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# Chadema accused slapped with 350m/- fines or 60 years in jail

Mbowe must pay 70m/- or stay in jail for five months

By Guardian Reporter

CHADEMA national chairman Freeman Mbowe and seven others were yesterday convicted by Dae es Salaam's Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court on 12 counts of incitement, slapping them with 350m/- total fines or serving a total of 60 years in jail.

Principal Resident Magistrate Thomas Simba said in his judgment that Mbowe alone has to pay 70m/- in fines for his freedom or stay behind bars. Dr Vincent Mashinji, who recently decamped to the ruling CCM, has to part with 30m/-.

Others convicted apart from the chairman and former secretary general Dr Mashinji are current secretary general and



AWAITING ALL-IMPORTANT RULING: Hai legislator Freeman Aikaeli Mbowe (R), national chairman of the opposition Chadema, in tête-à-tête with opposition ACT-Wazalendo chief advisor Maalim Seif Shariff Hamad (C) at the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly before the court delivered its judgment. Left is Chadema secretary general John Mnyika, one of the seven people convicted alongside Mbowe. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala



## PM stunned seeing roads manager he transferred still at work

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa was yesterday stunned to find the Morogoro Regional Manager for Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) who he last week ordered to be transferred immediately, still at work.

Godwin Andalwisiye was busy rebuilding Kiyegeya Bridge on the Morogoro-Dodoma

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The punishment should serve as a warning to other leaders who do not mind their words in public, the magistrate said

Kibamba MP John Mnyika, Iringa Urban MP Peter Msigwa, Kawe lawmaker Halima Mdee, Esther Matiko (Tarime Urban), John Heche (Tarime Rural), Deputy Secretary General (Zanzibar) Salum Mwalimu and Bunda MP Esther Bulaya.

The magistrate said that the prosecution, led by State Attorney Faraja Nchimbi, proved that on February 16, 2018 at Buibui grounds within Kinondoni district in Dar es Salaam, the accused persons organised and took part in an illegal gathering in which inciting words were uttered. All of them were found guilty in this count and fined 10m/- apart from other charges.

"The punishment should serve as a warning to other leaders who do not mind their words in public," the magistrate said.

The words uttered in the gathering were in contravention of regulations of the National Electoral Commission, the magistrate intoned.

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## Irony as Chinese, Ugandans beat Tanzanians in Kiswahili job takes

By Aisia Rweyemamu

INFORMATION, Culture, Arts and Sports minister Dr Harrison Mwakymbembe yesterday said that Tanzanians were lagging behind the Chinese, Ugandans and Kenyans in Kiswahili teaching and interpretation jobs globally, blaming it on 'lethargy.'

Speaking in Dar es Salaam at a presentation of the draft country report on protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, the minister said Tanzanians are better at complaining than grabbing job opportunities.

Kiswahili was recently approved as the official language of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

"My office opened a database for international job opportunities for Kiswahili professionals but we received more applications from

Uganda and Kenya than Tanzania," he said.

The minister explained efforts he made to invite Tanzanian graduates in the Kiswahili language to share some interpretation job opportunities but the response was poor as those who turned up were less than 10.

"In international interpretation jobs there are currently more Chinese than Tanzanians," he pointed out.

Being the birthplace of standard Kiswahili, Tanzania is best placed to lead in the

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## RC acts as mosquito-borne disease decimates livestock

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

A STRANGE disease spreading from across the border whose has affected thousands of livestock in wards bordering Kenya in Ngorongoro District, Arusha Region.

Ngorongoro District Veterinary Officer Dr Chobi Chugwa yesterday confirmed the existence of the disease, saying it is spread by mosquitoes, and

This is a disaster that needs great efforts to fight, even though you are late as herders say the disease erupted in November, last year

that the only way to combat it is through a vaccine which is currently available in Kenya at a high cost.

The disease attacks cattle, sheep as well as goats in a district whose economy is predominantly based on animal husbandry.

Chugwa said a bottle of the drug that can vaccinate 100 sheep

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**TCRA ICT AWARDS**

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# India rolls out international students fair in Dar, offers scholarships

By Beatrice Philemon

A HIGHER Education Fair that was organized by the High Commission of India in collaboration with the International Student Fairs Africa (ISFA) has brought positive results. More students from different higher learning institutions including high schools across the city participated in the fair, to see what India offers in terms of higher education and the scholarship scheme they have for international students.

The Indian High Commissioner to Tanzania, Sanjiv Kohli says as envoy to Tanzania, he was happy to see a lot of students visiting the ISFA education fair. They got a chance to meet with different lecturers from 15 leading Indian universities and have face-to-face discussion on scholarships offered in their universities, while others managed to apply for different courses offered in India.

"We still invite Tanzanian students to study in India because we have the best education and India is a hub of innovation, creativity and leadership," he says.

Also the education system that offered in India can help Tanzania to solve challenges they have as it strives to become semi-industrialized and transform it to an industrial economy.

Currently India is the fastest growing major economy, the world's 3rd largest higher education system and most higher education courses are delivered in English which offers ease of communication to be enjoyed by an overseas student.

"Tanzanian students keen to study in India can get world-class education that is affordable. We encourage universities in Tanzania to tell students about to study in India on education offered in India because we have a scholarship programme for their education," he says.

Tanzania has a huge population; to offer scholarships for students to study in India is part of Indian government efforts to support the education sector in Tanzania.

"As a result, we encourage students from higher learning institutions including high schools who did not manage to visit the ISFA fair to register right now at [www.studyinindia.gov.in](http://www.studyinindia.gov.in) in accordance with the universities they want to study so that they can avail scholarships offered in India," he elaborated.

"As I speak to you right now Tanzania is the largest beneficiary of Indian education among African countries benefiting from different scholarships."

The Indian government will continue to support Tanzania in education and other sectors to help the country attain enough skilled labour force needed by different companies.

India provides scholarships in various fields such as engineering, IT, accounting, manpower training, computer studies, rural development, diplomacy and many more and the number of beneficiaries has been increased to more than 500 people from different sectors.

He said assistance in the educational field has produced tangible outcomes in Tanzania's socio-economic development and further strengthened the bonds of trust and cooperation between the two countries.

For his part, Study to India Programme Officer Nikhil



**Gandhi Institute of Technology and Management (GITAM), Director-International, Kishan Kaza explain how Tanzanian students can get scholarships at GITAM university in India at the just ended International Students Fairs Africa (ISFA) Education Fair that was organized by High Commission of India in collaboration with International Students Fairs (ISFA) at Serena Hotel**

Mahajan underlined that 15 representatives of leading Indian universities and institutes were in Tanzania for the Study in India Programme to help students explore courses and scholarships offered in those universities.

The main goal was to help Tanzania have enough qualified experts in the health sector, industrial areas, petroleum management, the IT sector and helping students to access quality higher education.

"We invite students to register now at [www.studyinindia.gov.in](http://www.studyinindia.gov.in), as through this website it will be easy for students to select universities they wish to study and benefit from scholarships," he stated.

On May 14th or 15th there will be an online examination for Tanzanian students wishing to study in India and will be conducted for 90 minutes.

All passing students will get full scholarships to study in India while students who will score 50 percent in the exams will get a discount of 50 per cent to study in India.

He urged students in all areas to use this opportunity as the quality of education that is offered in India is world standard.

"As a delegation from India, we are very glad to be in Tanzania as the response from Tanzanian students was fantastic. We have got so many students who are ready to study in India as they were impressed to see what we offer in higher education and the scholarships offered," he affirmed.

Indian institutes are featured in the Top 100 Asian universities as per quality standards and the world university rankings of 2018.

Also more than 200 of the Fortune 500 companies hire directly from Indian campuses and the government of India 'Study in India' campaign enables one to reach out to the 100+ top ranked and accredited Indian institutions on a single portal.

Cities such as Bangalore and Hyderabad are known for their entrepreneurial and technology ecosystem and ranked amongst the most dynamic cities in the world.

For his part, Kishan Kaza, international director for the Gandhi Institute of Technology and Management (GITAM), says he was glad to receive students from different higher learning institutions including high schools who visited GITAM's table to see what they offer in courses offered and scholarships.

"During the event we provided fees structures and admission information to student to attract them to apply to our universities," he said.

"The B.Sc. - Renal Dialysis Technology course, BSc-Radiology and Imaging Technology, B.Sc. - Optometry, Pharmacy and B.Sc. - Nursing are the main courses that students were applying for in our university."

"We still encourage more students who didn't manage to attend this fair to register now at [www.studyinindia.gov.in](http://www.studyinindia.gov.in) so that they can benefit from scholarships offered in our university," he elaborated.

GITAM offers scholarships for all African countries for undergraduate and post-graduate studies, as so far GITAM University has three campuses located in South India.

The university was established in 1980 and is among Top 10 universities in India.

So far GITAM has students from around 24 countries spread over three campuses. Students who will apply for the nursing course will get a chance to put into practice what have learned in our universities at GIMSR Hospital, a full-fledged hospital catering to the healthcare needs of students, teaching and non-teaching staff.

The hospital is well equipped with 362 beds and operation theatres providing for wide ranging out-patient needs. The university has set up a youth club, Kalakriti to promote stu-

dents' interests in art and music, Yoga classes are regularly organized in university campuses to promote students' health.

"We encourage Tanzanians to apply, and eligible international students can submit online applications at [www.international.gitam.edu](http://www.international.gitam.edu) for any of the three campuses of GITAM," he stated.

India's system of higher education is the third largest in the world. While its engineering schools have been flag bearers of the India's higher education reputation, in keeping with the times and skill needs of the global workforce Indian universities are offering a host of other courses such as Masters in Business Administration, Sciences, Liberal Arts, Artificial Intelligence, Photonics and Design Thinking.

As a result, many of its higher education institutions figure in the top 100 Asian universities.

The Indian Education system is the world's third largest higher education system with more than 800 universities, 39,000 colleges and a capacity of enrolling a whopping 20 million students.

Higher education institutions in India offer courses/degrees that are competitive in the world market in terms of quality but are delivered at one fourth of the cost, hence guaranteeing value-for-money education. The Indian education system is vast in size, as well as in its academic offerings.

A vibrant and diverse education system means that a wide variety of courses are available -- from the modern and cutting edge to the traditional.

Indian education ranges from exposure to the latest advancements of science and technology like Virtual and Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Computing to Yoga, Ayurveda, Sanskrit and classical dances.

This vastness of the Indian education system directly translates to enhanced opportunities for its students and global learning for an all-round academic and personal development.

A burgeoning IT and services sector has led to a robust placement oriented education as about 200 of the Fortune 500 companies hire regularly from Indian campuses.

# Cameroon refugees struggle to cope with life of need in Nigeria

Cross River, Nigeria

ANNA Nga longed to see her children return to the classroom again.

A deadly conflict between Cameroonian government forces and separatist fighters seeking independence for the mainly English-speaking Southwest and Northwest regions has left many schools closed for more than three years.

In late January, with the threat of further violence looming larger ahead of the February 9 parliamentary and municipal elections, Nga travelled across the border to Nigeria.

"We had to move to save our heads," said the 35-year-old.

Nga now lives with her six children and four other minors related to her in the border village of Ajassor in southeast Nigeria's Cross River state.

Nga did not move alone.

Nearly 8,000 new arrivals - some of whom struggled through dense forests and grasslands bleeding from gunshot wounds - crossed into Nigeria's Cross River and Taraba states before the elections, according to the UN refugee agency, UNHCR.

Anglophone crisis  
What is commonly known as Cameroon's Anglophone crisis was triggered by demonstrations by lawyers and teachers in 2016 over the rising influence of French in their education and legal systems.

With frustration over alleged political and economic marginalisation high, the protesters' action soon morphed into wider demands and resulted in several strikes. Although talk of marginalisation is not new, the action by barristers and teachers became a rallying point for Anglophone Cameroonians who had voted to join the majority French Cameroon to form the United Republic of Cameroon in 1961.



**Anna Nga and her family in Ajassor border village in Cross River state. File photo**

The government's military response failed to reduce tensions, as government forces were accused of carrying out arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings, among other abuses.

In response, a slew of separatist groups rose to fight back and demand independence.

Inside Cameroon, the UN estimates that the conflict has killed about 3,000 people and displaced more than 679,000 others in the Anglophone regions, which comprise 20 percent of the country's estimated 25 million population.

UNICEF, the UN's children's fund, estimates that more than 855,000 children remain out of school in the Anglophone regions where 80 percent of schools remain closed.

Meanwhile, some 60,000 people have fled to neighbouring Nigeria,

spread across the states of Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River and Taraba.

In Ajassor, in a windowless room packed with nearly a dozen children, Nga happily looks on as her children put on bright school uniforms and get ready to head to school.

She pays between 2,000 (\$5.4) and 5,500 (\$15) naira per child for the local school, which has accepted refugee children alongside their regular students.

But Nga, who is not registered as a refugee because the UNHCR registration process has not started for new arrivals, is worried about her family's future in Nigeria.

"I am paying rent and then school fees for five children,"

she says, her face contorting. "It is very difficult for me without any work." About 47.5 percent of refugees seeking asylum in Nigeria live in four settlements built by the UNHCR, while the rest live in about 87 host communities across Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River and Taraba.

Many Cameroonians who live in host communities have limited access to education, health-care, relief items and livelihoods.

In Cross River state, which hosts 69.5 percent of Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria, there are three settlements for refugees in the town of Ogoja.

Permanent shelters made of red bricks and topped with corrugated zinc roofing appear everywhere.

Most of the people here used

to receive cash-based interventions (CBI) of 7,200 naira (\$20) per month from the UNHCR to cover food and basic needs. But refugees who spoke to Al Jazeera said there have been occasional delays in receiving the payments, which have also been reduced to 4,600 naira (\$12) since January.

"Before the CBI comes, I have already borrowed money to feed and take care of my baby," said 18-year-old Glory Tiku, adding that her monthly payment is not enough to feed her and her four-month-old baby.

"We usually start paying debts with some of the money whenever it comes."

Some refugees living in host communities in Cross River told Al Jazeera they are unable to receive their CBIs because they cannot afford to spend up to 3,000 naira (\$8) to travel to Ogoja where the money is disbursed.

The UNHCR says it will invest more funds into livelihood interventions to help refugees become self-reliant.

The agency is hoping to raise an additional \$27.3m for refugees in Nigeria, but funding for this supplementary appeal stood at 56 percent in early December.

At Adagom-3, a new settlement for more than 500 refugees created late last year in Ogoja, asylum-seekers said they did not receive essential items such as mosquito nets, mats, mattresses and cooking utensils when moving into their new houses.

"They think refugees are inferior beings, [but] one day we will rise and protest," a refugee in his 50s said.

To survive, refugees in the settlements work as farm labourers in exchange for 500 naira (\$1.4) or a tuber of yam or cassava af-

ter a day's work.

Meanwhile, the UNHCR has teamed up with its partners to provide agricultural supplies to some refugees to help them operate micro-gardens to feed their families.

But some refugees felt the initiatives did not go far enough.

"You can't call these projects empowerment because nothing has changed, really," a refugee in Ajassor said.

"The wheelbarrows given to people here started having bad tyres and other issues, and there is barely water to even bathe - much less to water the garden."

**Worsening situation**

Back in Cameroon, the simmering conflict continues to deteriorate, with human rights groups accusing both sides of committing human rights abuses. In December, Parliament passed a law giving the two English-speaking regions "special status" in the wake of a national dialogue where participants made several recommendations, including electing local governors and integrating ex-fighters into society.

Ilaria Allegrozzi, senior Central Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch, told Al Jazeera the separatists had not participated in the process.

"The National Dialogue did not prevent the worsening of the crisis in the English-speaking regions and the escalation of violence. The separatists, most of whose leaders are based outside Cameroon or are in prison in Cameroon, did not take part in the dialogue," Allegrozzi said.

Meanwhile, violence continues to affect civilians. On February 14, at least 21 people, including 14 children, were killed by armed men in Ngarbuh village in the Northwest region.

# China's anti-virus efforts boost foreign investors' confidence

SHENYANG

Foreign-funded enterprises maintain strong confidence in the resilience of Chinese economy, as the country has made unprecedented efforts in containing the novel coronavirus epidemic.

AS China goes all out to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak, authorities have stressed efforts to help foreign-funded companies resume production and operation in an orderly manner.

Thanks to unremitting anti-virus efforts, multinational companies and joint ventures across the nation are demonstrating their confidence in the Chinese market as their business activities have gradually recovered in the world's second-largest economy.

