



National Pg 3 Strategies to reduce accidents



National Pg 4 Minister hails construction project



National Pg 5 DUWASA to revive old bore holes



Page 13

VIOLENCE

Page 3



FORGERY

Page 4



DOUGHT

Page 5



LATRA enforcing electronic tickets for upcountry buses

By Guardian Reporter

THE Land Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA) has announced that effectively from tomorrow all upcountry buses will have to ensure that they issue electronic travel tickets to their passengers.

LATRA director general Gilliard Ngewe (pictured) said in a statement yesterday reminded owners of upcountry passenger buses to comply with their licencing conditions.

He named the relevant routes as covering buses plying from Dar-es-Salaam to Tanga, as well as to Arusha, Lindi, Mtwara, Iringa, Njombe, Songea and Mbeya.

Also included are those moving from Dar
TURN TO PAGE 2

Commen sell muddy water as cooking oil



Morogoro Urban legislator Abdul-Aziz Mohamed Abood (L) pictured yesterday listening to a representative of members of the business community conducting business at the Morogoro Municipality main market after they staged a strike, complaining that they were being subjected to unfair levy. Photo: Correspondent Ashton Balaigwa

By Marc Nkwame, Arusha

AN acute scarcity of edible oil in the Arusha Region has led to the emergence of a racket in which some unscrupulous people are filling murky water in containers and selling the dangerous grime to unsuspecting victims.

Investigations conducted in Arusha city have revealed hundreds of edible oil containers of 10 liters, filled with fake fatty liquids were being sold at 25,000/- per holder while the same package containing real oil ordinarily costs 50,000/-.

"They usually tell buyers that the cheap price comes from the fact that the contents were 'stolen' from factories. However upon opening up the containers later, the victims discover muddy water that looks like oil," said Gabriel Urio, who runs the Urio retail shop at Sombetini suburb.

Some youths went to his shop with such containers, trying to sell him the murky water they contain, but when he demanded that they open those holders, they refused and left only to sell it to a local lady food vendor who screamed banshee afterwards.

When contacted, Regional Commissioner Idd Kimanta said he has just directed the Regional Trade Officer and the district commissioners

PM sets PCCB on AMCOS bigwigs

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has directed the head of the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Ruvuma Region, Hamza Mwenda to arrest leaders of the Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Societies (AMCOS) following allegations of corruption.

The leaders are said to have been handing money to three councilors so that they convince their colleagues to push for relocation of the proposed district headquarters.

The councilors are Bruno Kapinga of Mkumbi ward, Bosco Ndimbo of Lukalasi

ward and the Linda ward councilor, named simply as Haule.
He also ordered RC Christine Mndeme to supervise the ongoing construction of Mbinga district headquarters

ward and the Linda ward councilor, named simply as Haule.

The premier issued the order in Mbinga District yesterday after inspecting ongoing construction of the administrative block for Mbinga town and district offices. He also ordered Regional Commissioner Christine Mndeme to supervise the ongoing construction of Mbinga district headquarters at Kigonsera.

He reached the decision after being informed that some councilors have been convincing others to reject the proposed site, a situation that affects the

TURN TO PAGE 2

TRC starts train derauling probe

By Guardian Correspondents, Dodoma

TANZANIA Railways Corporation (TRC) director general Masanja Kadogosa (pictured) says that the corporation has begun investigations on the passenger train accident that occurred at Kigwe, Bahi District near Dodoma on Saturday.

He was speaking at the scene of the accident amidst continuing work of hoisting the derailed wagons that was going on, saying the probe shall seek to find out not just who was responsible,



but also to assist in making sure such accident do not occur.

"We must conduct investigations to find out if people had made railway line verification before the train passed as regulations require that for a train to travel from one station to another, an inspection of the line has to be done first. So we shall know if they did so and came back and later rain water flooded the area," he elaborated.

Bahi District Commissioner Mwanahamisi Mnkunda said in the exercise to hoist up train wagons the crew on the spot had ensured to inspected the inside of all passenger wagons to make sure no one remained inside, in whatever condition.

Kadogosa further said that 63 of those injured in the accident that killed

TURN TO PAGE 2

Investigations conducted in Arusha city have revealed hundreds of edible oil containers of 10 liters, filled with fake fatty liquids

to follow up on the two issues; cooking oil shortage and the racketeers selling grime to gullible buyers.

Arusha is facing an acute cooking oil shortage, causing most wholesale outlets for the product to close down. Retail shops stocking the oils reportedly only have old stock in stores with long queues of people outside scrambling for what is left.

Prices have also rocketed in sync with demand, with Sundrop Oil, made by Mount Meru Millers from sunflower, costing 50,000/- per package of 10 liters, from the usual 35,000/-, while Azania and Safi (METL) oils are now peddling for 42,000/- per container, instead of the usual 33,000/- per unit.

But despite the sharp and sudden increase in prices, edible oils are scarce and people still have to fight for the little available stock.

An edible oils distributor, Godlove Kimaro, operating from the central market, said the scarcity is due to many factories stopping production of edible oils.

"When asked they said production stopped due to lack of raw materials especially sunflower that is usually grown in Singida, where again farmers say that prolonged rains have taken

TURN TO PAGE 2



Conmen sell muddy water as cooking oil

FROM PAGE 1

a heavy toll on their sunflower farms, hindering crop growth," the trader explained, elaborating that importers and distributors are trying to reduce the deficit by ordering edible oils from Kenya, and even as far away as Turkey.

From Kenya, the traders are importing Elianto corn oil retailing at 25,000/- per three liter container and the cheaper sunflower oil from Turkey fetching 22,000/- per five liter container.

Previously the local Sundrop sunflower oils, packaged at five liters used to sell at 18,000/- before rising to 25,000/- while Safi went

for 17,000/- and rose to 20,000/- in the past month.

However the five liters packaging containers were apparently becoming scarce of late and producers resorted to filling the 10 liters containers now going for 50,000/-.

Atul Mittal, the Mount Meru Millers managing director, did not respond to efforts to reach him at his factory in Njiro, with his aides saying he was away in Dubai and there was nobody else at the plant to comment on the issue.

His firm refines Sundrop and Sunola edible oil products from sunflower.

Eight people appear in court for alleged forgery

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Mbeya had dragged to Court eight people including an accountant and cooperative union official for alleged forgery.

Deputy PCCB head for Mbeya Aduudi Mbura told journalists yesterday that the two Noeli Kalemela and Aggrey Nzingana first appeared in court on December, 15 in Chunya District.

The suspects were taken to court for allegedly crimes against anti-corruption law.

On December, 22 in another development a local village officer Akoya Mwakonde was also charged for alleged forgery against section 337 and 335 of the

penal code.

In another development, leaders of Ndandalo Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Societies (AMCOS) Andy Mwakang' ata, Godbless Mwakajinga and Elia Malila also appeared in court on 23 December, last year.

On the same matter, on December 28, PCCB in Mbeya took to court an accountant with Mbeya referral hospital Samweli Mwakusa and hospital chief medical officer Dr Philo Nchimbi. The officials were arraigned for misuse of 11.1 million/-.

On January, a local chairman for Itaja village Nonga Kaseja was arraigned in court for allegedly demanding a bribe against corruption regulations.



Former Zanzibar Chief Secretary Dr Abdulhamid Yahya Mzee (L) hands over office to his successor, Zena Ahmed Said, at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

FROM PAGE 1

three people (two women and a child) have been discharged from hospital. Just three patients were continuing with treatment, he stated.

Most of those injured were hospitalized at the Dodoma Referral Hospital, following the derailment of six wagons of a passenger train travelling to

TRC starts train derauling probe

Tabora and Mwanza regions.

A senior medical officer at the hospital, Stanley Mahundo said on Saturday they received 66 injured persons. Out of those 32 were admitted, six needing extensive surgeries while 34 were treated and remained at the hospital waiting for transport to

their destinations, noting also that all the 20 injured people taken to Bahi District Hospital were discharged.

The three patients remaining in wards were doing well and were likely to be discharged today, he stated, expressing gratitude for the government for its great

efforts towards improving health infrastructures, as this explains how patients obtained speedy treatment and rapid discharge.

Strengthening of the referral hospital's emergency unit saw a team rushing to the scene of the accident for the first aid services needed, the senior medic intoned.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa inspects a Mbanga Town Council building shortly after inaugurating it yesterday. Photo: PMO

AfDB boosts investments in green mini grids via SEFA

By Jean Marie Takouleu

THE board of directors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) has approved \$7 million to boost investment in green mini grids in Africa. This funding is being committed through the Sustainable Energy Facility for Africa (SEFA).

AfDB is supporting the deployment of mini-grids in Africa. The pan-African financial institution is providing 7 million dollars through its Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA) to boost investments in mini green grids, a rapidly growing electrification solution in Africa.

The funds support the Africa Mini-Grid Market Acceleration Programme (AMAP). This technical assistance programme is being implemented by the AfDB to boost private investment in mini green grids on the African

continent.

Its development rests on several pillars including the implementation of a new standard framework for Mini-Grid Acceleration Programmes (MAPs) at the national level in several countries; the design and improvement of financial risk reduction solutions; and support for knowledge, innovation and skills development activities.

The AfDB estimates that in its initial phase, AMAP is expected

"A holistic and broad-based support programme informed by the needs of the industry is needed to provide governments, investors and of course the mini-grids sector with the kind of support that can facilitate rapid and effective progress"

to provide 880,000 connections to small power grids powered by renewable sources.

The facilities built under the programme will have a cumulative capacity of 80 MW, providing access to electricity to 4 million people in Africa.

It will also, in its first phase, create 7,200 full-time jobs, 1,800 of which are expected to be held by women; reduce more than 6.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) over its lifetime; and facilitate public and private investment in mini-grids, estimated by the AfDB at US\$650 million.

"AMAP underscores the African Development Bank's commitment to strengthening the mini-grid industry in Africa, which we see as a key driver for accelerating energy access, climate resilience and a green recovery from Covid-19", said Kevin Kariuki, AfDB

Vice President for Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth.

The financial institution based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, places AMAP within the framework of its new policy on investment in the African energy sector, as well as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This vision is shared by Aaron Leopold, the Managing Director of the Association of Mini-Grid Developers, who believes that the achievement of Goal 7 (universal access to energy) of the SDGs as defined by the United Nations (UN) requires radical development.

"A holistic and broad-based support programme informed by the needs of the industry is needed to provide governments, investors and of course the mini-grids sector with the kind of support that can facilitate rapid and effective progress," explains Aaron Leopold.

PM sets PCCB on AMCOS bigwigs

FROM PAGE 1

pace of project implementation. He affirmed that the buildings will be constructed at Kingosera, taking into considerations that the contractor has already started the job.

He said the councillors want the buildings to be put up at Mkumbi ward, where the relocation exercise will require the government to pay compensations to villagers residing at the area.

"Shifting the project to Mkumbi ward will require the government to pay compensations amounting to 400m/-," he said, noting that the councillors push for that option while knowing there is an open area covering 150 acres at Kingosera which can be used for the project.

He emphasized that AMCOS leaders had agreed to give 3m/- to the councillors so that they bribe other members of the district council, directing further that AMCOS leaders should be arrested and interrogated on why they used farmers' monies to bribe the councillors.

PM expressed satisfaction with ongoing construction of the administration block which will cost 3.7bn/-, commending Mbanga DED Grace Quintine

for proper supervision of the project components, as they are being implemented at required standards.

"The DED has been ensuring proper expenditure of funds," he declared, pointing out that 350m/- was disbursed by the government for construction of seven houses for civil servants but she only spent 321m/- up to finishing the project.

The previous financial year, she was given 300m/- for construction of the house of the district director, but she only spent 251m/-, he said.

Quintine informed the premier that in the 2019/2020 financial year, the district received 650m/- for construction of the houses. Completion of the project has helped the district to save funds which were used to pay for rents every month, she added.



Shifting the project to Mkumbi ward will require the government to pay compensations amounting to 400m/-

LATRA enforces electronic tickets for upcountry buses

FROM PAGE 1

es Salaam to Tunduma, Rukwa, Morogoro, Kilombero, Ifakara, Malinyi and Mahenge.

"The authority directs all transporters to ensure that they adhere to the guidelines as announced in the Government Gazette on February 2, 2020.

Under the regulations, a license will be issued to a transporter who has been registered in an electronic ticketing system approved by the authority, the statement affirmed.

"Regulation no 24 (b) (d) states

that transporters with license to transport passengers on long routes, should ensure they issue electronic tickets to its passengers'. So all these regulations should be adhered to avoid disturbances," it pursued.

LATRA was formed in 2019 and its board unveiled May 2020, from the Surface and Marine Transport Regulatory Authority (SUMATRA). It is tasked with regulating the land transport sector, tasked with issuance, renewal and cancellation of permits or licences, registration of crew and certification of drivers.



Land Transport Regulatory Authority (Latra) director general Gilliard Ngewe (C) briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on plans for long-distance commuter buses to use electronic tickets with effect from tomorrow. He is with Latra senior information officer Salum Pazy (L) and e-Ticket project manager Tadei Mwita. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Police promise to cut back rise in incidence of road accidents

By Correspondent Theresia Victor

Police have vowed to take tough measures on offenders of traffic rules to curb the rising number of road accidents across the country. The Police yesterday said that it will continue to do everything possible to reduce road traffic accidents in the country's roads by 50 per cent from the current 34 per cent.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Simon Sirro made the remarks in Dar es Salaam when briefing journalists in a meeting that involved traffic police officers from special police zones of Dar es Salaam, Rufiji, and Coast regions.

The meeting was meant to evaluate the performance of the traffic department last year and plan for this year.

"We have performed better last year but a lot more should be done. We want the number of traffic road accidents to be reduced at least by 50 per cent this year," he said.

According to the police boss, among the measures include to facilitate traffic police officers with resources such as alcohol test kits, frequent vehicle inspection among others.

During the evaluation meeting, Sirro said the main challenge was corruption, adding that the police had been taking measures to combat the menace, revealing that there is a number of officers who have been suspended and others fired for graft related matters.

"We need to continue giving out civic education on tame the malpractice which is derailing our efforts to control road accidents," he said.

IGP Sirro warned bus owners against a tendency of changing vehicle plate numbers whenever they are fined to escape the long arm of the law enforcers, saying this was against the law and that police will not hesitate to take serious measures.

He used the opportunity to assure Tanzanians that the country was safe including Mtwara Region where there were reports of insurgency from militants from neighbouring Mozambique.

Despite increased efforts to make Tanzanian roads safer, road crashes continue to claim innocent lives, with over thousand deaths reported annually.

The statement by IGP Sirro comes some weeks after road accident claimed 14 lives at Mkiwa village, Ikungi District in Singida Region.

After the incident, President John Magufuli directed authorities responsible to ensure motorists observe road rules and regulations.

Stakeholders have in recent years raised voices, calling for tough laws to curb the vice.

Recently, the minister for Home Affairs George Simbachawene linked the decrease in road accidents in the year 2020 to a strong relationship between law enforcers and road users.

PCCB warns tractor loan defaulters

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Manyara Region has warned people who have been deceiving farmers who took tractor loans not to pay back because the tractors belong to the government.

Head of PCCB in Manyara Holle Makungu made the warning yesterday here when addressing a news conference.

According to him, all farmers who took tractor loans under the National Development

Corporation (NDC) in 2018 should repay them and not otherwise.

"There are some people who have been misleading farmers that the loans of tractors should not be repaid which is not true. These tractors were issued to the farmers as part of the government's plans to support modern and commercial farming and take farmers out of the poverty trap," he said.

He said that tractor loans amounting 7.5bn/- were issued to farmers in the districts of Babati, Hanang, Simanjiro, Mbulu and

Kiteto.

"PCCB has been given the task to ensure that the farmers repay the loans and the exercise is currently going on well in various areas. Those who are misleading the farmers should be very careful because we will not entrain the behaviour," Makungu said.

He said that the bureau has launched an investigation on such people going around to deceive farmers and those who will be caught, stern legal measures will be taken against them.

Makungu urged government

officials, Members of Parliament (MPs) and councillors in the respective districts to support the efforts to ensure that all the loans are settled.

"We are campaigning for the farmers to repay the loans because we want other farmers who are in need to access the loans and thus improve their farming," he added.

He said that the government's zeal is to see farmers in the country benefitting from the sector, improve their lives and fight poverty.

'Police and courts must do a lot more to reduce gender-based violence'

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

Police say are painfully aware of the high-profile cases of gender based violence and that functioning criminal justice system can play an important role in ensuring that victims of gender-based violence are able to access justice. Zanzibar should become more innovative in its response to gender-based violence.

Zanzibar's Minister of State in the President's Office (Constitutional Affairs, Public Service and Good Governance Haroun Ali Suleiman has said the government has put in place special strategies for the period 2017-2022 in fighting gender bases violence (GBV) and child abuse in the Isles.

On behalf of Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, Suleiman pledged to meet with all stakeholders in the issue of GBV and child abuse including the police force, the judiciary and the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions with the aim of speeding up trials of cases involving such crimes.

The minister gave the remarks when opening the first congratulatory festival for members of Sunni Madrasa at the event held at Sunni Madrasa Hall, Mkunazini in Unguja at the weekend.

He said the government was not pleased with the backlog of cases involving GBV and child abuse and called on the community to boost cooperation with legal apparatus to clear up case backlog.

He also used the opportunity to congratulate teachers who teach "Nasheed" field for the good work and begged them to continue with efforts to extend the profession to the Isles rural areas.

In the function, the minister

presented awards to winners of "Nasheed" festival, whereas Nasra Abdalla Mohamed, a student took number one spot and was presented with a refrigerator, a handbag and the Quran.

The second winner Asiat Ramadhan Jussa, also a student, received a sewing machine, a handbag and the Quran, whilst the third winner, Mudrik Msellem Ali walked away with a bicycle, a handbag and the Quran.

Earlier, the Executive Director of the Department of census and Arts Omar Abdalla Adamu thanked the event's organisers of the festival saying they completed all legal and traditional procedures and culture of Zanzibaris.

Sheikh Habibu Othman 'Mazinge' called on Muslims countrywide to pray to God for the maintenance of peace and unity among the people of Zanzibar.



He said the government was not pleased with the backlog of cases involving GBV and child abuse and called on the community to boost cooperation with legal apparatus to clear up case backlog



Education, Science and Technology deputy minister Omary Kipanga (L) leafs through one of the books on the Higher Education Students' Loans Board at the board's offices in Dar es Salaam yesterday. He is with HESLB managing director Abdul-Razaq Badru. Photo: Correspondent Ismail Bakari

Dodoma City reminds hoteliers, managers to keep premises clean

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

Creating the right environment and brand experience for hotels guests is essential. A poor experience could be damaging to hotel business, impacting customers loyalty, making them less likely to return. Clean and hygienic facilities, communal areas and washrooms play a key role in turning an average stay into a great one, and are some of the most important factors when recommending a hotel to friends and colleagues.

Dodoma City health officer Abdallah Mahia has called on the city's hotel and restaurant owners to

ensure their premises were in good and clean environment especially during the rainy season as a precaution against the outbreak of waterborne diseases.

Mahia issued the directives at the weekend when speaking to reporters during which he said people should adopt the culture of frequently washing hands even if there was no longer the Coronavirus pandemic to protect themselves against outbreak of other diseases.

He cited the diseases as including cholera, diarrhea, worms related diseases and bilharzia.


"I beseech you Dodoma City residents including owners of

restaurants, hotels and street food vendors to take precaution by ensuring your premises are clean and urging your customers to frequently wash their hands," he said.

He said everyone should wash hands with soap and running water against such diseases.

He added that the council continues with its operations in homes that do not abide by health regulations, including those who emit effluent into the streets whenever there is a downpour.

He also called on Dodoma residents to have permanent, better, and modern toilets instead of temporary ones that collapse during rainy season.



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In reply please quote:

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

1. The general public is hereby notified that there will be a movement of special load from DAR ES SALAAM to MARSHALING by vehicle with registration numbers: T 979 DAD - T 864 CDJ, T 834CDG - T659CDJ, T874CDG - T789DBZ, T868CDG - T643CDH of MATRIXLINE. The journey is scheduled to start on 05/01/2021.

2. Special load dimensions:
Length - 22.00m
Width - 2.84
Height - 4.90

3. Route from DSM PORT to MARSHALING YAPI MERKEZI Via MANDELA ROAD
Travelling time will be only day time (06:30 am - 06:00 pm)
We regret for any inconvenience caused.

Govt restricts district executive directors from imposing levies on harvested marine resources 'at random'

By Guardian Reporter

LIVESTOCK and Fisheries minister Mashimba Ndaki has restricted district executive directors from imposing levies on harvested marine resources at international fish markets without consulting the ministry.

The move, according to the minister, will help reduce challenges facing small-scale fish processors and traders including the levies imposed on fishery products.

Tanzania is rich in fisheries resources from marine, freshwater, rivers and wetland species. "Fish traders have been complaining on the various taxes and levies imposed on fish and fish products saying they are 'unfriendly'. You must consult the ministry so that we came up with the amounts which will benefit both the ministry and district councils," said Ndaki.

He was speaking shortly after visiting the Bukombe international fish market at Kasenda village, Muganza ward in Chato District and Kirumba international fish market in Ilemela District, Mwanza Region. The minister also attended a livestock auction at Buzirayombo ward in Bukombe District.

Chato Member of Parliament, Dr Medard Kalemani appealed to the minister to consider providing loans to groups of registered fish traders and processors. He added that small scale fishermen can improve their businesses if financially supported and also assisted to get quality fishing gears.

Some interviewed fish traders at Kasenda village called upon the government to enhance efforts to control illegal fishing. They also commended the government

efforts towards improving the fisheries sector for the country's economic development.

Data from the ministry indicates that Tanzania's fish exports rose by a goodly 82 per cent in the past four years.

The country exported fish and fish products worth 696bn/- in total during the 2018/19 financial year, up from 379.25bn/- in the 2015/16 financial year.

The increase was due to the government's decision to scrap some nuisance taxes associated with the fisheries sub-sector.

The government has enacted the Deep Sea Fishing Management and Development Act 2020, replacing the Deep Sea Fishing Authority Act of 1998.

The aim of the new law was to attract more public and private sector investors in the sector. It also reformed the Fisheries Act (No 22 of 2003) with the aim of separating fishing activities from water species issues.

However, amendment of the 2009 Fisheries Regulations is intended to encourage participation of locals in fishing activities.

In October, 2020, President John Magufuli announced plans to procure eight new vessels as part of the government's efforts to promote an ocean-based economy.

President Magufuli revealed that his government is currently engaged in talks with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), to bring in the vessels from next year.

He said the vessels' arrival is expected to transform lives in the country and in particular among the fishing communities of coastal regions, who largely depend on the fisheries sector.



Arusha Urban legislator Mrisho Gambo (L) addresses a meeting at Olkungu in Terrat ward yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Getrude Mpezya

By Guardian Reporter, Mtwara

CONSTRUCTION of Mtwara regional referral hospital which will cost 16bn/- is going on well, according to Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development deputy minister Dr Angeline Mabula. The project is being under taken by the National Housing Corporation (NHC).

During the first day of her visit in Mtwara and Lindi regions at the weekend, Dr Mabula said despite NHC facing financial challenges, used its own funds amounting to 2.4bn/- to speed up construction

Mabula hails referral hospital ongoing construction project

while waiting for 2.7bn/- set aside for the project..

She said NHC's decision to use its own funds was aimed to ensure the project does not stall. The hospital will serve residents of Mtwara, Ruvuma and Lindi regions as well as neighbouring countries.

She said Mtwara referral hospital, apart from its intended

purpose could also be used by tourists because is near the Indian Ocean beach, and called on the Lands department in Mikindani town council to ensure the area is redesigned as a tourist attraction.

For his part, the Nanyamba Member of Parliament Dadi Hamis Chikota thanked the government for its follow up

on the hospital's construction work and praised the NHC for its construction pace and excellent job, pledging that Mtwara Region MPs will make a follow up on the financial challenges facing it.

The Mtwara referral hospital project was supposed to be completed in September 2020 but now it is expected to be handed over at the end of this month.



Finding no better option, these residents of Ilongo village in Mbarali District's Mahongole ward resorted to a power tiller to make it to their farms and back yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

Seif intervenes in Micheweni council fish salers conflict

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR'S First Vice President Seif Sharif Hamad has called on top officials of Micheweni Kisiwani District in Pemba to sit with stakeholders of Wingwi Njuguni market to end the tussle pitting the district council and fish sellers at the market.

He said it would be better if political leaders, the district

council and fish sellers discuss better ways to develop the market that was inaugurated last year.

Hamad issued the advice during his impromptu visit at the market at the weekend.

Since the construction of the market, fishermen refused to do business therein, instead they continued transacting business in their former area on claims that the new market was built very far

from the road, saying they will not be visited by buyers.

Hamad said when people find it hard when asked to shift to a new area, hence district officials to remove existing challenges to enable fish sellers to shift to the new market.

Fish sellers at the market say normally they sell their fish to passersby because the new market is far from the road these

buyers will not be able to come.

