD charge 1.20% of daily cumulative withdrawals
Inter-company cash deposit charges, applicable in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi	Up to 250 USD charge 3 USD Between 251-1250 USD charge 7 USD Between 1251-6250 USD charge 13 USD Above 6250 USD charge 0.60% of daily cumulative deposits
Inter-company transaction charges on cash withdrawals and deposits applica - ble to Sudan branches	Intercompany cash withdrawals 1.20% of the amount withdrawn Intercompany cash deposits 0.97% of the amount (minimum \$35 and maximum of \$750) This excludes the swift charges and stamp duty
Intercompany standing orders across all companies	Intercompany standing order 13 USD
LOANS	
Processing/arrangement/appraisal fees	
Personal loans:	2.40%
Business loans:	2.40%
Overdrafts:	2.40%
Mortgage finance	2.40%
Asset finance	2.40%
Penalty on unpaid loan instalment:	10% above approved rate
Early repayment:	NA
Valuation fees:	As per service provider rates
Legal fees:	As per service provider rates
Loan insurance fees:	1%
Interest rates	+ or - Base Lending Rate
Personal loans:	19%
Business loans:	'+ or - Base Lending Rate
*Base Lending Rate	19% for TZS and 9% for USD
*All rates are subject to negotiation based on the product	

Please note: All taxes included

Name/Tittle
Mgina Mfaume-Ag. Head of Operations and IT
Christine Manyenye-Head of Marketing and Corporate Affairs

Signature Date
Signed 15.1.2021
Signed 15.1.2021



SIMBA SAVERS ACCOUNT

Weka akiba yako na upate faida ya 6% - 7% na ufikie malengo yako.





Feza Secondary School students celebrate in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly after the National Examinations Council announced the results of last year's national Form Four Examinations. The school has emerged one of the top ten nationally and its former student, Isaya Rukamyia, the fourth best performer. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Heavy rains kill 13 in Rwanda since Jan 1

KIGALI

THIRTEEN people have died and 20 others injured in heavy rains that ravaged different parts of Rwanda since the beginning of the year, an official said Thursday as experts warned of more heavy downpours in the coming days due to climate change.

The heavy rains also destroyed more than 300 hectares of crops, more than 100 houses, several roads, and electric infrastructure, Philippe Habinshuti, the director of response and recovery unit in Rwanda's Emergency Management Ministry, told reporters.

Beyond normal rainfall is expected to continue through the weekend until Jan. 20, according to weather forecast by the Rwanda Meteorology Agency.

Appealing to residents living in dilapidated houses to relocate to safe places, Habinshuti said heavier rains would continue to pound southwestern parts of Rwanda.

Southwest and western parts of the East African country are expected to receive "beyond normal" rain-

fall daily, ranging around 20-50 millimeters (0.7-2 inches) in the coming days, according to weather forecast.

Official data by the Emergency Management Ministry indicates that 290 people lost their lives and 398 were injured in different natural disasters last year, while up to 5,968 hectares of crops and 458 hectares of forests were also destroyed by disasters.

Some 8,013 houses, 95 classrooms, four health centers, 151 roads, 102 bridges, 22 churches, 26 water supply systems, and 96 electricity transmission lines were also destroyed, according to the ministry.



Beyond normal rainfall is expected to continue through the weekend until Jan. 20, according to weather forecast by the Rwanda Meteorology Agency

Stakeholders conduct research on impacts of food production and supply in Africa

By Guardian Reporter

ARDHI University (ARU) in collaboration with the Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) and South African based Western camp college are conducting research on how the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic affected food production and supply in Africa.

ESAFF Coordinator for Eastern and Southern Africa, Joseph Mzinga said this yesterday in Dar es Salaam noting that researchers started working on the findings in September last year. He said the research will be

conducted in three African countries namely, Tanzania, Ghana and South Africa.

Mzinga added that the research which is financially supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) aims at coming up with findings that would be helpful to policy makers at national and regional level within the East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

He said the findings would help them to come up with better systems of ensuring food security during the pandemic outbreak. He said

enhanced food security systems would ensure reliable food supply during pandemics such as COVID-19.

He said despite challenges in food production and supply within African countries, Tanzania was food sufficient, and being able to sell food to neighboring countries.

"Apart from COVID-19, the research findings will also be the country in the fight against malnutrition which is still a big challenge to African children aged below five years. In Tanzania, malnutrition accounts for 30 per cent," said Mzinga.

The government launched

the National Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan (2016/17 -2020/21) requiring regional and district nutrition officers to implement policy actions envisaged in the plan.

The Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey of 2015-16 showed that the average rate of stunting in the country among children less than five years stood at 36 per cent. Malnutrition is one of the most serious health problems affecting infants, children and women of reproductive age among others.

He however added that in October this year, the United

Nations (UN) will hold a major conference which among other things will discuss issues related to food security in Africa.

"Our research findings will also be presented during the conference so that countries know how to deal with food security matters during pandemics," he added.

Mzinga explained that in Tanzania, the research will be conducted in six regions namely, Mwanza, Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Kahama, Dodoma and Mbeya. He said researchers will visit major crop markets as well as vegetable and fruit selling points.

He said the research will also include the supply of meat and fish in the particular regions.

A businessman at the Mabibo market in the city, Enock Kimwayeya said that during the pandemic outbreak, their daily sells dropped as most buyers feared to go to market places.

"Prices of some major food crops dropped during the outbreak of Coronavirus. A 100 kilogram sack of Irish potatoes was sold at 50,000/-," he said.

The highly contagious, pneumonia-causing illness (Coronavirus) firstly report-

ed in Wuhan, China has infected over 3 million people across the World.

It is characterized by mild symptoms including a runny nose, sore throat, cough, and fever. Illness can be more severe for some people and can lead to pneumonia or breathing difficulties.

Experts have frequently been advising the public to avoid unnecessary gatherings, practice self-isolation for them to remain safe during this time when the country and the World at large struggles to battle the spread of the highly flu-like Covid-19 outbreak.

Songea now to spend 5.7bn/- on eight water projects in 2020/21

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

SONGEA District in Ruvuma Region anticipates to spend more than 5.7bn/- to implement eight water projects in the 2020/21 financial year.

Songea District Rural and Urban Water and Sanitation Authority (RUWASA) Manager Eng Mathias Charles said up to January this year the agency in Songea District received 877m/-, equivalent to 15.2 per cent of the planned budget.

"Up to January this year an estimated 63.6 per cent of all residents in Songea District get piped water supply," said Charles.

However, he said up to now the Authority has spent more than 3bn/- in the district in nine water projects and that it continues with the work to boost the availability of piped water by constructing new projects.

He also said RUWASA continues to refurbish aged projects and better supervision of new completed projects to be sustainably by establishing and registering Community Boards for Water Consumers (CBWSOs) that will be tasked to ensure the projects provide services at all times.

He further said in FY 2019/2020 RUWASA in Songea District planned to establish 17 CBWSOs but up to June last year only 10 were established and registered.

He named water projects that were planned for implementation in Madaba District Council through P4R as including those for Ndelelyuma, Lutukira and Mbangawawe villages.

He added that others water projects to be implemented through P4R were those for Lipaya, Lundusi and Maposeni.



Christopher Myava, regional head of the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau for Ilala, briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the agency's performance in the fourth quarter of last year. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Minister calls for efficiency and performance

By Guardian Reporter

COMMUNICATIONS and Information Technology minister Faustine Ndagulile has directed institutions under the ministry to come up with deliberate strategies that will increase efficiency and performance and thus achieve the aspirations of the fifth phase government.

According to him, each institution should create performance appraisal agreements so as to assess its workers where he wanted them to report to him in the next 100 days on what they have achieved.

He made the directive yesterday during his meeting with the Tanzania Telecommunication Company Limited (TTCL) management to discuss several issues concerning the company.

"I want to see huge changes and achievements within the next 100 days, so every institution under my ministry should get up and start working on all directives issued so as to make things good, Tanza-

nia needs a lot from us, so we have to work hard to serve them," Ndagulile said.

According to him, coming up with the agreements to assess performance of workers is key if the government wants to achieve its development goals.

The minister also wanted TTCL to come up with commercial strategies that will enable it to operate profitably and compete well in the market.

"The government's aim is to ensure that it sends development in every corner of the country which include supplying residents with reliable communication services and thus contribute to the country's economic development, the government has invested a lot of funds to bring changes in the telecommunication sector," he said.

Ndagulile wanted TTCL to address communication challenges facing rural customers including shortage of vouchers and sim cards.

"There are complaints from various customers

over shortage of sim cards and vouchers thus causing havoc among them. TTCL should address this challenge, improve also bundles as well as the customer care services," he added.

The minister urged the heads of marketing and research units of the company to be creative and come up with ideas and services to market the company.

TTCL chief executive officer Waziri Kindamba said the company has invested a lot of efforts and will continue expanding service delivery to enable the underserved community access and use communication services.

"Five years before the 2016/17 fiscal year, the corporation was operating unprofitably losing 15bn/- per year. But since the Fifth Phase government entered, things have changed and the company is now operating well injecting profit of 5bn/- per year," he said.

He said that they are currently finalizing proce-

dures to sign two service provision contracts with Dubai and Malawi.

"We expect that within 90 days to sign a contract with a Dubai-based company worth US\$ 3.6 million as well as another contract worth US\$ 3.2 million, these contracts are going to bring huge changes in the communication sector," he added.

In February 2018, the government officially launched the operations of the new TTCL, with a strong call for increasing efficiency as a propeller for economic growth.

This followed the endorsement of the Tanzania Telecommunication Corporation Act, 2017, to replace the Tanzania Telecommunication Company Limited (TTCL).

The entity is operating as a fully-fledged communications corporation with the main objective of safeguarding national security, promoting socioeconomic development and managing strategic communications infrastructure.



Diploma in Clinical Medicine and Nursing graduands of the Dar es Salaam-based Military College of Medical Sciences head for the college's Lugalo premises yesterday ready for their graduation ceremony. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Ruvuma RC praises education stakeholders for better performance in the past Form Six exams

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

RUVUMA Regional Commissioner Christina Mndeme has commended education stakeholders for better performance in the past Form Six national examination where 98.68 percent of the students passed.

Addressing members of the regional advisory committee at the Songea municipal council hall yesterday, Mndeme said the region's academic performance has been improving annually at both primary and secondary schools.

RC Mndeme said that in the 2020 Standard Seven national examination, 78.52 percent of pupils passed while in 2019, 85.70 percent pupils passed the exams.

"May I recommend you for the good academic performance, over 85 percent of pupils passed Standard Seven exams and were selected to join secondary schools," said the Regional Commissioner calling upon authorities in Songea District to also ensure improved performance as only 66.68 percent of pupils

passed the national primary school examination last year.

She however added that until December 2020, the region was facing a shortage of 43 classes for Form One students selected to join secondary education in 2021.

Mndeme directed authorities to ensure the classroom construction project is completed by the end of this month, insisting all the selected Form One students join school in February.

She said that regional authorities in collaboration with stakeholders are working to ensure all the girls complete their secondary school education without being impregnated. She said most of the girls have been dropping out of schools due to several reasons including early marriages and pregnancies.

The Regional Commissioner informed that efforts are ongoing to construct dormitories for girls secondary schools, to protect them from early pregnancies. She said plans are to construct girls secondary schools at Madaba municipal council which will enroll students across the region.

Employers challenged to comply with country's labour laws

By Correspondent Beatrice

Philemon

EMPLOYERS have been challenged to ensure the presence of labour officers at both formal and informal working places to comply with the country's labour laws.

The remark was made recently by Assistant Lecturer at Jordan University College-Morogoro, Asifiwe Alinanuswe when speaking at a one day national dialogue with labor officer organised by ActionAid Tanzania.

He noted that most of the employers do not comply with labour laws and guidelines as there have been reported incidents of discrimination and violations of worker's rights in different companies.

"Labour officers are important for conducting visits at workplaces to help employees to get their rights and ensure adherence to regulations with a view to achieving potentials of the decent work agenda," he said. He added: "Employers must provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect them from workplace

hazards such as liquid, chemicals, noise, air pollution, sharp objects, wet processes, eye injuries or burns."

ActionAid Tanzania Head of Programme and Policy, Jovina Nawenzake noted that it is the role of labour officers to make sure there is a decent work in their localities and ensure employees get their rights, perform their duties in a conducive and safe environment.

"As Tanzania strives to become an industrialised nation and attain digital economy, human rights violation will increase as more changes hap-

pening in the country because right now there are other employers who treat their workers unfairly and they don't comply with the labour laws," she said.

She underscored the need for the government to create conducive environment for employees so that people can operate effectively.

"Labour officers should see how they can promote decent work as well as help employers to comply with national employment policies and labour laws," said Nawenzake.

In 2018, ActionAid Tanzania

conducted a baseline study in Lindi and Coast regions for the private sector to see the status of decent work aiming to help people access best services at workplace.

The research findings showed that labour officers do not conduct regular inspections at workplaces to find out if employers comply with available laws and policies.

Labour Officer, from the Prime Minister's Office (Labor, Policy, Employment, Youth and the Disabled) Fred Nyau-pumbwe said the government will soon come up with spe-

cial programme to educate the public on worker's rights, employer's rights and the Employment and Labour Relations Act Cap 366 of 2019.

"We will start educating the public on procedures of obtaining work permits for foreign employees coming to work in the country. We want the public to be aware of the newly established complaints desk at the Prime Minister's office so they can submit their grievances," said Nyau-pumbwe. The educational programmes will be aired through Televisions and radio

stations, said the officer.

Coast Region's Labour Officer, Richard Muhenga said educating the public on labour laws as well as their rights will help employers to comply with country laws and regulations. He also called on employees to cooperate and provide correct information to labour officers who will visit their workplaces.

"Majority of employees in both private and public institutions fears providing correct information to labour officers because they are scared of being fired," he said.

Zanzibar Water minister tasks ZAWA to reach more people, boost revenues

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR Minister for Water and Energy, Suleiman Masoud Makame has challenged the Zanzibar Water Authority (ZAWA) to make sure more people are connected with service as part of strategies to boost revenues.

Makame made the statement yesterday when speaking at a function to launch a new system which will allow customers in the Isles to pay water bills through their mobile phones.

The minister was concerned that failure to connect more customers with the service would affect the government's revenue collection targets. He said that improved water distribution networks are essential in reaching many people with clean and safe water.

"You must also look for other water sources to ensure reliable services to your customers," said minister Makame as he urges ZUWA authorities to make sure public institutions pay their monthly bills on time.

He said that timely payment of water bills would enable the authority to improve services as well as reaching more customers.

"Water users will now be able to pay their monthly bills through mobile phones. Previously, ZAWA officials had

to go at customer's residences to collect the money," he said.

ZAWA General Manager, Mussa Ramadhan Haji said it was high time the authority shifts to digital payment systems which include the use of mobile phones. He said with the digital payment system, the authority will enhance its revenues as the monies will directly go in its accounts.

He said that ZAWA's revenue collections have now improved following provision of better services as well as control of water leakages.

The head of Tigopesa department in Dar es Salaam, Angelica Pasha said they have facilitated the digital payment system to ensure customer's convenience in paying bills. She said that customers will now be able to pay their bills on time and avoid being disconnected with the service over delayed payments.



You must also look for other water sources to ensure reliable services to your customers



A car (R) lies on the roadside in Arusha city's Unga Limited suburb earlier this week after being involved in an accident. Photo: Correspondent Getrude Mpezya

Lindi residents appeal to TPDC to connect their homes with natural gas

By Guardian Correspondent

RESIDENTS of Mnazi Mmoja and Mingoyo wards in Lindi District have appealed to the government's petroleum watchdog-Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC) to finalise processes to connect their homes with natural gas.

The residents were concerned that delays in completing the project contributes in environment destruction as most of the villagers depend on charcoal and firewood as main sources of energy.

Once completed, the project which is implemented by TPDC will enable customers to buy gas units as per consumption using a pre-paid system.

Speaking in separate interviews, the residents including the Mihogoni village chairman, Asha Hassani said the project launch in June last year gave them hopes that will soon switch to clean, safer and affordable source of energy.

"We do not know what are the exact plans, we have been waiting for the project to be implemented for over seven months," lamented the village chairman.

Hadija Mohamedi from Mnazi Mmoja ward said they were earlier told that the project will commence on in the 2020/2021 financial year, but until today, nothing has been done.

Mnazi Mmoja Ward Councilor, Saidi Mchinjita commended the government for coming up with the project which will see the residents benefiting with a cheaper

energy source. Lindi District Commissioner, Shaibu Ndemanga urged the residents to be patient as the government works to finalise implementation of the project.

May last year, Energy Minister, Dr Medard Kalemami said that first customers to be linked with natural gas for domestic consumption will not pay connection fees, a move geared to ensure all citizens benefit from the country's gas discovery.

He was speaking during the launch of a project for construction of natural gas distribution networks.

Dr Kalemami urged the residents to grab the opportunity to reduce costs for cooking energy as well as protect the environment. He said the aim is to use the service for power generation, industries, fertilizer production, do-

mestic consumption and vehicles.

A six-person family uses gas worth 30,000/- per month in cooking variety food stuffs including beans, natural gas is an alternative to charcoal and firewood, according to the minister.

Minister Kalemami said the government resolved to remove connection fees to sensitize more people to join the services as well as control environment degradation mostly done through tree cutting for firewood and charcoal burning.

He insisted that natural gas distribution and connection will be sustainable whereas plans are to connect 2,000 new customers in the 2020/2021 financial year. Almost 300 of the customers are from Lindi Region.

Private sector urged to explore African market

By Guardian Correspondent

AFRICA provides a huge opportunity to Pakistan for goods export and the private sector should focus on the African region for promoting trade, said High Commissioner-designate of Pakistan to Rwanda Amir Muhammad Khan.

During a meeting with Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, said that Rwanda was enjoying an important location in the African region and by forging close business cooperation with it Pakistan could get easy access to the huge African market.

He stressed the need for developing government-to-government and business-to-business relations between the two countries to take trade and economic ties to higher levels.

He said that he was posted in Tanzania as Pakistan's ambassador and it also of-

fered great opportunities, therefore, the business community should explore its market.

He said that China and India had increased their presence in the African region to tap its business potential and emphasised that Pakistan should also make strenuous efforts to create space for it in Africa.

Speaking on the occasion, the ICCI president said that Pakistan neglected Africa for business relations since long due to which other countries were capturing its market.

However, he said that the current government was focusing on the Look Africa policy, which would help the private sector to gain better penetration into the African region.

He pointed out that the overall trade volume in the African region stood at \$1 trillion, out of which Pakistan's share was only \$3 billion mainly due to a lack of connectivity.



Minerals minister Doto Biteko (L) talks with Franone Mining and Gems Ltd director Onesmo Mbise (2nd-R) during a visit to the Mirerani tanzanite mining site in Simanjiro District earlier this week. Others are Manyara regional commissioner Joseph Mkirikiti (2nd-L) and the ministry's permanent secretary, Prof Simon Msanjila. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

However, he said that the current government was focusing on the Look Africa policy, which would help the private sector to gain better penetration into the African region



Morogoro modern market to boost council's revenue collection to over 172m/- per month

By Guardian Correspondent,

Morogoro

MOROGORO municipal council is expecting to boost its internal revenue collection to 172.9m/- from the current 48m/- per month following construction of a modern main market.

The newly constructed one-storey market started opera-

tions in January 2021. The demolished structure was constructed in 1953.

Municipal authorities resolved to build a new market after the previous structure had most of its infrastructures dilapidated. The new market has a capacity to accommodate more traders compared to the other one which could only accommodate a limited number of

traders.

The District Executive Director, Sheilla Lukuba made the remarks when briefing Morogoro Regional Commissioner, Loata Ole Sanare who toured the new main market. During his visit, the RC talked to traders to know their challenges and directed authorities to find solutions.

According to Lukuba, construction of the market is

part of the many strategies to boost the region's revenue collections. He said that levies to be collected from traders at the market would enable the region to implement other development projects.

She noted that levies charged to traders are in accordance with the actual construction cost, adding they are working to resolve some of the challenges as they still

registering new traders to operate in the new facility.

"The market is still new; it started operations on January 1, 2021. There are some few challenges, but we are going to work on them within a short period to ensure conducive business environment," she added.

Some interviewed traders said that there are many unoccupied business stalls at

the market, but authorities are not giving them to the traders.

He said some dishonest individuals have hired the business stalls at a cost of 20,000/- per month, but they are now leasing them at a cost of between 50,000/- and 70,000/- per month.

Morogoro municipal council authorities resolved to construct the new market to

improve the infrastructure and ensure adequate working environment to traders, market users and other stakeholders.

The structure includes a total of 304 shops and 900 stalls. The market includes structures for banks, restaurants, stores and offices. Construction of the market was supported by the Ministry of Finance and Planning at a

Stray lion attacks herdsman (32) in northern Tanzania

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

A stray lion attacked a 32-year-old herdsman as he grazed his cattle near Tanzania's Serengeti National Park, an official said on Thursday.

Nuridin Babu, the Serengeti District Commissioner in Mara Region, said the herdsman was attacked by the lion on Wednesday at about 6:30 p.m. local time and has been admitted to hospital for treatment of multiple injuries.

"The herdsman was attacked by the lion as he tried to save the cattle from a herd of lions," Babu told a news conference, adding that one of the lions attacked him, injuring his left arm. The herdsman was rescued by passers-by.

John Lendoyan, a Serengeti District Wildlife Officer, said the lions were believed to wander away from the nearby Serengeti National Park.