LyondellBasell, one of the largest plastics, chemicals and refining companies in the world, signed an agreement with the Liaoning Bora Enterprise Group through the Internet on Friday.

The two companies will invest 12 billion U.S. dollars over the next 10 years to build a petrochemical industry base in the city of Panjin, northeast China's Liaoning Province. The partnership will make the city a world-class production base of chemicals and drive the development of industrial chains including plastic packaging and building materials.

Executives from both companies witnessed the online signing ceremony in six cities worldwide including Shenyang, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Houston in the United States and Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

"I was worried that the signing ceremony would be postponed due to the epidemic, but LyondellBasell proposed to sign the contract online as scheduled," said Qu Baoxue, the controlling shareholder of Bora. "Both sides are very pleased to complete the investment on schedule."

"The signing of the agreement today is very timely. In terms of the coronavirus, we see that as a temporary situation. We know that will be solved in China and around the world," said Bob Patel, director of LyondellBasell. "And therefore, our work is very supportive because we see the strategic importance of the market in China."

In recent years, the global chemical giant has seen rapid growth in the Asian market, represented by China, at a rate of 7 to 8 percent per year.

The two companies first signed a memorandum of understanding and announced their investment plan in September 2019. Since the coronavirus outbreak, the two companies did not suspend their cooperation but sped up consultations and preparations to complete the investment project.

"I have been impressed with China's determination and tremendous efforts to combat the crisis," said Patel. "The outbreak will not affect the company's assessment of the



People work at the workshop in Faurecia (Chongqing) Automotive Parts Co., Ltd., a Sino-French joint venture, in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, Feb. 12, 2020. (Xinhua)

Chinese market. China's economic prospects are very bright in the long term."

The partnership between LyondellBasell and Bora epitomizes how foreign-funded enterprises are maintaining their investment strategies in China and upholding their confidence in the Chinese market.

As the world's second-largest economy, China's solid and stringent measures to curb the epidemic have helped cultivate a good business environment for foreign investors and offset the negative impact caused by the deadly pathogen.

Among those measures, local governments arrange chartered buses, trains and flights to bring employees of foreign-funded enterprises back to work, and implemented preferential taxation policies to reduce firms' production costs.

Zhang Yansheng, chief researcher

of the China Center for International Economic Exchanges, said China's effective control of the epidemic is undoubtedly becoming a new "bonus" for the country to attract global foreign investment.

On March 4, the construction of Japanese electric motor manufacturer Nidec Corp's new plant began in Jinpu New Area of Dalian, Liaoning Province.

In 2019, the company said it would invest 50 billion yen (about 488 million U.S. dollars) in the new plant, but in February, amid the coronavirus outbreak, it announced it would double the figure.

According to Igarashi Kazutsugu, general manager of Nidec (Dalian) Ltd., China attaches great importance to the development of the new-energy vehicle industry, and the company is confident about the industry's future development in China.

"Since the outbreak, we have seen the excellent governance capability of the Chinese government," said Igarashi Kazutsugu. "The country has struck a balance between epidemic prevention and production resumption to minimize the impact of the epidemic on foreign companies."

"We have faith in the local government and are very confident in our investment," added Igarashi Kazutsugu.

In Jinpu New Area, as of February, over 92 percent of foreign-funded enterprises above designated size had resumed production, helping stabilize global supply chains.

Meanwhile, in east China's Shandong Province, agreements were signed on Feb. 25 through video conferences for 66 foreign investment projects with a total investment of nearly 14.4 billion U.S. dollars.

In north China's Shaanxi Province,

according to Samsung China Semiconductor Co., Ltd., the first phase of its chip plant, with a total investment of 10 billion U.S. dollars, achieved full capacity of 130,000 memory chips per month in January and February.

According to Hyunki Ji, vice president of Samsung China Semiconductor, in order to ensure normal production and supply chain security, local governments helped Samsung contact upstream and downstream enterprises to ensure the transportation and supply of key raw materials.

They also set up a special team to offer 24-hour service for the company to help solve transportation, logistics and manpower problems.

"Thanks to the efforts of local governments, we didn't even suspend production during the Spring Festival holiday," said Ji.

Foxconn, the world's leading contract electronics maker, is also gradually resuming production capacity at its major manufacturing base in Zhengzhou, central China's Henan Province.

Its production in the Zhengzhou Airport Economy Zone had been slowed due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in January, affecting the international supply chain.

With help from the local authorities, Foxconn's Zhengzhou production base, which had only 1,800 employees left behind during the Spring Festival at the end of January, now has around 80,000 people hard at work, approaching the level at the same period in previous years.

"The epidemic will affect our production in the first quarter, but the impact on annual production will be limited," said Peng Jinhai, with the Zhengzhou branch of Lianchuang Electronic Component (Group) Co., Ltd.

In January, China's foreign investment law went into effect. Approved by the national legislature in March 2019, the landmark legislation will provide stronger protection and a better business environment for overseas investors.

While carrying out effective epi-

## Is Africa equal and enabled enough to empower women?

BY LIEZELLE KUMALO AND TSION TADESSE ABEBE

THE 2019 Global Gender Gap Report, developed by the World Economic Forum, says sub-Saharan Africa has achieved significant improvements towards closing the gender gap. The report measures four areas - health, education, work and politics.

Ethiopia and Mali are among the countries that have shown the greatest improvement in women's political representation. In Mali, 52% of ministers are women, and in Ethiopia this figure is at 48%. This matters because strong representation of women in political leadership can lead to policies that benefit women.

In terms of women's participation in the labour market, Burundi, Guinea, Rwanda and Sierra Leone have also recorded significant progress. In these countries, there are at least as many women as men in the labour market.

Cape Verde, Mali, Nigeria and Sierra Leone are also among countries that recorded significant improvement in women's economic participation. This was mostly achieved through facilitating entrepreneurship and the creation of more job opportunities. These are important advances since economic empowerment is a key pillar for all aspects of equality - political and social.

Despite positive developments, an equal and enabled Africa is a distant prospect for millions of women.

Despite these positive developments, an equal and enabled Africa remains a distant prospect for millions of women. The World Economic Forum report estimates that it will take sub-Saharan Africa 95 years to close gender gaps, due to multiple layers of gender challenges. So the 8 March International Women's Day theme - 'Each for Equal: An equal world is an enabled world' - is timely.

The first and chief challenge in closing



ing the gender gaps is protracted conflict across the continent. The Global Peace Index 2019 indicates that peace has deteriorated in 27 sub-Saharan African countries. Africa is home to half of active conflicts worldwide, and hosts seven of the 14 United Nations peacekeeping missions.

Conflict affects women disproportionately, being the major driver of forced displacement, which includes refugees and internally displaced people. Globally the highest number of women to be forcibly displaced is recorded in sub-Saharan Africa (52%).

The second problem is structural

**The African Union faces three major obstacles that hinder efforts to create gender equality on the continent.**

gender inequalities on the continent, driven largely by the prevailing patriarchal ideology. The impact is far-reaching, as structural challenges are also pervasive in political mechanisms tasked with facilitating gender equality. While it is desirable to have women in positions of power, merely having women in these positions doesn't guarantee that gender equality will be achieved.

The chief challenge in closing the gender gaps is protracted conflict across Africa

'Quotas to increase the employment of women have not served to redress gender inequality in any meaningful way, because power lies with those who make decisions,' says Dr Chandré Gould, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Security Studies. Women 'still face bullying, sexual harassment and even sexual violence in the workplace.'

A third obstacle is the escalation of violence against women and girls in Africa, a threat that hinders all efforts to

create an 'enabled' environment. East and Southern Africa have recorded the highest rates of violence against women and girls on the continent, with 20% of 15- to 24-year-old females reporting having experienced intimate partner violence.

Sexual violence is also rampant in Africa. Rape continues to be used as a weapon of war, even at times of relative peace. In February 2019, Sierra Leone declared a national emergency over widespread incidents of rape.

African governments and businesses should contribute to the AU's new African Women Leadership Fund

Despite these problems, 2020 provides significant opportunities for Africans to further enable the empowerment of women. South Africa, as the 2020 chair of the African Union (AU), included advancing gender equality and woman empowerment as one of its key focus areas for the year. Pursued effectively, this could encourage African states to improve their policies in this area.

Recognising that empowerment is linked to equality, the AU declared 2020 to 2030 the Decade of African Women's Financial and Economic Inclusion. To make this a reality, the recent AU summit established the African Women Leadership Fund, which aims to mobilise resources from the global private sector to fund initiatives that advance gender equality.

The fund could be a game changer if it helps women gain economic independence. Governments and the private sector in Africa should also contribute to the fund. This will ensure that empowering women is firmly on Africa's political agenda, and help overcome the perennial problem of a lack of political will.

Inclusion of women in all sectors is at the centre of the much-needed change. As UN Secretary-General António Guterres puts it, 'Only through the equal participation of women can we benefit from the intelligence, experience and insights of all of humanity.'

And only in an equal and enabled Africa will African women be empowered to take their rightful place in society. This needs to be driven by a bold vision where all citizens contribute to and benefit from Africa's development.

Agencies

# Bent on going for inclusive climate action? Then start with integrating gender equality into climate funds

By Verania Chao and Koh Miyaoi

GENDER equality and women's rights have progressed immensely since the adoption of the most visionary agenda on women's empowerment, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 25 years ago.

However, gender equality experts across the world are signaling that we need to identify additional paths for a sustainable world, including in our response to climate change.

This year, we have the opportunity to make a real difference in our climate response and to recognize its critical links to gender equality.

In addition to the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 2020 is also the year when countries are requested to deliver stronger climate action plans to adapt and cut their emissions further and faster under the global Paris Climate Accord.

As UNDP plays a central role in strengthening countries' capacity to plan and implement their climate targets, the organization has worked with countries on gender-responsive climate action and climate finance.

UNDP's Strengthening Governance of Climate Change Finance Programme (GCCF), supported by the Government of Sweden, has worked with countries to include gender in climate change policies and budgets in Asia and the Pacific since 2012.

Meanwhile, the Governments of

Germany, Spain and the European Union have joined forces to support a pilot on integrating gender equality and women's empowerment in 17 countries through UNDP's NDC Support Programme.

With a focus on national climate plans as an entry point, the pilot is elevating the integration of gender aspects from the project or programme-level to a more systemic, sectoral level.

As countries are approaching the deadline to deliver more ambitious, gender-responsive climate plans later this year, UNDP has also stepped up its efforts by offering additional support to 100 countries through the Climate Promise, a global initiative aimed to enhance NDCs and raise ambition.

This also offers an opportunity to improve and embed the integration of gender into the next generation of national climate plans.

To make this a reality, however, we must better integrate gender into the various areas of climate financing - public, private and multilateral.

Climate action is attracting a large volume of funding through increasingly diverse funding streams, but often ignores its impacts on gender equality and misses to benefit from women's leadership and expertise on climate-related issues.

If countries' climate actions are to involve the whole population, climate finance needs to become gender-responsive. So, what does it



mean to integrate gender into climate finance?

Many countries trying to implement gender-responsive climate action have found that even if capacities are in place, data has been collected and analyzed, and policies have been formulated, implementation bottlenecks remain.

One such bottleneck is the lack of an effective system to ensure planned actions are budgeted for and implemented on the ground.

Therefore, a robust and compelling framework for the integration of gender into climate finance streams is needed. In particular, there is a need to better understand how these different funding streams complement and reinforce each other, and how the experiences of gender integration in one funding stream can be leveraged for scaling

up gender equality outcomes in the others so that broader development priorities can be more effectively addressed.

Budgeting can be a powerful tool to advance the implementation of gender-responsive climate actions. While ministries of finance can directly advance this goal through by preparing the budget and proposing financial policy, they alone cannot ensure the embedding of gender-responsive climate actions in the policy and budget cycle.

Key ministries, such as Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment, Energy, Transport, Planning, and Environment, have a vital collective role to play through integration processes in their respective sectors.

By the end of 2020, UNDP will not only have

supported 100 countries on preparing more ambitious climate plans, but also with the embedding of gender-responsive climate measures.

To make a transformative change in a world that is being increasingly marked by deepening inequalities, climate change and natural disasters, it is also time to recognize the vital link between gender equality and financing for climate change to accelerate progress on our climate response.

In 2020, we have a real opportunity to make this happen.

**Verania Chao is Programme Specialist, Climate Change and Gender Equality/Inclusion, UNDP and Koh Miyaoi is UNDP Asia-Pacific Gender Team Leader/Regional Gender Advisor**

# Why women succeed in social entrepreneurship

By Sophie Hobson

ANY views expressed in this opinion piece are those of the author and not of Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Social entrepreneurship is a nascent sector, free from beliefs about what its leaders should look like or where they should come from

Divya Shah was 14 years old when she was inappropriately touched by a stranger on a bus while travelling back from school in Maharashtra, India. She could not explain the incident to her parents - she just didn't have the vocabulary. But today she has all the right words for adolescents in challenging situations.

She has educated 12,000 Indian teenagers about sexual and mental health through ThatMate, a start-up she co-founded with Madhavi Jadhav. The women are part of a global surge in female social entrepreneurs: people who start up enterprises that tackle social and environmental problems.

An estimated 45 pc of the world's social entrepreneurs are female, according to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, a research project.

This is strikingly more gender-balanced than other types of leadership. In worldwide politics, one in four national parliamentarians are women. Women hold only 29 pc of senior management

positions in global businesses.

Sure, the Fortune 500, comprised of the largest companies in the United States, has more female chief executives than ever before. But do not get too excited because these women still represent less than 7 pc of the total.

The not-for-profit sector is not much better. In Britain almost 70 pc of the chief executives of the largest charities are - you guessed it - men.

The reverse is true among the leaders we support at the School for Social Entrepreneurs: two-thirds are female in Britain and Northern Ireland and we help many more in Canada and India.

So why are there more women leaders in social entrepreneur-

ship than in other fields, proportionally speaking?

You might speculate that it is because social enterprise is driven by compassion rather than bald capitalism. Social entrepreneurs want to make profit but they reinvest it to tackle a social issue. Women are the more caring and nurturing gender - or so the stereotype goes.

Frankly, I have always found it reductionist and ridiculous to suggest half the world's population share a personality.

But it is probably fair to say that women are vulnerable to a broader spectrum of social injustices than men. One in five women and girls has experienced physical and/or sexual violence

by a partner within the past year. The World Economic Forum reckons global gender parity is still a century away.

So if you are a woman determined to fight injustice, how do you go about creating change? It can be difficult to reach positions of influence in politics, business and large charities. Entrepreneurship offers a pathway with low barriers to entry.

You do not need to be elected or selected by other people. You do not need to win the approval of men. You can simply start up a project, right here and now.

Being a social entrepreneur requires a deep understanding of the issue you are tackling. First-hand experience of injustice is an

asset. It legitimises your role as a change-maker. It can prompt you to devise solutions that might not fly in other sectors.

Take Canine Perspective, a social enterprise that brings survivors of sexual violence together with rescue dogs, founded by Marie Yates. Exploring the dogs' stories enables discussions about how to approach surviving and recovery.

A survivor herself, Marie had found solace in her rescue dog Reggie, so she knew the approach would work. The social enterprise subsidises the programme with profits from dog-training lessons and products.

It is hard to imagine an idea like this being cooked up as part

of a master of business degree or being funded by venture capitalists. But Marie did not need affirmation from any establishment to proceed.

Social entrepreneurship is a nascent sector. It is free from beliefs about what its leaders should look like or where they should come from. It does not have behavioural codes. It is not suffering with the hangover of institutional sexism, from a recent past drunk on masculinity.

It is not so much that social enterprise is especially fertile ground for women to succeed. It is that other sectors, having largely been engineered by men, are often exclusionary to people of other genders.



# Women around the world should join forces in making International Women's Day more than 'Hallmark holiday'

By Regan Ralph

IF ever there were a year to remember and reclaim the roots of International Women's Day, 2020 is it. Around the world, authoritarian strongmen are rejecting years of progress to trample on women's rights.

In the United States, the vaunted "pink wave" of women in government still makes up less than a quarter of Congress and abortion rights are on the chopping block - again.

Yet few Americans observe International Women's Day and even fewer remember why it began. International Women's Day was born out of protests by working-class women in the United States in the early twentieth century. Then, as now, women everywhere understood the meaning of mistreatment and inequality. Tired of poor working conditions, sexual harassment, and unequal pay - sound familiar? - the protests spread across Europe.

