



## ENVIRONMENT



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## 'Covid-19 vaccine could be ready by end of this year'

WASHINGTON

A VACCINE for the novel coronavirus infection could be ready by the end of this year, affirms Dr Anthony Fauci (pictured), director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

The top US epidemiologist said in an interview yesterday that if all things fall in the right place, "we might have a vaccine for Covid-19 by November or December."

The World Health Organisation (WHO) says that more than 100 vaccine candidates are being developed across the world, with a handful of such likely vaccines already in human trials. China's CanSino adenovirus vaccine, Oxford University's adenovirus vaccine, Moderna's mRNA vaccine emerged as the most promising vaccine candidates for Covid-19.

"I still think that we have a good chance, if all things fall in the right place, that we might have a vaccine that would be deployable by the end of the year, by December or November," said Fauci, a key member of the White House coronavirus task force.

Meanwhile, a top US epidemiologist, Robert Schooley, a professor of medicine with the

**"I still think that we have a good chance, if all things fall in the right place, that we might have a vaccine that would be deployable by the end of the year, by December or November"**

Division of Infectious Diseases and Global Public Health at the University of California, San Diego, said that the results of China's Covid-19 vaccine trial are 'very impressive.'

A study published by the medical journal Lancet, the phase 1 trial of an Ad5 vectored Covid-19 vaccine in Wuhan has been found to be safe, well-tolerated and able to generate an immune response against SARS-COV-2 that causes Covid-19 in humans.

Fauci said although there are lots of variables when it comes to vaccines, development continues to proceed. A second wave of coronavirus outbreak could happen, but the US can prevent it if it reopens its economy correctly. "It could happen, but it is not inevitable," Fauci said.

He said he's not sure whether hydroxychloroquine should be banned as a usable treatment for coronavirus. Scientific data is quite evident now about

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# Govt issues guidelines for reopening schools



University of Dar es Salaam Chancellor former President Jakaya Kikwete pictured yesterday inspecting the university's hostels popularly known as President Magufuli hostels which will host students again effective from next week after temporarily running as a quarantine centre for screening people for Covid-19. Photo: Romana Malliya

By Guardian Reporter

GUIDELINES are now available on the protection of students from coronavirus infections once classes resume on Monday. Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister Ummu Mwalimu stipulated the conditions in a statement yesterday, underlining that schools and colleges must decontaminate buildings and school buses, apart from re-arranging classroom and dormitory occupancy modalities.

They also must ensure the wearing of face masks and put up facilities for students to wash their hands with soap and running water or alcohol-based hand rubs.

The minister said students with Covid-19 symptoms must be tested immediately, while special face masks for students with hearing impairment must also be provided. This will enable them to interact with teachers and other students, she said.

Students with heart complications, asthma and other respiratory diseases should be spared the wearing of face coverings, she affirmed, signaling also that spirits are not allowed as an alternative to hand sanitisers.

"The spraying of disinfectants should be done 72 hours before schools reopen (on Monday). Teachers must use the first day educating students on Covid-19 preventive measures and recognizing symptoms of the

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## UDSM ex-quarantine hostels all ready to receive students

By Guardian Reporter

UNIVERSITY of Dar es Salaam hostels which were for some time being used as a quarantine centre hosting up to 844 suspected Covid-19 patients are now ready to accommodate students.

Neema Kweba, a UDSM medical officer standing in for the Dar es Salaam Regional Medical Officer said that student dormitories, popularly known as Magufuli Hostels, are now ready for use after

being sprayed with disinfectant.

She made the remarks in briefing a visiting delegation led by UDSM Chancellor Dr Jakaya Kikwete, the fourth phase president.

Chancellor Kikwete was accompanied by UDSM Vice Chancellor Prof William Anangisyie, Ubungo District Commissioner Kisare Makori and UDSM Council Chairman Justice (rtD) Damian Lubuva.

Universities, colleges and form six classes reopen on Monday as per President John

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## Minister: No ginger, lemon, spirit for returning students

By Guardian Reporter

STUDENTS will not be carrying items such as ginger, lemons and methylated spirit when they report back to schools and colleges on Monday.

Education, Science and Technology minister Prof Joyce Ndalichako announced the ban in Dodoma yesterday, directing schools to prepare foods that would boost students' body immunity alongside Vitamin C.

She said that the government would take stringent measures, including deregistration, against schools proved to have taken advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic to generate extra income by imposing additional charges. Some schools have been reported to ask

parents to make additional payments as well as directing students to report to school with a list of items including ginger, lemons and methylated spirit, she noted.

She warned school heads against turning the pandemic into a project as some of them had ordered students to report with two litres of spirit each.

Too much consumption of the above-mentioned food items may cause cancerous diseases, the minister said, adding: "Some schools are issuing impromptu directives while knowing that Covid-19 preventive measures must be issued by health experts." Spirits are inflammable and may cause

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## SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

**FACT 1** Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

**FACT 2** For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

**FACT 3** Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.



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**FACT 4** There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

**FACT 5** You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:

- Fever
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
- Seek medical advice if you
- Develop symptoms
- AND
- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

[cdc.gov/COVID-19](https://cdc.gov/COVID-19)



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## Govt issues guidelines for reopening schools

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disease," the minister specified.

Universities and colleges must also ensure availability of hand washing facilities at classroom entrances, staff offices, libraries, dormitories, dining halls and washrooms. Provision of water, sanitation, waste management, hygiene and environmental cleaning must all be in place, the statement noted.

There should also be automatic water taps to facilitate hand washing for people with disabilities. Colleges should train their health workers on how to attend to people suspected of having Covid-19, plus ensuring availability of essential medical equipment for use in emergencies.

Boarding schools must re-arrange beds and restrict students from sharing various personal use things like towels, buckets, bed sheets and soap.

On face masks, the minister recommended colleges to put in place special arrangements for production of cotton fabric face masks which should be sold at reasonable prices. It is mandatory for both teachers and students to wear the cotton fabric face masks, the minister noted.

It has been scientifically proven that cotton fabric face masks made with

double layers can prevent a person from contracting the coronavirus.

School bus conductors must ensure that no student is allowed into the buses without wearing face masks, the statement indicated.

The first Covid-19 patient was reported in the country on March 16 upon which the government imposed a range of prevention and containment measures, including closure of schools, colleges and universities.

Mid last week President John Magufuli ordered the reopening of universities, colleges and form six classes on June 1, when updating the country on the rapid decline of Covid-19 cases.

Meanwhile there are now more than over 100,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus across the continent.

Updates of the John Hopkins University and the Africa Centres for Disease Control on Covid-19 say Africa had 124,733 confirmed cases and has seen a total of 3,700 deaths, while 51,059 patients had recovered.

*Boarding schools must re-arrange beds and restrict students from sharing various personal use things like towels, buckets, bed sheets and soap*



Arusha regional commissioner Mrisho Gambo (R) listens to Vodacom Tanzania PLC Northern Zone head of sales George Venanty (3rd-R) on Wednesday shortly after the firm donated incubators worth 42m/- for supporting premature babies at Muriet Hospital on Wednesday. The assistance was routed through the Vodacom Tanzania Foundation. Second right is Arusha Regional Medical Officer Dr Kheri Kagya. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## Minister: No ginger, lemon, spirit for returning students

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fire outbreaks in dormitories, she cautioned, stressing that parents and guardians should merely provide students with re-usable cloth face masks.

"Students should observe social distancing and avoid being crammed in debates, classrooms or dormitories. They should also take note of other protocols of hygiene," the minister urged.

She warned people trying to use the pandemic as a money-making project or starting to ask for school fees while the students had already paid.

Prof Ndalichako emphasized that learning sessions will resume from where teachers ended when the schools were closed around mid-

March. The government has been issuing directives to school owners and those running the schools on how lessons will be provided.

"Some food items are difficult to get. I even do not know how and where I can get lemon powder. Let us not create fear among students since they are only going to stay at the schools for one month," she cautioned.

Prof Ndalichako insisted that schools ensure availability of WASH facilities to facilitate frequent hand washing, saying that once the facilities are in place there would be no need for students to go to school with hand sanitiser.

WASH facilities refer to the provision of water, sanitation, waste management, hygiene and environmental cleanliness.

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Magufuli's directive following a decline in the number of Covid-19 cases.

Kweba said that 426 out of the 844 people quarantined at the hostels came into contact with Covid-19 patients and the rest were travellers arriving in the country from Covid-19 hit countries.

The buildings, rooms and the entire premises have been disinfected and have remained open for more than one month. Students should not worry of remains of Covid-19 in the premises, she said.

Quarantined people accommodated at the hostels had tested negative despite developing some Covid-19 symptoms. She said the buildings were used for the quarantine for 21 days from April 5 to 25, she elaborated.

"The hostels are still equipped with protective equipment such as water tanks and waste destruction tools. We have destroyed all the wastes produced

## UDSM ex-quarantine hostels all ready to receive students

during the quarantine period," the medic observed.

Dr Kikwete said that he had earlier developed fear after hearing that arrivals from various countries and those who came into contact with patients will be quarantined at the hostels. But the government has assured students of the facility's safety, he stated.

"My worry was on the safety of our students. I asked myself what if these guests bring infections at the area. It took some time to decide but we later agreed that the buildings be used, but with great care," he said.

He appealed to students to stay in the hostels comfortably and without fear as the government has

taken all the precautions, including decontamination of the buildings.

Prof Anangisye stated that the university management has seen to it that all required preparations are made, and the facility was ready to receive students early next week.

"The majority of students especially those living in Dar es Salaam have started reporting to the university to finalize registration procedures," he said, noting that this exercise will be completed during the weekend.

Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister Ummu Mwalimu on April 5 announced that the newly built hostels would host travellers from coronavirus-hit countries arriving in

Dar es Salaam by air or ship. They would be put under the mandatory 14-day quarantine.

"The idea is to ensure that we control movements of the travellers," she said, citing reports about a traveller under quarantine in a Dar es Salaam hotel having escaped and found hiding in Iringa.

"So, to ensure that Tanzanians are protected from the coronavirus, we have decided to bring all travellers to one area which will be guarded around the clock. The (Dar es Salaam) regional commissioner, who also chairs the regional security committee, will be in-charge of this operation in collaboration with my ministry," the minister had declared.



Halima Saguti (R), programme manager with the Tanga Elderly Women Resources Centre, trains legal aid assistants in Tanga city yesterday under a project implemented by the centre. Photo: Correspondent Oscar Kasimiri

## Kagame fires two governors citing lack of accountability

KIGALI

RWANDAN President Paul Kagame has suspended two provincial governors as part of an ongoing purge targeting public servants deemed to be lacking accountability.

Southern Province Governor Brigadier General Emmanuel Gasana and his Northern Province counterpart Gatabazi Jean Marie Vianney have been pushed out pending investigations into their performance.

"The President has suspended from duty Mr Gasana Emmanuel, Governor of Southern Province and Mr Gatabazi Jean Marie Vianney, Governor of Northern Province owing to matters of accountability under investigation," a Monday statement by the Prime Minister said.

Gasana's executive secretary, Jabo Paul, has also been suspended.

The Rwanda Investigative Bureau declined to provide details of the matters under probe.

Gasana served as Inspector General of Police between 2009 and 2018.

Since his appointment in October 2018, Mr Gasana has faced a number of challenges, including increased poverty levels and incomplete projects in his region.

For example, an 80MW peat energy project in Gisagara District is behind schedule by two years.

The province also suffers from high poverty levels, according to the 2018 Performance Contracts (Imihigo) evaluation.

During a tour of the province early this year, President Kagame warned that local leaders will be held accountable should they not deliver services.

"Leaders in this province will always

take a step forward and another backward unless change their mindset. It is why there are no results to see even when they receive a budget," President Kagame said at the time.

Northern Province, which borders Burundi, has witnessed a spate of attacks by armed assailants believed to be from Burundi, with the most recent in Musanze last October leaving 14 people dead and 18 others wounded.

Shortly after his suspension, Mr Gatabazi apologised to the head of state and thanked him for him appointing him to the job three years ago.

"I apologise for any disappointment to you, Excellency Paul Kagame, RPF and the people of Rwanda, and I look forward to the next chapter of my life continuing to serve my country to my best ability and always loyal to the You Excellency President and RPF," he tweeted.

Lawmakers have welcomed the move by President Kagame to hold "the big fish" accountable, and are calling for thorough investigations of those who suspended and the findings made public.

"The initiative to hold big offices to account has always been there, but what is now new is that their suspected bad acts are made public. In all cases of all the ministers who are fired this year, the government states briefly why they are being fired, and this helps to kill rumours," Frank Habineza, an MP and Member of the Green Party, told The EastAfrican.

"Now the investigators have a duty to investigate these cases and make the findings public. We know cases involving officials who were said to be under investigation but no details were ever provided. This has to change."

AGENCIES

## 'Covid-19 vaccine could be ready by end of this year'

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of the lack of efficacy for the anti-malarial drug touted as a 'game-changer' by

President Donald Trump. Testing of hydroxychloroquine as a possible treatment for Covid-19 has been halted

by WHO, citing safety concerns.

Currently, there's no specific antiviral agent or vaccine for Covid-19, which has

claimed at least 352,494 lives worldwide and infected about 5,638,190 people in 196 countries and territories.





Kagera regional commissioner Brigadier General Marco Gaguti addresses residents of Katembe village in Muleba District on Wednesday before handing over one fishing boat to each of three wards in the district. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## ZAFICO's new fishing trawler is in operation, says Zanzibar minister

By Guardian Correspondent, Zanzibar

THE Zanzibar government has said the new fishing trawler it purchased from Sri Lanka 'SEHEWA II' for the Zanzibar Fishing Corporation (ZAFICO) has begun fishing activities in Zanzibar territorial waters.

This was revealed by the Zanzibar Minister for Agricultural, Natural Resources, Livestock and Fisheries Mmanga Mjengo Mjawiri when presenting his ministry's budget estimates for FY 2020/21 in the House of Representatives sitting in Zanzibar.

Mjawiri said fishing in the territorial waters will enable ZAFICO sell fish and fish products to the tourists market as well as for export.

He said ZAFICO's establishment was part of the implementation of CCM election Manifesto to ensure the fishing sector brings benefit for the country as well as enable people to establish fishing groups.

"I would like to congratulate Zanzibar president Dr Ali Mohammed Shein for his efforts in reviving ZAFICO to conduct fishing activities in the territorial waters thereby alleviating fish shortages," he said.

He said ZAFICO anticipates buying five other fishing boats for fishing activities for various youth's groups and for patrol purposes.

Mjawiri said his ministry is well mobilised to ensure the ban on illegal fishing activities using illegal fishing gear is enforced.

He cited efforts taken in fighting illegal fishing as including 172 patrols conducted in reserved waters for fishing in both Unguja and Pemba coastal areas.

He also congratulated fishing committees in rural councils for good work in the fight against illegal fishing including conducting patrols.

Mjawiri asked the House of Representatives to approve 29.89bn/- being the ministry's budget for 2020/21 whereas 23.32bn is for recurrent expenditure and 6.63bn/- allocated as subsidy for research in the fishing sector and marine products.



**I would like to congratulate Zanzibar president Dr Ali Mohammed Shein for his efforts in reviving ZAFICO to conduct fishing activities in the territorial waters thereby alleviating fish shortages**

# 'Agro-processing attracted 109 investors in four years'

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

OVER 100 investors have invested in the country's agro-processing industry from 2015/16 to 2019/20, creating 5,204,607 job opportunities from the previous 3,880,262.

In a written response to a question by Chumbuni Member of Parliament Ussi Salum Pondeza wanted to know government's plans to increase investment into the agro-processing sector, the ministry of Agriculture said it has put in place various initiatives to ensure there was much investment into the sub-sector.

The MP had in his principal question asked about the number of investors with interest in the sector for the last five years.

The legislator asked "How many investors have invested into the agro-processing sector since the beginning

of implementation of the industrialisation policy?" In a supporting question the MP also wanted to know the government's plan to engage farmers in modern farming. In response, the ministry said the government was implementing various initiatives to increase food production to complement the industrialisation policy, they include the strengthening of the agriculture inputs supply in collaboration with the private sector, analysing the needs by processing industries and registering farmers to facilitate coordination for investment.

The ministry said it was also strengthening the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and engaging insurance companies to facilitate crop insurance.

The ministry said it was training farmers with new ways of farming to let them practice modern farming.

Other strategies include researching on new farming technologies of planting, harvesting and processing as well as promoting the use of tractors instead of hand hoes where the use of tractors and power tillers has increased from 14,200 and 6,348 in 2015 to 18,088 and 8,883 in 2019.

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### GLOBAL HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN PROGRAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE - TANZANIA

#### JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title:</b>	Supply Chain Technical Advisor.
<b>Department/Unit:</b>	Capacity Building and Data Use.
<b>Location:</b>	Zanzibar.
<b>Reports to:</b>	Capacity Building and Data Use Team Lead.

**OVERVIEW:**  
The Global Health Supply Chain Program Technical Assistance - Tanzania (GHSC-TA-TZ) project, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), provides expert technical assistance to the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (RGOZ) in strengthening supply chain systems across all health elements, e.g. malaria, family planning (FP), HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). In coordination with in-country and development partners, GHSC-TA-TZ assists the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar health programs by providing strategic planning and implementation assistance; improving the delivery of health commodities to service sites; providing capacity building support to broaden stakeholders' understanding and engagement of the supply chain system; and strengthening enabling environments to improve supply chain performance.

**JOB SUMMARY:**  
The Supply Chain Technical Advisor will work under the administrative and technical guidance of the Capacity Building and Data Use Team Lead and is responsible for overall technical support to supply chain strengthening activities in Zanzibar. S/he will work in collaboration with national stakeholders such as the Ministry of Health-Zanzibar including its departments, units and vertical programs, Central Medical Stores (CMS) and other supply chain stakeholders. She/he will also dedicate and ensure that MOH staff have the skills required to manage supply chain management activities including usage of data for informed decisions. She/he will be involved in supporting transition of project's initiatives into the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. This position will be based in Zanzibar, with occasional travel.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**  
Responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Serve as a technical resource for the project and stakeholders for implementing supply chain improvement strategies and management approaches.
- Support the development of work plans, budgets and its implementation.
- Ensure workplan activities are correctly implemented, completed on time and are of high quality.
- Provide technical support and capacity building to the Zanzibar Supply Chain / Logistics Management Unit.
- Provide technical guidance on quantifications of health commodities
- Assist in the implementation of the redesigned ZILS, highlighting and addressing obstacles
- Support the implementation of the IMPACT approach initiative in Zanzibar.
- Collaborate with MOH Zanzibar and GHSC-TA-TZ to monitor the performance of IMPACT teams in ZnZ for supply chain performance improvement.
- Assist in transition of GHSC-TA-TZ initiatives to the RGOZ, monitor the progress of transition, highlight obstacles, and develop plans for addressing obstacles; such initiatives include the LMU, eLMIS, etc.

- Conduct trainings on technical supply chain topics, consulting skills and administrative topics.
- Become a champion in data use; identify challenges in data quality, visibility and use; and develop solutions to address them.
- Strengthen communication and collaboration across vertical programs and supply chain stakeholders.
- Prepare and share monthly, quarterly and annual reports including documenting success stories, best practices, and lessons learned
- Prepare presentations, participate and/or represent the project in stakeholders' meetings.
- Complete and submit in a timely manner and well written technical and trip reports.
- Perform other duties as assigned

**QUALIFICATIONS:**  
Applicants for this position should be Tanzanian nationals or lawful residents who possess the following minimum qualifications:

- A qualified Pharmacist, degree in Supply Chain Management, Public Health, or related degree with at least five years of experience in health programs.
- Experience working in Zanzibar's public health supply chain.
- Experience providing supply chain trainings.
- Ability to analyze supply chain data, conduct root cause analysis, and prepare quality presentation/reports
- Knowledge of various electronic health information systems such as eLMIS and DHIS2
- Ability to coach and mentor public sector stakeholders
- Proven strong leadership skills and ability to build strong interpersonal relationships
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
- Ability to handle multiple tasks, set priorities and work independently.
- Excellent technical writing and oral presentation skills highly desired
- Excellent written and verbal English
- A proven ability to work as part of a team and to be self-managing
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Experience working with the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar.
- Previous work experience with USAID-funded projects desirable.

If you are interested in applying this positions please send your resume, cover letter and copies of your academic certificate to [ghsc.recruitmenttz@gmail.com](mailto:ghsc.recruitmenttz@gmail.com). And kindly include title you are applying to and your name in the subject line.

While we thank all applicants for their interest, only those selected for interview will be contacted.

Deadline for submission shall be on 12 June, 2020.

GHSC - TA - TZ is an equal opportunity employer.

www.nbc.co.tz

## TENDER NOTICE

### PROVISION OF PAYMENT SYSTEM/ENGINE

1. National Bank of Commerce Limited has set aside funds for the procurement of various services during financial year 2020/2021, it is intended that, part of the proceeds of the fund will be used to cover eligible payment under the various contracts.
2. Request for proposal is open to all eligible service providers with proven experience and capacity to provide the required service. Interested eligible bidders are invited to apply for the provision of payment system/engine.
3. Request for Proposal documents can be downloaded from the website [www.nbc.co.tz](http://www.nbc.co.tz) and then click 'Procurement' to access the document.
4. All Proposals in one original and one copy set properly filled in, and enclosed in sealed envelope marked as per service name written on the RFP Document and should be addressed to; **CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, NATIONAL BANK OF COMMERCE LIMITED, HEAD OFFICE BUILDING, 6<sup>th</sup> FLOOR, and P. O. BOX 1863 DAR ES SALAAM.**
5. Sealed applications and bids must be submitted no later than **Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 1600 hrs.** Proposal shall be delivered by hand to the Tender Box located at reception of Head Office building, ground floor along Sokoine Drive/Azikiwe Street.

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER  
NATIONAL BANK OF COMMERCE LIMITED**

The Bank for a Working Nation



### Notice of Closure

IT IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT at the Extra Ordinary General meeting of AKASA RESOURCES LIMITED held on the 31st day of December 2019, a special resolution was unanimously passed by the Members to close the company as it has become dormant.

If anyone has any claim or interest against the company, they are advised to contact the company at the below address within 7 days of this notice.

Karimjee Attorneys  
P.O. Box 76421  
Dar es Salaam



## NEMC wins govt praise for forming 24-hour taskforce

By Guardian Reporter

THE Vice-President's Office has commended the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) for forming a 24-hour taskforce to ensure the public remains in touch with the council.

Expressing the government's positive reception and approval of NEMC's move, Minister of State in the VPO (Union and Environment) Mussa Azzan Zungu, told NEMC Board of Directors, that the taskforce had made the public access NEMC's expertise and decisions throughout 24 hours.

"We congratulate the council on this move because it enables NEMC to clear all emergencies that crop in society and protect the environment," the minister said also praising the board for being behind the council in taking all the positive actions and enforcing the law to protect environment.

Zungu called on the board to ensure there was sustained public education on protection of environment. "We appreciate the work of the board. But we would want to see unrelenting public campaign on protection of environment so that it becomes easy to enforce the Environmental Management Act of 2004 its regulations," the minister said.

The minister called on the board to act on the weaknesses and challenges that have emerged in enforcing EMA.

He gave the example of the Kihansi Toad Project and the unnecessary hardships people in the scrap metal business faced.

At the end of the meeting between the minister and board members, the NEMC board chairman, Prof Esnat Chaggu said the board would act on all issues raised by the minister in order to protect environment for the good of the present and future generations.

She said apart from the taskforce, NEMC would set aside a vehicle to ensure efficient mobility in environment inspections. She said the meeting discussed various national projects including the Kihansi project. "Kihansi is a project of immense value to the nation," Professor Chaggu said without giving further details on the next move.



**We congratulate the council on this move because it enables NEMC to clear all emergencies that crop in society and protect the environment**



Judge (rtd) Mathew Mwaimu (R), Chairman of the Tanzania Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance, presents documents in Dodoma yesterday to Ethics Secretariat Commissioner Judge (rtd) Harold Nsekela. The documents relate to cooperation between the commission and the secretariat. Photo: Mbaraka Kambona

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

ABOUT 150 fertiliser inspectors and 1,446 agents from various districts and municipal councils across the country have been trained on better methods of inspecting and storing the product during the 2019/2020 financial year.

The ministry of Agriculture said in a written response to a question by Tabora Urban MP, Emanuel Mwakasaka who asked the government's plan to control illegal importation of fertiliser in the country.

The MP said in his principal question that uncontrolled importation of fertiliser was among the reasons for

## 'Fertiliser inspectors trained on product inspection and storing'

the drop in harvests because some are imported from countries with low qualities.

The MP asked, "What is the government doing to control the uncontrolled importation of fertiliser?"

In response, the ministry said

because local production was not enough, the government coordinates the importation of fertilisers from producing countries which are Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine, China, Italy, Belgium Madagasca and Norway.

The ministry further added that

importation is done according to the law including the Fertiliser Act of 2009 putting in place two systems of importation namely Fertiliser Bulk Procurement System and the direct purchase from producers by companies.

The ministry said it offers permits for importation through the Tanzania Fertiliser Regulatory Authority (TFRA) and inspection is done in collaboration with Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), Tanzania Atomic Emission Commission (TAEC) and

the Government Chemist Laboratory Authority (GCLA).

In addition to that TFRA conducts inspections in warehouses and shops to ensure the fertiliser imported is of the required qualities and standards.

"In the year 2019/20 the ministry has set aside funds for the construction of fertilizer lab to increase efficiency and quality of fertilizers produced locally as well as those imported," the ministry said.