He said plans were underway to mount a joint operation with other relevant authorities to control the wild animals before they inflicted further damage.



Jenista Mhagama (3rd-L), Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Parliament, Labour, Employment and Persons with Disability), joins Tanzania Local Government Workers Union (TALGWU) leaders in singing a solidarity song in Dodoma city yesterday during the opening session of the trade union's national executive council meeting. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

'Prepare reports on institutions not having labour councils'

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

MINISTER of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Labor, Policy, Employment, Youth and the Disabled) Jenista Mhagama has instructed the registrar of Trade Unions and employers to prepare reports for public institutions and organisations that are yet to form labour councils.

Minister Mhagama issued the directive yesterday in the capital city when opening a session of the national executive council of

the Local Government Workers Union (TALGWU).

She stated that most of the public institutions in the country have not yet formed labor unions, a situation which deprives workers of their basic statutory rights.

"I want the registrar to prepare to me a report as soon as possible. Its unprofessional that in many public working areas there are no staff councils," said the minister giving an example of the Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA) and Tanzania Rural

Roads Authority (TARURA).

Mhagama added that workers councils are important to workers since they provide them opportunities to discuss their rights and various challenges they face in executing their daily duties.

The minister called upon all workers to join the government's efforts in fighting against corruption and misuse of public funds. "TALGWU is doing well in controlling the misuse of funds; you must also ensure that all the institutions establish workers

councils," she said. Mhagama said local government employees have been among those said to fall under the category of low-income earners, but yet they have to work for people and ensure fairness.

"Village executive officers, nurses, veterinary officers and several others work closely with the people every day; and they are required to adhere to the rules of public service and do justice to Tanzanians," said Mhagama

Reading out a memorandum on behalf of

the National Secretary-General, TALGWU Head of International Communications Unit, Shan Kibwasali said that one of the problems they face is delay of retired employees to be disbursed with their pension payments.

"Retirement benefits are delayed thus becoming a nuisance especially after the merger of social security funds," he said calling for government assistance to ensure that retirees get their monies as soon as they retire.



Angelica Pesha (L), Tigo's chief officer for mobile financial services, presents a dummy cheque for 1.2m/- in Dar es Salaam earlier this week to Coast Region Tigo-Pesa agent Angela Paschael for emerging a winner in a Tigo-Pesa 'Wakala Push' promotion raffle. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Tanzania Prison Service saves 11 billion/- on food

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Prison Service has saved 11bn/- that would have been spent to purchase food to feed inmates.

This follows directives from President John Magufuli that inmates should grow their own foods in prison fields.

Briefing the Home Affairs Deputy Minister, Khamis Hamza Chilo who toured the force's new headquarters in Msalato, Dodoma Region yesterday, Commissioner General of Prisons, Suleiman Mzee said they were spending 1bn/- per month to purchase food for the prisoners. He said the monies were paid to private suppliers.

The commissioner stated the prisons is now capable of producing enough food at its various fields across the country.

"We can now feed inmates from our own harvested food. We have not paid any money to suppliers for eleven months," added Mzee.

Meanwhile, the deputy minister, congratulated the prisons for successfully implementing the presi-

dent's directive as well as constructing the mega furniture factory which until completion will cost over 1.1bn/-.

"You have made a number of development strides, I congratulate or being able to enhance food production at your own fields, enabling the government to save a huge amount of money," the deputy minister said.

Chilo urged the prisons to direct the funds which were used to purchase food to other development projects.

In July 2018, President Magufuli called for prisoners to be made to work long hours, and to be punished if they are lazy.

Speaking at the inauguration of the new prisons chief, Magufuli said inmates should grow their own foods in prison fields.

"It is a shame for the country to continue to feed prisoners. All the prisons have fields, inmates must cultivate them," he said.

He added: "Some prison staff don't have homes. Make the prisoners work, let them make bricks day and night. If they are lazy, punish them. You have labourers, and for free."

UNESCO, Zanzibar reviewing response measures after collapse of Beit-al-Ajaib

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi and Head of the UNESCO Office in Dar es Salaam, Tirso Dos Santos have reviewed emergency response measures following the collapse of the Beit-al-Ajaib historic building on December 25th 2020.

The Beit-al-Ajaib also known as the House of Wonders, in the Stone Town of Zanzibar is the World Heritage property.

The House of Wonders is an emblematic edifice of the

Stone Town of Zanzibar, and a central component of the World Heritage site, which was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2000.

During the meeting, Dos Santos who is the UNESCO Representative in the country, conveyed the commitment of UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay to support Tanzania in assessing the damage to the building and developing a road-map for its rehabilitation, and for the continued conservation of the Stone Town of Zanzibar World Heritage property

as a whole.

It was agreed that starting this month, UNESCO, in partnership with the World Monuments Fund, and the Global Heritage Fund, will send three technical missions to assess the extent of the damage of the House of Wonders and establish a road map towards its rehabilitation.

The first mission will comprise experts from the University of Cape Town (Zamani Project) to carry out a 3D collection of data concerning the structure of the building to inform its rehabilitation.

A team of four architects and structural engineers will follow, carry out an on-site assessment of structural damage.

The third mission will be advisory in nature and will assess the state of conservation of the entire World Heritage property and recommend a road map for emergency safeguarding measures and long-term conservation and management needs.

This mission will be carried out by representatives of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Advisory

Bodies to the World Heritage Committee: the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM).

"Following these emergency assessment missions, UNESCO will continue to work closely with the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, the Sultanate of Oman and other partners, to ensure the restoration of the House of Wonders and the safeguarding of the Stone Town of Zan-

zibar World Heritage site," said Dos Santos at the end of his meeting with the President.

During the meeting, UNESCO's Representative also presented the Organization's condolences to the families of the two victims who lost their lives in the collapse of the House of Wonders, and best wishes for a speedy recovery to those who were injured.

The Stone Town of Zanzibar is an outstanding example of the Swahili coastal trading towns of East Africa.

Stone Town embodies the harmonious cultural fusion of disparate elements of the cultures of Africa, the Arab region, India, and Europe over more than a millennium. The House of Wonders, a large ceremonial palace built by Sultan Barghash, is one of the town's 18th and 19th-century landmarks.

The House of Wonders is an emblematic edifice of the Stone Town of Zanzibar, and a central component of the World Heritage site, which was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2000.

Varsity students advised to venture into farming sector

By Correspondent Theresia Victor

UNIVERSITY students have been urged to venture into agriculture and other sectors to overcome unemployment.

Speaking yesterday in Dar es Salaam when launching a JATU Uni Talk' program which aims at providing a platform for university students to link together and share their ideas on how they can improve their financial situation while at university through agricultural farming.

Jenga Afya Tokomeza Umaskini (JATU) General Manager Mohamed Simbano said that the JATU uni talk programme aim at unifying all university students in the country to come together and think beyond their academic qualifications and be able to engage in agricultural activities which will help them to earn while at university.

"It is the right time as the country is heading for industrial growth and it is in need of young student talents who will be able to invest in agriculture and be able to provide resources needed for industrial development," Simbano noted.

He further explained that there are a number of talents underneath university students and so they should come out individually or as a group and invest in agricultural farming by boycotting unnecessary leisure.

He said JATU PLC has set aside 5000

hector of land for agricultural activities of their choices, from beans, avocados and sunflowers which will start next month. He said students who wish to get involved in agricultural business are invited to join the coming venture.

It's an opportunity for all university students to start building their careers business wise without waiting until they finish their university studies and start looking for jobs.

JATU Marketing Manager, Mary Chule said that university students are the key factor in the national development hence the need to start engaging them on productive activities. She said youth are an important workforce for the country's socio-economic development.

JATU uni talk is a good platform for all students to share their ideas and see opportunities that are within capabilities and act on them especially in the agricultural sector, Chule added.

JATU uni talk Ambassador Queen Makune said the current education system in the country does not prepare graduates for self-employment.

"We need to be provided with skills that would enable us to employ ourselves," he said.

According to her, JATU uni talk will bring the best out of students because most of them have ideas but do not know where to start. She said through the forum both graduates and students will be able to connect and share their innovative ideas.



It's pineapples aplenty at Dar es Salaam's Buguruni mixed-goods market as found yesterday - with the going retail price per piece ranging between 1,000/- and 2,000/-, largely depending on size. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

African Union secures 270 million extraCOVID vaccine doses for the continent

By Brent Swails

THE African Union has secured an additional 270 million COVID vaccines doses for African countries, but it still may not be enough to meet demand for the region, the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) has announced.

At least 50 million doses will be available from April to June 2021 from Pfizer, AstraZeneca (through the Serum Institute of India) and Johnson & Johnson, according to an AVATT press release.

African Union Chair President Cyril Ramaphosa said "From the onset of this pandemic, our focus as a continent has been on collaboration and collective effort.

We have held steadfastly to the principle that no country should be left behind.

All 270 million vaccine doses will be made available this year with at least 50 million being available for the crucial period of April to June 2021."

These vaccines have been secured alongside a vaccine program from COVAX - a World Health Organization and Gavi Vaccine Alliance initiative to bring more vaccines to Africa on a fair basis.

The WHO Regional Director for Africa praised the move during an online media briefing on Thursday.

"Covax can only cover 20% of the African population, so it is really wonderful to see the African Union's efforts to secure a provisional 270 million doses by the

end of 2021..." said Dr. Matshidiso Moeti.

However, President Ramaphosa cautioned that while the initiative was "vital" it may "not extend beyond the needs of frontline health care workers, and may thus not be enough to contain the ever-increasing toll of the pandemic in Africa."

Africa is experiencing a second wave which is "higher than the peak experienced last July," with an average daily new case count of more than 25,000 in the last 14 days," Dr. Moeti added.

The African Export-Import Bank will support the strategy by providing advancements of up to \$2 billion to the manufacturers on behalf of member states, South Africa Presidency said in a statement on

Wednesday.

The African Union and the World Bank are also working together to allow member states access to \$5 billion to purchase more vaccines.

Despite promises of solidarity on Covid-19, rich countries are snapping up the supply of promising vaccines.

AVATT was formed in August to ensure the continent could secure enough vaccine doses to achieve herd immunity.

The announcement is welcome news for Ramaphosa as South Africa extended coronavirus restrictions on Monday, citing a "massive increase" in Covid-19 cases driven by a variant discovered last year.

SATURDAY 16 JANUARY 2021

Taking A New Look
At The News
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Small-scale farming could fix the climate and ecological emergency

REGENERATIVE agriculture is a conservation and rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems. It focuses on topsoil regeneration, increasing biodiversity, improving the water cycle, enhancing ecosystem services, supporting biosequestration, increasing resilience to climate change, and strengthening the health and vitality of farm soil. Practices include recycling as much farm waste as possible and adding composted material from sources outside the farm.

Regenerative agriculture on small farms and gardens is often based on philosophies like permaculture, agroecology, agroforestry, restoration ecology, key line design, and holistic management. Large farms tend to be less philosophy driven and often use 'no-till' and/or 'reduced till' practices.

As soil health improves, input requirements may decrease, and crop yields may increase as soils are more resilient against extreme weather and harbour Regenerative agriculture is based on various agricultural and ecological practices, with a particular emphasis on minimal soil disturbance and the practice of composting.

Thousands of farmers and activists across six Continents will come together at the Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC Global) this week to show that small-scale farming can fix the climate and ecological emergency. Representatives of indigenous communities from the

are pushing for food, farming and nature to be at the top of the COP26 agenda this November.

Farmers around the world who practice climate-friendly methods, including regenerative and organic farming, will share their success stories over the course of the seven-day global conference.

Colin Tudge, Oxford Real Farming Conference co-founder, said: "Agriculture in its present form is both a cause and a victim of all that is wrong with the world - from social injustice and political unrest to mass extinction and climate change. It is treated as a business, like any other, and required above all to compete for profit in the global market."

"What we need is real farming - based on the principles of agroecology and food sovereignty. ORFC Global will bring together farmers, food producers, activists, policy makers, academics and many others from around the world who are already showing how things could, and must, be very different."

"The ORFC is part of what is becoming a vital global movement - to restore agriculture to the centre of the world stage and to ensure that it operates in the best interests of all humanity and of the natural world."

Elizabeth Mpofu, small-scale organic farmer, coordinator of the global farmers' movement La Via Campesina and co-founder of the African Women Collaborative for Healthy Food Systems is one of 500 speakers at ORFC Global. She said:

We should seriously rethink our relationship with Mother nature

BIODIVERSITY is the variety and variability of life on Earth. Biodiversity is typically a measure of variation at the genetic, species, and ecosystem level. Terrestrial biodiversity is usually greater near the equator, which is the result of the warm climate and high primary productivity. Biodiversity is not distributed evenly on Earth, and is richer in the tropics. These tropical forest ecosystems cover less than 10 per cent of earth's surface, and contain about 90 per cent of the world's species.

Marine biodiversity is usually higher along coasts in the Western Pacific, where sea surface temperature is highest, and in the mid-latitude band in all oceans. There are latitudinal gradients in species diversity. Biodiversity generally tends to cluster in hotspots, and has been increasing through time, but will be likely to slow in the future.

French President Emmanuel Macron has organised a One Planet Summit for Biodiversity which was held recently in Paris. The summit was decided by France in consultation with the United Nations and the World Bank.

It was originally scheduled for June 2020 as part of the IUCN World Conservation Congress, but was postponed due to the global health situation.

The One Planet Summit brought together heads of state and governments and leaders of international organisations, financial organisations, the economic sector and NGOs, all made commitments to take concrete action to preserve and restore biodiversity, to make new strong announcements and to launch transformational initiatives for the benefit of nature.

The summit was an opportunity to scale up the international com-

munity's ambition when it comes to protecting nature and responding to the new questions posed by the crisis.

It also aimed to help build momentum for political mobilisation in the international events leading up to COP15 and raise the level of ambition in the fight against the erosion of biodiversity at the dawn of a year 2021 that will see many international events on nature. During the conference, four key themes for the preservation of life were presented including the protection of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, promotion of agro-ecology, mobilisation of funding for biodiversity and the link between deforestation, species and human health.

Around one million animal and plant species are in danger of extinction and will be in the coming decades, revealing the most alarming rate of biodiversity destruction in the history of humankind. More than 40 per cent of amphibian species and more than a third of all marine mammals are endangered.

Up to 70 per cent of coral reefs have already disappeared or have been greatly damaged.

This unprecedented destruction of ecosystems and natural habitat accelerates climate change and increases the risks of transmission of zoonoses, such as coronaviruses. The current trend of disappearing biodiversity not only threatens progress in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but also the well-being and dignity of millions of human beings.

Human rights cannot be preserved if the ecosystems in which we live cannot. Reversing this trend will be a major challenge in the decades ahead: we need to rethink our entire relationship with nature.

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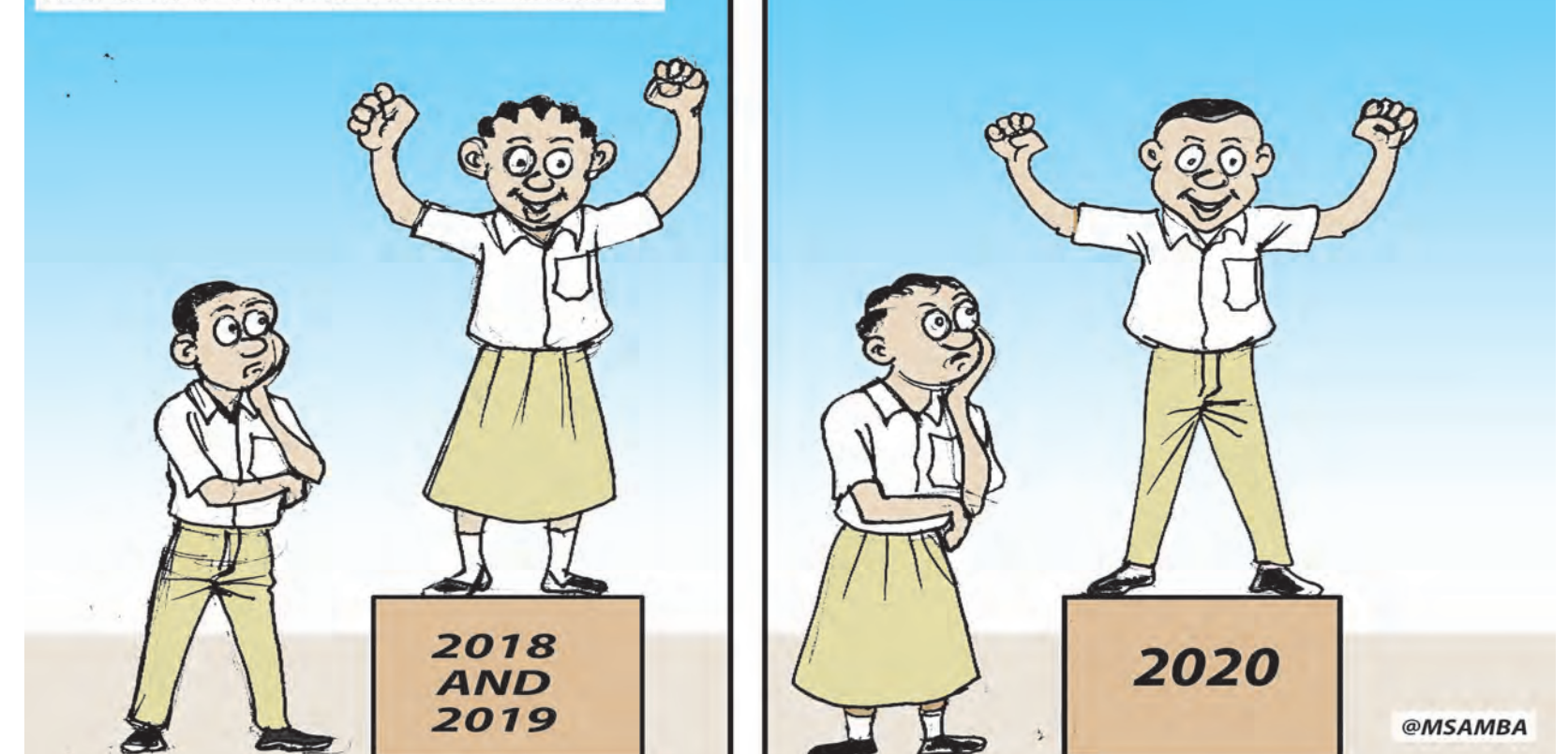
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NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS RESULTS



How will Africa remember Donald Trump? Here is how

By Azu Ishiekwene

US President Donald Trump may have lost re-election but he would be escorted out of the White House on Tuesday night with a special prize: Africa's worst friend in modern times.

Not that it matters to Trump one way or the other. We can only hope that after four years of spite, insults and hostilities, he might yet, in a fleeting moment of sanity, ask himself whether going out of his way to annoy or denigrate the continent was worth all the trouble.

Trump had a love affair with many parts of Africa, especially among young aspirational through his books on making money and his celebrity TV shows. But I guess it was just skin deep, purely transactional.

The real Trump came to light after he was elected president. The signs were always there, though. During his campaign, he insulted immigrants and blamed them for all of America's problems, including lower testosterone levels. But whatever he thought of and said about immigrants before his election, what he said, did and tried to undo after his election was worse.

He used punitive Executive Orders to target Muslims, especially those from Africa. He blamed immigrants for rape, drugs and violent crimes and for stealing American jobs on top of that. He incited racial hatred especially among far-right white groups and unleashed the demon that entered Derek Michael Chauvin who crushed George Floyd under his knee in daylight by a pavement. Trump abused lawmakers who wanted fairer immigration laws and accused them of encouraging an influx of aliens from "shithole countries."

That one, directed at Africans and Haitians in particular, hurt. The AU was forced to demand an apology. Trump offered one with the right hand and took it back almost immediately with a vulgar left hand when he called his guest, Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari, "lifeless".

Not long after he insulted Buhari, Trump put his foot in mouth again, right up to his knee, only this time over South Africa. He latched on a false comment by a Fox News TV host, stoked by a vicious trope of white farm-



President Donald Trump in the White House

ers, to ask the US secretary of state to "closely study the South Africa land reforms and farm seizures... and the large-scale killing of (white) farmers."

Of course, there was nothing like that. The African National Congress (ANC) had called for constitutional amendment to broaden land ownership which, because of South Africa's apartheid history, put millions of blacks at a severe disadvantage.

That was all. If there was any killing at all, it was on Trump's Twitterfields, where for four years the US president and his lynch mob made truth fair game.

Perhaps there was a spell of sanity, like when President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya visited him? Not quite. The charm offensive was not so much out of love for Kenyatta. It was not an act of contrition either: it was simply motivated by a sense of cold business calculation. Trump was worried that the Chinese were getting an increasingly bigger chunk of the Kenya pie, and the deal maker and Sinophobe that he is, he needed to maintain the US cut.

For all his disguised and undisguised insults, tirades and tantrums during his presidency, however, Trump reserved the worst and bitterest spite for the last.

Like he did on the Paris Accord on climate change, North Korea, and trade, the US president broke ranks with his allies, preferring to be a lone wolf. Trump opposed and obstructed two vital appointments on which Africa and the rest of the world stood shoulder to shoulder: The reappointment of Dr. Akinwumi Adesina as president of the African Development Bank; and the appointment of Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala as director general of the World Trade Organisation.

Not that there was any blemish to the records of the candidates or a question of competence or capacity. Trump was just being Trump, a man who would not let common sense get in the way of his ego. American exceptionalism, taught and widely esteemed in many graduate schools and adored in elite circles on the continent - the

very power of American example - is in tatters.