"We decided to return to our former area because buyers were not coming at the new market," said Issa Hassan a fish seller.

He said they saw it better to pay a big rent but assured of buyers.

Micheweni district executive director Mbwana Hamad Shehe said they remade the market's infrastructure but yet fishermen refused to use it.

Chunya District to offer cash rewards reports on minerals smuggling

By Guardian Correspondent, Chunya

AUTHORITIES in Chunya District will begin giving cash rewards to anyone who will provide reports that will enable the arrest of people engaged in the smuggling of minerals out of the district.

Chunya District Commissioner Mayeka Simon gave the pledge here at the weekend at a special meeting attended by the district's defense and security organs and officials from the minerals office that discussed how to eradicate minerals smuggling.

The meeting took place a few weeks after two police officers and a minerals trader were arrested for engaging themselves in the smuggling of minerals and subsequently arraigned.

In addition, a few days later the Minerals minister revoked licences for some gold traders in the district.

The DC said the rewards will be given to people from all cadres including members of the police, ordinary citizens as well as small miners.

He also called on the people to provide information even on gold buyers in formal areas including homes since the areas are illegal in minerals transactions.

"When we receive such information we will make a follow up and if the tip off is authentic and a smuggler is apprehended, we will give cash reward to the informer," said DC Mayeka.

Chunya District Police OCD Titus Lugomba said he will take steps to ensure the issue of police personnel engaging themselves

in minerals smuggling does not happen again.

He said he would call a meeting with all police personnel in the district and issue directives as well as admonishing acts that do not go in tandem with police ethics.

He added that all deficiencies that came up in the police force would be eradicated in a short time including taking stern measures against all those involved.

Minerals officer from Chunya special minerals region Sabai Nyansiri said since a minerals market was established in the district, gold production from small miners has increased ten-fold.

He said the current challenge stems from areas in the district with weak control, providing loophole to smugglers, and added that cooperation from all stakeholders was needed to arrest the situation.

However, some police officers cited some loopholes that could spur minerals smuggling in the district and how to control them.

One of the police officer, Abuu Mchuchuli said as for now there was no procedure to verify the quantity of minerals produced reach the minerals market, the environment that spurs smuggling.

"When we receive such information we will make a follow up and if the tip off is authentic and a smuggler is apprehended, we will give cash reward to the informer"

DUWASA creativity impresses ministry deputy PS

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

DEPUTY Permanent Secretary in the Water ministry, Nadhifa Kemikimba has been impressed by the decision of the Dodoma Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DUWASA) to revive old bore holes abandoned due to poor management, terming a creative way of solving water shortage in Dodoma.

Speaking during a visit to the site for drilling of additional new bore holes and revival of the old ones at Ihumwa and Nzuguni

wellfields, she applauded the management of DUWASA for the creativity.

However, despite the praise to the management, the deputy PS challenged them to ensure that drilling of the new bore holes is done within the specified period of time for city residents to access enough water.

"I am impressed by creative ways the management has adopted efforts to end water woes in the city, a clear sign that challenges always lead to search for new knowledge," she

said adding that if all such bore holes are revived, there will be increased water supply in the capital city.

Speaking about one of the bore holes drilled in 1989 and currently under revival at Nzuguni area, the acting DUWASA's Executive Director, Joseph Aron said initial results show that it will be able to produce 8000 litres of water per hour and that the water is clean and safe for domestic use.

He said as of now DUWASA is implementing the strategy to drill new bore holes and revive 11 old

ones, which upon completion will be connected to the main water system to increase supply in the city.

Earlier, Kemikimba in her tour inspected the construction of a water tank with a capacity to carry 2.5 million litres of water at the Buigiri area. The project is undertaken by Suma JKT at the cost of 998mn/-.

She later visited the Uhuru hospital in Chamwion area to see the proposed water pipeline from Buigiri-based water tank to the water source at the hospital. She also visited the ongoing drilling of bore hole at Ihumwa, giving a thirty days' ultimatum for the contractor to complete the work.

Last month Minister for Water, Jumaa Aweso instructed DUWASA to drill two more bore holes to

help increase supply of water in the city to at least 1.2 million litres per hour.

Speaking during an impromptu visit to Mbali area within Makutupora valley where DUWASA is currently drilling a borehole that can supply 400,000 per hour, the minister urged the water authority to act swiftly and reduce water shortage in Dodoma.

"Upon completion of this bore hole you should drill other two that can produce 1.2 million litres of water per hour and solve water shortage in Dodoma," he said, adding that they should be drilled at Ihumwa and Zuzu areas respectively.

The minister noted that currently DUWASA supplies a total of 66 million litres of water per hour while the actual demand

is 103,608 million litres per hour.

He said the government through the ministry has given DUWASA Sh1bn/- to improve water supply in areas with serious shortage of water within the city, promising to follow up on the drilling of boreholes, adding the projects will be undertaken both day and night.

Aweso expressed disappointment with the situation whereby some parts of the city have access to water while others do not have water completely stating that such unfairness must stop.

He explained that the government is committed to ensure Dodoma city have reliable access of water, mention the planned construction of Farkwa dam in Chemba district as one of the strategies.



Karagwe District Council chairman Wallace Mashanda underlines the need for students to get food during class hours. This was at a meeting called by Karagwe legislator and information, Culture, Arts and Sports minister Innocent Bashungwa, who toured the district at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Ellud Rwe-chungura

Lack of iron corrugated sheets delays building of VETA colleges in Arusha

By Guardian Correspondent, Longido

CONSTRUCTION of two vocational educational training colleges in Longido and Makuyuni in Arusha Region delayed due to lack of iron corrugated sheets, which are in line with the government's building guidelines.

Arusha regional commissioner (RC) Idd Kimanta said that most of the iron sheets which are imported from South Africa and are now so scarce thus affecting the projects.

He said the construction of the colleges wanted the use of iron sheets with sky blue colour.

During his visit at the construction site here, RC Kimanta said that the government has disbursed 63 percent of the funds; it was still hard to find the government's recommended iron sheets.

Recently, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa directed authorities in Arusha to fast track the construction of the colleges that they want them to complete before January this year.

"We thank the government for issuing over 60 percent of the funds, but the major challenge is to get the iron sheets as per the government's building guidelines. A total of 3.4bn/- has been set aside for the construction of the two vocational training colleges and the work was supposed to take six months to completion," he explained.

He said that the Vocational Educational

Authority (VETA) wanted all its colleges to be roofed with the sky blue colour iron sheets.

"The delay of the iron sheets which are being imported by Alaf company ltd from South Africa is a main reason for the stagnated projects, this because of the impacts brought by Covid-19 in the southern nation," he added.

Kimanta however expressed displeasure on the pace of the construction of the

Makuyuni College in Monduli despite facing the iron sheets challenge.

"The workforce deployed here is still very low, it doesn't give any hope, why can't you reach an agreement with the Makuyuni National Service to fast track the construction," he added.

Arusha VETA College who is also supervising the construction of the Longido College B a n g a n t a b o n a Deusdedit Mrefu said they are expecting to complete the

construction at the end of next month if the equipment will be found on time.

Earlier, Longido District Commissioner (DC) Frank Mwaisumbe expressed concerns that the wood designated for roofing the buildings may decay if the iron sheets will continue to delay.

"The forthcoming masika rains may leave negative impacts to the woods as they will decay due to the water," he said.



TENDER NOTICE

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) intends to engage the service provider for staff health insurance

Therefore, the Danish Refugee Council in Kibondo request the suppliers/service provider to submit their prices for the above services.

The bidding documents can be collected at the Danish Refugee Council Office in Kibondo from 05th January, 2021 during the working days and hours. 8:00 Am to 4:30 Pm in the following address: Old IRC Road Area, Kibondo. You can call on: +255625482649 or through email jackson.maseke@drc.ngo to receive the soft copy by email.

The closing date for the submission of the bids is 11th January 2021 at 4:30 Pm.

The RFP will be opened on 12th January, 2021 at 10:00 AM at DRC Kibondo Office, PO Box 177 Kibondo by the DRC Tender Opening Committee.

You can return your bid form through RFQ.TZA@drc.ngo OR DIRECT TO THE DRC OFFICE otherwise is void

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – PREQUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS FOR PROVISION OF HIRE SIX (6) DIESEL GENERATORS WITH RATING OF 1250KVA FOR THE DIESEL POWER PLANT EXPANSION AND IT'S AUXILIARY AT STAR & COMET FOR GEITA GOLD MINING LIMITED AT GEITA MINE SITE

I. INTRODUCTION

Geita Gold Mining Limited ("The Company") an AngloGold Ashanti's ("AGA") asset is located in north western Tanzania, in the Lake Victoria goldfields of the Geita region, about 5km from Geita town.

The Company is in the process of Hiring Six (6) Diesel Generators with Rating of 1250KVA for the Diesel Power Plant Expansion and it's auxiliary at star & comet and is, therefore, inviting interested eligible service providers to submit Expression of Interest for the below service.

Scope of work:

REFERENCE NUMBER	SERVICE TO BE PROCURED
GGME01094	HIRE SIX (6) DIESEL GENERATORS WITH RATING OF 1250KVA FOR THE DIESEL POWER PLANT EXPANSION AND IT'S AUXILIARY AT STAR & COMET

1. INFORMATION REQUIRED

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	10%
COMMERCIAL	
Company Profile	1.25%
Copy of registration/Incorporation Certificate	1.25%
Copy of Valid Tax Clearance Certificate (TCC)	1.25%
Copy of TIN Certificate of Firm/company and VRN	1.25%
Copy of Current Business Permit/Trade license.	1.25%
Company Shareholding Structure/Share structure of the company (ownership of shares in percentage (%))	1.25%
List of Directors	1.25%
Compliance with the Mining (Local Content) Regulations, 2018 by having Local Content plan - Approved by mining Commission	1.25%
FINANCIAL POSITION & TERMS OF TRADE	5%
Audited & certified financial statements (2018-2019)	2.5%
At least 2 references from the applicant's bankers regarding supplier's credit position	2.5%
SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	5%
OSHA Compliance Certificate	1.25%
Environment Compliance Certificate	1.25%
Workers Compensation Fund Certificate/ any proof of compliance	1.25%
Safety and Environmental Policies	1.25%
PAST EXPERIENCE	5%
At least 3 names of the applicant's clients, value and duration of the contracts entered into with the clients in the past two years (must be listed)	1.25%
Signed contracts/LPOs (proof of the above)	1.25%
Acceptance certificates/completion certificates (proof of the above) where applicable	1.25%
Provide at least 3 recommendation letters from different clients	1.25%
TECHNICAL CRITERIA	75%
Details of Equipment's owned and status [i.e. List of equipment owned (indicate condition, rating and availability) with ownership proof.	25%
Details of Maintenance Manual/details/records of Each equipment.	25%
Managerial site organogram and CV's details for Key Personnel's	25%
Total	100%

Interested bidders must submit expression Letters of Interest ("LOI") by quoting the SERVICE DESCRIPTION AND REFERENCE NUMBER (GGME01094) of the service they intend to express interest on THE SUBJECT OF THE EMAIL together with supporting information to GGML, which states the full name, address, telephone and e-mail address of the bidder, name of the principal contact, and signed by an authorized representative. The LOI must outline a statement of firm capability to provide the relevant Services. All LOIs and support documentation must be received by the GGML Office via e-mail at geita.eoi@anglogoldashanti.com not later than 0830 A.M 15 January 2021 (the "LOI" Submission Deadline). EOI submissions should not exceed 10MB per email. In case the size of the email exceeds 10MB, please split the submissions into more than one email.

=END OF ADVERTISEMENT=

Mwanza-based health college to award 100 scholarships to students from needy families

By Guardian Correspondent,

Mwanza

MWANZA-based Tandabui Institute of Health Sciences and Technology (TIHEST) is expected to award over 100 scholarships to students from deprived families.

This is a special programme designed to support President John Magufuli's free education policy and drive to uplift the livelihoods of low-income Tanzanians.

"Our President has shown kindness to help poor Tanzanians, and we, as an institute would like to support this well-intended initiative," said TIHEST Principal, Emmanuel Magubu in an official statement circulated to the media yesterday.

As part of the implementation of its programme, TIHEST expects to provide scholarships to more than 100 students from poor families to study various health and related courses at the institute. The scholarships will be announced officially during the TIHEST's 8th graduation ceremony set for Friday in Mwanza.

According to the principal, TIHEST's support to poor students started a long time ago and that "what we are doing now is to re-shape the programme to reach out to more beneficiaries and make it sustainable."

Until now, TIHEST management has provided assistance to more than 2000 students to study various healthcare courses since the inception of the institute in 2012.

"We are reviewing the structure and systems of our scholarship programme so that we may reach out to as many needy students as possible," said the principal.

The latest 100 scholarships expected to be announced during the graduation is part of the institute's strategy to groom more health experts who would help

many poor Tanzanians to access better health services.

"Good health is central to the realisation of President Magufuli's resolve to assist the poor and industrial development," said TIHEST principal, adding that "efficiency in all sectors of the economy depends on healthy citizens, capable of working hard and bringing about development".

TIHEST supports President Magufuli's drive to help poor Tanzanians says Magubu, adding "that's why we are providing scholarships to poor students and produce health experts who can bring better services to Tanzania, thus contribute to the realization of our dream of the industrial economy."

"We, as an institute, are doing business, but we have this programme of scholarships to help students from poor families to help implement the fifth phase government strategies that aim at increasing the number of health experts and ultimately enable the nation to make great strides in development," said the principal.

The scholarship programme, according to the principal, had been pioneered by the founder of TIHEST, Dr Kavita Mushi, "who had a dream to ensure students from poor families won't fail to access better education due to their financial constraints."

Andrew Charles, one of the beneficiaries of the TIHEST scholarships said; "my parents are poor and unable to pay my school fees, but I have studied a diploma course through the help of TIHEST."

"I had a dream to be a doctor but was unable to realise it due to financial limitations. I thank TIHEST for enabling me to study higher education free of charge and be able to realise my dream," Hassan Mohamed says, another beneficiary of the TIHEST scholarship programme.



Isaya Maliyaki, a trader at Mirerani tanzanite mining site in Simanjiro District, speaks on the need for training on safety in the area at a meeting held at Naisinyai village at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Govt to upgrade Kilyamatundu-Usevya road up to tarmac level

By Guardian Correspondent,

Sumbawanga

DEPUTY Minister for Works and Transport Eng Godfrey Kasekenya said the government plans to construct the 200 kilometers Kilyamatundu-Usevya road to tarmac level to save money which was spent to repair it after every rain season.

Construction of the road, which is along the Lake Rukwa valley, will go together with construction of bridges which have been swept away by the ongoing heavy rains in Sumbawanga District, Rukwa

Region. The Lake Rukwa valley is famous for paddy cultivation.

"The government spends a lot of money to repair the road and construct bridges every year; construction of the road to a tarmac level will be a permanent solution to these problems," said the deputy minister who was in the district to inspect construction progress of various roads including the 200 kilometers road from Kilyamatundu to Usevya.

Eng Kasekenya added that efforts are ongoing to ensure the damaged roads and bridges continue to be passable throughout the year.

She said preparations for construction of the Kilyamatundu-Usevya road have already started noting that engineers have completed feasibility study.

Kwela Constituency Member of Parliament, Deus Sangu said that evaluations conducted by experts from the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) shows that construction of the eight bridges will require 4.4bn/-.

Sangu commended the government for taking immediate actions to repair the roads which are crucial for the region's socio-economic development. He said most of the residents conduct

agricultural activities at the Lake Rukwa valley and depend on the roads to take their crops to market places. "Repairing the roads and bridges will enable businessmen who are in the region to purchase maize and rice to transport them on time. The ongoing rains have cut road communications within the district," he added.

Maize and paddy are dominant annual crops grown in Rukwa Region. Farmers also cultivate some garden crops such as beans, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, bananas, mangoes, lemons, pineapples, sesame, and sugar cane.



Ernest Kimaya (R), councillor for Chumbageni in Tanga city, briefs Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Environment), Ummu Mwalimu (C, in headscarf) on the ongoing construction of classrooms at Chumbageni Secondary School. The minister toured the school yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon

Use natural forest resources sustainably, MJUMITA says

By Getrude Mbago

THE Tanzania Community Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA) has urged villages in the country to invest heavily in natural forests and make proper use of the resource for sustainable development.

Elida Fundi, MJUMITA's policy and advocacy officer made the call during the weekend when speaking to villagers of Mtawatawa and Darajani in Liwale District, Lindi Region.

According to her, if villages could see the potential available in the forest reserves and invest efforts to conserve them, then they could reap big and thus stimulate development.

"Villages land forests have a lot of opportunities, what we have to do is to conserve them and use products from the forests sustainably to improve income villagers should be educated on the importance of protecting natural forests," she said.

She noted that natural forests play a vital role in sustainable development, climate change mitigation, and climate change adaptation.

She said that MJUMITA in collaboration with the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) has been coming out with several projects to support conservation of villages' natural forests as well enabling villagers to utilize opportunities with the land sustainably. Fundi said: "Through our 'Transforming Tanzania's Charcoal Sector (TTCS)' project, we have reached over 30 villages in Kilosa, Mvomero and Morogoro District in Morogoro Region with right education on sustainable production and use of charcoal and timber."

She said that currently, the network is implementing the Conserving Forests through sustainable, forest-based

Enterprise Support in Tanzania (CoForEST) project from 2019 to 2022. The focus for the project is to scale-up the model beyond the original three districts and to strengthen mechanisms to sustain the mode.

"The project has started to produce positive outcomes as it has stimulated development and increased conservation. We should all continue to incentivize communities to choose to allocate some of their land for natural forest conservation," she added.

Liwale District Administrative Secretary (DAS) Rajabu Kambangwa commended MJUMITA, TFCG and other stakeholders for their efforts in supporting villages to conserve natural forests.

He also hinted on the note that forest-based enterprises such as charcoal production and timber harvesting in sustainably managed forests have the potential to generate employment and incomes for rural communities.

"In the Liwale District, authorities collect over 2bn/- per year in tax and levies from forest products, these funds are then directed in development projects," he said.

He said that the government in collaboration with stakeholders has been implanting various projects aimed to support conservation efforts for sustainable development.

MJUMITA is a network of community groups involved in Participatory Forest Management (PFM) in Tanzania. The network provides a forum for capacity building, advocacy and communication for these groups.

The network also supports communities to demand and defend their forest rights where these are being threatened including in cases where private sector companies have attempted to take community forests.

After peace, follows accountability - Dr Mwinyi

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi has said after the maintenance of unity and peace in the Isles what remains now is to continue preaching accountability in the public and private sectors to usher in speedy development.

Dr Mwinyi issued the remarks at the weekend when speaking to Muslim worshippers in Afraa Bint Issa Mosque at Kidongohekundu, in Zanzibar Urban West Region during prayers.

Dr Mwinyi stressed for the need

of accountability from everyone in regard to the positions they hold in order to attain the envisaged development goals.

Citing three things which, if followed would usher in development peace, unity and the entire question of accountability, Dr Mwinyi stressed need for everyone to be accountable.

"A tax collector must collect tax, for if he doesn't we cannot have money for development, a waste collector should do his duty, else urban areas will become filthy, a health worker should serve patients well, if all of us become

accountable huge development strides will be realized," Dr Mwinyi said.

He said as a leader he has already started taking steps against issues that retard development efforts in the Isles.

He added that there were some people who would not be pleased with the steps he was taking, the steps that he said were essential in instilling discipline in the public service, the discipline that calls for accountability in regard to public funds expenditure, the funds that cater for all Zanzibaris, and

not just for some greedy few.

He also used the opportunity to thank all the people of Zanzibar for maintaining unity saying on the government side they have already taken steps to usher in the government of national unity aimed to unite the people in order to bring in development.

Earlier, reading his prayers sermon, the Mosque's Sheikh Omar Bin Abeid stressed for the need for Muslims to abide by ethics and praised President Mwinyi steps on accountability as part of his duties for the nation's benefit.

Traffic police in Kahama resort to community radio to lower carnage on roads

By Correspondent Rose Mwalongo recently in Kahama

KAHAMA, District has managed to reduce road accidents for the year 2020, with statistics from the Kahama District Traffic Police Office indicating that the district recorded seven road accidents for the period of January to June 2020, compared to the 23 road accidents for the same period in 2019.

The reduction in road accidents in the district can be attributed to regular patrols, newly installed traffic lights as well as partnership between the district traffic police and Kahama Community Radio, where the latter have been using radio programmes to create awareness on road use.

Speaking during an exclusive interview with The Guardian, PC Mwajuma Kitoro, a traffic officer in the district said road accidents had indeed gone down citing an example of a four-way junction, which before the installation of lights claimed many lives.

PC Kitoro attributes part of their success to their close partnership and radio campaigns with Kahama FM, a local station in the area.

"Kahama FM has always been with us and was with us before the traffic lights were installed where we had a program titled kurasa mpya, alias new pages where we would sensitize pedestrians and drivers on road safety and eventually traffic lights were installed in two of the most notorious black spots in town. We also convened students and other pedestrians at the traffic lights to educate them on proper road use, on when to cross and when not to," said Kitoro.

PC Nuran Mwakitubu, another traffic police officer in the district echoes her sentiments saying the radio and the police have

both been working closely with the community to reduce road carnage.

"Kahama FM has a radio program to create awareness on road safety, educating pedestrians and motorbike drivers on general road use to reduce accidents. We now have seen fewer reports compared to the previous ones. The installed traffic lights have also reduced congestion of cars as every driver wanted to pass around, but lights have reduced that. We used the radio to educate pedestrians on road use, as lights were a new thing in the area. Most buses spend a night here and there have not been any major accidents within the major roads," said Mwakitubu.

According to Mwakitubu, the number of fatal road accidents had gone down from 14 during the period of January to June 2019 to 2 within the same period in 2020.

"The number of people who were injured from road accidents went down from 34 in January to June 2019 to 13 for January to June 2020," says Mwakitubu.

Kahama FM has been enjoying support from UNESCO under its SDC project.

The radio is situated in Kahama, the mining belt of Tanzania, a home to international trade resulting from the district being an inland port and a transit corridor for the landlocked countries of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and DRC.



The number of people who were injured from road accidents went down from 34 in January to June 2019 to 13 for January to June 2020



Idd Malamsha (L, in cap), chairman of artisanal miners at Mirerani in Simanjiro District, has a word with the miners at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Improved water project to benefit over 18,000 Babati town residents

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

MORE than 18,000 Babati Town residents expect to benefit from the improved water project that will be managed by Babati Water and Sanitary Authority (BAWASA).

This was revealed at the weekend by BAWASA Acting Managing Director Eng Rashid Chalahani when speaking to this paper.

Chalahani said the project

is in the FY 2020/2021 budget for improvement of the water supply service in Babati town by boosting its water infrastructures.

He cited the areas that will benefit from the project as including Mutuka, Chemchem, Wann'waray, Mkuyuni B, Majengo, Arri, Haraa, Bonga, Wangbo, Imbilili and Dagailoy.

He further said the entire project will cost 994.5m/- upon completion.

Eng Chalahani said in FY 2020/2021 BAWASA has mobilized itself to construct water dams at Maisaka Katanini area.

"The project will be implemented by the government through the Water Ministry and its feasibility study has already been done for its second phase," he added.

He also said the first phase will involve the construction of dams that will cost 721.7m/- whereas the second phase includes the

purchase of sewage collection trucks and laboratory equipment to cost 482m/-.

John Duway, a resident of Imbilili area said BAWASA project was good if implemented in deeds.

For his part, Hussein dodo, a Majengo area resident also praised the project, especially its provision of sewage collection trucks which will control sewage that could affect the health of Babati residents.



China Railway Seventh Group workers collect stones in readiness for the rehabilitation of the edges of Dar es Salaam's Chang'ombe Road, as found yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Farmers in Muheza District now demand establishment of board for organic spices

By Guardian Correspondent, Muheza

FARMERS engaged in organic spice cultivation in Amani ward, Muheza District in Tanga Region have appealed to the government to establish a spice board to supervise their activities.

The board under the ministry of agriculture will oversee cultivation of organic spices such as garlic, tea, black pepper and cloves.

In separate interviews with this paper, the farmers noted that establishment of the board would boost production of the spices since it would also be easily to market them within and outside the country. They said spice farmers also deserve the government attention as well as being assisted to find markets as it is in other cash and food crops.

John Mdachi said they have been supervising themselves for

several years, hence the need to have a specific body that will govern their activities as well as setting indicative prices.

He said farmers have been selling spices depending on prices set by buyers because they don't have information and access to other markets outside the country.

"In Zanzibar, a kilo of black pepper is sold at 45,000/- but we are forced to sell it at 12,000/- due to lack of coordinated markets," said Mdachi.

Ramadhan Mdaa said they need government's support to be able to market their products internationally.

"We feel sidelined because the government oversees prices of all other crops except spices. We are producing thousands of tonnes of spices which could help the government to earn foreign currency," he added.

Spice farmers in Muheza District harvested over 120 98.7 tonnes in 2017.

As drought looms in Longido, herders urged to sell cattle in good time

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

LONGIDO District Commissioner, Frank Mwaisumbe has advised herders in the district to better sell their livestock during this period while they are still healthy before they are being hit by the severe impacts of drought.

According to Mwaisumbe, due to low vuli rains this year, most of the district has been hit by drought thus affecting water and feeds of the animals.

"It is better for the farmers to

take decision now before the animals become skinny or die due to lack of enough food, we have witnessed difficult situation for livestock keepers here due to drought brought by insufficient vuli rains, to avoid more effects, let us them sell the animals while they are healthy," the DC advised the herders.

In an interview with this paper, Mwaisumbe said that animals like cattle, sheep and goats need enough feed to survive and stay healthy, so contrary to that the

animals may die.

"There are some herders who have already taken their animals to the areas with enough water and feeds, but those who are yet to do so, I advise them to sell the animals now, the livestock can be sold to the meat processing factory located at Namanga border area," he added.

He also urged the pastoralists who will sell the animals to make proper use of the monies by purchasing calves and goats once the masika rain season begins so

as to sustain their business.

The official also warned some herders who have been moving their animals from Longido to Emboseri area in Kenya and West Kilimanjaro to avoid selling the animals in the neighboring country without obtaining permit from the government because doing so is against the country's laws.

"There are some pastoralists who take advantage of the drought situation to sell the animals in the neighboring Kenya to avoid

tax and levies, this is not allowed and once we catch them, stern measures will be taken," he said.

Steven Kiruswa, Longido legislator said that he has started to mobilize resources, encourage pastoralists to form groups and sell the livestock at a fair price.

"Majority of the pastoralists have been falling into the wrong hands of agents when it comes to selling their animals, this is why they are campaigning and educating them to avoid these dealers but rather form groups

to sell the animals in a profitable way," he said.

He said that selling the animals will also improve their income and food security in their households.

"We are organizing a mega conference which will bring all pastoralists in Longido to discuss among other things commercial and sustainable livestock keeping, during the conference, a number of challenges facing the group will be addressed including how to fight the impacts brought by drought," Kiruswa said.

TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 2021

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Ngorongoro's environmental crisis can't wait much longer

ENVIRONMENTALISTS and conservation observers generally have in recent months been aware of a rapidly developing environmental crisis in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, as its authority and related agencies like the wildlife research institute have piled data on the situation. From its creation in 1959 as an offshoot of the then Serengeti Game Reserve to the present, the land surface is constant but the pressure building from the population is increasingly unmanageable. And now local dogs are adding to the bill.

Social media adepts were put to a strange spectacle mid last week when video clips emerged showing seemingly trained dogs pursue and kill herbivores within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Reports said that in one video, a pack of the hounds surrounded and attacked a large wildebeest as occupants of tourist vehicles nearby watched helplessly. Another clip showed three dogs killing and eventually eating an antelope. Conservationists were soon demanding how the dogs, who seemed rather unlike the usual domestic dogs we know, found their way in, and how their owners had the audacity of hunting wildlife.

This crisis about dogs has complicated an already difficult situation where animals have a narrowed habitat. Dr Edward Kohi, principal researcher at the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI), said that the presence of such dogs was a disturbing situation, elaborating that the hound packs appear to be domesticated Maasai dogs, not a trained external group. What was bad was that their owners are unable to feed the dogs in a

routine way, and they are left to fend for themselves, thus forming ferocious packs.

The crisis in the key conservation area can be understood when it is noted that when the zone was separated from the then Serengeti Game Reserve in 1959, Ngorongoro had 8000 nomadic pastoralists. The number has since catapulted to over 100,000 ordinarily permanent residents, forming a bottleneck that is compounded by climate change, spawning invasive grass species meanwhile as the conservation area grazing areas were diminishing already. The bigger population also has massive livestock numbers.

Researchers say that 60 years ago the Maasai within NCAA kept less than 200,000 livestock between them, but as of 2019 the number of cattle, goats and sheep has quadrupled to over 800,000 kept animals. When this population now becomes a source of pestering animals and disturbing the tourist peace where hunting packs are usually distant and not in view, save for those in hunting safaris, the problem is clearly exacerbated. It is matter of solving not just the rampaging dogs but also the rising population, together.

The government has in recent years moved to map out grazing areas in different regions, though it is hard to say there are zones whose populations are sufficiently sparse for many to be resettled from the key conservation area. At the same time more methodical solutions can be found of purchasing most of the cattle and moving the population to a different area to start again. If they could also get those moving to adopt modernized forms of livestock keeping, such dangers are sharply reduced.

Bahi train accident: Infrastructure revamping still has long way to go

ANOTHER train accident in the central zone has awakened the public conscience that there is still plenty of danger in taking a train from Dar es Salaam to upcountry regions. Accidents are ordinarily supposed to come out of unpredictable situations, not just a heavy downpour piling up sand on the rails, disturbing the concrete and slabs, and this isn't discovered before a regular passenger train takes from the last major station to that area. Not only are the railway lines too exposed to rains and soil slides, but checks are rare.

Following the accident, the government announced that it would pay all treatment costs for over 60 injured people after wagons derailed at Kigwe area on Saturday night killed three passengers and left 66 others injured. Visiting those admitted at the Dodoma referral hospital, Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan said that the government will make sure that all patients received full treatment and settle the bills.

Dr Ernest Ibenzi, the Medical Officer in charge at the referral hospital, told the media that 33 out of the 66 injured had already been discharged from the facility. The news was bright but the hard work remains.

VP Samia pointed out that the TRC management put up a quick response and the hospitals showed acute readiness to start treating those injured in the accident, victims. The Minister for Home Affairs, George Simbachawene arrived at the scene of the accident and told reporters that the accident arose from effects of the ongoing rains, damaging the railway infrastructures stacking

mud on the rails. That situation more or less smacks of what we used to see in most Dar es Salaam roads, and not things are getting far better.

It means there is a railway aspect of infrastructure revamping that awaits, to modernize the central railway line so that it is dependable and all year round, not one that is punctuated by accidents or closed for weeks on end when flooding occurs. There is a far modern railway line being constructed, but the central line has a key role as a low intensity business model to link various regions at more favorable haulage rates than it likely to be the case with an electric train. That means new mapping has to take into account effects of erosion and diminished vegetation along the railway line zone, to raise its level, build canals.

What is needed is a higher level of the placing of rails than is the case now, and ensuring that water doesn't fill up on the edges but is redirected to lower ground and into a culvert somewhere near that point. This kind of infrastructure would have been there at the beginning but the surroundings have changed, which means the constructs ought to be improved to suit the situation. Definitely TRC managers are fully aware what needs to be done, but repeatedly it takes a tragedy or two for public authorities to act on what is already a painful situation, even an emergency. TRC has to work fast to restore confidence in the line and indeed in assuring the public that it has the capacity to run improved infrastructure like the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR). The central line can't remain chaotic and we expect a smooth rise into the SGR.

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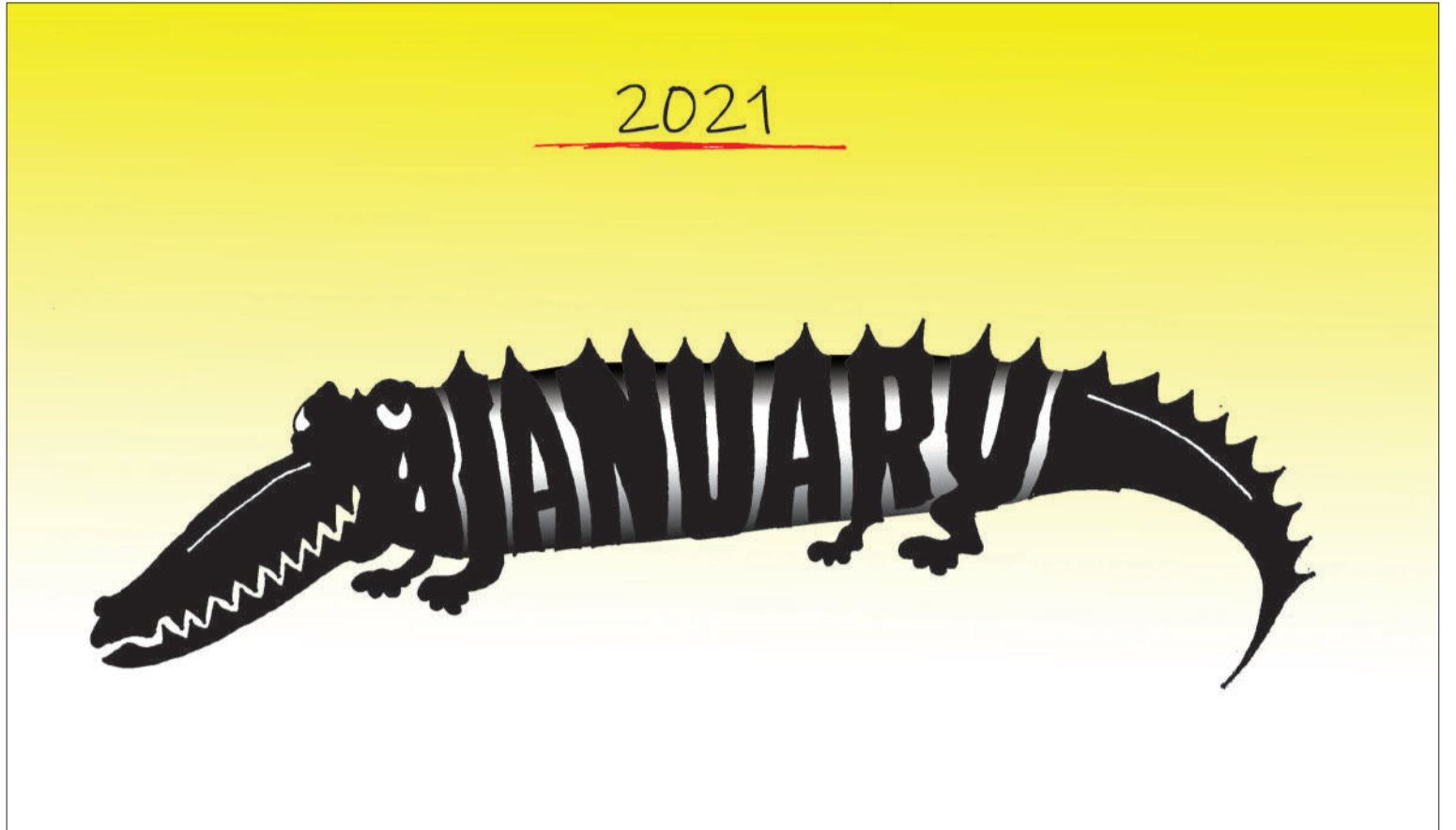
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Is 2020 a year to forget or a year to remember?

By Ruan Jooste

SOUTH Africa should benefit from a cyclical viewpoint, but for industry players and local experts longer-term structural issues locally remain a concern, and a huge one at that.

As the world celebrated the news in November of the development of a number of vaccines for Covid-19, it was encouraging to see how investor sentiment improved as a consequence. But it was the election of Joe Biden as the next US President, that lit a spark under the prices of riskier assets around the globe. Local multi-asset portfolios, which have been overweight in undervalued assets like SA equities and bonds since April, were in the perfect position to take advantage of this improvement in growth prospects.

The JSE All Share Index was testing the 60 000 mark earlier this month after hitting rock bottom in March this year, falling under the 40 000 level. Whether this rally will continue into 2021, is any South African's guess.

The same time last year analysts and economists expected muted economic growth as policymakers and the private sector were set to continue to muddle through the complexity of implementing meaningful structural reform.

Globally, lower equity market returns were anticipated, but

not the double-dipper that hit markets at the beginning of the year, which took everyone by surprise. The same goes for the JSE, which is highly correlated to what happens abroad. The world was turned upside down in March when Covid-19 spread from China to the rest of the world and stringent lockdown regulations took effect worldwide.

The ALSI started the year at just above 57 000 points. On 24 March the index dropped to just above 38 000 points, a dramatic 33% drop. April and May, however, saw a strong recovery with the index rebounding to just above 51 000 points at the end of May. As of 14 December, the ALSI had reached 59 509 points and has delivered a total return of 7.2% so far this year.

Sovereign South African State bonds received a double whammy this year. An expected downgrade to junk by Moody's saw the country's government debt instruments fall out of global investment favour and related universal benchmarked indicators.

This resulted in selling pressure leading into March. Global risk-off sentiment following the announcement of hard lockdowns globally resulted in a further spike in bond yields. The South African 10-year government bond yield stood at just over 9% at the start of 2020 but peaked at 12.38% in the last week of March.

The yield on this instrument,

which acts as a proxy for the bond market, has since steadied to 8.78% as of 14 December.

The JSE All Bond Index has delivered 7.85% in 2020 so far, and according to FNB Savings and Investments head of research, Chantal Marx, a decent return for patient investors, despite the challenges faced in this area of the market this year.

The research team at FNB expects economies to open up over the next 12 months as "second waves" subside and make way for certainty due to the widespread roll-out of Covid-19 vaccines. "Global growth is expected to be strong with China performing well", they state in an investment note, "which is good for emerging markets, due to higher commodity prices and stronger currencies."

The US dollar, as a countercyclical currency, is anticipated to remain weaker, and worldwide interest rates to remain lower for longer, they add. Unfortunately (or fortunately for 2020 returns), a lot has already been priced in and the markets and outlook are quite frothy.

Alex Tedder, head and CIO of Global and US Equities at Schroders, says that global equities are by no means cheap, but they are reasonably valued. "Considering the scale of the pandemic they performed surprisingly strongly in 2020, and we think they will continue to

do well in 2021," he is quoted in a 2021 outlook report. However, we expect the market recovery to broaden out across a broader range of sectors compared to the past 12 months. The market rally in 2020 was led by a fairly narrow range of tech stocks, in particular Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, Facebook and Alphabet – the owner of Google.

South Africa should benefit from a cyclical viewpoint, but for industry players and local experts longer-term structural issues locally remain a concern, and a huge one at that.

Fiscal pressures will continue to be exacerbated by weak nominal economic growth, even as the recovery gets underway everywhere else.

This underpins their view for further credit rating downgrades. They also expect inflation to remain benign, due to sustained weak demand, and the South African Reserve Bank to either leave rates steady or to cut rates by a further 25 basis points in 2021.

That being said, most investment analysts anticipate better than money market returns from growth assets over the next 12 months. But the caveat to the reader:

As always the tardy implementation of structural economic reforms, and growing political risk, will pose upside risk to anyone's forecasts.

By Special Correspondent

The issue of illicit arms flow needs to be addressed as national security imperative

THERE is need to establish special border patrols to contain the flow of arms. The closure of Nigeria's land borders for more than a year has not in any way diminished the country's security challenge. But the borders cannot forever remain closed, especially by an administration that has adopted a selective approach to who uses them. The issue of illicit arms flow, however, needs to be addressed as a national security imperative. Incidentally, the President reportedly assured the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) governors last week that "Now that the message has sunk in with our neighbours, we are looking into reopening the borders as soon as possible."

We understand the pressure that is making the federal government to rethink the issue of the border closure. But we should also not gloss over the fact that just last year, the president had lamented that the West African sub-region is not only a victim of illicit financial flows but also of human trafficking, arms and drugs, and

with dire consequences on the wellbeing of the people and on national security. These, he added, continue to fuel terrorism and the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs). His views were corroborated by deputy head, Policy and Analysis of Munich Security Conference, Mr Julian Voje, who said that illicit financial flows posed a double threat to global community. According to Voje, an estimated 1.7 trillion to 4.2 trillion dollars were laundered in 2018 alone, much of it across borders.

The challenges posed by illicit flows, particularly through Nigeria's borders, are enormous. Nigeria has hundreds of porous borders where illegal movement and smuggling of people and goods are done on a daily basis. Besides huge losses to the economy, the borders have also aided human and drug trafficking, while fuelling terrorism and communal violence in the country.

The level of insecurity and

conflicts across the nation perhaps highlights the prevalence of weapons in the hands of non-state actors. Nigeria is awash with illegal small arms and light weapons many of which were trafficked through the unmanned borders.

A recent research showed that out of the 857 million small arms and light weapons in the world, 500 million are illegal with 100 million found in sub-Saharan Africa. About 7.5 per cent of that is in Nigeria. The UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament and the Presidential Committee on SALWS also found not too long ago that 350 million of the 500 million such weapons in West Africa are in Nigeria.

The ease of access to these weapons has made individuals and communities more fortified and hence less amenable to entreaties to make peace. The increasing wave of bloody violence between farmers and herdsmen as well as the serious security challenges on the country's highways can be

traced partly to the ease to SALWs by some unscrupulous elements. This is a common phenomenon on the continent as it has resulted in breakdown of law and order in some of the failed states in Africa of which Somalia and Libya are prime examples. Such proliferation equally led to difficulties in conflict resolution as was the case in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the recent past.

While we are not oblivious to the existence of the Immigration and Customs Services at many of our border posts, these agencies have proved incompetent or compromised in the discharge of their duties. We had in the past advocated the need to establish a special border patrol unit that should be well-equipped with modern high-tech surveillance gear. Now that there are considerations for the borders to be reopened, we hope that President Buhari will work with the security agencies on how to safeguard lives and property in the country.

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

Regional water supply, sanitation authorities' improvement on water quality encouraging

The Tanzania Vision 2025 had set an ambitious target of reaching universal water access for urban population by 2025 and 90 per cent access for rural population. These targets are in line with the targets set by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goal 6 which aims at ensuring availability and sustainable management of water resources and sanitation for all.

Similarly, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II popularly known as MKUKUTA II set target for accessing safe water from 53 per cent in 2007 to 65 per cent for rural population in 2010, and for urban population from 73 per cent to 90 per cent during the same period.

Commenting on the 10th Water Utilities Performance Review Report for regulated regional and national project water utilities for Financial Year 2017/18, the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA)'s Board Chairman Professor Jamidu Katima said that the Authority has continued to implement its regulatory best practices to champion the delivery of quality water supply and sanitation services.

"EWURA has continued to build the capacity of regional and national project water utilities to ensure that they deliver services to the acceptable standards.

According to the report, over the three years, the water production, installed capacity and the water demand increased by 24 per cent, 14 per cent and 4 per cent respectively.

Despite the available capacity and increase in water production, still water production did not meet the required water demand.

Generally, for the past three years, regional water supply and sanitation authorities (WSSAs), have shown continuous improvement on water quality compliance. The overall percentage compliance increased by 14 per cent for E-Coli, 8 per cent for turbidity, 5 per cent for residual chlorine and 7 per cent for pH as from FY 2015/16 to 2017/18.

The Regional WSSAs with wastewater treatment facilities have shown continuous improvement on effluent quality compliance.

Despite uneven trend on effluent five-day biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) values, yet an overall effluent quality compliance increased by 9 per cent for BOD and 11 per cent for chemical oxy-



EWURA has continued to build the capacity of regional and national project water utilities to ensure that they deliver services to the acceptable standards. File photo

gen demand (COD) values as from FY2015/16 to 2017/18.

The number of water service connections increased by 36 per cent from financial year 2015/16 to 2017/18.

On metering, similar to FY 2016/17, the customer-metering ratio has remained at 97 per cent in FY2017/18, a 2 per cent drop as compared to the achievement made in FY2015/16. Generally, the performance on the indicator was good. However, the overall customer metering ratio was not within the service level benchmark of 100 per cent.

Regarding the sewerage service connections, the performance report has revealed that, sewerage disposal services through sewerage network was provided by 11 WSSAs among 26 regional WSSAs.

The total number of sewerage connections increased by 5 per cent

from FY2015/16 to 2017/18. However, from FY2015/16 to FY 2016/17 there was a drop in number of sewerage connections due to data clean up in various WSSAs database after customer verification survey.

On water service coverage: over the past three years, the population living in the area with water network has continued to increase, additionally, service coverage in terms of population directly served with water has been improving over the three years.

There has been a continuous improvement in service hours towards the service level benchmark of 24 hours. The service hours improved from 17 hours in FY2015/16 to 18 hours in FY2017/18.

The staff productivity in terms of staff per 1000 water and sewerage connections continued to improve

from 5.3 in FY 2015/16 4.0 in FY 2017/18. The attained level was within the service level benchmark of 5 staff per 1000 connections. However, this improvement was mainly due to increase in staff turnover.

The performance report has also revealed that the revenue collection among regional WSSAs increased by 45 per cent from FY 2015/16 to FY 2017/18.

The overall increase in the number of connections and the tariff change were the major impact on the positive change in revenue collection among the regional WSSAs.

Furthermore, the overall revenue collection efficiency for regional WSSAs has been increasing annually by 5 per cent from FY2015/16 to FY 2016/17. And by 2 per cent from 2016/17 to 2017/18. The challenge to most regional WSSAs was to separate

arrears collection from current bills.

The recommended overall efficiency indicator (OEI) should be more than 76 per cent by considering non-revenue water (NRW) of 20 per cent and the recommended collection efficiency of 95 per cent or above. For the regional WSSAs, the OIE has improved by 5 per cent from FY 2015/16 to FY 2017/18.

There has been a continuous annual increase in overall average tariffs for regional WSSAs. Average water tariff increased by 14 per cent from Tsh975.5/cubic meter in FY 2015/16 to Tsh. 1,113.7/cubic meter in 2017/18.

Regarding the performance ranking for regional water supply and sanitation authorities (WSSAs), they were ranked in accordance with EWURA's performance benchmarking guidelines for WSSAs (2014).

Based on the overall ranking criteria, the results of ranking the regional WSSAs' performance were as follows: Tanga WSSA was the overall best utility in the provision of water supply services after scoring 90.3 points; while Mpanda WSSA was the overall least performer in the provision of water services.

Furthermore, Mwanza WSSA was the best performer in the provision of sewerage services; while, Tabora WSSA was the least performer.

Based on the criteria for determining utility ranking, the following were the results of ranking the WSSA' performance: Mtwara WSSA was the best performer under the category of utility ranking in water services; while Geita WSSA was the least.

Iringa WSSA emerged as the best performer under the category of utility ranking in sewerage services while Arusha was the least.

The performance of six regional WSSAs (24%) can be interpreted as excellent; ten regional WSSAs (40%) as very good; five regional WSSAs (20%) as good; and four regional WSSAs (16%) as fair. There was no regional WSSA with unsatisfactory performance.

Other literatures have shown that Tanzania is endowed with abundant water resources.

According to FAO (2008) Tanzania had 96.27km² of renewable water resources per year. Which corresponded to 2,266m³ per person per year.

However, water resources are unevenly distributed across regions. Despite this richness, FAO predicted that Tanzania will suffer water stress by year 2025 defined as per capita water resources below 1,500m².

This means if management of water resources is not improved, the country bears a risk of water stress which will impact women more negatively than men.

The right to safe and clean water is provided in the UN General Assembly Declaration of July 28th 2010; declared safe and clean water is a human right essential to full enjoyment like the right to life and all other human rights.

Social media and you: In 2021, get off the hate spectrum

By Marianne Thamm

If you haven't watched it yet on Netflix, Death to 2020, Charlie Brooker and Annabel Jones's big, fat satirical stake in the heart of a torrid year should finally snap open your mental roller blinds to the grave threat that social media poses to global reason.

The mockumentary by the creator of Black Mirror is populated by a series of "experts" played by leading lights including Samuel L Jackson, Hugh Grant, Tracey Ullman, Leslie Jones and Lisa Kudrow.

In Death to 2020, voices/opinions/attitudes clamour to be heard, reflecting a world, right now, that comes together in the borderless, liminal space of "the internet" in general and social media in particular.

Here, most visibly, our deepest atavistic impulses, amplified and magnified ad infinitum by sock puppets, bots and trolls, have found shameless expression.

2020, the real year we have just survived, should provide humanity with sharpened hindsight. It was a repeated smack across the collective head by the universe.

It was Donald Trump who fashioned his own Throne of Twitter and who, perched there for four years, watching as we tore each other apart while he led from the frontline.

It felt like we were all part of a modern-age Circus Maximus.

And then, in keeping with the natural order of things, we watched as "Twitter" turned on Trump.

After Joe Biden's victory and Trump's very public dissolution, Twitter itself,



in response to Trump's tweets, reminded the former president and his supporters that in the material world election officials had certified Biden as the winner of the US presidential election.

In South Africa, the Covid-19 pandemic flushed out phalanxes of the disturbed and

paranoid, among them our own "friends" on Facebook.

As the great Facebook Friends and Family Purge of 2020 began to take full effect around August 2020, the trauma of the real world overwhelmed the data-driven noise.

Global hunger, racism, pov-

erty, sickness and disease, broken health systems, bureaucratic violence, and deeply corrupt ruling political and business elites all surfaced in full view in 2020.

But the internet and social media could still be our equivalent of the Sistine Chapel – if only we understood the free-

doms and agency they offer.

And while, for now, much of the terrain has been occupied by tech overlords who trade personal data; journalists, investigators, whistleblowers and decent, ordinary people across the world used the internet itself to expose the grifters.