The ministry said it will continue regulating and controlling entrance of fertilisers from abroad and ensuring that all fertilisers entering the country were of the required standards.



**PUZZLE:** The 'cargo' belongs to the man in blue, who was having a hard time knowing how to find room on the motorbike taxi destined for Dar es Salaam from the city's Chanika suburb. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

By Guardian Correspondent, Tabora

## Tabora Region issues 59,500 IDs for SMEs

TABORA Regional Commissioner Aggrey Mwanri has issued a total of 59,500 new Identity Cards (IDs) for small traders for the second phase.

This makes Tabora Region to have received a total of 71,500 IDs including 12,000 IDs it received during the first phase.

The new IDs were handed over here yesterday by the RC to all District Commissioners in the region for

onward distribution to small traders qualified to receive them.

Mwanri said Igunga District received 7,500 IDs, Nzega Town (10,000), Uyui District (10,000) and Tabora Municipality (10,000).

He said other districts include Nzega District (10,000), Sikonge (2,000), Urambo (5,000) and Kaliua (5,000).

He called on the DCs to work together with ward executives to ensure all IKDs issued during the first phase are early retired.

Earlier, Tabora Region's Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) Manager Thomas Masese said the expiry of the IDs is December this year, and added that their distribution is in accordance with amendments made to 2015 Tax

Management Act.

He said the new IDs are different to the old ones and their distribution calls for the insertion of important conditions especially where they are to be displayed to avoid fraud.

He added that they will evaluate the old IDs holders to ensure whether they are qualified to receive the new IDs.

## 500 public servants faces disciplinary measures for tampering with HCMIS

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

AT LEAST 500 public service officers have faced disciplinary measures including legal actions for tampering with the Human Capital Management Information System (HCMIS), it has been disclosed.

They are public servants and employers who were involved in different offences related to interfering with the system and have since been reported to law enforcement organs.

This was said here by the director of Human Resources Management, President's Office, Public Service and Good Governance, ACP Ibrahim Mahumi, saying the system has helped improve public service as well as solving complaints.

He said the system has helped restore integrity in public offices since complaints realised are handled as first as possible. "As the director I can see who gets into the system and what he or she is doing and get to know what is going on within public service," he said.

The director noted that in the past there were a lot of malpractices carried out by some bosses to their subordinates, stating that for instance, it was possible for top managers to divert some payments to their own accounts.

Mahumi said the system which is part of the broader government employment portal shows a lot of information for instance if an employee has reached the retirement date, the system show it at midnight of his or her working day.

"Integrity in public offices has to be built at any cost even through firing or taking people to court," he said adding that the system has helped built integrity.

He said while the system is still under improvement, its ability to strengthen public service has been noted, calling

on all employers to strengthen the system to boost performance in public offices.

In the past, the government experienced various challenges in effective management of human resource and payroll operations. Among the challenges include ineffective and outdated human resources and payroll business processes that led to delays in effecting changes on various personnel actions including promotions, transfer, pay and exit from the payroll.

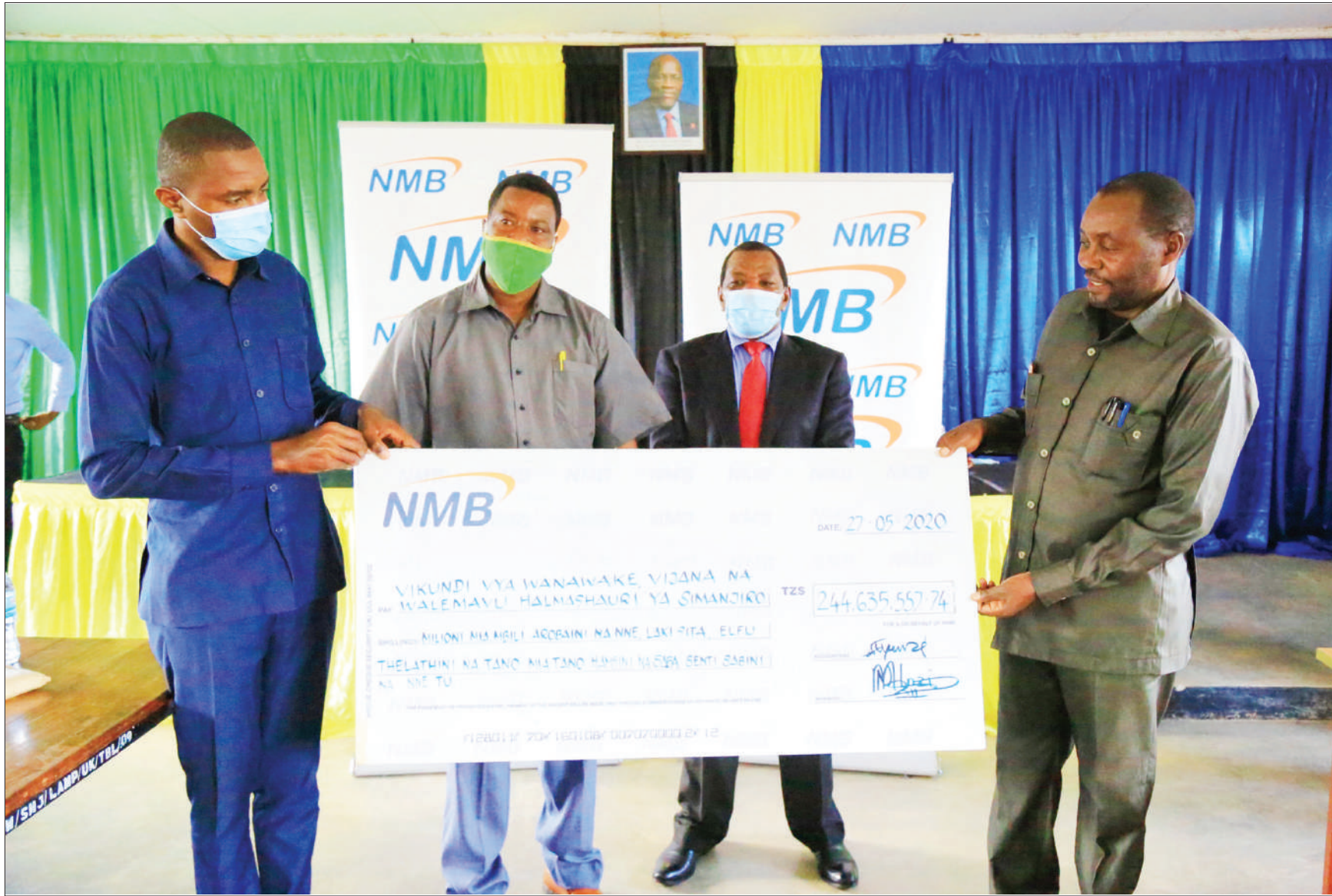
In response to the challenges, various reforms aimed at reforming the business processes and putting in place effective systems and structures to manage human resource and payroll were introduced.

In harnessing the opportunities provided by information and communications technology, the integrated system, HCMIS, was implemented as a tool for effective management of human resource and Payroll in the public service.



**As the director I can see who gets into the system and what he or she is doing and get to know what is going on within public service**





NMB Bank Plc Central Zone manager Nsolo Mlozi (L) presents a dummy cheque for over 244 million/- to Simanjiro district commissioner Zacharia Chaula (R) yesterday in loans to groups of women and youth with disabilities. The bank was helped in imparting financial literacy education to the groups before issuing the loans. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

# 31,000 villagers to benefit from 2bn/- water project in Manyoni District

By Guardian Correspondent, Itigi

A TOTAL of 31,000 residents in six villages in Itigi Division, Manyoni District in Singida Region will soon start benefiting from the supply of clean and safe water after the completion of two boreholes.

This was revealed recently by Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) Evaluation Technician for Manyoni District Christopher Ndahani when presenting his report to the Deputy Minister for Water Jumaa Aweso during the latter's one day inspection visit of water projects for six villages in the District.

Ndahani mentioned other villages to benefit from the project as Songambebe, Mlowa, Majengo, Tambukareli, Zinginali and Itigi and added that the project, whose total cost is 2,038,784,437/-, that began in December 3 2018 is expected to be completed on June 2 this year.

construction of water infrastructures from the wells to two huge tanks with 200,000 ltrs capacity each.

He said the project is coordinated by RUWASA at District level in collaboration with regional authorities.

The manager for Water Supply Authority for Manyoni Marycella Hagila said water demand for Manyoni town is 2,246,160 ltrs per day, while supply is 1,205,000 ltrs per day.



**He said the project is coordinated by RUWASA at District level in collaboration with regional authorities**

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

# PCCB drags medical doctor to court over bribery allegations

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Singida Region has dragged to court Dr Abdul Sewando of Singida Region Referral Hospital for soliciting and receiving bribe from a patient in contravention of Section 15 of the PCCB Act - No II of 2007.

Speaking here to reporters on Wednesday at the PCCB offices, the region's Bureau Head Adili Elinipenda

said the suspect was arrested on May 5 this year at around 3.30 pm following a trap which pointed to his alleged culpability.

He said he was arrested by PCCB officials after he finished cleaning a patient in the Hospital's premises.

Elinipenda said PCCB's investigations

in the region found out that the suspected received 60,000/- from a patient whose name has been withheld so that he cleans him after conducting

ultra sound diagnosis.

He said investigations also found out that the suspect directed the money to be channeled to him online which

he received via MPESA in his mobile phone.

He said PCCB in Singida Region cautions workers in the health sector in the region to abide by work ethics governing their professions especially during the period of Covid-19 pandemic.

He said the citizens should not hesitate to report on all corruption incidents by going directly to their offices or telephone 113 toll-free or via SMS.



## Invitation for Tender (IFT)

- Marie Stopes Tanzania (MST) is a registered Non-Governmental Organization providing Integrated Reproductive and HIV health services country wide. Established in 1989 under Marie Stopes International, MST operates 11 health facilities and 59 outreach teams.
- MST under projects fund invite sealed tenders from eligible bidders to provide the below mentioned tenders. MST is encouraging all interested bidders to participate.

Tender No	Tender Description
RFP ,MST/38/2020	Consultancy Service for the Provision of Supply Chain Management.
RFP,MST/39/2020	Consultancy Services for the Provision of New Products Registration to TMDA

- Interested and eligible bidders must confirm their intention to bid indicating all relevant contact information including respective e-mail address to [tenders@mst.or.tz](mailto:tenders@mst.or.tz) Attn: Procurement Lead. Bidders will be responsible for following up to ensure that MST has received the notification.
- Within 48 hours of receiving the bidder's confirmation of receipt of IFT and intention to bid, bid documents in English language will be sent to interested bidders by e-mail. Interested bidders will be responsible for confirming receipt of bid documents within 24 hours after receipt of bid document(s). MST will not be held responsible for any costs related to printing, preparation or submission of the bid documents.
- Bidders must submit bid in a sealed envelope by hand, post or email by 19th June 2020; Time 1200 HRS to: The Country Director, Marie Stopes Tanzania, Plot no. 421/422 Mwenge, Kijitonyama Area, P. O. Box 7072, Dar es Salaam, marked "Title of the Tender and Tender number ." Email submission should be two hours before deadline. Late submission of the bid will not be considered during evaluation.

Country Director  
Marie Stopes Tanzania  
P.O. Box 7072  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania  
Tel: +255 22 2774991-4  
Fax: +255 22 2774990  
E-mail: [tenders@mst.or.tz](mailto:tenders@mst.or.tz)

**NOTE:** MST takes any unethical action very serious, therefore; any form of fraud and/ or corruption is not tolerated in MST. If any of our staff ask for kickback and/ or commission, Please report the incident to the Country Director, Phone No. +255 757 170 042

For any enquires relating to this tender document please contact Procurement & Logistics Lead. Phone No. +255743495035



## job opportunity

East AFRITAC is a collaborative venture between the International Monetary Fund (IMF), its member countries, and bilateral and multilateral development partners. East AFRITAC provides capacity development support (technical assistance and training) to Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania (including Zanzibar), and Uganda, in areas of IMF expertise.

The Economist works closely with the Center Coordinator (CC)/Director, playing an important role in managing the Center's work plan, supporting outreach activities, and contributing to the main publications and analyses. S/he also supports resident advisors (RAs, the Center's experts) in their capacity development (CD) activities. The Economist has the following duties and responsibilities:

- Assists the CC in preparing and monitoring the implementation of the annual work plan and in preparing periodic reports to the Steering Committee.
- Contributes to the preparation of the annual and mid-year reports.
- Contributes to outreach publications, playing a key role in the preparation of the quarterly newsletter and the management of the Center's website and Facebook page.
- Supports the implementation of the results-based management (RBM) framework (see below).
- Provides supporting research and presentations for the RAs' regional workshops, and assists them with outreach activities.
- Analyzes economic time series data, defines data needs and requirements for use by the CC and RAs. Produces charts, graphs, and tables.
- Independently researches, collects and compiles information on member countries; maintains and updates quantitative and qualitative economic, financial or statistical databases.
- Keeps abreast of developments with respect to IMF CD policies and IMF work in member countries.
- Performs other related duties as required.

On RBM, the main duties of the Economist are:

- Training of staff on RBM methodology and systems;
- Supporting the development of logframes;
- Analysis of RBM data and reporting;
- Providing feedback to the CC and IMF headquarters on issues affecting RBM implementation at the Center;

### Competencies required:

Professional Competence – (a) knowledge of econometric and statistical analysis techniques, database management and related principles underlying IMF economic work; (b) ability to interpret and present statistical information; and (c) strong analytical skills.

Program/Task Management – (a) strong organization skills; and (b) ability to anticipate, adjust to and prioritize a variety of complex, evolving tasks, mastering unfamiliar work quickly in a committed fashion.

Communication – Strong communications skills (listening effectively, speaking persuasively, writing clearly and concisely).

Teamwork – (a) Proven ability to develop effective relations within/outside the office, and to promote collaboration within the team to meet unit objectives; and (b) ability to work with a range of senior professionals from various backgrounds.

### Qualifications and Experience:

MA/MS (Economics/Finance) in economics, finance, or statistics.

Two or more years of relevant work experience (e.g., econometrics, statistics, finance) or equivalent experience.

Proficiency in Microsoft Office software applications is required, particularly Microsoft Excel. Knowledge of econometrics packages such as TSP, eViews, AREMOS, SAS, RATS, together with a knowledge of statistical and econometrics techniques and macroeconomic relationships is an asset.

Demonstrated proficiency in English with excellent writing skills.

The position is based at East AFRITAC's headquarters in Dar es Salaam.

### Process:

Applications should be sent by June 12, 2020 by email to the following address: [afeweb@imf.org](mailto:afeweb@imf.org).

Applications should include a motivation letter, a detailed CV, and references.



# Covid-19: AKDN donates PPE, medical tools worth 60m/- to Mwanza Region

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

AGA KHAN Development Network (AKDN) with support from Global Affairs Canada has donated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other medical tools worth 60m/- to Mwanza Region to support the fight against Covid-19 pandemic.

The equipment which were handed over to Mwanza Regional Commissioner John Mongella include 150 sets of heavy duty PPEs, 750 pairs of N95 face masks, bottles of sanitisers, 6000 pairs of gloves, 198 megaphones, 15000 examination gloves, 300 pairs of surgical gloves, 75 litres of sanitisers and chlorine tablets.

The donation was provided under the IMPACT project of the Mwanza Region.

Speaking during the event, project manager Edna Selestine from AKDN acknowledged that health workers are working under hard and risky circumstances saving lives with passion, and professionalism as doctors, and even risking their lives in order to save and protect the lives of many Tanzanians.

According to her, through the IMPACT project, Global Affairs Canada approved 572.3m/- for the procurement of medical equipment, working tools as well as training to health service providers on the Covid-19.

Others are 30 beds and mattresses, 717 special bags for health service providers at community level. Speaking soon after receiving the equipment, RC Mongella thanked all stakeholders for supporting the government's efforts to combat corona virus disease.

He called on other stakeholders to

extend their support to compliment the government's efforts towards containing the spread of the infection in the region and the country at large.

"We appreciate all contribution given by stakeholders and companies saying that the donation is highly needed this time when the country is struggling," she said.

According to him, ten beds and mattresses will be sent to Butimba hospital. Ten others will be directed to Nyehuinge hospital and the remaining ones be sent at Isanzu hospital.

Mongella reminded the public to continue adhering to the government directives on protective measures against the virus such as frequent hand washing, sanitising, observing social distancing and wearing face masks. He also reminded them to continue taking herbal remedies as well as steam inhalation.

For his part, Ilemela District Commissioner John Wanga commended AKDN and the stakeholders while urging parents to ensure that their children who are expecting to resume schools on June 1, have enough face masks for protection.

Dr Thomas Rutanchuzibwa, Regional Medical Officer (RMO) said the Covid-19 cases in the region have declined significantly calling on the public to continue taking precaution measures.

*"We appreciate all contribution given by stakeholders and companies saying that the donation is highly needed this time when the country is struggling"*



Holt Dream Centre Park director Jieun (L) pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday symbolically presenting health insurance cards to 90 children living in difficult conditions. It was a donation by her institution in collaboration with Women in Social Entrepreneurship (WISE) - an NGO. Second left is the NGO's managing director, Dr. Astronaut Bagile. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Correspondent Mbaraka Kambona

THE Ethics Secretariat Commissioner, Judge (rt) Harold Nsekela has appealed to good governance oversight bodies to build up a close cooperation which would help them implement their responsibilities properly.

Judge Nsekela made the remarks at his office in Dodoma yesterday during his meeting with the Commissioner for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) chairperson, Judge (rt) Mathew Mwaimu.

He said there was a tendency of these good governance institutions to cooperate closely only during the commemorations of Ethics and Human Rights Day, saying that should not be the way rather they have to maintain that closeness daily.

## Oversight bodies urged to work closely

He added that working closely and sharing information would help oversight instruments to identify boundaries of their mandate and guide them to avoid overlapping of their responsibilities.

"There is a need to have close cooperation among us, this will assist us to share information that would help to provide better service to Tanzanians," Judge Nsekela explained.

He further said that the responsibilities of good governance instruments are almost the same, they are all investigators, the only difference is that CHRAGG is responsible for human rights, Ethics Secretariat for Ethics and PCCB is investigating issues of corruption, while CAG deal with

public money expenditures.

He added that there is a need for these oversight institutions to build a culture of exchanging knowledge and share experience so as to enable them identify their working parameters to avoid overlapping of their responsibilities.

Moreover, Judge Nsekela has urged CHRAGG to continue implementing its mandate by abiding with ethics, because that is the only way to help them to deliver proper services to the public.

"Constitution has given you the mandate to protect and promote human rights and pillars of good governance within the country, use that mandate to deliver better service

to Wananchi while observing ethics," Judge Nsekela insisted.

Earlier, Judge Mwaimu told Judge Nsekela that the aim of CHRAGG visit to Ethics Secretariat was to seek cooperation, to remind the public that CHRAGG is there to help them.

Judge Mwaimu said that over the past two years CHRAGG had been operating without commissioners the situation that affected the implementation of its activities.

"CHRAGG is an independent institution, we are not supposed to take side when dealing with human rights violation issues, our main responsibility is to resolve issues and help local citizens," Judge Mwaimu illustrated.



Zanzibar Second Vice President Seif Ali Iddi expresses appreciation yesterday to the People's Bank of Zanzibar management and board of directors for the bank's contribution of 100m/- to the government in support of the war on Covid-19. Photo: Office of Zanzibar Second VP

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

## TFS embarks on tree planting drive to restore vegetation cover in Mbeya

THE Tanzania Forest Service (TFS) has called on the public to refrain from wantonly tree felling to rescue the areas from turning into desert.

TFS assistant manager in Southern Highlands, Innocent Lupembe cited increased human activities in forest reserve areas as one of major causes leading to massive destruction of environment in the region.

The official called on stakeholders to support the government's efforts in conserving forest resources, which offer a wide-range of benefits.

"If our forests are well protected will bring a number of positive impacts while also benefiting the current and future generations, so every person has a role to ensure that there is no forest cutting, burning and harvesting without having permit from the

government," he said when speaking with this paper recently.

In a bid to restore the degraded environment, Lupembe said TFS in collaboration with other stakeholders has embarked on natural tree planting campaign in Mbeya Region.

The campaign, according to him, involves planting seedlings of trees which are locally known as Migunga, Mikuyu and wild Mango trees.

Lupembe said: "Human being activities such as deforestation has brought a number of adverse impacts to the area's environment, so this is why we stood up and decided to plant new trees to make the environment

more natural."

He added that TFS will continue to intensify efforts and plant more trees and fight against deforestation as the country is currently witnessing environmental burdens due to excessive tree cutting.

"We can't allow deforestation to continue. Impacts of climate change are hitting our country with its impacts that includes loss of forest cover yielding to soil and water source degradation, disruption in rainfall patterns and severe droughts... This should be fought with all our efforts," Lupembe added.

The TFS official further urged

authorities in the regions to supervise the Environmental Management Act and ensure that they hold accountable those responsible for environmental damage.

For his part, Traditional Chief for Mbeya region Rocket Mwashinga urged TFS to leave the responsibility of protecting the environment to chiefs and then watch the outcomes.

"We were given this role by our ancestors and we know our responsibility very well, so just give us full authority, we are going to supervise to ensure that our natural environment are well preserved," he said.

## Minister Jafo orders: Fire negligent TARURA staff

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

MINISTER of State in the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG) Selemu Jafo has instructed Tanzania Rural and Urban Roads Agency (TARURA) to remove its negligent regional coordinators who are holding back the agency's performance.

Jafo also instructed for the dissolution of procurement committees that have been responsible for the delay in the implementation of road projects in their areas despite the government having provided funds thereon.

The minister gave the directives here yesterday when launching the TARURA Advisory Board under the chairmanship of Florian Kabaka.

He said there are some areas with such negligent coordinators where no work is done and called on TARURA officials to be strict by removing these coordinators.

He said: "Review and institute changes in the committees, there were funds totaling 33b/- provided by the government, but there are areas where the committees are still struggling with procurement processes while in others they are very far ahead in projects' implementation."

In regard to the issue of TARURA financial resources, Jafo said to a large extent the agency depends on the Road Fund from which it gets 30 percent while Tanzania Roads Agency gets 70 percent.

"There are great efforts in obtaining funds from other sources including UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank, hence the existence of the Advisory Board will assist TARURA to serve the people," Jafo said.

He said TARURA has 108,950 km long road network hence the available funds is small, and called on the board to make sure the available financial

resources are spent with great discipline.

"We must build up the habit to assist the people and abandon self-centredness as the rains have played havoc to the road network, only about 23 percent of the entire road network is in good condition," he said.

He said since establishment TARURA has done a great work to serve the road network and brought much respect including to members of parliament who have been fighting over its small budgetary allocation.

"In urban areas the condition of roads was pathetic, projects valued at 820bn/- are transforming the roads and if you see good roads in urban areas with street lamps, it's due to TARURA," he added.

He said Dar es Salaam city of five years ago is now different as more than 600b/- is being spent to improve its roads.

The Permanent Secretary to PORALG Eng Joseph Nyamhanga said the Advisory Board has a great responsibility to ensure TARURA performs better despite budgetary constraints.

"We also have an acute shortage of engineers and other experts, we have discussed on the employment of engineers to alleviate the shortage," he said.

TARURA Advisory Board Chairman Florian Kabaka promised to implement all the directives of minister Jafo to make TARURA perform better,

*"We must build up the habit to assist the people and abandon self-centredness as the rains have played havoc to the road network, only about 23 percent of the entire road network is in good condition"*



## HakiElimu calls upon stakeholders to invest in pre-primary school teachers

By Getrude Mbago

HAKIELIMU, a non-profit based organisation has called on the government and stakeholders to invest heavily in producing qualified pre-primary school teachers who will be able to provide essential skills to children during early education.

Dubbed "Integration of Child Protection into Early Childhood Education and Assessment of Learning and Teaching", the two studies which were conducted in 2019 focused on the early needs of the Tanzanian child in and outside the formal education system.

Speaking at the virtual launching of the reports, HakiElimu executive director John Kallage said that the quality of pre-primary education the country should be looked with a bigger eye to ensure that children learn well for their future.

Kallage observed that there is a huge shortage of qualified teachers something which thwarts proper learning of the children.

According to him, almost 52.6 percent of pre-primary teachers who participated in the researches, demonstrated lack of proper understanding of pre-primary education and needs. This situation has made teaching and care of pre-primary pupils to become more or less similar to that of primary school pupils.

He said that it is important that the government invests in building and improving existing school infrastructure including existing pre-primary classrooms to adapt to the needs of pre-primary school age children.

"It is high time also to encourage more young people to join pre-primary school teacher training and to hire a larger number of such teachers to cover the prevailing deficit of the teachers," he said.

Kallage added that, together with this, the government needs to build the capacity of existing teachers so that they have a clear understanding of pre-primary education concept and its needs.

"We as HakiElimu have learnt that, as a nation, there are good steps reached in this area, but there are challenges as well, which require us to work together and jointly to address them so as to ensure protection, quality childhood and quality education to the Tanzanian

child, in his/her early years," he said.

Presenting the findings, Dr Jackline Amani, researcher from Mkwawa University said that the study has revealed challenges of poor teacher-parents' collaboration in ensuring that the child gets the required education and care according to the child's age and needs.

"Poor teacher and parent cooperation has caused lack of basic needs such as food and incidences of poor protection and child abuse," she said.

She recommended that schools should reinstate feeding programmes to promote pre-primary children attendance, participation and achievement of learning outcomes.