Also, during the recent dispute between Ethiopia and Egypt over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Trump who was supposed to be a mediator, warned that Egypt could "blow up the dam", raising tensions which were already high in the region.

"With mediators like Trump, who needs an instigator?," leading columnist and chairman of the Daily Trust editorial board, Mahmoud Jega, asked. "His attitude - his racist insults and lack of empathy - is a reflection of his contempt for blacks in the US in particular and blacks everywhere."

In hindsight, the action of the first black Nobel laureate in Literature, Wole Soyinka, who called out Trump's bigotry early on, discarded his US "green card" and vowed never to visit Trump's America, seems mild. Those who criticised Kongi at the time must now be feeling sorry for themselves.

Yet, as Jega also told me, while Trump takes first prize, he is not the only sad chapter in the continent's book of hostile US presidents, where Republicans have a special mention.

President Ronald Reagan once enjoyed that notoriety, along with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. The pair was the worst international enablers of and profiteers from apartheid, however stridently the Organisation of African Unity (OAU as it then was) and the rest of the decent world opposed that obnoxious regime.

In the last 40 or 50 years, Jega said, Africans appear to have had more friends in the Democratic fold, with President George W. Bush's exceptional African record, being the only Republican outlier.

Bush not only holds the highest record for the most US presidential visits since Franklin Delano Roosevelt first set foot on the continent in 1943, his health initiatives valued at \$80 billion, helped to polish the significantly tarnished Republican legacy in Africa.

To be fair, Trump maintained the over one-decade-long history of between \$7-\$9 billion aid to Africa; called

out the Nigerian government on sectarian killings in the Northern part of Nigeria; and even sold fighter planes to contain insurgency which Nigeria could not secure under President Barack Obama.

Hotheads in Nigeria's South East pressing for self-determination even fancy Trump as a hero. Yet, his tenure has been the worst collective nightmare in the African psyche.

South African journalist and newspaper editor, Ferial Haffajee, said she couldn't think of a Trump Africa legacy, accusing him of "unwinding" the good policies of his predecessors.

"He was the archetypal strongman leader," Haffajee said. "As we watched aghast at the raid on the Capitol in Washington in the opening days of 2021, I was happy to be living in a stable democracy with a sensible president."

Founder and Publisher of The Ghanaian Chronicle, Kofi Coomson, said, "Trump was lower than low. I still can't fathom how he became president of such a great country. As an African, I think he's the worst in living memory."

Perhaps, Africa needed the insanity of the Trump years to rediscover itself?

Former head of political affairs at the UN Hybrid Operations in Darfur, Sudan, Professor Babafemi Badejo, tends to agree. "Trump's African legacy is that of a president who did not pretend that Africa is of any significance in his foreign policy focus."

"Although his wife toured Africa, he didn't, unlike his predecessors. He relegated Africa to the low level of State Department and left it in the hands of American companies that are doing well for America. That should make Africans wake up to the fact that international relations is competitive. Africans should stop being deceived that they have friends who are giving them aid lifelines."

If it has taken Trump, and 78 years after FDR's first visit for Africa to discover the legacy of self-interest, perhaps it's not a bad thing after all.

It's showtime, Donald – here comes your mountain of troubles

By J Brooks Spector

IF anybody had dared suggest the final days of the Trump administration would ebb away quietly, as that cowardly lion retreated back to Mar a Lago for a gargantuan sulk to the evident relief of much of the nation, they would have been sadly mistaken. All the evidence and experience of the past half-decade points the other way. And so it has been as Donald Trump, his works and his allies and supporters have proven capable of extraordinary mischief, right to the bitter end.

Nevertheless, with only a few days remaining in Donald Trump's term of office – but still with so much to wreck – in the week after the Trump-instigated mob attack on the Capitol aimed at subverting congressional confirmation of the electoral vote for the November presidential election, a fight back against Trump and Trumpism is beginning to gather momentum.

It is just days before he becomes Donald J Trump, private citizen and the perpetual self-described victim at the hands of prosecutors, creditors, social media companies, Democrats (big "D" and small "d" both) – and everybody who can pile on is beginning to pick the right moments. This is coming even as he lurches around like a blind giant, but one still armed with some dangerous weapons. Eventually, the final act in the Donald Trump saga will have several set-piece scenes of mayhem, even as his harder-edged supporters try their own disruptions.

As further details and more video of the mob's storming of the Capitol became public, it has become increasingly clear this was not just some over-enthusiastic, riled up crowd that got a bit out of hand on adrenalin, out for some politically fuelled fun and frolics. People died, both from the mob and the police. Other police were manhandled by the crowd, and federal property was damaged or stolen.

Some of the mob came with plastic ties used in place of handcuffs; yet others chanted rallying cries to hang the vice-president and take out their aggressions against Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, among other intended victims. A growing number of members of Congress have now publicly spoken about how they realise they were under imminent threats of physical harm or worse, and that they only avoided those dangers as the mob broke through because they had been escorted to safe rooms in the nick of time. Of course, some Republican congressmen refused to wear anti-virus masks and so some of the other representatives sheltering there have now tested positive.

It is also increasingly clear that at least some in the mob were coordinating their efforts via social media, while others had weapons stockpiled in vehicles parked nearby. Moreover, others had apparently carried out a reconnaissance of the building the day before, posing as tourists, and may even have had operational information about the building layout, useful in planning efforts to seize the building or its occupants. Further, and very worryingly, numbered among the mob were at least a few off-duty members of police departments from around the country. That indicates dangers to law and order by forces of law and order.

As a result of all of this, federal law enforcement offices have been on the job to coordinate arrest warrants on identified members of the mob, and asking the public to help identify still more of the mob. (That tip line has apparently received more than 40,000 responses.) There are also reports that there was advance information about the mob leaders' intentions, but this information was neither coordinated effectively nor taken into consideration as the Capitol's defence was planned.

In contrast to that lacklustre defence of the Capitol Building on 6 January where the Capitol Police were seriously outnumbered and out-maneuvred by the mob, preparations to guarantee the safety of the Cap-



itol and the inauguration ceremonies on 20 January should make that day a very different one. There are now thousands of National Guard troops called to active duty from many states for events in Washington and they will secure a much better set of barriers and other crowd control arrangements than on that previous day. The city is now in an official state of emergency, declared by the city's mayor, and there will be a much better organised, well-coordinated plan of operations among all the various police departments that operate in the city and with the National Guard.

They will have to be coordinated in this way, well beyond the national capital, it appears. There are persistent reports that groups aligned to those in the Capitol Hill attack are planning similar efforts at many state capitals across the country. No one is now taking this as an idle threat, not after the recent Capitol attack and the mob that descended on the state capitol in Lansing, Michigan.

The net result of these plans, rumours, threats, and omens is that, along with the continuing ravages of the Covid pandemic, the upcoming inauguration will be very different from almost any other in recent memory, although Franklin Roosevelt's 1945 inauguration was seriously scaled back, given the pressures of the World War 2. In Washington, DC, just getting around in the downtown has already become an arduous task and before the inauguration, most streets will be subjected to roadblocks, and many subway stations will be shuttered. Regardless, there will be vast national and international attention on what the president-elect has to say on 20 January, given the ructions of the Trump presidency.

Meanwhile, over at the Capitol, by Tuesday, the House of Representatives had already passed a resolution calling for Vice President Pence to initiate proceedings under the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, declaring the incumbent president unable to continue in his duties, failing which the House would vote on the impeachment of the president for inciting an insurrection.

Not too surprisingly, Pence failed to take up this gracious offer and so, after

several hours of short, but repetitive speeches by Democrats explaining in rather explicit detail the president's serious misdeeds – and which in response Republican speakers cluck clucked over the rampaging mob, but who pleaded for national unity and a great kumbaya moment – the roll call was dutifully held for the impeachment motion. For Republicans, this is surely the most public chutzpah moment of modern times, given that they had been cheering on the president for years, regardless of his egregious acts, and 140 of them had actually voted not to accept the electoral vote count – after the mob had invaded the Capitol and chased them all into safe rooms or via escape tunnels out of the Capitol Building itself.

While the end result was unsurprising, what did surprise was that 10 Republican members – the opposition party in the House of Representatives – voted to impeach as well – a number of opposition legislators larger than in any previous impeachment (against Andrew Johnson, Bill Clinton, and Donald Trump the first time around). With that vote, Donald Trump has assured himself a unique place in history – as the only president to have been impeached twice.

In a modest but meaningless aside, Donald Trump had apparently been bludgeoned into recording a message in which he spoke disapprovingly about mob violence and that his movement (what movement is that?) abjures any such uncivilised behaviour. Nobody with an ounce of sense or sanity is taking this very late conversion to adulthood on the part of Donald Trump seriously, however.

With the passage of this second Trump impeachment, the action passes over to the Senate. Senate Majority Mitch McConnell has already publicly broken with the president over his behaviour – muttering darkly that he is considering the question of supporting such a conviction – but still declining to convene the Senate before the previously determined date of 19 January. That would obviously give virtually no time for the Senate to have a trial, let alone call witnesses and summon evidence, although truth be

told, everything covered in the impeachment charge had been carried out in public, generating an abundant public record. What this does mean, however, is that a trial would only really occur after the new president and vice president are sworn in, and the new Senate with its 50-50 party split with the vice president as the tie-breaking vote in favour of the Democrats would come into being. That means New York Senator Charles Schumer would be the new Senate majority leader, and he is certainly no friend of the incumbent president.

It is possible to argue this tactic would be smart politics on the part of the current majority leader so he does not have to preside over a trial and can push it all on to the incoming majority leader. One might ask why have such a trial at all, given it will now be private citizen Donald Trump and not President Trump. The major objective might well be to ensure the appropriate punishment is that he is disqualified from running for any national public office, ie president in 2024. Other punishments might also be forfeiture of any pension money, Secret Service protection, staff and office support and so forth. (A former president now gains those benefits after his or her term of office concludes.)

But Donald Trump's troubles are now not limited to these questions. He has lost access to his social media platforms which had previously been the way he had augered deeply into the consciousness of his followers for years.

But there is yet more trouble for him. The Deutsche Bank, his chief financial backer for years, has informed him he is no longer welcome into their precincts, and there will obviously be a reckoning with the estimated \$330-million he is on the hook for personally with them, that comes due in the next several years. Along the way, his current accounts bank has closed his accounts as well. Ouch.

But there has been still more. The PGA of America cancelled plans to have their premier tourney at a Trump golf club, and then the mayor of New York City announced a decision to cancel their contracts with the Trump Organisation to manage the city's golf course, and its

world-famous ice skating rink and carousel as well. These cancellations have cut to the heart of Donald Trump's self-esteem, given the pride he has taken in them over the years.

But there was still more. A growing list of major corporations has decided to sever any political contribution efforts to any members of Congress who supported the effort to decertify the electoral vote count, making obeisance to Trump a particularly painful and costly exercise.

There are also all those New York State investigations into funding irregularities or potential frauds perpetrated by the Trump Organisation that are going to eat up Donald Trump's time and vast sums for legal fees, fending off the depredations of these investigations and other likely charges.

Along the way, the main sources of his income, the allure of his branding on hotels owned by others, but run by his shop, will fade rapidly, leaving him with bills to pay from diminished returns from those establishments as well as half-empty hotels such as the Trump International Hotel in Washington, DC in the revamped but federally owned Old Post Office Building. Then there are the private golf clubs that are making little profit in the current circumstances of the economy. He may not be a martyr, but he will increasingly become an embittered old man, nursing ever-present grievances against so many, many people.

The incoming president, of course, will have his own challenges. In addition to obvious ones like the pandemic, the need for further stimulus packages and the national economic malaise, there are also a whole host of now-instituted decisions on foreign policy and environmental concerns the new Biden administration will want to untangle and revise quickly. That list does not even include efforts to restart negotiations for a new six-power Iran nuclear agreement, re-accession to the Paris climate accord, or refiguring US-China relations in tandem with allies, or reconfiguring the bilateral relationship with Russia.

Perhaps the Biden administration will just want to see the back of Donald Trump, even without pushing for a Senate conviction, especially since it may be rough sailing in getting 17 Republican senators to join for the two-thirds majority needed.

The almost certain bottom line from all of this that the Biden administration will want to make sure any preoccupation with Donald Trump does not overwhelm the critically important needs for congressional action on every other issue.

DM

African Continental Free Trade Agreement: Red tape delays start of trading under new pact

By Peter Fabricius

TRADING under the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), the ambitious continent-wide free trade agreement which has been signed by 54 of Africa's 55 states officially began on January 1. But Pretoria says no goods have yet been exported or imported under its zero or reduced import tariffs.

That is because all the necessary red tape has not yet been cleared away by all member states.

There has been some confusion about this, with official indications that South Africa, Egypt and Ghana had begun trading. But it turns out that while these countries have put in place the necessary customs procedures to start trading, they have not cleared other bureaucratic obstacles to do so.

Ambassador Xavier Carim, deputy director-general for international trade negotiations

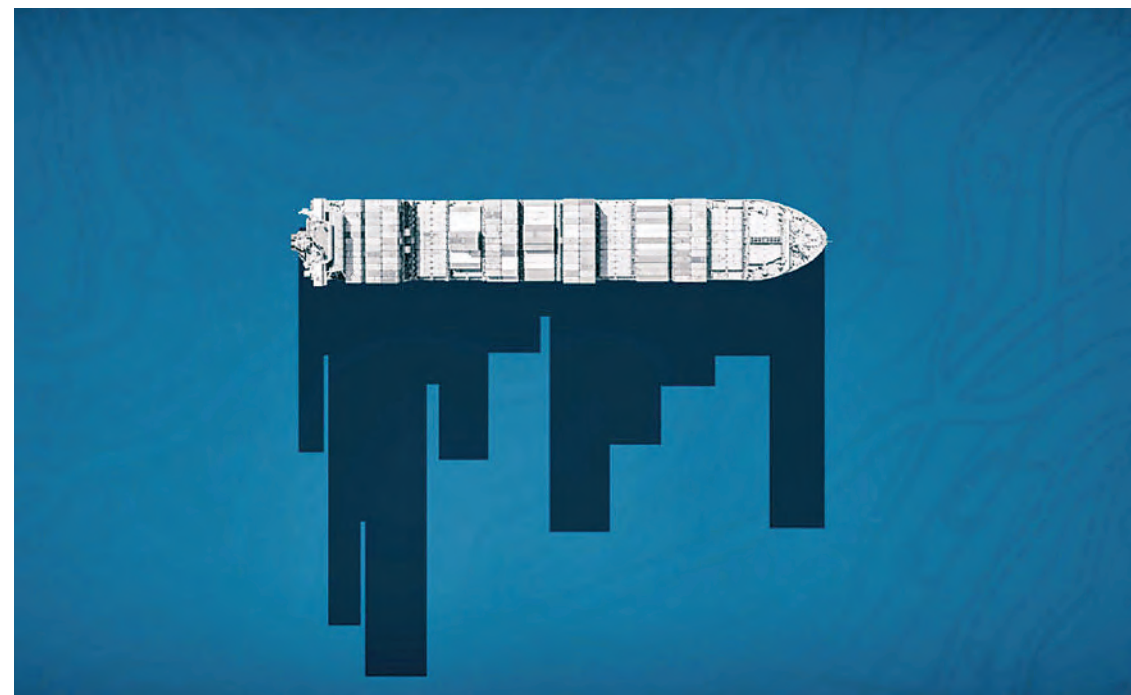
in South Africa's Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, confirmed to Daily Maverick that South Africa and Egypt had not yet begun trading under the AfCFTA.

He said this was because Botswana had not yet ratified the AfCFTA and because Egypt was still finalising its revised tariff reduction offers. South Africa and Botswana, plus Namibia, Eswatini and Lesotho are members of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), which will trade in the AfCFTA as a single bloc.

This means in effect that all SACU members need to ratify the AfCFTA before any of its members can start trading under it.

Carim said that South Africa had hoped that Botswana would ratify the agreement in December to enable trading to start on January 1. But it had not done so. He expected it would do soon, especially as that did not require parliamentary approval.

However, Carim said he did



not know when trading between SACU and Egypt would start because it was not clear when Egypt would submit its new tariff reduction offer.

He noted that other customs unions such as the East African Community and the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) were facing the same problem, as in each one some member states had not yet ratified the AfCFTA.

So no trading under the AfCFTA terms had begun

on January 1, he said. It remained a historic date, nonetheless, because any country or customs union that met three basic conditions could have started trading then and could do so now.

The preconditions for any country or customs union to begin trading were for it to ratify the agreement; to make an offer to start reducing import tariffs to zero on at least 81% of tariff lines over five years – where the rules of origin had been agreed; and to pass domestic legislation to en-

able customs authorities to allow imports into the country at the new tariff rates.

Carim noted that participating countries had originally agreed to eliminate tariffs on 90% of goods, but had only managed to agree last year on rules of origin for about 81% of tariff lines. So they agreed to begin trading on this 81% on January 1 and to negotiate the remaining rules of origin by June this year.

Rules of origin are critical to free trade deals as they determine how much of a product must be made within the free trade area, for it to qualify for tariff-free movement within the area.

Carim also clarified the position around reimbursing traders for trade that had taken place since January 1 this year but where customs procedures had not yet been put in place to apply the new zero or reduced AfCFTA tariffs.

AfCFTA Secretary-General Wamkele Mene had said this week that African trade ministers had agreed last year that the 34 countries that had ratified the AfCFTA would retrospectively credit importers if they had to pay the higher pre-AfCFTA import tariffs from January 1.

Carim said South Africa was prepared to do this but the measure would only apply reciprocally – ie, if trading partners had the requisite legislation and agreed to it. Some countries had expressed concern that if they put in place new customs procedures only in June, for example, they would have to backdate reimbursements six months and this could have negative fiscal implications.

Carim said that this year participating countries would work towards increasing the tariff reductions, from the present 81% of tariff lines to 90%. Also, the remaining countries would need to ratify the AfCFTA.

DM

Using ivermectin for Covid-19: What to do when caution and crisis clash?

By Mark Heywood

IVERMECTIN is primarily an anti-parasitic drug, developed and registered for use in humans and animals in many countries. It is not registered for human use in South Africa. It's been around for many years but has come to attention as one of the drugs - like dexamethasone and hydroxychloroquine - that have been investigated for possible benefits and repurposing in relation to Covid-19.

A number of these studies are still under way.

However, because of initial positive indications - evident from trials, past analyses and its current "off-label" use - a movement has formed demanding its use and claiming it is a cheap "wonder drug" with the potential to save many lives if sanctioned by regulatory authorities.

In South Africa, an ivermectin interest group has sprung up and there is advocacy and argument for the drug on social media. It is reportedly already being used widely, in some cases prescribed by doctors and in others obtained and used without medical supervision.

One doctor told me how "all his veterinary friends were now out of stock". A qualified doctor, who sees hundreds of patients a week, admitted he is taking it because it is "the only protection he has in wards, given the inadequacy of quality PPE supplies, the pressure caused by the second wave and the government's delay in initiating a vaccine programme".

However, while there are reports of benefits, there are also reports of overdoses and people profiteering by selling pills for up to R500 a pop. According to Maverick Citizen's Eastern Cape writer, Estelle Ellis: "Here in Port Elizabeth people are buying the ivermectin cattle dip and putting it in the bath. You can buy it at the co-op.

There is even a prescription going around on how much you are supposed to use. It will probably not be long before we see more cases of ivermectin toxicity than Covid-19."

According to Andy Gray, one of South Africa's most respected pharmacologists, who is globally recognised, the demand is being driven by a combination of genuine desperation, especially among GPs and intensivists on the frontline of care, "as well as some less visible commercial interests". Gray says the drug is also being promoted by respected physicians, often well meaning but whose words, PowerPoint slides and YouTube videos are being seized on and sometimes used selectively and out of context.

However, up to now the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) has taken a firm stance to prohibit its use as it awaits further evidence (see its latest statement here). The Ministerial Advisory Committee on Covid-19 has taken a similar stand in a recent memo. However, SAHPRA has said it will consider s21 applications (which allow use of a drug in exceptional circumstances), but says it has not received any yet.

SAHPRA has been criticised, including by Dr Nathi Mdladla, whose op-ed on why ivermectin should be allowed for compassionate use - properly prescribed and controlled by health workers - we are publishing today to set out the perspective of a number of healthcare workers on this issue.

Mdladla, a frontline intensive care doctor at Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital, thinks there are strong medical and evidentiary grounds to make ivermectin available for compassionate use:

"For a drug that has been dosed almost 3.5 billion times since it came to existence, its side-effects are obviously negligible. We have more dangerous drugs with way more common side-effects than ivermectin that are being used routinely, including many of our antiretrovirals that save lives."

He argues that "preliminary results from the Unitaid meta-analysis have already been presented by many people, including Dr/Professor Pierre Kory and Professor Paul Marik of the Front Line Critical Care COVID (FL-CCV) Alliance; as well as the principal investigator of the Unitaid-funded review, Dr Andrew Hill from the University of Liverpool. The findings, from more than 50 trials including 11 randomised control trials (RCTs)



Ivermectin is primarily an anti-parasitic drug, developed and registered for use in humans and animals in many countries.

of good quality and significant numbers, have yielded 7,100 patients, enough for a robust meta-analysis."