But in the United States, the galvanizing nature of women's day ebbed as quickly as it spread. The outbreak of two world wars diminished the spirit of international solidarity and the Cold War drove a wedge between women on either side of the ideological divide. When Representative Maxine Waters introduced legislation to make March 8 a national holiday in 1994, the bill never left committee.

Instead, commercial culture has subsumed International Women's Day. Corporations cash in on social media kudos - touting dubious feminist credentials - while brands hawk deals on chocolate, makeup, and flowers. Like Valentine's Day or Mother's Day, March 8 is booming business for marketing managers, and social media feeds overflow with emojis, sponsored content, and empty platitudes.

Elsewhere, however, the revolutionary spirit lives on. As a lifelong advocate for women, I am inspired, every year, by the radical ways women mark International Women's Day across the globe.

In Mexico, where ten women are killed every day, activists clad in symbolic green bandanas are taking to the streets to demand change. They have called for women to strike on March 9, making International Women's Day the prelude to a Day Without Women - a powerful display of protest with tremendous economic consequences.

In India, although International Women's Day is widely celebrated, the country's female labor force participation rate is among the lowest in the world. Activists mark March 8 with demonstrations of solidarity with women workers. In Jaipur, for example, members of the Rajasthan Mahila Kamgaar Union will gather to celebrate women's rights as workers.

# University sees partnership and research as keys to Africa's future

BLOEMFONTEIN

**P**ROFESSOR Francis Petersen, Vice Chancellor of South Africa's University of The Free State (UFS), has called for stronger relations between the higher education sector and industry in order to create South African entrepreneurial success stories during the fourth industrial revolution.

In a recent interview with AfricaLive.net, Prof Petersen highlighted the need for South Africa to adapt to new technologies, improve its entrepreneurial success rate, and foster innovation in the agribusiness sector.

The fourth industrial revolution can be defined as the impact of advances in computing, workplace automation, artificial intelligence, robotics, genetic engineering and other emerging technologies.

The impact on emerging markets will be significant, and the professor sees the role of universities as preparing economies for the future while assisting and safeguarding the current workforce.

"It is not merely about the new jobs that will be created, but also about considering those who are currently working," Petersen says.

He elaborates: "There is a need to look at the effect the fourth industrial revolution will have on them as well. Whenever I am faced with the question of what we are doing to ensure readiness, I highlight two key things that we are currently focused on. One is the future world of work, and the second is the digital environment.

"Most of our research projects are driven by these two areas. Agriculture is also a key topic that is related to these two areas, whereby we centre our research on how the current digital environment can help improve our agriculture. This research can be used to inform the future world of work."

## Relationship between research and commerce

In order to inform the future world of work effectively, Prof Petersen and his university see strengthening the relationship between higher education and industry as vital.

He says: "The relationship between industry, private sector and commerce is emphasized in whatever we do. We work to ensure that the research does not end up gathering dust on library shelves, but is used to better society. As a higher education institution, we are prepared to sit at the table with other stakeholders such as the private sector and the public sector.

"All this is embedded in our vision which is translated into a strategic plan, as well as our integrated transformation plan. In a nutshell, we want to be seen as an institution that



University of the Free State Rector Prof Francis Petersen and UNUEHS Director Prof Jakob Rhyner at a past event. File photo

is a thought leader producing quality graduates and paying its dues to the cause of social justice.

"We want to make sure that the next generation of graduates that leave our institution are not self-centred and feel the need to uplift others.

"We have created what is known as the industrialisation group within our institution. The group is designed to focus on three areas - the first is an industry focus on our academic programmes which entails our students and some staff members meeting with industry officials regularly.

"This fosters an ecosystem where the relationship between academia and industry becomes easy. The establishment of fifty-five advisory boards across various schools in the university helps us cement our relationship with industry."

Building synergies the key to the future

Economic indicators show that the South African economic climate will remain challenging for the foreseeable future. The numbers are particularly damning in relation to entrepreneurship, with a small business failure rate of over 80 per cent within the first three years.

UFS prepares all students for the realities of running a small business, as Prof Petersen explains: "Our approach to tackling this is systematic. We feel that there is a need to understand what entrepreneurship and innovation is.

"All our first-year students are, therefore, exposed to a module on entrepreneurship to sensitise them. We then have programmes that absorb students that remain interested in entrepreneurship after their first year.

"These programmes see people in the industry, who have set up start-

ups, mentor our students. We also have a financial student incubator where students are exposed to modules on financial planning and business.

The incubator provides a platform for entrepreneurs that had some failed ventures, to speak to our students on where they went wrong in their businesses.

"The support we lend to start-ups is therefore mostly related to business knowledge, with our focus mainly on sharing information on the requirements and what it takes personally to start and run a business.

"One of the biggest challenges facing start-ups, especially those that deal with government, is cash flow problems. Government projects face payment delays that affect their ability to execute new projects.

"If the payment delays persist, cash flow is affected which ultimately compromises the business. We therefore, have a role to play in creating awareness of the need for capital inflow sustenance."

For South Africa and the African continent to fulfil its potential, however, Prof Petersen repeats his call for a collaborative approach and for further efforts to drive collaboration between stakeholders.

"The message I would like to send out to all stakeholders is that Africa has a bright future. This future will only be realised if stakeholders come together in a bid to build synergy," he says, adding: "The keys to our development are partnerships, collaboration, and framing our key foci for our continent. We may not get a full consensus on what we should focus on, but we can

all find common ground."

## Partnership and research opportunities available

As UFS continues to prepare South Africa for the challenges of the future, there are opportunities for both the private and public sector to form partnerships around the following critical areas of development.

Agriculture dominates the landscape of the university's home province, with the majority of its residents living in rural and farming areas. The Free State is often called the 'breadbasket' of South Africa, as it is there that more than 70 per cent of the country's grain is produced.

Over the past six decades, the university has made a crucial contribution towards establishing and maintaining this status, and it continues to explore and develop innovative farming techniques to work towards food security and the sustainable use of natural resources.

With its Agribusiness Transformation Programme, the university has joined forces with the public and private sectors, leveraging existing expertise, skills and infrastructure to develop black commercial farmers and sustainable black-owned agribusinesses in the province.

Not only are these farmers given practical exposure to the very latest developments in farming methods and technology transfer, but they are also instructed in entrepreneurial skills.

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences is widely acclaimed for its ongoing efforts towards improved food security

in Africa through the genetic improvement of staple crops.

In its Department of Plant Sciences, seeds are developed with an inherent resistance to disease as well as genetically 'built-in' higher levels of iron, zinc, provitamin A and essential amino acids.

This is all done through conventional techniques with no genetic engineering, leading to better nutritional value and the alleviation of mineral, vitamin and protein deficiencies.

Indigenous knowledge and health products

The university subscribes to the conviction that indigenous knowledge systems represent an important component of global knowledge when it comes to development issues. For instance, the Department of Pharmacology focuses specifically on integrating indigenous knowledge systems with the pharmacology of medicinal plants.

UFS is meanwhile the first and only university in South Africa to be issued and granted a research permit for cannabis and is seen as the leader in pharmacological research and product development of cannabis in Southern Africa. Research work on the use of cannabis in treating drug-resistant cancers has been widely recognised and awarded.

Researchers in Plant Sciences on the UFS Qwaqwa Campus in the Eastern Free State also contribute to the expansion of indigenous knowledge systems with their work on the antibiotic, antioxidant and antidiabetic working of local indigenous plant species.

## Fostering entrepreneurship

South Africa's economy strains under an unemployment rate of around 30 per cent. UFS supports the notion that entrepreneurship has a vital role to play in combating unemployment and preparing young job seekers for the ever-evolving world of work. Equipping students with an entrepreneurial mindset is therefore a high priority, with 'entrepreneurial thinking' one of the university's key graduate attributes.

Towards this end, the university has a unique approach in using a compulsory module to expose all its students to aspects of entrepreneurship. Students from all faculties and study fields learn about the nuts and bolts of starting a business in their respective industries, marketing their skills through online platforms, and showcasing their work by creating their own websites.

The UFS Business School has developed diverse initiatives and training programmes specifically aimed at entrepreneurial enterprises. The Centre for

Business Dynamics reaches out to the business sector, helping companies to stay competitive by bridging the gap between existing skills and those required by each industry.

The UFS Student Business Incubator provides practical impetus to students with business ideas, while initiatives such as Young Entrepreneurs and a UFS chapter of Google's Startup Grind U further stimulates entrepreneurial thinking.

Climate change research

In the light of growing global concern about climate change, the UFS Department of Soil, Crop and Climate Sciences plays an increasingly critical role in the African research endeavour in this field - through teaching and learning, academic research, and the provision of community services in the soil-plant-atmosphere continuum.

The focus is on investigating the effect of weather and climate on crops, trees, grasslands, and livestock production systems. With climate change increasingly becoming the key driver shaping agricultural systems - air, water, and heat transfers as related to biomass development - are studied in agricultural environments, including the socio-economic consequences for farmers and other decision-makers.

Agrometeorological services, such as early warnings, irrigation scheduling, microclimate manipulation, and weather forecasts, are developed to cope with a changing and increasingly variable climate.

## Technology-driven health-care training

The Faculty of Health Sciences uses the latest technology in clinical simulation and virtual reality to train specialists in various fields. Students can be exposed to a whole range of simulated medical emergencies, with the huge advantage of improving patient safety and reducing complications and mortality rates.

This technology enables training surgeons to practise complicated medical procedures as often as needed and offers far greater precision in assessing students' practical work.

The Cardiac Simulation laboratory, which is situated in the Faculty of Health Sciences on the Bloemfontein Campus, is the only one of its kind in Africa. It forms part of the university's cardiothoracic programme, which is designed to become a training hub for the whole of Southern Africa, combining distance learning with an on-site high-fidelity simulation and assessment centre.

• Agencies

# Poor in the midst of plenty: Natural resource dilemma in West Africa

SIERRA LEONE

**T**HERE is little doubt the West African sub-region is endowed with abundant natural resources. The region is home to some of the best and largest deposit of gold, bauxite, rutile, diamond, timber, oil and gas, iron ore, uranium, coal and rivers. It hosts the Upper Guinea Forest [the Lungs of West and North Africa], with a massive green fortress protecting the region from being overtaken by the Sahara Desert. Then factor in the rich marine resources including, eye-popping lobsters, shrimps, crabs, fish in its oceans and the quixotic and scenic beaches, a tourist paradise of sort. These are the many alluring resources to behold in the milieu in focus.

This rich and sprawling natural endowment has always been an attraction and destination of some of the biggest corporations from around the world. There is paradox in the fact that the people and countries in the region are among some of the poorest and least developed in the world. How unfortunate that 'resource curse' ascription remains an ignominious tag on the region.

Bad governance and corruption eas-

ily come to mind when lamenting the woes of the people, but one should consider for a moment how multinational corporations, from countries that profess to champion rights, accountability, anti-corruption and justice, have been running to the region exploiting natural resources with no human face in the name of foreign direct investment.

There is a maxim that 'one who aids and abets a theft is equally a thief.' No wonder trillions are siphoned off the region in illicit flows from poor destitute communities to rich capitals in the West, joined recently by China, India and others.

"Being that it is the government that is inviting them (the multinational companies), they are sure of receiving protection. But we want these multinational companies to be accountable while tapping out our natural resources..." said the Board Chairman of the Sierra Leone Network on the Right to Food (SiLNoRF), Raymond Senesie.

Yes, governments in the region need investments to boost their economies and create jobs for their struggling people, so it goes without saying that the people had to survive at the mercy of their governments' pursuit of foreign investments regardless of the consequences for human rights and the en-

vironment.

Various accounts show how foreign companies, with the backing of their host and home governments, violate local community rights with impunity. Poor people suffer forceful displacement, denial of their livelihoods and destruction of their properties.

Saa Pascal Tenguiano, Guinean lawyer and Executive Director for the Center for Commerce and International Development (CECIDE) said "The scale and impact of the environmental degradation and abuses perpetrated by these companies, coupled with their failure to honor social corporate responsibilities to affected communities, make it hard to resist the feeling that, like their host and home governments, these concessionaires must be made to account."

Attorney Alfred Lahai Brownell, Sr. is the Founder and Lead Campaigner for Green Advocates International, the 2019 Goldman Prize [sometime referred to as the Green Nobel] Winner. He's all too aware that "communities in concession areas experience a range of negative impacts from the de-

struction of farmlands, to pollution of water sources, desecration of sacred sites and burial grounds and inadequate compensation for uprooting them from their livelihoods." He thinks by bringing vulnerable communities together in the Mano River Union Civil Society Natural Resources Rights and Governance Platform (MRU-CSO Platform), "there would be collective actions in brining much needed justice, accountability and relief to the suffering masses across the region who are most affected by multinational corporations - grabbing their land and destroying their habitats with impunity." Adding, "Governments in West Africa cannot and must not outsource their responsibilities to protect the rights of their citizens and the environment. It is time to ACT".

Alfred Brownell is one of four activists behind the formation of the MRU CSO Platform. The others are Abu Brima, Executive Director of the Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD), Sierra Leone; Michel Yoboue, Executive Director, Group for Research and Advocacy on Extractive Industries (GRPIE), Côte d'Ivoire and Kabinet

Sesay, then Executive Director, Center for Commerce and International Development (CECIDE), Guinea.

The idea was conceived in September 2012 at a meeting of civil society activists in Monrovia, organized by Green Advocates International (Liberia), to research and publish natural resource rights and governance profiles of countries in the Mano River Union (MRU) basin. The parties agreed in a communiqué to use the findings to design advocacy campaigns to ensure that land and natural resource laws and regulations are people friendly and that governments and corporations in the region will be held accountable to their obligations to protect, respect and fulfill rights.

Michel Yoboue, Executive Director, Group for Research and Advocacy on Extractive Industries (GRPIE), of Côte d'Ivoire could not hold back his enthusiasm about the achievement of forming a body that would fight to amplify the plight of the neglected and abused people in the region. He believes nothing works better in a democracy than the rule of law.

That is why they resolved to use existing judicial and non-judicial mechanisms at the local, national and regional levels to promote corporate and government accountability. "This is simply victory for human rights," said Michel.

The network has since grown beyond the (four countries) MRU (i.e. Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire) to include five other countries across West Africa, (comprising of Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Niger). The potential of the remainder of the other West Africa countries joining is evident.

Among other things, the MRU CSO Platform is committed to strengthening collaboration around corporate and governmental accountability, undertaking solidarity actions and sharing experiences on how community dwellers and their livelihoods are being affected by government's infrastructure development and foreign direct investment involving (large-scale mining, oil and gas, forestry and agricultural) companies and their host and home governments.

Agencies

## BUSINESS

## CENSURE

## Industries association wants MultiChoice prosecuted over DTV

JOHANNESBURG

Industry body, the National Association for Manufacturers in Electronic Components (NAMEC), has launched a scathing attack on MultiChoice over accusations levelled against the company by former communications minister Yunus Carrim at the state capture inquiry.

Last month, Carrim dropped a bombshell at the Zondo Commission State Capture Inquiry, accusing the giant pay-TV operator of leading a sustained campaign in ensuring the digital terrestrial television (DTT) policy in relation to set-top boxes collapsed.

The former minister alleged the continental pay-TV operator bullied state broadcaster SABC into adopting a policy position which strengthened MultiChoice's monopoly on broadcasting in SA. Carrim told the Zondo Commission that the bone of contention was the government's insistence on removing encryption on MultiChoice as part of digital migration to open up competition. He alleged this was something Naspers group chairman Koos Bekker did not agree with, leading to a standoff between Carrim and MultiChoice.

Baseless accusations  
However, MultiChoice strongly rejected the allegations, saying an unencrypted set-top box option has multiple benefits for South African television viewers. Joe Heshu, MultiChoice group executive for corporate affairs, told ITWeb: "MultiChoice has noted that Yunus Carrim confirmed under oath in his submission to the Zondo Commission of Inquiry today that he cannot attest to having personal knowledge of any fraud or corruption in respect of the SABC/MultiChoice agreement.

"Carrim's allegations concerning MultiChoice and some of its officials are baseless. MultiChoice and its officials deny these allegations. We have informed the Zondo Commission that we will respond to the allegations made against us in due course and reserve all of our rights."

In a statement, NAMEC says it is neither shocked nor surprised by the revelations that MultiChoice was involved

in the capture of the state. The industry body says when giving testimony at the Zondo Commission, Carrim stated that MultiChoice executives and its parent company (Naspers) chairman bullied SABC to violate government policy of encryption of set-top-boxes in favour of non-encryption.