For his part, Dr Moses Mnzava, a researcher at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) said that early learning is still a massive challenge in the pastoral communities.

"There are many deep-rooted and multi-faced challenges facing education in general and early learning in particular in pastoral communities. A comprehensive pilot early learning programme should be designed specifically for pastoral communities," he said.

This programme should be informed by actual realities, practices and circumstances of pastoral communities. Implementation of such a programme in a few pastoral villages for a minimum of three years can provide a viable model for an early learning programme for contemporary pastoral communities in Tanzania.

Richard Mabala, HakiElimu board chairman said: "What is needed in early education is flexibility, needs for urban schools are different from those in rural areas so this should be considered."

"Invest in producing qualified teachers for early education so as to feed and raise children with essential knowledge for their sustainable development," he said.

Joyce Kiango, a primary school teacher urged parents to be open to teachers about their children health problems or any other disability problem for better care.

"We have been receiving several children having various problems, but we fail to raise them well because we don't have deep history on the children's social challenges, so it is better for parents not to fear and be open," she said.



A bodaboda (motorbike taxi operator) moves to ensure a would-be passenger's vegetable are safe before actually setting off for a trip. This was at Muheza town market yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

By Guardian Correspondent, Chalinze

TANZANIA Rural and Urban Roads Agency (TARURA) in Chalinze District has been called upon to listen to advice from the residents, their elected representatives including ward councillors on priority to repairing roads' trouble spots instead of being glued in their offices and act on what they decide for themselves.

The call was issued during Chalinze District Council meeting following clash of priorities pitting the council and TARURA.

The first to raise the issue at the council meeting was the Chalinze Member of Parliament Ridhwan Kikwete who called on TARURA to work together with the citizens to reach all road trouble spots for repair.

Elaborating his position after the

## TARURA told to heed to authorities' advice on road renovation priorities

meeting Kikwete said procedurally the council selects a road following advice from contractors and then allocate budgets for the roads needing repairs and TARURA makes evaluation based on funds from the road Fund or what the central government provides.

Kikwete said problems arise, if for example the 12 km Kwaruhombo-Mduma road is only given funds for 8kms of the road, and added: "So TARURA instead of listening to the advice from the people in the area, TARURA goes ahead nonetheless even if road repairs ends in the middle of the forested area without even covering

trouble spot area.

Kikwete stressed that TARURA should listen to the advice of the people in the area through their elected representatives in giving priority to trouble spot areas instead of gluing themselves in their chairs and decide what they like.

He also gave the example of the Lugoba-Talawanda road, saying there are trouble spot sections that need major repairs but if today TARURA is provided with funds for their repair, it will embark on repairing the entire road even if the work ends midway without even reaching the trouble spot

areas.

He stressed that road repair activities aims to see how TARURA can assist in the improvement of road communication to be used for longer periods of time and in Chalinze District only 25 percent of gravel roads are passable during seasons of heavy rains.

Kikwete said TARURA have no reason to decide which roads are to be repaired and advised them to ensure they repair roads to last longer periods of time and that they should also take into consideration roads that are more important to the economic development of the people of Chalinze.



Ruvuma regional commissioner Christina Mndeme (L) issues directives to officials under her commando after a meeting at Mbinga yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gideon Mwakanosya

## CCM warns cadres against campaigning before time

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

THE ruling CCM in Arusha Region has cautioned some of its cadres with intention to contest for parliamentary and councillorship posts to stop lobbying in their wards and constituencies.

The party also said it has already received forms for contesting in councillorship and parliamentary posts and that in due time they will be issued in accordance with the party's

regulations.

The warning was given here yesterday by the party's Arusha Regional Secretary Musa Matoroka in his office saying that the party was closely following up the reports involving some party cadres starting lobbying before time, and that the party will take appropriate action against these cadres who flout party regulations and procedures.

Matoroka said it's better for party cadres with intentions to contest

for these elective posts to wait until appropriate time to start their campaigns because by doing so they are creating factions within the party.

He also directed political committees in the district and wards to closely follow-up these cadres and in case they find these people lobbying for posts before time, they should report them to the party's regional level.

He added that in case these committees will fail to submit names of the cadres who flout procedures steps

will be taken against the committees themselves.

He said elections are in wards and districts levels hence it is better for them to identify these cadres who do not want to adhere to party procedures.

Some CCM members who did not want their names disclosed in newspapers confessed the existence of these cadres especially those vying for the parliamentary post, saying they go around in the constituency and wards and establish support bases.

## 90 needy children in Dar district given NHIF cards

By Beatrice Philemon

NINETY children from poor households in Dar es Salaam's Temeke District have benefited from free National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) cards enabling them to access quality medical services in various hospitals.

Funded by a South Korean-Holt Children's Service in collaboration with the Women in Social Entrepreneurship (WISE), the support worth 4.54m/- considered children with chronic diseases such as sickle cell (SCD), Asthma, stomach ulcers, heart disease and others.

Speaking, Holt Children's Service Programme Manager, Vaileth Loy said they have offered NHIF cards through its three-year project dubbed: "Improvement of Social Welfare of Underprivileged families," which is implemented in Keko Mwanga B in Temeke.

She said the main goal is to help them improve their health, stay safe while at home and school, access high quality health services and enjoy what they study in school.

"We have decided to give them NHIF identity cards after discovered that it is very hard for their parents to help them access quality health care services in hospitals due to high cost of the medical services," she said.

Apart from that, Holt in collaboration with WISE have donated food items that including 10kg of rice and 5kg of beans to each child who they support.

Elaborating on Improvement of Social Welfare of Underprivileged families and Children in Keko Mwanga B, she said this is three years project that is being implemented at Keko Mwanga B targeting 100 Keko Mwanga pre/primary school children and 25 vulnerable single mothers.

The main goal is to reduce school

dropout rates by contributing in improving quality of education as well as improve the income and quality of life of single mothers' households by providing economic empowerment programme.

Under the project, children from poor families receive learning materials such as exercise books, English and math textbooks, pencils, school uniforms, shoes and catch up classes after school hours.

For her part, Nikolina Nyakunga, a 68-year woman who lives in Keko Mwanga thanked Holt and WISE for their generous support to the poor families in the area.

According to her, the organisations have supported her grandson with various supports including basic needs and health services. "Before getting this card, it was very difficult for my grandson to access health services because my poverty situation bared me from sending him in standard health centres, I normally depend on my neighbours or relatives to get support for medical treatment, I am so happy to get this card," she added.

She called on Holt and WISE to continue supporting more children from poor families because the demand is very huge.

For his part, Keko Mwanga B ward chairman, Hamza Zayumba said although Holt and WISE have donated NHIF cards and food items, the demand is very high in terms of NHIF card health insurance, food items because there are a lot of poor families.

"Currently Keko Mwanga B ward has more than 4000 poor families that need food items, health insurance and improvement of houses," he said.

According to him, majority of residents in the area are living in poor houses that are not durable, requiring constant repairs.



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## Reflection on adolescent girls of crucial relevance

**M**AY 28 is an appointed day for activists and governments worldwide, and especially in poor countries, to reflect on what they are doing or have achieved in ensuring dignity for young girls just starting to experience menstruation.

Plenty has been said about how this comes as a shock to many young people, who are unable to talk about it except to mother or someone else that close. And if there is some difficulty in that direction the young people start facing difficulties, like needlessly missing classes.

Primary and secondary schools across our country are currently closed owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, so this is not being directly experienced. But it will return in no time, as preparations are being readied to return school life to normal.

Still, activists and even authorities like the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Governments) can use this gap to focus on what more could be done in that direction, or programmes completed where work had already started. It is a vital aspect of hygiene.

Without ability to organise an actual gathering, the media have been playing the role of facilitator in the exchange of views on the issue, and some helpful interviews have been conducted with some young people in different situations.

Some reflections raised are sobering, others painful, but on the whole there is an effort in families and among various organisations to minimise the difficulties or inconveniences that young girls encounter in such situations.

The issue is how far this is actually the case and where corrective action is needed with respect to what UN agencies set out in the 'leave no one

behind' spirit.

There are, for instance laws in the country on affairs with pupils and students, but we still witness many cases of child pregnancies.

There have reports of the school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic having a bitter taste to it in that regard, the fear being that a sizable number of young girls will not be returning to school on account of pregnancy.

At times, trouble in raising cash for daily needs pushes desperate school girls into the arms of people they would gladly have done without. This calls for little elaboration, as it is an ages-old challenge.

In the final analysis, the problem with meeting girls' needs when they start experiencing menstruation is an aspect of biting poverty that encompasses many families - and mistreatment at the psychological level when that situation comes up links poverty to instability in families.

Stressed people have short answers and are more prone to violence, so children with extra needs or actual reason not to be satisfied with the situation in the home will face the brunt of these tensions.

That is how some sentimental transitions occur in life and, once this happens it is difficult to set back the clock, as the mentality too will have shifted.

All these are areas where activists need to put their heads together to see how many young people they can actually reach and help out, especially through networking at all levels.

Having well wishers they can call upon at any time will help, and during this trying period most of that has to be done rather privately. It is a daunting task but it can be done, if everyone plays their part. And there should be no shame in doing so.

## French support for water sector shows life returning to normal

**T**ANZANIA is set to receive a 175.6bn/- credit line for water and sanitation projects, with France having extended some 175.6 billion/- in support of the implementation of water supply and sanitation projects in Morogoro Region.

The projects are expected to benefit 722,010 people, which is most opportune as the country battles to ensure supply of clean and potable water everywhere in the country.

During the current parliamentary Budget session, the minister overseeing the water and irrigation docket has had occasion to inform MPs that the closure of the country's airspace and the resultant travel challenges would affect numerous water and sanitation projects.

Not all the technical work and especially supplies or feasibility studies are conducted by Tanzanian agencies, not to mention the funding aspect. In that case, the airspace closure held back such consultations and interactions until a better time.

While the support channelled through the French Development Agency will facilitate expansion of water distribution and increase the amount of water supplied in the region, questions remain on water sector projects.

Just passing down a street where roads are not properly built to tarmac level shows how easily water supply pipes are disturbed by routine interventions for various needs. There doesn't appear to be a working mechanism where authorities know where pipes have been laid or their condition at any particular moment.

Regular monitoring or checks would easily show burst water pipes, leading to immediate, but there are serious problems here - and the more serious the problem gets, possibly the longer and the more costly solving it will mean.

There is much loss problems with physical infrastructure are occasioning the public with respect to electricity and water supply, and it is hard to say that we have any ready or convincing answers as yet.

The government has made huge efforts to tune up public services in various sectors, and water is one of them - though problems remain.

The French line of credit is an indication that development partners appreciate the progress made and thus feel free to chip in, assured that their support will not dissipated in auxiliary and unnecessary costs.

What is also evident is that development partners are making efforts to rectify matters in relation to development cooperation, though sometimes only so much can be done when things like negative travel advisories abound.

It is to be assumed that each country is making the efforts it can to assure the citizenry on the situation, but finally what makes a difference is the situation on the ground.

We appear to have made remarkable progress in that context but, as national leaders and health experts insist, there is every need for people to continue observing precautions. Pandemic infections have several half lives and a capacity to return. We should stand so warned.



## High-level event to discuss financing solutions associated with COVID-19

By Special Correspondents in New York

**U**NITED Nations Secretary General António Guterres, the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness were yesterday expected to bring together world leaders and international organisations.

The occasion was meant as a joint initiative to sharpen and accelerate global response to the economic and human impacts of Covid-19 and advance concrete solutions to the development emergency.

The pandemic requires a large-scale, coordinated, comprehensive multilateral response to support countries in need, enabling them to recover better for more prosperous and resilient and inclusive economies and societies.

With more than 50 Heads of State and Government participating, the 'High-Level Event on Financing for Development in the Era of Covid-19 and Beyond' is the most inclusive gathering of countries to focus on the socio-economic recovery and financing needs from the pandemic.

It is crucial for the world to continue to coordinate these efforts to avoid a devastating impact on people's lives and livelihoods, the UN has stated.

We all face economic strain in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly low- and middle-income countries, many of which are seeing their efforts to achieve the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set back.

The High-Level Event looks at six urgent areas of action to mobilise the financing needed for the response and recovery. These are expanding liquidity across the global economy; addressing debt vulnerabilities; stemming illicit financial flows; increasing external finance for inclusive growth and job creation; and strategies for countries to recover better, achieve the SDGs, address climate change and restore the balance between the economy and nature.

"The pandemic has demonstrated our fragility," said UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, adding: "We are in an unprecedented human crisis, because of a microscopic virus. We need to respond with unity and solidarity, and a key aspect of solidarity is financial support."

Prime Minister Holness has meanwhile said: "The Covid-19 pandemic demands that we take immediate action to address its impacts

on the economies of all countries, in every region of the world and at every stage of development."

He has welcomed the six thematic areas of focus, including the "necessity to address the urgent need for increased liquidity, particularly for low- and middle-income countries".

For his part, Canada's PM Trudeau stands convinced that "all countries are being tested by the Covid-19 pandemic, and it threatens to undermine our hard-won development gains".

He has elaborated: "We know that the best way to help all our people and economies rebound is to work together as a global community. We want to support collective and individual actions to enable a recovery that leads to more inclusive, sustainable and resilient economies, where no one is left behind."

### The cost of the pandemic

World Health Organisation figures show that the Covid-19 pandemic has already claimed more than 340,000 lives, with more than 5.4 million cases globally.

Unless we act now, UN projections indicate that the pandemic could slash nearly US\$8.5 trillion from the global economy over the next two years, forcing 34.3 million people into extreme poverty this year and, potentially, an additional 130 million people during this decade.

Falling businesses are already causing a surge in unemployment. The International Labour Organisation expects that global working hours in the second quarter of this year to be 10.5 per cent lower than before the crisis, equivalent to 305 million full-time jobs.

Women are particularly affected, as they are overrepresented in sectors that have been the most affected with initial job losses. They are also the majority of those employed in the informal sector globally and on the whole tend to hold less secure jobs with fewer protections, less savings, and are more likely to live in, or close to, poverty.

The pandemic is causing economic distress even in countries that have not yet experienced the health impact in large numbers. Falling exports and growth are rapidly undermining the debt sustainability of many developing countries, particularly those that are heavily dependent on commodities, tourism revenues or remittances.

Growing debt distress poses an enormous challenge to these countries, further constraining their ability to implement stimulus measures.

Even prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, almost half of all least developed and other low-income countries were in, or close to, debt distress. Debt servicing costs for these countries more than doubled between 2000 and last year, to 13 per cent of government revenue, and reached more than 40 per cent in a quarter of all Small Island Developing States.

Effective domestic resource mobilisation will be crucial for rebuilding economies. Yet trillions of dollars are thought to be held in undeclared offshore financial holdings. The cost of money laundering has been estimated at around US\$16 trillion a year.

### Meeting the challenges

In the face of this unprecedented health, social and economic crisis, many governments across the world have rolled out large fiscal stimulus measures equivalent to an estimated 10 per cent of national gross domestic product (GDP).

But most developing economies are finding it difficult or impossible to implement sufficiently large fiscal packages, which have so far averaged less than 1 per cent of their GDP.

Last month, the G-20 agreed to suspend debt service on bilateral official debt to 76 low-income developing countries to help increase liquidity to deal with the impacts of the crisis.

The International Monetary Fund offered further debt service relief to 25 of the poorest countries, and the World Bank has been coordinating with regional banks to discuss Covid-19 support, joint initiatives, co-financing, and ways to maximise net flows to the poorest and most vulnerable countries.

But far more is needed, and quickly, and the High-Level Event was expected to discuss a wide range of inclusive solutions, seeking input from the countries feeling the most impacted.

### Rebuilding sustainably

In the initial containment and crisis phase of the pandemic, nations have prioritised the health of people before turning to the economic and labour market consequences.

As each nation charts its own course to recovery, countries are seeking to limit the economic fallout by taking steps to protect enterprises, jobs and incomes, and to stimulate the economy, and to do so in a way that protects women and families, young people, and the most vulnerable in our societies.

We must raise our ambitions in order to recover better, by building more prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies and societies. Countries cannot afford to leave unattended the underlying fragilities at the core of our current economic and social systems.

We cannot wish away systemic risks, from the climate crisis to high and persistent inequality. Everyone will benefit if we address these risks by investing up front.

The event was expected include a High-Level Segment in which heads of state and government would express their commitment to finding multilateral solutions to the global economic crisis and its effects on the most vulnerable.

In addition, a High-Level Panel of leaders from international institutions would discuss the challenges and opportunities for urgent, decisive action. Following the Panel, the High-Level Segment among Heads of State and Government, and partners will continue.

### Six critical areas of focus

The event was also set to launch a collaborative effort to enable discussions on concrete proposals to overcome challenges in six areas, with progress reported back at the margins of the High Level Political Forum in July, the General Assembly in September.

The focus would be on the need to expand liquidity in the global economy and maintain financial stability to safeguard development gains; the need to address debt vulnerabilities for all developing countries to save lives and livelihoods for billions of people around the world; and the need to create a space in which private sector creditors can proactively engage in effective and timely solutions.

It would also be on prerequisites for enhancing external finance and remittances for inclusive growth and creating jobs; measures to expand fiscal space and foster domestic resource mobilisation by preventing illicit financial flows; and ensuring a sustainable and inclusive recovery by aligning recovery policies with the SDGs.

The outcomes of the High-Level Event include the formation of six discussions groups, a collaborative effort that aims at providing concrete proposals by mid-July.

There is no time to lose. Solutions cannot wait, and decisive action is required.

• *See related piece on Page 9.*



# Covid-19 in Tanzania: Could it be time for our lenders to be counted?

Sadock Dotto Magai

**T**HE world is in economic lockdown owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. No good news is coming out of any media whether mainstream or social.

Never before in our lifetime have we witnessed such a magnitude of business and border closures, from developed to developing countries. It is a global problem and, therefore, its effects should be measured globally.

The coverage of this pandemic by the national and global media clearly indicates the economic problems ahead for individuals and for businesses at large. This calls for a reflection of the impact of this pandemic on the financial sector in Tanzania, given the current global and local environment.

A summary of the financial sector in Tanzania shows a composition of 30 commercial banks, six community banks, five microfinance banks and two development finance banks - collectively known as lenders.

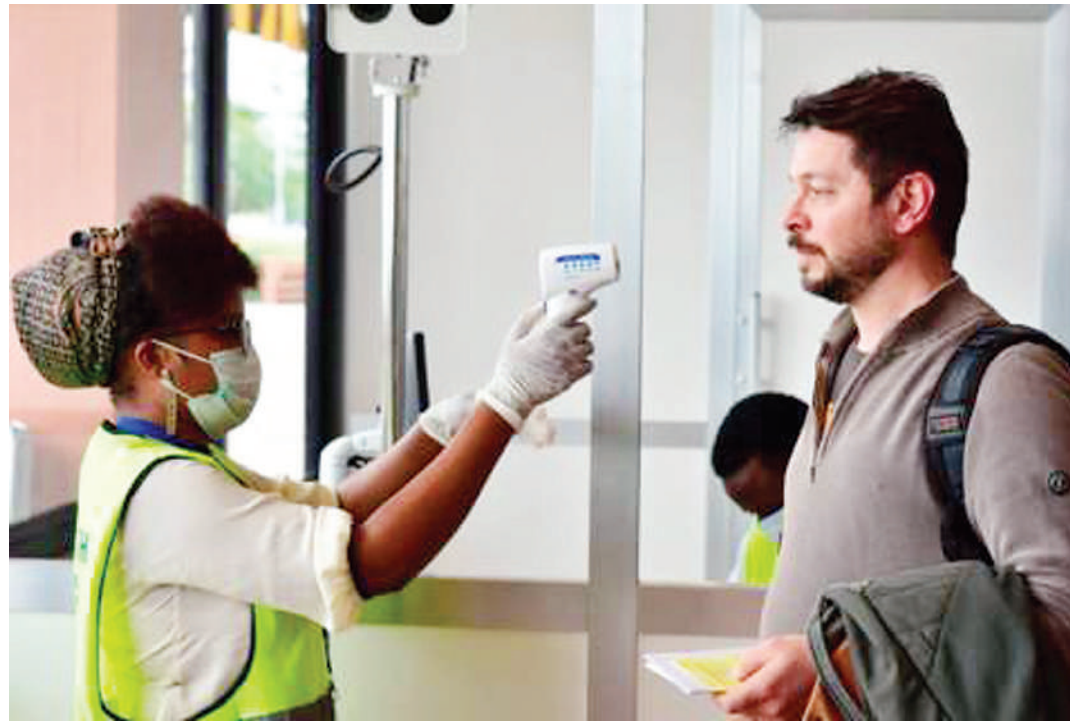
The primary function of these lenders is to acquire liabilities through deposits and assets by lending to businesses and individuals. When lending, lenders assume investment risk, while expecting returns by way of revenues through various charges, interest rate levies and the repayment of the principal amounts.

Banking laws in Tanzania demand that loans be adequately secured, although there are unsecured loan portfolios as well. Irrespective of the collateral taken by lenders to secure their loans, these repayments are expected to come from revenues generated from operational businesses. Collateral realisation is the last resort.

It is because of their special place in the economy that lenders should actively engage their borrowers - that is, customers - at a very early stage to protect their assets and the economy as a whole, with a view to mitigating any foreseeable defaults.

The financial sector is highly regulated, including by the Bank of Tanzania Act, the Banking and Financial Institutions Act, the Foreign Exchange Act, and regulations, directives and circulars made the relevant pieces of legislation.

It would be naïve to suggest that lenders are not aware of the risk posed by Covid-19, as they are required to have in place management of risk assets policies as part of their modus operandi in line with the banking laws in particular the Banking and Financial Institutions (Management of Risk Assets) Regulations and the Risk Management Guidelines issued by the Bank of Tanzania in its capacity as the



licensing authority, regulator and supervisor of these institutions.

As the regulator of the financial sector, the Bank of Tanzania has as its primary concern making sure that these lenders operate in a financially sound manner.

This means that they need to have adequate credit by way of proper capitalisation and good investment policies which, among other things, identify, measure, monitor and manage the risks arising from their businesses.

The aim here is to ensure timely and adequate measures or actions are taken on problematic assets, all geared towards promoting and maintaining public confidence in the financial and banking sector.

Given that loans are assets, they must be repaid or secured. As argued, repayment is normally expected to come from business revenues. When there is disruption to businesses, the borrower's capacity to pay is impacted negatively, thus affecting the performance of the lender's assets.

With that, lenders usually resort to the unpalatable action of collection by either managing the business (if it is found to have been mismanaged) to generate enough revenue to repay the loan or by resorting to disposal of the

security. Loans agreements foresee challenges that may make a borrower fail to repay the loans and provide for default clauses.

Given the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, it is important that commercial lenders be on the alert and be in a position to manage these possible defaults by borrowers in order to minimise statutory provisioning for losses.

For example, it is high time lenders closely monitored the economic trends affecting their customers - at least to understand the extent of the financial difficulties the latter (customers) are facing right now.

Under most loan agreements, borrowers are required to submit monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual reports to lenders. The primary purpose of these reports is to

inform a lender of the financial status of the borrower, market conditions and other operational issues so that a lender can make a reasonable assessment of the ongoing nature of the particular businesses. It is also a signal to the lender on the need to assess the solvency or otherwise of the business.

Covid-19 has resulted in a global pause to business. There is unprecedented lockdown of business both local and international. Borders have been closed, production has been suspended, travel is grounded, and the hospitality industry and the tourism sector are all but shut down.

The pandemic does not call for "legalistic" thinking such as the possibility of invoking force majeure by borrowers - which the courts have rarely upheld when it comes to defaults in the banking business.

Neither is it with the concept or doctrine of frustration of a contract - which is, however, not the ambit of this piece. What is needed is a practical and realistic approach to dealing with borrowers, the regulator, creditors and shareholders.

With the loss of business due to Covid-19, borrowers face loan defaults. In the circumstances, lenders should attempt to take a pragmatic approach to the problem including by doing their utmost to help their customers to survive the pandemic.

Considerations such as waivers of certain charges and interest rates (both current and penal) as well as restructuring options to give relief to borrowers should, as far as practicable, be considered.

Lenders should take pains to assess the financial capacity of their borrowers and, given the revenues from the businesses and based on

the financial capacity of the business, agree on the amount that can be paid.

This calls for lenders to approach this in line with the Management of Risk Assets Regulations and their own credit risk management policies.

It is especially important during these trying times for lenders to engage with the regulator (the Bank of Tanzania), with a view to considering suspending the statutory provisioning requirements and consult the Tanzania Revenue Authority through the regulator.

The aim would be the waiver of penalties on the anticipated tax revenues from interest charged and other charges if waived. In addition, lenders ought to fear engaging the regulator on the financial stimulus package.

In this respect, it is important to engage the regulator as an industry and not as individual lenders by bringing to the regulator's attention measures taken in other jurisdictions - including in the region - to ensure the survival of the banking industry.

Silence and non-action is detrimental to the economy and the banking business. By actively engaging now with customers and the regulator, the industry can mitigate the risk of heavy provisioning for losses.

It is high time the banking industry moved collectively, borrowing a leaf from other jurisdictions and actively suggesting solutions to the regulator that will mitigate the anticipated loss of business while building confidence in the industry and therefore reassuring customers that the banking industry is there for them.

**Sadock Dotto Magai is with IMMA Advocates, a Tanzanian DLA Piper Africa Tanzania member firm.**

## Q-&-A on May 28 event on financing for development in Covid-19-era and beyond

**What is this 'High-Level Event on Financing for Development in the Era of Covid-19 and Beyond' about?**

The High-Level Event brings world leaders and all other key institutions and actors together to identify concrete financing solutions to respond to the pandemic. And we need to recover better in a more sustainable manner and launch a process to enable implementation as soon as possible. Time has come to put resources in the hands of countries for an effective response and recovery from this human crisis.