Mdladla accepts that the evidence is not conclusive, but given the drug's safety profile and ready availability, he concludes:

"What would our justification be if ivermectin is eventually proven to be effective when the evidence has been around all along? Will the excuse for waiting for large multicentre RCTs be justifiable to the thousands of families who have lost their loved ones?"

Between a rock and a hard place

In this context SAHPRA once again finds itself between a rock and a hard place.

Medicine regulatory authorities are critical to ensure that those medicines that do reach our health system are safe and effective. They protect us against quacks, false claims and profiteering from unproven medicines. Unfortunately, they don't protect us from profiteering from registered medicines, like oncology drugs, and that is still a bone of contention between SAHPRA and health rights activists.

In South Africa, SAHPRA, a statutory body, fulfils a legal and ethical mandate to ensure the efficacy and safety of all drugs in the country. Its work is vital to realising Section 27 of our Constitution - the "right of everyone to have access to healthcare services".

Unfortunately, though, its budget is too way too small. Partly as a result of this, medicines regulation in South Africa has an unhappy history.

Its predecessor, the Medicines Control Council (MCC), and now SAHPRA have been criticised for allowing huge backlogs in applications for medicines. Twenty years ago, the Treatment Action Campaign took on the MCC for the delay in allowing the antiretro-

viral drugs Nevirapine and AZT to be used to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission, despite clinical trials showing their efficacy. It also illegally imported a generic drug, Fluconazole, in defiance of the MCC's refusal to permit its use. There was a belief that the procrastination was political and linked to pressure from then health minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang.

For all these reasons public trust is low and SAHPRA's transparency and public engagement even worse.

Maverick Citizen respects, protects and promotes the crucial role of SAHPRA in ensuring the efficacy and safety of medicines. Covid-19 poses different issues to HIV. However, ivermectin use is clearly an issue that needs informed and open debate, rather than being driven underground.

SAHPRA acknowledges that ivermectin is being used widely and has taken action to try and stop this. The concern, however, is that what one doctor called the "heavy-handed action and punitive approach of SAHPRA", without building public understanding, may be driving the drug underground and creating higher safety risks.

Maverick Citizen consulted a number of senior doctors and it's clear that the issue is complex. They all agree the drug is safe, that its profile is known and it's not an "experimental drug".

The danger is that it will be abused or overdosed. Some argue this is why it would be better for SAHPRA to open a window that regulates use by named health professionals through s21 authorisations, rather than acknowledge its underground use in a way SAHPRA has no control over.

According to Andy Gray, because it's not registered for human use here, the drugs currently being used are either being imported illegally or are veterinary

products. In other countries its registration opens the door to off-label use, including for Covid-19 (even if not recommended by health authorities).

Senior doctors also agree "there is a potential that more evidence will show that its advocates are right". However, they warn against those who are suggesting definitively that the drug works, pointing out that some of the trials on which claims are based were poorly constructed and that anecdotal claims lack the rigour of RCTs.

However, they expect that within weeks reports from trials under way will yield greater certainty.

In the light of this, Mdladla's article cannot be brushed aside, but his views must be balanced and considered in context. It is also incumbent on all of us to hold these debates in public, to be responsible in what we say and claim and ensure that our assertions are evidence based.

One thing beyond dispute is that, as increasing numbers of patients die in hospital corridors as our ICUs fill up, there is an unmet need for vaccine rollout and therapeutic interventions that is urgent and immediate.

DM/MC

African cities must prepare for climate migration amid environmental threats

By Aimée-Noël Mbiyozo

AFRICAN climate-linked migration tends to be dominated by European narratives. In reality, most of these migrants move within their own countries and regions. As climate change impacts intensify, migration will increase. African cities, countries and regions need to be more aware of the phenomenon and incorporate it into all levels of planning.

Despite contributing only 7.1% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, sub-Saharan Africa is one of the regions suffering the most from climate change impacts. Climate change is increasing the frequency, intensity, duration and locations of both slow and sudden-onset impacts. These will pose some of the greatest threats to people, ecosystems and development over the coming decades.

Sudden-onset climate change disasters are large-scale events of extreme weather, including hurricanes, cyclones, storms, wildfires or heavy rainfall leading to landslides or floods. The intensity and frequency of extreme weather events and the areas affected by them are growing as global temperatures rise.

In 2019, 195% more Africans were affected by extreme weather than in 2018. A total of 89 disasters occurred across the continent. Eleven storms affected over 4.5 million people and accounted for 1,300 deaths.

Slow-onset climate impacts

include drought, desertification, salinisation, ocean acidification, glacial retreat, sea-level rise and changing seasonal trends. Temperature rises in Africa are expected to exceed global averages. Increases in mean temperatures are creating hot extremes and more variable rainfall and drought. Net yields of crops become increasingly unpredictable and are likely to shrink or fail as soil quality worsens and water supplies become more stressed.

Africa is particularly reliant on rainfed agriculture. In sub-Saharan Africa, 95% of the food grown is rainfed. Agriculture employs 65% of Africa's labour force and comprises 32% of its gross domestic product.

Sea-warming and rising water levels lead to saltwater intrusion, coastal erosion, flooding and damage to ecosystems and infrastructure. Ocean acidification is altering marine ecosystems and causing loss of coastal resources, significantly impacting the productivity of fisheries and aquaculture.

Africa has over 47,000 km of coastline and 38 of its 55 countries are coastal and island states. Fishing employs more than 12 million people and provides food security for over 200 million.

The nexus between climate change and migration is complex. Migration is a highly personal decision made for a range of overlapping reasons, making it difficult to isolate climate drivers. Few people



Temperature rises in Africa are expected to exceed global averages. Increases in mean temperatures are creating hot extremes and more variable rainfall and drought. (File photo)

migrate because of climate change; they migrate because of economic or socio-political factors that are affected by climate change.

Migration is a critical resilience strategy against climate change impacts. While much of the common narrative suggests that migration results from a failure to adapt to climate change, it is in fact an adaptation strategy in and of itself.

Climate change drives far more internal movement within a country than it does internationally. Of the migrants who do cross international borders, most stay within their region of origin.

International migration

is expensive. It requires resources, knowledge and connections. The most vulnerable people have the least opportunity to adapt or move. Climate stresses are far more likely to increase barriers to migration than to increase flows. This is a dangerous cycle in which climate change simultaneously worsens poverty and people's ability to adapt.

Urbanisation is a key climate change outcome, as people seek refuge and work in cities. A 2018 World Bank report predicts that there will be 86 million internal climate migrants in sub-Saharan Africa by 2050.

African cities are already among the fastest-growing in

the world. Many are susceptible to climate threats. Addis Ababa, for example, is prone to drought and water shortages, while Dar es Salaam is low-lying and coastal and often sees flooding, erosion and storm surges.

Rapid growth, poor infrastructure, limited vegetation and high concentrations of people make cities vulnerable to climate change hazards. Low-income populations are particularly at risk as they often live in high-risk areas and have limited means to recover. In many of the most affected regions, cities are unprepared. They lack adequate housing, infrastructure, education, food, water and health facilities

to adapt to rapid population growth.

Climate change is described as "the ultimate threat multiplier". Changes to the natural environment will put pressure on social, economic and political systems. Increasing stresses on resources through environmental threats and growing populations may overburden weak states and aggravate fragile situations. In areas with poor governance or existing tensions, rising scarcity and competition can escalate into conflict. Conflict, in turn, increases vulnerability to climate change hazards.

Conversely, preparedness and the capacity to adapt can lower vulnerabilities. Strong

governance, resilience strategies, environmental protections, economic diversification and social support can help prevent disasters and unwanted displacement.

Examples of strong resilience planning are early warning systems, crop alternatives, improved irrigation, flood barriers or sustainable development programmes. In cases where migration is a positive adaptation measure, planned and managed migration can have better outcomes than forced displacement.

Africa needs to focus on managing African climate-linked migration. International frameworks often don't reflect African realities and policymakers cannot rely on them to guide such a local issue. African migration must be addressed via local, national, regional and continental governance.

Cities should prepare. If well managed, urbanisation presents infrastructure and economic development opportunities. If poorly managed, it can deepen poverty and divisions and have negative economic, security and social consequences.

National agencies need to incorporate climate migration in their health, education, housing, disaster management, urbanisation, environment and development planning. Climate-vulnerable regions should prepare for out-migration, while cities in more resilient locations should plan for in-migration.

DM

Mozambique tightening measures against COVID-19

MAPUTO

THE Mozambican government is tightening restrictive measures in an attempt to halt the rapid spread of the COVID-19 respiratory disease.

In an address broadcast to the nation yesterday, President Filipe Nyusi stressed that the COVID-19 situation has deteriorated dramatically since the New Year.

Since the first case was diagnosed, on 22 March last year, an average of 80 cases a day had been identified. Four per cent of patients infected with the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 had needed hospitalization, and 0.9 per cent had died.

But this month, there has been a sharp change, Nyusi said, with the average number of new cases rising to 422 a day. The worst six days of the pandemic have all been

in the past week.

The Greater Maputo Metropolitan Area was the epicenter of the Mozambican epidemic, Nyusi said, accounting for 68 per cent of all the infections that have occurred in Mozambique. Of all those hospitalized because of COVID-19, 88 per cent are in Maputo.

Since 1 January, there have been 2,525 new cases in greater Maputo. The positivity rate in the capital (the proportion of those tested who have the disease) has risen to 26 per cent. Since the New Year, 33 people in Maputo have died from Covid-19 (out of a total death toll of 205 in the entire country since the start of the pandemic).

Nyusi warned that the health services, both public and private, in the capital are running out of intensive care beds. The time was approach-

ing when, "if someone falls ill, there will be nowhere to put them".

All these facts amounted to a clear "red alert", said Nyusi. "If we don't push ahead with bold measures, we may exhaust our capacity to deal with the disease". He doubted whether simply increasing the number of beds to accommodate Covid-19 patients would be enough to solve the problem.

The solution to the pandemic, he insisted, could only be through prevention, and that could only work if all Mozambican citizens cooperated. Otherwise the National Health System might collapse, "and we cannot let that happen", declared Nyusi.

The Council of Ministers (Cabinet), meeting earlier in the day, had decided to re-activate several measures, which had been relaxed, or

scrapped, in December.

Thus all bars and stalls selling alcoholic drinks must close. Bars had been closed when the first state of emergency had been declared on 1 April, but a decree of 17 December allowed them to re-open. Other leisure activities that must close include discotheques, casinos, and games rooms.

Gymnasiums, swimming pools and other places for the practice of physical exercise must also close, and cultural activities in places such as cinemas, theatres, museums, galleries and the like are suspended.

The opening hours for restaurants (which had largely escaped the earlier restrictions) are from 06.00 to 20.00 Mondays to Fridays, and 06.00 to 15.00 on Saturdays and Sundays. All shops and other commercial establishments must

close not later than 18.00 every day.

Bottle stores can open from 08.00 to 13.00 Monday to Saturday, but must close on Sundays. Drinking alcohol on the premises is forbidden. The areas in supermarkets which sell alcohol are subject to the same restrictions as bottle stores, and so the owners must partition off these areas and close them at 13.00. No new licences for bottle stores will be issued.

The new regulations also close, once again, the country's beaches. No-one may swim or practice sport on the beaches. Citizens may walk along them, but not in large groups.

Nyusi announced that national sports championships will go ahead, but will be closed to the public.

Private events, including weddings and birthday parties, can have no more than 30 participants, if held in a closed

space, or 50 if held in the open air. They must finish no later than 20.00.

No more than 50 people may attend any religious service, and attendance at funerals is limited to 20 (and, if the deceased died from Covid-19, only ten participants are allowed).

The government moved to end the lengthy queues seen recently at public offices as citizens attempt to renew documents such as identity cards or driving licences. All official documents that have expired are now considered valid until 31 May 2021.

Wherever possible, the staff of both public and private institutions should work from home, and people who have respiratory problems, or are running a fever, must not go to their workplaces or to any schools.

Nyusi announced that

anyone entering the country must have a negative Covid-19 test result. Truck drivers will be expected to show test results at control posts set up inside the country.

Non-compliance with these measures will constitute a criminal offence.

All measures announced previously remain valid if they do not contradict the new decree. This includes, the obligatory wearing of masks on buses, minibuses, in markets or anywhere else that crowds are likely to gather.

The new government decree takes effect as from zero hours on Saturday. Nyusi said the measures will be reviewed in three weeks. If citizens behaved responsibly, then it might be possible to relax the measures "so that we can return to a normal, or near normal, life".

How some women leaders battled the Corona pandemic

By Jenifer Gilla

WOMEN are among the most vulnerable groups affected by the outbreak of the respiratory disease—Covid-19 due to the significant roles they play at family and national level.

Some women leaders who were recently interviewed by The Guardian about their leadership role and family challenges during the pandemic outbreak described fear as the number one challenge they faced due to the characteristic of the disease which includes spreading rapidly.

Rose Ruben is the Director of the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), she said: "I tried to maintain my work performance, but working from home was somehow challenging because of poor network connection."

Generally, she said the association's performance dropped as not all the staff could complete their task on time. She said meeting with staffs, donors and various stakeholders were mostly conducted online; a situation that dragged back the association's development due to the cost it had earlier incurred to pay for meeting venues.

"When the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in the country in March last year, we had to cancel all the scheduled

meetings with donors and stakeholders. This resulted in a loss because we had already paid for the meeting venues," said the director.

Director of the Tanzania Young Women Leaders, Konsolata Chikoti said: "I was worried of infecting my family with Coronavirus since I usually meet a number of people when executing my daily activities. I had to enter the house secretly, take a quick shower then take care of my son who could not avoid being around me because he was too young."

Working from home was a bit challenging because I also had to accomplish my tasks as a mother and at the same time work for the office, she added.

Global Peace Foundation (GPF) director Martha Nghambi said she found herself doing some extra tasks such as supervising her children's homework's online. She said staying idle at home resulted in her adding some weight because she could exercise as she usually does.

"I even noticed that my children were not happy with learning from home," she said.

Managing the challenges

Beatrice Bandawe is the Managing



Beatrice Bandawe, Nipashe newspaper Managing Editor

Editor of the Kiswahili daily tabloid—Nipashe, who said that COVID-19 demonstrated the power of information and communication technology (ICT).

"I never knew I could hold meetings with many people from different countries at the same time

using the internet. It was easily for me to communicate and conduct meetings through the internet. I was able to maintain my performance although there were some few challenges," said Bandawe.

She said since working in a media house requires

daily sessions, postmortems were conducted online. She said in the first days it was difficult because most of the journalists were not conversant with the new technology, but after few days they were all able to login for the meetings.

"I also attended a number of international conferences virtually; it is through technology that most of the operations continued as usual even after the pandemic outbreak," she added.

As a senior leader in the newsroom, Bandawe, said she also experienced a number of challenges which included reducing the workforce to save the company from further losses. She said it was difficult to decide who should go the proposed leave and should remain at work for a reduced monthly pay.

"It was one of the hardest times I went through in my career, because the company had already retrenched some staff in previous months, but we had to make difficult decisions and send some journalists for a three months leave."

A report by the Women Journalists Support Fund (IWMF) states that women faced economic and psychological consequences during the pandemic outbreak.

It said that despite all the challenges that women faces during Covid-19, their presentation in the media is still limited.

In Kenya, for example, out of all the corona-related information written, men sources were used three times more often than women.

Project to mitigate impact of COVID-19 on food and nutrition security in Zimbabwe

By Guardian Correspondent

A new project to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on food and nutrition security using Climate Smart Technologies has been launched in Zimbabwe.

The project will be implemented by the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCADERSA), with funding from the European Union (EU) through the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The project is an extension of the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) programme which seeks to strengthen the capacity of SADC member states to undertake regional and national adaptation and mitigation actions in response to the challenges caused by the effects of climate change.

A similar project launch was conducted in Eswatini while preparatory work was facilitated in Mozambique in November.

The EU has contributed Euro 8 million to the GCCA+ project to increase the capabilities of SADC member states to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, and to have their voices better heard in the international climate change negotiations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a humanitarian crisis, negatively impacting the food and nutrition status of millions of house-

holds worldwide.

The pandemic has disrupted food systems, including production and marketing due to lockdowns imposed by countries. The escalating threat on livelihoods, food and nutrition security due to increasing cases, lockdowns and health-related restrictions calls for urgent interventions to minimise the impact to the most affected communities.

In Zimbabwe, the launch and associated activities were conducted from 1 to 4 December, 2020. The delegation

was welcomed by the implementing partner, Grow a Tree Foundation (GTF), which arranged a series of meetings with stakeholders from different ministries and the local political leadership.

The team held its first meeting with GTF which outlined a number projects the foundation was working on. These projects include honey production, bee keeping, vegetable production, fisheries, poultry (indigenous chickens locally referred to as road runners, including installation of a solar incubator), as well as

moringa, pawpaw and baobab production and processing.

The required infrastructure included drilling of boreholes, installation of a solar powered drip irrigation system, fencing of horticultural gardens, installation of biogas digester, and construction of fish ponds. The foundation is also promoting the efficient use of energy using stoves.

The team engaged the project beneficiaries who re-emphasised the need to invest in vegetable production, honey production, papaya, moringa and baobab production and

processing. Community ownership of the project activities was indicated during the project launch.

Land allocated for the project and a borehole that has already been sunk together with irrigation equipment suggest good chances of success of the project as well as sustaining the project activities beyond the lifecycle of the funded activities.

The project is expected to be a farmer field school and lessons will be used to replicate the model to other areas in the country.

Pandemic sees South African churchgoers turn to online sermons

JOHANNESBURG

AS South Africa undergoes its second wave of the covid-19 pandemic, many locals seek solace in their religious faith to cope during this unprecedented global health crisis that has seen the country lose almost 36,000 lives with reports of around 1.2 million confirmed cases—accounting for 30 per cent of all cases on the African continent. Jeanene Joy Matthyse, minister at the Calvin Protestant Church in Cape Town, recounts her recent experiences.

"The other day somebody said, will you send a message of hope to my brother in law who is fighting Covid in hospital and I did the voice recording and I got the response from the patient back saying 'Thank you because he could still at that point speak. So those are the moments we celebrate.'"

Many religious practitioners have found ways to navigate the coronavirus-prevention sanitary measures banning or limiting gatherings and closing places of worship.

Minister Matthyse explains that spiritual expression is not limited to a particular physical locale.

"The church is closed but the church can also move beyond these closed doors, that we are the church outside of the church. You know, we not restricted to a building. Wherever you are you are the church, whether you are walking in the street and you praying. You are the church. In your home, you are the church and you represent Christ right there where you are."

As President Cyril Ramaphosa announced in a televised address on Monday the order of 20 million coronavirus vaccine doses, many South Africans can remain prayerful about surmounting the pandemic.



China's environmental protection industry eyes quality development with both rules and coins

BEIJING

AS China's economy enters the new stage of high-quality development, the idea that a sound ecological environment is the most inclusive well-being for people's livelihood gained increasing popularity.

With ecological protection and pollution prevention high on the country's agenda for the 14th Five-Year Plan period, Huang Runqiu, Minister of Ecology and Environment, noted the battle against pollution is expected to be deepened and expanded.

China's environmental protection industry will still be under strict supervision but also be empowered by increasing investment both from fiscal support and the capital market, industry observers say, noting that along with transformation and innovations, the industry is heading towards quality development in the following few years. --- Stricter, greener Tightening-up supervision is felt with a slew of measures introduced over the past few years.

It was particularly so in 2020 with the strictest-so-far Solid Waste Law coming into force, "waste sorting" and "ban on free plastic bags" being fully implemented, medical waste and urban water treatment being listed on agenda, and the import of "foreign waste" being completely banned.

On December 30, 2020, the long-awaited Reform Plan for Legal Disclosure of Environmental Information was approved, marking the beginning of an era of mandatory environmental information disclosure.

The Solid Waste Law that "could reconstruct industry chain" as observers put it, will exert continuous influences during the 14th Five-Year Plan period, posing supervision over areas such as medical waste, sludge, waste classification, construction waste, disposable plastics, and proposes for the first time that China should implement solid waste classification system and realize its effective coverage.

Environmental supervision is becoming stricter. The Producer Pays principle was put forward on the basis of the original Polluter Pays Principle, where the responsibility of industrial solid waste producers is strengthened and fines for illegal activities associated with solid waste substantially increased. Insiders believe that the new Solid Waste Law hikes illegal cost thus will lead to increasing environmental protection equipment use which would expand relevant market.

Further, the new Solid Waste Law guides a greener path for enterprises following energy saving and emission reduction, quality improvement and consumption reduction, and high-quality development through industrial upgrading.

The country will make new breakthroughs in key areas of the pollution prevention and control such as air quality improvement, carbon emission reduction, ecological supervi-



sion enhancement, eco-water increase, soil conservation and prevention of ecological and environmental risks and promote green and low-carbon transformation of the whole society during the 14th Five-Year Plan and the 15th Five-Year Plan periods, Huang noted.

On January 4 this year, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment specified that the system of ecological protection supervision regulation standards and a national ecological monitoring network will be initially established by 2025. --- Big market, big money

Under the reform of registration-based IPO system, energy conservation and environmental protection enterprises enjoy "smoother" A-share listing as one of the seven strategic emerging industries.

In 2020, A-share market welcomed 28 energy conservation and environmental protection enterprises as of December 25, compared with only 9 new listing in 2019, according to Shanghai Securities News.

This brought the number of energy conservation and environmental protection enterprises on the A-share market to 296, of which total market value hitting 2,243.41 billion yuan, up 16.48 percent year on year.