"NAMEC finds the revelations extremely disturbing as it confirms our long-held suspicion that sinister forces were at play to stall the digital migration process to benefit themselves by further entrenching their monopoly in the digital television market and anyone including NAMEC that stood in their way will be corrupted, at best or decimated, at worst," says Aubrey Tsaoane, NAMEC's acting secretary general.

"We find MultiChoice (illegal) actions unpardonable and call on the law enforcement agencies and Zondo Commission to thoroughly investigate and bring to book all those implicate[d]. It cannot be that people conspire to subvert the state and bring harm to emerging companies particularly and our country's economy and they go scot-free as this will cement a culture of impunity."

Tsaoane adds: "As a country, we have missed not only the International Telecommunication Union deadline for digital migration of 2015 but also our self-imposed deadline of June 2019. "We are also running a risk of missing the July 2020 deadline if urgent steps are not taken to accelerate digital migration. It is common cause that the stalling of the migration process has led to our country not benefiting from the developments in the information and communications technologies space."

Financial ramifications  
Tsaoane points out that opportunities abounding due to the advent of the fourth industrial revolution have also not being adequately seized as the country is lagging far behind, all thanks to the shenanigans of MultiChoice and those who assisted them. "There has to be accountability for the destruction to our economy and subversion of our state by Naspers, MultiChoice and their co-conspirators," Tsaoane continues.

also recorded a 47% increase in impairment charges to R300 million. The bank's residential mortgage book saw its credit loss ratio increase to 22 basis points as NPLs increased by 12%. FNB commercial NPLs increased by 47% while the group's UK business, Aldermore saw NPLs increase 51%.

"Looking forward to the second half of the year, the group is of the view that the South African macroeconomic environment will continue to deteriorate, probably at a faster rate than in the first half," said the group in a statement published on the Stock Exchange News Service (Sens).

The group said as the coronavirus outbreak is expected to result in supply chain disruptions, while the weak economy will leave consumers with less disposable income and job losses, companies will be under pressure.

"FirstRand has already experienced a material slowdown in its domestic business since the beginning of 2020. Given the expected pressures on top line the group appreciates the need for ongoing cost efficiencies, balanced with continued investment in sustainable growth strategies," read FirstRand's statement.

## SUPPORT

## France backs Tanzania's efforts in organic farming with 4.2bn/- grant



Organic farmers undergoing field training in Morogoro.

By Francis Kajubi

IN support of local farmers efforts to adopt organic farming, France has given a grant of euro 1.666 million (over 4.239bn/-) to organic agriculture projects to reach commercial levels.

Speaking at the launch of the project in Zanzibar earlier this week, French Ambassador to Tanzania, Frederic Clavier said that Tanzanian farmers have responded positively in adapting organic agriculture hence his government's decision to finance such projects.

"In the region, Tanzania and Uganda are making a good progress in adaptation of organic agriculture and we the French people are proud of such progress and eager to continue financing the agriculture sector in the two countries" said Clavier.

He said France has a lot of confidence in the country's farmers in the East African region because they have shown interest in the uptake of ecological organic agriculture hence convinced its development agency AFD to finance Tanzania and Uganda in East Africa and Morocco in North Africa under Institutional Innovations for Ecological Organic Agriculture in Africa (IIABA) project.

The IIABA project is coordinated by the African Organic Network (AfrONet) and will benefit a total of 300,000 organic and non-organic farmers from the three countries. The project will last three years and six months.

"But for further support of organic agriculture in Zanzibar, the AFD has set aside another US\$15 million (over 3.6bn/-) to empower smallholder spice farmers," Clavier added. He called on upon farmers to use the opportunity

effectively especially by forming groups to access funding easily which is separate from IIABA project.

AfrONet Program's acting Executive Director, Moses Aisu said that AFD has already disbursed euro 1.498 million (3.810bn/-) which will benefit an estimated 100,000 farmers, businessmen and processors engaged in organic agriculture.

Aisu said organic and non-organic farmers from Pemba, Unguja, Dodoma, Ruvuma and Coast regions will get exposed to new networks of production and sourcing of organic inputs through participatory and farmer-led research on farms.

"Both organic and non-organic farmers are a target. For non-organic ones the project will focus at convincing them on why they should venture into organic agriculture," he noted.

"We expect to increase the farmers' engaging in organic agriculture by 5 percent as of the end of the project period. Farmers who will benefit are those cultivating spices, avocado, vegetable and sunflower cultivation," Aisu added while noting that Dar has been allocated 775.2m/-.

The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in its 2019 survey states that global organic market peaked 92.1 billion euros by February 2019 with 69.8 million hectares worldwide of which Africa has only 2.1 million hectares.

According to the survey, Tanzania and Uganda are the only countries from the EAC region with the largest number of organic producers in the world. Uganda which is on second position of the global list has 210,352 farmers behind India with 835,000 farmers. Tanzania is the sixth with 148,610 producers.

## SANCTIONS

## Two firms contracted to supply iron to SGR, Julius Nyerere HEP liquidated for defaulting

By Guardian Reporter

TWO local firms which were given contracts to supply galvanised iron to Standard Gauge Railways and Julius Nyerere Hydro Electric Power Project in Rufiji have been liquidated by TIB Bank for defaulting on a 7bn/- loan.

The two companies, Automech Tanzania Limited and Reliance Industries Limited had their property auctioned earlier this year hence causing disruption of the materials but Tanzania Railways Limited CEO, Masanja Kadogosa said the collapsed firms have not affected the SGR project.

"We had contingency plans in place to offset such incidences of failure because we expected something like this," Kadogosa told Minister for Communication Works and Transport, Engineer Isack Kamwelwe.

Kadogosa said the local companies were deliberately picked to participate in the two mega projects as part of state efforts to build local capacity. On his part, Minister Kamwelwe said as part of efforts to build local capacity, Turkish contractor, Yapi Merkezi was directed to use local suppliers and subcontractors for some works.

Engineer Kamwelwe commended Kadogosa for seeking an alternative solution to ensure that construction works are not interrupted. "I am making a close follow up on the project although we as government understand that the project's main contractor is Yapi Merkezi who should it is completed timely," he said.

The Comworks Minister stressed that some works were locally outsourced to ensure that local contractors and suppliers also have a slice of the mega projects funding which is mostly taxpayers' money.

Updating Eng Kamwelwe on the project's progress, Yapi Merkezi's Site Engineer, Alper Cam said that they outsourced the galvanised iron products suppliers locally but the collapse of the two companies meant that part



Part of SGR project currently under construction by Turkish contractor, Yapi Merkezi.

of the construction work be stopped for the past three weeks.

"As a result we had to import some of the galvanised iron products to ensure that the project goes on as planned be-

cause local sourcing would need at least two months to get," Engineer Cam said while stressing that galvanised iron is an important part of the project's materials.

"Our supplier for the product was Automech which had its assets auctioned by the bank. We hope that the government will intervene to find a solution to this problem," he added.

## As FNB is hit by a big increase in bad debts, FirstRand warns against slowdown in S.Africa

JOHANNESBURG

The country's largest banking group by market capitalisation says it has experienced "a material slowdown" in its South African operations since the beginning of 2020.

FirstRand [JSE:FSR], which is the parent company of First National Bank, Wesbank and Rand Merchant Bank, released its interim financial results showing that its businesses collectively grew normalised earnings by 5% in the six months to December.

FNB South Africa, which is the biggest contributor to the group's profits grew its earnings by 5%. The bank gained more customers who deposited more money with the bank and increased its transactional volumes. However, this growth came with a R910 million increase in the bank's credit impairment charge. The group said FNB card impairments increased by 77% to R270 million as advances grew by 21%.

Non-performing loans (NPLs) in card business increased by a 84%. FirstRand said it expects ongoing elevated NPLs in the card business during the rest of the 2020 financial year. FNB's personal loans business

FAREWELL

# ROAM chief showers praise on outgoing BrighterMonday CEO

By Guardian Reporter

**O**UTGOING BrighterMonday Tanzania CEO, Mili Rughani who leaves the company next week has been described as outstanding manager who built the company's solid foundation for the future.

ROAM Africa CEO, Clemens Weitz said in Dar es Salaam earlier this week that Rughani who has been CEO for BrighterMonday and Zoom Tanzania since 2016, leaves behind a legacy of hard work and competence.

"The company is humbled by Mili's 3.5 years of service and leadership," said Weitz adding that, "She has built a strong foundation for the future growth of the organization, including strengthening our team, evolving our products and our marketing, improving our operations and growing our brand into a powerhouse for human resources consulting for the period."

BrighterMonday is an online recruitment space in Tanzania and East Africa and has since 2006 belonged to the ROAM Africa group.

ROAM Africa's chief further noted that during her tenure Rughani created a path that will enable the new CEO, Reshma Bharmal-Shariff to continue

moving the business and iconic brand forward. "With Reshma we have an accomplished and proven leader at the helm. We wish her best of success in taking the businesses to the next level," Weitz added.

In her farewell remarks, Rughani said she is overwhelmed by the cooperation given to her by colleagues but felt comfortable to leave Zoom and BrighterMonday Tanzania in even better hands of Shariff.

"It is such an incredible feeling and honour to experience brands that you nurtured establish themselves as industry giants. I will remain close to the company and have full confidence in the team to continue to spearhead Tanzania's market needs," she promised.

BrighterMonday is an online recruitment space in Tanzania since 2006 with more than 2 million registered professionals and over 50,000 employers. The new CEO has joined the ROAM group and will take over as Zoom and BrighterMonday Tanzania chief.

"I thank Mili for the extraordinary work she has done in building remarkable brands and I must say I have great shoes to fill," she said. Zoom Tanzania is one of the country's largest online classified platform that conveniently connects buyers and sellers since 2009.



ROAM Africa CEO Clemens Weitz (C) in a souvenir photo with outgoing BrighterMonday and Zoom Tanzania CEO Mili Rughani (R) and her successor, Reshma Bharmal-Shariff, in Dar es Salaam earlier this week. Photo: Guardian Photographer

ADJUSTMENTS

## Emirates introduces waiver policy to accommodate COVID-19 impact

By Guardian Reporter

Emirates is providing customers more flexibility, choice and value through its newly introduced waiver policy for all booked tickets issued since last Saturday until end of this month.

In a statement, the Dubai based carrier said the move will allow customers across its network the choice of changing their travel dates without change and reissuance fees. The move provides Emirates' customers with peace of mind should they decide to change their travel plans due to the evolving COVID-19 situation, the airline stated.

Customers can change their booking to any date for travel within an 11 month date range in the same booking class without change penalties. Difference in fare, if applicable applies. The policy covers all existing destinations across the Emirates network.

"We want our customers to feel fully supported, comfortable and confident when making travel plans, while offering them the best fares, without incurring change fees should they decide



Emirates' Chief Commercial Officer, Adnan Kazim.

to delay or adjust dates," said Emirates' Chief Commercial Officer, Adnan Kazim.

"The situation remains dynamic and we will continue to look at ways to provide flexibility, convenience and peace of mind for our customers," Kazim added while noting that Emirates Skywards will also be providing more flexibility to its members who have been impacted by the outbreak of the coronavirus through imposed travel restrictions and flight reductions.

Skywards Platinum, Gold and Silver members can maintain their current status by fulfilling 80 percent of their tier travel requirements between 31 March and 30 June 2020. In addition, Skywards members booked to travel between 1 March and 30 June 2020 will be able to benefit from an additional 20 percent bonus Tier Miles, the statement said.

For additional peace of mind, Emirates is also taking its aircraft cleaning process to the next level through additional precautionary measures of implementing enhanced disinfecting procedures after flights from destinations most affected by COVID-19, the airline noted.

RESTRICTIONS

## Government to announce new rules for Uber and Bolt

CAPE TOWN

Government plans new rules to regulate regulations to hailing services such as Uber and Bolt, Minister of Transport Fikile Mbalula confirmed on Monday morning.

With the rise of Uber, government has, on occasion, expressed a need for intervention and more clarity regulating the business' operations. However, the regulations first touted in 2017 have not been forthcoming until now.

According to a tweet posted by the transport minister on Monday, South Africa will

follow the lead of other countries that have started regulating Uber and other players in the sector. Mentioning existing National Land Transport Act of 2009, which was in the process of being amended, Mbalula said the new regulations would soon fill the gap that existed when controlling ride hailing services and their operations in South Africa.

Mbalula was also foreshadowing a briefing on the amendments, set to take place in Cape Town on Tuesday morning. Late last year, Uber lost its licence to operate in London, England, after concerns of substandard

safety standards.

Last month, the Competition Commission released a report about the metered taxi industry, proposing an overhaul of the taxi licencing and fare regime in South Africa, which it thinks will increase competition.

The commission found that metered taxis are subject to area restrictions, while the e-hailing services operate anywhere. For instance, taxi operators may be limited to one municipality, while e-hailing drivers in Gauteng can operate between the Tshwane, Johannesburg, and Ekurhuleni regions.

The commission wanted all area restrictions to be lifted, so that once a taxi service is licensed, it can operate anywhere in the country. Metered taxis argue that Uber's prices are too low and threaten their survival. The commission found that Uber is much cheaper than metered taxis - which on shorter routes can cost up to 250% more in Gauteng.

It detailed criticisms of Uber's operations in South Africa, including allegations that some of its drivers may now be earning less than the minimum wage, as their incomes continue to fall. The



SA Transport Minister, Fikile Mbalula.

CONFRONTATION

## Telkom Kenya fights EACC in court over assets sale freeze

NAIROBI

Telkom Kenya is seeking court orders to stop the anti-graft agency from interfering with any of its properties ahead of the firm's merger with Airtel. In a suit filed at the High Court, the telco has sued the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) on claims that the agency is demanding a list of its properties.

Telkom Kenya reckons that it is a private entity with no public assets, which fall within the category of properties that the EACC is mandated to investigate in line with Chapter six of the Constitution. The anti-graft agency wants Telkom Kenya to recall any recent sale of its properties and suspend further sales pending the inquiry, which has been ongoing for more than five years.

The EACC wants to investigate whether there was the misappropriation of public funds and properties during Telkom Kenya's privatisation and when the firm restructured its balance sheet. Telkom was privatised in 2007 when French telecoms operator Orange bought a majority stake, which was subsequently sold to Helios in 2015.

Through lawyer George Oraro, Telkom says the February 26 directive by the EACC to freeze any sale of assets is "draconian and unreasonable." Telkom now wants the EACC barred from restricting, limiting or otherwise interfering with its property as well as accessing a list of its properties and recalling or suspending any of them pending the conclusion of ongoing investigations.

It argues that allowing the EACC wishes to stand will adversely affect its ability to fund recurrent expenses and operate its businesses, putting it at risk of running into irreparable losses. "The said directive contravenes Telkom's right to property, fair administrative action, access to justice and fair trial," said Mr Oraro.

The telco claims it had received clearance from Parliament's Public Investment Committee through an April 2014 report, which did not recommend any scrutiny with regards to misappropriation of assets before and after its privatisation. It adds that the EACC wrote to them on October 7, 2015, requesting various documents without indicating the nature of their investigations.

The agency had earlier suspended a planned merger of Telkom Kenya and Airtel Kenya pending an inquiry into the use of funds and properties at Telkom. But Telkom has already received regulatory approval to merge with Airtel Kenya, even though the two entities are protesting the merger conditions.

RESTRICTION

# Wave of panic buying sees British supermarkets impose shopping limits on basic items

LONDON

British superstores and retail centres are facing restrictions after a surge in demand for home necessities amid fears of disruption to supply chains as consumers begin stockpiling over coronavirus fears.

The nation's largest supermarket chain, Tesco, has introduced rationing on a number of products including dry pasta, UHT milk and some tinned vegetables, as a rush on hand sanitiser gels and other non-perishable products has left shelves empty.

Other chains followed suit on Monday, with some placing limits on online purchases while high-street retailers Boots and Superdrug limited hand gel sales in their shops to two per customer. The British Retail Consortium (BRC) said it was working with the government to protect consumers and ease strains on supply chains.

The BRC's chief executive, Helen Dickinson OBE, told The National the association had given the government "a list of regulations where relaxation would ease pressure in the supply chain, including extending drivers' hours and giving flexibility on delivery times to stores."

Online retailers and marketplaces operating in the UK have also moved to protect consumers from profiteers after the



A shopper picking items from shelves at a supermarket in London.