**What do you hope to achieve out of this meeting?**

We hope to identify concrete proposals to address liquidity and debt challenges, the drop in external financing flows and to stem illicit financial flows. We see this meeting as the start of a collaborative effort among governments and international institutions.

We will be setting up six groups to take forward the outcomes of the high-level meeting and develop roadmaps and concrete solutions. Getting to solutions requires a comprehensive global effort. At the end of this process, we hope to see convergence on tangible solutions among key stakeholders, and their implementation.

**Why is the UN hosting this meeting? Isn't this the territory of G-7, G-20 and the Bretton Woods institutions?**

At the heart of the Covid-19 pandemic is a human crisis. People are being left behind. This development emergency underlines how economics and finance cannot be separated from broader discussions on sustainable development.

Not only are economic growth and financing key means to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Non-economic factors dramatically impact financial markets and growth prospects. We must address them together.

The UN can convene specialised policy communities and bring them together with other actors to facilitate this dialogue. The UN already convenes the Bretton Woods (World Bank and IMF) and other institutions at the Secretariat level through the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development. This initiative will bring this work to the political leaders.

Our work complements and in fact strengthens the efforts of financial



UN Secretary-General António Guterres

policy makers, the G-7, G-20 and international financial institutions.

**There are heads of state missing. Can this be global without them?**

The meeting brings together 50 Heads of States and Government from all regions and all levels of development to identify tangible solutions, in a very short time frame. This setting will allow for targeted and focused discussions. Any ideas and proposals emerging from the effort will of course be presented to the entire membership of the UN, at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in July and the General Assembly in September. All voices will be heard.

**Why have you chosen these six areas to focus on for the socio-economic recovery?**

Financing challenges are at the

heart of the recovery effort. In many countries, they also constrain the immediate crisis response. The six areas address major challenges around public, private and external financial resources that should be harnessed for recovery.

**What are the sticky issues?**

In all areas, there are complexities - technical or political - that are not easy to overcome. For example, an issuance of Special Drawing Rights requires broad global consensus which is lacking at this point. Including commercial creditors in moratoriums or debt relief initiatives raises a host of legal challenges. It's why we need this effort - the scale of the challenge requires attention and action from the highest political level.

The issues you have put on the table have been on the table for a long time. What makes this time different?

The urgency of the moment has made it clear to all that business as usual is not an option. We are in an unprecedented human crisis. Many measures that seemed impossible only a few months ago have been implemented in recent weeks. While there may be disagreement on how precisely we can advance on the issues on the table, there is consensus that we must find solutions for them.

**Is our global economy at risk of collapsing?**

No, that's very unlikely. However, we are clearly in a recession. The expected fall of 3 per cent in growth is already likely too optimistic. This has direct impacts on employment and human well-being. There is also a risk of a protracted crisis and very slow and uneven recovery. That's a scenario that would end all hopes to achieve the SDGs by

2030.

**Which countries are most at risk of being impacted the most by Covid-19?**

The economic impact depends on the scale of the pandemic. There is still a lot of uncertainty over how the coronavirus will evolve. We do already know that the economic fall-out from the pandemic is most severe for developing countries that depend on tourism, on commodity exports, and on those that were already vulnerable prior to the crisis. That includes many developing countries that were already at high risk of, or in, debt distress at the end of last year.

**How does this fit in with the humanitarian response to countries facing economic, health and humanitarian emergencies?**

The world is only as strong as our weakest health system. That's why we need a comprehensive global response in fighting this epidemic. Existing humanitarian support must be sustained to ensure life-saving action for communities that are already the most vulnerable and to prevent the disease from taking root and spreading like wildfire in fragile countries with weakened health systems. In communities in conflict, we need to do everything possible to find the peace and unity or world so desperately needs to battle Covid-19.

The financing required for the response and recovery from this crisis to be discussed in this event is additional to the existing commitments to support humanitarian action and must be sufficient - at least 10 per cent of global GDP - to spur global recovery and a new sustainable and inclusive economy that leaves no one behind.

**How is the socio-economic crisis affecting women?**

Women are particularly affected, as they are overrepresented in sectors that have been the most affected with initial job losses. They are also the majority of those employed in the informal sector globally and on whole tend to hold less secure jobs with fewer protections, less savings, and more likely to live in or close to poverty.

Additionally, the pandemic has been accompanied by an alarming rise in the levels of violence against women and girls, impacting health, dignity, and in some cases the right to life.

But women are not just vulnerable

or at risk. They are half our solutions. In the past months we have seen a surge in mainstream media pieces highlighting women leaders and their effective responses. Women from all sectors are at the forefront of the Covid-19 response and recovery, and they are bringing innovative and inclusive solutions.

**How will the next generation be affected by Covid-19?**

Even before the crisis, more than 267 million young people were not in employment, education or training (NEET), including almost 68 million unemployed young people. Now, the Covid-19 crisis could lead to the emergence of a "lockdown generation".

In a recent ILO-UNESCO-World Bank joint survey, around 98 per cent of respondents reported a complete or partial closure of technical and vocational schools and training centres. Although over two-thirds of training is now being provided at distance, often online, few low-income countries have actually made that transition.

Another new global survey by the ILO and partners of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth reveals that over one in six young people surveyed have stopped working since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis. Among young people who have remained in employment, working hours have fallen by 23 per cent. Moreover, around half of young students report a likely delay in the completion of their current studies, while 10 per cent expect to be unable to complete them at all.

On a standardised scale of mental well-being, more than half of the young people surveyed have become vulnerable to anxiety or depression since the start of the pandemic. And if we do not secure an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery, millions of young people will inherit a world that is more divided, less prosperous and dealing with climate-related disasters.

**What happens next?**

After the meeting of leaders next week, which should give us a roadmap and broad guidance, consultation groups in the six issue areas will get down to work on detailed proposals over the subsequent weeks. They will report back for the first time eight weeks later, at the margins of the HLPF in July - and then at the UN General Assembly and before the end of the year.



# Social distancing is still important even as cities reopen

BY YASMIN TAYAG

OVER the long weekend, revellers in the United States - from Daytona Beach to Houston - flouted social distancing guidelines with raucous celebrations and crowded pool parties.

Technically, they weren't breaking any rules: stay-at-home orders in Florida and Texas have expired, and all US states and territories have eased their shutdowns to varying degrees to jump-start their suffering economies. Social distancing, once a rule, is now considered guidance.

But just because it isn't illegal to get together now doesn't mean that social distancing isn't still critical for keeping you and your loved ones safe. The coronavirus hasn't been eliminated from the United States - far from it - which means that there are still people getting infected, potentially walking around and infecting people around them.

You're still at risk of becoming infected if you come into contact with someone who has tested positive. And if you are infected but asymptomatic, you risk spreading the virus to people you interact with. Going to public places, especially crowded ones where you get within six feet of another person, effectively increases that risk.

Perhaps the reopening of places like businesses, beaches and churches sent out a confusing signal suggesting that it's safe to resume regular life. After all, why would officials allow cities to reopen if it wasn't safe to do so?

But risk is not black and white: it exists on a spectrum, and the officials who have sanctioned reopening have

deemed the risk of Covid-19 spread to be low enough that people can hang out in public again.

It's also worth noting, though, that some of these decisions are made based on hospital capacity. It's not that spread risk is low, but only that hospitals have reached a place where they might be able to handle the number of infections. It's bleak but true.

Unsurprisingly, public health experts have strongly contested the interpretation that it's safe to reopen, arguing that the risk of catching and spreading the disease remains too high to do so safely. Here's a helpful rule of thumb if you ever need clarity: as long as the coronavirus is still circulating in the population, your risk of infection can never be zero.

The idea that certain cities have "flattened the curve" may have contributed to misunderstandings about relative safety. It's true that some cities, like San Francisco, have flattened their curve.

This means that the number of new Covid-19 cases there is no longer rising exponentially day to day. What it doesn't mean is that the number of new Covid-19 cases has necessarily dropped to zero.

The virus is still infecting people in many places that have flattened the curve - it's just doing so at a more gradual rate, hence the flat line on the graph.

It means that the number of people infected has become more manageable for health care systems. The hope is that eventually, the case count will reach zero, but most places are simply not there yet.

Committing to social distancing will help us achieve that. But since it's no longer enforceable by law, it will take



cooperation - and a certain level of personal sacrifice.

As the Washington Post reported, law enforcement officials in the cities that hosted big Memorial Day weekend parties said they couldn't enforce social distancing because it's now a guideline, not a mandate.

Those parties increased the risk of exposure to everyone

who attended, though it will take some two weeks before we know how many people were actually infected, since the virus's incubation period ranges from two to 14 days.

In that time, anyone who was infected could spread the virus elsewhere. For a look at what could happen if we relax social distancing rules too early, just take a look at what's happening

in Brazil, where cases are climbing and hospitals are nearing peak capacity.

We all desperately want to see our family and friends and hang out at restaurants and parties and bars - but to ensure that we can all do so sooner rather than later, we must cooperate in bringing the number of new cases down to zero. And that means avoiding chances to

catch and spread the disease, no matter the official rules in your area.

In its guidance for reopening the United States, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention states: "Reopening America requires all of us to move forward together by practising social distancing and other daily habits to reduce our risk of exposure to the virus that causes

Covid-19."

The key term here is "work together" - which means forgoing parties now so that we can all attend them in the future.

**Yasmin Tayag is a senior editor at OneZero at Medium, a real-time resource for Covid-19 news, advice and commentary, covering the sciences.**

# Amid hardships, Xi leads China's sprint to milestone

CHINA convened the "two sessions" after an over two-month postponement due to COVID-19 as the country makes its homestretch toward "Xiaokang," a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

Attended by about 3,000 national lawmakers and 2,000 political advisors, the week-long event in Beijing provided reassurance that the timetable for the milestone goal will not change, despite the pandemic and global economic recession.

Xiaokang will be the first commitment to be fulfilled in the course of realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, joined national lawmakers and political advisors in discussing state affairs.

The nation's will and strength to overcome any difficulties shone through and a well-off society for 1.4 billion Chinese people is within sight.

## Making history

A meal of meat and staple foods made from fine flour was an unrealistic wish during the harsh times decades ago in Liangjiahe, a village in northwest China's Shaanxi Province, where Xi spent seven years of his youth working alongside peasants.

Now Xi is leading the nation's battle to wipe out the absolute poverty that has haunted the nation for thousands of years.

Around 5.1 million people remained impoverished at the end of 2019, but China intends to lift them from poverty by the end of this year. The total number of people emerging out of poverty will have reached 100 million

since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012.

The weakest point in fulfilling the first centenary goal will thus have been shored up.

The commitment to eradicating poverty reflects China's people-centered philosophy. Xi stressed that it must be acted upon in every aspect of work.

Though caught off guard by COVID-19, China has never sought short-term economic gains at the cost of lives.

Among the deputies to the National People's Congress was Luo Jie, a 53-year-old medical professional from Hubei Province, which was hit hard by COVID-19. He told reporters how medics in his hospital spent 47 days saving an 87-year-old patient. In Hubei alone, more than 3,600 COVID-19 patients over the age of 80 have been cured.

**Xi said he was really impressed by Luo's story.**

"What is people first?" Xi asked before offering his own answer. "So many people worked together to save a single patient. This, in essence, embodies doing whatever it takes (to save lives)." During discussions, he also stressed fortifying the public health protection network.

The concept of Xiaokang also means democracy, the rule of law, fairness, justice and a good environment, all that the Chinese people yearn for.

The NPC Thursday adopted the Civil Code, the first law defined as a "code" of the People's Republic of China. The law will further refine the country's basic legal system and rules of conduct in the civil and commercial fields.

Sun Xianzhong, an NPC deputy who participated in compiling the civil code, said it protects people's rights to the fullest, en-



sureing their security, equality and dignity.

Meanwhile, the extensive range of topics discussed at the two sessions, including smart manufacturing, the application of 5G, elderly care, as well as the protection and inheritance of ethnic minority languages, have offered a glimpse into the world's second largest economy's quick bounce back from COVID-19.

China has also planned a further drop in energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product and a reduction in the discharge of major pollutants this year to promote the country's green development.

China has, for three consecutive years, topped a trust index surveyed worldwide, with record-high public confidence in its government, business, media and NGOs,

according to the results of Edelman Trust Barometer 2020 published in March.

**Marching through thick and thin**

The Chinese economy contracted 6.8 percent year on year during the first quarter. Consumption, investment and exports have declined. Pressure on employment has risen significantly. Enterprises, especially micro, small, and medium-sized businesses, face growing difficulties.

Worldwide, the pandemic has ravaged the global economic order, disrupted industrial and supply chains and caused a contraction in international trade that is expected to fall between 13 and 32 percent in 2020, according to the WTO.

China has set no specific

target for economic growth this year due to great uncertainties but made practical plans to ensure more than 9 million new urban jobs, give full play to over 100 million market entities and improve people's livelihoods.

Xi stressed analyzing China's economic situation from a comprehensive, dialectical and long-term perspective, urging efforts to foster new opportunities amid challenges and make new advances amid changes.

He also stressed creating a new development pattern in which domestic and foreign markets can boost each other, with the domestic market as the mainstay.

The government has decided to further cut taxes and fees, reduce enterprises' production and operating costs and increase financial support to keep business operations stable.

Liaoning Oxiranchem Inc, a chemical producer affected by COVID-19, saw its output fall by 26 percent and profits slump by 80 percent year on year in the first quarter.

Aided by government policies, Oxiranchem's production and sales in May are catching up, said Zhu Jianmin, chairman of the company and a political adviser. "The government's endeavor to safeguard the economy by unclogging and stabilizing industrial and supply chains will help more private businesses out."

This year's two sessions also sent signals of speeding up reforms in key areas, including state-owned enterprises, factor markets, finance and taxation, social security, and primary-level governance.

Priority will be given to new infrastructure, new urbanization initiatives and major projects, which will not only boost consumption but also facilitate structural adjustments and enhance growth sustainability.

China is also making greater efforts to foster a more vibrant and enabling business environment in which all companies are treated as equals and engaged in fair competi-

tion, with strengthened protection of intellectual property rights.

"The Chinese nation is adept at turning crises into opportunities, disadvantages into advantages, and turning costs into the driving force of progress," said Han Qingxiang, professor at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee.

## Standing on the right side of history

Today's world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century and is full of instability and turbulence.

"Protectionism is on the rise globally, but we should stand on the right side of history," Xi said, stressing commitment to multilateralism, greater democracy in international relations, as well as openness and win-win cooperation.

The China International Import Expo, the world's first national-level exhibition dedicated to import, will be held for the third year in Shanghai. More than 1,400 companies have signed up.

Despite the impact of COVID-19, Chinese investment in Belt and Road countries and regions increased by 11.7 percent year on year in the first quarter, along with a 3.2-percent growth in trade with them.

The future of China's diplomacy is premised on the commitment to working with all countries to build a community with a shared future for humanity. State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi told reporters on the sidelines of the NPC session. "No matter what stage of development it reaches, China will never seek hegemony. We will always stand with the common interests of all countries."

In the meantime, China will firmly safeguard its sovereignty, security, and development interests.

The national legislature Thursday adopted a decision on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to safeguard national security.

China is set to make national security laws for Hong Kong, according to the decision, which also introduced measures to strengthen enforcement mechanisms such as allowing the central government's security organs to set up agencies in Hong Kong when necessary.

Lawmakers and political advisors agreed that such a move is imperative, pressing, justified, and legitimate.

The two sessions have charted the course for China's homestretch to a key milestone in modernization. For the first time in human history, a country with more than 1 billion people will be moderately well off.

Yet China is still the world's largest developing country. Xiaokang is a new starting point along the path toward a great national rejuvenation.

The pursuit of Chinese people's dream never ends. The new glory is coming.

Xinhua



# Covid-19 speeds up digitalisation of African agricultural sector

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

WHEN it became harder in Kenya for plant and animal health specialists to meet physically with farmers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the two sides embraced digital agriculture services. And when farmers found it difficult to buy agri-products like seeds and fertilizer, they turned to online platforms.

Digital solutions including websites, social media platforms and specific apps are accelerating the digitalization of the east African nation's agriculture sector as it steadily sheds traditional operations.

In Kenya, as in many other African nations, digital solutions have been accelerated by the outbreak of COVID-19. Joseph Macharia, a social entrepreneur at Mkulima Young, a popular

online marketplace, said, "People are now buying and selling online out of the need to do so." He noted that in both Kenya and across Africa, the number of farmers, agro-dealers, trainers and buyers who use the platform has grown four-fold in the last two months.

"Online marketplaces have become a hit with all big and small actors in the agricultural value chain who want their products or services known

since traditional markets currently remain stifled," he said, adding that the disease has contributed immensely to the digital transformation of the agricultural value chain in Africa by enhancing access to markets and information.

Beatrice Macharia of Growth Point, an agro-consultancy based in Kajiado, south of Kenya's capital, said driven by the tough circumstances caused by COVID-19, farmers in the east African nation

and other parts of Africa are embracing digital solutions. "Initially, most farmers did not fully adopt digital practices because they could still travel to places and get physical interactions if need be.

But right now, with the curfews, lockdowns and need to maintain social distancing, they are using videos, photos and various apps to find solutions to problems," she said. "The digital future that many were talking about is here

and has come faster." For the last two months, she has barely met farmers physically but has handled hundreds of queries and received consultancy fees via mobile money, Macharia said.

John Karithi, a tomato farmer in Kenya, observed the trend. When his tomatoes turned brown and full of water inside, he used an online agro-consultancy service to ask experts what happened to the produce. Days later, he received information on

what the problem was and how to solve it.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, agricultural transformation in Africa is being boosted by the widespread use of mobile phones and low internet costs. Internet penetration in Africa stands at 39 percent of the population, which translates to 527 million people in the continent, according to the World Bank.

## Accurate measurements key for Tanzania to land nation middle-income status by 2025, says WMA

By Guardian Reporter

THE Weights and Measures Agency (WMA) is one of the public institutions which are working hard to ensure that accurate measurements become one of the key aspects for Tanzania to attain middle income nation in the next five years.

The agency has unveiled measures that will make it realize the long-term government's dreams of transforming the natural-rich nation into the bandwagon of the middle-income countries, through industrialization.

This includes extending its services into health, safety, and environment sectors, in an effort to protect the community against possible harmful effects that might result from wrong measurements' outcomes.

According to WMA Chief Executive Officer, Dr Ludovic Manege, measurement instruments in the health, safety, and environment sectors should be regularly verified to bring about accuracy and intended results.

Health sector relies on measurements to achieve its goals, Dr Manege says, noting that in hospitals, clinics, and health centers doctors and nurses depend much on various patient measurement results, like that of weight and blood pressure, among others, so as to be able to determine

the right treatments.

"Without accuracy measurement results a doctor can direct wrong dosage that could endanger the patient's life," says Manege when speaking at the climax of the World Metrology Day, an annual celebration of the signature of the Metre Convention on 20 May 1875 by representatives of seventeen nations. This year's theme is 'Measurements for Global Trade'.

He stresses: "Maternal and child health centers also rely on accurate measurements to monitor maternal health during pregnancy. The measurements are also important for the baby's heartbeats rate wherein without accurate measurement devices; things could go wrong."

According to him, given the fact that Tanzania is a member of the International Organisation of Legal Metrology (OIML)—the agency makes whatever possible to extend its services to all sectors, for not only protecting the community, but also making sure that locally manufactured goods are able to compete in international markets.

"The OIML provides International recommendations and guidelines regarding the use of precise measurements, aiming at bringing accuracy to the whole concept of measurements worldwide. For example, one kilo-



WMA officials inspect weighing scales to ensure that customers are not cheated by dishonest traders aiming for super profits.

gram of sugar in Tanzania must be equal to one kilogram in Denmark. And this, will help Tanzania to attain middle income nation status in the next five years."

The WMA also is responsible to protect transportation infrastructures; hence, it regularly verifies measurements' devices to let that all transport means, especially vehicles and locomotives have cargoes in line with their carrying capacity.

Accurate measurements plays an important role when tax collection comes in, to make sure that both traders and responsible tax collection authority get what one deserves, he says.

Economic reports from various sectors on production, trade and economy depends on accurate measurements.

For example, Dr Manege says information on exports depends on measurements like tones, meters and millimeters.

"Thus, use of proper measurements is crucial for acquisi-

tion of accurate statistics that help to determine the contribution of each sector to the national income."

For her part, WMA's Director of technical services division Stella Kahwa suggests the need for industrialists to heavily invest in proper packaging of their products to win the international competitive market.

"To me, proper packaging is an important yardstick in excelling in business undertaking within and beyond borders. As the agency, we want to see manufacturers use the correct measurements that have been verified in order to protect the consumer and give the required quantity of the products," the official says.

She also warns unscrupulous people who have been playing down measurements for super profit to stop from doing so, as WMA is there to protect consumers as it is in accordance with section 340 of the Weights and Measures Act, 2002 which was revised in 2016.

"Traders and industrialists should inculcate a habit of

using correct weights and measures in their businesses to bring fairness to consumers," she suggests, adding: "It is important to note that the struggle against those who tamper with measurements needs cooperation from consumers who are the main losers in this illegal tendency."

According to her, Tanzanians who want to do international trade should ensure that their merchandises are certified by WMA.

"This will make products be able to compete in the international markets," she says, calling business community to ensure that their products have correct measurements if they are to win the competitive international markets, so that the Tanzania reach semi-industrialized nation by 2025.

WMA has been in the forefront in educating industrialists to package their products in line with the law governing the agency, she says. "One of the important issues to consider when packing include products naming, manufacturing places and name of manufacturer, postal and email address, phone number as well as actual amount of the goods.

WMA is an Executive Agency, responsible for fair trade transactions through certification of weights and measures. It is the sole agency in Tanzania for enforcing the Weights and Measures Act No.20 of 1982.

Since 1999 and in pursuance to the Executive Agencies Act Number 30 of 1997, the WMA replaced the former Directorate of Weights and Measures under the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The move was part of the Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) to increase efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery.

## Brewer, TARI team up in producing high-quality sorghum seeds

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA Breweries Public Limited Company and Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) research project has produced a variety of sorghum seeds that are currently being analyzed for their suitability for brewing beer.

The project aimed to improve the quality of sorghum seeds in Tanzania.

The seeds were grown under 4 varying conditions i.e. with fertilizer; without fertilizer; based on good agricultural practices (GAP) and traditional farming methods. Sorghum seeds grown through GAP proved to have a higher yield of around 43 percent better than those grown through other conditions.

TBL's Managing Director Philip Redman said he was optimistic about the sorghum seed research project, which was launched in December 2019 at Hombolo, Kibaiwa and Kongwa districts, adding that it could play a key role in producing good sorghum seed variety that could be planted in other areas of Tanzania as well.

"Through the project, sorghum farmers will also be given grower guides to supplement the crop man-

agement practices that are championed by our Agri extension team. All these initiatives aim to enhance the quality and quantity of sorghum farmer yields, reduce their use of water and ensure crop protection through the provision of insurance," he said.

According to Redman, his company was keen to boost the livelihoods of farmers as well as provide TBL Plc with much needed raw material. Sorghum is used in the production of TBL Plc's affordable beers - Eagle Lager and Bia Bingwa. The company already sources 74 percent of its raw materials locally and is committed to increasing its local sourcing over the coming years.

For his part, the Centre Manager for TARI Hombolo Dr. Lameck Makoye who is heading the sorghum research project said the partnership between TARI and TBL Plc was a reliable and sustainable way of helping farmers to improve their yields and livelihoods.

He said TARI was committed to producing enough certified seeds to meet the needs of sorghum farmers who would continue to be exposed to good agricultural practices (GAP) of sorghum through the TBL Plc - TARI project.



## CABI-led Africa Soil Health Consortium helps over a million farmers grow more and better crops

By Guardian Reporter

THE CABI-led Africa Soil Health Consortium (ASHC) has reached more than 1.3 million smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, helping them to grow more and better crops. Improved information is critical to increase livelihoods and local, regional and national food security.

The project developed com-

munications campaigns designed to help farmers understand and adopt Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) practices when growing bananas, beans, cassava, maize and soybeans. Core funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation was used to leverage fund from IDRC, DFID, and IFAD/USAID in Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda.

ASHC aimed to reach 450,000

farmers but, since 2015, the consortium had far exceeded its goal by tripling the number of those benefiting from its advice. These smallholders are now more aware of ISFM practices for key crops such as maize, rice and soybean and evidence from outcome studies showed that at least 20 percent of them went on to adopt a range of new soil health practices.

Aside from radio and text mes-

sages, ASHC and its partners also used novel ways to reach farmers such as comics books, drama productions and music videos with down-to-earth messages about soil health and encouraging families to share information about soil fertility and good agronomic practices. This strategy proved especially useful for reaching younger people within farming families.

James Watiti, Coordinator - De-

velopment, Communication and Extension, who was the project manager said, "Poor soil fertility is one of the biggest hurdles preventing small-scale farmers in sub-Saharan Africa from improving their farm's productivity and, therefore, from increasing their incomes.

"A lack of access to reliable and timely information about ISFM means smallholders cannot easily learn about, or apply,

tried and tested practices, even for the most commonly grown crops such as common beans and maize.

"CABI helped to bridge the gap in farmers' knowledge by cultivating partnerships with over 70 different agencies to plan and implement more than 18 scale up campaigns which has seen a marked change in ISFM practices and, according, increases in yield."