These firms generated revenue of about 1,244.569 billion yuan in the first three quarters of 2020, up 6.96 percent on year. Industry insiders say that the registration-based IPO system is expected to further expand the A-share energy conservation and environmental protection sector.

Data compiled by Shanghai Securities News shows that 34 energy conservation and environmental protection enterprises

had disclosed their pending IPO updates by the end of 2020. Besides the capital market, China's fiscal expenditure for eco-environmental protection and green development has been growing over the years, according to Xu Bijiu, Director of the Department of General Affairs of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment.

National fiscal expenditure on energy conservation and environmental protection amounted to 2.4 trillion yuan during 2016-2019, guiding and mobilizing a large amount of social capital to participate in local ecological and environmental protection.

Local-government eco-environment protection related special bonds increased significantly as well with data by Wind showing that 134 local-government special bonds of 248.1 billion yuan were issued for eco-environment protection, pollution control and water-related affairs in the first eight months of 2020, accounting for 8.44 percent of new special bond issuance.

The National Green Development Fund (NGDF), which has been brewing since the beginning of the 13th Five-Year Plan, was formally established in July 2020, with a registered capital of 88.5 billion yuan.

The NGDF aims to promote green and sustainable development through finance, noted Shi Yichen, Deputy Dean of the International Institute of Green Finance of the Central University of Finance and Economics.

The fund will help advance R&D, technology transformation and promotion of green

technologies through financial means to promote the development of green industries while also making full use of government capital and market capital to effectively motivate and guide more financial institutions and social capital into green investment so as to address the long-standing fund shortages in this field, Shi said.

The NGDF would drive a new round of green investment, which could further boost development of environmental protection industry in the 14th Five-Year Plan period, insiders say. --- Cooperation and innovation The environmental protection industry is facing some tougher challenges rolling into the 14th Five-Year Plan period, according to Xue Tao, Executive Director of the E20 Institute of Environment Industry.

These challenges are more complex, said Xue, giving air pollution control, which now requires dealing with VOC governance and ozone pollution besides continuing to control PM2.5 concentration, as an example.

In urban water treatment, there are still question marks in terms of how to prevent re-pollution, improve quality and efficiency, and find alternative financing under increasing fiscal pressure, Xue said, noting that how to align solid waste disposal with waste classification and resource recycling besides waste incineration also requires further efforts.

In addition, the conflict between the systematic environmental governance and management the fragmentation poses great challenges. During the 14th Five-Year Plan period, topics like these require joint efforts

by both the government and enterprises in terms of top-level design and practice.

In fact, leading enterprises are already tackling such issues. "The company is improving operation while developing co-processing to improve project economics and product added value as 'Operation is key' in waste incineration industry's future development," said Qiao Dewei, President of Dynagreen Environmental Protection Group Co., Ltd.

Facing the vertical and horizontal industry chain integration, Xu Yanjun, CEO of Qiaoyin Environmental Protection Co., Ltd., said "the company will constantly expand business and provide whole-industry-chain services through industry, information, technology and experience sharing."

According to the Report on the Development of China's Environmental Protection Industry (2020) jointly issued by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment and the China Association of Environmental Protection Industry, revenue of the environmental protection industry was about 1.6-2 trillion yuan in 2020, which is expected to exceed 2 trillion yuan in 2021 and 3 trillion yuan in 2025.

Bountiful two decades with FOCAC

By Ali Issa Abdi

SINCE the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation 20 years ago and the recent initiation of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, China has become Africa's biggest economic partner.

There is no other country with such depth and breadth of engagement across trade, investment and infrastructure financing in Africa.

In this context, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi underscored, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of FOCAC on Nov 12, that trade between China and Africa had grown 20-fold and hit US\$208.9 billion in 2019.

In addition, compared with 20 years ago, total Chinese foreign direct investment in Africa reached US\$49.1 billion in 2019, marking 100-fold growth. Furthermore, more than US\$200 billion in Chinese financial support was generated by 2019.

China's expanding investments were supported by the forums through promoting infrastructure development, encouraging Chinese enterprises to invest, and facilitating the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in Africa.

China has already become a big financial source for Africa's development endeavors.

In September 2018, a total of US\$60 billion in financing was pledged for Africa at the seventh FOCAC summit.

This comprised US\$15 billion in grants, interest-free and concessional loans; US\$20 billion in credit lines; US\$10 billion for development finance; US\$5 billion for financing imports from Africa; and incentives for Chinese companies to invest at least US\$10 billion over three years.

Undoubtedly, Chinese investments and external financing were indispensable to sustained economic growth in many African countries in the FOCAC period.

Such investments have contributed to providing world-class economic infrastructure, injected much-needed capital, introduced new technologies and modern management know-how, and strengthened management of project implementation in these economies.

The views of African policymakers and academics demonstrate that countries significantly benefited from China during two decades of FOCAC.

Current achievements are broad-based but tell only part of the story, since China-Africa cooperation extends to other key sectors, as declared at the 2018 FOCAC Beijing summit.

The deepening relation-



ship is beyond economic cooperation and extends to crucial social sectors as demonstrated by efforts to provide support for health and educational institutions and governance in African countries, and for peace and security missions in some states.

More specifically, there is much to commend regarding China's efforts to assist Africa under the difficult circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. The health and econom-

ic impacts of the pandemic are creating huge economic and social challenges globally.

China's efforts to support Africa in surmounting these challenges and achieving post-pandemic recovery are vital to ensuring that the economic achievements of recent years are sustained, and poverty reduction in recent decades is not reversed.

At such a critical moment in the global fight against the

COVID-19 pandemic, commitments made at the virtual Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity against COVID-19 on June 17 promised to build a China-Africa community of health for all.

These commitments made at the summit in the words of President Xi Jinping included that African countries will be among the first to benefit from the COVID-19 vaccine once its development and deployment are completed in China.

The gains achieved under FOCAC and Belt and Road Initiative cooperation have built a shared community and substantial collaboration in socioeconomic fields. The remaining matters are how to strengthen and enhance cooperation within FOCAC and the BRI on high-priority issues that improve people's livelihoods and well-being.

There are core areas of vital importance for the transformation of Africa that should be covered urgently, including poverty reduction in fragile economies, expanded efforts to develop Africa's industrialization, and efforts to address the adverse impacts of climate change, which are an existential threat to some African regions and countries.

Over the past 20 years, FOCAC has considerably enhanced the cooperation and friendship of China and Africa, and the BRI will further strengthen this relationship.

Current practices and China-Africa strategic relations should be enhanced and expanded to critical areas that are vital for improving people's lives and promoting sustainable development.

BUSINESS

SKINTELLECTUALS

Six natural hair trends to look out for in 2021

PRETORIA

The natural hair movement is set to continue its path for world domination in fashion and beauty in 2021.

While 2020 was a big year for braids and other protective styles, particularly DIY styles and techniques that could be done while spending more time at home, 2021 is set to give rise to more styles that are easy to achieve without professional help, as well as those that last longer and embrace decades gone by. While public events and gatherings may be on hold for now, there is no reason why women cannot try these stylish and popular hair trends for 2021 at home.

Adding some bang to that bob

While the bob has always been a popular and timeless hairstyle that works across all hair textures, the bob and side bang look is having a moment. The more defined bob and bang look for 2021 features side bangs that add a cool new edge to the classic look.

Boity Thulo, the face and name behind the Boity Haircare range at Halo Heritage, says: "This look combines sophistication with a fun twist to a staple look. Curly bangs have also seen a growth in popularity and are expected to catch on in the New Year."

Incorporating pops of colour and texture

Adding a pop of colour to a classic haircut is a good way to make a statement and revitalise an old look without much effort. Natural hair enthusiasts are expected to play with more colour and texture this year as women continue to embrace their type three and four hair.

While it is recommended that you get professional help when colouring, there are ways to safely colour from home. Just make sure to use the right products for protection and moisture for hair that's as healthy as it is bold.

Braids and twists set to get longer

For those planning on combining a

chic new look with a protective style in 2021, long and braided is the way to go. "Long braids and twists are not only highly protective and uber-cool, but they add a retro spin to a classic and versatile look. Add some hair accessories to dress up your look and take it from day to night. Creativity and authenticity are at an all-time high, and we expect these to shine through when creating natural hairstyles," says Thulo.

Embracing those god-given locks

Natural texture is on-trend as many women are learning about and exploring their natural hair. It's no wonder that embracing natural hair and its unique textures were all the rage in 2020 and the new year will be no different.

"While naturally textured hair is hardly a new trend, embracing natural kinks and curls is new to many as women around the world continue to look at their hair more positively and healthily. Change is good and, this year, it's all about changing mindsets to embrace the beauty of natural, textured hair," adds Thulo.

Going knots with Bantu knots

For those times when it's all about style and convenience, Bantu knots are the way to go. Bantu knots have redefined the protective hairstyle game while still being distinctively and effortlessly cool and stylish. It is a great protective hairstyle that combines tradition with contemporary style. It's easy for many people to do at home and will increase in popularity as people stay in and do their hair themselves.

Don't forget to protect your style

Protective hairstyles work to seal in moisture, which is vital when maintaining healthy hair and retaining growth. The low manipulation of these hairstyles is also beneficial for hair growth as there is no need to comb or brush the hair. "Constantly changing and styling natural hair can lead to breakage and even stunt growth and protective hairstyles eliminate all of these concerns," advises Thulo.



Bantu knots.

RESISTANCE

Restaurants set to take govt in court over booze sales ban



CEO of the Restaurant Association of South Africa, Wendy Alberts.

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa's restaurant owners are moving to take government to court in a bid to have the ban on the sale of alcohol set aside.

The country's eating establishments have been hit hard by the impact of Covid-19 and were closed during the hard lockdown, with some shutting down for good. Although restaurants have since reopened and continue to operate during the current Level 3 lockdown, they do so under

a strict curfew and can't serve alcohol, which means they miss out on revenue from those sales.

The government imposed the ban on the sale of alcohol in December, after a sharp increase in Covid-19 cases that have now crossed over the 1.2 million mark. In a note to restaurant owners, seen by Fin24 on Thursday, CEO of the Restaurant Association of South Africa (RASA) Wendy Alberts asked members to participate in surveys that would enable the association to collect data that would help with the court case,

in support of an application by another party.

"We [are] busy with a high-level structured plan with major industry stakeholders to legally assist our pleas to lift the Alcohol ban (sic) and to support an application in the High Court in getting the liquor [sales] ban lifted," Alberts said in the note.

She explained that RASA was working towards creating a link between the loss of alcohol sales to restaurants closing down, as well as the impact of the curfew to turnover. Alberts confirmed

the legal action but would not be drawn into commenting further, saying that restaurant owners were concerned about the state of the industry and thousands of workers were losing their jobs, while hundreds of restaurants were closing their doors.

"We certainly feel that we need to do everything to try and save the industry and responsibly lift the alcohol ban in the way that works for both the consumer and for the restaurants, as well as saving lives and livelihoods," said Alberts.

The RASA CEO added that the association had put together plans to show the government that that restaurants can serve alcohol responsibly and help flatten the Covid-19 curve.

The restaurant industry is not the only alcohol trader that is approaching the courts over the ban, with South Africa's biggest beer maker, AB InBev-owned South African Breweries, taking legal action against the government to have the ban set aside.

Alberts would not provide details on who the group is supporting in court and whether it would be part of SAB's application. "We can't [make] any comments on it but we are certainly are going to do what we need to do to protect the livelihoods of the restaurateurs, as well as balancing lives and livelihoods," she said. SAB would not confirm or deny that RASA was joining its court matter, referring the question to Alberts.

RESTITUTION

Why Africa's stolen treasures must be returned

By Onyekachi Wambu

Estimates suggest that 80-90% of sub-Saharan Africa's cultural heritage is currently held outside the continent. Onyekachi Wambu, Executive Director of the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD), explains why these cultural treasures should be returned to their rightful owners.

African icons held in Western museums and private collections are stories that distil understanding of the cosmos, civilisations, expressions of beauty, historical personalities, as well as stories of encounter, trade, violence and conquest.

The return of African icons, both human and cultural, looted during the periods of slavery, empire and colonialism, is essential for us to revisit and re-engage with these important aspects of African history, ideas, personalities and aesthetics. The icons are the naissance of the African Union's 2063 renaissance agenda.

Estimates suggest that 80-90% of sub-Saharan Africa's cultural heritage is currently held outside the continent as a result of conquest, plunder, theft, and colonisation, as well as legitimate trade and exchange. These objects are of great artistic, cultural, religious, sacred and economic value. There have been loud calls for their return from the moment they were taken, often in violent encounters.

More recently, in 1976, the Nigerian government requested a temporary loan of the Queen Idia of Benin Mask from the British Museum, for use as the emblem of the 2nd



Africas stolen treasures on display at a museum in Paris.

World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC '77). The request was denied, and the mask remains in the British Museum. The mask was one of 4,000 artefacts looted by British soldiers following their conquest of the Benin Empire.

In 1992, the African continental body, the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) established a Reparations Committee, which among other demands, sought the return of African cultural artefacts held in Western museums and cultural

institutions.

The restitution movement was energised by another important historic development in 1994 with the election of Nelson Mandela as South Africa's President. This was a momentous occasion for global Africans, signifying the official end of an age in history - the age of slavery, colonialism and second-class citizenship of people of African descent.

For the previous 400 years, constitutions and laws in different countries around the globe, but

especially in the Atlantic space, enshrined African inferiority. This ended with the final liberation in South Africa, 190 years after the first in Haiti.

Since 1994, restitution demands have frequently been intermixed with a number of other discrete but related campaigns, involving the eight 'Rs' which are part of the overall reckoning by the Black and African world of the damaging impact and legacies of slavery and colonialism.

TRUE-LOVE

Forbidden love drives South Sudanese couple to elope

KHARTOUM

Nineteen-year-old Ishan Ahmed Abdallah, a Sudanese national, married a man from South Sudan last year. She acted without her mother's

and father's permission and knew the marriage likely would upset her tradition-minded parents, but she hoped they would come around and accept it.

More than a month later,

Ishan and her husband, Deng Anei Awen, fear for their lives after getting public death threats from her father. The couple say Abdallah's parents oppose their marriage because of tribal racism toward Awen.

The dispute has garnered a lot of attention on Sudanese and South Sudanese social media, largely because of the death threats the father posted on Facebook last month. Awen said he and Ishan tried

to follow the correct Islamic marriage procedures in Sudan but were unable to satisfy his wife's parents.

He said he and Ishan decided to leave Khartoum and elope to avoid forced

separation. The dispute over the marriage has stirred a lot of conversation in Sudan about the Sharia requirement that a male guardian must preside over a woman's marriage for it to be valid. Both Sudan and

South Sudan are conservative patriarchal societies where marriage decisions are taken mostly by men on behalf of their daughters.

AMBITIOUS

Meet entrepreneur producing Made-in-Rwanda baby wear

KIGALI

Personal struggles and experiences can often be a great basis to set up a business as one has an understanding of the pain points in the market. This is how Nicola K Magera started out her business.

It's only a handful of fashion designers who choose to invest in children's wear, however, Magera took a leap of faith and chose to explore the opportunities and perils of running a children's clothing line. Having children of her own and understanding her personal struggles led her to realise that there was a gap in the market, and speaking to other mothers she confirmed the existence of challenges and turned it into an opportunity.

So, Yambee Baby, her product line, was born out of that necessity which has now turned into passion. Yambee baby was established out of need by parents to have access to locally-made appealing products for babies and toddlers.

Starting off two years ago, Magera was mainly producing baby dolls but has since grown her scope of products to include shirts, lounge or sleep wear, sleep sacks among other items. These are mostly made with simple but vibrant and playful patterns and designs. They are also made of 100 per cent cotton, comfort comes first for her.



Nicola K Magera's dream is for Yambee Baby to be a go-to-brand for high quality baby and toddler wear.

"We would like babies and toddlers to feel comfortable when they wear our clothing and so we focus on that, for example, how we can make it easier for mothers to get a shirt over a baby's head - all our shirts come with shoulder snaps. If toddlers are going to be spending all day or all night in our loungewear, let's make sure it is as soft as it can be and is breathable and so we use 100 per cent cotton," she said of her designs.

Her work, she said, reflects a labour of love and collaboration for it in-

volves partnering with local artisans to create a variety of baby friendly products for Rwandans. Her items cater for babies in the age range of 0 months to 3 years although she said she is planning on including 5 year olds starting this year.

While her business has been in existence for two years, she said with this new product line, it feels like they are just getting started. One of the biggest challenges for her has been trying to get the right price point.

She explained that while she wants

her products to be affordable, she also struggles with the fact that, because she is still doing this at a small scale, the cost of production is high. And also, her desire to use quality fabrics which come with their own high price point, is a constraint on the other hand.

"Every day comes with a new challenge but we have a clear vision and are working towards that, to quote William A Foster; Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skilful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives," she noted.

In order to deal with some of these challenges, she is trying to make good use of the government's incentives offered for Made in Rwanda for example applying for VAT exemptions on importation of raw materials in an effort to reduce cost of production.

Her target market is parents with children aged 0 - 3 years old who are looking for quality Made in Rwanda clothing for their little ones. This has been her mission since starting out as she wanted to provide more options for quality Made

in Rwanda products for children. For the time she's worked in this field, Magera said she has discovered the existence of talented tailors and artisans in Rwanda.

"From creating patterns to getting our final products in the shops, I rely on collaboration with the tailors and I have been very impressed by the attention to detail and timely delivery during production," she said. The entrepreneur also noted that she has nonetheless not yet met her expectations noting that since she is still in the start-up stage.

"Our ultimate goal is quality excellence - for Yambee baby to be a go-to-brand for high quality baby and toddler wear that is Made in Rwanda. We want the quality of our product to be able to speak for itself and so that is where we focus all our efforts, ensuring we use premium and extra soft cotton that will be perfect for delicate baby skin and comfortable for toddlers," the entrepreneur said. Going forward, Magera said that she is a big believer in collaboration and so she has partnered with Haute Baso - an established Made in Rwanda brand in order to expand her reach.

APPRECIATION

Nigeria's consumer sentiment registers impressive progress

LAGOS

Against the backdrop of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, West African consumer sentiment has experienced a lift of 8 points in the Nielsen Consumer Confidence Index (CCI) for December 2020 with Nigeria CCI increasing to 116 from; up from the previous quarter's 108 points.

Nielsen West Africa Retail Intelligence Lead Ged Nooy comments; "The latest consumer sentiments reflect the country's continued cautionary concerns albeit with some practical fine-tuning. As the global pandemic continues to affect world economies and put pressure on consumers' pockets, Nigerians consumers are making lifestyle adjustments and taking actions to protect their long-term economic future."

Equitable optimism by Nigerian consumers also sees improved confidence around the opportunity of job prospects, with 55% of consumers saying they will be good or excellent in the next 12 months - a 12-point increase from the previous quarter. In terms of the state of their personal finances over the next 12 months, 67% say they are excellent or good, showing a substantial 8-point increase from the previous quarter.

Nigerian propensity to purchase has seen a continued decrease quarter on quarter, with the number of those who think now is a good or excellent time to purchase what they want or need rise just 1 percent from 32% to 33% in the third quarter.

Once they meet their essential living expenses however, the highest number of consumers (75%) put their spare cash into savings, a drop from 81% percent from last quarter, followed by 72% who choose to invest in stocks and mutual funds.

One of the most significant increases in discretionary spending is the purchase of tech up from 51% to 57% - a clear indicator of consumers' mindset shift away from non-essential services and their desire to make necessary work/life changes under the pandemic protocols.

To reduce expenses, 50% of consumers said they spent less on new clothes, 54% spent less on out of home entertainment, with the same figure deferring on the replacement of major household items. As much as 33% of Nigerian consumers said they had spare cash, up 1% from last quarter.

When looking at the practical factors that are affecting their outlook, the top consumer concerns over the next twelve months are increasing food prices at 34%, followed by life/work balance at 20% and the economy at 17%.

Nooy comments; "Nigerian economic recovery is of concern to consumers and may be more gradual than expected due to a drop in oil prices and restricted trade opportunities. The country has opportunities to transform its economy however, particularly in agro-processing beyond the pandemic."



A Nigerian consumer at a supermarket.

BREAKTHROUGH

Innovation bridges oxygen supply gap for Covid-19 patients

PRETORIA

A portable and cost-effective device that delivers consistently high levels of oxygen to Covid-19 patients and helps keep their lungs from collapsing has been approved by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (Sahpra).

The OxERA (oxygen-efficient respiratory aid), is effective where there are a large number of Covid-19 patients yet a lack of skilled staff, ICU and high care facilities; and insufficient bulk oxygen supplies. It effectively bridges the gap between current standard oxygen therapy via face masks and ICU-based non-invasive or mechanical ventilation, while requiring no more oxygen flow than a standard face mask.

The device was developed by a group of East London-based volunteers that includes doctors, engineers and entrepreneurs. The Sahpra has now approved the OxERA device for emergency Covid-19 use, which will be manufactured and distributed by Gabler Medical.

Dr Craig Parker, a medical officer working in anaesthetics with a background in mechanical engineering, says the group was determined to find a solution when they realised that South Africa would face similar patient loads seen in Europe during the Covid-19 pandemic, but would



OxERA oxygen supply device.

have limited high care capacity and fewer resources to respond.

They set up a social enterprise (a business with specific social objectives) in March 2020, trading as Umoya ('air' in isiXhosa). Drawing inspiration from sources as diverse as scuba diving equipment and 3D printing, they built a working prototype within two weeks, and a 3D-printed final design within seven weeks.