In between, there were virtual street corners of teenage pop-up revolutionaries on TikTok who outwitted the president of the United States of America by jamming his booking lines for his Tulsa coronafest.

The internet is the antidote to itself if you know how to administer the dose.

In Death to 2020, Kumail Ali Nanjiani plays "tech mogul" Bark Multiverse, CEO of Shreeker, who is so moved by Greta Thunberg's headline address to the UN in 2019 that he buys a mountain in New Zealand and hollows it out to create a soundproof "survival bunker" only for himself.

It is here that Multiverse sits out the shitstorm.

Commenting on Thunberg, Multiverse tells the interviewer: "Usually when a child is shouting for help it is best to ignore them in case it is a trap. No less a man than Jeffrey Epstein told me that."

We forget Epstein between Trump and Covid and collapsed economies.

Laurence Fishburne's booming voice-over reminds viewers that "throughout 2020 the gods of Silicon Valley stand accused of allowing their products to split the world into two warring factions".

Multiverse interrupts to correct that "actually it was four. We prefer to call it a hate spectrum, that is the official term."

Fishburne continues quoting to Multiverse research that found that it took "about six months' exposure [to social media] for the average person to become hopelessly radicalised".

"I know," says Multiverse sounding excited, "we are hoping to get that down to five minutes."

Death to 2020 is a sanity check on a year which metaphorically tilted the axis of the globe. Never before has humanity been so united and so divided in the midst of multiple self-created crises.

We begin 2021 without Trump leading the toxic charge. But Trump, those like him and those who support him will still be around. Twitter and the rest of social media will be their rickety soapbox.

You can choose to stand among a multitude of lunatics howling at the moon or you can begin to take control of the machine and curate for yourself what it offers, beyond the algorithm which will always render you as data, a consumer.

You can walk away, it is up to you.

You can clean up your lists, cultivate curiosity, curate and visit spaces you trust and reach out across atomised divides to turn the tide against rage, anger, idiocy and unreason.

Some roleplayers in the Middle East will miss Trump's presidency

By Phillip Van Niekerk

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MBZ) and Russian President Vladimir Putin have all had their ways with US foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa over the past four years.

Israel has bypassed the Palestinians to remake its relations with much of the Arab world. MBZ, the Gulf Arabs and Egypt have slammed shut the Pandora's box that was opened by the Arab Spring, and are seeking to rid the region of political Islam and disruptive democrats. And Putin has cemented his presence and influence in the Middle East, disproving Barack Obama's dismissal of Russia as a regional power.

Even President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey managed to persuade Trump to dump the Kurds, the US's most steadfast allies in the region, who had shed much blood in the defeat of Isis, and benefited from his relationship with Trump.

President-elect Joe Biden has described the US's policy processes under Trump's highly personalised reign as having "atrophied or been sidelined".

Rather than any guiding principle of international relations (and other than when he intervened with Russia and Saudi Arabia last April to steady the oil price and rescue the US shale industry), Trump's transactional view of American interests has boiled down to the sale of sophisticated weaponry.

Arms deals have featured prominently in the horse trading that has been conducted by Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and unofficial diplomat-in-chief. The UAE, for instance, purchased \$23-billion in F-35 fighter jets and advanced drones as part of the deal to normalise relations with Israel known as the Abraham Accord.

Likewise, Trump has pointed to a willingness to purchase hundreds of billions of dollars of US arms as justification for his refusal to get tough with Saudi Arabia, even after Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman earned a place in infamy for his role in the murder and dismemberment of the dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi embassy in Istanbul.

Biden and his team will find the Middle East and North Africa much altered from four years ago, not least because of the decline of American power and influence. "Right now, there is an enormous vacuum," Biden said.

Medium-level players have moved into this vacuum and their mercenary armies and fancy new weapons have become decisive instruments in the wars of north and northeast Africa.

Africa has become a battleground for competing nations such as Russia, Turkey and the UAE, which see the continent as a fairly cheap way of extending or rebuilding their global power and influence. Trump has been happy to make way for them.

There is a view amongst some pundits in Washington that for all his weakening of alliances and strengthening of America's adversaries, Trump will leave the Middle East more stable than it was at the end of the Obama administration. Isis is severely degraded, Iran is drowning economically, the Syrian civil war ground to a halt after a ceasefire deal between Russia and Turkey in March, and the biggest crisis right now is whether Iraq or Lebanon will go broke first.

A decade after the Arab Spring erupted in Tunisia, some Arab rulers view the return of a Democratic administration with trepidation - particularly in the light of Biden's statement that there will be "no more blank cheques for Arab dictators" and his promise to reassess the relationship with Saudi Arabia.

The US's long-term allies in the Gulf felt betrayed by Obama when he called on Hosni Mubarak to resign after the Egyptian leader unleashed violence against the pro-democracy demonstrators at Tahrir Square.

In his recently published memoir, A Promised Land, Obama describes how MBZ told him at the time that US statements were being closely watched in the Gulf with increasing alarm. He suggested to Obama that if Egypt collapsed and the Muslim Brotherhood took over, eight other



Illustrative image | Sources: Outgoing US President Donald Trump. (Photo: EPA-EFE/YURI GRIPAS / POOL) / Senior Advisor Jared Kushner. (Photo: EPA-EFE/Chris Kleponis / POOL) / Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. (Photo: EPA-EFE/ALEXEY NIKOLSKY) / Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. (Photo: EPA-EFE/Yonatan Sindel / POOL) / The White House in Washington, D.C. (Photo: EPA-EFE/Stefani Reynolds / POOL) / US aircraft. (Photo: EPA-EFE/SERGEY DOLZHENKO)

Arab leaders would also fall.

"It shows," he said, "that the United States is not a partner we can rely on in the long term," Obama wrote. "His voice was calm and cold. It was less a plea for help, I realised, than a warning."

In retrospect, MBZ's warning was prescient. Mubarak's departure was met with jubilation on the Square but within months the Muslim Brotherhood won parliamentary elections and a Brotherhood leader, Mohamed Morsi, was elected president in May 2012.

By June 2013, a fresh wave of demonstrations erupted against Morsi's attempt to monopolise power and he was deposed by Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, the head of the Egyptian armed forces. Hundreds of Muslim Brotherhood members were massacred in counter-demonstrations.

A decade after Mubarak left power, Egypt is a corrupt military dictatorship under Sisi in which thousands of political activists, journalists and other Egyptians have been arrested, killed or in some cases sentenced to lengthy jail terms for criticising the president on social media.

The US still provides more than a billion dollars in military aid annually to Egypt and Trump - who famously called Sisi his favourite dictator - has shown little concern for the corruption or rights abuses even as American citizens are among those who are locked up in Sisi's jails.

As vice-president, Biden was among those (including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton) who argued for a more cautious approach to Mubarak, a long-time US ally. Biden's pick for Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, was among a younger group who were enamoured with the "Facebook generation" protesting on the Square and wanted Obama to "get on the right side of history".

Sisi has already hedged his bets in case the incoming administration is less than friendly by moving into a closer military alliance with Putin. He has signed a major deal with Russia to build a nuclear reactor in Egypt and Putin has referred to Egypt as a "trusted and close partner". With the backing of Russia, Sisi threatened to invade Libya in August after Turkish-led forces pushed their mutual ally General Khalifa Haftar back from the suburbs of Tripoli.

In the eyes of the Gulf Arab rulers, Obama's even greater sin was negotiating the 2015 Iran deal - the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action - without consulting them, and their opposition to the deal moved them into a de facto regional alliance with Netanyahu, who has long seen Iran as an existential threat to Israel. Everywhere else the deal was hailed as a major diplomatic achievement - not just the US's European allies, but Russia and China as well.

Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018, launched economic warfare against Iran and in January 2020 assassinated Qasem Soleimani, commander of the Quds force, at Baghdad International Airport. In November Iran's leading nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, was murdered, which Iran blamed on the Israelis.

More than once the ratcheted-up tensions that have resulted from this aggression have brought the US to the brink of war with Iran. In January Trump only called off the bombers after Tucker Carlson, the Fox News host and one of his television gurus, warned that escalating such a conflict was a terrible idea. Trump has veered between a "wag the dog" mentality in which a war with Iran would be a convenient distraction for problems at home, and a bully's fear of a real-world crisis that could get out

of control.

Trump still has a few weeks left when he could blow up the Middle East by starting a war with Iran perhaps as a parting gift to Netanyahu or at least to muddy the waters for the incoming administration, but the signs are that the leadership of the military is loath to embark on such a risky adventure.

Biden has indicated that he wants to get back into the Iran deal as a starting point for follow-on negotiations and there is some optimism that a weakened Iran might be ready to expand talks to include proxy wars and non-nuclear missile weapons. These talks would have to involve other regional players as Iran is not the only one supporting proxies or deploying advanced weapons technology in the conflicts of the Middle East.

The success of such an undertaking might depend on MBZ, who occupies an ever more prominent leadership position in the Gulf and whose alliance with the Saudis is no longer as watertight as it once was. The UAE would be first in the firing line in the event of war and MBZ has shifted to a more accommodating posture towards Iran.

MBZ's flexibility was signalled by his moves in the Yemen war in 2019. Aggrieved at the incompetence of the Saudis, he switched his support away from the Saudi alliance backing the government in the north against the Iranian-backed Houthis in Sana'a, to a group in Aden wanting to restore the pre-1990 independence of south Yemen.

MBZ's alliance with Israel is designed to enhance the UAE's modernisation that is driving the economic regeneration of the region. Abu Dhabi is not only oil-rich, it has the second-largest sovereign wealth fund in the world and the link-up with Israel will give its investors access to one of the most vibrant technology sectors in the world.

Though Abu Dhabi has no more than 1.5 million people, MBZ appears determined to remake the Middle East in line with new economic and geopolitical realities. He has spent hundreds of billions of dollars on American weaponry and is now regarded as having the most advanced military in the Arab world.

Thus armed, MBZ has aggressively asserted himself in the region, seeking to rid the region of political Islam and confront the spectre of Turkey, which he now sees as his main adversary.

Anwar Gargash, the UAE's minister of state for foreign affairs, wrote in the French magazine *Le Point* in June that "Turkey has many things to answer for, with its long-term attempts in concert with Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood to sow chaos in the Arab world, while using an aggressive and perverted interpretation of Islam as cover".

This rivalry extends to Africa where MBZ's most critical intervention has been in Libya.

Libya remains a largely tribal nation, a reality that Muammar Gaddafi, ruthless and eccentric as he was, managed to navigate for decades. But this arrangement was blown up by the uprising of 2011 and the Western intervention that ousted Gaddafi.

After Gaddafi, the country fell apart. Warring tribes and militia were at each other's throats and the feuding led to a civil war that has now reached the point of stalemate.

In 2015 an international agreement split the government between Tripoli and Tobruk, the seat of Parliament, but the issue of how the oil revenues were to be shared remained unresolved. MBZ backed general Haftar, head of the Libyan National Army, as he mopped up the rag-tag militias and Islamists, and

took over the bulk of the county's oil production. In April 2019, Haftar turned to march on Tripoli.

Expected to make a lightning attack on the capital, Haftar's forces bogged down outside Tripoli before, in early 2020, Erdogan came to the rescue of the beleaguered UN-recognised government. The combination of Turkish drones, Syrian mercenaries and local militia, mainly from Misrata, broke the siege and pushed Haftar back along the coast.

But the Turkish-led force's advance on the next big target, Sirte (Gaddafi's hometown), was stopped by another combination of forces. These included Russia's Wagner mercenaries, Russian jets, Emirati drones and Sudanese mercenaries that MBZ had redeployed from Yemen. This army was bankrolled by MBZ, who recognised the strategic position of Libya as a bridge between the Arab world, Europe and Africa.

This has left Libya effectively divided in two - the Turkish-dominated Tripolitania in the west and the Russian-dominated Cyrenaica in the east - roughly conforming to the provinces of the Ottoman empire, with the oil-rich desert province of Fezzan still being contested.

The talks aimed at restoring peace and bringing about a political solution revolve around how to recognise this reality by partitioning Libya into spheres of influence and dividing the oil wealth without breaking up the country.

Putin and Erdogan are experts at backstage agreements, having done deals in Idlib that halted the Syrian war and in Nagorno-Karabakh that ended the fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan. But Libya is more complicated.

Turkey's interest in Libya involves not just Erdogan's dream of rebuilding the Ottoman empire. A maritime agreement he signed with Tripoli in November 2019 extends Turkey's claims across the Mediterranean, cutting across the Eastmed pipeline that is to carry natural gas from the rich fields of the Levant to Europe.

Eastmed's supporters are Egypt, Israel, Greece, Cyprus and France - which all view Turkey's moves in Libya with alarm.

MBZ, seizing an opportunity to stick a finger in the eye of his adversary, has signed a mutual defence treaty with Greece outside of Nato, its first such agreement with a European power, and has dispatched F-16 fighter jets to Cyprus.

For the first time since 1916 when the Englishman Mark Sykes and the Frenchman Francois Georges-Picot drew up the boundaries of the post-Ottoman Middle East, a power from that region - an emirate that was little more than a village in the desert when that colonial deal was done - is acquiring a prominent position in European affairs.

At the same time, the UAE still has planes and drones stationed in western Egypt, ready in case war flares up once more in Libya.

Other African battlegrounds are also being drawn into this new regional competition in which ultrasophisticated weaponry combined with mercenaries and local actors create complicated alliances, shadow wars that are conducted almost entirely in the dark.

Perhaps the most vulnerable battle line is south of Libya in the Sahel where Jihadists are growing in strength across Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, and where the thin line of 5,000 French troops, the last gasp of empire, is looking for a way out.

In 2012 the crisis in the Sahel was precipitated by the overthrow of Gaddafi

and the movement of his Tuaregs into Mali. Once again the spillover from Libya could precipitate a fresh crisis with reports of new weapons and mercenaries moving into countries ripe for contestation and opportunities for sponsorship.

Another vulnerable area is the Horn. The recent fighting in Ethiopia between the Tigrayans and the Ethiopian National Defence Force was an example of this mishmash of local and foreign forces overlaid by sophisticated weaponry getting stuck into an African conflict.

The UAE sent missile-armed drones from their base at Assab in Eritrea and their allies, the Eritreans, assisting in quashing the Tigrayans.

The French historian and analyst Gérard Prunier has warned of a catastrophic Yugoslavian-style break-up of Ethiopia with knock-on effects throughout the region. Somalia and Sudan have already been sucked into the conflict and Egypt is affected because of its dispute with Ethiopia over the Grand Renaissance Dam on the Nile.

Even as Trump has pulled his remaining troops back from Somalia, Turkey has its biggest foreign base in Somalia and Russia has just signed a deal with Sudan to build a naval base in Suakin. A further wrinkle is the status of autonomous Somaliland, whose independence is being blocked by Somalia.

The incoming Biden administration is watching the potential descent into militarisation and chaos closely, and has already put feelers out to the US's key ally in the region, Kenya.

The effects of the abandonment by the US of any principle to protect the international security system is being tested in northeast Africa. "None of these disputes really matter beyond their borders," says Prunier. "But together they constitute a warning light to the international community regarding its state of dilapidation. There is no more ringmaster in the deserted arena to prevent minor quarrels from going septic."

Biden has acknowledged that to be effective, the US will have to work to regain the trust and confidence of the world, which involves a new era of partnership.

"The truth is the challenges we face today can't be solved by any one country acting alone," said Biden. "They demand American leadership. They demand the cooperation of our allies and our partners."

The US and China, for instance, can find common cause alongside African, European and Asian partners to ensure security for ordinary Africans and Arabs who are most often the victims. But rebuilding the international order involves more than just holding the line against the worst-case scenario. The aspirations of the region's people need to be taken into account.

Though there is a powerful view that holds that what happened in Libya, Syria, Egypt and Yemen proves that the Arab Spring uprisings were devastating failures, they did usher in some reforms and the sentiments that gave birth to the protests were never totally suppressed. In Algeria, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, Sudan and elsewhere a new generation has gone to the streets to demand change.

It is unlikely that they will remain dormant, even though we are in a darker age where authoritarians have gained strength globally and where, from Belarus to Hong Kong, the odds appear stacked against people's power.

Biden's biggest challenge might be to balance the fears of those leaders who are fighting to preserve the status quo with the aspirations of the people seeking greater freedom, prosperity and democracy. The Palestinians cannot be willed out of history, as some might imagine. Here too, the Biden team will find that the damage inflicted by the four years of Trump have made things immeasurably more difficult.

Community radio helps students to see light at end of the tunnel

By Correspondent Rose Mwalongo

A 17-year-old Chagulaga Mayo (not her real name) is a form two student at Isabageni ward in Sengerema District, Mwanza Region who was once forced to rent a room at a village away from home to attend secondary school education due to her ward lacking one.

The situation was so appalling at the time that some of her friends fell prey to men and as a result, dropped out of school due to pregnancy. No one knew how to go about then until a local radio station in the area decided to address their plight.

It all began with journalists at Sengerema FM, a UNESCO funded community radio under its SDC Project making relentless efforts to campaign and air programs. Prior to that, the latter had conducted an investigation where they noted children in the area were forced to attend secondary school in

other wards far where they had to walk several kilometers and at times rent rooms. There were also some reports that most girls failed to complete school due to the environment being too harsh to do so. Through their radio programs, the station managed to sensitive the community on the need to build their own school nearby where eventually the message went through leading to community members to contribute towards the construction of Isabageni Secondary School with the government funding to finalize the infrastructure.

Isabageni Ward Executive Officer Adam Salumu admits that journalists from the radio used to interview local government authorities where they utilized the platform to encourage community members to contribute towards the construction of the school.

"Our radio campaigns made an

impact as community members made a hefty contribution towards the construction of the school with the government helping to complete the buildings," said Salumu.

According to Salumu, prior to that, students from Isabageni ward used to travel to other wards where they were forced to rent rooms closer to schools for them to study, a situation that saw some engage in weed smoking and sexual activities, with girls dropping out due to pregnancy.

This reporter paid a courtesy call at Isabageni Secondary School where she found students in a flamboyant mood with most of them sharing their dreams on how they wanted to become doctors, engineers as well as journalists like herself.

According to Rehema Maiko, second headmistress for the school, the first form four students would sit for their final exams in 2021.

Currently, she says, Isabageni Secondary School has 934 students being 471 male and 463 females.

Apart from education, Sengerema FM has been airing various radio programs on health issues, a situation that has seen an improvement of infrastructure as well as a reduction in malaria cases among others.

The radio has won hearts from the Sengerema District Commissioner Emmanuel Kipole who in his own words says "I am the first beneficiary of the station."

"Sengerema FM has been of great assistance in the district. In 2018, our district conducted a radio campaign via the station to sensitive parents to send children for vaccination. The campaign was so successful that we managed to exceed our target where we vaccinated 105 percent of children in the district surpassing the target which was 100 percent," says Kipole.

He admits that the radio has brought some tangible and intangible results in various sectors ranging from health, education, and agriculture.

"In health, we had an anti-malaria campaign with the radio. We conducted a sensitization campaign about the positive use of mosquitoes and the percentage of malaria cases in our district has gone down, overall we have lowered its prevalence through the radio," says Kipole

According to DC, the radio helps him as a government leader to disseminate the information at a fast pace in hard to reach areas within his territory.

"The district has 153 villages and 843 hamlets. I cannot run around throughout, so when I have sensitive information I use Sengerema FM to reach my area as was the case during the elections where I used the same to remind people to vote,"

stresses Kipole.

It is indeed encouraging that at long last, parents at Isabageni ward can now sigh with relief as they are now sure of their children going to a secondary school nearby, thanks to the joint efforts between community members, district authorities, and a local radio station in the area.

I have to pack now from this beautiful little town with fish aroma, but I cannot help but smile having heard about all the positive impact that community radio has created.

My message is for all local authorities to utilize your community radios to address the various issues in the area. It is said that the power of the pen is mightier than a bullet, so is the microphone, and Sengerema district authorities deserve an accolade for being able to utilize their radio to enhance development in their area, for they are now, a force to reckon with.

Delegates from 6 continents at Oxford Real Farming Conference to champion regenerative agriculture

By Special Correspondent

THOUSANDS of farmers and activists across six Continents will come together at the Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC Global) on Thursday to show that small-scale farming can fix the climate and ecological emergency.

ORFC Global delegates, including representatives of indigenous communities from the Amazon to Alaska, are pushing for food, farming and nature to be at the top of the COP26 agenda this November.

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

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

"What we need is real farming - based on the principles of agroecology and food sovereignty. ORFC Global will bring together farmers, food producers, activists, policy

makers, academics and many others from around the world who are already showing how things could, and must, be very different.

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

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

"Small-scale agroecological farmers around the world, the majority of them women, are producing food and resources for their communities while reducing CO2 emissions from agriculture. It's as simple as that. Agroecology is the way forward. It's a climate-friendly farming system." Jyoti Fernandes, smallholder and coordinator of The Landworkers' Alliance which represents farmers, growers, foresters and land-based workers in the UK, said: "We are in a climate and ecological emergency, but we already have the solutions. Agroecology reduces carbon emissions, sequesters carbon and increases biodiversity. On top of this, small-scale



farms using local supply chains reduce transport, waste, packaging and refrigeration.

"By growing food locally, we are cutting out the need for imports of crops that may have been grown on land cleared of forests. Leaders need to wake up to the facts quickly and set targets for a transition to agroecology."

The call from farmers comes in the face of multiple global threats. The

climate crisis, biodiversity loss, soil degradation, economic inequality and poverty continue to be caused and exacerbated by industrial farming, with huge monocultures devoid of workers relying on chemical inputs and geared to global markets. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the weaknesses of global food systems.

The conference will host sessions put together

with partners in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, England, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan,

Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, USA, Wales and Zimbabwe.

Cross-boundary offers up mini grids business model for Africa's peers

By COSMAS MWIRIGI

Nairobi-based financial services business Cross-boundary Group has announced the successful exit of the CBE I fund it raised five years ago to drive commercial and industrial (C&I) solar projects in Africa.

The landmark was achieved in September, with a sale of the investments to recently established, London-based emerging markets energy fund, Africa Renewable Power Fund (ARPF) as part of a \$40 million commitment by the ARPF to commercial solar projects. The ARPF is managed by London-based specialist investment advisor Arch Emerging Markets Partners.

With Arch - which was set up by London-based JCH & Partners LLP - having commissioned Crossboundary Energy Management to find and develop more C&I solar projects for the new fund, the Kenyan group has also announced plans by its mini grids unit to open up its approach to investing in local off-grid networks on an open-source basis.

The exit of the CBE I fund set up by Crossboundary in 2015 was announced at a 15% net, internal rate of return. The fund had been established with the help of a \$1.3 million repayable grant from U.S. federal government development agency USAID's Power Africa initiative, which attracted more than \$7.5 million of private investment. After the sale of its investments to the ARPF, the fund repaid the USAID grant at a 5% return and the vehicle attracted further grant support from the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation and the Shell Foundation, in partnership with the U.K. Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Pieter Joubert, chief investment officer at Crossboundary Energy, said: "In terms of what comes next, partnering with an industry-leading investor like Arch ARPF [African Renewable Power Fund] highlights the proven viability of captive commercial and industrial solar projects in Africa. We're very excited to work with Arch ARPF to continue providing Africa's leading businesses with cheaper, cleaner, more reliable power at no upfront cost. This commitment by Arch ARPF represents the next phase of a larger, \$100 million transaction which will allow us to take the C&I sector to scale across Africa and, in doing so, further reduce energy costs for our customers, create additional jobs within the solar sector, and significantly reduce carbon emissions."

Joubert also hailed the U.S. and U.K.-based investors who had kick-started the CBE I investment vehicle, adding: "We are incredibly grateful for the early-stage backing we received from our partners and investors such as Blue Haven Initiative, Ceniath, Slocum Investments, Treehouse Investments and others, who trusted in our vision to bring cheap, clean energy to businesses across the continent and continued to support and work with us to realize that vision."

Arch ARPF managing director William Barry said: "We believe that distributed renewables will be an important part of the energy future in Africa. The lower cost for solar and storage means that companies like Crossboundary Energy can offer retail consumers reliable, cost-effective solutions to their electricity needs. At Arch ARPF, we aim to partner with strong management teams and invest in scalable business models that offer compelling alternatives to their customers, including in the C&I space. CBE [Crossboundary Energy] has been able to grow a portfolio of high-quality assets and their growth continues to rapidly accelerate. We are excited to support them to scale."

Crossboundary Energy is coordinating the development, construction, and operation of distributed commercial and industrial solar projects to give African businesses access to affordable, reliable, cleaner power. The exit of CBE I, and the investment received from the ARPF, will boost the role of distributed renewables in under-served African markets through the provision of public and private, 'blended' finance.

Migration amid COVID-19: Young Africans weigh their options

By Michael Boompong

Despite increased investment in education, today's African youth face uncertainties associated with transitions from childhood to adulthood, including finding a job after school.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), even before the COVID-19 pandemic, young people were around three times more likely to be unemployed. The pandemic has further exacerbated those challenges, including disruptions in education, training, employment, while some have endured income losses due to lay-offs and reduced working hours.