Since 2011 the consortium has created over 600 ISFM materials that are now available on the ASHC website for anyone to use or adapt.

The ASHC family of projects includes many initiatives such as Gender and the Legume Alliance (GALA), and Upscaling Technologies in Agriculture through Knowledge Extension (UPTAKE) and Scaling Up Improved Legume Technologies (SILT).



# Education of children with disabilities risks falling by the wayside amid Covid-19 crisis

By Judith McKenzie, Richard Vergunst, Chantal Samuels and Thandi Henkeman

ONE of the most devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic is the global impact on education and the opportunities for children to learn. Where schools are closed, children are not only deprived of education but also of friendship, social interaction and stimulation. In situations of poverty, children may also lose access to food programmes and social support, leaving them more vulnerable and unprotected.

Within this situation, children with disabilities are likely to be even more vulnerable. We as the Teacher Empowerment for Disability Inclusion (TEDI) project have, as our specific focus, the development of quality education for children with disabilities and have been working over the past four years to empower teachers with the necessary skills. However, in the Covid-19 pandemic, much of the responsibility for teaching has now shifted to parents and families, and we share our reflections on what this means for children with disabilities.

Before Covid-19 According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in 2015, some 597,753 children with disabilities were out of school. Some parents have had to care for and educate their children at home long before Covid-19 arrived and those who do attend school remain predominantly in segregated special schools. Even here they do not experience success on par with their non-disabled peers. The DBE National Senior Certificate 2018 Examination Report indicates that of the 624,733 learners who wrote matric in 2018, only 3,856 had special educational needs - that is 0.6% of the total, but the national disability prevalence statistic is around 7.5%.

The Global Campaign for Education reminds us that the United Nation Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 requires parties to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", including persons with disabilities. However, despite this intention, the goal of universal primary and secondary completion is not on track for 2030, and 50% of children with disabilities in low and middle-income countries were out of school before the pandemic. Its presence has only worsened this already unacceptable situation.

Children with disabilities often live in some of the poorest families, face prejudices as well as discrimination in their communities, and are not prioritised in terms of education. The risk of exclusion is even higher now in this

time of crisis.

The impact of Covid-19

In South Africa, provincial education departments, organisations, schools and teachers have been tasked with creating and adapting teaching and learning materials so that learners can complete the school syllabus in their homes while the country is on lockdown. Parents and families are expected to play an active role by monitoring their child's learning, setting up homeschool programmes and even teaching content. While many resources are now available in the form of guides, YouTube channels and websites, there is very little support to parents and families who have the task of homeschooling their children with disabilities.

The DBE is proposing that schools will go back from 1 June in a staggered manner, starting with Grade 7 and Grade 12. The DBE has indicated that the return of learners in special schools will be determined at a later date due to their specific vulnerabilities.

Children who have sensory, physical or intellectual disabilities may require more intensive supervision and care than typically developing children. They may be less able to follow self-directed learning because they are not provided with adaptations such as braille, or South African Sign Language (SASL), which are essential for them to access learning materials. Some have not yet learnt to read by themselves, while others require higher levels of interaction and learning support.

Disruptions in daily routines can pose a challenge to many children with developmental disabilities and their families. For example, one mother that we spoke to said: "We [parents] both work from home anyway, but he's usually at school. It's difficult to work with a child who needs constant attention. He's not coping very well. His frustration levels are increasing, lack of outings and being indoors is not good. Not being at school, being out of routine, not being stimulated, all these things are adding to his frustration, which increases his levels of aggression, anxiety and of late, depression (he has been crying far more)."

Many children who are enrolled in special schools stay in hostels and these would need to be prepared for their return, which would likely cause further delays. Even prior to Covid-19, there have been numerous issues around the lack of supervision in hostels and inadequate safety measures, with multiple incidents of abuse. In addition, one of the teachers we spoke to said: "Also, when they return there have to be systems in place to protect the learners who suffer from other ill-



nesses. Our learners, generally speaking, have other medical issues.

"But how do you get blind children to use social distancing if touch is basically one of the key ways they connect with their friends? Also, their masks... blind learners may lose their masks easier and if they are not labelled with braille, they will not know whose mask is whose."

All of this indicates that it may take much longer for children with disabilities to return to school, and therefore highlights the urgency of considering remote teaching and parental support options.

Challenges of remote learning for schools and teachers

A teacher at a school for the deaf highlighted challenges of remote learning for her learners: "We are finding it very difficult to contact all our families. We have managed to get hold of 95 of our 100 families, but some phone numbers don't exist etc. For deaf kids, the videos etc that we send are data-intensive, and data costs are an issue for most families, hence initially there was not a good response to the work sent."

Within this Covid-19 context, teachers worry that children with disabilities are missing out on the important early learning experiences that they need. Special needs educators are well aware of the limited incidental learning (the learning from the environment that typically developing children are exposed to daily - the sights, sounds and concepts that they are immersed in) that children with sensory, physical and intellectual disability experience, and which need to be taught deliberately by skilled professionals.

As this teacher says: "Our little kids are missing out on incredibly important language learning opportunities. Most are at home in a family where no one signs and where they are getting no language stimulation - this is devastating for their future academic success."

Learners with complex disabilities may be especially disadvantaged as this teacher notes: "There are quite a few learners who are blind because of syndromes, and they will most likely not return this week, or even, worse... until the worst of the pandemic is over, which may be another year or two. This is a tragedy. Our learners are generally already older than the average sighted learner 'for their grade'. Some turn 21 in matric. This situation will become worse then."

Given that many children in special schools live far from their school, it can be difficult getting supportive resources to them. In addition to tools for remote learning, they may need specific assistive devices such as a Perkins Braille or video technology for communicating remotely in SASL.

Many children come from less privileged backgrounds and do not own their own assistive devices, and are thus at home without any assistive device support systems.

It is not clear whether there has been any attempt to supply learners with the necessary IT and assistive technology at their homes, but teachers caution that delivery and care of these devices in the home setting is likely to be highly problematic due to the expense, maintenance requirements and the fact that many parents are unfamiliar with how these devices are supposed to be used, and cannot therefore support their children's learning.

For children who are blind (of whom the majority are boarders) this means that they cannot access braille, as this teacher notes: "The braille copies of the book are thick and heavy and take up a lot of space. We did not send these books home with them when we thought the 'lockdown' would only have been three weeks. Subsequently, none of our braille learners have 'hard copy' textbooks."

The problems of access to textbooks, devices and data are compounded by the lack of expertise of parents in braille, SASL, alternative and augmentative communication as well as adaptation of materials and behaviour management. Our research in TEDI has shown us that it is an unfortunate reality, even when school is open, that families and professionals do not work together to support learners, and that families have little idea of what goes on in classrooms on a daily basis or even how to support their disabled children with homework. While there are cases of close cooperation between parents and teachers, there are also many, especially where children are in hostels, of parents having little communication with special schools.

### Challenges faced by parents

Parents of children with developmental disabilities such as Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) experience difficulty with caregiving, such as this family who told us: "[It is a challenge] not always having someone to watch him when I need to collect his medication or when I have to go get essential supplies. His dad stays with us but works out of the home every day, and the fact that his dad might get exposed unknowingly, passing it on to us is a major concern." They also experience anxiety about their children's progress and the impact of prolonged lack of schooling.

"Regression is a real concern - ASD children are in real danger of regression. That's the biggest fear, [that] he will lose what he has learnt over the years. ASD traps children in a world of their own - school and routine help to keep them focused on the world around them."

### What has been done

As observed during the pandemic, people are resilient and resourceful in difficult times, and this is equally true of families with a disabled family member. Thus, one group of parents shared: "We keep him busy by playing his nursery rhymes and stuff that he loves, and I think the fact that we've all been at home with him makes him feel safe."

There are indications that some parents are able to continue working with their children: "I am a teacher myself so I try to keep up with his routine, and we receive homework from his teacher every week as well as videos when they need to do practicals. We make videos and take pictures so his teacher can see that he is keeping up with his work."

It appears that some schools are using WhatsApp to send worksheets, which work well in some cases but are rather haphazard, as noted by this mother: "My son's teacher has sent 2 worksheets twice during the 7 weeks of lockdown. Other than that, no support at all."

At the school for the deaf, they have raised funds to purchase data for families, which has allowed for greater participation in learning. But there is frustration that the work that can be covered is nowhere near what they would be able to do in a day at school, bearing in mind the difficulty that such children experience with reading.

Teachers at another special school feel as though the school management is going through the motions of providing online learning, but not addressing the barriers that prevent teachers and families from implementing the prescribed learning. This can appear as an attitude of complacency and "let's just wait and see", and there is a feeling that learners and families need to be better equipped and supported.

An example of the complexity of online learning facing a child who has low vision is explained by a teacher we spoke to who has adapted her way of testing to accommodate her students: "All four of our matriculants have access to cell-phones. I sent one braille book with the three who take English First Additional Language: their drama. So, I am

writing questions in 20 bold font and then taking photos of the questions and WhatsApp them the questions. They then write their answers, take photos and WhatsApp it back. The progress is slow, but they have been quite good about doing the work and sending it back."

In Cape Town, the High Spirits Skills Training Centre for the Intellectually Challenged prepared activity packs which were distributed through the food parcel distribution network. These included the paper, activity pages, colouring-in pages and other play materials. Instructions were shared in hardcopy with the activity pack, and also via the school's WhatsApp group. They are currently developing video tutorials on the organisation's Facebook page.

What is needed

How then can we give these learners better experiences and more opportunities to continue to access education? Overall, the recommendations that apply to typically developing children apply to children with disabilities - reach out to teachers, establish routines, deal with fears and anxieties about the pandemic and other good advice that is offered on home teaching websites.

Beyond this, what is needed for educating children with disabilities from home, in a remote learning space, is a rigorous plan of action to facilitate more parent and family empowerment in homeschooling. This can include having webinars, websites, support groups, newsletters etc that can support and help manage the parents or families who often feel vulnerable and isolated in this context.

We would also encourage networking between teachers and parents to discuss how to adapt learning to the needs of their children, and we suggest that now is an opportunity to extend the collaboration between home and school that has been so sadly lacking in special schools.

Teachers should focus on families understanding how to enhance their child's learning with less of an emphasis on specific curricular activities. It is also clear that there is a need for community-based disability practitioners who are well-placed to foster links between the school and home, and would be able to assist parents with adapting materials to their child's needs, as well as behaviour management and therapeutic skills. A further resource would be specially adapted materials that can be found on websites such as those on the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities website.

### After Covid-19

While we focus on learners in special schools in this discussion, there is an urgent need to pay heed to the call for an international pursuit of equitable and inclusive education for all children. The current inequity related to remote learning should make us aware of how children with disabilities need to be considered not as an add on or exceptional group, but as part of the continuum of quality and inclusive education during and beyond this crisis.

Hopefully this experience will act as a catalyst for the future in developing the online and remote learning space that can complement the traditional learning space to provide more opportunities to engage with children for more comprehensive and effective learning - not only at school, but also at home. This is especially pertinent for children with disabilities who are not always able to access more formal educational institutions in South Africa, and who have to rely on the home environment for any form of education. Closer collaboration between families and educators is vital to finding workable solutions for all concerned.

Finally, we conclude by recognising the opportunities that Covid-19 offers to promote inclusive education. These are opportunities to increase stability/routine, opportunities to increase access for students who have never attended school, and opportunities to increase equity and inclusion.

AGENCIES

## THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 92 00--

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

- 3 LETTERS: PLY, FIG, ALL
- 4 LETTERS: SALT, TIME, LOME, IGAD, ENDS, ISLE SNAR (7 WORDS)
- 5 LETTERS: PANEL, ENDED, STARK, TIGRE, ROMEO (5 WORDS)
- 6 LETTERS: NEEDLE, PENALS, RUSSIA, SKILLS LOOSER (5 WORDS)
- 7 LETTERS: TUNNELS
- 8 LETTERS: FLAMINGO
- 10 LETTERS: SITUATIONS

**WORD-FIT**

Y U G O S L A V I A  
E A C M  
A M I D D I L M A  
R N O T E D U  
C D A A N T  
C O L O U R E  
L I C  
P O N D E M A I L  
M O O I  
A B R O G A T E N  
D O O R E G  
O E S T A T E Y

**CROSSWORD**

R E F E R E N C E S  
E R O N  
L E A T E N U  
I N D O L D  
E L S  
K N O B E V E N T  
A I E R  
A G O N I Z E D A  
B E R G R I  
A B U L A Y A T

- CLUES: Across**
- 1 a Japanese dish of thinly sliced beef or pork boiled
  - 2 quickly with vegetables and then dipped in sauce
  - 3 a crow-like bird
  - 4 little in size
  - 5 a soft plastic mixture
  - 6 a male child
  - 7 police officer in East Afrika
  - 8 a musical instrument
  - 9 a piece of writing on a particular subject
  - 10 laws formerly in operation in S.Africa controlling blacks
  - 11 rowdy behaviour
  - 12 the holding of an office
- Down:**
- 1 class, kind, variety
  - 2 on the top of
  - 3 the place where one lives
  - 4 basic monetary unit of Panama
  - 5 large New Zealand parrot
  - 6 labour hard
  - 7 Assegai
  - 8 Lake victoria in Kenya
  - 9 a course or run for skiing
  - 10 someone who plants
  - 11 argument in favor of something
  - 12 a habitual drunkard

By Maggiezi: 0755429240 telxmagz@gmail.com



# MINISTER KAMWELWE SAYS LOCAL ENGINEERS TO UNDERTAKE DAR PORT'S ESWS PROJECT

By Property Watch Reporter

**D**ISAPPOINTED by the performance of foreign contractors, the government will use its own e-government information communication technology engineers to install an electronic single window system at Dar es Salaam Port.

Works, Transport and Communications minister Isack Kamwelwe says the government has qualified and talented young minds employed by its electronic government agency who will undertake the eSWS project which has been delayed since 2005.

"This project is going to be implemented by e-government personnel because we have the best talented and qualified young people here with capacity to deliver," Eng Kamwelwe said pointing out that foreign contractors have disappointed the state on a number of occasions.

"We hired a foreign company which undertook the Tancis system installation which has given us a number of challenges to fix," said the ComWorks Minister while stressing that hiring foreign based contractors will now be done through intense scrutiny.

South Korean based KNET and Korea Customs UNI-PASS Information Association (CUPA) were contractors for Tanzania Network of Customs Information System (Tancis) in 2014 after being contracted by Tanzania Revenue Authority.

Minister Kamwelwe also named another project which was undertaken by foreign con-



TANCIS control room at Dar es Salaam Port.

tractors but had serious shortcomings as the electronic fiscal devices (EDF). "In this tender, the server was stationed in Dubai contrary to legal provisions of our country," the ComWorks Minister noted saying such shortcom-

ings have forced the state to look inwards when implementing sensitized projects.

When EDFs were introduced in 2010, eight companies were picked to sell the devices and approved paper roll plus servicing which at-

tracted widespread protests from business people. The companies were: Advantech Office Supplies Limited of Dar es Salaam; Bolsto Solutions Limited, Compulynx Tanzania Limited, Maxcom Africa Limited, Pergamon Group

Limited, Power Computers Telecommunication Limited, Soft Net Technologies Limited and Web Technologies Tanzania Limited, all from Dar es Salaam. Two companies; Advantech Office Supplies Limited and Total Fiscal Solutions Limited were sole suppliers of fiscal paper rolls for the machines.

A European Union expert, Ashley Elliot said in a policy briefing paper on operations at Dar Port in 2016 that the World Bank had shown interest to fund the eSWS project but people with vested interest both within the public and private sectors frustrated the project.

"The eSWS system has faced teething problems. The system was intended to be introduced in 2010 with World Bank support but faced opposition from vested interests," Elliot said in his paper while adding that opponents of the eSWS project were arguing that it is unnecessary in the presence of TANCIS which already allowed for customs clearance payment to be settled online.

"Indeed, most port users agree that there is no need for two separate electronic systems - a better alternative would be to have a unified system based on the existing TANCIS platform," Elliot noted saying Belgian based Pharos BVBA, which was contracted through an international tender to install the system has failed to do so since 2014.

"The company reportedly faced significant opposition from government agents in the port, some of whom have argued that the eSWS is unnecessary," the EU expert said.

## Lafarge Africa forecasts reduced revenue in Q2 of 2020 due to Covid-19

By Property Watch Reporter

THE coronavirus will erode earmarked profits of Lafarge Africa Plc, the Nigerian based sister company of Mbeya Cement Company Limited.

In its first quota results for the year ending March 2020, the company said due to subdued activity in the construction sector caused by lockdown measures to avoid the Covid-19 outbreak, its revenue will likely be impacted in June.

However, during the period under review, its revenue grew by 10 percent year-on-year to US\$164m from US\$149m in the same period in 2019 with net profit more than doubling to US\$20.8m. "First quarter sales were driven by growing cement sales that compensated for slowing aggregate and

concrete sales," said Managing Director, Khaled El Dokani who noted that despite, short-term disruptions due to the epidemic, the subsidiary of LafargeHolcim was confident of the resilience of its business. According to the holding company, LafargeHolcim's quarterly report, Middle East Africa delivered an over-proportional increase in recurring EBIT with turnaround initiatives offsetting COVID-19 impact in the region. Nigeria, Algeria and Iraq were solid contributors, while South Africa and Lebanon were impacted by lockdown measures.

"We are confronting an unprecedented health crisis with COVID-19 that is changing how we live and how we work in many ways. Keeping our employees healthy and safe is our number one priority and core value," said

LafargeHolcim's CEO, Jan Jenisch.

Jenisch said in early January, when the first signs of the pandemic emerged, the company was quick to respond and take all the necessary measures to protect the health of its people while supporting partners and communities, in full alignment with local authorities across all markets.

"I am very proud of how our people have gone above and beyond to engage in relief work worldwide. Building on our long tradition of working closely with our communities, our teams are actively supporting health efforts around the world," he added pointing out that the company participated in the rapid construction of emergency field hospitals to sanitizing public spaces and disposing of medical waste. He further noted that



Mbeya Cement Company Limited's plant on the outskirts of Mbeya city.

the Covid-19 crisis highlights how essential construction is to keep society running hence he extended sincere gratitude to all people around the world whose swift response

to the new reality has been exemplary. "It has allowed us to maintain vital business continuity so that we can play our role to address this crisis. I applaud the determination

of all our front-line workers who are providing critical materials and services in challenging lockdown circumstances," the LafargeHolcim CEO noted.

## Mozambique gas: First topside module lifted on Coral South FLNG hull

MAPUTO

ENI-OPERATED Coral South FLNG project is making progress with the first topside module installed aboard the hull of the under-construction FLNG unit destined to develop offshore gas fields in Area 4 of the Rovuma Basin, Mozambique.

Coral FLNG SA, an Eni-led JV developing the project, said Wednesday that the power generation module had been lifted aboard the hull, marking the start of the integration between the hull, launched in January, and the massive topside (12 process modules of around 70,000 tons), both currently under construction in South Korea.

"The construction of the FLNG facility, which is primarily carried out at Samsung Heavy Industry in South Korea with 7 main operating centers worldwide and a global supply chain,

is progressing well aiming towards the commencement of production in 2022," Coral FLNG said.

The Coral South FLNG, a floating facility for the processing, liquefaction, and storage of gas, will be moored approximately 50 kilometers offshore of the Palma bay in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, Mozambique. Partners in the Coral FLNG SA are Eni, ExxonMobil, CNODC, ENH, Galp, and Kogas.

The 432 meters long FLNG unit will have a gas liquefaction capacity of 3.4 million tons per year (MTPA), and it will be the first FLNG ever deployed in deep waters, at a water depth of approximately 2,000 meters. While not the first operational FLNG unit in Africa, the unit will be the first purpose-built FLNG in Africa. Namely, Cameroon was the first African nation to bring online an FLNG unit (in 2018), however, the vessel was converted

from the 1975-built Moss LNG carrier and not purpose-built.

Meanwhile partners in Area 4 of the Rovuma Basin, Cabo Delgado, have reaffirmed their projection for the beginning of natural gas production in 2022, despite the negative effects of Covid 19. The group yesterday announced the assembly in South Korea of the first Coral-South FLNG platform superstructure modules.

This is the power generation module, the first of the upper infrastructures and one of the 12 processing modules, weighing in at around 70,000 tons, which will sit atop the hull launched in January.

Coral-Sul FLNG, the first deep-sea floating natural gas liquefaction plant in the world, will produce about 3.4 million tons of liquefied gas per year, and will extract natural gas from a depth of around 2,000 metres in Area 4 of the Rovuma Basin.



Assembling the Coral South FLNG plant in South Korea.



# UK-BASED AGDEVCO EXPANDS INTO TANZANIA MARKET WITH INVESTMENT AT TANGA'S PPTL

By Property Watch Reporter

**T**ANGA based low-cost grain storage solution targeting smallholder farmers, Pee Pee Tanzania Limited has attracted an unspecified investment from UK based AgDevCo.

In a statement last week, AgDevCo announced a long-term debt investment into PPTL which is East Africa's market leader in the production of grain storage bags. The UK based company said PPTL, which distributes its products to farmers across Eastern and Southern Africa, helps reduce post-harvest losses and improve food security.

"We're pleased to help PPTL bring to market a low-cost, practical solution for smallholder farmers in Tanzania, which will reduce food waste and improve food security," said AgDevCo's Chief Investment Officer, Chris Isaac.

Founded in 1994, PPTL employs over 750 people thus making it one of the largest agro-related companies in Tanga region. AgDevCo's investment will allow the company to expand its manufacturing capacity, including setting up a new dedicated factory for the production of grain storage bags with the creation of 300 new jobs.

"We greatly look forward to working closely with the AgDevCo team to realise our goal of being able to reach out to millions of farmers across East and Southern Africa with sustainable technology-based solutions for crop drying and storage," said PPTL's Executive Director, Suraj Devan.

The storage bags which are manufactured by PPTL were developed by the Purdue University in the USA and offer a simple and low-cost way of storing grain and seed without using chemicals to control insect pests. They are durable and can be stored in family homes.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, post-harvest losses for grain are valued at US\$1.6bn per year, or about 13.5 percent of the total value of grain production. PPTL have rights to manufacture and distribute storage bags across the region. In Tanzania, post-harvest losses are estimated to peak close to 40 percent per annum.

The UK based AgDevCo is an impact investor specialising in agribusiness investments in Sub-Saharan Africa with a portfolio consisting of over 40 active investments in production, processing and distribution companies. Across Sub-Saharan Africa, AgDevCo has invested over \$170 million linking over 480,000 smallholder farmers to profitable markets and creating over 11,000 jobs.



Former Tanga regional commissioner Chiku Galawa (in headscarf) admires a bag manufactured at Pee Pee Tanzania Limited in the region sometime back.

## Altron sells Parktown HQ as its new R300m campus takes shape

JOHANNESBURG

JSE-listed technology group Altron has set aside R300 million to complete its new Woodmead office campus announced last year.

This was revealed by Mteto Nyati, Altron's group chief executive, in a telephone interview with ITWeb last week. The interview followed last week's announcement of the company's annual results for the year ended 29 February and its final dividend announcement.

Last year, Altron signed a rental contract with Growthpoint Properties for a 29 000 square metre head office in Woodmead. The contract will begin in November 2020 and will bring all nine of Altron's operating companies under a single roof.

The office is currently being used by Deloitte, whose contract ran out at the end of March. Deloitte will move its offices to Waterfall, with new head offices that will be developed at a cost of more than R1 billion.

### Building connections

Before the Altron Group moves in, Growthpoint says it will invest a significant amount to modernise, customise and connect eight buildings to Altron's requirements. "For our move to the new campus that we communicated earlier, we have consolidated our locations in Gauteng to Woodmead. That move will enable us to reduce floor space that we are using from 47 000 square metres to about 29 000 square metres," Nyati said.

"In the process of doing that, we still need to upgrade and fix that building. So we will be spending a fair amount of capital in making sure the buildings are ready for occupation. In terms of the capital outlay - the fixing and the renovating of the business - we are looking at probably R300 million.

"That's where we are going to put all of our operations. We've got about eight operations and we've decided to consolidate all of them in one location and this will help us save costs in regards to rentals and we are also ensuring the campus is in line with new ways of working," he noted.



Altron's planned reception area.

In August 2018, Altron unveiled a new brand with what it dubs the "One Altron Strategy", looking to bring the firm under a single identity, making it easy for customers to do business with it. Some of Altron's subsidiaries include Altron Arrow, Altron Bytes Systems Integration, Netstar, Altron Karabina, Bytes Secure Solutions and Bytes UK.

According to Nyati, Altron has already sold its Parktown location where the company is currently domiciled. He added the company has also already sold some of the buildings where Altron Bytes Document Solutions is residing.

"This is all in preparation for the move, at the beginning of the next financial year, to Woodmead. An integral part of the One Altron Strategy is doing good, while doing good business. To this end, we have focused on reducing our impact on the environment, through our anticipated move to our new, certified green offices in Johannesburg.

"This is expected to reduce our carbon foot-

print by 25% in 2021. Furthermore, Altron has adopted a sustainability framework which is aligned to the group's strategic value drivers. "In order to embed our ethical values, an increased focus on governance has been achieved through the adoption of a formalised corporate governance framework and realignment of the group's strategic risk efforts."

### Encouraging collaboration

In a statement issued to ITWeb, Altron says the space planning has been based on an agile working environment with a high saturation of WiFi connectivity to allow Altron employees to work anywhere within the campus or outside in the gardens.