Competition and Markets Authority warned suppliers to act responsibly and said it was monitoring prices. Facebook is temporarily banning adverts and listings for medical masks. The social media giant had already announced a ban on adverts for hygiene products claimed to be in short supply.

"We're monitoring Covid-19 closely and will make necessary updates to our policies if we see people trying to exploit this public health emergency," Facebook's director of product management, Rob Leathern, said. Stockpiling and panic buying have

been fuelled in part by recommendations last week by health authorities for Britons to "plan ahead" in case they are forced to self-isolate for several weeks.

But the country's chief scientific adviser Patrick Vallance said he believed there was "absolutely no reason" for the public to panic buy. An emergency meeting of the UK's Cobra committee was held on Monday as experts predicted Wednesday's budget will be influenced by the impact of the virus.

The decision means the UK remains in the first "containment" phase of the government's plan to tackle

the spread of the virus. Ms Dickinson said retailers are facing "a rise in demand for certain products

unprecedented outside of the Christmas period."

But the BRC chief sought to ally consumer fears

surrounding shortages: "Our members are working hard to ensure consumers have access to the products they need. "Even where there are challenges, retailers are well-versed in providing effective measures to keep retail sites running smoothly, and they are working with suppliers to increase the supply of goods," she said.

The BRC said it was too early to predict what the impact of coronavirus will be on sales but has warned "if disruption to supply chains continues and spreads, then retailers and consumers may eventually see knock on effects on cost or availability of goods."

The group said it could foresee an impact to sales in the luxury sector due to the decline in Chinese tourists: "Restrictions on travel to and from China may well have an impact in the short to medium term for fashion and luxury goods retailers, as will the slowing of China's

economy a result of imposed quarantine zones."

The UK's Chancellor Rishi Sunak's first budget is expected to announce extra funding for efforts to combat the virus including help for the NHS and temporary support for small businesses, such as retailers hit by a drop-off in demand. On Sunday he told the BBC the government was looking at "a range of scenarios" and making sure it was well prepared for all of them.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies said concerns over coronavirus will be at the centre of this week's budget and has warned there will be negative impacts on the economy as a result of the outbreak. "The key focus of an economic policy response should be to ensure continued delivery of public services and to minimise the long-term effects of what will hopefully be a short-term increase in levels of illness," it said.

"There are likely to be negative effects on both the demand side and the supply side of the economy. This could be substantial but hopefully short-lived." But the sight of empty shelves in supermarkets across the country has raised lingering fears of continued shortages, as cases of the virus continue to grow. The UK's Food and Drink Federation (FDF) said it was working with the government to counter the disruption.

The FDF's chief executive, Ian Wright CBE, told The National: "The FDF is in regular dialogue with the government and its agencies on how the food and drink industry should react to the spread of Covid-19." "At this stage supply chains have experienced disruption but there is no evidence of significant disruption to food supplies. UK food and drink manufacturers have robust procedures in place."



**ISIDINGO** MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

MONDAY 09 March	WEDNESDAY 11 March	FRIDAY 13 March	TUESDAY 10 March	THURSDAY 12 March	SATURDAY 14 March	SUNDAY 15 March
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
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22:00 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost	22:00 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost	22:00 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost	22:00 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost	22:00 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost	22:00 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost	22:00 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost
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CENSURE

# Congressional panel points out Boeing has a culture of concealment, weak control

WASHINGTON

A congressional committee investigating Boeing said on Friday that a "culture of concealment" at the company and poor oversight by federal regulators contributed to two deadly crashes involving the grounded 737 Max.

The committee's Democrats said multiple factors led to the crashes, but it homed in on a new flight-control system that pushed the nose of each plane down based on faulty sensor readings. Boeing failed to classify the system as critical to safety, part of a strategy designed to avoid closer scrutiny by regulators as the company developed the plane, the House Transportation Committee said.

The report said Boeing had undue influence over the Federal Aviation Administration, and managers at the regulator rejected safety concerns raised by their own technical experts. Staffers for the committee's Democratic majority made the comments in a preliminary summary of the panel's nearly year-long investigation of Boeing's development of the Max and the FAA's decision to approve the plane.

The committee has held five hearings and disclosed troves of internal Boeing documents that highlighted company employees' safety concerns about the Max. The panel's summary did not break new ground, but it illustrated the breadth and depth of one of several investigations under way into Boeing.

Boeing spokesman Bryan Watt said the Chicago company has "co-operated extensively for the past year with the committee's investigation" and will review the preliminary report. The FAA said its certification procedures "are well-established and have consistently produced safe aircraft designs," but it welcomed the scrutiny. "We are confident that our openness to observations and recommendations will further bolster aviation safety worldwide," said FAA spokesman Lynn Lunsford.

Republicans on the Transportation Committee suggested the report by the Democratic staff had gone too far in

faulting how FAA approves new planes. Other investigations into the Max accidents and FAA's oversight of Boeing have found problems with Boeing's assumptions about pilot reaction in emergencies and the FAA's expertise in understanding complex automation in the Max.

However, "none of these expert reviews or investigations have come to the conclusion that our safety certification system is broken or in need of wholesale dismantlement", said the two top Republicans on the committee, Sam Graves of Missouri and Garret Graves of Louisiana.

The committee Democrats' report said Boeing jeopardised safety by pressuring employees to speed up production of the plane and by making incorrect assumptions about important technology, especially the flight-control system, which is called MCAS. The company concealed key information from the FAA and didn't tell pilots about MCAS until after the first crash.

The House committee, led by Representative Peter DeFazio, said it is still conducting interviews and reviewing records as part of its investigation. The committee said it is considering legislation to improve FAA oversight of new aircraft.

That legislation is expected to focus on the FAA's policy of deputising some employees at Boeing and other manufacturers to conduct safety-related analysis and testing. FAA officials have defended that decades-long policy, saying it has produced safe aircraft. They point out that there have been no fatal crashes involving US airline planes since 2009, an unprecedented safety streak.

The FAA certified the Max in 2017, and airlines began using it later that year. A Max jet operated by Indonesia's Lion Air crashed in October 2018, and another flown by Ethiopian Airlines crashed five months later, in March 2019. Regulators around the world grounded the plane days after the second crash. Boeing hopes to win approval of changes it is making to the plane around mid-year. Families of passengers who died in the second crash will gather Tuesday in Ethiopia at a memorial service to mark the anniversary.

## WORLD

# WHO chief says threat of COVID-19 pandemic very real as all EU members report cases

BRUSSELS

THE chief of the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Monday that the novel coronavirus has got a foothold in so many countries and the threat of a pandemic has become very real.

His words came as Cyprus confirmed its first two COVID-19 cases, which means all EU members have reported infection cases.

European countries have begun to upgrade their containment measures. In Italy, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte announced on Monday evening that measures to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus will be extended to the entire country in the next hours.

**"THREAT OF PANDEMIC VERY REAL"**

COVID-19 is an uneven epidemic at the global level, WHO Director-General

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at a daily briefing, reminding that different countries are in different scenarios, requiring a tailored response.

It would be the first pandemic in history that could be controlled, the WHO head also noted. He called on all countries to take a comprehensive blended strategy for controlling their epidemics and pushing this virus back.

Tedros also said of the around 80,000 reported cases of COVID-19 in China, more than 70 percent have recovered and been discharged. Among the countries with the most cases, China is bringing its epidemic under control.

He stressed that the transmission of coronavirus can be slowed down and infections can be prevented through decisive and early actions.

"Countries that continue finding and testing cases and tracing their contacts



WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

not only protect their own people, they can also affect what happens in other countries and globally," said Tedros.

## INFECTIONS KEEP RISING IN EUROPE

The Italian authorities said Monday the number of people who tested positive for the new coronavirus reached 7,985, an increase of 1,598 new infections compared to the previous day, and did not include recoveries or fatalities.

Considering all data (including deaths and recoveries), the number of assessed coronavirus cases in the country was 9,172.

Also on Monday, Germany confirmed the first two deaths from COVID-19, both in the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), German local media Focus reported.

According to official data, the number of confirmed cases in Germany rose to 1,112 by Monday morning, 484 of which are in NRW.

In France, 1,412 cases of coronavirus infection have been confirmed and 25 patients have died,

Director-General of Health Jerome Salomon announced on Monday evening.

Both Spain and Denmark eyewitnessed rapid growth in confirmed cases on Monday. The number of confirmed cases in Spain rose from just under 600 on Sunday to over 1,000, with the death toll increasing from 10 to 26.

Denmark saw its total number of COVID-19 infections rise to 90 by Monday afternoon, a sharp increase from Sunday's 35, according to an update on the website of the National Board of Health on Monday evening.

The virus has affected some international organizations. The Brussels-based North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) confirmed a case of coronavirus infection in its headquarters on Monday morning. The staff member is currently at home in self-isolation.

## NEW MEASURES TO STEM SPREAD

European countries have stepped up efforts and put in place new containment measures to contain the spread of COVID-19.

In France, all gatherings of more than 1,000 people are now prohibited across French cities. Only events considered "useful to the life of the nation" will be maintained.

The new measures also included a decree making telemedicine more flexible and available to the public. In addition, hospitals would trigger the "white plan" of extra mobilization systems to cope with the additional influx of patients linked to the coronavirus. It allows to reinforce additional nursing and administrative staff, offer more beds and limit patient visits.

In Spain's autonomous community of Madrid, schools and universities will be closed for 14 days starting from Wednesday, the region's president Isabel Diaz Ayuso confirmed.

Romania also unveiled similar plans. The country's interim Prime Minister Ludovic Orban announced that all primary and secondary schools, as well as kindergartens across the country, will be closed on March 11-22.

Xinhua

# Potential treatments to defeat novel coronavirus

BEIJING

CHINA has released the seventh version of the diagnosis and treatment guideline on the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Here are some drugs and therapies that have been recommended by the guideline, and some drugs that have been found to have the potential to defeat the virus and have entered clinical trials.

## -- CHLOROQUINE PHOSPHATE

Chloroquine Phosphate, a widely used anti-malaria and autoimmune disease drug, has been used for more than 70 years. The drug has been used in treating 285 critically ill COVID-19 patients in a hospital in Wuhan, and no obvious adverse reactions have been found so far. In the latest version of the treatment guideline, Chloroquine Phosphate is recommended for COVID-19 patients from 18 to 65. The amount for patients over 50 kg is 500 mg per dose twice a day for seven days. The guideline also noted that patients should take less than three antiviral drugs.

## -- TOCILIZUMAB

Tocilizumab, with the common brand name Actemra, is an injectable synthetic protein that blocks the effects of IL-6 in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. IL-6 is a protein that the body produces when there is inflammation.

The latest version of the guideline suggests the use of Tocilizumab in patients with an increasing level of IL-6 and with extensive lesions in both lungs or severe symptoms. Chinese researchers have found that a cause of death for severe and critically ill patients infected with the novel coronavirus is cytokine storm, an overreaction of the immune system. These patients are found with a higher level of IL-6 in their blood. Last month, the increasing level of IL-6 was recommended as a warning sign that the patient's situation could possibly deteriorate. Currently, the drug is under clinical trials in 14 hospitals in Wuhan and a total of 272 severe patients had been treated with Tocilizumab as of March 5.

## -- CONVALESCENT PLASMA

Convalescent plasma, processed from the plasma collected from recovered COVID-19 patients, contains a large number of protective antibodies. As of Feb. 28, 245 COVID-19 patients have received the therapy and 91 cases have shown improvement in clinical indicators and symptoms. According to health authorities, plasma therapy has proved safe and effective.

## -- TCM

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has been proven effective in treating COVID-19 patients. With TCM treatment, patients with mild symptoms have seen their fever or cough alleviated, according to medical experts. For severely ill patients, TCM helped relieve symptoms and restore blood oxygen saturation, preventing the patients' conditions from developing into critically ill cases. TCM decoction Qingfei Paidu Soup has been recommended to medical institutions nationwide on Feb. 6 after data analysis on 214 cases. As of Feb. 29, the decoction is used in 66 designated hospitals in 10 provincial-level regions in China.

## -- ANTIVIRAL DRUGS UNDER TRIAL

Favipiravir, an influenza drug available on overseas markets, has been put in a parallel controlled study in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, with 80 patients enlisted. The initial outcome of the trial shows the drug has relatively obvious efficacy and low adverse reactions. Experts have suggested expanding the trial to further observe and study its effect. Remdesivir, developed against Ebola infections by American pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences, has shown fairly good antiviral activity against the novel coronavirus at the cellular level. Cao Bin, a respiratory expert who is leading the Remdesivir program, said on Wednesday that two trials for Remdesivir are going on smoothly and China will share the data with the international community after the program is completed.

## -- STEM CELL TRIAL

Clinical studies on stem cell therapy, which can inhibit the overreaction of the body's immune system, have also been carried out to treat severe patients.

As of Feb. 21, four patients who have received the therapy have been discharged from hospital, and the trial is expected to be further expanded. Currently, three kinds of stem cells - mesenchymal, lung and embryonic stem cells - are used in treatments. Researchers usually inject stem cell products into the lungs. Meanwhile, the Chinese Academy of Sciences has developed a new stem cell drug, CASstem, which has shown promising results in animal experiments. The research team has applied for urgent assessment by the National Medical Products Administration. Approvals by the ethics committee, and clinical observation and evaluation are in progress. Several research and trials on applying stem cells to treat COVID-19 patients have been carried out in the country.



A medical staff distributes traditional Chinese medicine to residents in Weinan City, northwest China's Shaanxi Province, Feb. 20, 2020. Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has been widely applied in treating the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) patients in China as it has proved effective in improving the cure rate. (Xinhua)

# What Chinese researchers discovered about COVID-19

BEIJING

CHINESE researchers have been racing against time to formulate a detailed profile of the virus since the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak. Here is a summary of the developments:

-- A research team said COVID-19 may have originated from bats. The genome sequencing of the novel coronavirus is as high as 96 percent identical with a type of coronavirus from bats, the team said, adding that the new coronavirus enters the receptor using the same cells with SARS virus.

-- The metagenome sequence of the novel coronavirus strain separated from pangolins was 99 percent identical to that from infected

people, indicating pangolins may be an intermediate host of the virus, a study led by South China Agricultural University has found.

-- The new virus is transmitted mainly through air droplets, but touching can spread the virus too, according to Chinese health authorities.

-- Renowned Chinese respiratory specialist Zhong Nanshan warned the public to keep their waste pipes unobstructed as the novel coronavirus may spread through drainage systems.

-- The novel coronavirus can be transmitted when someone was exposed to high concentrations of aerosol in a relatively closed environment for a long time, while the probability of aerosol trans-



Xie Wen from Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University conducts tests at the clinical laboratory of the Leishenshan (Thunder God Mountain) Hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, March 4, 2020. The laboratory brought together medical personnel from different hospitals and medical testing institution. Their work is to test samples collected from COVID-19 patients and provide diagnostic information for doctors. (Xinhua)

mission in a normal working and living environment is extremely low, according to Chinese health authorities.

-- Chinese researchers have found that COVID-19 patients may have no fever or CT abnormality, according to a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine Saturday.

Only 43.8 percent of the studied patients had fever when they were admitted to hospital, a contrast to 88.7 percent during hospitalization, it revealed.

The study also showed that the virus could be detected in some patients' gastrointestinal tract, saliva and urine, thus it advised that more hygiene protection be taken.

Xinhua

# Chinese farmers' livestream harvests to generate sales amid COVID-19 outbreak

FOR farmers, whose businesses are traditionally highly dependent on venues such as wholesale markets and shops with the hustling flow of customers, the ongoing closure of such gathering venues to reduce the risk of human-to-human transmission means their work resumption is not easy, thus affecting their income, which will further dampen the local poverty alleviation goals.

Farmers across the nation have spared no effort to overcome these unavoidable challenges, and livestreaming sales have emerged as one of their unique business models.

## Broken sales chain amid epidemic

Traditionally, most agricultural products in China were sold through wholesalers. The products harvested by farmers and rural cooperatives would be collected by the wholesalers, before entering peddlers' and wholesale markets.

Thereafter, it will be channeled to the wet markets and supermarkets, and finally, land on consumers' baskets. However, following the transportation and road blockades, such a long sales chain stands snapped.

The family of Wang Linfen from Chengmai county in South China's Hainan Province has been growing sweet potatoes for generations. Most of the farmers in her town make a living by growing the vegetable.

In the past, the typical vegetable with good taste and rich in nutrition always generated sufficient sales.



Hua Zhilong, a farmer from Xuwen county in Zhanjiang, South China's Guangdong Province, sells pineapples via livestreaming.

Speaking to the Global Times Wang said, the offline sales volume of the vegetables harvested in December could reach 200 tons per day during the past Spring Festivals.

However, only a bit more than 300 kilograms were the best sales on a single day this year due to the closure of the wholesale market, the most important part of the traditional circulation.

According to Wang, her family owns a piece of land with an area of over 40 mu (2.67 hectares). Each mu can usually harvest about 2,000 kilograms of sweet potatoes.

About 75 percent of sweet potatoes grown by her family in the past were collected by wholesalers from across the country, and

the rest 25 percent were sold online.

"Wholesalers have various sales channels that can help sale in big batches, so most of our sales rely on the wholesale markets, as the sales generated online targeting individual customers cannot match," Wang said.

But so far this year, almost all her income came from online sales.

Wang opened her online shops at e-commerce platforms such as Pinduoduo and Taobao three years ago.

Since the offline sales channels faced obstacles, she put more effort into online sales and started live streaming relentlessly.

At present, she spends at least two or three hours daily to promote her sweet potatoes through

livestream every afternoon.

During a livestreaming session held between February 10 and 12, she sold about 8.6 tons of sweet potatoes.

"Compared with simply selling products through online shops, the effect of livestreaming is better, since the customers can see the products with their eyes," said Wang noting as online sales and live streaming is the current trend, she wants to put greater focus on this aspect even after the epidemic ends.

## Brand awareness promoted through livestreaming

While some farmers are striving to recover their economic losses through livestreaming, others discovered new opportunities through this alternative

revenue model.

"Compared with wholesale markets, promoting the sales of fruits through livestreaming allows the customers to see the real condition of the place of production, the quality of the products, and interact with the farmers directly, which further expand influence and promote brand awareness of the local pineapples," Weng Zhiqian, an e-commerce practitioner involved in the trade, bid data and industry of pineapples from Xuwen county in Zhanjiang, South China's Guangdong Province, told the Global Times.

Xuwen is one of the nation's largest pineapple production zones. According to Weng, around 48,000 farmers in his county cultivate about 350,000 mu areas for pineapples with annual production reaching 600,000 tons.

"Hit by the epidemic, the pricing of pineapples was negatively affected a while ago, even though the quality of the pineapples harvested this year is pretty good because of the good weather," Weng said. "But following the use of e-commerce platforms, the pricing of the pineapples is picking up."

According to Weng, although local farmers have been selling their products through e-commerce platforms for years, online sales have been growing particularly fast this year due to the epidemic.

At present, the online sales volume exceeded the revenue garnered offline.

Global Times



# Biden, Sanders seen to change campaign plans amid epidemic

**WASHINGTON**

DEMOCRATIC presidential candidates Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders said on Monday they were consulting with public health experts about coronavirus risks in planning their next campaign moves, as election officials in upcoming primary states urged people to consider voting early.

Neither Sanders, a senator from Vermont, nor Biden, the former vice president, has called off a major rally because of the outbreak that has sickened more than 110,000 people and killed almost 4,000 globally, although public health officials have urged people at risk for contracting the disease to avoid large gatherings.

There have been 605 confirmed cases in the United States, with 22 deaths.

The winner of the Democratic nomination will take on Republican President Donald Trump in the Nov 3 general election. Trump has said he would not stop holding campaign rallies.

"Every organization in America is taking a hard look at what the coronavirus means for their operations, and yes, that's true of our campaign, as well," Sanders told a coronavirus roundtable in Michigan, one of six states that vote on Tuesday in the next round of the state-by-state nominating competition.

"We do not hold a rally without first conferring with local public health officials."

Biden told NBC on Monday he would consider calling off rallies if health authorities warned they were too risky.

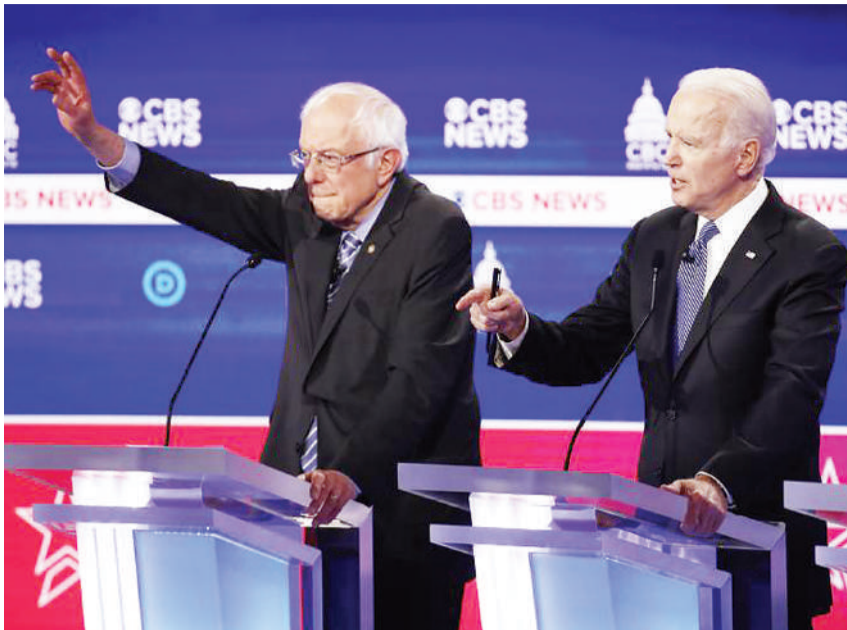
"I'm looking to the CDC for advice on that," Biden said, referring to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "We're going to follow the recommendations of the experts ... and if they conclude that there shouldn't be big indoor rallies, then we'll stop big indoor rallies."

At a rally in Detroit on Monday, Biden's campaign provided hand sanitizer to attendees and press.

A "Women for Trump" bus tour set to be led by the president's daughter-in-law, Lara Trump, was canceled on Monday, because of scheduling issues, his campaign said. The New York Times reported that sources close to the campaign said the cancellation was spurred by concerns over the coronavirus.

Several of the states holding nominating contests in coming days have adopted measures aimed at protecting voters from contracting or spreading the virus.

Florida's government urged voters to consider voting early for its March 17 Democratic presidential nominating contest, and Arizona braced for the possibility of poll workers staying



**In this Feb 25, 2020 file photo, Democratic presidential candidates Sen. Bernie Sanders (left), and former Vice President Joe Biden participate in a Democratic presidential primary debate at the Gaillard Center, in Charleston, S.C., co-hosted by CBS News and the Congressional Black Caucus Institute. (AP)**

home that day.

In Michigan, which votes on Tuesday, officials told poll workers to step up plans to sanitize voting booths and other equipment. Washington state - the hardest-hit state in the country - caught a break because its Tuesday contest is vote-by-mail.

**CANCELLATIONS**

Fears of the spread of the virus

have led officials to cancel events and conferences across the country, including a planned Saturday event by Democrats in Washington state.

Arizona officials are bracing for the possibility that poll workers will not show up on March 17 because of illness or fear. They are combing through a statewide volunteer database to identify potential replacements if needed, according to the Ari-

zona Department of State.

In Cook County, Illinois, which includes Chicago, officials are seeking the power to extend voting hours on March 17, reassign early voting locations and even change voting days, said Frank Herrera, a spokesman for the county clerk's office.

Florida, the nation's third most-populous state and home to a large population of elderly people, has 19 confirmed cases of the virus and has declared a state of emergency.

State voters who have symptoms can designate someone to pick up their absentee ballots up until Election Day, Laurel Lee, Florida's secretary of state, wrote on Twitter on Monday.

Florida authorities have emailed local election officials recommendations from the CDC on how to prepare polling places amid the spread of the virus. The recommendations include advising poll workers to stay home if they feel ill and steady cleaning of voting locations throughout the day.

READ MORE: Biden sets up 1-on-1 battle with Sanders after Super Tuesday wins

In Orlando, Florida, a forum for the presidential candidates that had been scheduled for Thursday was canceled because of coronavirus concerns, said Carolyn Bobb, a spokeswoman for the AFL-CIO.

Agencies



## Turkish top diplomat provides details of joint patrol mission with Russia in Idlib

**ANKARA**

TURKISH Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu has held a meeting with the Anadolu news agency's editors, providing them with information concerning the joint Turkish-Russian patrol mission in Syria's Idlib province.

"We would like a ceasefire to be declared in Syria and we continue efforts to ensure a permanent ceasefire. We will patrol areas north of the M4 highway and the Russians will carry out a patrol mission south of it."

A Russian delegation has arrived in Ankara to discuss what needs to be done to safely open the M4 highway for traffic," Cavusoglu (pictured) pointed out.

Yesterday, Russia and Turkey are expected to begin consultations on the joint patrol mission set to kick off on March 15.

Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey agreed at their Moscow talks on March 5 that a ceasefire would be declared in Idlib and a number of other measures would be taken to improve the situation in the Syrian province.

In addition, Russian and Turkish troops will launch joint patrols along the M4 highway, where a security corridor will be created.

Besides, Moscow and Ankara reaffirmed their commitment to preserving Syria's sovereignty and agreed to continue a determined fight against terrorism.

Agencies

# Russia alters schedule of diplomatic contacts over coronavirus

**MOSCOW**

RUSSIA has altered its schedule of diplomatic contacts over the novel coronavirus spread, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in an interview with Rossiya-24 television channel on Sunday.

Countries are cancelling bilater-

al visits and changing their schedules of diplomatic contacts due to the virus spread, she noted.

"We are now working with this map of international events, adjusting, in particular, the Russian side's schedule of diplomatic contacts," the spokeswoman said.

The coronavirus situation has also affected the work of Rus-



**Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in an interview with Rossiya-24 television channel on Sunday.**

sian diplomatic missions in some countries, she said.

"The embassies are taking measures, carrying out work with the staff, analyzing the local side's recommendations and correspondingly organizing the embassy activity," the diplomat pointed out.

On December 31, 2019, the Chinese authorities reported to the World Health Organization about an outbreak of pneumonia of unknown etiology in Wuhan, an economic and industrial megalopolis with a population of 11 million.

The virus was identified on January 7 as 2019-nCoV. As of today, 103 countries and territories, including Russia, have reported confirmed coronavirus cases.

The World Health Organization declared the new coronavirus

outbreak a public health emergency of international concern, characterizing it as an epidemic with multiple locations. WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stated on February 11 that the organization gave the novel coronavirus an official name of COVID-19.

Agencies

## Royal farewell: UK's Harry and Meghan bow out from official roles

**LONDON**

BRITAIN'S Top royals came together on Monday at Westminster Abbey in their last public family gathering before Prince Harry and his wife Meghan set off on a new career path devoid of official duties.

The annual Commonwealth Service was also the first time Harry and Meghan had been seen with Queen Elizabeth, his elder brother William and wife Kate, and father Prince Charles and his wife Camilla, since the couple thrashed out an exit deal from their royal roles in January.

Harry and Meghan smiled and she waved at William and Kate as they arrived at the abbey. The couple chatted and laughed with his uncle, Prince Edward, who was sitting next to them.

"I imagine everybody will be on absolutely best behavior," royal biographer Penny Junor told Reuters. "But goodness knows what they will all be thinking privately."

The January agreement, which comes into force at the end of the month, will see the couple - the Duke and Duchess of Sussex - seek to carve out "a progressive new role", mainly in North America, that they aim to finance themselves.

Harry, 35, and Meghan, 38, will stop using their HRH titles - His or Her Royal Highness, will not



**Britain's Harry and Meghan the Duke and Duchess of Sussex arrive to attend the annual Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey in London, on Monday. (AP)**

use "royal" in their branding and Harry, who remains a prince, will relinquish his military titles.

Their announcement that they wished to step back from some royal duties sent shockwaves through the monarchy. It led to a crisis meeting involving the 93-year-old queen, her heir Charles, William and Harry that concluded he and Meghan would have to give up all their royal duties.

The couple have since spent most of their time in Canada, but returned this month for a farewell round of engagements. Their baby son Archie has remained in Canada.

Monday's event was their last

official royal appearance and came less than two years after they married in a dazzling ceremony watched by millions.

"Our hope was to continue serving the queen, the Commonwealth and my military associations without public funding. Sadly that wasn't possible," the prince, sixth-in-line to the throne, said in January.

**'GIVING UP EVERYTHING'**

Polls show Harry, whose mother was the late Princess Diana, is one of the most popular royals and the couple were greeted with a standing ovation at an event on Saturday.

Junor said his leaving would

be a huge loss for the family and the monarchy.

"I thought that he had absolutely embraced his destiny as a member of the royal family," she said. "He recognized what he could do with his position, the power he had to change things for good. I think he will miss that ability to make people's lives better."

However, Harry, who served in the army for 10 years, has never hidden his discomfort with his royal role and the attention of the media. He has spoken candidly about his mental health struggles following his mother's death.

He has also been angered by the treatment his American wife, a former actress, has received from some British tabloids. She has also said how difficult she found it.

Junor said Harry might find it difficult living in the United States and Canada away from his family, friends and former life.

"He is giving up everything he's known, a huge family that he's very close to, and his work, to go and live in Canada where he actually knows nobody and he has no job," she said.

Last weekend, Harry met the queen at Windsor Castle to discuss his future. A royal source confirmed a report in the Sun newspaper that the queen told Harry he would always be welcome to rejoin the royal fold. **Agencies**

## Ghani sworn in as Afghan president for second term

**KABUL**

INCUMBENT Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani was sworn in for a second five-year term on Monday, while his main election rival and government Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah also held a parallel presidential swearing-in ceremony.

Afghanistan's Chief Justice Sayed Yousuf Haleem administered Ghani's swearing-in ceremony at the fortified Presidential Palace.

"The election process has ended... today I call on every Afghan, men, women, child and youth, particularly on political band that this government is yours," Ghani said in his speech after taking the oath.

"The division time has passed, today is the day of juncture, and today is the day of unity," Ghani said.

The ceremony was attended by hundreds of Afghan and foreign guests including U.S. Special Representative for Afghan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad, Commander of NATO's Resolute Support Mission and U.S. forces Gen. Austin Scott Miller and ambassadors from China, Saudi Arabia, India, France, Germany, Canada, Italy among



others.

At the same ceremony, Amrullah Saleh and Mohammad Sarwar Danish also took the oath of office as first and second vice president respectively.

Ghani issued the first presidential decree shortly after taking the oath, appointing Mohammad Yousuf Ghaznafar as the president's special envoy on development, economic, commercial and alleviation of poverty affairs.

The 71-year-old Ghani called on his political rivals to assist him in building a united and strong Afghanistan.

During his speech, Ghani also promised to continue the national reconciliation policy for achieving durable peace in the country and called on Taliban militants to join the peace process and resume

their normal life.

"There is a need for profound negotiations and talks with Taliban," he said.

"We will form a coalition for peace and unity that would be 10 times more powerful than the coalition of war against us. Our strength has always been in our unity," he said.

Ghani noted that he would unveil the lineup of his government within two weeks that will be submitted to the parliament for approval.

At the same time, government Chief Executive Abdullah held a parallel oath taking ceremony in the nearby Sapedar Palace.

"Today I am the president, and the servant of all of you. Without any discrimination, I will be in the service of all people," Abdullah told the audience. **Agencies**

# Venues for 2022 Winter Olympics resume construction amid epidemic

BEIJING is now making efforts to push ahead with venue construction for the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in an orderly manner amid novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic prevention and control.

Currently, 15 projects, including the National Speed Skating Oval, the National Aquatics Center, the National Alpine Skiing Center, the Yanqing Winter Olympic Village, and the Yanqing Mountain News Center have resumed construction to ensure timely completion.

Strong epidemic prevention and control measures are what come before the construction. Therefore, the three competition

zones for the Winter Olympics in Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou made a quick response after the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, requiring projects to implement close-off management at sites and ensure regular disinfection and close monitoring of workers' temperatures.

These sites are also requested to report information on a daily basis, enhance dormitory management, and offer meals in shifts.

At the construction site of the National Alpine Skiing Center, a 600-meter-long track has been completed. Alpine skiing events have a high requirement for tracks' surface hardness, so it



**The landmark venue for the 2022 Winter Olympics - the National Speed Skating Oval, also known as the "Ice Ribbon", is capped, Dec. 31, 2019. Photo by People's Daily**

calls for high precision in both making and compacting the snow.

To make the snow track meet

standards, the project team had only two days off during the 7-day Chinese New Year holiday.