Efficient oxygen use

The device's key components are an anaesthetic mask and an adjustable mechanical valve, known as a positive end respiratory pressure (Peep) valve. Oxygen supply is via a hose and accumulator bag,

with the hose connected to any available oxygen source. A viral filter removes viral particles from expired air, which is a safety benefit for health practitioners using the device.

"The high oxygen level delivered by the device ensures that maximum oxygen content is available to diseased lungs. The valve on the device maintains slight pressure to prevent lungs from collapsing when the patient breathes out, and reduces the amount of work it takes to breathe.

"Furthermore, as oxygen supply can be adjusted to patient demand, less oxygen is usually required. In our oxygen resource-constrained environment this is a game

changer. It allows even the most basic facilities, which are dependent on bottled oxygen or small oxygen concentrators, to provide a higher level of care than they are currently able to," Parker says.

Field testing

The device has been used successfully in environments ranging from rural clinics to specialist hospitals, and by all levels of staff. Hundreds of devices have already been distributed to 25 hospitals from Cape Town to Pretoria, says Umoya project manager Trevor Rossouw, a civil engineer with a background in project and business management. These include the Volkswagen Covid-19

field hospital, Frere and Cecilia Makiwane Hospitals and many of the academic hospitals in the country.

Many rural hospitals such as Zithulele on the Wild Coast and Madwaleni near Elliotdale have benefited from the devices. They have also been used by GPs for home and clinic treatment. Devices have also been distributed as far as Zimbabwe, DRC and the Central African Republic.

The device is Sahpra-approved for use during the Covid-19 emergency period. Interest in the device should gather momentum as clinical trials are being arranged at Chris Hani Baragwaneth Academic Hospital which offers specialist services to referred patients.

Production and distribution The device will be manufactured, distributed and supported by Gabler Medical, which holds ISO13485 certification and specialises in the manufacture of oxygen therapy equipment. "We can produce over 15,000 units a week, so capacity is not an issue. This will definitely create jobs during the pandemic and, if the product achieves general acceptance, also after the pandemic. The device holds export potential too," says Reiner Gabler, MD of Gabler Medical.

DIVERSITY

Showmax hires Kenyan artistes for new show

NAIROBI

Showmax, a subsidiary of Pan African pay-TV operator Multichoice, has hired local artistes for a planned production of a Nairobi-based TV series.

The new series, Crime and Justice to be screened on its platform and Canal+'s French-speaking channels,

will star Kenyan artistes Sarah Hassan - actress, model and former TV host - and Alfred Munyua, who featured in several movies and local soaps. Multichoice Connected Video CEO Yolisa Phahle said their investment is pinned on telling African stories that reflect the lives, languages and cultures of the continent.

"We believe in African talent and look forward to shining the international spotlight on not only Kenyan stars, but the Kenyan technical industry's capabilities," she said, adding it was the first Showmax original show to be shot in Kenya.

Crime & Justice is directed and produced by Danish screenwriter-director Adam Neutzsky-Wulff, who

according to internet movie database has total of 10 credits as a filmmaker and five credits as a writer with the most recent being All The Little Things We Kill (2019), Stranger Within (2013) and The Ultimate Film Challenge.

The planned TV series revolves around Makena (Ms Hassan) and Silas (Munyua), the two detectives

at the heart of the topical show that follows one ripped-from-the-headlines case per episode, all the way through to the courtroom verdict.

The two Kenyan artistes will be joined by TV favourites Maqbul Mohammed (Varshita, Auntie Boss) as DCI Boss Kebo, Paul Ogola (Sense 8, Kati Kati) as Prosecutor Sokoro and Brian Ogola (Lusala, Disconnect) as

Caleb, the resident pathologist, as well as the stage and screen legend John Sibi-Okumu.

Multichoice, whose PayTV brands, GOTv and DSTv have been in Kenya for the past 25 years has sponsored production of 10 original Kenyan productions among them Maisha Magic, like Kina, Selina, Pete and Chozzi.

WORLD

Biden unveils plan to pump US\$1.9t into virus-hit economy

SAN FRANCISCO

WILMINGTON - US President-elect Joe Biden outlined a US\$1.9 trillion stimulus package proposal on Thursday, saying bold investment was needed to jump-start the economy and accelerate the distribution of vaccines to bring the coronavirus under control.

Biden campaigned last year on a promise to take the pandemic more seriously than President Donald Trump, and the package aims to put that pledge into action with an influx of resources for the COVID-19 response and economic recovery.

"A crisis of deep human suffering is in plain sight, and there's no time to waste," Biden said in prime-time remarks from Delaware. "We have to act and we have to act now."

The aid package includes US\$415 billion to bolster the response to the virus and the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, some US\$1 trillion in direct relief to households, and roughly US\$440 billion for small businesses and communities particularly hard hit by the pandemic.

Stimulus payment checks would be issued for US\$1,400 - on top of the

US\$600 checks delivered by the last congressional stimulus legislation. Supplemental unemployment insurance would also increase to US\$400 a week from US\$300 a week now and would be extended to September.

Biden's plan is meant to kick off his time in office with a large bill that sets his short-term agenda into motion quickly: helping the economy and getting a handle on a virus that has killed more than 385,000 people in the United States as of Thursday.

It also provides a sharp contrast with Trump, who spent the last months of his administration seeking to undermine Biden's election victory rather than focusing on additional coronavirus relief. Trump, who leaves office on Wednesday, did support US\$2,000 payments to Americans, however.

Many Republicans in Congress balked at the price tag for such payments.

Biden will face similar hurdles with his proposals, which come on the heels of a US\$900 billion aid package Congress passed in December.

But he will be helped by the fact that his fellow Democrats will control both the House and the Senate.



Chuck Schumer, who is about to lead a narrow Democratic majority in the US Senate, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said on Thursday that Biden's package was "the right approach" and pledged to begin working on legislation.

The incoming president will seek to pass the legislation even as his predecessor faces an impeachment trial.

The Democratic-led House of Representatives voted to impeach Trump on Wednesday, making him the first president in US history to be impeached twice. Ten of his fellow Republicans joined Democrats to charge him with inciting an insurrection in last week's deadly rampage at the Capitol. The impeachment proceedings threaten to hang over the beginning of Biden's term, and Biden has encouraged lawmakers to handle the trial while also moving forward with his agenda.

Precarious moment

Transition officials said Biden's plan will be a rescue package that will be followed up with another recovery package in the coming weeks.

The plan would extend moratoriums on foreclosures and evictions until September and include funding for rental and utility assistance.

The president-elect also called on Congress to increase the mini-

mum wage to US\$15 an hour, and the package will include assistance to fight hunger.

"I know what I just described does not come cheaply, but failure to do so will cost us dearly," Biden said, adding that economists, financial institutions and Wall Street banks supported the need for stimulus.

"If we invest now - boldly, smartly, with unwavering focus on American workers and families - we will strengthen our economy, reduce inequality and put our nation's long-term finances on the most sustainable course."

The coronavirus relief-related funds will go toward a national vaccine program, testing, investments for workers to do vaccine outreach and contact tracing, and money for states.

"The vaccines offer so much hope ... but the vaccine rollout in the United States has been a dismal failure thus far," Biden said, adding that on Friday he would set out his plan to vaccinate 100 million Americans in 100 days after taking office.

"This will be one of the most challenging operations efforts we've ever undertaken as a nation. We'll have to move heaven and earth to get more people vaccinated."

Pandemic-related shutdowns and restrictions have cost millions of US jobs. The Biden plan - if enacted - would buy more time for the economy to bridge the period until the distribution of vaccines allows for a wider resumption of economic activity.

US equity index futures were little changed after Biden's speech, details of which emerged during Thursday's trading session.

"It's one piece in the overall puzzle," said Jake Dollarhide, chief executive at Longbow Asset Management in Tulsa, Oklahoma. "It bridges the gap to getting restaurant workers, airline workers and other employees back to work. **Agencies**

WHO experts start quarantine in Wuhan

BEIJING

AN international expert team from the World Health Organization (WHO) arrived in China and started quarantine at a hotel in Wuhan on Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said yesterday.

The 13-member team will conduct joint scientific research with Chinese scientists on the origin-tracing of the novel coronavirus, Zhao said at a press briefing.

China's regulations on the monitoring of the nucleic acid tests are formulated based on the current global pandemic situation and are in line with the arrangements made by other countries, Zhao said, adding that the purpose was to guarantee the orderly exchange of Chinese and foreign personnel on the premise of ensuring epidemic prevention and control.

"This is not only to maintain China's hard-earned achievements in epidemic prevention and control but also to minimize the risk of cross-infection among people coming to China and safeguard everyone's health and safety," Zhao said.

China will strictly abide by relevant regulations and requirements on epidemic prevention, and provide support and convenience to WHO experts in carrying out cooperation on the origin-tracing of the COVID-19 virus in the country, Zhao said. **Xinhua**

Italy's Conte resists calls to resign after Renzi quits govt

ROME

ITALIAN Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte resisted calls to resign on Thursday after a junior coalition party pulled out of his government, stripping him of a parliamentary majority in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Instead, Conte (pictured) signalled he wanted to take his fight for survival to parliament, with his main coalition partners backing plans to try to find so-called "responsible" lawmakers from among opposition ranks to prop up the administration.

On Monday he will address the Chamber of Deputies on the crisis and what is sure to be a fiery debate will be followed by a vote of confidence that should provide an indication of whether he can battle on.

If he survives that vote, an even tougher one will come the following day in the upper house Senate, where cobbling together a majority looks more difficult.

"Government majorities are put together in parliament, openly, in the light of day and without shame. This is what we will do now," said Dario Franceschini, the culture minister and a leading figure in the co-ruling 5-Star Movement.

Former premier Matteo Renzi plunged the country into political chaos on Wednesday when he withdrew his two ministers from the cabinet, presenting a long list of grievances over how Conte had handled the health emergency and the economy.

Renzi has left open the door to returning to the fold so long as a new policy pact could be worked out, but his one-time partners said they wanted nothing more to do with him.

"We cannot return to the negotiating table with him," said Vito Crimi, head of the co-ruling 5-Star Movement.

The political ructions pushed the gap between Italian and German government bond yields to its widest level in over a month on Thursday, while borrowing costs rose slightly from recent record lows at an auction.

"Opening a government crisis was an unprecedented act of irresponsibility," Economy Minister Roberto Gualtieri told state broadcaster RAI, voicing widespread anger in his PD party over Renzi's manoeuvring.

Analysts said markets would become much more volatile if investors thought the crisis would lead to an early election, which polls indicate would likely be won by the opposition centre-right bloc headed by Matteo Salvini's eurosceptic League.

Salvini called on Thursday for a vote and shrugged off concerns about campaigning during the coronavirus epidemic, which has killed more than 80,000 people in Italy and plunged the country into its worst recession since World War Two.

One of Renzi's main complaints about Conte is the way he has handled plans to spend more than 200 billion euros (US\$243 billion) of promised European Union funds, accusing him of trying to bypass parliament in the decision-making process. Renzi also said Conte must accept up to 36 billion euros offered for the health system by a separate euro zone bailout fund. No country has tapped this mechanism amid fears the cash will come with unwelcome conditions.

For Conte to stay in office, he would need to find around 25 lawmakers in the 630-seat lower house and up to 18 in the 315-seat Senate. However, such a majority would be fragile, making prolonged political stability hard to achieve. **Agencies**

Chinese president on global vaccine cooperation

BEIJING

FROM promising to make its vaccines a global public good to joining the COVAX facility backed by the World Health Organization, China has been active in promoting global vaccine cooperation advocated by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Xi has engaged in intensive "cloud diplomacy," including attending or chairing virtual meetings and having phone calls with foreign leaders and heads of international organizations, to make China's contributions to the research, development and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

The following are some



Chinese President Xi Jinping

highlights of his remarks. During his phone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in November 2020, Xi said China stands ready to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with Ger-

many on COVID-19 vaccines and push for the vaccines to be fairly distributed as a global public good, especially for the benefit of developing countries.

Speaking at the 12th BRICS

summit in November that also gathered leaders from Russia, India, South Africa and Brazil, Xi said China has designated its own national vaccine R&D center and will work with other BRICS countries both online and offline to advance collective vaccine research and trials, set up plants, authorize the production and recognize each other's standards.

At the general debate of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September, Xi said at the moment, several COVID-19 vaccines developed by China are in Phase III clinical trials. When their development is completed and they are available for use, the vaccines will be provided to other devel-

oping countries on a priority basis.

During the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity against COVID-19 in June, Xi said, "We pledge that once the development and deployment of COVID-19 vaccine is completed in China, African countries will be among the first to benefit."

When addressing the opening of the 73rd session of the World Health Assembly in May, Xi said COVID-19 vaccine development and deployment in China, when available, will be made a global public good, which will be China's contribution to ensuring vaccine accessibility and affordability in developing countries. **Xinhua**

Moscow aware of risks of further deterioration in ties with Washington - diplomat

MOSCOW

RUSSIA is aware that threats of deterioration in the relations with the United States still remain, spokeswoman for the Russian Foreign Ministry Maria Zakharova told a briefing yesterday, commenting on the post published by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Twitter.

"There are no prospects in engaging in dialogue with us using the language of threats

and intimidation to achieve unilateral concessions, it is counterproductive. We are aware of risks of potential further deterioration of the situation. However, the ball is in the Americans' court in this case," she said.

The Russian Foreign Ministry, she continued, shares Pompeo's views that the dialogue failed to normalize in the past four years. According to her, Russia cannot be blamed for these develop-



ments. "Washington even managed

to place us on the list of America's enemies. The hostile and destructive steps of the US aimed at deepening the crisis in bilateral affairs included the introduction of various anti-Russian sanctions, the practical destruction of the entire arms control architecture, along with intimidation and threats," Zakharova pointed out.

The spokeswoman added that the Americans blocked all positive shifts in bilateral

cooperation.

To change that, the diplomat believes, US public opinion should not be manipulated anymore.

In addition, the Russophobic smear campaigns and the endless flow of fake news against Russia should stop. "For our part, we remain ready to discuss the irritating moments on both sides if Washington starts to show such healthy interest," she concluded. **Agencies**

China introduces industries, technologies to rural areas for poverty alleviation

THANKS to the technologies and assistance provided by the local government, Hou Yan, a registered impoverished farmer in northeast China's Liaoning province, has built a greenhouse and become better-off.

Hou comes from Qingliangshan village. Her family encountered obstacles in 2017 when her husband was confined to bed due to illness, which increased the burden of the schooling of her two children.

To help the villager, Qingliangshan township allocated poverty alleviation funds to set up a vegetable greenhouse for her and invited an expert from the Liaoning Academy of Agricultural Sciences

to teach her how to cultivate edible fungi, according to Shi Yu, Party chief of the township.

Zhang Jijun is the expert sent by the academy to the autonomous county. Zhang heads a work team for tech-led poverty alleviation and a team for edible fungi cultivation in the autonomous county. The expert usually drives about two hours to Hou's greenhouse to teach her cultivation techniques.

"Make sure of enough sunlight and fresh air for the mushrooms to improve the yields and quality," Zhang told the farmer.

This year, Hou earned about 50,000 yuan (\$7,650) from cultivating edible fungi. "Zhang comes

to the village two or three times a week to provide guidance and suggestions, and helps me improve my planting skills," the woman said.

Hou is one of the beneficiaries of China's poverty alleviation efforts through science and technology, which have been an important part of the country's strategy of poverty alleviation and development.

China has advanced innovation-driven and targeted poverty alleviation with greater input of science and technology as well as human resources, said Xu Nanping, vice minister of science and technology, at a press conference on Dec. 23.

Xu added that the country has

upgraded the mechanisms for the collaboration among different ministries, paired-up assistance between the eastern and western regions, and joint actions among sci-tech management departments at ministerial, provincial, municipal and county levels.

China's Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) has pushed forward poverty alleviation in targeted poor areas. Since 2012, it has implemented over 250 science and technology projects with the support of key national research and development programs in five targeted impoverished counties, namely, Jingganshan and Yongxin in Jiangxi province, Pingshan in Sichuan prov-

ince, as well as Zhashui and Jiaxian in Shaanxi province.

The MOST has invested 280 million yuan in these counties, helped them attract investments totaling about 860 million yuan, and trained more than 8,600 grassroots cadres and technical personnel.

The ministry has continuously improved the innovation capability and industrial competitiveness of the five targeted poor counties and helped them achieve high-quality poverty elimination.

Meanwhile, the MOST has made concerted efforts with enterprises and other government departments to advance poverty alleviation in contiguous poverty-stricken areas.

The ministry, together with the National Railway Administration and China State Railway Group Co., Ltd., has taken the lead in contributing to regional development and poverty alleviation in the impoverished Qinling-Daba mountain areas.

By accelerating the infrastructure construction in the areas, speeding up the commercialization of scientific and technological achievements, and boosting the cultivation of traditional Chinese medicine plants and the industries of the wood ears and rare edible fungi in the areas, the ministry has continuously enhanced the endogenous growth drivers in the areas. **People's Daily**

'Nuclear blast in cyberspace': Diplomat slams Big Tech purge of Trump as blow to democracy

MOSCOW,

SILICON Valley's purge of incumbent US President Donald Trump's accounts across social media has harmed the democratic values regularly professed by the West, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on her Facebook page.

"The decision by US Internet platforms to block the accounts of the head of state can be likened to a nuclear explosion in cyberspace.

The aftereffects are worse than destruction. A blow has been dealt to the democratic values professed by Western society.

Both darknet apologists and the advocates of harsh censorship have instantly gained a substantial argument. The media market has begun to be reshaped and a massive digital migration is afoot," she wrote.

Earlier, US-based social media giant Twitter said that it had permanently blocked access to Trump's personal account due to his violations of the terms of service and also for fear that he might try to trigger unrest.

Also, he was stripped of the right to upload posts to Facebook and Instagram until his term of office will have expired. Apple has temporarily removed Parler from its App Store, which is very popular with Trump supporters.

On January 6, Trump supporters stormed the Capitol Building in Washington DC to stop lawmakers from officially certifying the results of the November presidential election in a last-ditch attempt to prevent Democrat Joe Biden from becoming the new president. According to the authorities, during the unrest a woman demonstrator was shot.

Also, three unrelated deaths, described as medical emergencies, were reported. A Capitol police officer died after the clashes. Biden's inauguration is scheduled for January 20.

China to add a 'one-click car-hailing' function for the elderly

CHINA'S Ministry of Transport (MOT) said recently that it is studying a plan to optimize online car-hailing software by adding the "one-click car-hailing" function to provide convenience for the elderly.

The new function is expected to begin trials by the Spring Festival travel rush, or Chunyun in Chinese, the ministry said on its official website.

A slew of online car-hailing platforms including Didi Chuxing, Shouqi Taxi, Caocao Taxi and Meituan Dianping participated in an MOT meeting held on Friday centered on discussing how to provide convenience for the elderly.

Representatives introduced their experience and practices in serving elderly strengthening mobility services, and stated that they will enhance demand analysis and program demonstration to further improve the service quality for older passengers, and effectively facilitate their travel.

Implementation plan includes adding the "one-click car-hailing" function; speeding up the opening of the phone-hailing service on the major online car-hailing platforms while maintaining taxi call-hailing services; major platforms will aim to provide priority dispatch services for the elderly.

In a circular on November 24 issued by the General Office of the State Council, it called for efforts to meet the demands of the elderly while promoting a digitally integrated society.

Responsible departments should maintain traditional service while also encouraging innovation, and solve problems that elderly people have encountered in using intelligent technologies, according to the circular.

To facilitate daily transportation of the elderly, responsible departments are required to guide online car-hailing operators to improve their services.

Orders could be made through the telephone, and priority should be given to elderly people. Also, methods to make appointments with doctors should be improved for the elderly, including via telephones, through the internet and in the hospital, said the circular.

Global Times

International students launch campaign to return to Australia

SYDNEY

AN official petition to Australian lawmakers urging them to exempt international students from border closures has received nearly 3,000 signatures, citing "bad quality" online lessons and lack of schooling for some.

The petition, which is backed by social media campaign #bringusbacktoaus on Twitter, needs 12,000 signatures from Australian residents or citizens before Feb. 10 for it to be tabled before lawmakers for a discussion.

"These are students from all over Asia, all over the world," said Phil Honeywood, Chief Executive, International Education Association of Australia.

"Those who are not citizens have families here. The Indian and the Chinese communities, for example, have cousins or friends who are signing on their behalf."

Australia, which recorded a second straight day of zero coronavirus cases on Friday, has adopted a heavy-handed approach to curb the pandemic, shutting state and international borders, forcing hotel quarantine for returning Australians and making masks mandatory in regions facing a virus resurgence.

The country's A\$37 billion (US\$29 billion) education sector has been bleeding since early 2020 when coronavirus-induced border closures were announced.

The sector, Australia's leading export earner, contributes significantly to the nation's A\$1.9 trillion economy via housing demand, retail sales and employment growth.

Agencies

Trump's Senate trial in limbo as Pelosi, McConnell silent

By Bloomberg

HOUSE Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who signed the single article of impeachment Wednesday night, hasn't said anything about her schedule for transmitting it to the Senate.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and his Democratic counterpart, Chuck Schumer, also have been publicly silent about how the Senate, which will be in nominal Democratic control after Inauguration Day, will be handling the unprecedented case of trying a president on impeachment charges after he leaves office.

How all that plays out will have major implications for President-elect Joe Biden, who is set to be sworn-in six days from now. A Senate trial for Trump, which could begin no sooner than Jan 20, risks delaying confirmation of Biden's cabinet nominees and early legislative initiatives.