It notes the design of the campus makes use of the green space available within the campus as well as a "spine". The company explains that the role of the "spine" is to connect all the buildings together in a "boulevard-type environment" to promote the culture of a One Al-

tron. It adds the spine comprises a number of collaboration spaces as well as meeting rooms.

The office layout is a mixture of permanent seating and agile working areas with very few offices, says the company, noting that offices will only be allocated to Altron exco and opco MDs, with the balance of staff sitting in an open plan environment.

To counter the concern about privacy and the need for confidentiality, Altron says a number of collaboration areas have been designed to hold confidential or private discussions as well as make private phone calls.

Building three will be the main reception which also includes Altron head office and the staff restaurant.

"The use of technology but still retaining the 'human touch' will be evident throughout the campus. Altron solutions and technology will be utilised within the campus, showcasing what Altron can provide to its clients," the company notes.

## RMB confirms Total's \$15 bn funding for Mozambique LNG project

JOHANNESBURG

TOTAL concluded the acquisition of Anadarko's 26.5% interest in the Mozambique LNG project for \$3.9 billion in September.

Rand Merchant Bank (RMB) confirmed on Thursday that it is part of a consortium of banks providing \$15 billion funding for French energy major Total's Mozambique liquefied natural gas (LNG) project. Sources told Reuters last week that Total had secured \$14.4 billion in funding for the project with a group of about 20 lenders.

RMB, owned by FirstRand Bank, said the signing of \$15 billion in financing was scheduled for June. "It will be a remarkable achievement in the circumstances," Jonathan Ross, head of oil and gas coverage at RMB, said in a statement, adding that other projects have experienced delays.

"The backdrop could not have been worse for Total and partners to raise huge volumes of long tenor funding - the economic fallout of COVID-19 has put enormous pressure on banks' funding and capital and has triggered an oil price crash."

Exxon Mobil in early April delayed approval of its \$30 billion Rovuma LNG project in Mozambique as the COVID-19 pandemic forced the industry to rein in spending. Total concluded the acquisition of Anadarko's 26.5% interest in the Mozambique LNG project for \$3.9 billion in September. It is expected to start production in 2024.

## Norfolk closes indefinitely, fires all employees

NAIROBI

OWNERS of The Fairmont Norfolk, an iconic hotel in Nairobi, announced Wednesday that it is closing its doors indefinitely and will fire all employees over the impact of coronavirus pandemic on the business.

In a memo to staff dated May

27, the country manager Mehdi Morad said owing to the uncertainty of the direction the global pandemic will take, they have been forced to terminate employee contracts and close their properties.

The Fairmont Hotels and Resorts said they are going to close Fairmont The Norfolk and Fair-

mont Mara Safari Club as a result of "spiral effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent flooding of Fairmont Mara Safari Club."

"Due to the uncertainty of when and how the impact of the global Pandemic will result in the business picking up in the near future, we are left with no

option but to close down the business indefinitely," Mr Morad said in the memo.

"It is therefore the decision of the management to terminate the Services of all its employees due to "frustration" by way of mutual separation and taking into account the loyalty and dedication the employees have

put into the success of our company in the previous years."

Employees will receive their termination letters by June 5. Fairmont joins a growing list of hotels that have closed or suspended operation due to effects of coronavirus. Most five-star hotels rely on tourism, events and conferences which have

since dried up.

In March, Nairobi's Tribe Hotel, Ole Sereni and DusitD2 stopped operations days after the government imposed travel restrictions and social distancing rules to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Other high-end hotels followed suit to cut costs as the

pandemic drags on. Restrictions on foreigners coming into Kenya have delivered a big hit to the country's tourism industry, which brought in Sh163.56 billion last year.

Most hotels have reported occupancy rates of well below 10 percent against 75 percent normally.



## TECHNOLOGY

## GLOBAL ENERGY INVESTMENT TO SEE \$400BN SLUMP THIS YEAR



Nuclear power plants are an important source of energy in the developed world.

**PARIS** GLOBAL investment in energy is expected to slump 20 per cent or nearly \$400 billion in 2020 due to the “staggering” impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the industry, according to the International Energy Agency.

Energy investment was on track for a 2 per cent rise - the largest increase in spending in six years, but has been derailed by the pandemic, which disrupted global supply chains and led to a sharp drop in energy consumption. “The historic plunge in global energy investment is deeply troubling for many reasons,” said IEA executive director Fatih Birol.

“It means lost jobs and economic opportunities today, as well as lost energy supply that we might well need tomorrow once the economy recovers. The slowdown in spending on key clean energy technologies also risks undermining the much-needed transition to more resilient and sustainable energy systems,” he said at the launch of the agency’s World Energy

Investment 2020 report.

Revenue to state coffers could decline by well over \$1 trillion globally this year from falling demand for energy and lower prices, notably for oil, as well as a rise in non-payment of bills. Oil accounts for much of the decline, the Paris-based agency said, singling out the fact that global consumer spending on the commodity is set to fall below the amount spent on electricity for the first time. Of the \$1.52tn set to be spent on energy this year - down from \$1.89tn last year - \$575bn will be spent on the fuel sector and \$678bn on power.

Weak balance sheets of energy companies, as well as uncertain demand outlooks, will see projects being cut back and budgets being squeezed as a result of “lockdowns and disrupted supply chains”, the report said. Higher debt, as a result of companies seeking state and other sources of funding, will leave a “longer-term” post-crisis legacy, presenting lasting risks to investment, the agency said.

Investment in the oil and gas sector globally is expected to decline by about a third in 2020, with investment in shale, which has been hit hard by the slump in prices, is set to fall by 50 per cent. Oil prices declined by 60 per cent in April from their peak in January. A lack of investment could have an impact on supply, with many oil producers becoming cash-strapped as a result of declining revenue.

“For oil markets, if investment stays at 2020 levels then this would reduce the previously-expected level of supply in 2025 by almost 9 million barrels a day, creating a clear risk

of tighter markets if demand starts to move back towards its pre-crisis trajectory,” the report said.

Spending on the power sector is also set to decline by 10 per cent this year, with “worrying signals” for more sustainable sources of electricity. The renewable energy industry has weathered the pandemic in a more resilient way than fossil fuels, said the IEA. However, the agency noted that spending on rooftop solar installations by households and businesses was strongly affected. Final investment decisions for new utility-scale wind and solar schemes for the first quarter of 2020 fell back to levels seen three years ago, according to the report.

Investment in electricity networks is set to decline 9 per cent compounding an already large fall in 2019, with spending on sources of power system flexibility, natural gas and battery storage levelling off. “Electricity grids have been a vital underpinning of the emergency response to the health crisis - and of economic and social activities that have been able to continue under lockdown,” said Mr Birol. “These networks have to be resilient and smart to ward against future shocks but also to accommodate rising shares of wind and solar power. Today’s investment trends are clear warning signs for future electricity security,” he added.

## US to become LNG swing producer with utilisation of capacity declining

**NEW YORK**

LIQUEFIED natural gas (LNG) capacity utilisation in the US, the world’s largest producer for gas, declined to 65 per cent by mid-May, pushing the country into becoming a swing producer, according to IHS Markit.

A swing producer is a supplier of a commodity, with significant spare capacity and hence the ability to respond to price volatility by increasing or decreasing supply rapidly in response to market conditions. Deliveries of feed gas to liquefaction plants in the US fell to 6 billion cubic feet per day in mid-May from 9.5 bcf/d in late March, the consultancy said. US LNG facilities were fully utilised prior to the pandemic, which led to a fall in energy demand as many countries enforced lockdowns.

“The inevitable has happened. US LNG capacity utilisation has begun a turndown in response to market forces exacerbated by Covid-19. We are witnessing an historic event where US LNG is taking on the new role of swing supplier,” said Terrell Benke, executive director at IHS Markit.

Before US oil plunged into negative territory in April, gas prices were trading in the negative in recent months. Gas prices fell below zero as infrastructure development such as pipeline capacity has been unable to catch up with the surge in output.

The US shale boom has propelled the country to become the world’s top producer in hydrocarbons, with some of the cheapest available gas in the market. However, with prices falling, there is little economic viability in transporting gas to liquefy at a plant and then ship it to a far-off destination at such low prices.

Gas prices also dropped after US oil prices fell nearly 80 per cent in April from their recent peak in January. That had an impact on associated gas as drillers shut



US LNG cargoes being shipped to markets abroad aboard special vessels.

production to prevent further losses. Some US LNG cargoes have been cancelled but production at liquefaction facilities continues due to the high cost of restarting a closed plant.

“The outlook for US LNG exports this summer is bearish. Current forward prices indicate that US LNG is out of the money through [to] at least September,” said Matthew Shruhan, senior analyst at IHS Markit. “Additional cargo cancellations will follow. It all adds up to continued pressure and a new source of supply flexibility in the global gas market,” he added.

Utilisation of US LNG capacity is expected to fall below 50 per cent given summer price differentials, which could result in losses for the producers on a short-term basis as prices fall lower than costs, the consultancy said.

Cancellations of US LNG cargoes are expected to provoke greater price volatility as the market looks to balance supply and demand. There is potential for cargo cancellations to overshoot, putting upward pressure on spot LNG prices and potentially putting US LNG back in the money at certain times, the report said.



A man cleans solar panels at the Benban Solar Park in Aswan, Egypt.

## Yellow Door Energy out to raise \$100m to fund projects on renewables

**DUBAI**

DUBAI-BASED Yellow Door Energy, which is backed by multilateral lenders including the International Finance Corporation, is looking to raise \$100 million in debt to finance renewable projects as it remains bullish on the sector’s prospects.

The company, which already has a presence in Jordan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, is likely to take an 18 per cent hit to its revenues for 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, chief executive Jeremy Crane told The National in an interview, but expects demand for renewables to remain resilient. “We expect an 18 per cent decline in revenues for this year. I think we’re past the worst,” Mr Crane said.

“Our 2020 targets haven’t changed. We’re going to have about \$110m of projects operating by the end of this year. There are some slight delays there but on an annual basis, it remains the same,” he added. The firm plans to reach 100MW of capacity by year end and is looking to raise “approximately \$100m in debt” for various projects from different banks, Mr Crane said.

Yellow Door Energy, which was spun-off from Middle East-focused solar energy investor Adenium Energy Capital in 2015, counts the International Finance Corporation, Mitsui & Co, Norway’s Equinor Energy Ventures and Dammam-based Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (Apicorp) among its investors.

The company, which has 55MW of projects under construction, faced some delays due to supply chain disruptions as most of its materials are sourced from China. Projects in Jordan, one of its key markets, were also affected by the country’s strict lockdown measures, which prevented staff from accessing sites. However, most projects are now back on track, and although timelines have been pushed back, none are facing completion risks, Mr Crane said.

Decarbonisation of the global energy system away from fossil fuels to renewables could generate \$98 trillion (Dh360tn) in cumulative growth between now and 2050, adding an extra 2.4 per cent to gross domestic product, according to the

International Renewable Energy Agency. The Abu Dhabi-headquartered agency last month called for stimulus and recovery packages to be made available to the clean energy sector to prepare for a more sustainable, post-pandemic future.

Mr Crane agrees that while short-term subsidies may favour other sectors through a “shock transition period”, governments are likely to pivot to renewables both for economic and environmental reasons. “Renewables are cheaper, less expensive than oil or any other form of generation. If people are motivated to save money, they’re motivated more than ever to make the change to renewables. In many ways this shift, the desire to reduce their cost of energy, is going to mean an increased demand for renewables,” he said.

Organisations such as the World Economic Forum, meanwhile, have issued cautionary reports, suggesting that the pandemic could derail progress in clean energy growth as countries pause economic expansion to focus on immediate health risks to populations. Mr Crane, however, says renewable firms such as his continue to focus on existing markets, even if new business development has become more difficult with the grounding of airlines. “Our growth is now more focused in the countries where we have already set up operations,” he said. As far as acquisitions are concerned, the company is “actively looking for new investments.”

Yellow Door Energy’s current focus is on Pakistan, where the government has been prioritising renewable energy development along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as it looks to meet its growing power needs. The company has three projects underway in the South Asian country, largely to serve commercial and industrial clients.

“We’re working with many businesses now to help them reduce their cost of energy and provide them with a greener footprint, which is certainly extremely important for the exporters, who want to provide reassurance to ... whether it’s Walmart in the US or somebody in Europe that they’re following the greenest standards possible in manufacturing,” Mr Crane said.

## Union Properties setting out to recover Dh1.5bn in construction-related claims

**ABU DHABI**

A fully-owned unit of the Dubai-based property developer, Union Properties, has begun an arbitration process to recover about Dh1.5 billion related to the construction of a project that was completed a decade ago.

The Dubai-listed developer behind the Motor City master-planned development did not name its subsidiary, the entity against which it has lodged an arbitration request or the project involved in the dispute.

“The claim is related to construction work for a significant project that was completed around 10 years ago,” the company said in a brief statement to the Dubai Financial Market, where its shares trade. Union Properties has completed a number of projects in Dubai including Motor City, Dubai Autodrome, the Green Community and Uptown Mirdiff.

The company’s executive management will not “spare any effort in pursuit of the collection of the amount owed, and is taking the proper legal procedures, which are in the interests of the company’s shareholders”, Khalifa Al Hammadi, group chief

executive of Union Properties said on Wednesday.

Union Properties, like its UAE peers, has struggled to maintain profit growth on the back of a slowing real estate market in the UAE. It swung to a loss of Dh219 million in 2019 from a profit of Dh62m for the prior year. Dubai’s real estate market has softened in the wake of a drop in oil prices that began in 2014. Ongoing concerns about oversupply in the market have also posed challenges.

Last year, the emirate formed a higher committee for real estate planning, headed by Deputy Ruler Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed that includes a number of senior property developers.

The committee aims to balance supply coming onto Dubai’s property market through greater collaboration between government-related entities and private sector firms. Dubai’s property market is expected to bounce back strongly in 2021 on the back of increased economic activity related to Expo 2020, Hussain Sajwani, chairman of Damac Properties said last month.



## WORLD

## China to enhance coordination with France to back WHO, mobilise global resources in COVID-19 fight, says minister

BEIJING

CHINA is willing to enhance coordination with France to increase political support and funding for the World Health Organization (WHO), jointly mobilize global resources and win the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Tuesday.

In a telephone conversation with Emmanuel Bonne, diplomatic counselor to French President Emmanuel Macron, Wang said that Hong Kong affairs fall within China's domestic affairs and China appreciates France's cautious attitude toward Hong Kong-related affairs, hoping that France will adhere to an objective and impartial position.

Wang said that China and France have maintained close communication in the joint fight against the pandemic, which has demonstrated high-

level strategic coordination.

Both as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and responsible major countries, he said, the two countries should play a more active role in the uncertain international situation.

Recalling that Chinese President Xi Jinping and Macron recently attended the opening of the 73rd session of the World Health Assembly (WHA) via video link, Wang said China and France have made contributions to the success of the assembly.

China stands ready to work with all parties to implement the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for the poorest countries adopted at a recent Group of 20 meeting, Wang said, calling for multilateral creditors and commercial creditors to participate in the initiative. China is willing to work with France to actively carry out trilateral cooperation with Africa and help Afri-



Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi

can countries fight the pandemic, he added.

China supports France's initiative to hold a leaders' summit of the five permanent members of the UNSC via video, and the five countries have responsibility to send a positive signal of strengthening international anti-epidemic cooperation, said Wang, expressing hopes that France will continue to play its role in reaching a consensus on this regard among the five countries.

In accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the National People's Congress's move to establish and improve the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security at the national level is a necessary choice to ensure Hong Kong's lasting peace and stability, which is reasonable, lawful and perfectly legitimate, Wang said.

No country or region can be unguarded in its security, he said.

China's move is aimed at filling a loophole in Hong Kong's

national security legislation, which will not undermine Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy, but rather is conducive to promoting a steady and sustained development of the "one country, two systems" principle, improving Hong Kong's legal system, and better protecting the interests of investors of various countries.

For his part, Bonne congratulated China on holding the "two sessions" after making important progress in the fight against the pandemic.

As the international community has been gripped by tensions and misunderstanding due to the pandemic, France is willing to strengthen strategic communication with China, boost mutual trust and conduct multilateral coordination, he said.

The remarks by Xi and Macron at the WHA were highly consistent with each other, Bonne said, adding that France is ready to strengthen coordination with China to materialize the spirit of the remarks of the two heads of state and jointly promote international anti-epidemic cooperation.

France is ready to work with China to push the implementation of the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for the poorest countries and jointly help Africa fight the pandemic, he said.

France thanks China for its support in holding the video conference of the five permanent member states of the UNSC, Bonne said, adding that under the current complicated international situation, it is crucial for the five countries to demonstrate solidarity and France is ready to stay in communication with all parties in this regard.

Xinhua

## Zimbabwean economy to slow down in 2020 as COVID-19 takes toll - information minister

HARARE

ZIMBABWE'S economy is expected to slow down in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with a bad agricultural season and lack of international support, take its toll.

Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services Minister Monica Mutsvangwa said the pandemic would hugely affect the economy, state news agency New Ziana reported Thursday.

"In tandem with other global economies, Zimbabwe's economy has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak and

growth is expected to slow down. The drought experienced in the 2018-19 and the current season coupled with diminished access to external sources of foreign currency further compounded Zimbabwe's economic situation," she said in a post-Cabinet media briefing late Wednesday.

She said the government had put a number of measures in place to rescue the economy.

"There are however, a number of measures, both fiscal and monetary, that are being implemented to address the challenges that the country is going through in the absence of financial support from in-



ternational financial institutions," she said.

Zimbabwe has been under Western sanctions for two decades, penalties that have cost its economy over 100 billion U.S. dollars

over the period, the minister said. Mutsvangwa (pictured) said the current price hikes and exchange rate fluctuations were more speculative, and did not reflect the economic fundamentals in the

country. The country has lately experienced a wave of price increases, particularly of basic commodities, and sharp devaluation of the local currency.

"It is also stressed that the current price and foreign exchange rate fluctuations are clearly divorced from real economic fundamentals and can also be attributed to speculative tendencies.

"The Minister of Finance and Economic Development and the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe will announce measures which should see the situation stabilizing in due course," she said.

Xinhua

## England's COVID-19 test and trace system begins

LONDON

BRITAIN'S government faced questions over how closely people would abide by its new COVID-19 test and trace service yesterday, as a row persisted over the prime minister's closest adviser taking a long-distance journey during lockdown.

Lawmakers from the governing Conservative Party continued to add their names to those calling for Dominic Cummings to quit, after it was revealed he had travelled 400 km in March with his four-year-old son and his wife, who was sick at the time, to be close to relatives.

Under the new system, which will be in place in England Thursday, contacts of those who test positive for COVID-19 will be asked to isolate for 14 days, even if they have no symptoms.

The tracing service, which will have a task-force of 40,000 specialists to test those with symptoms

and identify their contacts, will initially rely on what the government described as people doing their "civic duty", but sanctions could be introduced if people did not comply.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have similar programs just about to launch or already running.

Britain's government said there is now enough capacity for all who need tests to get them. It is aiming to provide test results within 24 hours.

Hancock also said an accompanying tracing app, which is being trialed on the Isle of Wight and could help locate anonymous contacts, is ready but is not yet being brought in.

Another 412 deaths were registered as of Tuesday afternoon, bringing the total coronavirus-related death toll to 37,460, the Department of Health and Social Care said. As of Wednesday morning,



the number of confirmed cases rose by 2,013 to 267,240, according to the department.

Cross-protection against COVID-19

The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday that there was no empirical evidence on cross protection against COVID-19, but studies in this area might offer hope for long-term protection.

Cross protection is a phenomenon in which a pre-existing viral infection prevents a secondary infection with the same or closely related virus.

"There is certainly some evidence with regard to T-cells that if you have a previous coronavirus infection, you may be able to mount a more rapid response to COVID-19. But there is no empirical evidence that the previous corona-

virus infections protect you from infection with COVID-19," Michael Ryan, executive director of the WHO Health Emergencies Program, said at a press conference.

"The jury is still very much out on that. But it is interesting to know that, at least in some of the studies, if we get a more broad-based T-cell response, there's more hope for vaccines and others producing a more long-term immune response," he said.

"So for me this information is very important. It gives us hope that we're getting the kinds of immune responses that may be helpful for long-term protection and may also mean that vaccines have a broader protection," he added.

The WHO on Wednesday also announced the creation of the WHO Foundation, an independent grant-making entity that will support the organization's efforts to address the most pressing global health challenges.

Agencies

## Carrie Lam welcomes NPC decision on HK legislation

HONG KONG

HONG KONG Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ning welcomed the decision of the National People's Congress (NPC) to legislate national security laws for the special administrative region.

Shortly after the NPC passed the decision on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to safeguard national security, Lam said her government will fully cooperate with the Standing Committee of the NPC to complete the relevant work on legislation as soon as possible.

"I welcome the passage of the Decision by the NPC. The HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China. Safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests is the constitutional duty of the HKSAR and concerns every Hong Kong citizen," Lam said in a statement.

She said in her statement that the HKSAR still had the legal responsibility to enact legislation in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law and would do that as soon as possible.

She acknowledged the difficulty of the HK executive and legislative authorities in proactively enacting legislation to safeguard national security in the "foreseeable future" and stressed that the NPC's involvement had been necessary to safeguard national security at the state level.

Lam pledged to explain the objective and the importance of the legislation to various sectors. "As required by the Decision, the HKSAR Government will enhance enforcement and public education in relation to safeguarding national security, and report regularly to the Central People's Government," reads the statement.

"The legislation to be enacted for the HKSAR to safeguard national security aims to prevent, curb and sanction an extremely small minority of criminals who threaten national security, safeguarding the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and maintaining "One Country, Two Systems".

It will not affect the legitimate rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents. "One Country, Two Systems" has been Hong Kong's top advantage, and a stable and safe society will provide a favourable business and investment environment. This will help better Hong Kong's development down the road. I strongly believe that various sectors of society will lend their full support for the legislation," Lam said in the statement.

Commissioner's office issues statement

In a separate statement issued Thursday, a spokesperson for the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR said in a statement that legislating on national security is within the power and the obligation of the central authorities, not within the limits of the autonomy of the HKSAR.

It firmly opposed and refuted a statement by US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo in which he alleged that the national security legislation for Hong Kong would undermine Hong Kong's autonomy and freedoms and threatened sanctions.

"The legislation targets only a few acts and activities endangering national security. It will not affect the high degree of autonomy of Hong Kong, will not affect Hong Kong citizens' rights and freedoms enshrined in the law, and will not affect foreign investors' legitimate rights and interests here. Quite the contrary, it will only help to refine the legal system of Hong Kong and uphold social order in the city, and will facilitate the practice of "One Country, Two Systems" and Hong Kong's prosperity and stability in the long run," reads the statement.

The spokesperson said it was utterly imperious, unreasonable and shameful for some in the US to stigmatize and demonize China's just and legitimate measures to plug the loopholes in national security.



Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ning speaks at a booth set up for people to sign a petition supporting the national security legislation. In North Point, Hong Kong, yesterday. (CHINA DAILY)

## Jiangsu accelerates work resumption to guarantee supply chain

SCIENTIFIC personnel are racing against time to research on and develop COVID-19 vaccine at a lab of Suzhou Abogen Biosciences, east China's Jiangsu province.

The company fully resumed work on Feb. 3 to accelerate research and development of COVID-19 vaccine, on the heels of an anti-COVID-19 provincial program that encourages scientific personnel to carry out research on epidemic prevention and control, diagnosis and treatment, testing, and application of medical instruments.

As a major export-oriented city, Suzhou has rolled out a package of policies to help enterprises resume work and production and stabilize foreign trade and investment, including a 12-term package that aims to maintain

stability of the foreign trade enterprises issued at the early phase of work resumption.

Ying Bo, CEO of Suzhou Abogen Biosciences, said the company received a two-million-yuan special fund on R&D of COVID-19 vaccine only five days after application. Besides, it enjoys a three-month rent exemption offered by the bioengineering and pharmaceutical industrial park where it is located. The park also provides a place for the company to develop the mRNA vaccine.

"We've been given strong policy support to resume production," said Cai Qifeng, head of the operation department of Chunhua Technology (Kunshan) Co., Ltd. located in Kunshan, Jiangsu province.

Sending workers back to the compa-

ny through a chartered train, Kunshan New & Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, where the company locates, also issued an allowance of 546,000 yuan for the company to stabilize employment, subsidized the company with 34,600 yuan for its import and export businesses, and offered it with a three-month discount of social insurance contribution, Cai introduced.

The foreign trade companies in the province are also making efforts on their own parts to restructure and upgrade their businesses.

"The epidemic is a test to our ability to develop," according to Chen Xiaodong, president of Jiangsu Guotai International Group based in Zhangjiagang, Jiangsu. Chen believes that his company must retain its customers, market

and channels, focus on key clients, and maintain shares in mainstream markets and supply channels. Besides, it also needs to improve its capabilities and reduce costs.

"The production of our manufacturing department has returned to a normal level, and the sales volume in March is expected to reach 80 percent of that before the epidemic. We are affected by the epidemic in the short term, but our headquarters is still confident about the Chinese market," said Yang Ming, deputy general manager of Panasonic Industrial Devices Materials (Suzhou) Co., Ltd., adding that the company will expand its input in technological reform so as to transform and upgrade its products.

Affected by the epidemic, the indus-

trial, supply and value chains all face a new round of restructuring. As an important link on the global supply chain, Suzhou has found its niches and strived to maintain, complete and improve the supply chain.