They went back to the project

site in Xiaohaituo Mountain in Yanqing, a district in northwest Beijing on the second day of the Chinese New Year.

The team had full concentration on and commitment to the project, and the data of temperature, solar illuminance and air velocity they collected will also serve future events to be held there.

At the Shougang Industrial Park in Beijing, the Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (BOCOG) has resumed work, and its staff are all wearing masks at the workplace.

Before entering the industrial park and the office buildings,

the staff have to have their body temperatures checked. In addition, the offices are disinfected and ventilated on a regular basis, and meals are delivered by the canteen to the staff to avoid cross-infection.

At present, the organizing committee's external liaison and work deployment rely on telephone and video conferences.

On Feb. 17, the BOCOG held a video conference with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on the preparations for 2022 Winter Olympic Games.

Zhang Jiandong, vice mayor of Beijing and executive vice president of the BOCOG, said

that this video conference reflected the understanding and support from the IOC when the Chinese people are fighting against the novel coronavirus epidemic.

At the conference, IOC vice president Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr. praised the decisive and efficient measures China has taken to combat the epidemic. He said the IOC will stand firmly with the BOCOG in the epidemic.

"We are very, very proud of (China's) proficiency and dedication," said Samaranch Jr., extending his confidence in China's victory over the epidemic. **People's Daily**



Zanzibar resident, Feruzi Khatib Omar (R), who emerged as last week's SportPesa Jackpot Bonus winner, is presented with 21,167,335/- dummy cheque by SportPesa's Director of Administration and Compliance, Tarimba Abbas, at the betting firm's office recently. Feruzi placed right bets on 10, 11 and 12 matches to lay his hands on the cash prize. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

## Tentacles of Olympic cancellation would reach around globe

TOKYO

THE tentacles of canceling the Tokyo Olympics – or postponing or staging it in empty venues – would reach into every corner of the globe, much like the spreading virus that now imperils the opening ceremony on July 24.

The International Olympic Committee and local organizers say the games are on, but the clock is ticking.

The fate of the Tokyo Games touches 11,000 Olympic and 4,400 Paralympic athletes, coaches and sports officials, local organizers, the Japanese government and national morale, international broadcasters, fans, and world sponsors. Add to this hotels, airlines, and taxi drivers – and even 80,000 unpaid volunteers who will miss a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"I've heard things about possibly the Olympics being canceled, and I think that would stink," J'den Cox, a two-time world champion wrestler and an Olympic bronze medalist in Rio de Janeiro, told Associated Press. "It would probably break everybody's heart if that were to happen."

The Olympic brand could be damaged, although the Switzerland-based International Olympic Committee may be among the least affected parties financially if the games are called off. The IOC has been resolute in its message, although it has a several-month window to decide.

"Hard to imagine this will be defined by the end of May, but it could be," Dr. Ali Khan, an epidemiologist and dean of the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska, told Associated Press in an email. "Regardless, numerous sick athletes could not lead to a very interesting games."

"From what we know from numerous other mass-gathering events including sporting events, it is very easy to spread diseases worldwide from such events – from meningitis to Zika," Khan added. "Besides welcoming athletes and spectators with their tiny microbes, there is and may be ongoing disease in Japan."

Kazuhiro Tateda, an expert on infectious diseases and a member of a Japanese government panel, said the virus may not die out quickly.

"Unlike the flu that disappears with warmer weather, the response to the new coronavirus, I think, will have to continue for half a year or a year," Tateda told Japanese broadcaster NHK on Tuesday.

The IOC has ample financial safeguards against cancellation, which has happened only in wartime since the modern Olympics began in 1896. Its latest annual report shows it has almost \$2 billion in reserve that could cover running costs until the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

The IOC's annual reports show it paid almost \$14.4 million in an insurance premium to protect against canceling the 2016 Rio Olympics and \$12.8 million for a policy to cover the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

IOC President Thomas Bach was asked last week after an executive board meeting if the insurance premium has risen to as much as \$20 million for a Tokyo policy.

"I don't know," he replied. "It wasn't dis-

cussed at this EB."

Wolfgang Maennig an Olympic rowing gold medalist who teaches sports economics at Hamburg University, suggested the losses will be shared.

"Insurance companies will have to pay a large amount of the losses of the IOC," Maennig said in an email to AP. "The rest will have to be borne by the IOC."

The IOC controls the Olympics and has wide latitude to act. Its protection is spelled out in the 81-page Host City Contract, signed in 2013 with the city of Tokyo, and the Japanese Olympic Committee.

The preamble to the contract states: "the Olympic Games are the exclusive property of the IOC which owns all rights ... to their organization, staging, exploitation, broadcasting, recording, representation, reproduction ... whether now existing or developed in the future, throughout the world in perpetuity."

The contract also specifies that the IOC can terminate and withdraw from the city because of a "state of war, civil disorder, or boycott ... of if the IOC has reasonable grounds to believe, in its sole discretion, that the safety of participants in the games would be seriously threatened or jeopardized for any reason whatsoever."

Victor Matheson, a sports economist at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, said athletes are the most vulnerable. The Olympics feature 33 sports, and many of the smaller ones have a limited following until games time.

"For athletes, their career length isn't long and in many sports success in the Olympics is your one shot at a financial return," Matheson told AP.

Matheson said that losses by hotels and other service businesses are unlikely to be insured. The billions on government spending on venues looks like a risky investment. The loss of the Olympics would negate the difficult-to-calculate goodwill that Japan and Tokyo might have won.

An Irish bookmaker is showing odds leaning slightly toward the Olympics not going forward. Odds are 4-6 it will not open on July 24 in Tokyo, and even that it will.

Tokyo is officially spending \$12.6 billion to organize the Olympics, although a national government audit office says it's at least twice that much. The local organizing committee budget of \$5.6 billion is private money, with the rest coming from Japanese taxpayers. About \$1 billion in the local operating budget is to come from ticket sales, which would be lost if the games go ahead without fans in empty stadiums.

"Some combination of the IOC, the broadcasters, and the insurers will lose big," Matheson said. "That loss is coming out of someone's pocket depending on how all of the contracts are written."

Andrew Zimbalist, who teaches economics at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, said some of the venues, such as the \$1.43 billion national stadium, would have "enduring value."

"But virtually none of it would have made the list of the priority public investments," he said in an email to AP, adding that if the games were canceled, much of the investment would be "wasted." AP

## The Magic of Inspiration

By Correspondent Lloyd Elipoke

IN sports, the inimitable magic of inspiration has through the years proven to be a spectacularly transformative power that enables feats out of the ordinary to be achieved.

For instance, the Locus Classicus of inspiration's unfailingly uplifting power can be seen in the ex-football icon now-turned-president George Weah and the laudable as well as lasting impact that the Liberian had on continental football.

Indeed, prior to 1995, the notion of any African football star being deemed good enough to win coveted accolades like the European player of the year and world player of the year would be considered laughable at best.

However, in 1995 A.D., the world of football was to receive such a tremendous shock whose impact was so far-reaching to the extent that it immeasurably upped the stock of African football exports who were plying their trade overseas.

For in 1995, the unthinkable, the hitherto impossible and the dream that all African football players dared not dream actually came true.

Against all the odds, George Weah's star shone so brightly that it not only put his rivals in the shade but come the end of the season, the Liberian was the deserving recipient of a cherished trio of awards, which were namely the World player of the Year, European player of the Year and befittingly the African player of the Year as well.

Needless to say, it was an indescribably stupendous achievement.

In the wake of Weah's retirement from the sport, it is highly doubtful whether the likes of Samuel Eto'o and Didier Drogba among others would have been able to perform so self-assuredly



Tanzania's amateur boxers trade punches in a past national championship, which took place in Dar es Salaam.

and quintessentially on the grand European stage had they not drawn inspiration and hope from the bedazzling exploits of George Weah in that memorable year of 1995, which will forever be recalled as a bona fide annus mirabilis in the lore of continental football.

It seems then that the aforementioned example is a crystal clear case which vividly illuminates the transcendent magic of inspiration.

The good news though is that there are seemingly countless examples where African sportsmen have acquired a 'can-do' mentality and gleaned encouragement from the illustrious showings of heroic sportsmen and sportswomen who practically ruled the roost in their respective sporting disciplines in years gone by.

In fact, we have an excellent example which clearly illustrates the near-unstoppable magic of inspiration in the sporting realm right here in our own

neck of the woods.

Indeed, in the mid-1970s, a then distinctly unheralded Tanzanian athlete Filbert Bayi was most likely steeling himself mentally for the herculean challenge ahead as he stood in his lane awaiting the start of the 1,500 meters final at the Commonwealth Games.

Of course, virtually every Tanzanian knows exactly what happened next once the starting gun for the final to begin had been fired.

In a sterling display that would assure him of immortality in Tanzanian sports history, Filbert Bayi would not only go on to impressively win the gold medal but he would set a new Commonwealth Games record for the 1,500 meters to boot.

Bayi's extraordinary display would come to be regarded as one of our distinctly exemplary moments in sports for us as a country on the world stage.

And even though Alphonce Simbu has rarely spoken of how

the likes of Suleiman Nyambui and Filbert Bayi have inspired him, few would dispute the contention that both sporting greats were uppermost in his mind as he sped down the home stretch to eventually cross the finish line and win the bronze medal in the men's marathon at the 2017 World Athletics Championship in London.

Indeed, Simbu's bronze medal holds such immense significance for our domestic sporting patch as it marks only the second time that Tanzania has won a medal in the history of the elite athletics championships.

Thus, having established the centrality of inspiration to the achievement of wondrous sporting feats, let us hope then that the Taifa Stars and their fellow sportsmen can find some inspiration of their own as they go bidding for glory in the upcoming CHAN finals and other sporting championships of note such as the Olympic Games for example.



Dar es Salaam's Ilala Municipal Mayor, Omary Kumbilamoto (in blue tracksuit), leads Vingunguti Ward's youth jogging clubs in fitness training session, which took place in the city on Sunday. Kumbilamoto congratulated the youths for their willingness to cooperate with authorities to solve the ward's problems. PHOTO: JOSEPH MWENDAPOLE

## Murray scores 21 as Nuggets beat short-handed Bucks 109-95

DENVER

JAMAL Murray led the Nuggets with 21 points but it was a basket of his that didn't count that really ignited Denver's 109-95 win over the short-handed Milwaukee Bucks.

Murray soared for a thunderous slam dunk over D.J. Wilson with 9.8 seconds left in the third quarter and Denver clinging to a 74-71 lead Monday night. Wilson jumped in an attempt to prevent the jam and was pulverized on the play, staggering out of bounds.

"It was crazy," Nuggets teammate Jerami Grant said. "I didn't think he had it in him. Obviously, he does. We've seen it."

"Tweet! We've seen the whistle. But instead of and-one, it was no way!

The biggest of baskets was waved off and a charge called on Murray instead of a foul on Wilson.

The crowd was incredulous, the Nuggets furious, but coach Michael Malone didn't challenge the call. (He mistakenly said after the game he had already used his challenge).

"It definitely wasn't a foul," Murray said. "But yeah, I wanted to just drive, and I felt like I had a step, so I just took off."

Although the whistle went the other way, the play sparked Denver to a season sweep of the NBA-leading Bucks (53-12), who were without their top six scorers – including reigning MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo (knee).

"The crowd was phenomenal. After that, the crowd was into it

every single play, every single steal, rebound, block, bucket," Murray said. "Once we got them going, they got us going."

The third quarter ended with Mason Plumlee's fast-break layup for a 76-71 Denver lead after Monte Morris blocked Frank Mason III's pull-up 3 from behind.

Then, the Nuggets pulled away with a 33-24 fourth quarter as Nikola Jokic, who took just two shots in the first half, finally found his rhythm and scored eight of his 10 points, including a 3-pointer that snapped an 0-for-13 skid from beyond the arc.

Paul Millsap added 20 points and Grant scored 19 as the Nuggets sent the Bucks to their third straight loss and fourth in five games.

Kyle Korver had 23 points to

lead a big effort by the Bucks' backups, but Milwaukee sorely missed all that firepower during a fourth consecutive road defeat.

"At the warmup and certain guys weren't warming up, I was like, 'You playing tonight?' 'Nope, I don't think so.' Different guys are banged up – we're at that time of year," Korver said. "We've got a good home stretch coming up here and we want to get right. Guys have nicks and knacks and you take care of it. We've got some important games coming up so it was definitely the right call."

And the Nuggets thought Murray's waved-off basket was definitely the wrong call, albeit one that sparked them even more than any of his 21 points that did count.

## Star Ronaldinho 'in good spirits', say prison warden

ASUNCION

FORMER Brazil and Barcelona player Ronaldinho is adapting quickly to life in a Paraguayan jail, the head of the facility told Reuters on Monday, but his lawyers are hopeful he may soon be released into house arrest while the investigation continues.

"In broad terms he is doing very well," prison warden Blas Vera told Reuters in a telephone interview. "I see he is in good spirits, just like you see him on television, always smiling."

Vera said that Ronaldinho and his brother Roberto Assis, who were arrested on Friday for using a false Paraguayan passport, would present their case to a judge on Tuesday.

Their lawyer Sergio Queiroz told Reuters they had asked a court to release them into house arrest and offered guarantees they were not a flight risk.

Vera said the 39-year old former AC Milan and Paris Saint-Germain forward and his brother had beds, a television and a fan in their cell at the prison on the outskirts of the capital Asuncion.

The brothers use a communal bathroom and have the right to use the outdoor patio on a regular basis.

The pair's lawyers have provided them with meals and they have not eaten the food offered by the jail.

The maximum security facility has around 195 detainees, including

politicians and police officers accused of corruption as well as major drug traffickers.

The more dangerous prisoners are housed in a different wing to Ronaldinho, Vera said, adding that he was working to ensure the pair's stay is "as comfortable as possible."

Carlos Gamarra, the former captain of Paraguay's national team who also played for several Brazilian clubs, visited Ronaldinho with a group of ex-players in jail on Sunday.

Vera said others who were at the regular Sunday visiting time befriended the Brazilian.

"There was also a group of boys and girls and he welcomed them, gave them hugs and chatted with them," he said.

Ronaldinho, who was last year named a tourist ambassador by Brazil's far-right government, arrived in Paraguay on Wednesday, invited to the landlocked South American nation by a local casino owner.

Although he last played professionally in 2015, Ronaldinho, who also represented Brazilian clubs Atletico Mineiro, Flamengo and Fluminense, is still hugely popular with global football fans and advertisers.

He won the World Cup with Brazil in 2002 and the Champions League with Barcelona in 2006. He was also named FIFA world player of the year in 2004 and 2005.

(Agencies)

## Oldest footballer in the world scores goal in debut match

CAIRO

A 74-year-old grandfather became the oldest footballer in the world to score a goal in an official match when he netted on his debut for an Egyptian third tier side on Saturday.

Ezzeldin Bahader is seeking recognition as the world's oldest professional footballer, and he can meet the Guinness World Records criteria of playing two official full-length matches when his club take to the field on Match 21 in their next Group Five fixture.

The record is currently held by Israeli goalkeeper Isaak Hayik, who represented FC Ironi Or Yehuda in April 2019 at 73, although this achievement would be eclipsed by Bahader, who was born on Nov. 3, 1945.

The attacking midfielder, who first played football on the streets of Cairo as a six-year-old, scored a penalty for his team this weekend

as he captained his new club to a 1-1 draw, having worked with a personal trainer to achieve match fitness.

In January, grandfather of six Bahader was registered as a professional player with the Egyptian Football Association, having spent his working career as a civil engineering consultant and then a land cultivation expert before retiring.

"I became the oldest professional footballer scoring a goal in an official game," the veteran told BBC Sport following his debut.

"This is something that was achieved in the last minute of the game that I thought I wouldn't achieve."

"I was injured and all what I hoped for was to continue for the full 90 minutes and play the next game."

(Agencies)

## 'Military training' as China's footballers ordered to stay trim, beat virus

SHANGHAI

CHINESE football clubs and national teams must undertake "spring military training" to defeat the coronavirus and help fulfil President Xi Jinping's dream of making the country a force in the sport, officials said.

Matches in China are indefinitely suspended over the outbreak but the football association has issued detailed orders, telling clubs how long players must train each week, what exercises they must do and even how slim they must be.

The strict instructions, the latest in a series handed down by the Chinese Football Association (CFA) in recent years, are likely to be met with surprise by coaches such as Rafael Benitez and Fabio Cannavaro with a background in European football.

But Cannavaro, at Chinese Super League (CSL) champions Guangzhou Evergrande, and Benitez at Dalian Pro are among the coaches who will be held directly responsible for incorporating the training regime into their pre-season programmes.

The order was made on Friday, and clubs had until Tuesday to tell the CFA how they would adhere to it. They will also face random inspections to make sure they're following the instructions.

The CFA said the training was designed to help realise Xi's grand plans, launched in 2016, to make China a major footballing nation.

At the same time, players must also do their bit to fight the deadly coronavirus, which emerged in central China in December and has since spread across the world.

"Battle preparations" -

"Achieve epidemic prevention and control on one hand, and focus on training and battle preparations on the other," the CFA said.

"Both hands must be strong and both battles must be won."

"Men's and women's national teams and professional football clubs are requested to strictly follow the notice," the CFA added.

The results of the surprise checks will be made public and clubs will be ranked to shame underachievers into action.

"The head coach of each team is the direct responsible person," said the CFA, in a nod to the likes of Italian World Cup winner Cannavaro and Benitez, who led Liverpool to the 2005 Champions League title.

The order goes into extraordinary detail, saying teams must train for at least 16 hours a week and meet targets in tests that include squats, bench presses and vertical jumps.

AFP

# Imperfect Liverpool offer Atletico hope

LIVERPOOL

LIVERPOOL'S 2-1 victory over Bournemouth on Saturday was met with an unusual sense of relief around Anfield for a side that had just clinched a 22nd consecutive home league win and moved 25 points clear at the top of the Premier League.

Such has been the Reds' relentless run towards a first league title in 30 years that three defeats in three different competitions in four games was considered a slump in form.

A 3-0 reverse at Watford deprived Jurgen Klopp's men the chance to match Arsenal's "invincible" unbeaten league season and a FA Cup exit at the hands of Chelsea means they cannot replicate Manchester United's treble of 1998/99.

However, the most damaging of the trio of defeats could still prove to be the 1-0 deficit they must overturn when Atletico Madrid travel to Anfield for the second leg of their Champions League last 16 tie on Wednesday.

"It's a long season and you see how many games we've played. In any sport you play it's impossible to be at your highest level all year, year in and year out," said James Milner, who produced a stunning goal-line clearance to secure victory against Bournemouth.

"You try your best and it just doesn't happen, and that's when you need to find a way to win."

When at their best, Liverpool have shown they are more than capable of second leg fightbacks at home. Most



Georginio Wijnaldum scored twice when Liverpool beat Barcelona 4-0 last season in one of many famous European nights at Anfield (AFP Photo)

spectacularly when Barcelona were humbled 4-0 in last season's semi-final despite holding a 3-0 first leg lead.

However, there are cracks in the English champions-elect's armoury that Atletico can expose.

After keeping 10 clean sheets in 11 league games between early December and mid-February, Liverpool have conceded in each of their last five games.

The loss of goalkeeper Alisson Becker to a hip injury is a massive blow

with his erratic understudy Adrian at fault for the opening goal against Chelsea last week.

Jordan Henderson's presence in midfield has also been badly missed after he limped off with a hamstring injury in the first leg against Atletico and could be rushed back to face the Spaniards.

Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane again carried the goalscoring burden to turn the game around against Bournemouth, but the form of Roberto Firmino is also a worry for

Klopp.

The Brazilian's all-round game makes him the perfect foil for the Salah and Mane to come off the wings and get the goals, but Firmino has been out of sorts in recent weeks and still has not scored at Anfield all season.

No closed doors disruption -

Liverpool can at least rely on a vociferous home support that makes Anfield such a fortress on European nights.

Klopp has never lost a European game at home

since taking charge of Liverpool in 2015 and has reached three finals in that time.

"Our people will be ready. Welcome to Anfield! It's not over yet," warned the German after the first leg.

Unlike matches in Italy, France and Spain there has been no order for games to be played behind closed doors in the United Kingdom to halt the spread of coronavirus.

Paris Saint-Germain will host Borussia Dortmund in front of an empty stadium on Wednesday as will Juventus if the second leg of their tie against Lyon next week even goes ahead.

With PSG, Juve and Real Madrid trailing from their first legs and Barcelona a shadow of their former selves, the competition could open up again for Liverpool if they can break Atletico's resistance.

"It's down to us to turn around a tough result," added Milner.

"We know how good they are, we know how well organised they are but hopefully we can push them all the way and overturn that and have another special night at Anfield."

AFP

## Mourinho's greatest takedowns, from Luke Shaw to Sergio Ramos

BY CHRIS WRIGHT, ESPN TOE POKE WRITER

JOSE Mourinho isn't shy of digging into his players, so it seemed the right time to run down some of his greatest hits ...

With Tottenham once again faltering at the weekend in a 1-1 draw with Burnley, Mourinho decided to delve into his big bag of scapegoats and find a new name on which to pin the blame.

This time, €62m record signing Tanguy Ndombele was the fall guy locked in Mourinho's scathing cross-hairs, with the Spurs boss openly lambasting the midfielder's lack of commitment during his postmatch interview.

Ndombele was hauled off at half-time with Mourinho questioning how many more chances Spurs' record signing would be given to impress after seeing his form bottom out in recent weeks.

"He's a player with a great talent, and he has to know he has to do much better," Mourinho grumbled after the match. "Many times our midfield players were hiding. I cannot keep giving him opportunities to play because the team is more important than the players."

Of course, this isn't the first time Mourinho has openly pinned personal blame on his own players (and/or staff members) in front of a large global audience.

Luke Shaw

Luke Shaw bore the brunt of Mourinho's ire for the majority of his tenure at Manchester United, with the Portuguese regularly tearing strips off his left-back.

Things famously came to a bit of a head when Mourinho took it upon himself to run up and down the touchline with Shaw -- who had just recently returned from injury -- during a game against Everton in 2017, yelling basic positional instructions at his defender and then taking credit for his performance after the game.

"He [Shaw] was in front of me and I was making every decision for him. He has to change his football brain," Mourinho said. "We need his fantastic physical and technical qualities, but he cannot continue to play with my brain."

Marcus Rashford and Anthony Martial

After United suffered an embarrassing 1-0 defeat against Brighton at the tail end of the 2017-18 season, Mourinho decided the fault lay at the feet of the two strikers he selected to lead the line.

With Romelu Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez unavailable, Marcus Rashford and Anthony Martial stepped into the breach -- though they probably wished



Jose Mourinho dared to cross Sergio Ramos at the Bernabeu. (Agencies)

they hadn't come the end of the game, after struggling to make any impact between them.

"It was not good enough," Mourinho scowled. "The players who replaced others did not perform at a good level and, when individuals do that, it is difficult for the team to play well."

"Maybe now you will not ask me why A, B and C do not play so much. People always ask: 'Why always Lukaku?' Well, now they know why always Lukaku."

Henrikh Mkhitaryan

Despite his obvious talent, Henrikh Mkhitaryan was a fairly peripheral figure at United under Mourinho, with the latter accusing the former of going missing during games.

After dropping the Armenian forward from the matchday squad for two consecutive games in late 2017, Mourinho gave his explanation in a news con-

ference.

"Mkhi started the season very well and after that step by step he was disappearing," he said. "His performance levels in terms of goal scoring and assists, high pressing, recovering the ball high up the pitch, bringing the team with him as a No. 10, were all decreasing step by step. That was enough [to drop him] because the others worked to have a chance."

Sergio Ramos

Even the erstwhile Real Madrid captain, Sergio Ramos, wasn't immune from Mourinho's wrath during his rocky stint in charge at the Bernabeu.

In the wake of a 1-1 draw against Manchester United in the Champions League round of 16, Mourinho directly singled out Ramos as the man at fault for Danny Welbeck's opening goal after letting his man slip free from a corner.

"If you see it on the television, you can see what

happened," Mourinho complained. "We train, we organise ourselves, we give each player a job, we watch videos of the opponent to know their strong points at dead balls."

"But when you lose your individual battle, organisation does not matter. They scored in their first attack, and the game changed."

Eden Hazard and Cesc Fabregas

In one of the most acidic beratings of his career, Mourinho mercilessly gouged out most of his big-named Chelsea players after overseeing a truly wretched start to the 2015-16 season.

Having lifted the Premier League title as champions only months beforehand, the Blues were down, flailing from defeat to defeat and mired at the foot of the table.

Indeed, another "shock" defeat against Leicester City saw Mourinho launch into an angry rebuke of his so-called "superstars."

The Portuguese began by claiming he was being "betrayed" by his players before aiming a barrage of thinly veiled slights in their direction.

"They have to look to Sunderland and Watford and say, 'hey, we are at the same level now,'" Mourinho barked. "I am not the superstar, I am not the player of the season, I am not the world champion, I am not the Premier League cham-

panion. At this moment, I am at your level."

Names were not explicitly used, but it's fairly simple to ascertain exactly who was in the firing line, given Eden Hazard was Chelsea's player of the season and that Cesc Fabregas and Pedro were the only two world champions in the squad.

Mourinho was sacked two days later.

Ball boys

It's not just his players who run the risk of a Mourinho tongue-lashing, with the poor ball boys at Old Trafford finding out the hard way that they too were not immune.

With Manchester United's home form stuttering in early 2018, Mourinho reportedly decided it was the speed at which his ball boys were returning balls that was the key reason for his side's malaise.

Mourinho axed ball boys who were too slow at returning the ball to the pitch after a 2-0 win over Hull in the EFL Cup semi-finals in January 2017. He drafted in youngsters from United's under-16s for a 1-1 draw with Liverpool after that.

This wasn't the first time that Mourinho has taken umbrage with ball boys either, with the Portuguese marching down the touchline to reprimand a kid while his Chelsea side trailed against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park in 2014.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



# SPORT

Imperfect Liverpool offer  
Atletico hope

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**TONIGHT @ 7:00**

**EATV SAA 1**

**WEDNESDAY**

11:00 DADAZ LIVE  
12:00 Weekend Movie (r)  
13:30 Kali Za Wana  
14:30 Planet Bongo (r)  
15:00 Funguka  
15:30 Nirvana (r)  
16:00 Skonga (r)  
16:30 #HASHTAG  
17:00 SSELECT  
17:55 Kurasa  
18:00 eNewz  
18:30 Music/Soap  
19:00 EATV SAA 1  
19:45 MJADALA  
20:00 DADAZ (r)  
21:00 Kibishara Zaidi

**EATV SAA 1**  
Coverage of the days current events accompanied by interviews with prominent people on diverse topics ranging from national to social interests.

**eastafrica RADIO**

06:00 Supa Breakfast  
10:00 MAMAMIA  
12:00 Kipenga Xtra  
13:00 Planet Bongo  
16:00 EA Drive  
20:00 Kipenga  
21:00 The Cruise

**88.1FM**  
DAR ES SALAAM

## Simba SC looks to bounce back against Singida United



Simba striker, John Bocco (R), dribbles past Singida United defenders, Rajab Zahir (C) and Salum Kipaga, in a recent Mainland Premier League clash, which took place in Dar es Salaam.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

**S**IMBA SC will look to bounce back to winning form in the Vodacom Premier League when they host Singida United at the National Stadium in Dar es Salaam today, with kick-off slated for 1600.

The league's defending champions suffered a derby defeat against Young Africans SC (Yanga) at the same venue on Sunday.

Simba had consequently ended a run, which had seen them claim five straight wins to move 17 points clear at the top of the table.

Sven Vandebroek charges will be confident of getting a result against a Singida United side that

has yet to claim victory in 11 matches and are rooted to the bottom of the table.

Having suffered his second loss in the league, the 40-year-old Belgian tactician wants victory over the visitors to restore confidence in his camp and take another step towards the title.

"We need to regroup and focus to ensure we do well in our next games to fulfil our title ambitions," he disclosed.

In head-to-head stats, Simba and Singida United have met in five league matches since the 2016/17 season.

Simba, nicknamed 'Msimbazi Reds', have claimed five wins and scored 11 goals in the games.

When the teams met earlier this season, in Arusha in October 2019, Simba registered a 1-0 victory.

Meanwhile, Alliance FC who lost 1-0 on the road against Azam FC last week take on Polisi

Tanzania.

Alliance FC will be out to avoid a fourth successive loss that will increase their relegation fears.

With 10 matches to the end of the campaign, Alliance FC find themselves in the relegation play off spot.

They will need to be at their best to beat Polisi Tanzania who are coached by Malale Hamsini.

David Richard, who has seven goals and two assists, has been the one consistent star for

Alliance FC this season.

They will need the 21-year old striker to continue at that level for them to avoid relegation.

Hamsini's side are sitting comfortably in sixth position on the table, only seven points away from a top-four place.

They have not won their last two league outings, having lost to Mwadui FC and most recently settled for a barren draw with high flying Namungo FC.

## Simba will not underrate Singida United, says coach

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

VODACOM Premier League leaders, Simba SC, have said they will treat this afternoon's game against Singida United, to be played at the National Stadium in Dar es Salaam, with care.

Simba's head coach Sven Vandebroek said his players will play their hearts out in this afternoon encounter knowing that at this stage of the league any team is playing to win points.

He said although Singida United are anchoring the league table, he has told his charges not to underrate the visitors and approach the game like a final.

"We are well prepared for the game against Singida United, after our 1-0 defeat to Yanga our focus shifted to this game," he disclosed.

"I know our opponents are anchoring the league table, but that does not mean they are pushovers," he said.

Today's game promises to be more entertaining as both Simba and Singida United had experienced disappointment in their respective last weekend matches.

Simba lost 1-0 to Yanga, while Singida United conceded 2-1 loss to JKT Tanzania.

Singida United are anchoring the 20-team league table with 12 points from 27 games.

They know that their chances of remaining in the league will be very slim should they lose today's encounter.

Mathematically, the team still have a chance to remain on the league, but practically it looks impossible as Singida's performance on the pitch has not been not that good.

However, the squad's head coach, Ramadhan Nsanzurwimo, said they will play today's game with the aim of collecting maximum points.

He said his players know the importance of winning today against league leaders Simba.

The Burundian tactician said he is confident his team will get good results today as his charges have been playing well.

"My team is always playing well, the only problem is that we are not winning games," he pointed out.

"The boys know the importance of winning this game, we are working very hard so as to remain in the league," he said.

He said his team is made up of experienced players who can raise at any occasion and today, he is banking on them.



Taifa Stars' head coach Etienne Ndayiragije

## Stars provisional squad for AFCON Qualifiers unveiled

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA's senior national soccer team 'Taifa Stars' head coach Etienne Ndayiragije has unveiled a provisional 35-member squad for camp ahead of the African Cup of Nations (AFCON) Qualifiers' clash with Tunisia, slated for March 30.

Information released by Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) yesterday said the team will go into camp on Thursday at a place to be announced later.

The released squad is mostly made up of regular senior national team players with a few new players.

South-Africa based defender Abdi Banda has been recalled to the team after having been excluded from the side for many months.

Notable missing player is veteran keeper Juma Kaseja who has of late not been enjoying much time at his outfit, KMC FC.

The federation did not indicate if the team will play any international friendly match before facing Tunisia.

Taifa Stars are in Group J of the qualifiers for the 2021 AFCON finals, to be hosted by Cameroon, with the group also consisting of Tunisia, Equatorial

Guinea and Libya.

Taifa Stars are placed third in the group, having collected three points from two games.

They kicked off their campaign impressively, cruising to 2-1 victory over Equatorial Guinea in Dar es Salaam in November last year.

They later on conceded 2-1 loss to Libya in the second match of the qualifiers in Tunisia the same month.

Players making Taifa Stars' provisional squad include keepers David Kissu, Metacha Mnata, Aishi Manula, and Salum Salula.

Defenders are Shomari Kapombe, Juma Abdul, Kelvin Kijiri, Mohamed Hussein, Nickson Kibabage, David Bryson and Bakari Nondo.

Others are defenders Aggrey Morris, Kelvin Yondani, Dickson Job, Erasto Nyoni and Said Makapu.

Midfielders include Abdi Banda, Jonas Mkude, Himid Mao, Bryson Raphael, Mapinduzi Balama, Salum Abubakar, Hassan Dilunga, and Faisal Salum.

Also in the squad are forwards Reliant Lusajo, Ayoub Lyanga, Ditram Nchimbi, John Bocco, Lucas Kikoti, Shabaan Chilunda, Farid Mussa, Simon Msuva, Sixtus Sabilo, Idd Selemani and skipper Mbwana Samatta.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