Also hanging in balance is the change of Senate control, as Vice President Kamala Harris is replaced in the chamber by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla and Democrats Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff await state certification of their victories in Georgia's runoff election.

The nine House Democrats who Pelosi appointed as impeachment managers to prosecute the case declined on Thursday to discuss what, if anything, they know about the timing for sending the article to the Senate. Pelosi will face questions about her strategy at her regularly scheduled news conference on Friday.

Democratic Representative Diana DeGette of Colorado, one of the impeachment managers, told reporters Thursday that she didn't know whether the Senate trial might last days, or weeks.

"It's one article of impeachment and, I mean, it's like, you see the president on TV inciting people to come up and try to stop the counting," DeGette said. "So, it's pretty easy facts, but on the other hand, there were a lot of things that happened."

Representative James Clyburn of South Carolina, a member of Pelosi's leadership team, is continuing to press for delaying the trial to allow Biden time to put his administration together.

But Representative Ted Lieu of California, a co-sponsor of the impeachment article and one of the House managers, said Thursday that the Senate should convene in an emergency session now and "have the trial as soon as possible."

"They could have a trial on Friday," Lieu said on MSNBC. "They could have it next Monday. So we're calling for Senator McConnell to bring the Senate in so we can have the trial."

One House official said the risk of delaying a trial, as



House Speaker Nancy Pelosi

Clyburn suggests, is that it dilutes the argument for urgent action against Trump over his actions stoking the mob that stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6. It also may make it even less likely that 17 Republicans would join with Democrats to get the two-thirds vote necessary for conviction, according to the official, who asked for anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

Biden made a plea for the Senate to divide its time between Trump's trial and regular business, but McConnell hasn't responded publicly and officials were still reviewing whether and how the chamber could do that.

Tom Daschle, who was the Democratic leader in 2001, the last time the Senate was split 50-50, said starting the trial sooner rather than later and having the Senate split its time "would be the most logical and pragmatic" approach.

Delaying the trial would risk making it harder to forge legislative agreements, he said. "The longer it hangs out there, the more political it becomes and the more divisive it could be," Daschle said.

After Trump's first impeachment on abuse of power and obstruction of Congress on Dec 18, 2019, the House didn't transmit the articles until Jan 15, 2020, a span of 27 days. That trial began Jan 16, 2020. But opening arguments didn't start until six days later as the Senate wrangled over witnesses and evidence. It concluded Feb. 5 with the president's acquittal, a span of almost three weeks.

US says Capitol rioters meant to 'capture and assassinate' officials - filing

WASHINGTON

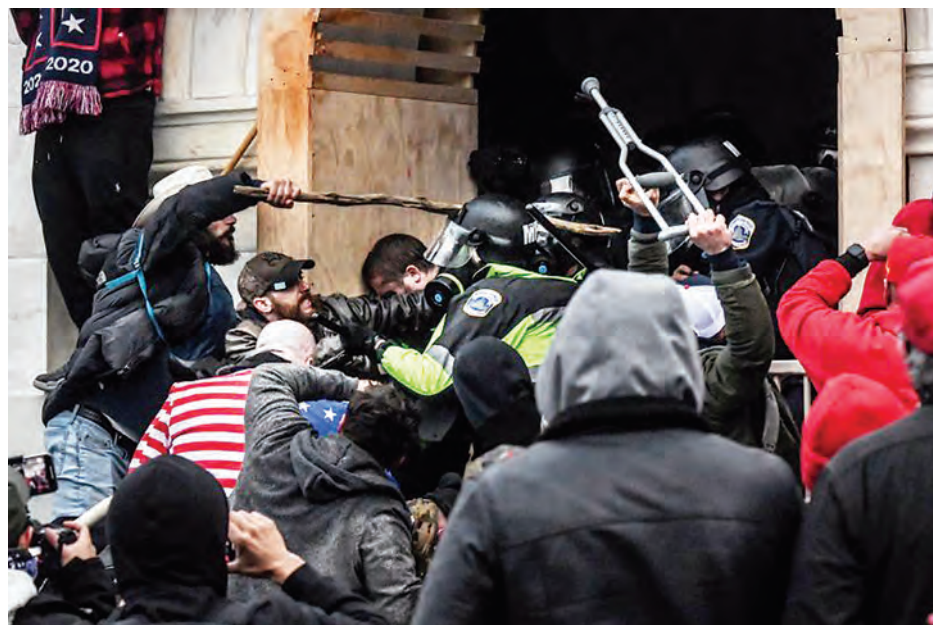
FEDERAL prosecutors offered an ominous new assessment of last week's siege of the U.S. Capitol by President Donald Trump's supporters on Thursday, saying in a court filing that rioters intended "to capture and assassinate elected officials."

Prosecutors offered that view in a filing asking a judge to detain Jacob Chansley, the Arizona man and QAnon conspiracy theorist who was famously photographed wearing horns as he stood at the desk of Vice President Mike Pence in the chamber of the U.S. Senate.

The detention memo, written by Justice Department lawyers in Arizona, goes into greater detail about the FBI's investigation into Chansley, revealing that he left a note for Pence warning that "it's only a matter of time, justice is coming."

"Strong evidence, including Chansley's own words and actions at the Capitol, supports that the intent of the Capitol rioters was to capture and assassinate elected officials in the United States government," prosecutors wrote.

A public defender representing Chansley could not be immediately



Supporters of U.S. President Donald Trump battle with police at the west entrance of the Capitol during a "Stop the Steal" protest outside of the Capitol building in Washington D.C. U.S. January 6, 2021. REUTERS

reached for comment. Chansley is due to appear in federal court on Friday.

The prosecutors' assessment comes as prosecutors and federal agents have begun bringing more serious charges tied to violence at the Capitol, including revealing cases Thursday against one man, retired firefighter Robert Sanford, on charges

that he hurled a fire extinguisher at the head of one police officer and another, Peter Stager, of beating a different officer with a pole bearing an American flag.

In Chansley's case, prosecutors said the charges "involve active participation in an insurrection attempting to violently overthrow the United States government,"

During the trial, House impeachment managers and the president's defense each were given 24 hours of floor time spread over three days to make their arguments. Another 16 hours of time was given for senators to ask questions.

Much about Trump's present impeachment case is unprecedented.

When a sitting president is tried by the Senate, the Constitution says the chief justice presides, but Trump will be out of power. McConnell, in a memo to GOP senators, said it was unclear whether Chief Justice John Roberts would preside.

"The chief justice has no comment," Supreme Court spokeswoman Kathy Arberg said in an email when asked if Roberts would come to the Senate to hold the gavel.

If he doesn't, Harris likely would be the presiding officer, which would give Democrats an edge in setting trial procedures in a 50-50 chamber.

The procedures for an impeachment trial could be addressed in the Senate organizing resolution, Daschle said. That resolution can be passed by a majority vote though it would be better to come as close as possible to unanimous consent, he said.

"The preference is getting unanimous consent," he said, but "the organizational resolution only requires a majority."

Whether Trump would be convicted could turn on what McConnell does. He has told associates he believes the president committed impeachable offenses, two people familiar with the matter said. But he told Senate Republicans in a Wednesday note that he hasn't decided if he would vote to convict.

Senator Lisa Murkowski, an Alaska Republican, said in a statement on Thursday that the House was right to impeach Trump. She was highly critical of the president and his role in last week's riot, saying "President Trump's words incited violence, which led to the injury and deaths of Americans - including a Capitol Police officer - the desecration of the Capitol, and briefly interfered with the government's ability to ensure a peaceful transfer of power."

While she said Trump's actions "cannot go without consequence" Murkowski added that she isn't prepared to say before the trial whether she would vote to convict him. Aside from the trial, Democrats will get more latitude in determining the course of events after Jan. 20. The Senate will be split 50-50, but Democrats will have control with Harris providing the tie-breaking vote.

Georgia officials expect to certify the victories by Warnock and Ossoff by inauguration day, though it's still not clear how quickly they will be seated.

Padilla was appointed by California Governor Gavin Newsom to take Harris's seat in the Senate. A person familiar with the discussions on when he'll join the Senate said that the plan calls for Padilla to be sworn in after Biden and Harris take the oath of office on Inauguration Day. **Agencies**

and warned that "the insurrection is still in progress" as law enforcement prepares for more demonstrations in Washington and state capitals.

They also suggested he suffers from drug abuse and mental illness, and told the judge he poses a serious flight risk.

"Chansley has spoken openly about his belief that he is an alien, a higher being, and he is here on Earth to ascend to another reality," they wrote.

The Justice Department has brought more than 80 criminal cases in connection with the violent riots at the U.S. Capitol last week, in which Trump's supporters stormed the building, ransacked offices and in some cases, attacked police.

Many of the people charged so far were easily tracked down by the FBI, which has more than 200 suspects, thanks in large part to videos and photos posted on social media.

Michael Sherwin, the Acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, has said that while many of the initial charges may seem minor, he expects much more serious charges to be filed as the Justice Department continues its investigation. **Agencies**

China's Belt and Road to link Africa with global markets amid COVID-19, says expert

NAIROBI

THE China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is expected to help Africa connect with global markets during the COVID-19 pandemic, thus creating jobs and promoting growth, said a Kenyan expert.

Edward Kusewa, an economics lecturer at the Nairobi-based St. Paul University, told Xinhua in an interview on Wednesday that the BRI will spur economic growth by improving trade efficiencies between African nations.

"The digitization proposed by the BRI could have a transformative effect because partner nations will benefit from the world-class innovations developed by China," Kusewa said.

He noted that the BRI can help Africa achieve its goal of becoming seamlessly interconnected.

"Africa's fragmented markets require infrastructure to promote move-

ment of goods and people across its borders," said Kusewa. "Through the digital economy, Africa will leverage e-commerce to ensure goods can reach international markets."

He said that the digital Silk Road will positively alter the digital ecosystem of the continent by providing a foundation for the growth of smart cities and the rapid adoption of modern technologies such as financial technologies.

Proposed by China in 2013 to promote common growth and gain shared benefits, the BRI involves infrastructure development, trade and investment facilitation and people-to-people exchanges aimed at improving connectivity on a trans-continental scale.

Kusewa said that support for global connectivity through developing hard and soft infrastructure has not only boosted economic growth in Africa,

but also helped connect countries with the rest of the world.

The African continent began trading under the African Continental Free Trade Area on Jan. 1 with 54 nations signing the trade pact, creating the world's largest trade bloc with approximately 1.3 billion people.

Kusewa said the trading bloc is expected to boost intra-Africa trade, drive the continent's economic recovery, and help African nations diversify their markets.

"It will help Africa's post-COVID-19 recovery by enabling nations to take advantage of nearby markets," he noted.

The scholar also noted that multilateralism will ensure that Africa has access to critical raw materials that can spur industrial development on the continent and lucrative international markets for its commodities.

He added that a multilateral trad-

ing system where even small African countries have a say will help lift millions out of poverty.

"Multilateralism is key to achieve globally shared prosperity where everyone including vulnerable communities can enhance their living standards," Kusewa said.

Yet he said the COVID-19 pandemic has posed a threat to the free movement of goods and people within the region and regional supply chains, as well as to the free movement of labor and commodities across borders.

The expert noted that structural deficiencies of low-income African states have also been exacerbated by the pandemic, further devastating already ailing economies.

As of Wednesday, the continent has 3.1 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and 74,444 deaths, according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Xinhua**



Yanga's Chief Adviser, Senzo Mbatha (L), and the club's Registration Committee's official, Hersi Said, pose for picture with the 2021 Mapinduzi Cup tournament's trophy won by the squad in Zanzibar mid this week. Yanga edged rivals Simba SC 4-3 in penalty shootout of the final to lift the silverware. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

Yanga congratulate Mbatha and Hersi

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

YANGA's management has sent congratulatory messages to the club's leaders, Chief Adviser Senzo Mbatha and Hersi Said, the outfit's Registration Committee's official, for their excellent service at the club.

Said is moreover the GSM Group's Director of Investment, with the company being Yanga's main sponsors.

Yanga conveyed the greetings via the club's social media accounts after the club had lifted this season's Mapinduzi Cup tournament's trophy.

The outfit posted a picture of the two leaders carrying the Mapinduzi Cup tournament's top honour.

"Success begins with good and effective leadership, you are truly exemplary leaders in our club," the team stated in the message.

Under the leadership Yanga have ended their three-year trophy drought, clinching the Mapinduzi Cup tournament's title in the event's final, which took place in Zanzibar last Wednesday. Yanga edged rivals Simba SC 4-3 in

penalty shootout of the final after the tie's 90 minutes ended in a 0-0 draw.

Kenyan keeper, Farouk Shikhalo, was Yanga's hero, given he saved one penalty by Simba's center-back Joash Onyango, with Simba's other penalty taken by Meddie Kagere hitting the crossbar.

The champions' midfielder, Said Ntibanzokiza, was a constant menace to Simba in the tie.

He netted the spot kick, which won Yanga the competition's top honour.

The midfielder disclosed shortly after the penalty shootout his teammates asked him to take the pitch and he did so.

He said: "I was not scheduled to play but my team mates asked me to play and I said I would play because the sport is my job and I have done so, I am happy."

"It is time for our team's fans to continue supporting the side," he noted.

Yanga's chairman Mshindo Msolla stated the squad was set to make its way back to Dar es Salaam a day later and go directly to the camp.

Morris sees bright future for Taifa Stars

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

VETERAN center-back, Aggrey Morris, played his final game for Tanzania's national team 'Taifa Stars', when the team faced Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) national football team in a friendly clash in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday.

The defender used the match to officially announce his retirement from the national squad and concentrate on club duties for Azam FC, which is coached by George Lwandamina.

Morris received a guard of honour, as well as being presented with a framed national team jersey signed by Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) officials, past and present players of the national team he played with.

He further was presented with 5m/- as gratitude for his patriotism.

He played for only three minutes in the friendly tie, which ended in 1-1 draw, to make sure he puts his feet on



Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) president, Wallace Karia (C), hands over a framed national team 'Taifa Stars' jersey signed by the side's players, technical bench and officials to Aggrey Morris as part of the defender's memory of his retirement from the squad. Looking on (R) is Deputy Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Abdallah Ulega, and the ministry's head, Innocent Bashungwa (partly hidden). PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

the pitch for his farewell.

The clash moreover was part of preparations for Taifa Stars' players as they were set to travel to Cameroon to take part in the African Nations Championship (CHAN) tournament, slated for January 16-February 7.

Speaking after the friendly match Morris said: "It's been a long journey to serve the national team for 12 years, and now I think it's the right time for me to let the youngsters

continue to thrive on the national team, because there are so many good central defenders like Bakari Mwamnyeto, Abdallah Khery and Ibrahim Ame, all doing well, and this is my right time to retire."

Morris also opened up about his club career and he never hesitated to say he will hang up his boots next season.

He noted: "As for Azam FC I will retire in the 2022 season completing my two-year contract.

Since I have already completed my tenure with the national team, then I will wait until my contract expires with my dear club then I will retire from football completely."

Zanzibar-born Morris has also represented the Isles soccer team, playing 15 games and scoring six goals from 2009-2012 when he served the squad, alias 'Zanzibar Heroes'.

Morris, aged 36, is still playing for his club

Azam FC and he is the squad's skipper.

He joined the side in 2009 from Mafunzo FC of Zanzibar where he began playing in 2003.

Morris was voted as the Best Player of the 2011/12 Vodacom Premier League season.

He received thunderous cheers after the top flight organisers had picked him for being outstanding in his matches and showing high sense of discipline.

During that season, Azam FC grabbed five of the 12 awards, including the biggest of them all (for players)- the Footballer of the Year award that went to Morris.

Morris has had a lot of success with Azam FC, he won the Tanzania Mainland Premier League trophy once in the 2013/14 season.

He helped Azam FC clinch the Mapinduzi Cup showpiece five times, he moreover has helped the team win the CECFA Kagame Cup tournament twice.

He has collected a total of eight trophies in the time he has played for Azam FC.

Three U-20 players included in Taifa Stars' squad for CHAN finals

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

THREE youthful players have been included in Tanzania's national team, Taifa Stars, for the 2021 Total African Nations Championship (CHAN) finals, which take place in Cameroon from January 16-February 7.

The three players, Paschal Gaudance, Samwel Jackson and Abdulrazack Hamza, were part of the national U-20 football team, Ngorongoro Heroes, which qualified for the 2021 Africa U-20 Cup of Nations' tournament, scheduled for next month in Mauritania.

The finals will serve as an opportunity for the trio to gain experience and ultimately put good displays for Ngorongoro Heroes in the next month's showpiece.

Taifa Stars head coach Etienne Ndayiragije believes his team is ready for the CHAN finals.

Ndayiragije made the remarks after the international friendly match against Democratic Re-



Senior national soccer team 'Taifa Stars' players participate in training in Dar es Salaam recently to shape up for 2021 Africa Nations Championship (CHAN) finals. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

public of Congo(DRC) national squad, which took place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday, and the two teams drew 1-1.

He noted: "First I have got the first eleven, we started training from January 9-11, a day before the encounter."

"I would like to congratulate the players as they did quite well because I know they were physically

exhausted as I tried so hard to push them to finish 90 minutes."

"So after the game, I figured out we could do better, but we have seen some challenges in the game and we are going to deal with them."

"I'm confident we will have a good game in Cameroon."

On Tuesday's encounter the squad had a lot of changes, especially on the defense

and front line where new faces were introduced in the squad.

Ndayiragije noted: "It has come to a point where we have to give birth to a new generation, and so in the transition period I urge people to be patient and if you see mistakes we must first let them get used as the past experienced players did."

"Those who we see are

better today, they were offered a chance to grow earlier; they would not have started on top.

"You could witness how the match began and see how the boys kept gaining by time."

"If we trust them and give them time, the future team will be much better."

The tactician moreover maintained that his team played collaboratively from the beginning till the end of the game.

According to him, the squad attacked and defended together so the results were brought about by team's efforts.

"The important thing is that we attack as a team, we defend as a team."

"We are not attacking with one striker but as a whole."

"So we scored one goal as a team and conceded one goal as a team."

He further asked the Tanzanians to continue praying for their national team as they head to play in the CHAN finals.

WASHINGTON

THE A-list is back. How A-list? Try Lady Gaga and J. Lo.

Inauguration officials announced on Thursday that the glittery duo would appear in person on Jan. 20, with Gaga singing the national anthem as Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are sworn in on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol, and Jennifer Lopez giving a musical performance.

The announcement comes a day after word that Tom Hanks will host a 90-minute primetime TV special celebrating Biden's inauguration. Other performers include Justin Timberlake, Jon Bon Jovi, Demi Lovato and Ant Clemons.

Despite a raging pandemic that is forcing most inaugural events online, it was a sign that Hollywood was back and eager to embrace the new president-elect four years after many big names stayed away from the inauguration of President Donald Trump, hugely unpopular in Hollywood.

More stars return to inauguration



FILE - Beyonce sings the national anthem at the ceremonial swearing-in at the U.S. Capitol during the 57th Presidential Inauguration on Jan. 21, 2013, in Washington. A-list celebrities are flocking back to inaugural events four years after many stayed away from the inauguration of Donald Trump, hugely unpopular in Hollywood. (AP Photo)

The question: How would the star wattage play across the country as Biden seeks to unite a bruised nation? Eric Dezenhall, a Washington crisis management consultant and former Reagan administration official, predicted reaction would fall "along tribal

lines."

"I think it all comes down to the reinforcement of pre-existing beliefs," Dezenhall said. "If you're a Biden supporter, it's nice to see Lady Gaga perform." But, he added, "what rallied Trump supporters

was the notion of an uber-elite that had nothing to do at all with them and that they couldn't relate to."

Presidential historian Tevi Troy quipped that the starry Gaga-J. Lo lineup was not A-list, but D-list - "for Democratic."

"When Democrats win you get the more standard celebrities," said Troy, author of "What Jefferson Read, Ike Watched and Obama Tweeted: 200 Years of Popular Culture in the White House."

"With Republicans you tend to get country music stars and race-car drivers." Referring to Lady Gaga's outspoken support for the Biden-Harris ticket, he said he was nostalgic for the days when celebrities were not so political.

"Call me a hopeless romantic, but I liked the old days when Bob Hope or Frank Sinatra would come to these events and they were not overtly political," he said.

Still, he said, Biden's unity message won't be derailed. "In the end, I don't think having Lady Gaga or J. Lo is all that divisive," he said.

Attendance at the inauguration will be severely limited, due to both the pandemic and fears of continued violence, following last week's storming of the Capitol.

Outside the official events, one of the more prominent galas each inauguration is The Creative Coalition's quadrennial ball, a benefit for arts education. This year, the ball is entirely virtual.

But it is star-studded nonetheless: The event, which will involve food being delivered simultaneously to attendees in multiple cities, will boast celebrity hosts including Jason Alexander, David Arquette, Matt Bomer, Christopher Jackson, Ted Danson, Lea DeLaria, Keegan Michael-Key, Chrissy Metz, Mandy Patinkin and many others.

Robin Bronk, CEO of the non-partisan arts advocacy group, said she's been deluged with celebrities eager to participate in some way. The event typically brings in anywhere from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million, and this year the arts community is struggling like never before.

'Real Madrid's Supercopa elimination 'not a failure'

MADRID

REAL Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane does not consider his team's elimination from the Spanish Supercopa at the hands of Athletic Bilbao "a failure."

Athletic beat holders Real Madrid, 2-1, in Thursday's semifinal in Malaga and will face Barcelona in Sunday's title game in Seville.

"It's not a failure," Zidane said after the game. "A failure is not to give your all on the pitch and not to try. The team tried but we couldn't get the equaliser. Life is like this. You can't always win."

Zidane admitted his players underperformed in the opening half. Raul Garcia struck twice before the interval to give the Basque outfit a 2-0 half-time lead.

However, the French tactician said he was proud of his team's reaction in the second half. Marco Asensio came close to scoring but was denied twice by the woodwork before teammate Karim Benzema reduced the arrears in the 73rd minute.

"We didn't start the game well," Zidane said. "They had two chances and scored two goals. When you are 2-0 down it's always difficult. The second half was totally different, we created lots of chances, hit the woodwork twice."

Zidane, whose side were held to a goalless draw at Osasuna on Saturday in La Liga, believes his team must improve.

"We need to turn the page and continue to work," he said. "We can't go mad, we just have to keep working. When things don't go well you have to work and insist on that. Now we need to rest and think about our next game."

Zidane also expressed confidence in Eden Hazard despite his continued struggles.

The Belgian, Real's record signing, has only scored two goals in all competitions this season and offered little in attack.

"He needs to recover confidence, play a great game or score a goal, just to do something different. We know what a great player he is and we need to be patient with him as he is working hard," Zidane said.

"We are behind him and we must give him time. The fans want to see the best version of Eden so we must be patient. We're sticking with him and he really wants to step up. But today it wasn't just Eden, we're all in this together."

Real Madrid next visit Spanish third-division side Alcoyano in the Copa del Rey round-of-32 on Jan. 20.

(Agencies)

Premier League bosses hit back over virus celebration fears

LONDON

WEST Brom boss Sam Allardyce on Thursday led Premier League managers in questioning the need for new coronavirus guidelines over goal celebrations.

The Premier League have issued the new celebration edict to clubs in a bid limit the virus spread at a time when Covid-19 cases are spiking in Britain.

There have been several Premier League, FA Cup and lower league fixtures postponed after virus outbreaks at clubs in recent weeks.

Players continued to celebrate goals with group hugs this week, leading one MP to describe those actions as "brainless".

However, Allardyce doesn't believe it makes any difference if players are prevented from hugging when they have already passed virus testing.

"Certainly jumping on each other and hugging each other is out of the question now. I'm not sure why we're in a bubble here and we get tested twice a week that it makes a difference," Allardyce said.

"But if that's what the protocols are we'll try our best to adhere to it. But I can't promise that anyone won't get carried away if they score a goal."

Chelsea manager Frank Lampard also warned it will be difficult to "dictate emotion", but accepted players have to take their responsibilities seriously. "So to control the emotions is a fair ask, but to dictate emotion will probably be very difficult on the pitch," he said.

"Let's just see how this goes because as it goes along we will see if players can control it. I hope they can."

- 'Awful message' -

In a joint statement, the Football Association, Premier League, EFL and Women's Super League said they were confident their tightened virus protocols would enable them to finish the season.

"Safety is a collective effort and football requires the ongoing support of clubs, managers, players and all those involved in staging matches to continue to manage the spread of infection and set the right example to the public on and off the pitch," the statement said.

"We will offer guidance, education and support as well as reviewing our practices to ensure they remain of the highest standard.

"Our three organisations have confidence in our COVID-19 protocols and our ability to bring the season to a successful conclusion."

Premier League managers and captains are attending a series of virtual meetings set up by the league on Thursday and Friday to talk through the new protocols.

AFP

Tierney's absence highlights how devoid Arsenal are of attacking creativity

By James Olley, Senior Writer, ESPN FC

IT would be churlish to suggest Kieran Tierney was Arsenal's man-of-the-match against Crystal Palace given he wasn't even out there for the 0-0 draw but the left-back's importance to Mikel Arteta was underlined in his absence here.

Tierney had helped set the tone for the Gunners' post-Christmas revival which saw them end a run of seven winless Premier League games with three consecutive victories and an extra-time FA Cup success against Newcastle. The decision to play Tierney for the entire 120 minutes of that third-round tie when several other regulars were given at least part of the evening off was both an understandable desire to keep an in-form player in the team but also an unnecessary risk viewed in the context of what followed.

Tierney was unavailable against Palace due to what the club initially stated was unspecified "muscle tightness", code perhaps for cumulative fatigue given this was

only the second Premier League game he hadn't started all season. But it later emerged Tierney had been forced out of the game just a few hours before kick-off and will undergo an MRI scan on Friday to determine the extent of the problem.

"We'll probably know more tomorrow after testing him, having the evolution of the injury, and how long he is going to be out for," said Arteta.

"Certainly, it was a big disappointment to lose him. It is a challenge when you make the gameplan for the day and within a few hours just before the game, he has to pull out. Kieran's progression in the last few months has been incredible and now it is for other players to step in."

No Arsenal player has created more chances from open play this season than Tierney's 20 and they desperately missed him here. Ainsley Maitland-Niles has been tried as a left-back from time-to-time -- most significantly perhaps in Unai Emery's first game in charge against Manchester City in



Kieran Tierney

Aug. 2018 -- and as a left wing-back when Arteta favoured a 3-4-3 formation during Project Restart but it is not a position he is naturally suited to. The 23-year-old struggled from the outset defensively and failed to provide even a vague approximation of Tierney's attacking threat, registering just one cross in the 65 minutes before he was substituted.

Something similar could be said of Hector Bellerin on the opposite flank, who managed to work himself into more dangerous positions but frequently made the wrong decision, most memorably taking

the ball off Alexandre Lacazette's toe as he prepared to shoot from Bukayo Saka's cross. Bellerin's form has been underwhelming for some time now, and Cedric Soares must be wondering what he needs to do to get a run in this team. But the reliance on Tierney at left-back is more profound following the decision to allow Sead Kolasinac to rejoin Schalke on loan until the end of the season.

Along with Maitland-Niles, who still harbours hopes of establishing himself as the midfielder he always planned to be, Saka is the next-best understudy for Tierney

and yet deploying him there robs the Gunners of one of the brightest attacking talents in more advanced areas.

Saka and Emile Smith Rowe showed up their more celebrated teammates Willian and Nicolas Pepe against Newcastle but they struggled to break down a typically well-drilled Palace side on this occasion. Smith Rowe has thrived of late but to ask a 20-year-old to repeatedly deliver with just a handful of top-flight games under his belt -- this was just his fifth Premier League start -- is perhaps a measure of the transition period Arsenal are in the midst of.

Width is often the key in these situations but with Maitland-Niles and Bellerin unable to make inroads, Arsenal found themselves disappearing down cul-de-sacs and lacking creativity reminiscent of the most troubling periods during Arteta's tenure.

This was the end of a three-game winning run -- four if you count that extra-time FA Cup victory -- and so there is a sense of momentum being checked. Arsenal

haven't beaten Palace since Arsene Wenger left the club in the summer of 2018, a run now stretching back four draws and one defeat, and the lack of consistency in performance which contributed to the Frenchman's departure continues to linger as a leading issue.

The sheer volume of games is catching up with a lot of teams and Arteta believes Arsenal are no different.

"We created a lot of situations against the low block but lacked the final quality," said the Spaniard. "We probably didn't do enough to win the game. We are playing a lot of games and you can see fatigue is paying a price, many players aren't fresh."

"We had a period that was fatigue-related where we kept giving the ball away. We lacked the quality in the final third to win the game."

Arsenal's more attacking players must take responsibility but in the past, they have been bailed out by Tierney bombing forward from deep. Arteta will be praying his marauding left-back isn't out for long.

Man United finally good enough to win trophies - Rashford

LONDON

MARCUS Rashford said Manchester United are ready "now more than we were two years ago" to fight for trophies, and there is nothing sweeter than scoring against Liverpool.

Manchester United are three points ahead of Liverpool at the top of the Premier League table and will face Liverpool in the Premier League on Sunday -- the first of two matches within a week for the rivals after they were drawn for the FA Cup fourth round.

Rashford spoke in a wide-ranging interview at the Football Writers' Association awards when he was commended for his campaign to lobby the UK government to fund free school meals for children, and given the Tribute Award.

In a tribute at the awards ceremony, Sir Alex Ferguson congratulated the 23-year-old, who was also awarded an MBE last year, for his work on the campaign outside of football.

"I have known him since being a kid of seven years of age, and seen him develop through the ranks of Manchester United into a truly wonderful person," he said. "Apart from his football life, what he has achieved in the last few months is quite astonishing, how he has helped the people in need is a truly amazing achievement."

"I would like to congratulate him on that. He has shown to young people in particular there is a different way of dealing with life."

"He has shown great humility, he has shown courage to do what he did, so this achievement is well deserved and should be recognised with what he has done."

On the pitch, Rashford believes with the Bruno Fernandes and Anthony Martial attacking duo,

United have one of the most versatile squads "probably in the Premier League" and it is the start of more success for the club which has dipped since Sir Alex' years in charge.

"Ultimately we are more dangerous, we can score goals at any time. But we can do much better. I believe it is still the start of something which can go on to be an unbelievable connection," he said.

"Just the forward line in general at the moment which we have -- we can play in so many different ways, in different positions with different personnel. We can just be so strong and for us, that is what is key because if we want to win trophies and win the leagues, then you need versatility."

"We are a team which is still improving, we are in a good run of form, so we have to just try to keep focusing on ourselves and do the best we can do. As long as we do that, you walk off the pitch with no regrets."

Having been knocked out of the Champions League and the semifinal of the Carabao Cup already this season, Rashford said having leaders in the squad has been key to push the team forward, despite social distancing making it difficult.

"As soon as we go out on the training pitch, that is when we can be together and have to do a lot of the work because the small things which would happen in the normal settings of a changing room, like conversations and the lessons you would have learned off some of the older players, that has been taken away from us," he said.

"There are things which have happened where if you don't come out and be a leader, someone that the squad can look to in difficult moments, then it will



Rashford said Man United's Bruno Fernandes and Anthony Martial attacking duo, make them one of the most versatile squads 'probably in the Premier League.' (Agencies)

continue to happen. We have to show we are ready to fight for what we want -- and what we all want is success.

"We are more ready now than we were two years ago in terms of leaders on the pitch and ready to fight for trophies. We are in the FA Cup and [have] the Premier League left, so we have to try to go and win both of them trophies, and just do our best to continue improving."

Rashford also said that his former manager Jose Mourinho had helped him become more "savvy" in the box to win penalties.

His comments follow some debate over how many penalties Manchester United team are awarded, with Liverpool

manager Jurgen Klopp saying United had more spot kicks in two years than he had in 5-and-a-half at Liverpool.

Rashford said he had been denied several penalty claims while working under Mourinho and that the Portuguese had told him he had to become more aware in the box. "Jose said, 'If you're not savvy about the way you do it, then you are not going to get given it,'" Rashford said.

Mourinho left United in 2018 and since Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's first league match in December of that year they have been awarded 27 Premier League penalties -- more than any other team, according to Sky Sports.

"As a forward line, we

want to go and score goals," he added.

"There is no way you are going to let somebody take the ball off you, so for me it is just a case of us wanting to score goals and the teams wanting to defend goals -- and you know, penalties can happen."

Rashford also revealed when he was younger, despite having grown up in the United academy, he looked up to Arsenal's Thierry Henry in the No. 9 position.

"When I was younger, about 16 or 17, when I first started to play in that No. 9 position, [Henry] was someone that I looked at because he is not a traditional No. 9."

"He drifts to the left, he does things with the ball, he is not what you

would consider the traditional No. 9 in English football," he said.

"I knew I could never be ... a traditional No. 9 who is going to hold the ball up, win headers and do stuff like that. But I also know the qualities that I do have and what I can do as a No. 9."

"He was someone that I paid close detail to and he is just a wonderful footballer and he knows his football as well ... It is important for me to keep taking in that knowledge and I just try to treat my brain like a sponge really, and just soak as much information in as I can."

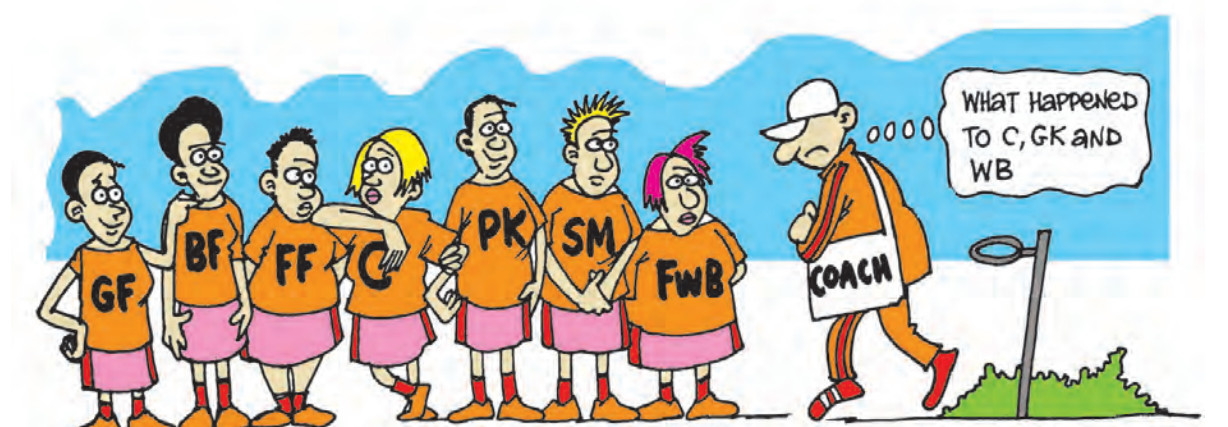
As for the approaching Liverpool fixture, when asked if there was anything sweeter than scoring against the Merseyside club, Rashford said: "For me, no. Liverpool and [Man] City, there is no better games."

"[Liverpool] are hard to beat at home. For us to beat them we are going to have to be at our best, it is as simple as that really."

"Nothing changes for us, we try to be at our best for every single game. We will approach that game in the same way. If you do that, as players if you give all you can give, you know that when you come off the pitch you have left everything out there, there is not much you can do."

(Agencies)

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Tierney's absence highlights how devoid Arsenal are of attacking creativity

PAGE 19

Mwakalebela: Yanga still following up Bernard Morrison's case



Bernard Morrison

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

YANGA's vice-chairman Fredrick Mwakalebela has confirmed that the club has already made payment for the hearing of its case against Simba SC midfielder, Bernard Morrison, at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

Yanga still believe Morrison, who played for them in the 2019/20 season, is their legitimate player, saying Simba did not follow procedures in roping the player in.

Mwakalebela made the statement shortly after Yanga had won this year's Mapinduzi Cup tournament with 4-3 victory over Simba SC in the final, which took place in Zanzibar mid this week.

The Yanga official made it clear that they had already

made payment for the case.

"Yesterday was the deadline for payment, we are determined to get justice, so, we are waiting for the case to be decided, when it will be successful," Mwakalebela said.

Yanga appealed to the CAS against decisions made by Tanzania Football Federation (TFF)'s Statutes and Players Status Committee on the validity of Morrison's contract with the club.

It should be noted that the case had led to Morrison being approved as a free agent and he later joined Simba SC.

Tuesday turned out to be the last day for the trial to be scheduled for a judge and a court hearing, which made it clear that Morrison is awaiting a response.

In another development, Yanga's Chief Adviser, Senzo Mbatha, disclosed much as he recognizes the Mapinduzi Cup tournament is not a high profile showdown, that will not stop his club from celebrating its success in the competition.

Mbatha, who served as Simba SC's Chief Executive Officer before joining Yanga in August 2020, said his club is thrilled to beat Simba in the Mapinduzi Cup tournament, which takes place every year.

He said: "I know the Mapinduzi Cup tournament is not a high profile event, but the main thing is we have become the competition's champions and, better yet, we have defeated Mainland Tanzania Premier League champions Simba SC."

"It doesn't matter how big or small the tournament is, but when you meet a strong team like Simba SC you have to be stronger, and that's what our players did and today (Wednesday), they are celebrating their success", he said.

Mbatha was one of Yanga top officials, who had travelled with the side to the Isles to battle it out in the showpiece.

The 2021 Mapinduzi Cup tournament climaxed mid this week, with Yanga emerging as the showpiece's champions by beating Simba SC 4-3 in the final.

Outfits that participated in the 2021 Mapinduzi Cup are Zanzibar's Jamhuri, Chipukizi, Malindi FC and Mlandege, while Mainland Tanzania was represented by Yanga, Simba SC, Namungo FC and Azam FC in the event.

Yanga have therefore won the Mapinduzi Cup for the second time, whereas Simba have won it three times.

EATV MONDAY

TONIGHT @ 9:00

UJENZI

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
14:00 Wanawake Live (r)
14:30 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Copa Coca-Cola (r)
16:00 Akili & Me (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 S5ELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 5SPORTS LIVE
22:30 Bongo Hits

TONIGHT @ 9PM

Find out how using glass blocks from Canghul Traders Limited can improve your home decor

And Tanfix Quality Choice has an innovative solution for wall fungus

eastafrica RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Rajasthan Royals find new global investors

DELHI

THE creator of the Laver Cup in tennis, the CEO of British Telecom, the founder of Betfair are among the global entrepreneurs who have invested in the Rajasthan Royals in a fresh funding drive. The investors injected the funds via the franchise's lead stakeholder Emerging Media IPL Limited (EM IPL), which is owned by UK-based businessman Manoj Badale.

The franchise has not disclosed the value of the funding exercise, but the development means EM IPL is now the leading investor in the Royal with over 50% stake, further establishing Badale as the lead owner. The Royals, one of the eight original IPL franchises, won the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2008. Their fortunes have swung differently since then as the Royals finished last in IPL 2020, which was held in the UAE.

"Funds were raised from a small number of new individual investors, including Ian McKinnon, one of the founding partners of TEAMS, a leading sports and entertainment company and the creator of the Laver Cup, UK business leaders including BT CEO Phil Jansen, FutureLearn and Network International Chairman Ron Kalifa and Betfair founder Ed Wray have invested, as well as Arizona-based tech entrepreneurs Kal Somani, Simer Mayo and Mihir Patel," the franchise said in a media release on Friday.

Despite being billed as an Indian domestic T20 franchise tournament, the IPL has grown into the most lucrative cricket event in the world. In 2017, Star India bought the five-year global media rights for a record sum of US\$ 2.55 billion (INR 16,347.5 crore). Recently, the BCCI approved to make the IPL a ten-team event from the 2022 edition.

While Somani said the IPL's "huge potential" could not be ignored, Badale said the growing appeal of the IPL globally - the tournament has its own free window for nearly two months in the Indian summer - was what investors recognised. "Investors are now recognising the value of sports franchises," Badale said. "EM IPL's increased ownership of the franchise and expanded network of US-based, value-add investors presents an exciting opportunity to drive the growth of both the Rajasthan Royals and the IPL."

Mike Fordham, new Royals CEO

The Royals have also announced Mike Fordham as the Group CEO. Fordham was part of the International Management Group (IMG) team that helped the IPL take off in 2008. According to the Royals' release, Fordham also helped the ECB in "development" of The Hundred, which is scheduled to start this summer in England after its launch was postponed in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

AGENCIES

Gymkhana cricketers clobber Tamil Nadu Sports Club in 2021 DC Gymkhana Cup

By Guardian Reporter

GYMKHANA Cricket Club made short work of Tamil Nadu Sports Club in a recent 2021 Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) Gymkhana Cup tournament game, posting an emphatic seven-wicket victory over the latter in the encounter which took place in the city.

Opening batsman Kannan Natarajan was so far the batsman that made his presence count after Tamil Nadu Sports Club had got the opportunity to start batting in the tie to end with 67 runs all out in 13.4 overs of the 15-over duel.

Natarajan scored 25 runs which included two boundaries, none of the rest of the team's performers ended with double digit figure.

Low order batsmen Manivannan Thillaikkannu and Merison Pathrose ended with nine runs and eight runs respectively in brief spells which hardly suggested the club had the audacity to end the innings with a convincing score.

Krutik Thakkar had most wickets for Gymkhana Cricket Club, ending his spell with four wickets and giving away eight runs in three overs.

He had one maiden over in his three overs, ending with an economy rate of 2.67.

He was ably assisted by Umang Somani in preventing Tamil Nadu



Gymkhana Cricket Club's players pictured after facing Tamil Nadu Sports Club in a 2021 Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) Gymkhana Cup tournament's clash, which took place in the city recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TCA

Sports Club's batsmen from ending their innings with a bigger total.

Somani ended with two wickets, conceding 13 runs in 2.4 overs.

With Gymkhana Cricket Club chasing a modest target of 70 runs, the side hardly wasted time in the chase, notching 70 runs for the loss of three wickets in 9.3 overs.

Opening batsman Amit Raghuvanshi confidently led the team's chase,

posting 25 runs which included three boundaries.

Brief spells by experienced player, Yakesh Patel, and youthful batsman, Hamisi Lyimo, who recorded eight runs and two runs respectively, could hardly weaken Gymkhana Cricket Club's resolve.

The impressive Thakkar forged a four-wicket stand with skipper Harsheel Shah to make certain of the

outfit's chase.

Thakkar recorded 19 runs not out, which consisted of two boundaries, Shah ended with seven runs not out.

Nirmalkumar Balakrishnan was Tamil Nadu Sports Club's only bowler, who somewhat held his own against the opponents, finishing with two wickets and giving away 24 runs in two overs.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