After having a thorough investigation into the work resumption of the suppliers, OEMs, and distributors of major companies in the sectors closely related with epidemic prevention and control, production, and daily life, as well as other industries that concern national economy and people's livelihood, Suzhou made a list of alternative companies. As of March 15, the city had mobilized 3,582 enterprises to restart work.

Wistron Group located in Kunshan Comprehensive Bonded Zone, Jiangsu

province which has about 500 suppliers found 47 first-tier suppliers in just a day thanks to the coordination of local government, said Zhou Hongren, general manager of the east China region of the company. These suppliers accelerated the company's work resumption and secured its supply chain, Zhou added.

As a major export-oriented province, Jiangsu has unveiled 22 measures to actively cope with the epidemic and stabilize foreign trade. A number of cities, including Suzhou, Wuxi, Taizhou and Nantong have all come up with policies to support foreign trade since February. They've also proactively offered assistance to enterprises to resume production.

People's Daily





Travelers enter waiting rooms in Nanchang railway station in east China's Jiangxi province on April 30.

## China's market sees revival in May Day holiday

CHINA'S transportation, tourism and consumption rebounded markedly in the May Day holiday, and the domestic market saw adequate supplies with stable prices, maintaining general stability and releasing huge vitality.

During the five-day vacation, the total number of train, road, waterway and air trips made nationwide hit 121 million, about 24.3 million daily average, 17.9 percent higher than that of the previous five days. Domestic tourism revenue garnered 47.56 billion yuan (\$6.7 billion) in the same period. "The Ministry of Transport will further improve and better implement regular epidemic control measures, and use every feasible means to guarantee the supply chain of international logistics in the next phase, in a bid to facilitate economic and social development and the comprehensive resumption of production and life of the people," Liu Xiaoming, Vice Minister of Transport, introduced.

"The holiday carried special significance for the tourism market," Wang Xiaofeng, an official with Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT), observed.

"The travel industry was greatly revived, as the MCT made active efforts to meet people's need for travel and help tourism enterprises resume work while ensuring epidemic control and reducing congregations," he added.

The MCT requested tourist attractions to limit their reception of tourists to as low as 30% of their maximum visitor capacity, and manage the flow of the tourists to avoid gatherings. At the same time, the travelers must make reservations beforehand and avoid peak time.

To meet MCT's requirements, tourist attractions increased manpower and strengthened management and control measures at major areas.

From May 1 to 5, a total of 115 million domestic trips were made across Chi-

na, generating revenue of 47.56 billion yuan. The figure almost accounted for 50% of that last year, promoting the unleashing of potential in tourism-related consumption amid the continuous efforts of epidemic control and prevention, according to Wang.

The five-day holiday witnessed a robust domestic market and a revival in consumption, which reflected the strong resilience and vitality of China's market.

The Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) said that key enterprises in retail industry showed a sign of remarkable revival, with a daily average sale up by 32.1 percent compared to the three-day Tomb-sweeping Day holiday in April.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 epidemic, 28 provinces and municipalities, as well as 170 cities across the country handed out consumption coupons totaling over 19 billion yuan, and soon stimulated consumption and boosted confidence, according to Wang Bingnan, Vice Minister of Commerce.

"The promotion campaigns aimed at helping catering and retail industries, which were hit hard by the pandemic, and they worked fairly well to bring customers back, playing a very important role in stabilizing enterprises and industries," Wang added.

"Generally speaking, the speedy recovery of the consumption market in the May Day holiday showed the advantages of China's ultra-large-scale market and the potential of domestic demand," Wang introduced.

Going forward, the MOFCOM will continue to promote the resumption of business amidst the ongoing containment efforts, expand consumer spending, work faster to unleash domestic demand, and provide solid support for maintaining economic development and social stability, ensuring and improving living standards and forming a strong domestic market, Wang remarked. *People's Daily*

## No empirical evidence yet of cross-protection against COVID-19 - WHO

GENEVA

THE World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday that no empirical evidence has been found on cross protection, a phenomenon in which a pre-existing viral infection prevents a secondary infection with the same or closely related virus, against COVID-19, but studies in this area may offer hope for long-term protection.

"There is certainly some evidence with regard to T-cells that if you have a previous coronavirus infection, you may be able to mount a more rapid response to COVID-19. But there is no empirical evidence that the previous coronavirus infections protect you from infection with COVID-19," Michael Ryan, executive director of the WHO Health Emergencies Program, said in a press conference on Wednesday in Geneva, responding to a question on the theory of cross-protection against COVID-19. *Xinhua*

## Russia considers using heavy drones to control Arctic borders

MOSCOW

THE Russian industry considers developing heavy drones to control the border in Arctic regions, First Deputy Director of the Federal Security Service (FSB), Border Guard Service Head Vladimir Kulishov told TASS yesterday.

"In the interests of carrying out border guard activity in remote Arctic areas and Far Eastern seas, medium- and heavy-class drones will be

in demand in the medium-term perspective as they ensure the transmission of data on the border situation to large distances and are less dependent on weather conditions," he said in an interview with TASS timed for Russia's Border Guards Day celebrated on May 28.

"In view of this, industrial enterprises are now exploring the possibility of manufacturing for us rotary-wing unmanned aircraft systems capable of taking off and landing both on avia-

tion-capable border guard patrol vessels and on the coast," he said.

Unmanned aircraft systems are already available in Russia, the Border Guard Service head said. "Domestically-produced unmanned aircraft systems are actively used in protecting the state border, along with mobile tethered video surveillance aerostat systems designated for distant control of remote border sections and coordination of border patrols," he said. *Agencies*

## Trump, furious at Twitter, aims executive order at tech giants

By Bloomberg

US President Donald Trump has been raging against Twitter Inc since the social media platform that helped vault him to the presidency slapped fact-check links on a pair of his tweets.

Now, he's poised to take action Thursday that could bring a flurry of lawsuits down on Twitter, Facebook Inc and other technology giants by having the government narrow liability protections that they enjoy for third parties' posts, according to a draft of an executive order obtained by Bloomberg.

The companies' protections against lawsuits apply when they act "in good faith" in taking down or limiting the visibility of inappropriate tweets, videos and other social media posts, but the law doesn't define bad faith. The draft order would push the Federal Communications Commission to issue rules clarifying the issue, potentially allowing users to sue over takedowns if they were inconsistent with companies' terms of service, did not provide enough notice or meet other suggested criteria.

The White House declined to comment early Thursday morning.

The draft order would also convene, through the Justice Department, a working group of state attorneys general to look into deceptive practices and review executive ad spending on the platforms.

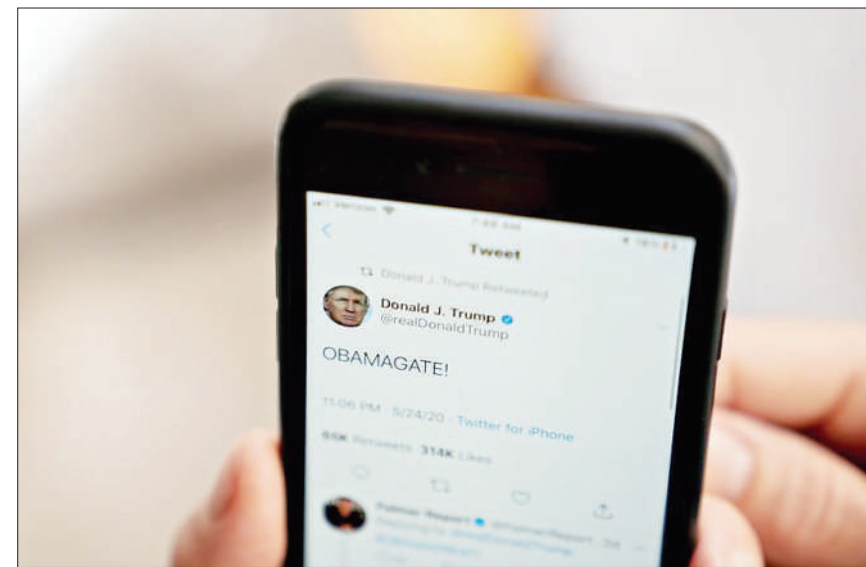
The move could set off a legal battle between Washington and Silicon Valley.

"Big Tech is doing everything in their very considerable power to CENSOR in advance of the 2020 Election," the president said Wednesday night -- on Twitter. "If that happens, we no longer have our freedom. I will never let it happen! They tried hard in 2016, and lost. Now they are going absolutely CRAZY. Stay Tuned!!!"

Word of the executive order came a day after Twitter added links to a fact-checking page on Trump tweets asserting that mail-in-voting leads to rampant fraud.

As Trump himself has observed, Twitter gives him the power to dodge the media and speak directly to the American public. It also allows the president and his vast community of followers to instantly spread a steady stream of pro-Trump messages and attacks on his rivals, including exaggerations and outright falsehoods that not even Twitter's fact-checking links can dent.

He has no legal authority to shut down the service, as he threatened to do Wednesday morning, but doing so would mean silencing his loudest megaphone -- as well as what his campaign calls "keyboard warriors" who both amplify his voice and provide him memes and other free content to



An Obamagate tweet by US President Donald Trump is displayed on a smartphone in an arranged photograph taken in Arlington, Virginia, US, on Tuesday. (BLOOMBERG)

broadcast to his 80 million followers.

Twitter also serves as a valuable punching bag, which he uses to generate outrage and sympathy among his supporters.

The social media platform has become even more important for Trump as the coronavirus pandemic prevents him from holding his trademark rallies, and he seeks a free outlet to attack his likely Democratic challenger, Joe Biden.

"He's going to need to continue to use this platform," said Amy Becker, a professor at Loyola University Maryland, who focuses on political communication. "It's going to be his random tweets, it's going to be him attacking whoever criticizes him, there's going to be a lot of attacks on Biden, the Democrats."

### Liability protections

The order Trump plans to sign Thursday is his latest attempt to exert control over the formidable technology industry. In 2018, he considered issuing an order instructing federal antitrust agencies to open probes into the practices of tech giants like Alphabet Inc's Google and Facebook. The possible measure was criticized as politicizing antitrust enforcement and it was never signed.

Trump's attacks on Twitter and other social media companies are often hyperbolic and rarely lead to immediate concrete action. The government could never silence a company like Twitter without violating First Amendment rights to free speech. However, his threats are a reminder of other significant levers that the president and the rest of the federal government have at their disposal.

Senator Josh Hawley, a Missouri Republican, wrote Twitter Chief Executive Officer Jack Dorsey on Wednesday to demand an explanation for the fact-checking links added to Trump's tweets. He accused the company of choosing to "editorialize."

Hawley repeated a threat that's been

raised by other lawmakers over the years: Revoking the protections that shield Twitter and other platforms from legal liability for content its users post.

"Politicians can use the powers of government to make life very difficult for private companies and there's a long track record of politicians from both parties doing this in the last couple years to social media companies," said Jesse Blumenthal, a conservative who leads tech policy at Stand Together, part of the political network affiliated with libertarian billionaire Charles Koch.

In recent days, Trump had tweeted attacks on cable news host and former Republican Representative Joe Scarborough by pushing a baseless conspiracy theory that he was involved in the death 19 years ago of a woman who worked at his district office in Florida. Her widower sent a letter to Twitter asking the publicly traded company to delete Trump's tweets, but it chose to leave them online.

Scarborough is a frequent critic of the president.

**80 million followers, 52,000 tweets**

The feud with Twitter comes as Trump has been under siege for his handling of the coronavirus pandemic that's infected more than 1.6 million Americans and killed some 100,000. He trails Biden in general election polls by an average of 5.3 percentage points, according to RealClearPolitics.

There has never been a politician as prolific on social media, which he often uses to call opponents names, spread conspiracy theories, dismiss employees and announce policy changes. He has sent more than 52,000 tweets and has more than 80 million followers.

Trump has both acknowledged the power he wields when he tweets and the platform's impact on his 2016 election.

*Agencies*

## UN warns of possible war crimes in northeastern Congo

KINSHASA

WIDESPREAD and systematic killings, beheadings, rape and other barbaric acts by militia mostly from the ethnic Lendu community in northeastern Congo may constitute crimes against humanity and war crimes, the United Nations said on Wednesday.

In the six months to April 2020, at least 296 people were killed, 151 wounded and 38 raped, including women and children, mostly by fighters linked to the CODECO rebel group, according to a report by the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO).

CODECO's fighters are drawn from the Lendu ethnic group.

Rich in natural resources including gold, diamonds, oil and coltan, the Ituri province in northeast Congo was the site of some of the country's worst fighting between 1999 and 2007, after a power struggle between rebel groups descended into ethnic violence, mostly between the Hema and Lendu communities.

After years of relative calm, tit-for-tat fighting erupted again in Dec 2017, reviving longstanding tensions over land.

The recent attacks against civilians not only targeted the Hema and Alur communities, but included communities previously spared, according to the UNJHRO report. The raids intensified from March this year, particularly around artisanal mining sites.

"The persistence of this violence is likely to push members of the communities targeted by the attacks, who have so far shown restraint, to form self-defence militias," UNJHRO said.

"This could increase the likelihood of large-scale inter-communal violence in the region."

Since June 2018, hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced, bringing the number of displaced people in Ituri province to more than 1.2 million, UNJHRO said. On March 25 CODECO's leader Justin Ngudjolo was killed in an army ambush, leading to a power struggle and split within the group.

"There is a high risk that leaders with more radical positions will emerge and plunge the area into a more serious cycle of violence, with even more attacks against (the army) and civilians," UNJHRO said in the report. *Agencies*



**The persistence of this violence is likely to push members of the communities targeted by the attacks, who have so far shown restraint, to form self-defence militias**

*Agencies*

## China contributes to global scientific research on COVID-19 for shared future

The value of putting lives first is closely binding up China with the rest of the world, as every effort made in the COVID-19 pandemic by the world aims at saving lives.

Facing the sudden outbreak of the pandemic, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee Xi Jinping called on the whole nation to be united, take science-based and targeted measures against the epidemic, and have confidence in conquering the virus.

China has strictly followed science-based approaches and considered how to improve the recovery rate and lower mortality as the most urgent task in relevant scientific studies. While treating the patients, the country summarized experi-

ences and made improvement, compiling seven editions of diagnosis and treatment protocol for COVID-19 and six editions of prevention and control plan in just 50 days. According to incomplete statistics, Chinese experts have published over 1,100 papers on English academic journals.

These valuable experiences gained at huge sacrifice and cost have been shared with more than 180 countries, as well as around a dozen international and regional organizations without reservation, bringing hope to the world in defeating the virus.

These are hard-won experiences. A Wuhan citizen named Cai Yaqing, as well as her father who passed away because of the novel coronavirus pneumonia

both contributed to the scientific studies on the disease. Cai donated her father's body to the makeshift hospital Huoshenshan for pathological anatomy. She wrote on the donation agreement that this decision would create more possibilities for other patients, saying her father would have definitely agreed had he known his body could help the others.

It was the patients who donated plasma immediately after they recovered, and those who were still grieving over the deaths of their relatives but agreed to body donation that enabled China to establish the world's first pathological sample base of COVID-19 and helped improve the recovery rate of critically ill patients in Wuhan from 14 percent to 89 percent.

By timely sharing medical experiences and results with the world, China hopes to put an end to the pandemic as early as possible, so that there will be no more families torn apart. This reflects the sense of morality of China, and the glittering humanity of the Chinese people.

"What shall we do if the nucleic acid test results change?" "When shall we use noninvasive and invasive ventilators?" "What are the standards of nutrition support?" These are questions raised to Chinese medical experts dispatched to Ethiopia for pandemic relief by local medical workers at Eka Kotebe Hospital, the largest designated facility for receiving COVID-19 patients in the country. All of them were answered in details by the Chinese experts.

During the pandemic, China has put into practice the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind and made every effort to advance global scientific cooperation, to cope with the global crisis with the world. It shared the genetic sequencing of the virus, as well as specific primers and probes for detection of the novel coronavirus with the world at the first opportunity, established an online knowledge center for COVID-19 containment that is open to all countries, and organized pandemic prevention teleconferences with experts from different parts of the world.

Bolivian Health Minister Anibal Cruz said China's selfless sharing has provided reference for many countries and regions in the pandemic, and Malaysian

virologist Lam Sai Kit pointed out that it was China's timely sharing of the genetic sequencing that helped global scientists carry out relevant studies so rapidly. Everything that China shared, from prevention to diagnosis and treatment, was valuable and effective, said doctors with Italy's Lazzaro Spallanzani National Institute for Infectious Diseases.

The only real competitor for domination of the planet remains the viruses, said a Nobel Prize winner. To defeat the viruses calls for science and cooperation. Countries promoted the development of modern medicines by cooperating with each other to fight the 1918 flu pandemic, and came to realize the importance of establishing international cooperation

mechanisms.

In the 1960s, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the Smallpox Eradication Programme, which was participated by both the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and finally eliminated the virus from the world. In today's world, where countries are closely interconnected, we need more than ever a globalized method to resist the global pandemic. As Yuval Harari, the author of *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* has put forward, history indicates that real protection comes from the sharing of reliable scientific information, and from global solidarity. United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also reiterated that "This is a time for science and solidarity." *People's Daily*



The  
**Guardian**

# SPORT



The cast and crew of Meadows are seen on set during production of the series, following the relaxation of lockdown, amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in Abuja, Nigeria May 20, 2020. REUTERS

## Cameras roll again in Nollywood but Nigeria's cinemas still dark

ABUJA/LAGOS

NIGERIA'S film industry is creeping back to work after lockdown, and one of the first productions to resume is a new television series about a highly infectious disease that has ravaged the world.

Cameras stopped rolling weeks ago due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than 300,000 people worldwide, including 200 in the West African country.

Better known as Nollywood, the multibillion dollar industry churns out movies and TV shows at a rate second only to India's Bollywood and employs one million people. But productions have had to be stripped right back.

Filming for the TV series Meadows, shot in the capital Abuja, restarted in mid-May after being halted for two months. Its production team, excluding actors, has been cut back to around seven people - around a quarter of the people in a regular Nollywood crew.

"I have to do lots of things myself," said director Samuel Iduagbonya, who is now also in charge of lighting.

The crew wear face masks, actors keep their distance from one another as they deliver their lines and undergo regular temperature checks.

The global pandemic has left Nollywood in deep trouble, according to industry executives and financial analysts.

Cinema closures across Nigeria due to the lockdown have been "catastrophic" for the industry, which gets half of its revenue from ticket sales, according to Bismarck Rewane, who heads the Lagos-based consultancy Financial Derivatives.

Cinemas in Nigeria are still shut indefinitely and the consultancy predicts that up to 250,000 people employed in Nollywood, from designers to box office attendants, could lose their jobs.

Moses Babatope, managing director of Film One

Entertainment, believes that the pandemic has caused Nollywood losses of around 3 billion naira (\$8.33 million) since mid-February.

An increase in home viewing has boosted sales to streaming platforms including Netflix, but meanwhile revenue from other clients such as airlines has dried up, said Babatope, who is secretary of a film industry body.

The shuttering of the cinema chain he co-founded and which accounts for 60% of his distribution revenue, has forced him to furlough around two thirds of his staff.

"If this goes on much longer, a lot of cinema businesses will struggle to come back, including ours," said Babatope.

Fred Amata, president of the Directors Guild of Nigeria, said social distancing would make most scripts unworkable.

Nollywood's films are famed for tales of romance and witchcraft and often depict lavish social gatherings that are the bedrock of Nigerian life.

The scene evolved from visual pulp fiction and poor production in the 1990s to a thriving industry that has grabbed the attention of global entertainment brands.

"It all seems so bleak," Amata said.

But on a mild Wednesday evening in May, a crowded car park in the capital Abuja offered a potential ray of hope as tens of cars lined up facing a big screen - one of around a dozen drive-in cinemas which have popped up around the country.

Charles Okpaleke, the producer behind the Abuja site, said he wanted to respect both cinema and social distancing in a way that was financially viable.

"In every setback there's an opportunity," he said.

REUTERS

## No risk of losing 2021 World Cup over tax exemption - BCCI

NEW DELHI

INDIA is not at risk of losing hosting rights for next year's Twenty20 World Cup despite its cricket board's failure to secure a tax exemption for the event, a key BCCI official has told Reuters.

Tax exemptions for International Cricket Council (ICC) events are listed as a requirement in host agreements and the BCCI was supposed to confirm they had secured one by May 18.

ESPNcricinfo, citing correspondence between the two bodies, has reported that the ICC has threatened to shift the tournament away from India over the issue. However, BCCI treasurer Arun Singh Dhumal told Reuters that would not happen and that negotiations were continuing.

"There is no risk to the tournament," he said by telephone. "That is a work in progress. We are discussing it with the ICC and we'll resolve it."

The BCCI encountered a similar problem when it hosted the event in 2016 when the government refused to provide a tax exemption, and there has been no change in New Delhi's stance despite the board's appeals.

Failure to secure that exemption in 2016 saw the ICC withhold an equivalent sum from India's share of revenue from the governing body's grants and it appears to be taking an even harder line this time around.

REUTERS

## Could be limited - or no - fans at a September French Open

PARIS

WITH the new \$55 million (50 million euros) retractable roof shut atop a barren Court Philippe Chatrier - where the red clay has dimmed to an orange-brown, the court's white lines have all but faded and there's no net - the French Open's main stadium was transformed into a far more imposing and modern-looking facility.

But without any fans yelling and clapping on Wednesday, it felt a bit like standing inside a silent and empty space ship. The site sits sans spectators this week: The clay-court Grand Slam tournament was postponed from now until September because of the coronavirus pandemic.

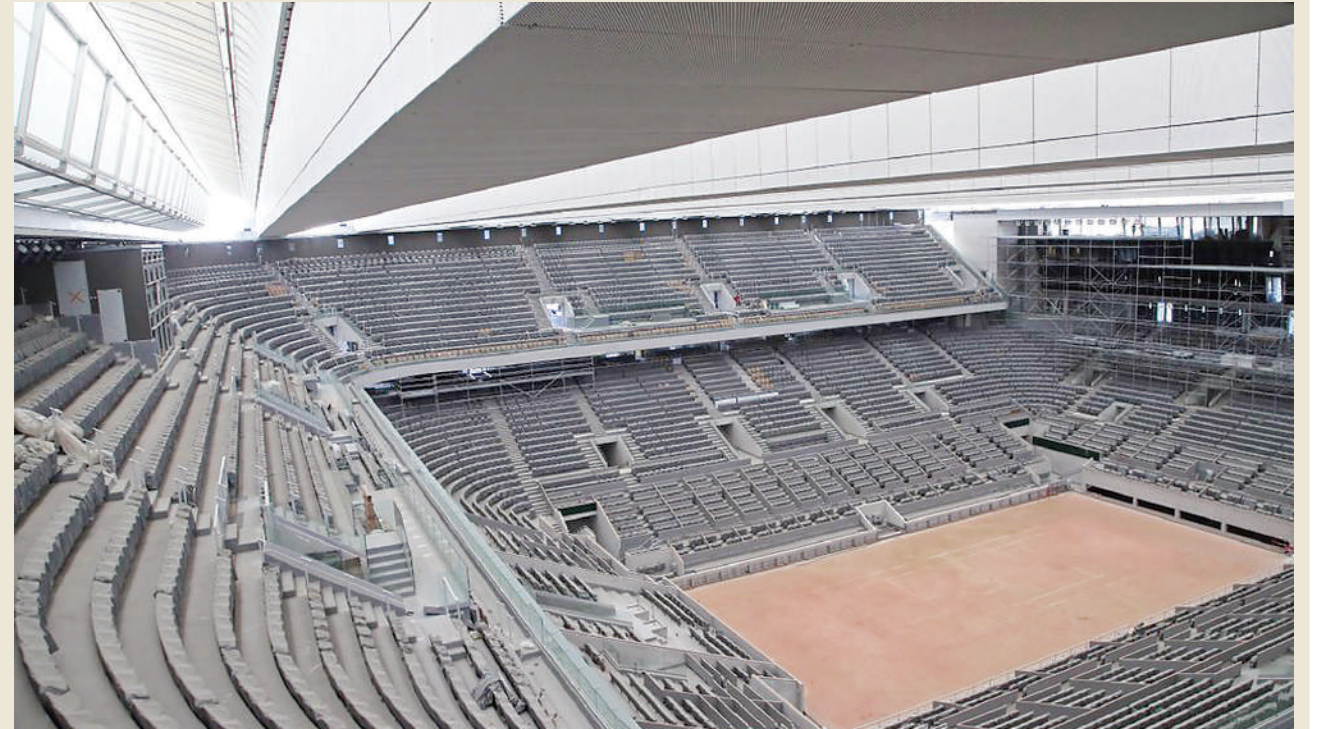
When - or if - the French Open is held later in 2020, though, it is possible there could be zero - or a limited number - of people allowed to attend the event, which broke its attendance record last year with 520,000.

Capping the number of fans allowed each day of the 15-day tournament might improve social distancing.

"Of course, we can have less people, so that the flow of people is made easier," the French tennis federation's general director, Jean-François Vilotte, told The Associated Press on Wednesday, when about 10 media members were allowed to tour Chatrier. "The options range from a very small reduction to the number of fans to various levels of reduction."

Or no fans at all. That, Vilotte said, would be a last resort.

"We are considering all the options. But we obviously prefer not to play behind closed doors. We want there to be fans there, fans who respect precautionary measures," Vilotte said. "I have a hard time understanding



A general view of the Philippe-Chatrier tennis court with its new retractable roof during a media tour at Roland Garros stadium in Paris, Wednesday, May 27, 2020. The French open will moving to September from the end of May because of the outbreak of the COVID-19 disease. (AP Photo)

why restaurants and shops are allowed to re-open, but we can't do so at a big event like ours."