For some young people, the inability to find employment opportunities at home means migrating to other countries within Africa or outside the continent.

Increasingly, migration for work or education has become a common phenomenon in Africa. Data from the International Migrant Stock 2019 report, prepared by the UN Department of Eco-

nomics and Social Affairs (DESA), shows that international migrants in 2019 numbered an estimated 272 million, an increase of 51 million since 2010.

About 20 per cent of all international migrants in the South, mostly from Africa, were under the age of 20, making Africa the youngest region of international migrants

Within the past two decades, policy discussions of migration have been dominated by images of young Africans taking rickety boats to Europe due to poverty and lack of opportunities including jobs.

The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on travel and the closure of borders by some countries have disrupted or delayed migration within Africa and outside Africa. However, for young Africans experiencing multiple shocks with little or no social protection, the prospects of migrating may increase, especially for families seeking to mitigate socioeconomic challenges.

While the African migration narrative

may be dominated by desperate youth involved in irregular migration, the near-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on them has also increased the migration of certain groups, especially those with skills useful in the health sector of destination countries.

For instance, between March and April 2020, some countries in the West offered work or exchange visitor visas to encourage people with medical training and expertise to migrate.

"After completing my nursing training in Ghana, I came across this government scheme looking for health workers to go work in the UK. On top of offering us a job, they provided us with the necessary support, including accommodation in the UK. Since I arrived in the UK everyone has been supportive, including my family and friends," says 29-year-old Ghanaian David Kwesi.

Mr. Kwesi's experience mirrors that of many other young Africans migrating to the West to work in the health sector. Once employed, these migrants play a

key role in supporting their families back home through remittances.

Yet, the migration process is not that easy for many others. Many young African migrants have been forced to return to their countries of origin amid precarious job conditions and lack of access to a safety net, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reports have emerged of poor access to healthcare, as well as abuse and scapegoating of African migrants in some countries in Middle East and Asia. Migrants employed as domestic workers in those regions face an increased risk of abuse, with some stranded in destination countries while others seek the fastest way out.

Ana Abebe, 27, just returned home to Ethiopia after losing her job in Lebanon. "I lost my job and had no money. I could not afford food or even accommodation. If you don't eat well you can easily die if you contract COVID-19. I decided to return home to my family and spend time with my child," says Ms. Abebe.

The Covid-19 vaccine and the danger of creating false expectations

By Barry Schoub

There is a growing groundswell of impatience, and sometimes even a demanding anger, resulting from the delay in having Covid-19 vaccines in the country. 'Why is it taking so long to get the vaccine into the country?' 'Has the government dropped the ball?'

Undoubtedly the issue is becoming more and more emotional and a hot political weapon. Activist groups, such as the C19 People's Initiative, have also sprung into action, alluding to the laudable and effective HIV treatment campaign. However, while the intent is commendable, it must be balanced against raising false expectations which could imperil the crucial non-vaccine Covid infection prevention precautions which will still be critically needed for some time to come.

Let me say at the outset, that I have spent some four decades of my professional life fighting, supporting and advocating for vaccines which, together with the provision of clean water, are the most effective modalities for protecting against disease and maintaining health. However, Covid-19 vaccines are not measles vaccines and the strategies for their control are not the same.

Other than a handful of anti-vaxers, and maybe a few more nervous vaccine-hesitant folk, we all want this vaccine, and we all urgently want it as soon as possible, none more than our heroic frontline healthcare workers. The delay has simply come about as a result of the grotesque selfishness of high-income countries.

Comprising some 13% of the world's population, they have



South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) are ready to commence reviewing applications from Covid-19 vaccine candidates. File photo

jumped in, even before the results of clinical trials to assess the efficacy and safety were known, and bought up 51% of the global production of vaccines - in some cases enough for 3 to 5 times their entire populations' needs. This was done so that at least some of their vaccine purchases would be effective and safe.

However, middle-income countries, like South Africa, would be roundly condemned should they have considered gambling with their much more limited taxpayers' money for vaccines still undergoing investigative trials, when it was unknown whether they would be safe and effective.

The decision was then taken to secure a guaranteed tranche of vaccine for 10% of the population through the pooled procurement facility of COVAX. COVAX would be purchasing vaccine on behalf of some 189 countries to aim for equitable distribution of

available vaccines globally.

Word from COVAX is that the expectation for delivery of this allocation of vaccines to South Africa (one of the first countries in line) would be the second quarter of this year. Importantly, however, over and above this, the government and the business sector are in negotiations with vaccine manufacturers to secure supplies of vaccine as soon as possible, and also for the remainder of the population. For obvious reasons these negotiations are, at this stage, sensitive and confidential - no one with genuine interests for us speedily acquiring vaccines would now wish to jeopardise these negotiations.

The impatience, the anxiety and the dissatisfaction are understandable. The Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 has taken a tremendous toll of illness, loss of life and loss of livelihood. There has also been a very significant intrusion into people's quality of

life. Not unexpectedly, people are tired of these encumbrances, irritations and invasions into their daily living. 'If only we had a vaccine this would all go away'; 'if only the government had not been so inept, we would not have to continue with these restrictions'. Regrettably, the reality is that the vaccine will not be a magic wand and any suggestion that it may be, is dangerously threatening the public motivation to continue with the non-pharmaceutical interventions, which are so critical for the control of the epidemic.

The vaccine grab by the wealthy nations has not only harmed the middle- and lower-income world (the latter depending solely on COVAX), but it is, in fact, also short-sighted. Pandemic infections can only be controlled if they are controlled globally, and that means every country, wealthy and poor.

The delay for South Africa is, of course, deeply regret-

table and unfortunate, especially for our vulnerable and indispensable healthcare workers. However, it does offer us a short breathing space, enabling us to even better assess and evaluate those vaccines being deployed in the field in the developed world. How are these completely novel vaccines faring in the field situation? How they perform in millions of recipients may not always be identical to their behaviour in the few thousands of volunteers within the structured environment of the clinical trial. (As one example, it has now been reported that severe allergic reaction, anaphylaxis, has been seen, albeit rarely, but 10 times more commonly with the Pfizer vaccine than with other vaccines, which is now necessitating a specific warning to allergy-prone individuals).

In addition, more vaccine manufacturers are now applying for licensing, thereby widening the choice for vaccines for our local conditions, rather than simply grabbing the first available licensed vaccines, as wealthy countries have done. Our vaccine selection and strategic planning could well be influenced by observations and knowledge coming from the field behaviour of these vaccines.

In conclusion, and most important of all, the public must be made aware that the Covid-19 vaccine will not be a magic bullet. Its arrival on our shores will not miraculously and immediately spell the end of the epidemic.

The United Kingdom, one of the first countries in the world to roll out vaccines at the beginning of December, is currently experiencing a second wave considerably greater than the first wave. It is still experiencing a daily new infection rate nearly three times that of South Af-

rica, while it is battling the disease with one of the harshest lockdowns in the world.

Clearly, we will still have a way to go even after the commencement of vaccination. For many months after receiving the vaccine, we will still need to depend on public buy-in to the Covid-19 infection precautions.

We cannot afford to create false hopes and false expectations which, unfortunately, vaccine activism may be in danger of doing. Vaccines will not immediately allow us all to go back to our pre-Covid lives. Sustaining human behavioural dedication to fight an unseen enemy is challenging, uncomfortable and even irritating. But it depends critically on the support of all sections of the community. It is fragile and can be easily fractured by the seduction of a magic vaccine. It is equally easy to look for a scapegoat.

Arguably, there may well seem to be a lacuna in communicating adequate assurance to the public. But let me state that there are indeed very extensive behind-the-scenes efforts to acquire safe and effective vaccines as soon as possible, and also to develop a comprehensive vaccine strategy.

Finally, I would like to address an urgent and earnest appeal to civil society groups - please stop insinuating false hopes and expectations to the public for immediate solutions to the Covid-19 crisis. These only serve to compromise, and even jeopardise, the critical current imperative to maintain the, maybe less palatable, but critically needed, Covid-19 prevention precautions. The challenges are unique and difficult enough to sustain, and we can only succeed with the support of all leaders who influence behaviour in the country.

DM

South Africa's Victims of Crime Survey adds useful insights

BY ANDREW FAULL

Police crime statistics provide only limited insight into the nature of crime and violence. This is not a uniquely South African problem. The same is true of all police data around the world. For a range of reasons, a lot of crime and violence is never reported to police. This limits the use of relying on police statistics alone to develop interventions to improve public safety.

Fortunately, complementary methods for understanding crime and violence exist. One of these, a victim survey, is well established in South Africa. A second that draws on health data - the Cardiff Model - is in its infancy but developing.

South Africa's latest Victims of Crime (VOCS - Governance, Public Safety, and Justice) Survey was pub-



More data means better ability to address the country's public safety challenges. File photo

lished on 1 December. This survey explores experiences and perceptions of crime among South Africa's population.

Unlike police statistics,

which only represent crimes reported to and recorded by police, this survey allows us to estimate the percentage of all households and individuals older than 16 who experi-

ence crime. It also gauges the rate at which victims report the crimes to police, and asks how safe people feel.

The 2019/20 VOCS estimates that 13.5% of households experienced burglary and 6% of individuals experienced theft of personal property, making these the most common crimes in South Africa. These are also the crimes most commonly reported to the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Police crime statistics provide only limited insight into the nature of crime and violence

Concerningly, the second most frequently experienced offences involve the threat or use of violence, namely house robbery and street robbery.

According to the survey, these affected roughly 2.5% of households and 2.8% of individuals in 2019/20 respectively.

The VOCS and SAPS measure crime differently. While the VOCS actively seeks out victims, the SAPS waits for them to report. Nor do the two employ the same crime categories or counting rules. As such, although some comparison between the two is possible, it is not precise.

Nevertheless, it is reassuring that year-on-year crime trends in three of the four somewhat comparable categories recorded by both SAPS and the VOCS point in similar directions. Housebreaking, home robbery, and deliberate damage to property all declined. In contrast, the SAPS recorded a decline in theft of motor vehicles while the VOCS detected a substantial increase.

While we can speculate about this difference, for example, more uninsured vehicles being stolen resulting in fewer victims reporting to police - accurately explaining such contradictions requires further research.

VOCS data shows notable declines in victims' reporting of crime to police in recent years. For example, in 2013/14, 90% of victims reported their stolen vehicles to police but by 2019/20 only 79% did so. Similar declines are found in hijacking (100% to 78%) and assault (67% to 41%), with less pronounced but important dips in reports of house robbery (62% to 54%).

According to the VOCS, fewer than 45% of all assault, theft or street robbery victims reported crimes to police in 2019/20.

However, its findings don't always provide adequate clarity. Furthermore, although VOCS surveys allow for the estimation of millions of offences not reported to police, they do not do so perfectly. For example, many South Africans may not identify an experience as a crime - such as a fistfight with friends in a bar, or being hit with a kitchen pot by a family member.

Not only are many such incidents unlikely to be reported to police, but victims may fail to recall them when asked by a VOCS interviewer whether they have experienced crime in the preceding 12 months or

five years.

One useful way to fill this data hole is to capture information on violence-related ambulance calls and trauma admissions at health facilities. As with the fistfight between friends, or the pot assault by a family member, many people seeking medical treatment after violent attacks don't report incidents to police. Public health data can helpfully improve our understanding of levels of violence. This approach is being piloted in the Western Cape, and should be considered elsewhere.

Finally, the VOCS explores how safe people feel walking alone in their area of residence during the day and after dark. Because this question has been asked in all VOCS since 1998, it is possible to compare the findings over 22 years. Here the 2019/20 data is somewhat positive, with people reporting that they feel safer than at any other time since 1998, other than in 2011.

While the Victims of Crime Survey actively seeks out victims, the SAPS waits for them to report

This may appear counterintuitive in a country with a murder rate six times the global average, but it need not be. Crime and violence are not equally distributed. Some areas and people are significantly more vulnerable than others. So while some communities may be increasingly vulnerable to repeat victimisation, others may be shielded by advances in private security, surveillance technology, and neighbourhood solidarity.

While it is impossible to accurately measure most categories of crime, there is no question that the burden of crime and violence in South Africa is huge. Although neither SAPS nor VOCS data is perfect, the fact that it continues to be captured, recorded and published should be celebrated.

As should Police Minister Bheki Cele's decision to release quarterly crime statistics, and the Western Cape government's move to use health data to measure violence. Whatever they reveal, more good-quality data means better ability to effectively understand and intervene in problems, making South Africa safer.

AGENCIES

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 166 00--

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

3 LETTERS: SEE, LIT, GET
 4 LETTERS: BACK, UEFA, CAFE, RAGE, EBON SOON, IDEM
 5 LETTERS: ABODE, AGAIN, LASSO, ELECT, NDAMA,
 6 LETTERS: ELITES, ADHERE, STAGER, PLUNGE TABOOS
 7 LETTERS: ALLOWED
 8 LETTERS: LEGALESE
 10 LETTERS: BOUNDARIES

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CLUES: Across
 1 a native of the south
 5 a large perching bird with mostly black plumage
 7 bear native to bamboo forests in China
 8 Kathmandu is the Capital city
 10 the ship built by Noah
 11 Latin from Greek Khoreia
 13 break with a sharp cracking sound
 15 accept
 17 movements of hands when you talk
 19 a person who uses something
 20 feel doubt

Down:
 1 ill
 2 formal term for on
 3 not imagined or supposed
 4 tolerate
 6 put on clothes
 7 canal connects the pacific ocean and Atlantic ocean
 9 medium for communications
 12 stoat
 14 stone in Greek
 16 a diving waterbird with a long neck
 17 a weapon with bullets
 18 join fasten

WORD-FIT CROSSWORD

SOLUTIONS

F	R	E	E	M	A	R	K	E	T	U	N	D	E	R	W	H	E	L	M
L	V	E	R	L	A	R	G	E	M	E	M	O	A	M	A	S	S		
W	N	O	V	E	L				A	C	A	N	G	L	E	S	K	A	
M	M	A	P	E	T				C	T	A	S	K	Y					
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R									R										
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 <p>CURRENT NEWS Youthful entrepreneur makes potted plants popular Page14</p>	 <p>BUSINESS NEWS Kahama motor taxi operators benefit from Azania Bank's 'Jikwamue' loans Page14</p>	 <p>OUTLOOK & ANALYSIS DSE defies Covid-19 to maintain growth trajectory in 2020 Page15</p>
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Economy seen rebounding to 6.9pc growth

NAIROBI

The economy is seen rebounding to a growth of between 4.7 and 6.9 percent in 2021 from barely a percentage growth this year, offering hope to millions of households which were plunged into poverty by the devastating shocks of Covid-19 containment measures.

Economists at the Treasury, International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group have forecast economic activity to recover from the adverse effects of the pandemic that brought key sectors such as tourism and education to their knees. The World Bank Group, which estimates the economy contracted by 1.0 to 1.5 percent in 2020, sees uninterrupted resumption of schools from January lifting gross domestic output to a growth of 6.9 percent in 2021.

World Bank economists have taken a more optimistic year-on-year growth outlook on Kenya than their counterparts at the IMF who in October forecast the economy to pick up from an estimated 1.0 percent to 4.7 percent growth in 2021. The Treasury, which in November downgraded growth outlook for 2020 to 0.6 from 2.5 percent, sees economic outlook expanding 6.4 percent in 2021.

"The growth outlook will be supported by stable macroeconomic environment, ongoing investments in strategic priorities of the government under the 'Big Four' agenda, turn around in trade as economies recover from Covid-19 pandemic and expected favourable weather that will support agricultural output," Treasury secretary Ukur Yatani says 2021 outlook.

Travel restrictions and shutdown of hotels as well as closure of schools in March pushed the economy into a trough in the April-June 2020, with GDP – a measure of economic output – shrinking 5.7 percent. The World Bank estimates that an additional two million persons in Kenya were rendered poor by the pandemic.

DSE doubles investors' accounts to 600,000 since 2013

By Smart Money Reporter

SUSTAINED growth at Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange in the past seven years has since the number of investors' accounts double to 600,000 while also doubling liquidity on the equity market, market capital and size of outstanding bonds.

In a recent interview with journalists held in Dar es Salaam to close the year 2020, DSE CEO Moremi Marwa said in 2013, the domestic market was around 5trn/- while liquidity was 50bn/- per annum but currently it has boomed to almost 500bn/-, almost 10 times compared to 2013.

"And in terms of market capital, we are at 9.2trn/- which is closer to \$4.5 billion, so an additional of almost \$2 billion over this period of time. That is on the equity segment. If you look on the bond segment, seven years ago, the size of outstanding bonds in the market was around 5trn/- but now we are at 12.6trn/-," Marwa who took over as DSE CEO noted.

He pointed out that in terms of the investor base, there were at 300,000 investment accounts which have since increased to



Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange CEO Moremi Marwa.

600,000. "If you look at the first 10 years of DSE and the developments that were there, the growth that we saw, and then if you look into this second 10 years, and now we are on

the seventh year, there has been a significant enhancement of the market," he noted.

The DSE chief executive further stated that despite the coronavirus

outbreak, the bourse has maintained steady growth thanks to the brief lockdown imposed by the government earlier this year. Marwa explained that there has been an

impact on performance because of European and North American lockdowns which have forced investment managers to suspend trading at DSE.

"This year, for example, as much as we have the COVID-19 and the impact that we have seen for most of the African markets, as you look into their indices, most of them are down, companies are losing value, and there are also significant volatilities. But for us this year, our domestic market capital has gone up by two percent. So, we are at an additional of around 200bn/- this year, where if you look across Africa, all markets have gone down," he added.

"In terms of liquidity, for example, in the bonds market, it has doubled compared to last year. In 2019, we traded close to \$500 million but last year were at almost \$1 billion of liquidity in the bonds market. And then we are seeing retail investors also participating in the bond market while previously it was only institutional investors like pension funds or commercial banks or collective investment schemes and unit trusts," the DSE chief noted (the full interview is on page 15).

China's factory output growth softens in December as input costs rise

BEIJING

Activity in China's factories continued to expand in December but a rise in input costs slowed the pace of expansion of manufacturing output in the world's second largest economy.

The Caixin/Markit Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index, a composite indicator designed to provide a single-figure snapshot of operating conditions in the manufacturing sector, edged down to 53 at the end of 2020, from 54.9 in November.

A reading above 50 indicates expansion, while one below indicates contraction. Analysts polled by Reuters had forecast the headline reading could slip to 54.8. "The manufacturing PMI remained in expansionary territory as the post-epidemic economic recovery [in China] continued," Wang Zhe, senior economist at Caixin Insight Group, said.

Both demand and supply in the manufacturing industry remained strong, while overseas demand also improved. Sub-indices for output and total new orders edged lower from



An employee works on a car seat assembly line at a factory in Shanghai.

November levels, but remained in expansionary territory for the 10th and seventh consecutive months, respectively.

"The overseas pandemic situation remained uncertain, but demand for China's exports improved, as the sub-index for new export orders stayed in positive territory for the fifth straight month," the report said. China was the first country to report the coronavirus in December

2019. However, strict containment measures helped Beijing to control the spread of the virus. The country has so far reported 87,150 cases of Covid-19 infections with 4,634 fatalities, according to Worldometer. Globally, the number of infections has risen to over 85 million with more than 1.85 million deaths.

China's industrial sector has charted a swift recovery from the pandemic-induced slowdown.

The International Monetary Fund expects the country's economy to expand 8.2 per cent in 2021 after slowing to about 1.9 per cent in 2020 - the weakest pace in over three decades. However, China's economic recovery is much stronger than most major economies that are still struggling to contain the virus.

"In terms of the trend, we expect the economic recovery in the post-epidemic era to continue for several

months, and macroeconomic indicators will be stronger in the next six months, taking into account the low bases in the first half of 2020," Mr Zhe said.

Manufacturers in China, however, registered a "sharp and accelerated increase" in average input costs in December amid reports of greater raw material costs, particularly for metals. The rate of inflation was the steepest recorded for three years and led to a quicker rise in prices charged by manufacturers, according to the report.

Also, weighing on the headline index was a slower increase in production during December. Firms surveyed also reported a slower, but still marked, increase in overall new orders. Underlying data suggested that this was partly due to weaker growth of new export sales as demand from foreign clients expanded modestly.

"We need to pay attention to the mounting pressure on costs brought by the increase in raw material prices and its adverse impact on employment, which is particularly important for the design of the exit from stimulus policies implemented during the epidemic," Mr Zhe said.

Total asks Mozambique staff to leave with attacks near LNG project

MAPUTO

Total SE asked some staff to vacate its \$20 billion Mozambique liquefied natural gas project as Islamist militants are staging attacks increasingly closer to the site.

Fighters linked to Islamic State raided a town less than 5 kilometres (3 miles) from the construction camp this week of what is Africa's largest private investment, ratcheting up risks for the planned LNG export terminal on Mozambique's northern coastline. While the heavily guarded site hasn't been attacked yet, militants have made threats that they may do so.

Total "has temporarily reduced its workforce on site in response

to the prevailing environment," the company said in an emailed response to questions on Friday. The situation is being reviewed continuously, it said.

The southern African nation has so far struggled to contain an insurgency in the Cabo Delgado province that began in October 2017 and that's killed about 2,500 people while prompting 570,000 to flee their homes.

Mozambique is hoping that LNG projects such as Total's will transform one of the world's poorest countries and catapult it to being a major global exporter of the fuel. The coronavirus pandemic has further weighed on the decision to reduce personnel, Total said. The Mo-

zambique LNG project, set to start production in 2024, was the site of the country's first coronavirus cases in April, which led to works being suspended until June.

Meanwhile consultancy IHS Markit told Lusa today that it had revised its economic expectations for Mozambique last year, now expecting 0.2% growth in 2020 rather than a 2% recession. Mozambique's GDP will have grown by a modest 0.2% during 2020, compared to our previous estimate of a 2% contraction," economist Thea Fourie told Lusa, adding that the review was based on economic activity during the first half of the year.

"Economic growth exceeded initial expectations and fell by 0.8%

during the first half of the year, better than the forecast of a fall of 2.2% from January to June," the analyst said, pointing out that it was agriculture that 'saved' the country from recession.

"The isolation measures taken due to the Covid-19 at the end of March and the disturbances in the supply chains left many sectors under pressure during the second quarter, but agricultural production, which represents almost 30% of GDP and is dominated by subsistence farming, remained resilient and grew 3% during the first six months of 2020," Fourie said.

In addition, some sectors of the Mozambican economy would grow while others remained in difficul-

ties. "Although the general growth in the third quarter was below potential, activity in some sectors of the economy may start to recover, while others, like agriculture, will remain resilient," she said.

Asked about the state of negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which were interrupted by the pandemic and only resumed at the end of the year, Fourie said that "IHS Markit assumes that relations with Mozambique have improved since 2019, when the Government accepted the Fund's assumptions, and guaranteed the resumption of financial aid", but did not guarantee the adoption of a financial assistance programme, as Mozambique has proposed.

The country has already received funds from the IMF: on April 13, Mozambique benefited from financial support from the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust (CCRT); the country joined the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), and in April, the IMF disbursed US\$309 million under the Rapid Credit Facility.

"The budget deficit in 2020 should stand above the initial estimates of 10.4%, and end 2021 at 11.7%," the analyst proposed. "Public expenditure related to combating Covid-19, together with the growing humanitarian needs of people displaced by terrorists in the province of Cabo Delgado, will compound the deficit in 2020."

Kahama motor taxi operators benefit from Azania Bank's 'Jikwamue' loans



Azania Bank's Kagongwa branch manager, Prosper Meela (R) handing over one of the nine motorcycles to Kagongwa 'Bodaboda' Association chairman, Samuel Malele at a ceremony held in Kahama District last week. Photo courtesy of Azania.

By Smart Money Reporter

SOME motorcycle taxi operators popularly known as 'Bodabodas' in Kahama District have received concessional loans in forms of their transport machinery in a move aimed at improving their welfare.

Under a loan scheme christened 'Jikwamue,' Azania Bank Limited has come up with the tailor made motorcycles credit plan to enable the operators increase their revenue and graduate into business owners instead of casual employees of other.

Msalala lawmaker, Iddy Hamisi who also attended the handover ceremony commended the bank for implementing the government development plans by targeting 'Bodaboda' operators who are among petty traders.

"We appreciate Azania Bank's decision to give concessional loans to these operators that will not only help them tame poverty by increasing their income

but also incorporates them into the formal banking system," Hamisi said.

He said banks have an important role to play in fulfilling the government's development agenda and growth of small businesses which employ the bulk of youths in the country. "I hope that the beneficiaries will make better use of the equipment so that we can repay loans," he advised.

He said the government of President John Mungufuli wants to see the majority of Tanzanian business people become successful by growing their businesses hence his decision to issue petty traders with state identity cards.

"As a middle income economy, we have to ensure that business people borrow from banks and other financial institutions to grow their businesses and graduate into companies," the Msalala legislator noted.

Speaking during the ceremony which was attended by Kagongwa Councillor, Ismail Masolwa, Azania Branch

Manager, Prosper Meela said the bank understands the importance of assisting small business owners boost their activities.

Meela said the Dar es Salaam based lender has designed tailor made 'Jikwamue' loan scheme targeting groups of petty traders, 'Bodaboda' operators, food vendors and small businesses which do not qualify to get credit because of failure to meet stringent lending conditions.

"These loans are for groups like women, youths and the disabled who are marginalised by the existing formal financial system," he said while adding that the loans do not need collateral except for endorsement by peers.

He said in order to qualify for the loans which range between 3m/- for individuals and 30m/- for a group of 10 members, the beneficiaries need to back each other as collateral. "I urge residents of Kahama to make use of this opportunity," he urged.

West African solar startup secures \$8.5-million funding

DAKAR

Senegal-based startup, Oolu has secured \$8.5-million in a Series B round of investment led by RP Global, an independent renewable energy developer, and several additional investors namely; Persistent Energy Capital, Shell-seeded impact investor All On, Gaia Impact Fund, and DPI Energy Ventures.

In an official press statement, Leo Schiefermueller, Director of RP Global Africa, comments on its investment made into Oolu. "We are looking forward to working with the most promising solar home systems provider in West Africa. Having found a partner with such an efficient structure and excellent management makes us optimistic that this will be our greatest venture in Africa to date. The fantastic team at Oolu is prepared to lead the company towards a whole new level of success and growth in all areas of one of Africa's most important challenges - 'access to energy'."

The funding will be used to expand the startup's offering of pay-as-you-go solar energy and develop its operations in West Africa. Dan Rosa, CEO, and co-founder of Oolu explains that the funding is integral to the growth of the startup in providing renewable energy to much-needed communities.

"The strength of our business and industry during a challenging global pandemic has demonstrated the value that customers see in our products and service. RP Global's financial expertise and experience in managing renewable energy businesses will enable us to accelerate our growth. All On's unparalleled knowledge of the renewable energy sector in Nigeria will help us to further adapt our business to meet customers' needs. In addition, we are excited to continue our successful collaboration with current investors especially Persistent."

Founded in 2015, the West African startup aims to provide access to affordable energy for rural and peri-urban individuals in the region. With an innovative service that allows users to purchase solar home systems, providing a source of renewable and reliable energy to homes.

Oolu claims to have sold more than 60 000 solar home systems to customers in West Africa. The startup's business model enables it to offer high-quality solar products on an affordable financing plan to customers. With headquarters in Dakar, the startup supports women-empowerment and this reflects in its management team which is 50% made up of women.

Night SGR train to ease demand as schools reopen

NAIROBI

A new inter-county night train will now be available on Monday on the Nairobi-Mombasa standard gauge railway (SGR), adding trips on the route in a bid to ease increased demand. This is after the Kenya Railways Corporation introduced two new Madaraka Express commuter rail services on the route ahead of schools reopening.

In a notice, the rail transport regulator said two trains would depart from Nairobi and Mombasa termini concurrently at 9pm stopping at each of the seven intermediate stages in the six-hour journey. However, Kenya Railways did not specify how long the new night service would be in operation.

Transport Cabinet Secretary James Macharia had earlier announced an elaborate plan to facilitate the movement of learners as schools reopened on Monday. Part of the plan included increasing rail trips to ease pressure on the public transport sector as learners travel back to school across the country.

Kenya Railways has also added more trains on its Nairobi Commuter Rail Service that operates from Nairobi city centre to Ruiru, Embakasi, Syokimau and Kikuyu stations. "We want to make sure that the movement of children to school is seamless and that is why we must have more trains. We are urging matatu operators to cooperate," said Mr Macharia.

At the same time, the Corporation has introduced a back-to-school Nanyuki safari train on the Nairobi-Nanyuki route with stops at Thika, Mitubiri, Makuyu, Maragua, Murang'a, Sagana, Karatina, Kiganjo and Naro Moru.

The trains depart at 9am from Nairobi and Nanyuki with passengers paying Sh200 for the economy class and Sh1,000 for the business class. The two trains will operate on Monday and Tuesday to ease the burden as thousands of pupils and students go back to school. Mr Macharia said about 1,500 learners and parents will be ferried through the Nairobi-Nanyuki refurbished railway line.

CURRENT NEWS

Rwanda's youthful entrepreneur makes potted plants popular

KIGALI

As a child, Adelphine Abewe recalls her dislike for unattended and dried up plants as well as wrongly placed potted plants.

She remembers finding joy in giving some of her mother's plants to neighbours, friends and even strangers who would show interest in them. Abewe's passion for green plants started while at a tender age, and she knew for a fact that one day her deep connection with plants would become a career.

The inspiration The thirty year old said her mother being among the leaders in church, often planted flowers and different plants at home to ensure that anytime flowers or plants are needed in the church, she has what to take there.

"Because of this, my mother made me in charge of her plants. She taught me how to till the garden and take care of every green living thing in that particular garden," she said. The hospitality management graduate said that as a child, to some extent it was boring because it took most of her playing time.

However, with time Abewe, who grew up in Kigali came to love the role and from there, she

never stopped loving to take care of plants. "I came to realize that plants are important in our life not just for clean air, but also to relieve stress and decoration," she added.

In her teenage years, she started planting her own plants and would still give out as well to people. It is at this moment that she realized she can earn a living only if she doesn't give out plants for free, but rather in the exchange of money. "I was encouraged and motivated by those that received my plants as they gave positive feedback. They challenged me to start selling them so that I can become independent on my own," she noted.

After doing her hospitality course, Abewe secured a job at Kigali Convention Center where she worked as a Meeting and Event Supervisor for a period of two years, before starting up her own plant business in 2018.

About the enterprise Her plant business goes by the name El Amor Garden Kigali Ltd, based in Kigali, where they design office and home plants, herbs, vegetables, flower accessories and fruit seedlings as well.

"We simply design an environment that promotes well-being by adding deep connection with

nature to Restaurants, offices and Homes. "Doing what I love motivates others to attempt to do the same as opposed to being in a career that you had no passion in, is what keeps me going," she said.

Moving forward, Abewe said at the onset of her business, people didn't appreciate her efforts and the business itself. Some will associate it for jobs for those people who didn't go to school, and some would actually think only farmers in upcountry can handle such a business.

"It's fulfilling now since people are realizing that having plants around you is not only to conserve the environment but also, help add a nice touch of décor and bright energy to any indoor space, and this is the feedback that we normally get from some of our customers," she said.

Abewe's work consists of designing an environment that promotes well-being by adding deep connection with nature to Restaurants, offices and Homes. She further cited transportation as a major challenge she is facing now as sometimes plants get broken in the process of transit. Abewe's plants range from Rwf 5000 to Rwf 20,000 depending on the type of the plant, the size and design of the plant.



DSE defies Covid-19 to maintain growth trajectory in 2020

In this interview with Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange CEO, Moremi Marwa, he explains how the bourse has maintained strong growth last year despite of the coronavirus outbreak, a status which has been maintained in the past seven years, excerpts:

Can you elaborate on the impact of COVID on the capital market?

COVID-19 has had an impact on almost every nation and every economy. Tanzania being part of the global economy also had its own impact. However, the impact was limited in the sense that our social and economic activities were not much impacted by the lockdown. Our lockdown was partial, in terms of restricting some of the movements, and that was for only three months, from mid-March to June. Thereafter, the government decided to open up the economy after seeing positive development in reduction of the virus. Since the beginning of July to date, we are just progressing as usual.

How has that been affecting strategies that you use to bounce back fully as an institution?

On the equity side of our market, 80 percent and above depend on foreign portfolio investments, and therefore, given what is happening especially in Europe and North America, that is where the big chunk of investments that comes into our market comes from. Basically, fund managers from Europe and America are the key investors in our market. Now, because of the impact and some of the obligations that the fund managers will have during times like these, they have limitations in terms of cash that will go into investments. That has somehow impacted liquidity in our market, which has also

impacted the pricing valuations and volatility of some of the companies which are listed. Some of the strategies that we are using include trying to enhance the domestic investor base by engaging more retail investors. And recently, we have launched a platform we call the mobile trading platform, which is a platform based on mobile phones, which people use to invest in the market from wherever they are in the country. A significant part of our people live in rural areas and so, this platform gives them access to the trading engine at the exchange without the need to physically visit a stockbroker.

What has been the impact of the mobile application since you launched it and how has it helped market penetration?

From when we launched the mobile trading platform on the 20th of November, there has obviously been new developments in the market. Much as it is only three weeks down the line, however have almost 1000 individuals who have already used this platform for their investment activity. These are first time investors coming to the market who, by getting this opportunity provided by the platform, now from wherever they

are, in rural areas and villages or even in cities and towns, they can perform investment activities at their own convenience without necessarily having to physically go and see a stockbroker.

What are some of the strategies you have implemented to try and sensitise the public on this new agenda?

Engaging with the public goes beyond the mobile trading platform and creating its visibility and for people to use it. Rather, it is a broader approach to enhance financial literacy and financial education to our people here. What we have been doing for a long time now, almost seven years, is that we are using mainstream media as well as social media to try and engage with the public. For example, we are using local television and media platforms to provide content to policymakers, to the business community, to potential investors being retail or institutions. And we are seeing some results which are coming out of it. But also, we have some group focused engagements in which we do some visits to some of the entities but also associations, the business community to try and share, educate, and enhance their understanding of



VIEW FROM THE TOP

what the stock market can do to enable them diversify their sources of capital and investment opportunities. In 2020, we introduced a program called the DSE Enterprise Acceleration Program, which is basically an incubation or acceleration for building capacities to SMEs to enable them consider to run their businesses successfully so they can access capital using financial markets from capital markets to banking into microfinance, all kind of capital sources.

However, what we are doing actually is just to broaden some of the entrepreneurs and business owners and business managers who are running SMEs to understand that there are various and different forms of capital that can be accessed, whether private equity or venture capital fund or angel investments or using public offerings to access capital.

What has been the impact since you started this DSE Program?

We launched the DSE Enterprises Acceleration Program in January last year as an extension of the SME or startups market segment called the enterprise growth market, which is a platform used for small and medium enterprises as well as startups to raise capital. Now, with the DSE Enterprise Acceleration Program we engage more with the public to get some more traction to enable SMEs to access public money and get listed onto the stock exchange. This year, we have had 15 entities that have gone through this training and capacity building program. In the beginning of 2021, we intend to establish a segment in the market called the SME Acceleration Agreement, which will be basically listing some of these entities to give them access to potential investors who are private investors in these companies.

Four years ago, during our last interview, you talked about the reluctance of certain Tanzanian businesses to go public and some of the reasons being perceived costs for the flotation or disclosure or perhaps the ownership dilution. How has that changed, what has been the impact so far and any challenges experienced?

For anything significant for the society which also touches into the cultural perspectives, it takes a little bit of time to change, and hence the need for patience and consistency. And given our own history as a nation, from a centralized economy to now market based economy and the democratization of enterprises and capital and finance, it takes a bit of time for people to change the way they contextualize and perceive some of those aspects. In this way, the reason why we came up with the enterprise growth markets and now some of the initiative to build the capacity for entrepreneurs and business owners is part of that sensitization and financial literacy that we are trying to engage in order to change some of these cultural aspects. We understand that it is a journey and we have to consistently engage with the business community, but also policymakers to see that capital markets as one of the tools for finance for development.

What has been the performance of the domestic listed companies so far?

Over the years, there have actually been some consistently good improvements. When I joined the stock exchange seven years ago, our domestic market was around TZS 5 trillion, which is \$2.8 billion and our liquidity on the equity side was TZS 50 billion per annum, which is \$25 million a year. But

now, our annual average turnover is almost TZS500 billion per annum, which is almost 10 times where we were seven years ago. And in terms of market capital, we are at TZS 9.2 trillion, which is closer to \$4.5 billion, so an additional of almost \$2 billion over this period of time. That is on the equity segment. If you look on the bond segment, seven years ago, the size of outstanding bonds in the market was around TZS 5 trillion, which was \$2.5 billion, but now we are at TSS 12.6 trillion, which is almost \$6 billion. So, we went from \$2.5 billion to \$6 billion of outstanding bonds listings, more than two times where we were seven years ago. And in terms of the investor base, we were at 300,000 investment accounts, but now, we have 600,000 investment accounts in the stock market, so almost doubled as well. If you look at the first 10 years of DSE and the developments that were there, the growth that we saw, and then if you look into this second 10 years, and now we are on the seventh year, there has been a significant enhancement of the market.

What about liquidity?

So, talking about liquidity size of the market, the kind of returns that investors are getting, investor participation in the market, there has been some growth. This year, for example, as much as we have the COVID-19 and the impact that we have seen for most of the African markets, as you look into their indices, most of them are down, companies are losing value, and there are also significant volatilities. But for us this year, our domestic market capital has gone up by two percent. So, we are at an additional of around TZS 200 billion this year, where if you look across Africa, all markets have gone down. In terms of liquidity, for example, in the bonds market, it has doubled compared to last year. In 2019, we traded close to \$500 million but year we are at almost \$1 billion of liquidity in the bonds market. And then we are seeing retail investors also participating in the bond market while previously it was only institutional investors like pension funds or commercial banks or collective investment schemes and unit trusts. So, there has been really some significant development. In terms of listing, seven years ago, we had 12 listed entities, but currently in the domestic listed entities we have 22. So again, it has almost doubled. This is linked to the level of awareness that we are trying to create and using the media, both domestic and international media, to try and enhance visibility and profile the exchange.

How has all this good performance enhanced DSE recognition?

Last year, for example, we were accepted into full membership to World Federation of Exchanges which is a global association of exchanges and for us to qualify to be allows full membership, it means in terms of your institutional setup, in terms of your governance, in terms of your risk management, the infrastructures that you have as a market are in line with what is expected of international standards. And also, FTSE Russell which is one of the global country and market classification body, in 2020, it gave us status of a frontier market. And this year, we were accepted in their frontier market index. So, that tells us that we are making some progress, slowly, but at least we are seeing that what we are trying to do here is being seen, appreciated, and recognized by investors, but also some of the global entities which look into the capital markets.

China to take action against NYSE move to delist telcos

BEIJING

The Chinese government plans to take "necessary countermeasures" to safeguard the interests of its companies, according to reports. This after the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) announced its plans last week to begin a process of delisting three Chinese telecom firms that allegedly have military ties.

The NYSE has indicated that it would delist China Mobile, China Unicom and China Telecom, with trading to be suspended by 11 January. This action follows president Donald Trump's move last November to bar US investment in firms the US government says are owned or controlled by the Chinese military, Reuters reports.

"China opposes the Americans from abusing national security by listing Chinese companies into the so-called 'Communist China Military Companies' list and will take

the necessary countermeasures to resolutely safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies," a spokesperson for the Chinese Commerce Ministry is quoted. The latest announcement comes amid ongoing tensions between the US and China - the world's biggest economies.

According to Reuters, the US Commerce Department added dozens of Chinese companies to a trade blacklist in December, accusing Beijing of using its firms to harness civilian technologies for military purposes.

As a result, Chinese diplomats have expressed hope that president-elect Joe Biden's election will help ease tensions between the two countries. Responding to the delisting of the three major Chinese telcos, a spokesperson for China's Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) says they have taken note of this development.



Logos of China Mobile, China Unicom and China Telecom.

"With their American Depositary Receipts issued and traded on the NYSE for about two decades, the three Chinese telecom companies have always adhered to market rules and regulatory requirement of the US securities markets and have been widely recognised by global investors." The spokesperson reiterates the move to delist the telecoms firms stems from the executive order of the Trump administration.

"The executive order, which is based on political purposes, have entirely ignored the actual situations of relevant companies and the legitimate rights of the global investors, and severely damaged market rule and order."

The CSRC spokesperson adds: "The role of the US as an international financial centre is

built on the trust of the global enterprises and investors in the inclusiveness and certainty of its rules and institutions. The recent move by some political forces in the US to continuously and groundlessly suppress foreign companies listed on the US markets, even at the cost of undermining its own position in the global capital markets, has demonstrated that US rules and institutions can become arbitrary, reckless and unpredictable.

"It is certainly not a wise move. We hope that the US side could show respect for the rule of law, do more things that can benefit the order of global financial markets, the legitimate rights of investors, and the stability and development of global economy."

WORLD

Georgia election guardian Raffensperger faces heat as Trump contests defeat

CUTHBERT, GA

GEORGIA'S Republican secretary of state, Brad Raffensperger, cemented his status as an unlikely hero for U.S. Democrats following a fresh clash in which he rejected President Donald Trump's claims that his election defeat was the result of widespread fraud.

Trump returned the 65-year-old former businessman to the limelight when he called Raffensperger on Saturday to badger him to "find" enough votes to reverse Democratic President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the state, according to audio of the hour-long call published by the Washington Post on Sunday.

As Georgia's top election official, Raffensperger oversaw multiple recounts of the Nov. 3 ballots, each of which reached the same result - that the southern state had narrowly favored a Democratic presidential candidate for the first time in a generation.

He has vowed to fight any future election fraud even as he echoed the findings of his counterparts across the United States that there was no evidence of widespread fraud in November.

He has also repeatedly pushed back against Trump's unfounded claims of

fraud, even after the president labeled him an "enemy of the people." He did so again on Saturday's call, telling Trump the vote showed Biden was the rightful winner.

"Well Mr. President, the challenge that you have is the data you have is wrong," Raffensperger could be heard telling Trump on the recording of Saturday's call.

The White House declined to comment.

But he and his colleagues for weeks have been warning that Trump's rhetoric placed them and their colleagues in danger.

"Stop inspiring people to commit potential acts of violence. Someone's going to get hurt, someone's going to get shot, someone's going to get killed," Gabriel Sterling, the manager of the state's voting systems, said at an emotional Dec. 1 press conference.

Noting Raffensperger's wife had been getting sexualized threats, he added, "It has all gone too far. It has to stop."

It was unclear if the state had taken security measures around Raffensperger after the threats emerged. His office and that of Governor Brian Kemp did



Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger

not respond to requests for comment.

REPUTATION AS 'STRAIGHT SHOOTER'

After years as a civil engineer and successful businessman, Raffensperger served two years on a city council and four years in Georgia's House of Representatives before succeeding Kemp in 2018 as the top election official.

Acquaintances of Raffensperger in the state House described him as a "straight shooter" who backed traditional Republican priorities, supporting a bill to cut regulations on small businesses, for example, and voting against a tax on gasoline, according to a profile in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

A lifelong Republican, Raffensperger was an early supporter of Trump in 2016, and the president returned the favor by endorsing him for secretary of state. But whatever goodwill existed between the two men has since disappeared.

"Brad Raffensperger: he's not some liberal. Like he's no hero of mine," Hillary Rosen, a Democratic strategist, said on CNN. "He is a solid conservative Republican standing up to the president. That's what makes it so significant."

Trump's relentless attacks since the Nov. 3 election included an accusation that Raffensperger hid tens

of thousands of illegal votes, ensuring Biden's victory. Georgia's Republican incumbent senators - David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler - have called on Raffensperger to resign.

Perdue and Loeffler themselves are locked in tight campaigns ahead of Tuesday run-off elections that will determine which party controls the U.S. Senate.

Raffensperger has come under fire from the party establishment across the state for not bending to Trump's will.

Ronald Ham, the Republican party's head in rural Brantley County, said Raffensperger should take Trump's allegations about voter fraud more seriously. He said there were discussions among some party leaders about recalling him.

"I've been a little too critical of Brad, but where there is so much smoke I would want to verify," Ham said. "He's a good guy, but he won't survive re-election if he gets that far."

Raffensperger told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution in late November that he and his wife of 44 years had leaned on their faith to cope with the pressure.

"We're straightforward people, simple people," Raffensperger said. "We're quiet people in an unquiet role."

Agencies

Prisons shut down as COVID-19 sickens guards

BATTERED by a wave of coronavirus infections and deaths, local jails and state prison systems around the United States have resorted to a drastic strategy to keep the virus at bay by shutting down completely and transferring their inmates elsewhere, The New York Times reported on Saturday.

"From California to Missouri to Pennsylvania, state and local officials say that so many guards have fallen ill with the virus and are unable to work that abruptly closing some correctional facilities is the only way to maintain community security and prisoner safety," the Times said in a report.

There have been more than 480,000 infections and at least

2,100 deaths among inmates and guards in prisons, jails and detention centers across the nation, a NYT database said. Among those statistics are the nearly 100,000 correctional officers who have tested positive and 170 who have died from the disease.

Confirmed COVID-19 cases in the US topped 20 million on Friday as the discovery of a highly contagious new virus strain has increased pressure to speed up the vaccination process.

In California, health officials say if the current surge of cases in the state continues, staffing shortages at already strained hospitals will erode the state's overall healthcare system.

California on Thursday deployed 1,280 medical personnel

to healthcare facilities around the state as part of an effort to relieve the stress on the healthcare system.

As of Saturday, California recorded more than 2.3 million confirmed cases with more than 26,500 deaths, according to a tally kept by the Los Angeles Times.

Primary concern

As cases rose through the holiday season and into the New Year across the US, staffing has become a primary concern in hospitals.

Brad Spellberg, chief medical officer at Los Angeles County + USC Medical Center, said in an e-mail the hospital has redeployed staff who care for patients outside the intensive care unit to

increase staffing in the ICU and intermediate level of care areas. "That means we are not doing elective surgeries or procedures, like colonoscopies. It also means fewer visits to outpatient doctors," he said.

As the newly reported variant is posing a bigger threat in Europe, a party took place despite France's nationwide nighttime curfew.

A French prosecutor said on Saturday that police detained seven people, including two alleged organizers, after the New Year's Eve rave party drew at least 2,500 people in western France despite a curfew and other restrictions.

French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin tweeted that ac-

tions by police around the site at Lieuron, in Brittany, "led to the end of the illegal party without violence" on Saturday morning, 36 hours after it began.

Ravers from France and abroad converged on a hangar in Lieuron on Thursday night to party into the New Year. Officials said ravers attacked the police on the first night, torching one police vehicle and slightly injuring three officers with volleys of bottles and stones.

Other parts of the world have also seen rising COVID-19 cases amid vaccination drives, including India, which authorized two COVID-19 vaccines on Sunday, paving the way for a huge inoculation programme.

Xinhua

Challenges ahead as EU, UK open new chapter in relations

BRUSSELS

CHALLENGES lie ahead for both the European Union (EU) and Britain following the inking of a long-awaited deal laying out how the two sides would manage their future relationship starting 2021.

Eleven months after Britain announced the departure from the EU, the pair reached a deal featuring a zero-tariff and quota arrangement, which regulates their future relations regarding trade, fish-

ery and security, among others. "This is the first time the EU has ever negotiated a free trade agreement in a context of divergence, not convergence," commented Michel Barnier, the European Union (EU) chief Brexit negotiator.

The EU turns a new page of the European integration project as it enters the year of 2021 with Britain not belonging to the bloc any more, demographically, politically and economically.

British Prime Minister Boris



Johnson (pictured) and Brexiters cheered for the regained sovereignty. On the other side

of the English Channel, an EU press release said the deal that provides a solid basis for preserving the "longstanding friendship and cooperation" nevertheless reflects the fact that Britain can "no longer enjoy the benefits of EU membership or the single market" it used to have.

A graphic by the European Commission illustrated that Britons only kept two of a score of privileges, namely the free trade in goods and visa-free travels under 90 days, but

lost the rights from visa-free travel beyond 90 days and pet passports to removal of border checks and access to Erasmus.

While the last minute effort by both sides to secure the agreement avoided the much feared no-deal scenario and created stability and predictability for traders and consumers, one has to admit that the separation is always worse than a union with the Britons on board.

Xinhua

China unveils new foreign investment security review rules to align with international practice

CHINA unveiled new rules for reviewing foreign investment on security grounds over the weekend in a major move to align with global practice in regulating foreign investment in the military, key energy and information technology sectors, and financial services.

Arguing against misleading claims that distort the nation's efforts to fill the regulatory gap as a tit-for-tat response to US sanctions, experts noted that the new rules are intended to strengthen China's legal framework for greater opening-up and they would augur well for legitimate foreign businesses looking to the Chinese market while serving as a sharp weapon to battle offenders.

The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) on Saturday, December 19, jointly released the new rules, scheduled to come into force in 30 days. The 23-clause new rules rest upon the Foreign Investment Law and the National Security Law as a legal basis.

Foreign investment in the military sector, among other national defense and security related areas, and investments involving foreign persons near military facilities would be subject to the new rules.

Foreign investment in key areas that implicate national security such as important agricultural production, energy and resources, cultural prod-

ucts and services, information technologies and internet products and services, and financial services where such investment amounts to actual control of the investment targets will also fall under the purview of the new review regulation.

The significance of the security review on foreign investments in China's arms sector and national defense is self-evident amid the country's continued and expanding reform and opening-up. Song Zhongping, a Chinese military expert and TV commentator, told the Global Times on Sunday.

If foreign investments manage to tap into China's arms industry and military development without proper

supervision, the risk is high that foreign capital gets some say in China's national defense development that would harm China's national security. Another possibility is that improper investment in Chinese arms companies or military units would have to report work progress to foreign investors, during which confidential intelligence could leak, a Chinese expert on intelligence security told the Global Times on Sunday on the condition of anonymity.

Under the new rules, a work mechanism for security review on foreign investment would be put in place, with NDRC and MOFCOM heading the review task force whose office is set up in NDRC.

"This new rule is by no means a

unique practice by China in reaction to changing global situations, but a catch-up the nation needs to align itself with similar legislation in major global economies," Gao Lingyun, an expert at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, told the Global Times on Sunday.

The hype about the new rules being relied on as a means of vengeance against an escalating US clampdown on Chinese businesses can barely be justified, Gao said.

In a fresh sign of reckless confrontation, the US announced Friday the addition of 59 Chinese firms including major Chinese chipmaker Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation (SMIC) to its entity list of

export controls.

Law-abiding foreign businesses should be worry-free about the new rules which are an important part of the nation's efforts to coordinate openness and security in the next Five-Year Plan and through 2035, Gao said.

China passed the new foreign investment law, which made it clear that the country would launch a security review mechanism for foreign investment.

In another statement on the NDRC's website on Saturday, an unidentified official with the review work mechanism office stressed the new rules are not intended to implement protectionism or to roll back on opening-up.

Global Times

Photovoltaic power generation alleviates electricity shortage, helps poverty reduction in Chinese village

"LOOK at the shiny panels outside. We make money from the 'tiles,'" said Wan Chunmei, an impoverished resident in Zhailiang village, Shangwu township, Wangcang county of Guangyuan, southwest China's Sichuan province, when she arrived at a greenhouse one kilometer from her home to prepare the soil.

The tiles she said are photovoltaic panels on the roof of her greenhouse. They were a part of the first photovoltaic-agriculture program launched in Sichuan province, which started with an investment of 2.5 million yuan (\$381,750) from the Science and Technology Department of Sichuan Province and the government of Wangcang county in 2016.

"Our village finally bid a farewell to power shortage given the upgraded rural power grid and these photovoltaic greenhouses," said Gou Junde, party chief of Zhailiang village. According to him, electricity was always in short supply when power demand peaked in summer. "Villagers had to go to the mountains to fetch firewood for cooking when summer came," he told the People's Daily.

To alleviate the situation, Zhailiang village resorted to green energy. Located in a valley, the village is covered by sunlight for 1,352 hours in total each year, and the longest sunshine duration in the summer can reach 14 hours per day.

Under the assistance offered by the Science and Technology Department of Sichuan Province, the village built 11 photovoltaic greenhouses that are able to generate 226,800 KWh of electricity each year.

"The volume not only covers the demand of our village, but also helps us gain extra income once sent to other places," Gou said.

As the first village in the province to launch photovoltaic-agriculture program, Zhailiang encountered obstacles when starting the mode.

Residents in the village lived on farming for generations, so the innovative development mode was not accepted well in the first place.

"Some villagers worried that they might lose their source of income once the land was transferred," said Yuan Yi, mayor of Shangwu township. To eliminate the concerns of the residents, village officials visited door to door to persuade them. "Two notebooks were used up," Yuan said.

Zhailiang village organized 65 impoverished households and established a photovoltaic power generation cooperative. These households plant edible fungi in the greenhouses, and the profit is shared according to their contribution.

"The mushrooms are ready to hit the market now," said Zhang Kuosheng, first secretary of Zhailiang village in charge of poverty alleviation work. He's quite confident about the industry's prospects. According to him, the edible fungi planted in the greenhouses are expected to generate revenue of 70,000 yuan this year, and each impoverished household can receive an extra bonus of 3,250 yuan from power generation.

Wangcang county is currently working to promote the construction of photovoltaic power generation bases to further increase the ratio of renewable energy in total generating capacity. By the end of this year, the county will have built 16 photovoltaic power stations in its villages, which will increase 1,000 yuan of income for each resident every year.

People's Daily

Niger village attacks killed 100, says prime minister

NIAMEY

ONE hundred people were killed on Saturday in attacks on two villages in western Niger, Prime Minister Brigi Rafini said following one of the deadliest days in recent memory for a country ravaged by Islamist violence.

Rafini announced the death toll in remarks broadcast on national television on Sunday from a visit to the zone, near the border with Mali. He did not say who was responsible.

Security sources said on Saturday that at least 70 civilians had been killed in simultaneous raids by suspected Islamist militants on the villages of Tchombangou and Zaroumdareye.

Niger has suffered repeated attacks by militants linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State near its borders with Mali and Burkina Faso. The violence is part of a wider security crisis in West Africa's Sahel region that has unnerved Western allies like France, who have poured troops and resources into the region.

Niger has also seen tit-for-tat killings between rival ethnic communities that have been stoked by the jihadist violence and competition for scarce resources.

Saturday's attacks came on the same day that the electoral commission announced the results from the first round of the election to replace President Mahamadou Issoufou, who is stepping down after a decade in power. Ruling party candidate Mohamed Bazoum, who finished in first, expressed his condolences on Sunday to the victims.

Agencies

South Korea's population falls for first time during pandemic

By Bloomberg

SOUTH Korea's population declined in 2020 for the first time on record as births dropped to a historic low amid the pandemic.

The population fell by about 21,000 to 51.8 million, according to the Ministry of Interior and Safety. The number of South Korean births slid 11 percent compared with the previous year, likely driving down what is already the world's lowest national fertility rate.

With the pandemic hitting jobs and hurting incomes, even more people are delaying marriage and pregnancies, accelerating the country's aging problems, the Bank of Korea said in a report last month.

South Korean policy makers for years have had little success trying to boost birth rates by subsidizing pay during childcare leave and providing free nurseries. A lack of good jobs is the big reason that young people are choosing to have fewer babies, according to Sung Tae-yoon, an economics professor at Seoul's Yonsei University.

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during childcare leave and providing free nurseries. A lack of good jobs is the big reason that young people are choosing to have fewer babies, according to Sung Tae-yoon, an economics professor at Seoul's Yonsei University.

"The economy isn't growing as fast as it used to, and the rigid wage system that rewards employees for seniority keeps employers reluctant to hire new ones," he said.

The jobless rate for South Koreans in their 20s exceeds 9 percent, even as the figure for all age groups hovers around 4 percent.

The interior ministry's report, released Sunday, also showed households getting smaller, shrinking to an average of just 2.24 people. People living alone now account for close to 40 percent of the total, suggesting that the focus of welfare and housing policies needs to change, the report said. With seniors aged 60 and older now making up 24 percent of the population and the number of working-age people continuing to decline, government finances are likely to come under increasing pressure, especially given all the spending needed to deal with the pandemic.

South Korea's government still has a low debt-ratio compared with other developed economies, but the pace of increase has alarmed some policy makers and President Moon Jae-in's administration is pushing for legislation to cap borrowing.

Agencies



Passengers wearing protective masks walk on a moving walkway at a subway station in Seoul, South Korea (File photo)

Nancy Pelosi reelected as US House speaker

WASHINGTON

DEMOCRATIC Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi of California was reelected on Sunday as speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, where her party has a narrow majority.

Pelosi received support from 216 Democrats, with two of her colleagues voting for someone else and three others voting present. Kevin McCarthy, also from California, received all votes from the 209 Republicans present, allowing him to continue serving as minority leader.

A veteran legislator who has served in the U.S. Congress since 1987, Pelosi was elected the first woman to serve as House speaker in 2007. She returned to the role in 2019 after her party regained control of the chamber.

The speaker is the political and parliamentary leader of the U.S. House. During the past two years, the White House and the Pelosi-led House had a strained relationship.

The chamber impeached U.S. President Donald Trump in late 2019 after an inquiry triggered by a whistleblower complaint that raised concerns about the White House's interactions with Ukraine. The Republican-led Senate later acquitted the president.

Pelosi's election as House speaker came as the 117th U.S. Congress was sworn in on Sunday. In a letter to her colleagues in the morning, Pelosi said the new Congress convenes "during a time of extraordinary difficulty."

"Each of our communities has been drastically affected by the pandemic and economic crisis: 350,000 tragic deaths, over 20 million infections, millions without jobs -- a toll almost beyond comprehension," she said. The balance of power in the 100-seat Senate will not be clear until after next week's Senate runoffs in the southeastern state of Georgia.

The new Congress will convene in a joint session on Wednesday to formally count the votes cast by the Electoral College in the 2020 presidential race - 306 for Democrat Joe Biden and 232 for Trump, the Republican incumbent.

A group of Republicans have announced they will contest the Electoral College results but their planned moves will unlikely overturn Biden's victory over Trump, who hasn't conceded and is still pushing for claims of massive election fraud.

Advancing arms control agenda meets interests of both US and Russia - team

NEW YORK

ADVANCING the arms control agenda and extending New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) meets the interests of both Russia and the United States, incoming US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan told CNN.

According to Sullivan, "even at the height of the Cold War" there were areas of cooperation between Russia and the US, "more specifically in arms control and nuclear non-proliferation."

"Today I very much believe that that the United States and Russia can act in their national interests to advance in arms control and strategic stability agenda, to deal with the threat that nuclear weapons pose to the world," he said.

That is something that President-Elect Joe Biden has tasked his team with pursuing "right out of the gate in the early days and weeks of the administration," he noted.

"A key treaty between the US and Russia, the New START Treaty, expires just a little more than two weeks after we come into office and we will have to look at extending that treaty in the interests of the United States."

In late December, CNN reported citing its sources that Biden was likely to give the green light to quickly extending New START for a short term in order to launch more substantive talks on strategic stability with Moscow.

One of the sources said Biden considered New START's extension and using this deal as a foundation for new arms control agreements.

Wang Yi: China-Africa friendship emerges still stronger from COVID-19 test - 2

CHINESE State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that the friendship between China and Africa emerged still stronger from the test of COVID-19 in 2020.

Wang made the remarks in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency and China Media Group.

The following is a transcript of that interview on the international situation and China's diplomacy in 2020.

Question: What role has the Foreign Ministry played during the nation's battle against COVID-19 and how has the Ministry put its people-centered philosophy into action?

Wang Yi: The principle of for the people and by the people has been a source of strength for the Communist Party of China. It is also the defining feature of China's diplomacy. This human touch of China's diplomacy has been further demonstrated during the test of COVID-19. Throughout the year 2020, we have pooled every resource available and lost no time in delivering people-centered diplomacy. We have defied risks and danger to put up a firm line of defense for our fellow Chinese in every corner of the world.

We have stood at the forefront of preventing imported cases, doing everything we could to lock in the hard-won gains in controlling the coronavirus at home. We have stood at the forefront of serving domestic development, giving diplomatic support to the national endeavor of finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and securing victory against extreme poverty. We have stood at the forefront of advocating international cooperation against COVID-19, making our contribution to forging a global synergy in this battle. We have stood at the forefront of fighting misinformation, rebutting attempts of politicization and stigmatization. We were determined to make sure that the objective narrative and collective memory of the battle against the pandemic would not be distorted by lies.

COVID-19 may have suspended flights, yet it has not hindered the solicitude of the motherland for the well-being of its sons and daughters abroad. COVID-19 has brought challenges to our consular work, yet the safety of overseas Chinese has remained our priority no matter what. Consular services have continued uninterrupted, so has our consular work in general.

In the early stage of the pandemic, we mobilized all resources possible to meet the pressing needs of Wuhan and the whole country, sourcing, buying and receiving all kinds of medical supplies from around the world to address the urgent demand at home.

When COVID-19 struck other parts of the world, we kept the safety and well-being of overseas Chinese citizens very much on our mind. We urged more attention from the governments of host countries to the hardships of Chinese nationals, and offered prompt support to those infected, including targeted telemedicine services. We overcame various difficulties to deliver more than 1.2 million health kits to overseas Chinese students, sent emergency medical supplies to overseas Chinese in 100-plus countries, and arranged over 350 special flights to bring home stranded Chinese nationals. Our consular protection hotline 12308 has operated 24/7 to provide dedicated services and assistance to overseas citizens, bringing the care and solicitude of the Party and the country to every one of them. Our diplomats abroad said this to their fellow countrymen and women in affected countries, "The embassy will always be here with you. We will get through this together."

With COVID-19 still ravaging the world, the risk of case import continues to rise and consular protection remains a formidable task. We in the diplomatic service will firmly implement the decisions of the CPC Central Committee and make solid efforts to prevent imported cases and protect and assist overseas Chinese citizens. We will press ahead against all difficulties to live up to the trust and fulfill the mission placed upon us.

Question: China and Russia have been supporting and helping each other since the outbreak of COVID-19. How would you describe the current China-Russia relations?

Wang Yi: In 2020, China-Russia relations have stood the test of a once-in-a-century pandemic and unprecedented global changes, and reached a historic high in all respects. Intensive interactions between the



Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi gives an interview

two heads of state. President Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin have had five phone calls and exchanged correspondence on multiple occasions, providing the most important strategic guidance for the steady growth of the bilateral relations.

Mutual support between the two peoples. Russia was the first country to send medical and other supplies to China, and China was one of the strongest supporters of Russia's COVID-19 response efforts. The two countries have also worked closely on joint epidemic response and development of vaccines and drugs.

Growing practical cooperation despite challenges. The two countries have vigorously facilitated economic reopening, safeguarded the functioning of industrial and supply chains, and made steady progress in several major projects. The Year of Scientific and Technological Innovation was launched, and bilateral cooperation on the digital economy, e-commerce and other new business forms and models was advanced at a fast pace.

Closer coordination on international affairs. The year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the victory of World War II and the founding of the UN. China and Russia have worked in concert to defend the victorious outcomes of World War II and uphold international fairness and justice. The two countries have extended mutual support on issues concerning each other's core interests and stood side by side against power politics, which further underscores the global significance of China-Russia relations.

The year 2021 is a year of special importance for China-Russia relations, as both countries will enter a new development stage. In developing China-Russia strategic cooperation, we see no limit, no forbidden zone and no ceiling to how far this cooperation can go. Focusing on the central task of implementing the common understandings of the two Presidents, the two countries will use the opportunity of the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Good-neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation to renew their shared commitment to ever-lasting peace and win-win cooperation. Being each other's strategic anchor, diplomatic priority, development opportunity and global partner, the two countries will expand and deepen cooperation from a higher starting point. Together, China and Russia will continue to be the example of good-neighborly and friendly relations between major countries, add impetus to global recovery, and underpin global strategic stability.

Question: China-US relations are going through a period of difficulties rarely seen since the establishment of diplomatic ties. This relationship has once again come to a major historical juncture. How do you see the future of this bilateral relationship?

Wang Yi: In recent years, China-US relations have run into unprecedented difficulties. Fundamentally, it all comes down to the serious misconceptions of US policymakers about China. Some see China as the so-called biggest threat and their China policy based on this misperception is simply wrong. What has happened proves that the US attempt to suppress China and start a new Cold War has not just seriously harmed the interests of the two peoples, but also caused severe disruptions to the world. Such a policy will find no support and is doomed to fail.

China-US relations have come to a new crossroads, and a new window of hope is opening. We hope that the next US administration will return to a sensible approach, resume

dialogue with China, restore normalcy to the bilateral relations and restart cooperation.

China's policy toward the United States is consistent and stable. We are ready to develop with the United States a relationship based on coordination, cooperation and stability. China never meddles in the internal affairs of the United States and values peaceful co-existence and mutually beneficial cooperation with the United States. Likewise, the United States also needs to respect the social system and development path chosen by the Chinese people and respect their legitimate rights to pursue a better life.

We know that some in the United States are uneasy about China's rapid development. However, the best way to keep one's lead is through constant self-improvement, not by blocking others' development. We don't need a world where China becomes another United States. This is neither rational nor feasible. Rather, the United States should try to make itself a better country, and China will surely become its better self. We believe that as long as the United States can draw lessons from the past and work with China in the same direction, the two countries are capable of resolving differences through dialogue and expanding converging interests by cooperation. This will allow the two major countries to establish a model of co-existence that benefits both countries and the world, and open up new development prospects in line with the trend of history.

Question: China and the EU marked the 45th anniversary of their diplomatic ties in 2020. Within Europe, there is a debate on maintaining strategic autonomy versus seeking closer ties with the United States. What experience have China and the EU gained in growing their relations? How would you characterize the EU's role in the process toward a multi-polar world and the future of China-EU ties?

Wang Yi: As you mentioned, the year 2020 marked the 45th anniversary of the diplomatic ties between China and the EU. Throughout the years, our relationship with the EU has withstood the profound changes in the world. It has on the whole focused on dialogue, cooperation and mutual benefit, and demonstrated strong vitality by progressing with the times. For the two sides:

The most important experience is to stay committed to peaceful coexistence, open cooperation, multilateralism, and dialogue and consultation. The most important conclusion is that our cooperation and common understandings far outweigh competition and differences. China and the EU are comprehensive strategic partners, not systemic rivals. The most important mission is to jointly tackle global challenges, promote a multi-polar world, economic globalization and greater democracy in international relations, and inject more stability and certainty into a turbulent and changing world.

In 2020, China and the EU made new progress in their relations despite COVID-19. China became the EU's largest trading partner for the first time. The two sides signed the agreement on geographical indications, and decided to establish two new high-level dialogue mechanisms on environment and climate and on digital cooperation, and build partnerships for green and digital cooperation.

President Xi Jinping and European leaders have jointly announced the conclusion of negotiations on a China-EU investment treaty, adding fresh, strong impetus to China-

EU cooperation. It is also great news for the struggling global economy. This is a clear example of how, by working together in the spirit of mutual understanding, mutual accommodation and equal consultation, the two sides can open up broad prospects for China-EU cooperation.

In this volatile and changing world, China will remain a supporter of European integration, greater strategic autonomy of the EU, and a bigger role of the EU in international affairs. The multilateralism that our two sides advocate must be dedicated to unity and cooperation rather than group politics. It needs to transcend systemic difference rather than draw lines along ideology. China is prepared to enhance coordination with the EU to keep our relations on the right track.

Question: The year 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of China-ASEAN dialogue relations. What hopes do you have for the future development of China-ASEAN relations?

Wang Yi: The ASEAN member states are China's friends and close neighbors. We are connected by mountains, rivers and seas, and we share close affinity. Since its launch, China-ASEAN cooperation has always been results-oriented, pioneering and responsive to the trend of the times. It has become the most successful and vibrant example of regional cooperation. Over the years, China-ASEAN relations have created many "firsts". China was the first major country to join the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and establish a strategic partnership with ASEAN, and the first major economy to form a free trade area with ASEAN. The two sides became each other's largest trading partners for the first time in 2020. We jointly pushed for the signing of RCEP, which gave birth to the world's most promising free trade area with the largest population and biggest economic aggregate. This is a historic breakthrough in China-ASEAN cooperation.

Facing the onslaught of COVID-19, China and ASEAN came to each other's aid and took the lead in joint COVID-19 response and cooperation on reopening the economy. We helped turn East Asia into an example in the global fight against the virus and an early bird in achieving economic recovery.

China and ASEAN will celebrate the 30th anniversary of their dialogue relations in 2021. We look forward to the new opportunities it will bring for enhancing China-ASEAN ties and stand ready to work with ASEAN to further enrich our strategic partnership and usher in a new era of peace, development and cooperation for the region.

First, we need to work together to defeat COVID-19. We must continue to step up collective response and cooperation on vaccines, upgrade our public health cooperation, and jointly set up a regional reserve of emergency medical supplies and a liaison mechanism for public health emergencies to strengthen crisis response capacities.

Continues tomorrow



Yanga

Yanga take on Jamhuri in Mapinduzi Cup opener

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

DAR ES SALAAM'S Yanga will open their campaign in this season's Mapinduzi Cup competition with a date against Zanzibar's Jamhuri at Amaan Stadium in the Isles today, with kick off scheduled for 8.15.

Yanga have been drawn in Group A of the tournament with Jamhuri and Mainland Tanzania's Namungo FC.

Yanga's coach Cedric Kaze said his team did not include players that have got senior national team 'Taifa Stars' call up to shape up for this year's Africa Nations Championship (CHAN) to be held in Cameroon this month.

"The rest of the players will all travel to Zanzibar and the goal is to do well in the tournament continue entertaining our fans," he stated.

Kaze said despite planning to lay their hands on every silverware in a tournament his club will participate in, they have set out to give more opportunities to their players, who often do not get a chance to start in Premier League matches in Mainland Tanzania.

Yanga said they expect the Tuesday tie will be tough due to the quality of their opponents.

The 15th edition of the Mapinduzi Cup tournament is expected to officially start the same day

at Amaan Stadium, with defending champions Mtibwa Sugar, placed in Group C, confronting Zanzibar's Chipukizi with kick off slated for 4.15pm.

The Mapinduzi Cup tournament's Group B is made up of Simba, Mtibwa Sugar and Chipukizi, whereas Group C consists of Azam FC, Malindi and Mlandege.

The competition's teams from Pemba were set to arrive in Unguja on Sun-

day, whereas the Mainland Tanzania clubs were set to arrive in the Isles yesterday.

The showpiece's Organizing Committee's chairman, Khamis Abdallah Said, said nine teams have confirmed their participation in the competition and have been drawn in three groups, noting each team will play two matches.

"The teams are divided into three groups and will play two matches, each group will produce one winner and we will later look for the competition's best losers, who will join the three teams to play in the semi-finals," he said.

He said they will use electronic tickets in the competition to increase revenue and reduce corruption.

"We have planned to install an electronic system for our tickets and if it fails we will use our old system but we will put a special logo that will not be forged," he said.

This year's tournament's winners will receive a trophy, 15m/- in cash and gold medals, runner-up will get 10m/- and silver medals.

He disclosed they are considering to hand over prizes to individuals including the best player, best goalkeeper and best scorer.

The Mapinduzi Cup competition's fixture:

Today: Mtibwa Sugar vs Chipukizi-4.15, Yanga vs Jamhuri-8.15.

Wednesday: Malindi vs Mlandege-8.15

Thursday: Simba SC vs Chipukizi-8.15

Friday: Azam FC vs Mlandege-4.15, Yanga vs Namungo FC-8.15

Saturday: Jamhuri vs Namungo FC-4.15, Simba vs Mtibwa Sugar-8.15

Sunday: Azam FC vs Malindi-8.15

Mapinduzi Cup tourney for U-20 players kicks off

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

THE 2021 Mapinduzi Cup competition for U-20 players, known as 'Vumbua Mapinduzi Cup', kicked off yesterday at Mao Stadium in Unguja.

The tournament, which has brought together 12 teams from Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, is the first of its kind in the Isles since the start of the tournament.

Speaking to reporters, 'Vumbua Mapinduzi Cup' spokesman Ramadhan Madogo said Zanzibar is represented by nine teams and the rest come from Mainland Tanzania.

He said the tournament aims at supporting Zanzibar Revolution's celebration, as well as promoting and nurturing football talent in

the country.

He said the tournament, which will have fans watching matches free of charge, is expected to attract various guests and football stakeholders to watch games and issue advice on improvement of sports for youths.

"We have invited various sports stakeholders so that they can also issue views on how to develop the sport, the stakeholders will also be part of efforts to promote soccer among youths," Madogo said. Madogo said the 'Vumbua Mapinduzi Cup' will moreover strengthen unity and cooperation between the youth centers based in Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar centers.

The Mapinduzi Cup Organizing Committee's vice-chairman,

Khamis Machano Amme, who is also a member of the Zanzibar Football Federation (ZFF) executive committee in charge of youth football in Zanzibar, said all preparations for the tournament have been completed.

He said the competition's winners will receive a trophy, medals and cash prize, runners-up will get medals and cash.

He said that there will moreover be a prize for the competition's best scorer, best player, best team, best goalkeeper and best coach.

Speaking on behalf of the teams participating in the tournament, Yusuf Hassan Suleiman said they are well prepared, noting that they will ensure they maintain discipline at all times.

New Year Expectations

By Correspondent Loyd Elipokea

WELL, after the veritable annus horribilis that we have all just been through, I'm pretty sure that all of us are collectively heaving a sigh of relief that 2020 is most firmly in our rearview mirrors.

Now, as we ready ourselves to sink our teeth into this piece's hopefully tasty morsels, it has occurred to me several times in recent days that New Year expectations, where matters sports are concerned, have not really been treated as a subject yet.

Therefore, I feel that I should be the first sports writer to try and take a stab at outlining what New Year expectations my countrymen and countrywomen harbor in the sphere of sports most naturally.

One issue that will weigh heavily on the minds and hearts of Tanzanians will be how the national U-20 team, Ngorongoro Heroes, fares at this year's upcoming Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) U-20 finals.

In light of that, it is dearly hoped that the Ngorongoro Heroes undergo meticulous, detailed and pretty intensive preparations for



Yanga Princesse's fullback, Anastazia Nyandago (L), challenges Simba Queens' player during the Serengeti Lite Mainland Women Premier League tie played at Bunju in Dar es Salaam recently. The tie ended in a 0-0 draw.

their long-awaited hour of reckoning to hopefully turn on the style before a captive continental audience.

Indeed, one could pretty much say the exact same thing about the national U-17 team, Serengeti Boys, who will be flying our treasured national flag loftily at this year's forthcoming Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) U-17 finals.

It would be absolutely nothing short of a disaster if the Serengeti Boys were to show up for the football showpiece event woefully underprepared, which of course would render

them massively ill-equipped to take the daunting challenges of featuring at such a prestigious championship in their stride.

Switching gears, the national netball team, Taifa Queens, will also likely be the cynosure of many observers and commentators who have followed the waning fortunes of the team for some time.

It is an ill-concealed secret that netball in the country has been going through a decidedly rocky patch.

A good case in point of domestic netball's exceedingly lean spell is

the fact that the national team, the Taifa Queens, rarely ever engage in international competitions any more.

Hence, it is to be hoped that this New Year offers infinitely more rewarding tidings for local netball and more importantly, that the Taifa Queens get the opportunity to test their mettle against international opposition, which, critically, would go a long way towards bettering their world ranking.

Still on women's sports, women's football will as well be the magnet of attention and ever-watchful eyes in this

New Year.

Indeed, it would be entirely valid to assert that women's football has experienced quite an uplifting and heady upturn in fortunes during the past few years.

A mere three years ago, for instance, Tanzania electrified the whole populace after splendidly clinching the U-20 COSAFA Women Cup.

Hot on the heels of this brilliant feat came the national U-17 women's team's inspirational and morale-boosting triumph at the U-17 COSAFA Cup exactly the following year in 2019.

Thus, it should be expected that many Tanzanians will be observing women's football with keen interest this year in the fervent hope that the women's game can continue ascending on its upward and immensely encouraging trajectory.

Finally, I'm assured countless numbers of you, Dear Readers, will join me in earnestly expressing the wish, nay, prayer, that we will not witness the tragic and untimely demise of any iconic sports figure who have hitherto enlivened the realm of sports.

And, I wish you all an immensely fruitful, healthy and prosperous New Year!



Netballers making some of squads which are playing in this season's national netball championship 'Taifa Cup', put their skills to show in one of the games in Manyara.

Manyara netball team trounce Simiyu in Taifa Cup opener

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

ARUSHA regional netball outfit has had a good start in this season's national netball championship 'Taifa Cup', cruising to a comprehensive 69-12 win over Simiyu at Singe Secondary School's court in Babati, Manyara on Sunday.

The 'Taifa Cup', which tipped off the same day, involves regional teams from Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

In the day's second clash, hosts Manyara also had the last laugh, commanding 38-25 win over Tabora.

Manyara regional sports officer said the tournament is an opportunity for Manyara to promote economic growth for the region's people.

He said the showpiece will moreover help the country get good regional squads and national teams.

He urged Manyara residents to turn up in the showpiece's match-

es and motivate the players.

The referees, who officiated the games, are Beatrice from Morogoro, Masumbuko from Mwanza and Constancia Kisege from Simiyu, whereas Babati's Joseph Sanga was the players' doctor.

Manyara Regional Netball Association's secretary, Yasinta Sylivester, had earlier noted the regional squad had had intensive training and played various friendly matches to prepare for the competition.

Yasinta, who is also the National Netball Association (Chaneta)'s executive committee's member, had asked for co-operation from Manyara's residents and sports stakeholders to back the region's preparations for the showpiece.

In a recent Regional Consultative Committee (RCC), Manyara Regional Commissioner, Joseph Mkirikiti, said the region cherishes hosting the competition given the showpiece will boost the region's

economy.

Mkirikiti moreover commended the National Netball Association (Chaneta) leadership for giving Manyara greenlight to play host to the 'Taifa Cup' as the competition will promote Manyara.

Manyara regional netball team recently took on Ayalagaya Secondary School's netball side in a friendly clash, which was part of the former's preparations for 'Taifa Cup'.

Ayalagaya Secondary School's netball team conceded 42-15 loss to Manyara regional netball team.

The school's Head, Father Lawrence Lawala, stated every side should participate in the coming tournament in good faith to maintain love, peace and solidarity.

He said every team, who will feature in the competition, should realize that they are playing an important role in maintaining cooperation between the places they come from and the hosts.

De Bruyne hails Man City display in win over Chelsea

LONDON

MANCHESTER City playmaker Kevin De Bruyne said he was delighted that his team had rediscovered their ruthlessness in Sunday's 3-1 Premier League victory at Chelsea, although it felt a "bit bizarre" to play as a striker.

With the club's record goalscorer Sergio Aguero on the bench as he manages his knee injury and fellow striker Gabriel Jesus out after contracting COVID-19, De Bruyne was moved forward and the Belgian responded with a goal and an assist.

"Bit bizarre in the beginning," De Bruyne told Sky Sports when asked about his experience.

"I've done it a few times in my career... Obviously we have a lot of forwards out and the coach asked me to do this job, so I tried my best to do it as good as possible."

Victory means City are unbeaten in seven league games and fifth in the table with 29 points from 15 matches, four points behind leaders Liverpool with a game in hand.

"It's important we win one of these big games. This season we had played some good games but not won any of them so we have shown we can win the big games," De Bruyne said.

"We're still fighting an uphill battle but we are getting closer, that's all we can do now."

"The years we were champions we were winning big games. It's a bit different this year because everyone is losing points. We had a bad start but we are coming back so it's a good thing we're here fighting and that's all we can do now."

Meanwhile, Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola has defended Benjamin Mendy after the full back breached COVID protocols on New Year's Eve, saying the Frenchman's critics were too quick to pass judgment.

Mendy apologised for flouting rules by hosting a party attended by at least three people outside his household. Under British government guidelines, those living in regions with Tier 4 restrictions are not allowed to mix with others outside their own household.

"Normally in this society we judge, but society will be better if we judge ourselves. I'm not justifying him, he broke the rules. But don't give too many lessons to the other ones," Guardiola told reporters after Sunday's 3-1 win over Chelsea. His comments come after some current and former players lambasted Mendy and other Premier League players for failing to act as role models and argued that clubs needed to be stronger and hand out punishments.

REUTERS

Conte still not happy despite Inter's 6-2 victory

MILAN

NOT even Sunday's 6-2 thrashing of struggling Crotona and taking temporary possession of the Serie A top spot could cheer up Inter Milan manager Antonio Conte as he railed against Chilean midfielder Arturo Vidal after the home victory.

A hat-trick by Lautaro Martinez helped Inter to get their eighth league win in a row but Conte was still smarting afterwards about Vidal conceding a first-half penalty that allowed bottom side Crotona to level at 2-2.

"Arturo has significant room for improvement," Conte said. "Keep your head down and keep working, nobody is guaranteed a place here and he has to prove he deserves to play. He must do much better than what he is doing."

"Too many ups and downs, and we can't afford them. He knows it, he knows he has to go back to training."

Inter's disappointing early exit from the Champions League last month piled the pressure on Conte, who was visibly angry after the 0-0 draw with Shakhtar Donetsk which sealed their fate.

Conte clashed with former England coach, now television pundit, Fabio Capello after that stalemate, but even with Inter becoming the first Serie A side to score six goals in the first game of a calendar year since 1959 on Sunday, Conte was still not happy.

While Inter have won every league match since their Champions League exit, their performances have not been all that convincing. Strike duo Romelu Lukaku and Martinez had combined for just two goals in all competitions, until Sunday.

Against Crotona, however, Lukaku showed his prowess as an assist-maker, brilliantly threading the ball through for Martinez's equaliser in the 20th minute.

Lukaku also helped to set up the goal that put Inter 2-1 in front, before again playing a part in creating the chance for Martinez to score his first-ever Inter hat-trick, which he duly converted.

Lukaku also got on the scoresheet himself, scoring his 50th Serie A goal in his 70th league appearance on an impressive afternoon for Inter's deadly duo.

"When you win consistently, as we are doing, self-esteem and confidence in your own means increases," Conte said. "The group knows the path we must follow, we must cover our ears, be concentrated and move forward."

The victory took Inter, who are dreaming of a first league title in 11 years, briefly to the top of the table, before closest rivals AC Milan beat Benevento 2-0 in a later match to put themselves one point ahead.

REUTERS

Lampard under fire as Guardiola shows his managerial superiority

By Mark Ogden, Senior Writer, ESPN FC

WHEN it's not your day, it really isn't your day, so Chelsea manager Frank Lampard was entitled to a rueful shake of the head when misfiring striker Timo Werner made such a mess of taking an 88th-minute corner against Manchester City that he kicked the flag instead of the ball.

Werner, the £47 million forward, has now gone 12 games without a goal for his new club after Sunday's 3-1 defeat at Stamford Bridge. His ordeal has started to personify Lampard's difficulties in the Chelsea hot seat.

Werner just can't catch a break and neither can Lampard. Faced with a City team that was missing five first-team players because of positive COVID-19 tests in recent days, this was Chelsea's chance to end a run of just one win in six and claim a first win against a fellow Big Six side this season.

But Pep Guardiola's weakened City, with United States No. 1 Zack Steffen making his Premier League debut in goal in place of the unavailable Ederson, ripped Chelsea apart in a devastating display of slick, attacking first-half football. At the same time, they underlined their status as the biggest threat to Liverpool in the title race and left Lampard in the uncom-



Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne celebrates scoring their third goal against Chelsea. REUTERS

fortable position of being the favourite to become the next top-flight manager to lose his job.

It may be harsh to think that Lampard is fighting to avoid the sack as manager after just 18 months in charge, but owner Roman Abramovich has always been swift to act when results fail to live up to expectations. Even with Lampard's status as a club legend, he won't be immune to the Russian's impatience.

"I played here, I understand how everyone looks and asks questions when you lose a few games," Lampard said. "I have to be a realist. This club has to take some pain before we get to where we want to be, that's how you build."

"This is a difficult period. But we have to keep fighting and I'm the first one to keep fighting."

Defeats and perfor-

mances like this certainly won't help Lampard, though, especially when proven managers such as Massimiliano Allegri and Thomas Tuchel are out of work and ready to tell any interested club owner of the trophies they have won with some of Europe's biggest clubs. The pedigree of Allegri and Tuchel is at the heart of the problem that Lampard must overcome, and it was emphasised by Guardiola's impact on this game.

Allegri and Tuchel have been there and done it when it comes to motivating and organising top players, but Lampard hasn't. Prior to arriving at Chelsea in the summer of 2019, he had amassed one year of managerial experience with Derby County in the EFL Championship.

Abramovich has traditionally appointed

managers of the highest calibre since buying Chelsea in 2003. Jose Mourinho, Carlo Ancelotti, Antonio Conte and Rafael Benitez had all won the biggest prizes before taking charge at Stamford Bridge.

Guardiola was the one that got away for Abramovich, with the Spaniard twice resisting Chelsea interest prior to taking charge at Bayern Munich in 2013, but this was a game which showed just why the City manager is among the best in the world.

With a depleted squad, Guardiola still managed to find a way to beat a full-strength Chelsea side, with Kevin De Bruyne impressing in the unusual role as a false nine. But City didn't just win, they won with style and assurance.

Manchester United may have climbed into

second spot in the table, but City are the team that Liverpool will fear most this season. Only two teams have the ability to go on a run of 10-12 consecutive victories and they are City and Liverpool, so don't even think about writing Guardiola and Co. off.

"Same manager, same backroom staff, the players are the same and the ideas are completely the same," Guardiola said after the game. "The way we won leagues and titles and other things is the way we played today. The tempo we have missed in the past, today we recovered it."

City's first-half goals, from Ilkay Gundogan, Phil Foden and De Bruyne, were all rooted in bad Chelsea defending, but City's ruthlessness saw them capitalise on the chances. At the same time, Lampard

watched from the touchline, despairing at his team's woeful defending and toothless attacking. But he is the man tasked with getting the best from his group of players and there is no question that they are underperforming.

So can Lampard make a difference on the training ground and turn his team around? Does he have the coaching ability of a Guardiola, Jurgen Klopp or Jose Mourinho to arrest Chelsea's slump? The reality is that he is yet to show that the answer to either question is 'yes.' This season, Chelsea have scored just twice in five games against Big Six rivals and won none of them. Each time, Lampard has been unable to devise a plan to win. And even against a City team weakened by players out because of COVID-19, he still ended up on the wrong side of a heavy defeat.

"At the minute we're in a little period, five or six games that we've struggled," Lampard said. "If you go back to City and Liverpool in their transition periods, there were periods of pain and you have to get through that."

"I've sat there and had these days and then lifted a trophy at the end of the year. We bounced back then because we had a spirit in the dressing room and any player in football will have periods like that."

"Some other defeats for other teams have been painful. We have to take it on the chin. This is football."

Chelsea collapse leaves Lampard testing Abramovich's patience

LONDON

FRANK Lampard knows the demands of being a Chelsea manager under Roman Abramovich more than most having played for nine different coaches during his playing career at Stamford Bridge.

Now Lampard is the man in the firing line after Sunday's 3-1 defeat to Manchester City capped a run of one win in six games that looks to have extinguished any hope of a Premier League title challenge.

Much more was expected of the Blues after a £220 million (\$300 million) spending spree in the transfer market at a time when most of European football's major powers were scaling back due to the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

After bankrolling the purchases of Kai Havertz, Timo Werner, Hakim Ziyech, Ben Chilwell and Edouard Mendy, Abramovich will have expected more than Chelsea's position of eighth in the table nearly halfway through the season.

Patience has not been a virtue of the Russian's 18-year reign as Chelsea owner and even a club legend like Lampard, who is the club's all-time top goalscorer, is unlikely to be afforded much more time to turn the situation around.

The Athletic reported on Sunday that Chelsea are already lining up suitable candidates should the 42-year-old be sacked.

- Great expectations - Lampard does have some credit in the bank from his first season in charge, which took the club back into the Champions League despite a transfer ban and the sale of Eden Hazard to Real Madrid.

But expectations have changed since the summer spending spree, even if Lampard has always cautioned Chelsea will need more time to match the standards set by Liverpool and City in recent seasons.

"The expectations are different this year because everyone looks and says 'you spent this amount of money,'" Lampard said after a fourth defeat in six games.

"The reality is a lot of the players that have come in are new, young, have been injured, or not played together. There are a lot of expectations that are not real."

But the manner of defeat to a City side depleted by coronavirus infections and who have struggled to score goals this season, offered little sign of what Lampard is trying to build towards.

Chelsea's failure to launch a title challenge is all the more disappointing as Liverpool



Frank Lampard

and City's standards have dropped in an unusual season, opening the door to the chasing pack.

As Manchester United and Tottenham have stepped forward to close the gap, Chelsea are trailing Leicester, Aston Villa and Everton, leaving Lampard with the lowest points-per-game tally of any manager in the Abramovich era.

The former England international's relationship with his players has also been questioned since his public rebuke of their attitude and commitment in a 3-1 defeat to Arsenal last weekend has not summoned the response he hoped for.

Instead there were more examples of lethargy as Ziyech watched on, while Kevin De Bruyne surged past him

to score City's third goal inside 35 minutes.

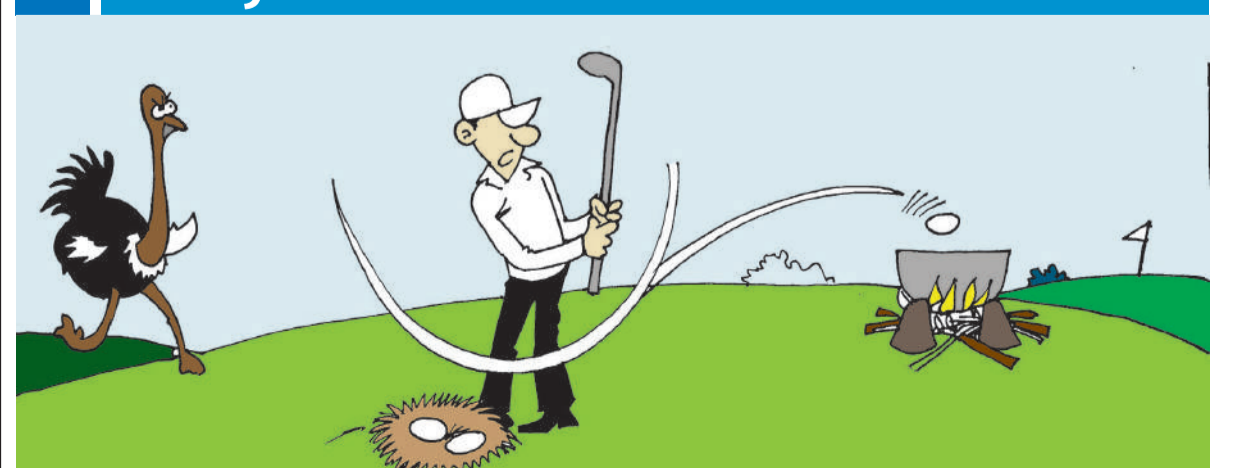
Lampard's inability to summon the best from some of his big money buys has reportedly caused concern among the Chelsea hierarchy.

For the fourth consecutive game, the club's record signing Havertz only appeared as second-half substitute despite his side's struggles, while Werner, prolific in his time with RB Leipzig in the Bundesliga, has now failed to score in 13 games.

Lampard has been given the tools to build a team capable of much more than they have shown in the past month.

Now time is of the essence to start delivering if he is to ward off the same fate as so many Chelsea managers that have gone before him.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

De Bruyne hails Man City display in win over Chelsea

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

TONIGHT @ 9:00

NIRVANA

Nirvana explores the hottest trends in fashion, beauty, art and lifestyle as well as interviews with notable people from the entertainment, art and fashion industries.

EATV TUESDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 MPYA
12:30 Msoi Kitaani (r)
13:00 Wanawake Live (r)
13:30 Kaili Za Wana
14:00 DK 10 za Maangamizi
14:30 Bball Kings Highlights (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 SSPORTS (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EASY SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)

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's information officer, Haji Manara (R), speaks to reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the outfit's return leg of the 2020/21 CAF Champions League's first round against FC Platinum of Zimbabwe, which will take place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in the city tomorrow. Sitting (L) is Simba SC's Marketing Manager, George Abdulrahman. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNEJUMA

Yanga set to miss eight stars in 2021 Mapinduzi Cup tourney

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YANGA arrived in Zanzibar yesterday ready for the 2021 Mapinduzi Cup tournament, which kicks off at Amaan Stadium today.

In the tournament's today matches, defending champions Mtibwa Sugar will confront Zanzibar's Chipukizi with kick off slated for 04:15pm, followed by the game pitting Zanzibar's Jamhuri against Yanga, which is slated to kick off at 8.15pm.

Yanga have been drawn in Group A of the competition with Mainland Tanzania's other club Namungo FC and Jamhuri.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam, Yanga's head coach Cedric Kaze said his squad did not include the players selected for a provisional squad of senior national team, Taifa Stars, who have begun preparations for the 2021 Africa Nations Championship (CHAN), to be held in Cameroon this month.

"The rest of the players will travel to Zanzibar and the goal is to do well in the tournament and continue entertaining our fans," he disclosed.

Yanga's players that have landed Taifa Stars' call up are Yassin Mustapha, Bakari Mwamnyeto, Farid Musa, Feisal Salum, Ditram Nchimbi and Deus Kaseke.

Midfielder, Balama Mapinduzi, who is still recovering from an injury, and the outfit's skipper, Lamine Moro, are Yanga's other players that will not take part in Mapinduzi Cup.

Kaze said despite planning to triumph in each of the tournament his side will participate in this season, they have planned to give more opportunities to their players, who do not get a chance to start in Premier League matches, to play for the team in Mapinduzi Cup.

Mainland Tanzania's Simba SC is in Group B of the competition, which also has Mtibwa Sugar and Zanzibar's Chipukizi.

The Group C consists of Azam FC along with Zanzibar Premier League (ZPL) powerhouses, Malindi and Mlandege.

FC Platinum wary of Simba SC's challenge in CAF Champions League clash



Zimbabwe's FC Platinum striker, Silas Songani. AGENCIES

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

DESPITE his side's 1-0 win over Tanzania's Simba SC in the first leg of 2020/21 CAF Champions League's first round clash, which took place in Harare, Zimbabwe's FC Platinum striker Silas Songani has said they have a lot of work to do to get their opponents out of the tournament.

Songani did not play in the first leg, which took place at the end of last year, due to injuries.

He is one of 23 players in the team's squad that will face Simba in a return leg that will be played at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam tomorrow from 5pm.

Songani said despite his team having the advantage of a home win, they need to fight for status and qualification for the group stage in today's tie.

He disclosed: "We got good results against Simba but one

win is not enough, we need to finish Simba off."

"We have a lot of work ahead of us but honesty, integrity, dedication and willingness to move forward are the catalyst for us to move forward."

"What impresses me the most about this group is the thirst for hard work and every player is fighting for a place in the team."

The striker thanked FC Platinum's management for transporting the team early to Tanzania to enable the players to adjust to the weather in Dar es Salaam.

In the visitors' first practice, the temperature was 31 degrees while the humidity was 66 percent.

The Zimbabwe Premier League champions need either victory or a draw of any kind to advance to the group stage of the premier continental club tournament for the third time in a row.

Any team that make it to the CAF Champions League's group stage will rake in a sum of US dollars 550,000 (over 1.2bn/-) which could be increased if the side qualifies for the next stage.

The FC Platinum have come to Dar es Salaam for their CAF Champions League's first round rematch against Simba, but the former are worried about the game, anticipating the hosts will come out firing on all cylinders so they can get good results.

One of the visitors' forwards, Ralph Kawondera, stated they know Simba will enter the match with the aim of overturning the results and, for that matter, the Wednesday tie will be tough.

He noted: "We know we have to go to war to win. We know it will be a tough game for us."

"We are going to fight Simba on their home ground and we know they

will fight for victory, that's what we expect."

"We have a good squad and the way we started this tournament, it seems that the efforts we made to prepare for the season will pay off."

"We have a strong squad and I believe we can compete with the best team in any competition and that is our attitude with which we enter this match and in all these Champions League competitions."

Simba, under head coach Sven Vandebroek, have the task of turning the tables on FC Platinum so the former can advance to the group stage.

Simba's information officer, Haji Manara, said that they are aware that the game will be tough but in any case it will be difficult for their opponents to post victory.

He noted: "We ask our fans to come forward to support our team as there is no way our opponents will emerge victorious."

"Preparations and plans for our return leg match are well underway and we are waiting for the time to come so that we can entertain fans as well as represent our nation internationally," he said.

In the first leg, which took place at Zimbabwe National Stadium, Simba lost 1-0 to FC Platinum, Simba therefore need a two-goal win to advance to the group stage.

The FC Platinum have already made their way into Dar es Salaam, making it clear that they have come for victory.

Simba will enter the match needing a 2-0 victory and the team had morale boosting victory in Vodacom Premier League (VPL) and Federation Cup games.

Simba clobbered Mbeya's Ihefu FC 4-0 in a VPL match and in the Federation Cup third round, Simba beat Majimaji 5-0 to book a place in the competition's fourth round.



Hamisi Maya

Dar boxer to face Kenyan opponent in non-title bout

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

TANZANIAN professional boxer, Hamisi Maya, is expected to face Kenyan, Alvin Omondi, in an international, non-title bout which will take place at the PTA Hall, Sabasaba in Dar es Salaam on April 2.

Maya, fighting in Welterweight division, was earlier set to fight Egypt's Ahmed Handy in the eight-round fight.

The fight's co-ordinator, Chaurembo Palasa, disclosed apart from the change of an opponent for Maya, there is as well a change of the fight's date.

The official said it had previously been slated for February 14.

As it was the case for the Egyptian opponent, Maya has to defeat Omondi if the Tanzanian boxer is to improve his record.

Maya is now the Global Boxing Council (GBC) Intercontinental Welterweight title holder.

He won the title with victory over Piergiulio Ruhe in a fight which took place at Yayla, Krefeld, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany on November 30 in 2019.

Omondi will significantly improve his record, should he beat Maya, given the Kenyan boxer had not been in action from the time he suffered a Technical Knockout

(TKO) defeat to Uganda's Charles Mulindwa in a fight which took place in Kampala on December 26, 2018.

Omondi's record stands at three wins and one loss in four fights he has taken part in.

Maya will improve his record, should he post victory over Omondi. The Tanzanian boxer's record stands at victory in 10 fights, two losses and one bout being declared draw.

Palasa pointed out the coming bout will specifically be a chance for Maya to get back to action given he was inactive for quite some time.

He said the fight is organized by Super D Boxing Promotion firm and Maya fans will witness their boxer showcase his quality.

He stated there will be 10 supporting bouts for the Maya against Omondi's fight.

In some of the bouts, Dar es Salaam's Vicent Mbilinyi will take on Kenya's George Onyango, Francis Miyeyusho will fight Gabriel Chola, Hamidu Kwata will lock horns with James Kibazange.

Juma Abdul will fight Hamza Mchanjo while Bakari Magona will take the ring to fight Emmanuel Mwakyembe.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