The French federation would, of course, face significant revenue losses - tickets, hospitality, food and drink, merchandise - if no fans are allowed. As it is, those who bought tickets for the tournament's original dates - last Sunday until June 7 - already were offered refunds.

Vilotte did not say what the cost of not having spectators would be.

"It's too soon to answer this question," he said.

One key question if spectators are allowed: How to gauge what rules should be applied at a 17-arena tournament?

"It's not a football stadium. It's not one unique location. There are

many courts," Vilotte said. "So how do we organize ourselves in terms of managing the flow?"

Even with a roof, night sessions are not planned at the French Open until 2021. If matches can go ahead in September, eight of the competition courts will have artificial lights to allow play until 9:30 p.m. local time - roughly as late as they would have ended if the tournament were held as scheduled in May and June.

Vilotte said the roof, which makes the French Open the last of the four Grand Slam tournaments to have at least one court protected from rain, is fully operational, other than some fine-tuning to lessen the noise when it closes.

The covering has 11 large sections, gleaming gray slabs that measure

360 feet (110 meters) long and weigh 660,000 pounds (330 tons) apiece.

It is part of a wider renovation that cost about \$415 million (380 million euros) and included the destruction of Court No. 1, known as the "Bullring," to make way for a grassy space.

About a dozen or so construction workers were visible around Chatrier and its surrounding, smaller courts Wednesday, including Court No. 6, which had its seating removed so the roof's sections could be placed there before being installed.

Those seats need to be replaced. Other work that still needs to be completed, according to Vilotte: finishing hospitality suites and a new media center.

AP

## Wanted in Hollywood: COVID-19 consultants to help keep sets safe



FILE PHOTO: A person wearing a face mask and gloves adjusts glasses while taking photos of the Hollywood sign after a partial reopening of Los Angeles hiking trails during the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) at Griffith Park in Los Angeles, California, U.S., May 9, 2020. REUTERS

LOS ANGELES

ALONG with hair stylists, camera operators and the hundreds of others who make magic happen for TV and film, Hollywood is counting on a new supporting member for future productions: COVID-19 consultants.

The coronavirus pandemic has prompted producers, movie studios and workers' unions to seek expert advice on how to safely reopen film and TV sets, which shut down worldwide in mid-March.

In demand are epidemiologists and other public health specialists to provide detailed strategies for dealing with large crews who work

in cramped spaces, makeup artists who get face-to-face with stars, and actors who kiss, hug and fight on set.

The shutdown has taken a severe financial toll across the industry, as well as on cities such as Los Angeles that benefit economically from production. Restarting is important to companies, including Netflix Inc, Walt Disney Co and others, which need fresh programming to engage audiences.

While sets remain empty in the United States, productions are ramping back up in South Korea, Australia, Sweden, as well as New Zealand, where James Cameron's "Avatar 2" is restarting this week.

People who work in the industry

expect to see smaller crews, regular testing, hand sanitizer everywhere and the use of computer-generated imagery to create big crowds on screen when work resumes.

### 'VILLAGE OF STAFF'

Writer-director Tyler Perry has taken the lead on getting cameras rolling again, announcing plans to begin shooting two BET television series on July 8 at his studio complex in Atlanta.

Perry's 330-acre self-contained lot offers housing where people can be isolated to help prevent spread of the novel coronavirus, which causes a sometimes fatal respiratory illness called COVID-19.

In a 31-page outline, Perry said "it took a village of staff, medical doctors, epidemiologists, lawyers, union reps, talent and their reps, crew members, insurers, and a lot of other great thinkers" to develop safeguards.

One was Dr. Carlos del Rio, an infectious diseases expert at Emory University, who said he advised that all cast and crew be tested at the start and at least once during the two weeks they remain sequestered for a shoot.

Del Rio also made recommendations on hygiene and other protections, though he noted nothing offers a 100% guarantee.

"It may fail" to keep coronavirus completely out of the set, he said. "But I think it's also not feasible to say we're going to wait until the virus goes away, or we have a vaccine, because then we might as well not work for the next two years."

### NEW PROTOCOLS

Unions representing actors and set employees, including SAG-AFTRA, IATSE and the Directors Guild of America, have hired experts from Harvard and the University of California to help develop guidelines.

All are looking to California Gov. Gavin Newsom, who is taking input from labor and industry representatives and said he is aiming to release protocols for film and TV shoots as early as this week.

Actors are watching closely. Actress Anna Kendrick, in an interview promoting her HBO Max series "Love Life," said some ideas she's heard sound like they're from "somebody who's never been on a film set."

"In my experience people on film sets, as opposed to people in an airport, we all know we're on the same team, we're all just trying to keep each other safe," she said. "I think it can be done, but I haven't seen super great solutions yet."

Handling the coronavirus is complicated in television because many workers are freelancers, said Dr. Paul Litchfield, an occupational physician, who helped develop guidelines for TV networks in Britain.

"People are moving in and out of your bubble to other productions with other companies," he said. "So it's making sure that the guidance is consistent across (TV) companies."

REUTERS



## War of words erupts in Brazilian football

By Tim Vickery, South America correspondent

It is only natural that the return of the Bundesliga has racked up the desire of some elsewhere in the world to get the ball rolling in their leagues.

But everywhere else is not Germany, with the coronavirus under relative control. Brazil is certainly facing a very different situation; the death toll is now well over 25,000, and rising at a rate that makes it more realistic to talk of a plateau rather than a peak. Are these adequate conditions for the safe return of football in the country?

In a welcome moment of reflection and sanity, the giant Corinthians club of Sao Paulo issued a statement earlier this week. The club described as "legitimate" that football search for a way out of the current crisis together with the authorities, but feels that "it is worrying that Brazil is living a scenario very different from those countries whose leagues have restarted."

"In Germany," the statement continues, "there was an intense dialogue between all the political and football agents, and one principle was clear for the Bundesliga; that football should be ahead of the control of the pandemic. When society had trust in the success of this combat by the various levels of German government, the Bundesliga finally restarted its games. There was responsibility with the product, the stars and the public."

Without these elements, concluded the statement with considerable wisdom, "any return will just put back the next forced shutdown, in which the clubs will suffer once again. As a sustainable business, football can only return after an efficient articulation of forces, focused on the well being of the people."

And Brazil has added complications. It is a country the size of a continent. The four national divisions were to have kicked off earlier this month. As Corinthians point out: "In 2020 the Serie A [first division] has 20 clubs, drawn from 9 different states, all of them with distinct panoramas of the virus. It will require a more coordinated work between governments, clubs and federations. In a collective sport, it is not possible to play alone."

This would appear to be a dig

at Rio de Janeiro giants Flamengo, who are back in training and, together with local rivals Vasco da Gama, have been pressing for an imminent return of football. This would be possible because the Rio State tournament has yet to be completed. It was moving towards the home straight when football was suspended in mid March. So, given the green light, Flamengo and Vasco could be in action at a local level ahead of the delayed kick off of the national championship.

But if Flamengo and Vasco are in favour, the other traditional Rio teams, Fluminense and Botafogo, are not. The climate has become increasingly ugly between Flamengo and Botafogo, the former wanting to start as soon as possible, the latter seeing this as an unjustifiable risk.

Botafogo director Carlos Augusto Montenegro said last week that the plan to restart the Rio championship was "homicide" and that his club would not take the field.

Flamengo president Rodolfo Landim hit back. He told Fox Sports that in light of Botafogo's recent results, in both sporting and financial terms, "it is an indicator that if they disagree with what we are doing, it means that we are probably on the right path."

It is true that Flamengo have titles and resources which Botafogo are currently unable to match. But Landim had left a flank dangerously exposed – the fire at his club's training ground at the start of last year which cost the lives of 10 of their youth team players.

In an interview with the Extra newspaper, Montenegro went for the jugular.

"Botafogo really are on an opposite path," he said. "In 2019 we did not have youngsters burned to death. We try to preserve the lives of players, the coaching staff, families and club workers."

"This year Flamengo, in an obstinate and irresponsible manner, continue wanting to risk lives with an idiotic rush to bring football back."

Such hostility will not be easily dissipated, and will probably make it harder to reach some kind of consensus in the future. As Corinthians pointed out in their statement: "If the combat of the corona virus does not have alignment between the different levels of government, in football the reactions are even more fragmented."

## Premier League moves step closer to returning

By James Olley, Senior Writer, ESPN FC

The Premier League made a significant stride toward restarting matches on Wednesday after all 20 clubs unanimously agreed to resume contact training.

A brief shareholders meeting concluded with a vote on moving to Phase 2 of preparations following discussions on Tuesday between players, managers and league representatives designed to assuage concerns about social distancing amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The league also confirmed on Wednesday that it had four positive cases from three clubs following its third round of testing of 1,008 players and club staff.

Several players, including Chelsea midfielder N'Golo Kante and Watford striker Troy Denney, have opted to pursue individual programmes at home, partly due to statistics indicating people from a BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) background are more likely to die from COVID-19.

Regarding contact training, the league said: "Premier League shareholders today voted unanimously to resume contact training – marking another step towards restarting the Premier League season, when safe to do so."

"Squads are now able to train as a group and engage in tackling while minimising any unnecessary close contact."

"The Premier League's priority is the health and wellbeing of all participants. Strict medical protocols are in place to ensure the training ground is the safest environment possible and players and staff will continue to be tested for COVID-19 twice a week."

"Stage Two of the Return to Training protocol has been agreed following consultation with clubs, players, managers, the PFA (Professional Footballers' Association), the LMA (League Managers' Association) and the Government. Discussions are ongoing as work continues towards resuming the season when conditions allow."

The Premier League can today confirm that on Monday 25 May and Tuesday 26 May, 1008 players and club staff were tested for COVID-19. Of these, four have tested positive from three clubs.

Those conversations will continue on Thursday when the Premier League meets again to discuss wide-ranging issues including a restart date, television scheduling and contingency plans if the season has to be curtailed.

Sources told ESPN on Monday that the original June 12 return date is now viewed by many to be too soon to build up players' fitness to a level that minimises the risk of injury. A date later in the month – possibly June 19 or June 26 if the commitment to resuming on a Friday night remains – is most likely.

## Champions League made Mourinho and Mourinho made the Champions League. Can he win it again?



Jose Mourinho's reputation in the Champions League helped define his career trajectory. Can he win it again? (Agencies)

By Nicky Bandini

THE Champions League made José Mourinho and, perhaps, for a generation of soccer fans, José Mourinho also helped to make the Champions League. For the best part of a decade he dominated the narrative around this competition like no other manager could. From his first triumph, with Porto, in 2004, through to the last of his three consecutive semi-final defeats at Real Madrid, in 2013, how many of the most memorable moments were his?

First came the charge down the sideline at Old Trafford, fists pumping and coattail flapping behind him as he raced to celebrate the 92nd-minute Costinha equaliser that would seal a famous 3-2 aggregate victory over Manchester United. As stunning an upset as that was, the resistance of his short-manned Inter at Barcelona's Camp Nou six years later might have been more iconic still.

Even when his teams weren't winning, Mourinho still demanded attention. He hid in a laundry basket to get around a suspension, conjured up analogies comparing soccer teams to omelettes and introduced an English-speaking audience to the phrase "ghost goal."

More darkly, he also made a false allegation against a referee, Anders Frisk, asserting that the official had met with the Barcelona manager Frank Rijkaard in his dressing room at half-time of a last-16 tie. Frisk subsequently received death threats and retired. UEFA would eventually release a statement absolving Mourinho of responsibility for that decision, but it would not be the last time that he sparked outrage with claims of conspiracy.

Whether good or bad, you could not write the history of the Champions League in this period without him. These were 10 years in which Mourinho managed four different clubs and failed only three times to reach the semifinals.

After lifting the trophy with Porto, he led Chelsea to the semis twice in three seasons, only to lose narrowly both times to Liverpool. Next came Inter. Under his stewardship, they became the first team ever to win a treble of Champions League, Serie A and Coppa Italia.

When Real Madrid hired Mourinho immediately after that trio of triumphs, he was presented as a "can't-miss" appointment. Prior to Mourinho, Madrid's transfer policy under Florentino Pérez in the early 2000s had been defined by its superstar player signings – the so-called "galácticos" like Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane, David Beckham and the Brazilian Ronaldo. "This year," the president explained, "the galáctico is Mourinho."

It ought to have been a match made in heaven. Pérez and Mourinho shared the same priority: to become continental champions once more. Although Madrid were already the most successful team in European Cup history, they had not won it since 2002, sitting one shy of La Decima, an iconic 10th success. Mourinho, having become the third manager ever to win the competition with two different clubs, saw an opportunity to write his legacy by becoming the first to do it with three.

The story goes that when Pérez led Mourinho through the club's museum at the Santiago Bernabéu, he stopped in front of the trophy and confessed to his new manager that "I miss it." "Me too," Mourinho replied. "And for me, it has only been a few days."

Yet, somehow, they never quite made it happen, and even now, opinions differ on Mourinho's tenure in Madrid.

His supporters point out that nothing is guaranteed in knockout competitions, and that the team had previously gone six years without even making it to a quarterfinal. They note that he only lost to Bayern Munich on penalties in 2012 and by a single goal to Borussia Dortmund a year later. His critics counter by observing that Madrid enjoyed some accommodating draws leading up to those semifinals, and that only Manchester City spent more on transfers over the same period. The fact that his successor, Carlo Ancelotti, won the Champions League at the first attempt, even thumping Bayern 5-0 on aggregate in the semis, looked bad for Mourinho, too.

Still, he was at least always a part of the Champions League conversation at Madrid; Mourinho has scarcely even had a chance to compete for the trophy he covets most in the decade since. There was one more semifinal, at the start of his second tenure with Chelsea. After drawing 0-0 away to Atlético Madrid in the first leg, Mourinho's team went 1-0 up in the return game at Stamford Bridge, only to concede an equaliser before half-time and crumble to a 3-1 defeat.

Mourinho's subsequent criticism of Eden Hazard, who failed to track Juanfran in the build-up to Atlético's equaliser, may have been a turning point. Chelsea went on to win the Premier League the next season, but the manager's relationship with Hazard deteriorated and teammates have observed that the Belgian started to lose sight of his own best qualities, forcing bad passes in an effort to appease his manager when before he should have carried the ball forward himself.

It all feeds into a greater narrative with Mourinho, that he has become too egotistical, too ready to throw his own players under the bus in this latter stage of his career. At Porto, Inter and during his first tenure at Chelsea, he had been perceived as a manager who shielded his squads by drawing the media's attention on himself, his braggadocio-laden press conferences and conspiratorial claims all just methods of misdirection. Now he was letting others become scapegoats for his team's

failings.

The truth is, though, that this was not actually a new tactic at all. Mourinho has picked fights with his players all through his career, and often with the biggest stars. In his first season at Porto, he banned the first-choice goalkeeper, Vitor Baía, from team activities from a month after an argument. In 2010, on the way to that treble at Inter, Mario Balotelli was publicly scorned. The difference was that, back then, the messaging worked.

At Porto, players saw that a young manager was prepared to make strong decisions. At Inter, a squad that had been asked to buy into an ethos of self-sacrifice was reassured that no exceptions would be made, even if that meant damaging the potential sell-on value of a player viewed as a major asset.

There are myriad reasons why a similar ruse might not have worked out so well in Manchester, London or Madrid. Human relationships are complicated, and whole articles could be written on the psychological state of each squad. Perhaps all that is a distraction, anyway. Is it really Mourinho's man-management that has let him down, or are his tactics simply outdated?

In more successful times he would mock football's idealists. "There are lots of poets in football," he said after winning the Europa League with Manchester United in 2017, "but poets don't win titles." But Jonathan Wilson, author of "Inverting The Pyramid," has argued that at a certain stage, Mourinho himself became a poet, too attached to his own belief that hard graft and defensive discipline could overcome anything. Mourinho might have been right, once, but soccer has moved on around him.

In the early 2010s, he was competing with Pep Guardiola, Barcelona and delicate tiki taka. Today, the kings of Europe are Liverpool with Jurgen Klopp's furious "heavy metal football." Different times require different solutions.

None of which is to say that Mourinho's window for winning the Champions League is necessarily closed. It's difficult for any manager to stay at the forefront

of the game through multiple decades – there is a reason why so few have done it – but not impossible.

Mourinho has not always been dogmatic. At Porto and Inter, as well as in that first stint at Chelsea, he actually showed himself to be very tactically adaptable. Or maybe tactics are also a red herring. Was the secret ingredient in each of those settings actually something else? Back then, Mourinho always seemed like a man having fun.

In an interview with Gazzetta dello Sport last week, Mourinho was asked about the decision to leave Inter for Madrid in the summer of 2010. He spoke frankly about ambition, the fact that he had already turned the Spanish club down twice and that desire to achieve something unprecedented, winning the Champions League with a third different club from a third different country.

Yet parting with Inter was still difficult. By Mourinho's account, the club's owner, Massimo Moratti, told him after the semi-final win over Barcelona that they would not stand in his way, that after such a performance he owed them nothing. In effect, the Italian club granted him "the right to do what I wanted. But not the right to be happy. In fact, I was happier in Milan than Madrid."

Mourinho's enduring attachment to that Inter team feels noteworthy. The Champions League-winning side still have a WhatsApp group together, and players have observed that their old manager is the most active person in it. It is a detail that feels at once charming, but also revealing. It's hard to imagine such close involvement with his squads from Manchester or Madrid.

Togetherness, and a shared sense of purpose, are often cited at Inter as the key ingredients in their unprecedented 2010 success. Time will tell if Mourinho can achieve something similar at Tottenham, or wherever his journey takes him next. He has already left his mark on European soccer's most prestigious competition. But in his own mind, at least, the story is not finished yet.

ESPN

Gwiji by David Chikoko





# SPORT

Champions League made Mourinho and  
Mourinho made the Champions League.

Can he win it again?

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Mbao FC players participate in training in Mwanza recently to shape up for this season's Mainland Premier League matches. PHOTO: COURTESY OF MBAO FC

## Clubs start preps for VPL action

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

A SECTION of the Vodacom Premier League sides have started featuring in training sessions to shape up for the rest of the domestic top flight games.

President John Magufuli recently issued permission for the resumption of sporting events, starting with soccer competitions, from June 1.

Sporting activities had been put in an indefinite suspension with the aim of containing the coronavirus disease.

The domestic top flight outfits and others, which participate in the First Division League (FDL) and Second Division League (SDL), were given green light to attend training with strict adherence to precautions put forward by the government.

Vodacom Premier League leaders, Simba, started camp in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday after their players underwent testing.

The club's three foreign professionals, Zambian Clatous Chama, Sudan national Sharaf Shiboub, and Kenyan Francis Kahata, nevertheless have not joined the training given they can not get out of their respective countries, which have imposed lockdown to contain the coronavirus disease.

"A lockdown has been imposed in Kahata's home country, therefore, it is quite difficult for him to get out of the country," Simba's manager, Patrick Rweyemamu, stated.

"We, nevertheless, regularly contact with Chama and he can make his way back any day."

Yanga also started training at Tanganyika Law School's venue in the city the same day, with all of the outfit's players going for tests.

The outfit's doctor, Sheck Mngazija, stated the thermal scanning went on smoothly, noting precautions were also taken during the training.

He disclosed players were instructed to avoid contact and wear face masks and gloves.

"We have moreover seen to it all footballs are washed with sanitizers," he disclosed.

Singida United's Chairman, Festo Sanga, stated his outfit has as well started training to shape up for the rest of their games.

Sanga maintained they are confident they will post good results in the games and make certain of their presence in the domestic top flight next season.

"We will pick off from a spot we had stopped, given we grabbed victory in our last match," he stated.

Singida United edged Mbeya City FC 2-1 in a clash, which was played at Liti Stadium in Singida on March 14.

Prisons' secretary general, Ajabu Kifukwe, said the Mbeya club went for training last week, with all of their players going for tests.

"We have officially started training, but 90 percent of players have reported at the venue, others have not arrived," he stated.

Ndanda FC has also started taking part in training but the squad was set to enter camp today, once a number of issues are put in place.

Selemani Kachele, Ndanda FC secretary general, disclosed they know they are facing challenging task playing the rest of their assignments in Dar es Salaam.

He was adamant they are nevertheless prepared to confidently face the challenge and they are waiting for the fixture.

"We are moving on smoothly, we have already started training but we will enter camp on Friday, we are keenly waiting for the fixture, despite being required to play the rest of the fixture in Dar es Salaam," he disclosed.

Namungo FC Chairman Hassan Zidadu noted the outfit has been featuring in training for the past two weeks to shape up for the rest of the fixture.

"We immediately got into action once President Magufuli had expressed his plan to issue permission for resumption of sporting activities, we knew sports will resume soon," he added.

## 2020 T20 World Cup prospects fade, as alternatives sought

SYDNEY

AS the prospects of the men's T20 World Cup proceeding on schedule in Australia this October recede by the day, the ICC board will consider alternative scenarios on Thursday.

An official decision may not come after the board meeting - the ICC issued a statement to say that reports of a postponement were "inaccurate" - but according to one official familiar with the contingency planning, a tournament this year would be "too big a risk" in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. The official said the logistics of arranging a global tournament would be "impossible to manage," and that the "safe option" would be to not have it this year.

Alternative options as to when the tournament can take place were drawn up in a meeting of the Finance & Commercial Affairs (F&CA) Committee, an influential sub-committee within the ICC, on May 22.

Although it is looking increasingly likely that international cricket will resume soon enough the challenges of bringing together 16 teams from across the world into one country and creating a bio-secure bubble for them is of a different scale altogether. The ICC has to take into account multiple travel restriction policies, different quarantine measures in different countries and the loss of revenue from a tournament played behind closed doors (not to mention the additional costs of playing matches in a bio-secure environment).

It is possible that the ICC Board does not make the decision official tomorrow - the ICC pointed to a "number of contingency plans" in its statement - and instead waits till its annual conference scheduled for mid-July. But one official said leaving the final decision late would hurt all stakeholders. "If there is uncertainty too close to the actual event itself then stakeholders like the broadcaster will not like it."

The four main scenarios for when the tournament can be postponed to in chronological sequence are:

Scenario 1: February-March 2021. Venue: Australia

Moving the T20 World Cup to February-March next year. For that to happen though the ICC will have to reschedule the 2021 women's ODI World Cup - currently scheduled between February 6 and March 7 in New Zealand - to start mid-January. The proximity of the events shouldn't be an issue, the ICC having held back-to-back world events in 2017 with the men's Champions Trophy and the women's ODI World Cup in England. Another key advantage is that keeping it in Australia ensures a continuity to plans already in place.

Questions: Will there be an appetite among the game's commercial and broadcast stakeholders to have two men's T20 World Cups in the same year (and three major ICC events overall) considering India are scheduled to host the 2021 men's T20 World Cup in October-November?



A darts player puts his skills to show during a recent National Club Championship, which took place in Arusha.

# TADA postpones East African darts tourney until 2021

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

TANZANIA has been the first to pull out of this year's East African Darts Federation Championship, pushing back the regional sports event to the middle of next year, according to an official statement made available here.

Usually conducted on rotation basis, the tournament for East African countries, which is an annual feature, is usually held yearly in turns between Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Tanzania was, this year, expected to stage the country's leg of the event in Biharamulo Dis-

trict of Kagera.

The competition was scheduled to take place in the Lake Zone region from June 26-28 this year. It has nevertheless been forced into postponement according to the official statement from the Tanzania Darts Association (TADA).

"We are sad to inform you that the Tanzania Darts Association (TADA) will not be able to organize the East African games as per East African Darts Federation and TADA calendars, and this is due to the prevalence of the Covid-19 infections," the association's Secretary General, Victor Kimambo, said.

In another development, the TADA official has written to re-

gional darts associations' secretaries regarding the TADA calendar which starts on June 1 this year. He stated the calendar is apparently undergoing changes, indicating the possibility of other local darts events resuming next July.

He disclosed that all regional officials in conjunction with their zonal counterparts need to start preparation and complete their players' selections before July 13, 2020 deadline so that TADA may start fixing the Darts Zonal Tournament finals scheduled to take place in Dodoma.

The Darts Zonal Tournament finals are expected to be staged in the region from July 24-26, 2020, comprising of Singles and

all Men's and Ladies.

Meanwhile the TADA Cup competition will again be held in Biharamulo from September 25-27 and will feature Singles, Doubles, Team Games and all Men's and Ladies games.

The annual Nyerere Day Darts competition and Taifa Cup will be held in Dar es Salaam from October 14-17, 2020.

The showpiece will bring together the first and second winners from each region's competition and Singles, Ladies plus all Men's and Ladies' teams.

The TADA has directed the Dodoma officials to start making preparations for the events in respect to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko



**EATV FRIDAY**

11:00 DADAZ LIVE  
12:00 Mid Week Movie (r)  
13:30 Kall Za Wana  
14:00 Bongo Hits  
15:00 Funguka  
15:30 Wakilisha (r)  
16:00 Ujenzi (r)  
16:30 #HASHTAG  
17:00 SSELEKT  
17:55 Kurasa  
18:00 eNewz  
18:30 Skonga  
19:30 EATV SAA I  
19:45 MJADALA  
20:00 DADAZ (r)  
21:00 Friday Night Live  
23:00 Kurasa (r)

**TONIGHT @ 9:00**

**Friday Night Live** The Weekend begins here! Listen to upbeat mixed music by the hottest Djs, Gossip, showbiz updates and exclusive interviews with celebrities from home and abroad. Don't you dare miss this.

**eastafrika 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 Friday Night Live

**88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM**