



## HEALTH



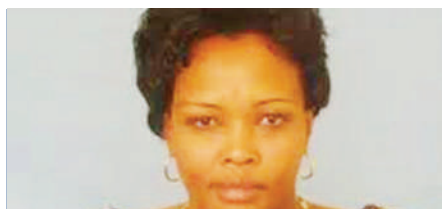
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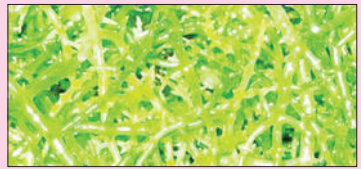
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President Dr John Magufuli attends Christmas service at Mary Immaculate Parish in Dodoma yesterday

# JPM: The world must prioritise prayers in wide COVID-19 fight

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT John Magufuli has appealed to public authorities in the rest of the world to prioritise prayers to win the battle against Covid-19.

Speaking after prayers at the Mary Immaculate Parish in the capital, the president said the various efforts taken by many countries to fight the disease must be supported with prayers.

He said Tanzanians have all the reasons to thank God for the grace shown to this country, especially during the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic

"Tanzanians have seen miracles and God's love during the outbreak of the pandemic which saw countries imposing costly precautionary measures. Thousands of people died, but Almighty God saved us from the pandemic," he declared.

He said Tanzanians successfully battled the fear against the coronavirus, thus people in urban and rural areas continued with their daily activities.

He urged the public to continue thanking God for rescuing the nation from the pandemic and pray for other nations to be

rescued from the respiratory catastrophe.

He said Tanzanians must continue working hard to strengthen the country's economy and improve individual welfare.

In July, the government declared the country a coronavirus free state, making it the first in Africa.

"The coronavirus pandemic has been eliminated here thanks to God," the president told worshippers in the capital city parish.

Official data was last released for end of April, indicated that there were 21 confirmed deaths related to the Covid-19 pandemic and about 509 cases overall, with the country having registered its first positive case of coronavirus on March 16.

By the time data release stopped, about 183 recoveries had similarly been confirmed, while most patients recovered in special facilities, which were soon closed down for lack of new patients.

Worldwide, the pandemic has so far killed 1.73m people and infected 78m overall, while countries are now scrambling to administer mass vaccination programmes to build immunity to the

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# Peace, justice top in X-mas homilies

## ● Bishops urge gratitude on COVID-19 escape

By Guardian Reporters

MESSAGES of peace and love dominated this year's Christmas sermons as clerics urged Tanzanians to maintain the prevailing tranquility and work hard for the country's development as well as improving public welfare generally.

Christmas is celebrated on December 25 yearly to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ, widely acknowledged as the person who has exercised the most potent influence on humanity in world history

Bishop Liberatus Sangu of the Roman Catholic Diocese in Shinyanga Region



**We need to build an African continent that exports its products around the globe. We have enough raw materials to produce quality products**

said Tanzanians must protect the country's peace which has existed since the leadership of the Father of the Nation, first phase president Julius Nyerere.

During the prayers, which were also attended by Shinyanga District Commissioner Jasinta Mboneko, the bishop emphasized that avoiding chaos is the best way of ensuring development.

"We should not allow other nations to disturb our peace," he said, commending public authorities in the region for successfully curbing the killing of elders which was rampant in previous years.

Archbishop Isaac Amani of Arusha urged Christians to change their mindsets and embrace togetherness. He said the birth of Jesus should remind people of the importance of rights for fairness and justice.

In his sermons at the Burka Parish, the archbishop said: "We must live the kind of life that reflects the birth of Jesus," underlining that he was born in a poor

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# Z'bar to study seawater invasion

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Second Vice President Hemed Suleiman Abdallah has underlined the need for environmental experts to make an in-depth examination of the invasion of sea water that continues to affect Sipwese Village in Pemba South Region as part of efforts to tackle the effects of climate change.

He said villagers face inconveniences trying to reach nearby villages as the sea claims soil and creates salty swamps, making those paths perilous for children going to school.

The VP was discussing environmental issues with his Union Minister of State in the President's Office (Union Matters and Environment), Ummu Mwalimu (pictured) who paid a visit to his office on a courtesy call.

He said the Zanzibar government is mobilizing resources to find a solution for the Sipwese Village situation, just as it did for Panza Village also in Pemba under the supervision of the Union ministry, which organized the construction of a bridge and planting trees, expressing the hope of strengthening cooperation between the Union ministry and Isles authorities on environment issues.

Noting that capable ministers were in charge in this and other sectors, he said the ministers had shown direction of action and will start meetings of experts to spot areas that need addressing.

On her part, minister Mwalimu said initial steps in tackling climate change have been put in place. The matter is crucial considering that environment issues in Zanzibar resemble those found along the eastern coast of the Mainland, she added.

# Minister halts two gold traders, market officials

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

MINERALS minister Dotto Biteko (pictured) has revoked licenses of two traders dealing in gold and other minerals at the Mwime Ilindi mining market in Kahama town, Shinyanga Region for suspicions of engaging in gold smuggling.

He also suspended the market's officer for minerals, Isaya Roki and market chairman Samwel Malimi for apparent irresponsibility in supervising minerals



trading at the market.

The minister issued the directives yesterday during an impromptu visit at the market, saying that ten such traders have been arrested on suspicions of smuggling, naming those losing licences as Samwel Ndulu and Francis Tishekwa.

"There has emerged a group of traders from Dar es Salaam who have been going to small-scale miners' areas and purchase minerals at unfair prices, smuggling them to sell in other markets. These traders violate government directives instructing buyers to obtain minerals in designated markets," he said.

Biteko said that the actual amount of minerals sold at the Mwime market reaches 1.95kg per day but market officials

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Bishop Liberatus Sangu of Shinyanga Catholic Church diocese blesses believers during Christmas Eve on Thursday night. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

## Minister halts two gold traders, market officials

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reported selling 147grams per day.

Miners and traders must stop engaging in the dirty business of smuggling the minerals as the government has created a conducive environment for small-scale miners to operate, he cautioned.

James Chanya, a trader in

minerals at the market blames some minerals supervision officers as tolerating illegal business, saying "they were not serious with their jobs."

"We have been witnessing the officers coming to work at noon, so you can see how lax these officials are. It is rare to see them entering their office in the morning but most traders claim they do not

obtain receipts whenever they pay levies," he said.

In March 2019, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa opened the international gold exchange market in Geita Region, opening doors for other districts to emulate the measure.

During the launch, he directed regional commissioners in gold-rich regions in particular to open

minerals trading centres to curb smuggling of the precious metal.

Reports cite Tanzania as fourth in Africa in gold production after South Africa, Ghana and Mali, with gold exports being a key source of foreign exchange.

The mining sector contributes around 4.8 percent to the gross domestic product (GDP), on the basis of current statistics.

## JPM: The world must prioritise prayers in wide COVID-19 fight

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dreaded virus

Earlier this month, the United Kingdom became the first country in the world to start administering the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine, soon followed by several other countries.

The president for the first time

joined Christians locally and elsewhere in Christmas prayers in the capital rather than his native Chato district home, where he especially urged the public to continue counting on divine intervention to win the battle against infections of the respiratory plague-Covid-19.

## Peace, justice top in Xmas homilies

FROM PAGE 1

environment and lived like an ordinary person.

It is important for leaders to continue ensuring rights and justice for the poor especially those living in difficult conditions, the prelate intoned.

In Dodoma Region, Bishop Dr Solomon Massangwa of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) said it is high time Tanzanians start using available raw materials to produce various products that can be sold to regional markets.

"We need to build an African continent that exports its products around the globe. We have enough raw materials to produce quality products," he stated.

At the Ungalimited Parish in Arusha, Father Festitus Mangwagwi said the church took up Christmas Eve to encourage Tanzanians to continue praying for the country's peace.

ELCT Bishop of Dodoma, Amon Kinyunyu urged Tanzanians to thank God for saving them from the coronavirus pandemic which has killed hundreds of thousands of people all over the world.

He urged that everyone needs to prioritize preserving peace for the country's economic development.

"We must thank God for helping us battle Covid-19; we are among the luckiest because there are many countries which are still struggling to control infections of the respiratory disease," he told the congregation

He said in many countries people have even failed to gather for Christmas prayers due to the pandemic, thus Christians must use the festival occasion to preach peace.

Parents and guardians need to ensure the protection of their children as well as loving them by ensuring the provision of necessary needs, the prelate added.

## Ethiopia army 'kills dozens of militants' over village massacre

By Agencies

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said he was sending more soldiers to secure Ethiopia's restive Benishangul-Gumuz area after armed gunmen killed more than 100 civilians.

Ethiopia's military on Thursday killed at least 42 people allegedly responsible for massacring over 100 civilians a day earlier, according to local officials.

The federal troops also seized firearms during a military operation in the western Benishangul-Gumuz region.

"The Ethiopia Defense Force has destroyed 42 anti-peace forces who attacked civilians yesterday" in the Metekel zone of Benishangul-Gumuz, the regional government said in a statement on Thursday.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said Thursday he was sending more troops to secure the region bordering Sudan.

"The massacre in the Benishangul-Gumuz region is very tragic," Abiy wrote on Twitter, conceding the government's efforts to solve the problem "had not yielded results."

The government sent a "joint force" to the region "to solve the problem," Abiy said.

Rights group Amnesty International confirmed the Wednesday killings, saying the death toll was likely to increase in Benishangul-Gumuz. It said the attack was reportedly ethnically

motivated.

Ethiopia has been grappling with outbreaks of violence since Abiy came to power in 2018. The Nobel Peace laureate has accelerated democratic reforms in the African country, which has resulted in the state loosening its grip on regional rivalries.

Contests over land and resources in Benishangul-Gumuz have spurred ethnic violence in the troubled region.

Amnesty International said Wednesday the latest violence "underscores the urgent need for the Ethiopian government to act to stop violence against ethnic minorities."

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), a government-affiliated but independent body that first reported the massacre, said no security or police forces were seen in the area when the attack occurred.

"EHRC has repeatedly called for stronger collaboration between the federal and regional governments and a greater focus into the recurring nature of the attacks," it said in a statement Thursday.

"Unfortunately, the attacks have since only increased in scope and frequency."

In November, a bus attack in the Metekel zone killed 34 people. Twelve civilians were killed in a separate attack in the same area in October, and 15 died in a similar assault in late September.



Beite-I A Jaib - the historic building which was being rehabilitated at Mjimkongwe in Zanzibar collapsed yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Martin Kabemba

## Heart, respiratory diseases and cancer leading causes of death

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

A Report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) said that non-communicable diseases such as heart, respiratory and lung diseases, and cancers were the leading causes of death in 2019 globally.

However, people in low-income countries are still more likely to die of a communicable or infectious disease such as malaria, HIV/Aids or diarrhoeal diseases than a non-communicable disease (NCD). According to the WHO this is because of delays in adopting

preventative measures like improvement of environmental conditions where the pathogens related to these diseases thrive.

However, malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/Aids are killing fewer people. For example, HIV/Aids, caused 59 per cent fewer deaths in 2019 than in 2000. Last year at least 161,000 people died of HIV compared with 395,000 in 2000 according to WHO's The top 10 causes of death in 2019 report released recently.

Deaths from HIV/Aids have fallen by 51 percent during the past 20 years, moving from the

world's eighth leading cause of death in 2000 to the 19th in 2019.

Diarrhoea diseases like cholera and dysentery are more significant as a cause of death in low-income countries ranking in the top five causes of death. Nonetheless, diarrhoeal diseases are decreasing in low-income countries, with global deaths falling from 2.6 million people in 2000 to 1.5 million people in 2019.

In low-income countries, neonatal conditions remained the biggest killers in 2019, even though these reduced marginally around the globe. According to WHO

data at least 2.4 million newborns (under 28 days) died in 2019, due to preterm birth complications, birth asphyxia, pneumonia, congenital anomalies, diarrhoea and malaria, compared with 3.2 million in 2000.

In lower middle-income countries, diabetes is a rising cause of death, having moved from the 15th in 2000 to ninth leading cause of death last year, claiming 1.3 million lives in 2019 compared with 700,000 in 2000.

WHO says the routine collection and analysis of high-quality data

on deaths and their causes, as well as data on disability, disaggregated by age, sex and geographical location, is essential for improving health and reducing deaths and disability across the world.

"It is important to know why people die to improve how people live. Measuring how many people die each year helps to assess the effectiveness of our health systems and directs resources to where they are needed most. Mortality data can help focus activities and resource allocation among sectors such as transportation,

food and agriculture, and the environment as well as health," said WHO.

However, the organisation said there are inherent fragmentations in data collection systems in most low-income countries, where policy-makers can't confidently say how many people died and of what.

In response to the gap in mortality data collection, WHO has partnered with global actors to launch Revealing the Toll of Covid-19: Technical Package for Rapid Mortality Surveillance and Epidemic Response.





Mining minister Doto Biteko addresses small miners at Mwime Ilindi - Zongomela Ward within Kahama council in Shinyanga Region recently. Photo: Correspondent Shaban Njia.

# Total of 16,343 committees for defence against GBV for women, children created

By Guardian Correspondent, Butiama

A TOTAL of 16,343 defence committees for women and children have been established in the regions, local councils, wards and villages to enhance the fight against gender based violence (GBV) and child abuse countrywide.

This was revealed in Butiama District in Mara Region by the Assistant Director in the Gender Development Department in the Ministry of Health, Grace Mwanga during a training seminar for the committees' members.

Grace said the government through the ministry of Health Department of Community Development has been able to monitor training to the committees in collaboration with UNFPA.

Mwanga said the government recognises that the National Plan in the eradication of GBV and Child Abuse (MTAKUWVA) was being implemented especially at village level hence it was essential for the district Defense Committees to go down to the people to five them education on the eradication of the menace.

She said local council officials to where the defense committees are attached to should assist them in empowering them with working tools to implement their duties whenever a GBV or child abuse incident occur in various areas.

Opening the training seminar, the Butiama District Commissioner AnnaRose Nyamubi admonished GBV especially female genital mutilation (FGM) that cut short girls' dreams in education.

She added that Butiama District has mobilised itself to ensure it fights GBV in all areas by working together with the communities, including traditional elders, religious leaders and other prominent people.

Butiama Member of Parliament Jumanne Sagini said efforts by political leaders were also needed in fighting the vice.

**“She added that Butiama District has mobilised itself to ensure it fights GBV in all areas by working together with the communities, including traditional elders, religious leaders and other prominent people**

By Ani Jozeni

# ‘Treat migrants well where security isn’t endangered’

PUBLIC authorities have been urged to ensure that migrants from other countries who are not endangering national security in a clear way are fairly treated.

This appeal was made yesterday by Bishop Zacharia Kakobe of the Full Gospel Bible Fellowship Church in Dar es Salaam in his Christmas homily, underlining the fact that Jesus Christ was also a refugee as an infant.

He told his Sam Nujoma Road church audience that the fair treatment of refugees, on the basis of this essential element of Christian heritage and thus of civilization as a whole, is a vital

aspect of expression of humanity.

He went over Biblical history to show how the phenomenon of being a refuge and how fair treatment is central to how this tradition is constructed is essential for believers and for that matter, those in authority, to take note of its importance.

Bishop Kakobe all the same used a substantial part of his homily to underline the difference between the grave situation of the

intensification of the coronavirus pandemic all over the world in contrast with Tanzania, noting that prayer houses are mostly deserted, and no Xmas sermons will be taking place in most parts of the world.

He shocked his audience with an observation that various preachers in Europe and North America confide in private conversation that not only have people - the youth in particular

- gradually abandoned following online church services on account of lockdowns, but their faith is being depleted rapidly.

“Many church leaders believe that even when lockdowns will have ended and the churches opened, and people are called back to the faith, there will be quite few who shall still be available on the basis of current trends,” the city preacher intoned.

# Mwinyi remembers orphans during x-mass, new year fete

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Mwinyi has dished out assorted food items to orphans living at SOS Children's Village Mombasa and Mizizini orphanage in Unguja Town for Christmas and New Year celebrations.

According to a statement issued yesterday, the food items were presented to the two centres by the director of services in the Zanzibar President's Office, Ameir Ali Khatib.

Handing over the donation, Khatib said: “This support is meant to console children living in these orphanages so that they celebrate as it is for other children.”

He said that in the donation, Dr Mwinyi wanted to be with them but due to official duties he failed to do so.

However, he promised that the assistance would not be limited and would continue to provide such supplies in the future.

Social Welfare's Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mwanajuma Majid Abdallah, expressed her gratitude on behalf of the government, and thanked Dr Mwinyi for a good start by providing support for the children

and has shown concern and appreciation where the children are comforted.

In another development, Urban West Regional Police Force has put in place a comprehensive action plan to ensure that criminals do not get a chance throughout the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Urban West Regional Police Commander, Awadh Juma Haji, said there are criminals who use those days to commit crimes including looting property so the army will patrol all areas so that citizens can celebrate the holidays in a safe environment.

**“This support is meant to console children living in these orphanages so that they celebrate as it is for other children**



Dar es Salaam residents in a queue to buy meat at Ubungu in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam for the festive season yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

# Villagers appeal against eviction from reserve area

By Guardian Correspondent, Malinyi

THOUSANDS of Ngombo village residents in Biro Ward, Malinyi District in Morogoro Region have appealed to the government to draw demarcation lines to separate reserve areas and those of the village in order to protect the reserves instead of evicting

the entire village on claims that it is in the reserve area, while in fact it was surveyed and legally registered and have lived in it for many decades.

The villagers issued the appeal at a public meeting in the village recently saying despite President John Magufuli forming a team of ministers to follow up on land

conflicts including those the reserve and the villagers, still the team comprising eight ministers has not given any report of its decision.

The ministers in the team included those of lands, Livestock and Fisheries, Natural resources and Tourism and others.

Instead, the villagers claim

they continue to be harassed and threatened by TAWA wardens telling them to quit the area.

“This village has been here since colonial times, and as for now the villagers do not cultivate in fear of certain eviction, we are not engaged in any destruction activities in the

reserve on the environment,” said Hanalus Ali, one of the villagers.

Some herders and farmers, including Kligo Kidawa claimed that the 2012 operation to reduce the number of livestock helped a lot at first but due to flimsy control on herders, a huge influx of them invaded the area including

thousands of animals who hide in the reserves and blamed on the villagers for environmental destruction.

Kiligo appealed to the government to assist in removal of the invaders, as the Village government due to lack of resources failed to do so in their own.



## Police holding 28 for various crimes

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

POLICE in Dodoma are holding 28 people for various crimes including two Somalis for illegal entry together with a Tanzanian who was escorting them to Songwe Region.

Those arrested include Michael Chalinze a resident of Chalinze Nyama, Noel Nyandwa (Kibaigwa), Erasto Gingilo (Kibaigwa) and David Mhando.

Dodoma Police Commander Gilles Muroto said the suspects were arrested following a manhunt carried out by the police in the region.

Muroto said four of the suspects were arrested after being found in possession of two shotgun which was traditionally made and five bullets.

Muroto said the manhunt came after a series of incidents that looked similar in Dodoma and Morogoro which prompted the police to carry an operation which led to their arrest.

The suspected are said to have injured a resident of Isava Chamwino at his shop and robbed him 30m/-, an incident which happened in October, at the same time at Chingwini village they fired bullets in air and stole a cow and at Dumila in Kilosa they stole 1.8m/- from a business person.

RPC Muroto said a total of six motorcycles drivers had been seized for allegedly of their involvement in thefts and criminal activities.

The regional police boss said ahead of the festive season, the police had prepared well to

intensify security in places of worship and in public places to ensure people celebrate peacefully.

"We call upon religious leaders to work together with the police, children should be directed, there will be no disco for the young ones, and we will carry out patrols to ensure there is security," he said.

However, he called on drivers to follow road safety rules to protect road users.



**We call upon religious leaders to work together with the police, children should be directed, there will be no disco for the young ones, and we will carry out patrols to ensure there is security**



Reverend Ibrahim Mnaka of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania Sinza blesses children who attended the Christmas service in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Suspected illegal fishing workers days are numbered, says minister

By Guardian Correspondent, Moshi

LIVESTOCK and Fisheries Deputy Minister, Pauline Gekul has warned workers in the sector who are suspected of participating in illegal fishing activities saying their days are numbered.

The minister's warning came as the ministry has come up with a participatory system to fight the malpractice throughout instead of having periodical operations.

The minister was speaking when addressing residents of Lang'ata Bora who are near Bwawa la Mungu dam in Mwanza Kilimanjaro Region.

"We have information that some of the workers in the sector are collaborating with illegal fishermen to conduct illegal fishing, this tendency is not acceptable and we will take serious legal actions," she said.

The deputy minister issued

a five days ultimatum to the workers to immediately stop the malpractice in the Nyumba ya Mungu dam.

In the year 2018, the government launched an operation Sangawe and Jodari to control illegal fishing in water bodies across the country.

A research officer from the Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI) Charles Ezekiel said the institute was in the process to carry out research

on the species of fish found on Nyumba ya Mungu dam adding that that studies have shown that stunting among fish species in the dam was due to illegal fishing.

The head of Fisheries department in the ministry Magesa Bulayi said the government was working on establishing strategies to control illegal fishing in collaboration with citizens.



Livestock and Fisheries deputy minister Pauline Gekul (C) talks with Longido MP Dr. Stephen Kiruswa (R) at the herders meeting held at Orendeki, Namanga Mpakani in Longido District, Arusha Region on Thursday. Looking on is ministry's Permanent secretary Prof. Elisante Ole Gabriel. Photo: Correspondent Mbaraka Kambona

## Dodoma CC to empower SMEs with business skills

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo,

Dodoma

DODOMA City Council is planning to implement a chain of projects in 2021 to ensure entrepreneurs are doing their businesses to a more professional ways.

The initiatives, projected to commence from earlier next year, will focus to capacitate the small-scale entrepreneurs to manufacture goods, but also offer trade services that reflect relevant quality set by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS).

Moreover, the move will see the construction of numerous clusters to enable entrepreneur groups within the city to manufacture and market their products under the same roof.

Head, department of youth and social development at Dodoma City Council, Sharifa Nabalang'anya said the initiative will start with setting up of a vast cluster at Nanenane area.

"The cluster at Nanenane will occupy a total of 8 acres and upon completion. The project will play a major role to help fast-tracking a pace of economic development within the fast-growing city, apart from boosting livelihoods among the entrepreneurs," she said.

At the envisaged centre according to her is to incorporate a

special section for milk collection hub, food processing and packaging, tailoring of different attires, leather processing, food vendors as well as traditional decorations among others.

"The government has set aside at least 500m/- for the construction of the cluster's structures, but there will be special loaning schemes to enable the envisioned entrepreneur groups to acquire friendly capital loans to expand and improve their products."

"Dodoma is the country's capital city which receives and harbors high profile officials and thus it's prudent to ensure products produced and marketed are of high quality," she insisted.

However, it has also been revealed that the government in the region has already earmarked more areas for supporting a number of entrepreneur groups within the city to initiate numerous income-generating activities.

As part to spearhead the fifth phase government drive to empower youth, women, and disabled in the country, Nabalang'anya observed: "We're very determined to see all groups within our societies are practically engaging into profitable and useful economic projects, a move which will also help to curtail poverty levels from grassroots levels."

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Second Vice President Hemed Suleiman Abdulla has directed the Regional Commissioner for Unguja North Region to revisit and submit to higher authorities for further actions a report on a flower project invested in Kibumbwi village after the investor failed to deliver as expected.

The second VP made the directives when he visited

## Second VP directs Unguja North RC to revisit, submit report on flower project

Kibumbwi village at Mahonda constituency in the region to see for himself the challenges facing them and how they can be addressed.

He said complaints about Zanzibaris who were employed

in the project without receiving anything was against the plans by the government to provide employment through investments.

The VP said the aim of the government was to see the

investor working for the interest of the people fail to do the job, the government had the right to remove him.

He called upon the villagers to cooperate so that the promises made by officials who

accompanied him to build roads, bridges, and clean water were implemented.

Explaining further, the RC for Unguja Mohammed Mahmoud said at the beginning of this year, they expect students from

the area will start learning from a school constructed in the area.

He said the school would be important because it will end the learning problems facing children who walk distances in search of education in the village.

RC Ayoub promised the VP that they will implement all the directives he has issued so that residents of the village live peacefully.



## 7.6m/- to refurbish damaged secondary school classrooms

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

WORLD Vision Tanzania has donated building materials worth 7.6m/- to support the refurbishment of three classrooms at Gorowa Secondary School in Babati District, Manyara Region.

The three classrooms were recently damaged by rain. The donation, which includes galvanized iron and cement, was handed over to the Babati District Commissioner Lazaro Twange.

Handing over the donation, Gorowa project coordinator Ester Mushendwa said through the development project after the disaster World Vision decided to donate building materials to help restore infrastructure.

She said they have presented 160 roofing iron sheets and 183 bags of cement so that construction of the classrooms is completed before schools reopen in January next year.

Mushendwa commended the government for the support they have been providing to the organisation. She said with the government support, World Vision has been able to successfully execute its activities within communities in the district.

Ayasanda Ward Executive Officer, Mary Shimsa thanked World Vision for the assistance saying the renovation work will be completed on time.

According to Shimsa, the school had also received assistance from various stakeholders including Babati Member of Parliament, Daniel Sillo who contributed 1m/- a business man Emmanuel Mollel provided 100 pieces of timber and Manyara sugar factory which contributed 1m/-.

She said the Babati District supported the project with 4m/-.

Babati District Commissioner, Lazaro Twange commended World Vision for the support calling upon stakeholders to continue supporting the education sector to improve students' academic performance. He said the government is determined to ensure all Tanzanian children get quality education hence introduction of the free education policy in 2016.

"Without contribution from stakeholders, the government would have taken long to complete construction of the damaged infrastructures," he said.

Head Teacher of Gorowa Secondary School, Laurence Manimo said the school infrastructures were damaged during the September rains.

Manimo said the destruction has resulted in student congestion whereas a single class accommodates 70 students instead of 50.

Ayasanda Ward Councillor, Yahaya Loya said that World Vision has been supporting a number of projects in the area.



**Without contribution from stakeholders, the govt would have taken long to complete construction of the damaged infrastructures**



Kimara Mwisho resident in Dar es Salaam buy chickens for the festive season yesterday. A chicken sold for 25,000/- . The Christmas season, also called the holiday season, or the festive season, is an annually recurring period recognised in many Western and other countries that is generally considered to run from November to early January. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Newly elected Dar mayor underlines need for unity among local government officials

By Correspondent Theresia Victor

THE newly elected Dar es Salaam City Mayor Omari Mkulanga has called on local government administrators and staff of the city council to work in unity in implementing various initiatives so as to boost socio-economic development of the city and the country at large.

He made the call in Dar es Salaam on Thursday soon after being sworn in to serve the post and convening the first session of

the city council as City Mayor.

"There are a lot of pending issues that need to be addressed and if we want to achieve success through it then we have every reason to work in unity otherwise we will not reach the target," Mkulanga said.

According to him, as long as they have been chosen to protect people and bring development, they have to work in team to address various challenges facing the community.

"We have been chosen by our people because they see in us

potentials that could be used in bringing relief on different challenges that they have been facing, so we should work and not let them down," he added.

Mkulanga further formed five central committees that will work hand in hand to ensure that the city attains its development goals.

The committees formed include finance and management committees, planning and coordination committees, environment and infrastructure, social services and the Security

and Ethics Committee for councillors.

Resident Magistrate at then Resident Magistrate Court of Dar es Salaam-Sokoine Drive, Hanifa Mwingira immediately after swearing in the City Mayor and councillors urged the leaders to observe ethics and live up their oaths to bring changes in the city.

Mwingira further reminded all local administrations to ensure that they also uphold ethics and fulfill their responsibilities for the country's development.



Christians attend Christmas service at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania Sinza in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Special Correspondent

## Study sees severe biodiversity impacts linked to land use for sub-Saharan Africa

SUB-SAHARAN Africa is likely to see some of the most severe biodiversity impacts tied to land use, according to researchers who warn that agricultural production will affect some 20,000 species without changes to the global agricultural system.

The new findings were published this week in the journal Nature Sustainability.

"Ultimately, we need to change what we eat and how it is produced if we're going to save wildlife on a global scale. We need to alter both our diets and food

production methods," said Dr. David Williams of the University of Leeds in the UK. Williams led the research team from Leeds and the University of Oxford.

Their findings are based on a more precise model of how land use will affect biodiversity, and finer detail on which parts of the world are more likely to see expansion of agricultural land. In addition to sub-Saharan Africa, the most severe impacts

are expected to affect Central and South America.

The authors hope that improved visibility into the agricultural impacts will drive conservation efforts in a more targeted way.

"Discussions on slowing and reversing biodiversity often focus on conventional conservation actions, such as establishing new protected areas or species-specific legislation for threatened species.

These are absolutely needed, and have been effective at conserving biodiversity," said Dr. Michael Clark of Oxford.

"However, our research emphasizes the importance of also reducing the ultimate stresses to biodiversity—such as agricultural expansion. The good news is that if we make ambitious changes to the food system, then we can prevent almost all these habitat losses."

## CWC project to benefit 600 young mothers in Iringa

By Friday Simbaya, Mufindi

OVER 15000 adolescents including 600 young mothers in Iringa Region are expected to benefit from the Children with Children (CwC) project which is aimed among others, to empower them with life skills, reproductive health education as well as linking them to various opportunities.

To be implemented by SOS Children's Village Tanzania, the project is set to be launched early next year.

Speaking on the sidelines of the project to empower women and children rights (WECR) held recently here, SOS Director David Mulongo said that the 600 teen mothers are those who dropped out of school due to pregnancies.

Mulongo said that teenage pregnancy and early marriages presents a major challenge to girls, so launching the project could provide relief to the hundreds of helpless young mothers.

He said that the young mothers will undergo psychological counseling and various entrepreneurial skills.

According to him, after a successful entrepreneurship and vocational training, the teen mothers will be able to set up small businesses including hairdressing, baking, tailoring and other entrepreneurial products to improve their living.

"Apart from that, the young girls will also be linked with financing groups and institutions for them to be able to access funding, and loans from relevant institutions for income generating activities of their choice...they will also be able to plan their family as they will be well trained family planning and reproductive health education," he said.

Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) for Iringa Happiness Seneda promised to provide close cooperation in the new project so as to support the young school children and teen mothers.

Seneda commended SOS

Tanzania for establishing children's councils across the region that will be used to find solutions to issues facing the group as research conducted by universities in Iringa Region in 2018 showed that there are many violent acts perpetrated by misguided traditions, and alcoholism.

"I have witnessed SOS helping women to become economically stable and I have instructed the directors of Mafinga and Mufindi councils to ensure that these groups formed by SOS with 250 women are connected to the loan scheme provided by the councils so as to support their economic hustles," she said.

In the event, village chairpersons in Mafinga and Mufindi District councils pledged to continue strengthening efforts to ensure that children's rights are protected by fighting all forms of violence.

Manusi Kalinga, chairperson of Kikombwe village in Mufindi District said the project will be a help as in his area there are many orphans who have had early pregnancies thus failing to cope with their daily lives.

"I recommend that the girls be introduced to projects that will help them grow economically, I am sure that this project will produce positive impacts in the region," Kalinga said.

Victor Mwaipungu, SOS Programme Coordinator for Mufindi District said that the CwC project will be implemented in three districts of Iringa Region, namely Mufindi, Kilolo and Iringa DC.

He said that the project is meant to help adolescents girls and boys and young mothers to have access and utilization of sexual reproductive health services as basic health care services.

Mwaipungu noted that the project will help young mothers who got pregnant and dropped out of school on how to be self-reliant economically and foster care issues.



## AfCFTA only path to sustainable development, says UNECA official

By Special Correspondent, Addis Ababa

THE African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement should be made to work as it is the continent's only path to sustainable development, a senior United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) official has said.

The remarks were made by David Luke, coordinator of the ECA's African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC), during a webinar on effective coverage of the AfCFTA.

"Let's not underestimate the importance of this AfCFTA initiative," Luke said, as he emphasized that "there's no plan B; we have to make the AfCFTA work."

Luke stressed that "all societies only developed when their productive capacities, productivity and competitiveness were expanded, driven by trade, and Africa could not be an exception."

According to Luke, revenues from trade were in multiples of receipts from sources like investments, remittances, foreign

direct investment and foreign aid.

The AfCFTA aims to create the world's largest free trade area with the potential that brings together more than 1.2 billion people with a GDP of over 2.5 trillion U.S. dollars and usher in a new era of development, according to figures from the UNECA.

The continental free trade pact is said to offer a greater potential to generate a range of benefits through economy of scale, trade creation, structural transformation, productive employment, and poverty reduction.

The AfCFTA entered into force on May 30, 2019 after the treaty was ratified by 22 countries as the minimum number required by the treaty.

So far, some 34 African countries have submitted their instruments of AfCFTA ratification to the African Union (AU) Commission, according to figures from the 55-member pan African bloc.

Trading under the AfCFTA is due to commence on January 1, 2021 after the COVID-19 pandemic caused it to be postponed from July 1 this year.



Dar es Salaam residents purchase food and other items at Mabibo market in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam for the festive season yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## MP not pleased with classrooms construction pace

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

MBEYA Rural Member of parliament Oran Njeza has called on Nsalala Ward residents in Mbalizi Town to increase the pace of classrooms construction at Malama Secondary School to enable Std VII students who passed their examination to enroll

into Form I at the school.

Njeza issued the appeal on Thursday this week during his inspection visit at the school during which he inspected the four classrooms under construction by the residents' efforts.

He said he was not pleased with the pace of the construction

and he was worried whether the classrooms would be ready in the government given time frame - before January 10 next year

"I have gone through many areas in my constituency, and everywhere I saw great efforts by the people in contributing their efforts for their own development, but in this ward the situation is a

bit different, hence increase your efforts," said MP Njeza.

During the visit he pledged to contribute 2m/- towards classrooms construction that have reached ceiling level.

Earlier, reading report on construction work Nsalala Ward Executive officer Juma Shumba said the biggest challenge facing

them was the shortage of financial resources.

He said they have been forced to buy on credit some of the construction materials to enable students start their lessons in time. He mentioned some of the materials they bought on credit as cement, bricks, and sand all of which cost 3m/-.

"We are more than 3m/- in debt and we ask the government to pay that debt," he said.

However, he said once the classrooms walls are completed they will have no money for the roof and other infrastructures hence he appealed to the government through Mbeya District Council for assistance.



Head of Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau in Simanjiro District, Manyara Region Adam Kilongozi (L) gives orders to Nicas Lyimo to return properties of 'pyramid' scheme victims yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

## Malnutrition and deadly diseases threaten displaced children in Mozambique as rainy season commences

MAPUTO/NAIROBI/NEW YORK

APPROXIMATELY 250,000 children have been displaced by the escalating crisis in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado and are now at risk of deadly diseases as the rainy season sets in, UNICEF has warned.

The United Nations' children's agency is especially concerned that safe water, sanitation and hygiene services are insufficient to meet the growing needs of children and families in overcrowded temporary accommodation centers and in host communities. These services must be urgently strengthened and expanded to prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases like cholera and the further spread of COVID-19.

"In less than two years, children and families in Cabo Delgado have faced a devastating cyclone,

flooding, drought, socioeconomic hardship linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and conflict," said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore. "As conditions in the province deteriorate further - especially with the start of rainy season - water, sanitation and health care systems are under increasing strain. Humanitarian partners on the ground must shore up these services to protect the lives and wellbeing of the region's children."

Health conditions like diarrhea, which are easily prevented and treated, can be deadly for displaced children without access to safe water and adequate sanitation. This is especially true for children suffering from malnutrition.

Weather-related disasters and conflict over the past two years have contributed to food insecurity and hunger across Cabo Delgado. Two out of every

five children in the province are chronically malnourished and more cases of severe acute malnutrition are being detected amongst the displaced population.

UNICEF is expanding its water and sanitation response and supporting mobile health teams. These teams visit communities and accommodation centers to screen children for their nutritional status, provide lifesaving treatment with therapeutic food for severe cases, and refer children with medical complications to the nearest health center. Mobile health teams also provide regular healthcare to women, mothers and children, ensuring that key services such as antenatal care and standard vaccination cycles are observed.

Displaced children are especially vulnerable. Some may have lost contact with their families or find

themselves in high-risk situations that can expose them to physical and psychological violence. Many children have witnessed or experienced extreme violence or even lost close family members to brutal killings and abductions. They need a comprehensive protection response including psychosocial support after experiencing such traumatic events.

UNICEF and its partners are running child friendly spaces where displaced children can enjoy activities in a safe and secure environment, while trained facilitators can identify those who need more specialized care. There is an urgent need to expand the network of trained case workers who can visit surviving children and their families at home to offer psychosocial support and referrals to protection and social services.

## How seaweed, sustainable solutions alleviate poverty

WASHINGTON DC

IN spite of an increasingly developed and wealthy world, poverty persists in countries and communities all over the globe, with about 10% of the world's population living in extreme poverty in 2015.

These populations strive to acquire greater security, access to healthcare, improved equality and human rights protections.

Those living in poverty face many challenges to achieving these goals, including environmental challenges that threaten their safety, economic output and overall livelihood. Additionally, 70% of the world's poor rely on natural resources and their surrounding environment for their livelihood, which can negatively impact the environment with unsustainable practices. Therefore, poverty and the environment have a mutually reinforcing relationship that can be supported through sustainable solutions to improve the state of both parties. A prime example of this is seaweed farming, a sustainable practice that continues to improve coastal communities.

In the United Nations' latest Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) conference, the global eradication of poverty in all its forms was identified as the first goal that must be achieved by 2030. As a subcategory of this goal, the UN added that it is necessary to reduce the exposure of affected populations "to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters" as disadvantaged populations are particularly vulnerable to the environment.

In an effort to expand upon this environmental aspect, the UN Environment Programme and the UN Development Programme partnered in 2018 to create the Poverty-Environment Sustainable Action Goals. This framework strives to more deeply integrate environmental consideration and sustainability to countries'

development plans and enhance knowledge sharing on sustainable solutions and practices. In addition to deepening environmental objectives within national and subnational policies to improve resource management, private and public investments will be utilized to more aggressively pursue the SDGs.

Additionally, UNICEF adds that extreme poverty could be reduced by decoupling economic growth from the reliance on natural resources. Due to developing countries' reliance on natural resources, vulnerable communities will be affected when these same resources come under intense strain and will soon no longer be able to support growing economies.

In addition to efforts by the U.N. and other organizations, the relationship between poverty and sustainability can be improved through the support of key industries.

The seaweed farming industry has existed in coastal communities for years, especially those in developing countries where the industry plays a vital role in the economy. In Zanzibar, located off Africa's east coast, many communities rely on seaweed farming as their main source of income, and the industry has employed thousands of workers.

The seaweed industry is the third-largest contributor to Zanzibar's economy and generated roughly \$8 million during its most productive years. Furthermore, seaweed farming in Zanzibar has significantly improved the livelihood of women and helped shift gender relations in a traditionally patriarchal society. As men left seaweed farming to enter more profitable industries, such as fishing and tourism, women filled the gaps and can now afford medical expenses, school and other luxuries.

However, experts caution that profits may be at risk due to environmental factors threatening the quantity and quality of seaweed yields.



# Blue economy key to African growth and demands more innovation - official

By Special Correspondent

ENTREPRENEURS, executives, investors, scientists and government representatives from around the world gathered online recently for the second edition of Ocean Innovation Africa, a platform dedicated to fostering connection, knowledge-sharing and discovery between leaders looking to make a positive impact on the continent's oceans economy.

The two-day summit, organised by OceanHub Africa (OHA) and event specialist Catalyze, was sponsored by Wesgro, the City of Cape Town, 3DEXperience Lab and the French Embassy in South Africa and supported by the V&A Waterfront, World Wildlife Fund South Africa, World Ocean Council and AWS Activate. It saw more than 500 people engage in a range of live panel discussions, pitching events and masterclasses with attendees also being given the option of joining several networking, matchmaking, and film screening sessions scattered throughout the proceedings.

A highlight of this year's summit was the keynote address given by Paul Holthus, Founding President and CEO of the World Ocean Council. He explained that Africa's rich ocean resources are key to supporting socio-economic growth on the continent but stressed that their exploitation must be done in a manner that is sustainable, accountable and in line with the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water.

"In doing so, we need to prioritise innovation in marine-related technology, policy, and research and development, while simultaneously

encouraging greater collaboration between stakeholders in the ocean economy," said Holthus.

In addition to keynote addresses, the event saw several panel discussions take place, during which ocean-entrepreneurs and representatives from leading organisations explored how innovation may affect the various sectors of the ocean economy.

A noteworthy discussion focused on the role of government in the blue economy, with the panel including stakeholders from the Norwegian Embassy in South Africa, the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative, the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, and members of the EU Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries as well as the African Union. They unpacked how governments need to exhibit greater leadership in protecting the marine economy and stimulating new approaches to ocean resource exploitation.

Another session which proved popular with attendees was a panel centred around building the pipeline of ocean-impact startups, which featured representatives from the World Economic Forum's (WEF) UpLink initiative, Katapult Ocean, NTELX, Sustainable Ocean Alliance, University of Cape Town, and DOTCAN. Opening the session, John Dutton - who heads WEF-UpLink - announced the launch of an action group for African Ocean Innovation, saying that: "This will be a digital group for various stakeholders dedicated to mobilising the African community to accelerate the development and adoption of ocean solutions across the continent."



The winner of Smart TV, Agness John of Dar es Salaam receives her award from Tigo manager for Coast zone Robert Sanyagi (L) after winning 'Jaza TukuJaze Tena' promotion in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. Right is Tigo sales manager for Coast zone Robert Kasulwa. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## At least 15 dead in delays at South Africa-Zimbabwe border

JOHANNESBURG

AT least 15 people have died in recent weeks on the South African side of the Beitbridge border with Zimbabwe in lengthy queues that have been slowed by coronavirus screening, television news channel eNCA said on Friday.

The health ministry, Department of Home Affairs and South African police Local did not respond immediately to Reuters' requests on Friday for confirmation of fatalities that

local media outlets attributed to exhaustion and ill health owing to a lack of facilities while waiting to cross the border, sometimes for days.

Images and videos on local news channels and circulated on social media showed lines of stationary cars, mainly trucks, stretching for kilometres on the narrow road leading to the inland Beitbridge port that serves as the main crossing point between the countries, and is more busy than usual at this time of year because

of a seasonal return of migrants to Zimbabwe.

South Africa, which the United Nations says is host to an estimated 1.5 million Zimbabwean migrants, is suffering a second wave of COVID-19 infections.

Authorities suspect the surge in cases has been triggered by a genetic mutation of the disease. Total positive cases are now near the 1 million mark, by far the most on the continent.

Asked about the border

delays in an interview on news channel eNCA, the director-general of South Africa's Health Department, Sandile Buthelezi, said that coronavirus screening for outgoing traffic had now been suspended but proof of a negative COVID-19 test performed within 30 days would be required upon re-entry.

"The main backlog was outgoing trucks. We don't require a test when you're going out of the country," Buthelezi said.



Igunga MP Nicholaus Ngassa looks at a child admitted at Igunga hospital after their house was demolished by flood waters recently. Right is unnamed nursing officer. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## African youth urged to take lead in implementation of AfCFTA

By Lavie Mutanganshuro

AFRICAN youth have been called upon to own and take lead role in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Agenda 2063.

The call was made at the inaugural webinar dubbed Africa Expects Youth Series, an initiative that seeks to give an opportunity to African youths to discuss several issues affecting the continent with a solution-oriented perspective.

Spearheaded by the Pan-Africa Movement (PAM) Rwanda Chapter, the webinar brought

together pan-African youth from Rwanda, Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa to discuss 'youth as stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 2063 and AfCFTA'.

Agenda 2063 was initiated by African leaders, with the intention of refocusing and reprioritise Africa's agenda from the struggle against apartheid and the attainment of political independence for the continent to achieving inclusive social and economic development.

The Agenda also seeks to achieve continental and regional integration, democratic governance and peace and

security amongst other issues aimed at repositioning Africa to becoming a dominant player in the global arena.

On the other hand, AfCFTA aims at reaching integration of the African countries in bid to ensure collective benefits. The agreement's implementation is slated for January 1, 2021, after being postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Louis-Antoine Muhire, the Made in Rwanda Project Manager at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, youth's role in the implementation of continental policies should start at the grass-root level.

"Championing change does not begin from getting top seats in the government, it begins at the community level by making contributions wherever necessary," he said.

"Experience is something that young people have to value, not simply having academic degrees. Take risks and consistently try new things. Let your actions give you the opportunity to serve," he added.

Raymond Okpani a Nigerian pan-Africanist also reiterated that the role of youth in the implementation of AfCFTA and Agenda 2063 include striving for unity among Africans.

## Africa can lead the world in the COVID-19 recovery

By Kundhavi Kadiresan

Kundhavi Kadiresan is Managing Director, Global Engagement and Innovation, CGIAR System Organization. CGIAR (formerly the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) is a global partnership that unites international organizations engaged in research about food security.

A mother homeschools her children in Shamva district, Zimbabwe, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 10,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Africa; Zimbabwe and South Sudan among most vulnerable. Credit: WFP/Tatenda Macheke

WASHINGTON DC, Dec 18 2020 (IPS) - Africa, compared to Asia, Europe and the US, has largely escaped the devastating death toll of COVID-19, accounting for a fraction of the world's 63 million cases.

Instead, the continent has been uniquely affected by the pandemic's impact on food supply chains, revealing underlying vulnerabilities that threaten to bring a different crisis and leaving the spectre of famine looming over several African countries.

As donors, NGOs and research organisations rally to support governments in preventing a rise in extreme hunger and poverty, we have an opportunity to transform Africa's food systems for the better at a time when the entire world has reached an inflection point for the sustainability of food systems.

In tackling the secondary impacts of the pandemic, Africa can build greater resilience to global shocks, leapfrogging other regions by reconfiguring a food system that the continent - and the world - has long since outgrown.

This could provide a blueprint for other regions and countries in the run-up to a milestone UN summit in 2021 and help the rest

of the world to leverage food and agriculture for better health, climate action and opportunities for equality.

Such a roadmap should start by recognising that the diet, nutrition and health of a population underpins all other indicators of progress and prosperity.

With this in mind, agriculture should be situated at the heart of any national or regional strategy for development and economic growth.

Since it was launched in 2003, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) has set out clear targets for agriculture as a driver of other goals and includes more than 40 countries among its signatories.

As of 2015, public spending on agriculture across Africa under CAADP had increased by more than seven per cent a year to support more and better livelihoods, stronger food security and greater resilience.

It also provides a clear, shared vision around which partners, such as agricultural research networks like CGIAR, can unite to play their part.

Such an integrated, coordinated approach, both between governments and partners, will be essential in delivering the next decade of the programme to accelerate the transformation of African agriculture.

But while a high-level framework like CAADP is crucial for bringing together partners in pursuit of common goals, each country, district and neighbourhood will also need solutions appropriate to their specific contexts.

The world may be connected by its common need to produce sufficient healthy food in a sustainable way, but the means through which this is achieved varies enormously according to social and environmental factors.



# The Guardian

SATURDAY 26 DECEMBER 2020

Taking A New Look  
At The News  
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

## The COVID-19 recession is severe global economic crisis

THE year 2020 is ending with the world caught up in an unprecedented human and economic crisis. The pandemic has contaminated 75 million people and killed 1.7 million. With the lockdowns, the global economy has suffered the worst recession in 75 years, causing the loss of income for millions of people. In such a bleak environment, what will the new year bring? Whilst uncertainty is the only certainty, eight points are likely to be key in the year ahead:

The COVID-19 recession is a severe global economic crisis which has caused a recession in some nations and in others a depression. [ It is the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression. The economic crisis began due to the economic consequences of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The first major sign of a recession was the collapse of markets during the 2020 stock market crash, which began in late February and lasted through March. But the stock market crash was short-lived, and many market indices around the world recovered or set new records by Autumn 2020. As of September 2020, every advanced economy is or had been in a recession or depression, whilst all emerging economies are in recession. Modeling by the World Bank suggests that in some regions a full recovery will not be achieved until 2025 or beyond.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to more than a third of the world's population being placed on lockdown to stop the spread of COVID-19. It has caused severe repercussions for economies across the world, following soon after a global economic slowdown

during 2019 that saw stagnation of stock markets and consumer activity worldwide.

The recession has seen unusually high and rapid increases in unemployment in many countries, and the inability in the United States for state-funded unemployment insurance computer systems and processes to keep up with applications. At present, over 10 million unemployment cases are filed in the United States. California State University has brought up an initiative of releasing nationwide remote opportunities to benefit the citizens of the United States. The United Nations (UN) predicted in April 2020 that global unemployment will wipe out 6.7 per cent of working hours globally in the second quarter of 2020—equivalent to 195 million full-time workers. In some countries, unemployment is expected to be at around 10 per cent, with more severely affected nations from the COVID-19 pandemic having higher unemployment rates. The developing world is also being affected by a drop in remittances, [26] exacerbating global food crises.

The recession saw a drop in the price of oil triggered by the 2020 Russia-Saudi Arabia oil price war; the collapse of tourism, the hospitality industry, and the energy industry; and a significant downturn in consumer activity in comparison to the previous decade. Global stock markets crashed around 20 to 30 per cent during late February and March 2020, respectively. During the crash, global stock markets made unprecedented and volatile swings, mainly due to extreme uncertainty in the markets.

## The desert locust is potentially the most dangerous of the locust pests

A new generation of desert locust swarms is threatening agricultural and pastoral livelihoods and the food security of millions of people in the Horn of Africa and Yemen despite intense efforts to control the pest throughout 2020, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) has said.

With international support and an unprecedented large-scale response campaign coordinated by FAO, more than 1.3 million hectares of locust infestations have been treated in ten countries since January.

The desert locust is a species of locust, a periodically swarming, short-horned grasshopper in the family Acrididae. They are found mainly in Africa, through Arabia and West Asia, and extending into parts of South Asia. During population surge years, they may extend into parts of western Spain.

The desert locust shows periodic changes in its body form and can change, in response to environmental conditions, over generations, from a solitary, shorter-winged, highly fecund, nonmigratory form to a gregarious, long-winged, and migratory phase in which they may travel long distances into new areas. In some years, they may thus form locust plagues, invading new areas, where they may consume all vegetation including crops, and at other times, they may live unnoticed in small numbers.

During plague years, desert locusts can cause widespread damage to crops, as they are highly mobile and feed on large quantities of any kind of green

vegetation, including crops, pasture, and fodder. A typical swarm can be made up of 150 million locusts per km<sup>2</sup> and fly in the direction of the prevailing wind, up to 150 km in one day. Even a very small, 1-km<sup>2</sup> locust swarm can eat the same amount of food in a day as about 35,000 people.

As an international transboundary pest that threatens agricultural production and livelihoods in many countries in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, their populations have been routinely monitored through collaborations between countries through the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Their migratory nature and capacity for rapid population growth present major challenges for control, particularly in remote semi-arid areas, which characterise much of their range.

Locusts differ from other grasshoppers in their ability to change from a solitary living form into gregarious, highly mobile, adult swarms and hopper bands, as their numbers and densities increase.

They exist in different states known as recessions (with low and intermediate numbers), rising to outbreaks, and extremely high densities or plagues. They have two to five generations per year. The desert locust risk increases with one-to-two-year continuum of favourable weather (greater frequency of rains) and habitats that support population increases leading to upsurges and plagues.

The desert locust is potentially the most dangerous of the locust pests because of the ability of swarms to fly rapidly across great distances.

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By Imraan Buccus

UNIFORMED men claiming to be uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) veterans openly attacked migrants in the streets of Durban again this past week. It is incredible that the state allows this to happen and that this direct and open attack on democratic values is not a major national issue.

uMkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) was the armed wing of the African National Congress, co-founded by Nelson Mandela in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre. Its mission was to fight against the South African government. It was formed in 1961.

In military terms, MK was arguably a failure. But large numbers of courageous young people fled apartheid to join "the people's army" and it was a very important symbol of resistance for the millions who remained at home. As we all know, MK was sheltered in the Front Line States, and many members of MK married into local communities.

It is desperately sad that the name of an army of resistance, an army sheltered in other African states, an army that was allied to progressive deals is now being

## Durban attacks: These are dangerous times we are living through

used to legitimate a collapse into authoritarianism, public thuggery and despicable forms of chauvinism. It is just as sad that the name of an army that once stood for freedom is now being used to support Jacob Zuma, a notorious kleptocrat who wreaked havoc on our country, setting its progress back by decades.

The word from people on the streets is quite clear in terms of what is actually going on in Durban.

There is an ethnic aspect to the support for Zuma, and there have been some unsuccessful attempts to arouse ethnic sentiments against migrants and Indians. But with the pro-Zuma forces rallying behind Ace Magashule, and backed by a range of shady non-Zulu characters such as Carl Niehaus and Andile Mngxitama, it would be more than a little silly to say that what is going on is a purely ethnic phenomenon.

The heart of the matter is that a predatory political class with no access to capital outside its relation to the state, and no professional qualifications, has been displaced from its access to

accumulating wealth via the state. For this class, which is multi-ethnic and multi-racial, the alternative to kleptocracy is irrelevance, and for some poverty.

The forces that once backed Zuma, and now hope that Magashule will return them to influence and power, have no coherent ideological project.

There is no real political project beyond restoring their access to the wealth that can be diverted from the state. However, to restore their capacity to loot from the state they need to win control of the ANC.

Winning control of the ANC is mostly a matter of buying votes and controlling the bureaucracy that sets up and regulates branches but some sort of ideological cover is also required to legitimate kleptocratic elites. Magashule is a master of the dark arts of branch manipulation but with money drying up, and President Cyril Ramaphosa being a very rich man with very rich friends, the kleptocrats have lost some of their capacity to buy votes. As a result it is now urgently necessary to drive an ideological

project.

The Radical Economic Transformation (RET) line was always ridiculous. Allowing a politically connected elite to loot the state can only do serious damage to society and to the majority of its citizens. But it had some success until massive popular anger at the wholesale looting of funding allocated to the Covid crisis resulted in a decisive turn against corruption.

The new strategy, following the right-wing demagogues elsewhere in the world, is to try to rally nationalist sentiment behind an attempt to blame migrants for a deep and worsening social crisis. If the kleptocrats can follow the likes of Donald Trump and persuade the public that they are the ones who truly care about the "people", and are willing to stand up to their "enemies", they hope to be able to emulate the initial electoral success of Trump.

These are dangerous times. People of principle need to take clear positions against an open, deliberate and violent attempt to corrode democracy from below.

## Africa must unite to demand stolen art's return

By Harrison Mwilima

AFRICAN nations need to work together to pressure Europe to return looted art held in its museums, such as Germany's newly opened Humboldt Forum, says DW's Harrison Mwilima.

Among the priceless works held by Germany's new Humboldt Forum museum, a massive cultural complex in Berlin, are 75,000 African artifacts. It's not clear how some of these objects made their way into German hands during the colonial era.

But the provenance of the Benin bronzes, considered among Africa's greatest treasures, is known. Several thousands of artifacts were looted by British soldiers in 1897 from the ancient Kingdom of Benin, in what is now modern-day Nigeria. Around 200 ended up at the British Museum in London, while the rest were divided up between a variety of Western collections, including museums in Germany.

Objects from the Benin bronzes will form the centerpiece of the Humboldt Forum's Africa exhibition, which is planned to open in the third quarter of 2021.

The speeches at Humboldt Forum's opening ceremony

last week included some voices critical of the museum's role in exhibiting these, and other, looted artifacts.

And then it ended there. An ending that seemed to be over too early.

It feels like a book that has been closed although there are so many unwritten chapters lying ahead.

Nigeria is among those demanding art back

A week before the Humboldt Forum's opening, Nigeria's ambassador to Germany Yusuf Tuggar sent a second letter to the German government asking for the return of the Benin bronzes held in Germany. Tuggar says he never received a response from the German government to his first letter sent in August 2019.

Nigeria is among the growing number of African countries formally requesting the restitution of artifacts pilfered during the colonial era.

Last year, Germany gave back a 500-year-old stone cross to Namibia after the Namibian government officially requested its return in 2017.

Ethiopia has repeatedly asked for artifacts back from Britain while Benin, Senegal and Ivory Coast are among those countries which have asked France to

return objects taken during the colonial era.

Many of these requests seem to fall on deaf ears: The relationship between former colonial powers and the formerly colonized are still marred with power asymmetry.

Other African governments may not decide to take a strong role in requesting for their artworks and objects for fear of losing development aid and international support from their former colonial masters.

This has led to many African governments not being active in their requests, thus most of the push for restitution has been left to various NGOs, activists and other committed individuals.

The movements and debates going on in Europe need to take place also in African countries.

African nations need to unite to demand return of artifacts

A groundbreaking report in 2018 by Felwine Sarr and Benedicte Savoy estimates that 90% of African artworks and cultural objects such as sculptures, masks, burial objects, jewelry and ritual objects are located outside the African continent. In order to facilitate the return of those African looted arts, African governments must

take center stage.

The quest for restitution should be a key item on the agenda in most African countries and key policy guidelines should be developed on how to facilitate this process.

In this context, African sub-regional organizations could also play a strong role.

Taking the East African Community (EAC) as an example, once member states have developed their national policies to facilitate restitution, they could move forward and develop a regional position to push their agenda beyond their nations.

This could also be taken further to the continental level, whereby the positions of sub-regional groups could be taken to the African Union to create a strong continental position on restitution to recover cultural heritage.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 already shows the continent's intention of building Africa with a strong identity.

How is that possible when a large part of this identity has been stolen and is inaccessible in museum archives or generating income for European cities as the star attractions of museum exhibitions.



By Asukile R. Kajuni

# Tanzania's western tourism circuit anchored from Katavi National Park - Part I I

Plate 1: Chimpanzee in Gombe Stream National Park  
(Source: tanzaniaparks.go.tz/publications accessed on 28Aug 2020)

## 2. Malagarasi/Moyowosi Ramsar Site

A Ramsar site is a wetland site designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, known as the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental environmental treaty established in 1971 by UNESCO, which came into force in 1975. Such site provides for national action and international cooperation regarding the conservation of wetlands, and wise sustainable use of their resources. The Malagarasi-Moyowosi RAMSAR Site, located in the administrative regions of Kigoma, Shinyanga and Tabora, in northwest Tanzania is the third largest such site in the world.

Other Important Features/Sites  
The Western Tourism Circuit boasts of having some of the most incredible and special features for both local and international tourists that included but not limited to:

- i. Meteorite site in Mbozi "Kimondo cha Mbozi". This is a rare and spectacular sight and is the eighth largest meteorite in the world, weighing about 12 tons.
- ii. Rock paint and human foot print found at Nkangamo ward Mbozi district believed that ancestors painted these rocks about 3000 years ago.
- iii. The Rift Valley-Albertine rift
- iv. A unique Ngosi Crater Lake and other crater lakes of Kiungululi, Ikapu, Kingili, Ilamba and Itamba
- v. The Utengule and Ibale wetlands
- vi. Natural bridge at Izumbwe
- vii. Beautiful scenery and waterfalls at Shengaa, Hali and Iswi
- viii. Natural caves and hot water springs at Songwe and Kilambo in mbambo.

## Recent Discovery of Animal Species

Palaeontologists from an international team of scientists from the United States, Australia and Tanzania as part of the Rukwa Rift Basin Project, working in Tanzania have identified a new species of hyaenodont, a type of extinct meat-eating mammal. After the extinction of the non-avian dinosaurs 66 million years ago, hyaenodonts were the main predators on the African continent. The newly discovered animal is called Pakakali rukwaensis, the name derived from the Swahili term "pakakali," meaning "fierce cat," and "rukwaensis," the word for the Rukwa Rift region of the Great Rift Valley in southwestern Tanzania. Between 23 and 25 million years ago, newcomers arrived in Africa -- the first relatives of modern dogs, cats and hyenas-where they coexisted with hyaenodonts for millions of years. But eventually, hyaenodonts went extinct.

Plate 2: Pakakali rukwaensis  
(Source: NSF/Ohio University:2017)

This new carnivore, discovered in Tanzania sediment deposits dating from 25 million years ago, provides new information about the transition of carnivores in older ecosystem types to carnivores in today's African ecosystems, according to Judy Skog, program director in NSF's Division of Earth Sciences, which funded the research.

The new hyaenodont species was discovered in the same 25 million-year-old rocks as the oldest fossil evidence of the split between Old World monkeys and apes. At that time, the ecosystem was undergoing dramatic climate and tectonic upheavals as Africa collided with Eurasia and the modern East African Rift System formed.



The fossil gives palaeontologists a glimpse of hyaenodont anatomy before modern carnivores invaded the continent, revealing that Pakakali was about the size of a bobcat.

Based on the findings of the study, hyaenodonts may have been pushed to become more specialized meat-eaters due to competition from other species. That dietary specialization may have made hyaenodonts more vulnerable to extinction in the changing African ecosystem by leaving them with fewer food choices.

## Historical Events

### 1. Ujiji/Lake Tanganyika

The Western Tourism Circuit consists of a famous slave trade route centered from Ujiji on the shore of Lake Tanganyika, which traversed over 1,200 kilometers to Bagamoyo on Tanzania main land coast before the trade was forbidden in 1873. Ujiji was the major caravan terminus on the shores of Lake Tanganyika in the nineteenth century, for traders coming both from the coast and from destinations across the lake in Congo.

### 2. Dr. Livingstone Memorial in Kigoma

Ujiji is the oldest town in western Tanzania, located about 10 km south of Kigoma. It is the place where Richard Burton and John Speke first reached the shore of Lake Tanganyika in 1858. It is the site of the famous meeting on 27 October 1871 when Henry Stanley found Dr. David Livingstone, and reputedly uttered the famous words "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?". A monument known as the "Dr. Livingstone Memorial" was erected in Ujiji to commemorate the meeting and managed as a national monument and museum.

### 3. The Wavinza and Uvinza Salt Mining

The migration of Wavinza (vinza) communities from central Africa to Tanganyika and Uvinza in particular. The term means the salt minerals from underground salt rocks. These group landed in Tanganyika and Uvinza in particular from Central Africa passed to Uganda, Rwanda and cross the border and at the first time reached in Kagera, then after was reach in Kigoma region where they establish their rule in their Kingdoms. The Wavinza (Vinza)-speaking people are thought to have migrated from Cameroon. They absorbed bits and piece of culture and tradition from other society they passed, eventually settling in the northwestern area of the Great Lakes in Tanzania as a unique and diverse people. Eventually Uvinza was established, which became a small salt-mining village and the primary place of residence for the Vinza people. Several rich

salt-water springs near Uvinza made it a profitable location for salt-mining operations. The Wavinza communities utilized the brine springs to their advantage in the salt trade, but the mining did not become a large-scale operation until the Vinza adopted a chief as ruler of their clan in 1800. In the late 1800's spreading hostilities with the Germans began to negatively affect the salt trade. The Germans succeeded to control salt mineral sites in Uvinza and all communities found in Uvinza in the period of 1885s and Uvinza village and the present Uvinza district was known as NeuGottorp.

TO\_1990? email accessed on August 18th 2020)

### 4. Oldest Fossil Evidence of Agriculture

Scientists led by Eric Roberts of James Cook University along with researchers from Ohio University through NSF funding, discovered the oldest known examples of "fungus gardens" in 25-million-year-old fossil termite nests in East Africa. Some termite species cultivate fungi in "gardens" in subterranean nests or chambers, helping to convert plant material into a more easily digestible termite food source. Scientists had previously used DNA from modern termites to estimate that termite fungus farming began 25 to 30 million years ago. The fossil evidence from Tanzania confirmed that date, allowing researchers to more accurately

characterize the timing and evolution of the symbiotic relationship between termites and fungi. The relationship likely significantly modified the environment, scientists say. The study results were published on 22 June 2016 in the journal PLOS ONE as part of an ongoing research project on the evolution of the Rukwa Rift Basin in Tanzania.

## About the Author:

Mr. Asukile R. Kajuni has more than forty years of professional field experience in protected area management and planning; policy development and the sustainable management of natural resources. He was recruited as a Senior Ecologist for the Serengeti Ecological Monitoring Programme (SEMP) based in Seronera, Serengeti National Park. He was promoted to become the first TANAPA Manager of Planning and established the TANAPA Planning Unit (TPU) in Arusha; introduced a strategic planning process (SPP) in the preparation of general management plans (GMPs). As Ecologist for SEMP he coordinated all scientists undertaking field research in Serengeti National Park and participated in annual wildlife census conducted in all protected areas countrywide. As Manager of TANAPA Planning Unit he undertook the preparation of five GMPs and developed a Development/Action/Lease Procedures (DALP) adopted by TANAPA as a matter of policy

for strictly regulating procedures and environmental compliance requirements for all new and old development projects in all national parks in the country.

He moved to join international organizations as a Senior Environmental Specialist in the NRM/EG program for about 10 years managing natural resources and tourism development programs with USAID/Tanzania. His personal efforts contributed immensely to his outstanding performance with community based natural resources management (CBNRM) programmes in the Mission - that resulted in the promulgation of WMA Regulations in 2002. He was the lead field person and co-author of a CBNRM Stock taking exercise by USAID in 2002. He pioneered and successfully incorporated integrated water resources management (IWRM) and ecohydrological principles in the NRM portfolio within USAID/Tanzania Mission. He is an expert in community based natural resources management, PA planning specializing in Visitor Use, Visitor Facilities design and planning; interpretive media design and planning; and environmental impact assessment (EIA). He is a registered Environmental Expert (EIA and Audit) under the Environmental Management Act (EMA 2004) through the Tanzania National Environmental Management Council (NEMC).

Some of his other international assignments include an 18 month assignment as Project Manager for the Trans boundary Peace Park for Sierra Leone and Liberia where he facilitated and took the lead in the establishment of Gola Forest National Park in Liberia to support the trans-boundary component with the Gola National Park in Sierra Leone; and a 40 months assignment with the Zambia Wildlife Authority as Protected Area Planning Coordinator; where he established and developed a general management planning process adopted from TANAPA for the Zambia Wildlife Estate and oversaw the preparation of three GMPs for Lower Zambezi, South and North Luangwa national parks. In addition he facilitate the preparation of GMPs for Saiwa Swamp and Lake Bogoria National reserves in Kenya as a Consultant for WWF East Africa Regional Programme Office in Nairobi.

From 2012 to 2018, he was engaged by WWF/Tanzania Country Office in Dar es Salaam as a Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Specialist by coordinating the WMA implementation programme countrywide; the preparation of three GMPs for Ipole, Uyumbu and Mbarangandu WMAs; provision of Monitoring and Evaluation (M &E) technical assistance. Until his retirement in December 2018, he provided technical support and backstopping to the Species as well as the Ruvuma Landscape programmes in planning and implementing CBNRM through the WMA process.

He holds a Diploma in Range Management from Egerton College, Njoro, (Kenya); a BSc and MSc in Range Science from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas (USA). He also has post graduate Certificates in Mathematical Ecology from Institute of Theoretical Physics in Trieste Italy for which he was an Associate for 10 years and EIA from Aberdeen University in Scotland, the UK.

Asukile R. Kajuni  
is natural resources management and tourism expert





# Ravaged by COVID-19, Europe to celebrate Christmas like never before

BRATISLAVA

Overshadowed by COVID-19, Europe saw a Christmas ahead like never before. For the upcoming holidays, a variety of restrictions were in place across hard-hit countries to contain the virus spread, while households hurried up with preparations for holiday feasts.

A recent role played in this gloomy picture was a more contagious strain of the coronavirus found in Britain, adding to the COVID-19 sentiment. There is good news, nevertheless, as the mass vaccination is around the corner, which is likely to be the light at the end of the tunnel.

## EUROPE POISED FOR QUIET CELEBRATION

Usually major holidays in Italy come with a big family meal, but under the strict rules on distancing, gatherings come into question.

Regulations there in force through Christmas and New Year's Day prohibit non-essential travel beyond 30 km from home or between regions. Restaurants and bars are asked to close by 6 p.m., with a nationwide curfew taking effect in four hours.

"This will be a holiday season unlike anything any Italian has experienced," said Luciano Sbraga, director of the research department of Italy's restaurant industry association. "We can't visit family in other regions, and we can't gather together in large groups either in restaurants or at home. Those things are almost the definition of 'holiday' in Italy."

In Britain, restrictions before Christmas were tightened, parts of it with tier 4 rules, further limiting festive options. Residents in tier 4 are not allowed to gather with anyone outside the family during Christmas except for special reasons.

This last-minute change forced many to cancel or change their Christmas plans. James Downs, 31, from Cambridge, said he opted for



other choices for Christmas Day rather than facing "the idea of risking my loved ones."

As his job requires contact with various groups of people, he decided to cancel the plan to see his family in Cardiff, including his clinically vulnerable dad.

"The idea of giving my dad the virus and him being very unwell is something I'm not prepared to risk for the sake of a few months, by which time he might have the vaccine," he said.

Days ahead of the year-end holidays, French authorities and experts urged the public to obey the health rules and avoid a third deadly wave of COVID-19.

A recent Odoxa poll showed that though a Christmas gathering and dinner is still a popular tradition, two-thirds of the respondents planned to meet with fewer people than in previous years, and 72 percent said they would respect the government's recommendations.

For Spaniards, the Christmas holiday of 2020 meant a change in their mindset beyond cheering up the family, as uncertainties

over the pandemic directly affect year-end consumption, according to the Spain-based EAE Business School.

Uncertainties throughout this year, resulting from the virus outbreak, have slowed down consumption in general, since when living in this state people begin to save income and prioritize expenses, Pablo Contreras, a marketing consultant and EAE professor, told Xinhua.

With Christmas in sight, families in Latvia are choosing online reunion, because this year conventional holiday parties are off-limits. Summing up hopes for the future, Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins said this week that health is the most precious gift for this Christmas, urging the public to stay home and not gather to keep the virus at bay.

Despite the limits, a buoying festive mood prevailed in Romania's major supermarkets in recent days, with customers bustling around. As night fell, windows in residential areas glittered with colored lights. COVID-19 seemed to change the way of celebration,

but may well not drown out the yearning for a better tomorrow.

## LOCKDOWN PREVAILS ACROSS CONTINENT

Italians are to spend much of the Christmas and New Year holidays in a nationwide red zone, with restrictions equal to a partial lockdown, to contain the coronavirus, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said in mid-December.

"The situation remains difficult, in Italy and in Europe," Conte said. "The virus continues to circulate everywhere."

In Germany, some border states announced new COVID-19 test obligations for travelers from risk areas. Health Minister Jens Spahn appealed on Wednesday to the public for reduced contacts, citing concerns about strained resources in clinics.

"Many people are talking about how they are going to celebrate Christmas. The medical and nursing staff won't get to celebrate much at all," he said, adding that with their behavior, the citizens are deciding "how things will go on in the intensive care units after

ward."

To bid farewell to the outgoing year, French people love parties with friends or public countdown with fireworks. This winter, however, they are likely to celebrate with little fanfare and under fairly strict rules, as family and private gatherings are considered vectors of virus acceleration.

Davina Ensergueix, a 32-year-old jewelry saleswoman in Paris, got ready for the restrictions. "It's necessary to remain vigilant and make some sacrifices so that things will soon get better and we will find again our lives as before," she said.

Tough restrictions remain in place in Latvia through the winter holiday season, with all private parties and gatherings at home and outside banned, except for those held within a household.

Romanian citizens will spend Christmas under a national curfew, and in some badly-hit cities and towns, residents have to be under lockdown.

Bucharest authorities extended the state of alert for another 30 days last week to empower relevant departments to take measures. They asked residents to observe health regulations, wear face masks when leaving home, keep social distancing, and restrict night travel.

In addition, all kinds of public celebration for Christmas and New Year's Eve are prohibited. To protect the elderly from the virus, the authorities said it is best not to hold family gatherings this Christmas, and that children should avoid visiting their grandparents.

Travel ban, imposed by many European countries after Britain warned of a faster-spreading variant of coronavirus, came as another blow to Britons' Christmas plan.

France on Sunday shut a vital

trade route between the two countries. Big supermarkets in Britain warned that the travel ban and subsequent delays at ports could see shortages of certain fresh foods, including lettuces and citrus fruits coming from the continent.

Under the deal between Britain and France on Wednesday, those traveling for urgent reasons, including hauliers and British citizens with French residency, will be allowed into France, but they need to receive a negative test result less than 72 hours before departure.

All in all, it may be too late for some French and Dutch nationals living in Britain to secure tests in time to get home for Christmas.

## VACCINE AS A RAY OF HOPE

Romania is set to start mass vaccination with many other European Union members on Sunday. President Klaus Iohannis expressed the hope that citizens will be vaccinated as much as possible, stressing that this is the only way to get rid of the pandemic.

"The situation will not change on its own, but we can change it by following the epidemiological safety rules," said Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins, who welcomed the approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine that is expected to become available to Latvia's medics before the end of this year.

In the eyes of Contreras, the EAE professor, the public came to the end of the year exhausted. While many remained optimistic in March, the second wave has dampened their hope and the overall confidence.

"We trust that this situation will change with the arrival of vaccines," said Contreras.

XINHUA

BEIJING

When China's decades-long opening-up met a pandemic on a scale unseen for over a century, the country chose not to slow down or postpone steps to connect its economy further with the rest of the world. The world's second-largest economy has raised hopes for a global recovery with its own accelerating economic rebound.

China has continued to seek greater synergy between the domestic and global economies in 2020, rather than lapsing into deglobalization or an economic decoupling.

In a year many would prefer to have skipped, China has stayed strong despite the worst recession since the Great Depression in the 1930s, and has upheld its commitment to boost economic connectivity as a major global growth engine.

## NEW OPENING-UP HEIGHTS

In December 2019, the Annual Economic Work Conference that outlined China's development priorities and targets for 2020 stressed the importance of greater opening-up. It concluded that the country's opening-up should continue to develop on a larger scale and at a deeper level; foreign investment should be facilitated and better protected; and the country should further shorten its negative list for foreign investment and lower its overall tariff level.

On the first day of 2020, the foreign investment law took effect to better protect foreign investors' interests.

In May, the country unveiled moves to pursue a new development paradigm of "dual circulation," which allows the domestic and overseas markets to reinforce each other, with the domestic market as the mainstay.

In September, the country unveiled three pilot free trade zones amid efforts to accelerate the formation of the new paradigm

# Economic Watch: China pushes forward opening-up despite trials of 2020



through a higher level of opening-up.

In November, the third China International Import Expo sealed greater deals than its previous iteration and saw face-to-face trading boost much-needed confidence in the global flow of goods and services.

Also in that month, China signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, which launched the world's biggest free trade bloc to date.

Earlier this month, the country removed further items from its negative list for market access -- a boon to foreign investors.

And this year's Annual Economic Work Conference put opening-up high on the agenda: The country will aim for more open and inclusive growth that can be shared by all around the world.

## ENGINE FOR GLOBAL RECOVERY

Through consistent moves, China has sent a clear message to the world: The international community must close ranks to jointly respond to this crisis and meet the challenge. It must keep the global economy open in order to promote global recovery.

China has become the only major economy in the world to achieve positive growth in 2020. With its opening-up elevated to a higher level, the Chinese economy is generating positive spillover effects for the world's economic recovery.

Its strong performance this year has shown how much the world needs China to realize a sound global economic recovery in 2021, noted a recent Bloomberg opinion piece that shed light on China's key economic indicators for November.

"The world needs China more than ever. Thank goodness it's showing up. Economic data ... all looked strong and

in line with forecasts," read the article published in mid-December.

Reviewing the global scene, the world's second-largest economy stands out all the more, the article added, calling China "indispensable" as other major economies are still "going the wrong way."

The global economy is projected to grow 4.2 percent next year, with China expected to account for over a third of that growth, said the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in its latest Economic Outlook report.

"The countries and regions with effective test, track and isolate systems, where vaccination will be deployed rapidly, are likely to perform relatively well," read the report.

While the country has emerged from the global recession as the recovery frontrunner, it is also at the forefront of global COVID-19 vaccine

development, with most vaccines undergoing phase-3 clinical trials. In order that the world can vanquish the pandemic as soon as possible, China stands ready to contribute to vaccine accessibility and affordability around the world, in developing countries in particular.

Xulio Rios, director of the Observatory of Chinese Politics in Spain, said China has not only taken domestic measures to control the pandemic and restart its economy but has also sent strong messages promoting cooperation to the international community.

Rios cited meetings such as the G20, APEC and BRICS, as well as the signature of the RCEP agreement, as evidence of China's support for cooperation, noting that China has demonstrated the correct response at this time: strengthening cooperation and multilateralism.

XINHUA



By Liz Kimbrough

THE world is facing an ongoing sixth mass extinction. To curb this human-caused loss of global biodiversity, many countries have made commitments to protect and conserve large areas of land in the coming decades. But the fate of the Indigenous peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendants who live on these lands remains unclear.

A new study conducted by the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) in collaboration with the Campaign for Nature addresses the risks these groups face from exclusionary conservation measures and urges decision-makers to adopt rights-based conservation approaches.

Safeguarding at least 30% of Earth's land surface by 2030 is a goal in the current draft of the U.N.'s Convention on Biological Diversity post-2020 Global Biodiversity framework. However, the current draft does not include protections for the rights more than 1.65 billion Indigenous peoples, local communities and Afro-descendants who live in what are referred to as "important biodiversity conservation areas" or areas that scientists say need protection to prevent biodiversity collapse.

More than 1.65 billion Indigenous peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendants who live in what are referred to as "important biodiversity conservation areas" or areas that scientists say need protection to prevent biodiversity collapse.

Past approaches to creating protected areas have involved relocating people or banning access and traditional use of land from its historical inhabitants. An estimated 136 million people have been displaced in the process of formally protecting land. Using these historical models to expand conservation would be "highly contentious, prohibitively expensive and come with human rights costs that will fuel land conflicts," the report says.

"The conflict and violence around some public protected areas demonstrate that exclusionary approaches can't continue, much less expand to reach global targets," Raina Thiele, who is Dena'ina Athabaskan and Yup'ik and an adviser to the Campaign for Nature on Indigenous issues, said in a statement. "Some conservation organizations recognize this and have shifted practice towards rights-based conservation;

## Study: Human rights-based conservation is key to protect and conserve biodiversity



Women selling non-timber forest produce (wild fruit) in Mumbai Maharashtra.

others now need to follow suit."

As the new post-2020 Global Biodiversity framework draft is negotiated, the 190 countries involved have the opportunity to, according to the report, "actively redress conservation's colonial history, and begin decolonizing conser-

vation," by codifying rights-based conservation approaches.

"There is no 30% protection by 2030 without the leadership of Indigenous peoples and full respect for Indigenous peoples' rights," Thiele said in an interview with Our Daily Planet. "In-

digenous peoples have been the most effective stewards of their lands and of biodiversity since time immemorial. Their sustainable life ways and traditional management systems have proven to be better at protecting the environment than many western conservation approaches. Historically, western conservation approaches have also led to violations of Indigenous rights."

The report stresses the capacity of Indigenous peoples to manage and conserve ecosystems and biodiversity effectively through techniques such as Indigenous fire management, which leads to reduced deforestation. And because an estimated 80% of the planet's biodiversity is found in Indigenous territories, many of their land management techniques are clearly working to safeguard biodiversity.

This new study builds on the findings of a 2018 study by RRI, "Cornered by Protected Areas," which documents human rights abuses, displacements and militarized violence committed in the name of conservation and biodiversity protection.

"Throughout conservation's checkered history, we have seen exclusionary conservation as a gateway to human rights abuses and militarized forms of violence," José Francisco Cali Tzay, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, who endorsed the report's findings, said in a statement. "We now have evidence that this approach is also economically devastating. Paying Indigenous peoples to abandon lands they have historically protected better than governments and private entities is wasteful and furthers past wrongs."

Physically relocating the more than a billion people who live in these important biodiversity conservation areas would cost an estimated \$4 trillion to \$5 trillion, the authors estimate. Not included in this cost estimate are indirect costs such as potential civil disruption, loss of cultural resources, and "the multi-generational trauma of evicting communities whose identities are inextricably linked to their traditional lands and territories."

The cost of recognizing the tenure rights of Indigenous and local communities would be less than 1% of the

cost of relocation, based on data from Peru, Indonesia, India, Nepal and Liberia.

Most of the people who live in these important biodiversity conservation areas are in middle- and low-income countries and more likely to depend on the natural resources from these areas for their livelihoods. In India, for example, 275 million rural poor, including 89 million tribal people, are estimated to depend on non-timber forest products (NTFPs) for a large part of their livelihoods. Exclusion from these areas may put people at risk of livelihood or food insecurity, and these impacts are likely to disproportionately affect rural women.

"This report shows that as far as both the science and economics are concerned, investing in Indigenous peoples' and local communities' land and resource rights should be a primary strategy for reaching global biodiversity targets," said Brian O'Donnell, director of Campaign for Nature.

The authors recommend that organizations, donors and governments adopt the Gold Standard principles, which include strengthening respect, recognition and protection of Indigenous peoples' lands as well as partnerships with Indigenous peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendants; and helping to ensure community rights in the areas of conservation, development and climate.

"The idea that we can save our world without putting indigenous peoples at the heart of the environmental movement is colonialist and racist," Fiore Longo, head of Survival International's conservation campaign, who was not involved in the study, told Mongabay in an email. "If we're serious about putting the brakes on biodiversity loss, the cheapest and best-proven method is to recognize indigenous peoples' land rights."

"Anyone who truly cares about the planet must stop supporting any form of 'conservation' which wounds, alienates and destroys the environment's best allies," Longo added. "It's time to decolonize conservation and recognise indigenous peoples as senior partners in the fight to protect their own land."

## Shedding light on the ocean's 'twilight zone'

By Special Correspondent

Deep below the Atlantic Ocean's surface, glowing objects glide through the inky black depths. On closer inspection, it is clear that they are actually a special group of fish, lanternfish, who get their name from their incredible ability to produce light.

Lanternfish have tiny organs known as photophores, inside which a chemical reaction takes place to give off bioluminescent light. These fish live in one of the largest ecosystems on earth: the mesopelagic zone of the ocean, between 200 and 1 000 meters down. Lanternfish often group together, forming dense layers. In fact, these layers contain so many fish tightly packed together that they can actually reflect sonar beams. For many years, oceanographers believed that the layers of fish were actually the ocean bottom!

This is just one misconception proving how important it is to know about the sea life inhabiting the ocean depths. By gathering knowledge on marine creatures, we can promote the sustainable use of ocean resources and protect the marine environment.

With that in mind, the FAO-implemented EAF-Nansen Program has produced a fully illustrated identification guide to mesopelagic fish of the central and southeast Atlantic Ocean. This in-depth guide details 126 lanternfish and 426 other species of fish from the mesopelagic zone. It was put together by a global team of experts, taxonomists and scientists, along with a scientific illustrator. This guide is just one part of the program's larger research on the ocean's resources and ecosystems.

Whilst mesopelagic fish usually inhabit between 200 and 1 000 meters below the surface of the ocean, they rise nearer to the surface shortly before sunset to feed before travelling back down again to hide from predators. Through this act they contribute to the "biological pump", which takes carbon out of the air and brings it down to the deep ocean. This is just one of the ways in which oceans take in and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Without this pump, the atmospheric concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> would be twice its current value - so mesopelagic fish are pretty important!

Several recent studies have estimated that mesopelagic fish are the largest vertebrate group in the world in terms of biomass. This has attracted the attention of the fishing industry looking into using these resources as an alternative source of fishmeal and oils. It is therefore important to have a thorough understanding of these species to ensure that any increase in fishing is done in a sustainable way to avoid any potential adverse effects.

The necessary foundation of any research activity is accurate identification, but with mesopelagic fish this is a challenging task due to slight differences within and among species, and that their fragile bodies that are easily damaged in nets. These difficulties are what the new guide seeks to overcome.

In early 2019, the guide was put to the test by the scientists aboard the EAF-Nansen Program's research vessel, the Dr Fridtjof Nansen, during a mesopelagic fish survey off the coast of Namibia. The vessel, owned by the Norwegian

## Unique 'climate refuge' for coral discovered off coast of East Africa

By Harry Cockburn

SCIENTISTS in East Africa have discovered a rare ocean refuge for coral where species are still thriving despite the accelerating climate crisis impacting other nearby reefs.

The stronghold, in the Indian Ocean off the coasts of Tanzania and Kenya, teems with life and is described as a "jewel of biodiversity" by researchers - but they warn that looming threats, including coastal development and destructive fishing practices, could cause irreparable harm.

The newly-discovered reef complex is located in a rare "ocean cool spot", which the researchers believe is helping to protect the large populations of corals and marine mammals from the devastating impact of warming sea temperatures.

At first, the scientists, from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), could not understand the reason for the huge abundance of flora and fauna the region attracts and is home to. This part of the Indian Ocean has the greatest concentration of dolphins in east Africa, and fish species previously thought to have become extinct have been found thriving in these cooler waters.

But they now believe the local geology, and in particular Mount Kilimanjaro - a vast dormant volcano 5,895 metres high - is responsible for creating the unique oceanic conditions.

The researchers described the coral sanctuary as being "intimately connected to the shape of eastern Africa".



"Its deep coastal basin was formed thousands of years ago during deglaciation by runoff from Mt Kilimanjaro and the Usambara mountains. Those deep water channels now help provide thermal stability to marine ecosystems, shielding them from the worst of global warming in a pocket of cool and unstressful

They said that as sea temperatures in the Indian Ocean continue to experience more frequent and intense heat spells, the area could become an

increasingly important haven for east Africa's unique marine fauna, including threatened sharks, rays and even the very rare dugong. "Coral sanctuaries are regions where reefs have the best chance to survive climate change. Scientists are scouring the world's oceans to find and protect them," said the study's author and lead WCS coral scientist, Dr Tim McClanahan.

"This area off the coast of Tanzania and Kenya is a small but vibrant basin of marine

biodiversity. Our study shows that while warming waters may devastate surrounding reefs, this area could become an incredibly important sanctuary where marine species big and small will flock to find refuge from climate change.

He added: "If well protected, this key transboundary marine ecosystem will remain a jewel of biodiversity for the entire east African coast." The research is published in *Advances in Marine Biology*.



SPECIAL REPORT

# How a British COVID-19 vaccine went from pole position to troubled start

LONDON

On June 5, researchers at the University of Oxford quietly made a change to a late-stage clinical trial of their COVID-19 vaccine. In an amendment noted in a document marked CONFIDENTIAL, they said they were adding a new group of participants.

The adjustment might seem minor in a large-scale study. But it masked a mistake that would have potentially far-reaching consequences: Many of the United Kingdom trial subjects had inadvertently been given only about a half dose of the vaccine.

The new volunteers would now receive the correct dose. The trial continued.

Much was riding on the Oxford vaccine, a British-led endeavour also involving UK drugs firm AstraZeneca. Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government was desperate for a success story after its early mishandling of the pandemic contributed to one of the world's highest death tolls from COVID-19 - around 65,000 by mid-December. The government has secured 100 million doses.

On Nov. 23, Oxford and AstraZeneca delivered positive news. They announced that the regimen of a half dose followed by a full dose booster appeared to be 90% effective in preventing COVID-19. Two full doses scored 62%. Oxford researchers have said they aren't certain why the half-dose regimen was much more effective.

Johnson called the vaccine team and tweeted his thanks "for their brilliant work." He went on, "These results are incredibly encouraging and a major step forward in our fight against COVID-19."

Oxford and AstraZeneca are now hoping for quick authorization by Britain's regulator. But questions about the trial and the results won't go away.

Some experts say the dosing discrepancy raises doubts about the robustness of the study's findings. And they worry about another acknowledged peculiarity of the study: The half-dose regimen wasn't tested on anyone over 55 - the group considered at high risk from COVID-19. In contrast, a vaccine produced by Pfizer/BioNTech was tested on thousands of people over 65, with an efficacy of 94%.

John Moore, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York, said there needed to be a better understanding of how the Oxford trial unfolded. "When you get corporate and academic scientists saying different things, it doesn't give you the impression of confidence in what they're doing," he



told Reuters. "Was the dosing thing a mistake or not?"

Now a Reuters review of hundreds of pages of clinical trial records, as well as interviews with scientists and industry figures, provides the most detailed account to date of what went wrong with the dosing in the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine study. The review found that Oxford researchers were responsible for what their own clinical trial documents called "a potency miscalculation."

For Oxford and AstraZeneca, the stakes could not be higher. They hope to produce up to three billion doses of the low-cost vaccine by the end of next year, enough to inoculate much of the world, including many of its poorest inhabitants. For months, scientists at Oxford have been busily promoting the experimental vaccine's prospects in bullish terms - beginning even before the first human test subjects were injected with the experimental vaccine.

In an interview that appeared on April 11 in Britain's The Times newspaper, Sarah Gilbert, one of the vaccine's chief researchers at Oxford, said she was 80% certain her team would be able to produce a successful vaccine, possibly as early as September. That was 12 days before a clinical trial to test its safety began.

Oxford didn't answer detailed questions for this story, but provided a statement saying the trials have been "conducted under the strict national, ethical and regulatory requirements." It added that "all trial protocols and trial amendments have been subject to review and approval by the relevant authorities. All safety data have been reviewed regularly" by regulators.

A spokesman for AstraZeneca referred questions about the UK clinical trial to Oxford, which sponsored it. A spokeswoman for Britain's regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), declined to answer questions about the Oxford/AstraZeneca dosing issue. "Our rolling review is ongoing," she said, "so this informa-

tion is currently commercially confidential."

The UK's Department of Health and Social Care declined to comment.

AN EXACT SCIENCE

Vaccines are the world's best hope of ending a pandemic that has claimed more than 1.7 million lives globally. More than 60 COVID-19 vaccine candidates are currently undergoing human trials, according to the World Health Organization.

Vaccines made by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna have already been authorized for use in some countries, including the United States. They use a relatively new technology called messenger RNA (mRNA) that instructs human cells to produce antigens, a type of protein, that stimulate the immune system. Late-stage clinical trials showed both vaccines appeared to be at least 94% effective. Until the UK approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine on Dec. 2, no RNA vaccine had ever received authorization for general use.

The Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine employs a more established technique called viral vector. The vaccine uses a bioengineered version of a harmless common-cold virus found in chimpanzees to instruct human cells to make antigens.

On Dec. 8, Oxford published an interim analysis of its trial results and more than 1,100 pages of supplementary documents in the scientific journal The Lancet. These show that measuring the concentration of viral materials can be tricky, and they shed light on the chain of events leading up to the dosing discrepancy.

Viral vectors are typically produced in bioreactors holding up to 2,000 liters, which are then filtered and purified into a concentrated batch of active substance of just a few liters.

"This is not about measuring pencils, pens, bricks, or fixed objects of a given size," said Lucio Rovati, chief executive of Rottapharm, an Italian

biotech company that is trying to develop a different type of vaccine using a genetic fragment. "It's about live biological products."

According to the Oxford documents, in May researchers received a vaccine delivery from Italy's IRBM/Advent - one of the contract manufacturers Oxford enlisted to complement its own vaccine production. The late-stage trial of the Oxford vaccine was about to begin.

The shipment, batch K.0011, had undergone the Italian company's quality check using an established genetic test - quantitative PCR, or qPCR - to determine viral matter per milliliter.

Oxford ran its own analysis for good measure. The university had been using a different method known as spectrophotometry, which measures viral material in liquids based on how much ultraviolet light the viral matter absorbs.

Oxford's measurement showed that the batch was more potent than the Italian manufacturer had found, the documents show. Oxford trusted its own result and wanted to remain consistent with a measuring tool it had used throughout an earlier trial phase. So it asked Britain's drugs regulator for permission to reduce the volume of vaccine injected into trial participants from the K.0011 batch. Permission was granted.

"The decisions about dosing were all done in discussion with the regulator. So when we started the trial, we had some discrepancies in the measurement of the concentration of virus in the vaccine," Andrew Pollard, the Oxford trial's chief investigator, told Reuters.

A spokeswoman for the regulator declined to discuss when it first became aware of the dosing issue.

"SERENDIPITY"

Trial participants who received shots from the Italian batch displayed milder than normal expected side effects, such as fever and fatigue. AstraZeneca executive vice president Mene Pangalos said the dose was measured incorrectly. "It ended up being half the dose," he told Reuters. He called the mistake "serendipity," given that data analysis later indicated the half dose, followed by a full-dose booster shot, was much more effective than two full doses.

He also recently told the BBC: "There is no doubt I think that we would have run the study a little bit differently if we had been doing it from scratch. But ultimately, it is what it is."

IRBM/Advent told Reuters there was no manufacturing issue with the batch. The company said in a written statement that the measuring mishap was "the result of a change in the testing method" used to confirm the potency of the dose "once the material had been shipped."

The documents published in The Lancet confirm that the error lay with the Oxford researchers. A common emulsifier, polysorbate 80, used in vaccines to facilitate mixing, had interfered with the ultraviolet-light meter that measures the quantity of viral material, according to the documents. As a result, the vaccine's viral concentration was overstated and Oxford ended up administering half doses of vaccine, believing they were full doses.

The documents don't give a detailed timeline, nor do they show that Oxford informed AstraZeneca at the time. But they do show that Oxford contacted the British regulator again, this time seeking approval to change its measuring method to the one used by the Italians, and to figure out how to proceed with a late-stage trial that had begun with participants receiving the wrong dose. The documents don't provide full details of the communication between Oxford and the regulator.

In early June, the regulator gave the green light to continue injecting people with the half-dose, in an effort to keep the trial as large as possible and to try to speed up the results, according to the analysis published in The Lancet. The regulator also ruled that Oxford must add another test group to receive the full dose, in accordance with its original plan to test the safety and efficacy of full doses.

"We went back and discussed it again with the regulators and agreed with them," said Pollard, the Oxford study's chief investigator.

Ultimately, 1,367 trial participants - none of them over 55 - received the half-dose/full-dose regimen. Two full doses were given to 4,440 adult participants, from all age groups.

The MHRA, Britain's regulator, is expected to decide soon whether to approve the vaccine. The agency is headed by June Raine, a doctor who trained in general medicine at Oxford. The university's website shows she has made donations, given talks and performed volunteer work for the university's Somerville College, which she attended.

The MHRA said that before any decision on the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is made, Raine "will ensure, for complete transparency" her interactions with Oxford as an alumnus are declared. It added that "none of these ties are of a nature that could give rise to a conflict requiring recusal."

CONTRADICTIONS

Deep within the more than 1,100 pages of supplemental appendices published in The Lancet appeared a description of the dosing discrepancy - "a potency miscalculation." That admission is contained in a "Statistical Analysis Plan" by Oxford and AstraZeneca dated Nov. 17.

Six days later, Oxford and AstraZeneca announced the interim results of their clinical trials in the UK and in Brazil. "Oxford University breakthrough on global COVID-19 vaccine," was the headline of an Oxford press release.

AstraZeneca's news release was more muted. "Two different dosing regimens demonstrated efficacy with one showing a better profile," it stated.

In interviews about the results with Reuters and the New York Times, AstraZeneca's Pangalos spoke of "serendipity," a "useful mistake" and a "dosing error."

But the firm's chief executive officer, Pascal Soriot, told Bloomberg: "People call it a mistake - it was not a mistake." A spokesman for AstraZeneca declined to comment on the statements.

Meanwhile, the two scientists leading Oxford's development of the vaccine - Sarah Gilbert and Adrian Hill - suggested that the half-dose was not administered by mistake. They didn't provide evidence. Gilbert, an Oxford vaccinology professor, said it was normal for researchers to look at different dose levels during vaccine trials. "It wasn't a mix-up in dosing," she told the Financial Times in an article published on Nov. 27.

A few days later, Hill told Reuters it was a conscious decision by researchers to administer a lower dose. "There had been some confusion suggesting that we didn't know we were giving a half dose when we gave it - that is really not true," he said.

Gilbert and Hill together have about a 10% stake in a private biotech firm called Vaccitech that was spun out of Oxford University, according to a filing with Companies House, the UK's companies registry, dated Oct. 29. According to a spokeswoman for Vaccitech, the company transferred its rights to the vaccine to Oxford University's research commercialization arm in exchange for a share of the revenue. "If the vaccine is successful then all shareholders and investors in the company could potentially indirectly benefit," she wrote in an email.

Hill and Gilbert didn't respond to detailed questions for this article.

The conflicting explanations of what went wrong have drawn criticism from some experts. "Personally, I can say that I think their vaccine is much better than their communication," said Guido Rasi, who until last month was executive director of the European Medicines Agency, the European Union's regulator. He said the agency eventually will evaluate the trial data.

'AHEAD OF THE WORLD'

For months, the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine was described by officials and in the media as the front-runner in the global race to produce a COVID-19 vaccine.

Britain's health minister, Matt Hancock, told a press conference in April that Britain was "at the forefront of the global effort" to find a vaccine.

On June 26, the World Health Organization's chief scientist, Soumya Swaminathan, said at a press conference that Oxford's vaccine was probably the world's leading candidate.

Five days later, the then head of Britain's vaccine procurement program, Kate Bingham, told a parliamentary committee: "Oxford is ahead of the world in that it is the most advanced vaccine anywhere."

Some Oxford scientists did little to dampen the enthusiasm. Asked at the same science and technology parliamentary committee on July 1 whether the world would have to struggle through the coming winter without a vaccine, Gilbert said, "I hope we can improve on those timelines and come to your rescue."

At the end of July, she alluded to competing vaccine efforts. In an interview on the Royal Society of Biology's website, she said of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine: "If this doesn't work, I don't think anything will work."

Her main partner on the project, Hill, was equally bullish. On May 15, he told Reuters the Oxford/AstraZeneca candidate is "almost certainly the best single dose rapid-response vaccine." He dismissed as "total unknowns" and a "wild card" the vaccines using mRNA technology, such as Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna, which have since published results showing they were both at least 94% effective at preventing COVID-19. The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is already being distributed in the millions in the United States and the UK.

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 160 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: ASS,  
4 Letters: YULE, MASS, OMEN, WASH, PASS, SPAN, REEF, HEED, TRAP,  
5 Letters: MONEY, SKILL, DAILY, MAYOR, HAMAS, WATER, SHADE  
6 Letters: MOSCOW, NOISES, UGANDA, SHARES, ASMARA, CAREER, REMAIN  
7 Letters: SANGOMA, ENGLISH,

WORD-FIT

CROSSWORD

CLUES: Across  
1. Tanzania's Capital  
6. Nation created in 1948  
7. Christian festival celebrating the resurrection of Christ  
9. turn away  
10. Second largest city in Tanzania  
11. step in a process  
13. mischievous person  
16. skilful  
17. large round citrus fruit  
19. sell goods by going from place to place  
20. utter words

Down:  
1. images seen while you sleep  
2. a place far away  
3. the mixture of gases surrounding the earth  
4. personal, secret  
5. beloved  
8. consisting protein that is produced by a living organism  
12. an off break bowled with an apparent leg-break action  
13. a surface which is higher on one side than the other  
14. keep away from someone  
15. demonstrate by evidence  
18. a donkey



## BUSINESS

## APPRECIATION

## Reopening of bars lifts beer taxes to near pre-Covid level

## NAIROBI

Reopening of bars and a tax raise in line with changes in inflation helped lift October excise duty collections to near pre-Covid levels, latest data from the Treasury show.

Excise duty receipts amounted to Sh17.1 billion in the month, according to the revenue statistics the Treasury shared with the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), the highest since March when Kenya shut bars, pubs and night clubs. The March 22 closure, which was part of measures to control the spread of Covid-19, resulted in significant disruption of alcohol value chain that heavily depended on bars and clubs.

The decision to reopen bars and allow restaurants to resume sale of alcohol from September 29 was followed by an increment in excise duty by 4.94



**Data shows the taxman had received Sh64.45 billion, or a third of the revised full-year target, in the first four months of the financial year through October compared with Sh67.64 billion for a similar period a year ago.**

percent from October 1 in line with the average inflation rate for the year to June. Alcohol and cigarettes, largely sold in bars and restaurants, are the largest contributors to the excise duty receipts, accounting for more than three quarters of the collections.

The Kenya Revenue Authority, for instance, charges Sh265.50, Sh198.34 and Sh116.08 per litre of spirit, wine and beer, respectively. A stick of cigarette with filter attracts a duty of Sh3.31. The excise duty receipts in October were, however, 4.57 percent lower than a similar month in 2019 when Sh17.92 billion collections were reported.

The year-on-year fall occurred despite tax now being applied to non-alcoholic beverages like bottled water and juices unlike a year ago, partly reflecting the impact of Coronavirus restrictions on social gatherings such as weddings and burials on consumption of soft drinks.

Treasury secretary Ukur Yatani in September lowered the excise duty target for the current year ending June 2021 to Sh195.6 billion from Sh241.4 billion on the back of prolonged restrictions of social gatherings.

Data shows the taxman had received Sh64.45 billion, or a third of the revised full-year target, in the first four months of the financial year through October compared with Sh67.64 billion for a similar period a year ago.

## STUNNING

## A 9-year-old made more than \$29 million on YouTube this year



The Kaji family has been able to parlay their YouTube success into hundreds of millions in licensing, branding, and TV deals.

## TEXAS

A 9-year-old has topped out the list of top-earning YouTube stars this year, making more than \$29 million, according to Forbes. And this is the third year in a row that he's stood at the top of the list. Others on the list include Rhet and Link (third with \$20 million), and controversial beauty guru Jeffrey Star (10th with \$15 million).

The third-grader, who lives with his family in Texas, gained notoriety for his unboxing videos when he was just four. A video of

him unboxing and reviewing toys from the movie "Cars" went viral and garnered more than a billion views and Kaji's "Ryan's World" channel took off from there.

Unboxing videos, where kids review toys or games, have become enormously popular on YouTube, and thousands are uploaded to the platform each month. Ryan's success, say his parents Shion and Loanna Kaji, is because he's able to create a special bond with his viewers.

"I feel like Ryan's relationship with his fans is very unique and different from talent on TV,"

Shion told Business Insider earlier this year. "His relationship with his fans is more of a friendship where every time we meet Ryan's fans and their family, they always mention, 'Oh, my son or daughter thinks they are Ryan's best friend.'"

The Kaji family has been able to parlay their YouTube success into lucrative licensing, branding, and TV deals. The family now runs a 30-person production company called Sunlight Entertainment, which helps them produce the videos.

According to Forbes, the Ryan's World name has been licensed

to more than 5,000 products. The family also produced a line of merchandise for Walmart, and Ryan has his own shows on Nickelodeon and Roku.

This Thanksgiving a float of Ryan as his superhero alter ego, bounded through the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. And in early December, he launched a virtual world on the popular videogame platform Roblox. All told, Kaji's brand empire is said to be worth around \$500 million according to the Wall Street Journal.

## IMPRESSIVE

## Meet the 9-year-old fashion designer who stole the show at Dubai Fashion

## DUBAI

The phrase "young talent" took on new meaning at the recent Dubai World Fashion Week, when Vidha Karva, 9, presented her debut collection on the runway.

Although still studying at Indus International School in Pune, India, Karva sent out a collection of eveningwear that focused on shimmer and volume in jewel tones. The designer even walked the runway with one of her models, showing off one of her own designs. Showcasing her collection as part of the International Kids / Teens Fashion Runway, Karva was introduced by event organisers Vivz Fashion School as the "youngest fashion designer in the world."

Her tender years meant that while the ideas are all Karva's, she had to enlist the help of her mother to bring them to realisation. "It was my dream to be a designer, and right now I imagine the designs, and my mother helps with giving them shape on paper," she explains. The event was Karva's debut



Vidha Karva, the nine-year-old eveningwear designer from Pune, India, at Dubai World Fashion Week.

as a designer, and the launch of her label, Vidha Karva Couture. Buoyed by the positive response, the girl now has her sights set wider afield.

"It was a big turning point for me and I received great feedback. Now, I will start to work on my next collection, and am excited to take the line to London and Milan as well," Karva says. Despite her global ambitions, the budding talent is keen to highlight important issues, as well as help promote Indian expertise. "I would like to promote sustainable and Indian fabrics through my designs," she says.

As well as helping her with the work, Karva credits her mother as the inspiration behind her foray into fashion. "My mom has been my inspiration. She used to make nice dresses for me and I got inspired to become a designer," she says. She lists Hannah Montana, Jennifer Aniston and Sonam Kapoor as her style muses, and confessed that she would love to one day dress Priyanka Chopra Jonas. Self-taught to date, Karva admits that she still had a lot to learn, and that any knowledge has been largely gleaned online. "I will sign up for a course, but whatever I have learnt to date is via YouTube," she explains.



A reveller at Explorer Tavern.

## RECOMMENDATION

## New research shows the importance of taking blood pressure in both arms

## LONDON

Taking blood pressure has become common practice - whether a patient is being admitted to hospital or just going for a check-up at the doctor - as it allows healthcare professionals to check for hypertension.

Healthcare professionals should consider doing readings for both arms from now on, as a recent study in the journal Hypertension found that a big difference in blood pressure between arms increases death risk.

International guidelines for

reading blood pressure do advise that readings should be done from both arms, yet this instruction is still widely ignored. This study was the first to conclude that a large difference in inter-arm blood pressure could increase a patient's mortality risk.

Dr Chris Clark, lead author of the study, stated, "Checking one arm then the other with a routinely used blood pressure monitor is cheap and can be carried out in any healthcare setting, without the need for additional or expensive equipment. "Whilst international guidelines

currently recommend that this is done, it only happens around half of the time at best, usually due to time constraints. Our research shows that the little extra time it takes to measure both arms could ultimately save lives."

## Stroke, heart attacks and death

For the purpose of this study, the researchers "searched for studies recording bilateral blood pressure and outcomes, established agreements with collaborating authors, and created a single international dataset." This included

inter-arm blood pressure difference data and individual patient data from 24 different studies merged together. From the data collected, the researchers looked at the number of deaths, strokes and heart attacks that occurred over ten years.

## How to read blood pressure

The unit for measuring blood pressure is millimetres of mercury (mmHg) with a reading of two numbers: the systolic (upper maximum) and the diastolic (lower minimum). A high systolic reading indicates hypertension, whereas a

big difference in systolic readings between two arms could indicate a narrowing of arteries (often atherosclerosis).

Findings of the study concluded that differences in inter-arm systolic readings increase all-cause mortality, cardiovascular mortality and cardiovascular events. "We've long known that a difference in blood pressure between the two arms is linked to poorer health outcomes. The large numbers involved in the INTERPRESS-IPD study help us to understand this in more detail. Managing High Blood Pressure

If your doctor says you have high blood pressure, you need to get it under control. It's important for your health. So take it seriously. Prepare to make some changes in your lifestyle. Medications may help, too. "It tells us that the higher the difference in blood pressure between arms, the greater the cardiovascular risk, so it really is critical to measure both arms to establish which patients may be at significantly increased risk. Patients who require a blood pressure check should now expect that it's checked in both arms, at least once," said Dr Clark.



## PASSION

# American family's mission to share Africa's truth

KIGALI

Before they began a life of travel around the world, Aaron and Michelle Jackson say they have been nomads all their lives, having lived in different parts of the United States of America. 2015, however, marked their global nomadic life when together with their daughter Ala Jackson, they moved to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, where Michelle had just acquired a job offer.

They would later move to Cambodia, where they lived for a year, before relocating to Rwanda at the start of 2018. "Mum and dad," Ala says, "first came to Rwanda for mum's birthday anniversary and they immediately fell in love with the country. When they came back to Cambodia, they were telling me stories about Rwanda and we just decided to move here."

Aaron is quick to chip in: "We met a lot of people who introduced us to their families and friends. They were very welcoming, which was the first time this was happening in our travels. The country is clean and organised. We had been travelling to many beautiful countries but Rwanda just blew our minds and for us that has been our cultural shock."

"So many things drew us to this place," Michelle adds, "I loved to see how many people are like me, a lot of people are very talented, people as young as 19, doing business. I am very fascinated by the progress. It is good to see how people are just so happy with themselves. They have a healthy level of self-pride. I love it! Everybody just loves their country and it's stunning!" The Jacksons love and live for travel. As an educator, travelling for Michelle is about learning things, while Aaron and Ala enjoy meeting new people and eating good



The Jacksons donning the Rwandan traditional attire.

food.

"Most people think teachers don't learn, we learn a lot. Travelling teaches you so much about the world, and opens your mind to so many opportunities and enables you to connect with people from different cultures, learning different languages and eating different kinds of food.

"It also helps us unlearn some of the negative things we have heard, especially on the continent of Africa. We get to see with our eyes and look at things

through our own lens and express our truth with everybody else," Michelle says.

In between their relocations, they have travelled to 14 countries where they take videos and pictures that they share on their social media pages. Their first trip to Africa in 2015 was to Zanzibar which is when they began video blogging for their almost 11,000 subscribers, and they have not looked back since. "We wanted to show other people who don't travel that there is a vast world out there

that is beautiful and what the reality is right now.

"Our whole story is just trying to get the truth to everyone. In the West, there's this big misconception about what Africa is and our aim was to show the world the truth of what Africa is right now and this beautiful country of Rwanda, and letting our sisters and brothers in the Diaspora know that it is a beautiful and progressive place.

There are some people who relocated to Rwanda just from watching our videos and I am

very humbled because we have a lot of people travelling and seeing the beauty that they don't show on TV. "And we have seen entire families, seniors and businessmen coming to Africa because of our stories and we are humbled," Michelle says.

Aaron adds that growing up, he didn't know that Africa had cities. He remembers as a little baby seeing images of babies in Africa "with a big stomach and flies on their eyes. It was sickness, famine and hunger, that's all they showed. All you see on TV is Africans living in huts, and people ask if they have shoes and clothes."

He believes that content creators are making a big impact on the way people see the continent of Africa. The more they tell their stories, the more they share the truth. The family is very consistent in creating content but outside that, Michelle is an educator who also creates content for educators worldwide, while Aaron is into animation that he sells his online.

15-year-old Ala, is a gamer and visual artist, doing painting and digital art. As a student, she also home schools online at an American school, which makes it possible for her to travel. For Michelle, "these times have taught us to always create a plan B, all the way to Z. Don't put all your eggs in one basket, if you're creative in something, do business out of it.

"We also learned that you have to pay attention to the signs and rules of every country, it's for people's protection, that you don't just film anywhere you like," Aaron adds. The Jacksons also recently registered their local business that deals with sales and promotion for businesses, homes, products and events.

## OUTSTANDING

## Ground-breaking cover star Paloma Elsesser named Model of the Year

LONDON

Game-changing model Paloma Elsesser, 28, has been unveiled as the winner of 2020's Model of the Year Industry Award. Elsesser, who has walked for the likes of Prabal Gurung, Fendi, Alexander McQueen and Salvatore Ferragamo, was chosen by a judging panel of 250 industry insiders at the annual Models.com awards.

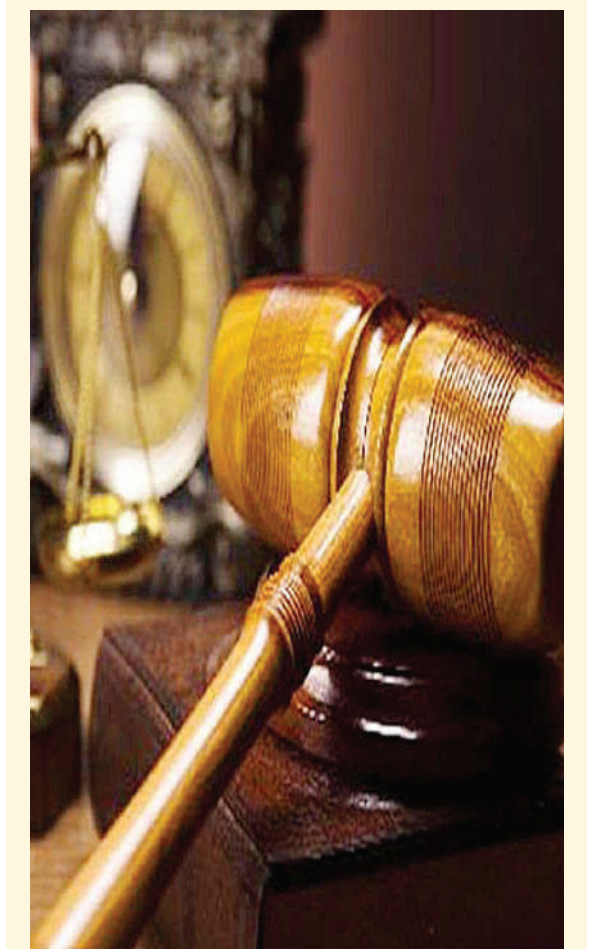
At a UK size 18 (US 14), Elsesser is breaking the mould of the traditional model shape of a UK 8 (US 4). Yet by being named as the winner, Elsesser is helping break down rigid body-image stereotypes that have too long dogged the fashion industry. Born in Switzerland, the American-British model has graced the covers of many global magazine titles, including US Vogue, and is widely regarded as shaking up the industry.

This latest accolade will cement her place in the upper echelons of the fashion world. South Korean model Sora Choi bagged the readers' vote for Model of the Year, while the panel-selected runner-up was 2019's overall winner, Adut Akech.

Readers, meanwhile, opted for Bella Hadid as runner-up. Interestingly, of these four women, three are from categories that would have previously been regarded as unconventional, showing that the fashion industry is finally breaking away from its own rigid thinking and widely accepting diversity.

Another "plus-size: model - Jill Kortleve - picked up the Breakout Star Award. In the men's division, Alton Mason won Model of the Year, nominated by both the industry and readers, while Malick Bodian and Alpha Dia picked up the runner-up Awards. In a huge step forward, all three men are black.

For the first time, the ceremony featured a Lifetime Achievement Award that went, not too surprisingly, to industry veteran Naomi Campbell. The British supermodel has worked for more than three decades, after being discovered in 1986. She appeared on the cover of British Elle just shy of her 16th birthday. She was the readers' choice for Model of the Year in 2019.



Paloma Elsesser has won the 2020 Model of the Year Industry Award.

## PENALTY

## Family awarded Sh566,248 for girl's death at hotel pool

NAIROBI

The High Court has awarded a family, whose nine-year-old girl drowned in a swimming pool at Mt Kenya Leisure Lodge Nyeri during Christmas Day celebrations in 2015, Sh566,248.

The chief magistrate's court in Nyeri had initially awarded the family of Hellen Njoki Sh696,920 but the hotel appealed leading to a reduction of the damages by justice Hedwig Ong'undi. In her judgment, Justice Ong'undi said inasmuch as the hotel had a duty of care for its customers the deceased's parent and guardian had a role to play to ensure her safety. The judge increased the parents' portion of liability from 20 per cent as held by the magistrate to 35 per cent.

"My conclusion is that the appeal succeeds to the extent of apportioning the percentage of liability and the one to the deceased goes to the guardians." The judge noted that there was no evidence to



Kenyan Judge Hedwig Ong'undi.

prove existence or non-existence of a life guard at the swimming pool.

"One would expect such a person to

be an employee of the appellants hence there should be documentation to that effect," said Justice Ong'undi. The lodge's

manager had claimed that there was a disclaimer and various rules displayed at the pool area. But the judge found that he did not tender any proof of the same.

"The circumstances of this case are such that the deceased was a victim of lapse of care from the people who were responsible for her. Accordingly, I am not convinced that she should have been assigned any liability.

"In the same breadth, a guardian should be alert when dealing with minors in circumstances that would compromise their safety. Her uncle readily conceded that there was a lapse on his part," said the judge. The minor's father, Nicholas Kogi, said they arrived at the lodge at around 4pm and registered the vehicle at the gate.

They settled at a table next to the pool and he paid Sh200 for the deceased to swim. He looked for a waiter to serve their table and then entered the washroom. Upon his exit, he heard shouts of life saver! life saver! and hurried to the pool.

He found his daughter lying next to the pool and his cousin Steve Njogu trying to resuscitate her.

## ADVISE

## Drinking cocoa may boost brain power, study suggests

BIRMINGHAM

Researchers of the University of Birmingham recently revealed that consuming high levels of flavanols could be highly beneficial for cognitive function.

Flavanols are a group of compounds found in a range of plant-based foods and drinks, such as cocoa, tea, berries and apples. Poor nutrition and being unfit wear out the vascular system, and as a

result, speed up cognitive ageing, which may lead to dementia.

Existing evidence shows that cocoa flavanols protect against vascular disease and death related to heart disease. All the effects of flavanols on the brain are, however, not yet fully understood. This study, published in Scientific Reports, is one of the first of its kind, testing the effects that the consumption of flavanols have on the brain.

Drinking cocoa for brain power

The study included 18 healthy male participants who were subjected to a procedure that challenged blood circulation in the brain, leading to elevated levels of carbon dioxide in the blood (known as hypercapnia).

The levels of blood oxygenation of the participants were tracked during the procedure to see the brain's response to the increase in carbon dioxide. The participants then completed a range of cognitive

tests that became increasingly difficult.

On two occasions, participants completed a cognitive test before and after consuming a cocoa drink, of which only one contained flavanols. Lead author, Dr Catarina Rendeiro, added, "We used cocoa in our experiment, but flavanols are extremely common in a wide range of fruits and vegetables."

Researchers found that when the participants drank the drink

containing flavonoids, they responded better to hypercapnia because the oxygen levels in their blood were higher. The results of the cognitive tests completed by the participants show that when they drank the flavanol-enriched drink, they performed the more difficult tasks 11% faster and more accurately.

"Our results showed a clear benefit for the participants taking the flavanol-enriched drink - but only when the task became

sufficiently complicated," Dr Rendeiro stated. Time has not been kind to Agostinho Neto. In this town in Sao Tome and Principe, a small archipelago off the coast of Gabon off Africa's western coast and once the world's leading cocoa exporter, former workers of colonial cocoa and coffee plantation. The researchers also said that the outcomes of this study are helping them to guide people about the dietary benefits of certain foods.



## REVIEW

## Barack Obama shares his top films, TV shows, songs and books of 2020

## WASHINGTON

Whatever Twitter, Spotify and YouTube can do, Barack Obama can do too. As the big tech platforms release their most popular lists for 2020, so too has the former US president, who took to social media to share his favourite songs, TV shows, books and movies of the year.

Obama, who also got to celebrate his former vice president Joe Biden winning the 2020 US election, shared his big and small screen highlights of 2020, as well as the books he's read and the music he's been listening to, showing off his diverse tastes. Here's a look at all of his top picks for the year:

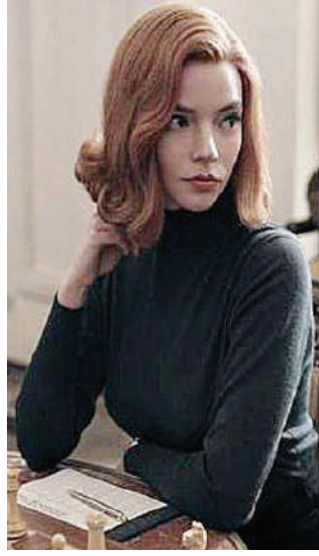
When it comes to movies, potential Oscar frontrunners loomed large on Obama's list, with Mank and Nomadland making the cut, as well as Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, which was one of the last films Black Panther star Chadwick Boseman made before his untimely death in August.

"Like everyone else, we were stuck inside a lot this year, and

with streaming further blurring the lines between theatrical movies and television features, I've expanded the list to include visual storytelling that I've enjoyed this year, regardless of format," tweeted Obama.

Also on the list was Disney Pixar animation, Soul, which has been garnering rave reviews from critics, and Let Him Go, which stars Kevin Costner and Diane Lane and is based on real events. Obama also showed his love for foreign films with Russia's Beanpole on the list, as well as documentaries, recommending Time in which a woman called Fox Rich fights for the release of her husband, Rob, who is serving a 60-year sentence in prison.

On the small screen, like everyone else who has seen it, the former president chose Netflix's chess drama The Queen's Gambit as a highlight, alongside Better Call Saul, Amazon Prime hit, The Boys, and the BBC drama I May Destroy You, about a young woman who seeks to rebuild her life after being raped. He also gave a shout out



Netflix show 'The Queen's Gambit' and a track by Puerto Rican rapper and singer, Bad Bunny made former US president Barack Obama's list of his favourite books, shows, movies and music of 2020.

to the acclaimed Michael Jordan documentary, The Last Dance.

When it comes to his music highlights of 2020, the former President showed some eclectic taste, with Megan Thee Stallion, J Cole, Bob Dylan and Phoebe Bridgers all on the list. Bad Bunny, the Puerto Rican rapper and

singer who was named Spotify's Most Streamed Artist of the Year was on the list with his track, La Dificil, along with the late Mac Miller's Blue World, Jhene Aiko's Summer 2020, and Franchise by Travis Scott featuring Young Thug and MIA.

"Here are some of my favorite

songs of the year," he wrote on Twitter. "As usual, I had some valuable consultation from our family music guru, Sasha, to put this together. I hope you find a new song or two to listen to." And with plenty of tunes influenced by his daughters, there were also some oldies on the Obama playlist

with Bruce Springsteen's Ghosts and Bob Dylan's Goodbye Jimmy Reed.

When it comes to books, the former president, who recently released his newest tome, A Promised Land, a collection of presidential memoirs, showed an appreciation for both fiction and non-fiction.

Ayad Akhta's Homeland Elegies, drawn from the author's experience as the son of Muslim immigrants living in the US made the list, along with Anne Applebaum's Twilight of Democracy which was also named a best book of the year by both The Washington Post and The Financial Times.

Kawai Strong Washburn's debut novel, Sharks in the Time of Saviours, meshes the legends of Hawaiian gods into a family saga, while in How Much of These Hills is Gold, author C Pam Zhang follows two children of Chinese labourers as they take their father's body on a journey through the California hills in the middle of the Gold Rush.

"As 2020 comes to a close, I wanted to share my annual lists of favorites. I'll start by sharing my favorite books this year, deliberately omitting what I think is a pretty good book - A Promised Land - by a certain 44th president," he added, with a cheeky bit of self-promotion. "I hope you enjoy reading these as much as I did."

## ACTIVISM

## 'Sesame Street' unveils first Rohingya Muppets Noor, Aziz 6 yrs old twins

## LONDON

Sesame Street has introduced its first Rohingya Muppets - Noor and Aziz, 6-year-old twins who will appear in educational videos shown in the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh. At least 700,000 Rohingya refugees live in Cox's Bazar after fleeing persecution in Myanmar since a military crackdown that started in August 2017. Half of those living in the camp are children.

Sesame Workshop, the non-profit organisation behind the children's TV show, unveiled their newest characters on Thursday, highlighting their role in providing early education to children and families. Noor, short for Noor Yasmin, is a curious and confident young girl who is constantly finding ways to understand her world. "No problem is too big for her to try to solve," is how she is described.

Her brother Aziz has a creative streak, eager to perform and weave stories about kings, queens and animals. Though his imaginative mind may wander, Noor helps him focus. He also likes helping out with household chores. The two siblings speak the Rohingya language. "These are two very special Sesame Muppets - for most Rohingya children, Noor and Aziz will be the very first characters in media who look and sound like them," Sherrie Westin, president of social impact for the Sesame Workshop, said.

She added that "extensive research and input from Rohingya families" were part of developing the Muppets and their stories. She has also travelled to the refugee camps as part of her work in creating the characters.

An ethnic and Muslim minority in Myanmar, the Rohingya people

have been the target of systemic discrimination and violence in the South-East Asian country for decades. The military crackdown and subsequent mass departure in 2017 resulted in the deaths of at least 730 children under the age of 5, according to a survey by Doctors Without Borders. The show by Sesame Workshop aims to help alleviate the stress and trauma faced by children and caregivers who have survived and endure in the camps.

Noor and Aziz will appear with other Sesame Street characters such as Elmo and Louie, Elmo's father. Through playful video segments, the show will explore subjects such as social-emotional learning, math, science, as well as health and safety.

It is not the first time that Sesame Workshop has developed an initiative for refugee children. Last year, an Arabic version of Sesame Street featuring main characters Jad and Basma was created for an educational learning programme aimed at reaching displaced children in Syria. Currently, the refugees in Cox's Bazar are not only grappling with displacement, but the spread of the Covid-19. The first case of coronavirus in the camp was detected in May.

This month, authorities in Bangladesh have begun moving a group of 1,500 Rohingya people from Cox's Bazar to Bhasan Char, an island built to house refugees. Concerns from the UN have been raised about this plan, however, as living on the uninhabited island would make it more difficult for humanitarian agencies to reach the refugees. The current ruling party in Myanmar, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, have yet to address plans for the Rohingya people's right to return.



Noor and Aziz are the first Rohingya Muppets created by Sesame Street.



## ITV

## SUNDAY 20 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI  
6:40 Kumekucha  
7:00 Habari  
8:00 Al Jazeera  
09:00 Watoto Wetu  
10:00 S/Prog: Karate Championship Live  
16:30 ITV Top 10  
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo  
18:00 Jiji Letu  
18:15 Mapishi  
18:30 Matukio ya wiki  
19:30 Igizo: Mtego  
20:00 Habari  
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko  
21:05 Mizengwe  
21:30 Mjue Zaidi  
22:14 Bongo Movie: Kizaizai  
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin

## MONDAY 21 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI  
6:40 Kumekucha  
7:30 HABARI  
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo  
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo  
9:30 Isidingo  
10:00 Watoto wetu  
11:00 ITV Top 10 rpt  
12:00 Al Jazeera News  
12:30 Mjue rpt  
13:00 Mjue Zaidi  
13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt  
14:10 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
15:00 Meza huru  
16:30 Watoto Wetu  
17:00 The Base  
18:00 Jiji Letu  
18:10 Aibu yako rpt  
18:15 Mapishi  
18:45 Kesho leo  
19:00 Afa ya Jamii  
19:30 Isidingo  
20:00 Habari  
21:05 Dakika 45  
22:00 Kipindi Maalum: TADB  
22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
23:00 The Base  
00:00 Al Jazeera  
02:00 DWTV

## TUESDAY 22 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI  
6:40 Kumekucha  
7:30 HABARI  
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo  
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo  
9:30 Isidingo  
10:00 Watoto wetu rpt  
10:30 Jungu kuu rpt  
11:00 The Base rpt  
12:00 Al Jazeera  
12:30 Afa ya Jamii  
13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Ripoti  
13:45 Shika Bamba rpt  
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
15:00 Meza huru  
16:30 Watoto wetu  
17:00 The Base

## 18:00

Jiji Letu  
18:10 Yu wapi  
18:15 Mapishi rpt  
18:30 Uchumi na biashara  
19:00 Jarida la wanawake  
19:30 Isidingo  
20:00 Habari  
21:00 Tanzania yetu  
21:30 Chetu ni chetu  
22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
23:00 The Base  
00:00 DWTV

## WEDNESDAY 23 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI  
6:40 Kumekucha  
7:30 HABARI  
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo  
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo  
9:30 Isidingo  
10:00 Watoto Wetu rpt  
10:30 Uchumi na biashara rpt  
11:00 The Base rpt  
12:00 Al Jazeera  
12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt  
13:00 Dakika 45 rpt  
13:50 Kipindi Maalum: TADB  
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
15:00 Meza huru  
16:30 Watoto Wetu  
17:00 The Base  
18:00 Jiji Letu  
18:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang  
19:00 Ijue Sheria  
19:30 Isidingo  
20:00 Habari  
21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco  
21:30 Kipindi Maalum: Ripoti  
22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
23:00 The Base  
00:00 Al Jazeera  
2:00 DWTV

## THURSDAY 24 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI  
6:40 Kumekucha  
7:30 HABARI  
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo  
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo  
9:30 Isidingo  
10:00 Watoto  
10:30 Shamba lulu rpt  
11:00 The Base rpt  
12:00 Al Jazeera  
12:30 Ijue sheria rpt  
13:00 Ripoti Maalum rpt  
13:30 Tanzania yetu  
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
15:00 Meza huru  
16:30 Watoto Wetu  
17:00 The Base  
18:00 Jiji Letu  
18:15 Mapishi rpt  
18:30 Jagina  
19:00 Usafiri wako  
19:30 Isidingo  
20:00 Habari  
21:00 Malumbano ya hoja  
23:00 The Base  
00:30 DWTV

## FRIDAY 25 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI

## 6:40

Kumekucha  
HABARI  
7:30 Al Jazeera  
8:00 DWTV News  
09:00 Isidingo  
10:00 Watoto wetu  
10:30 Usafiri wako  
11:00 The Base  
12:00 Al Jazeera  
12:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanesco  
13:00 Jagina rpt  
13:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt  
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
15:00 Movie:  
16:30 Watoto Wetu  
17:00 Kipindi Maalum: Kikristu na Krismasi  
18:00 Jiji Letu  
18:15 Mizengwe rpt  
18:30 Ibadu ya kislamu  
19:00 Shamba lulu  
19:30 Isidingo  
20:00 Habari  
21:05 Kipima Joto  
23:00 The Base  
00:00 DWTV

## SATURDAY 26 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI  
6:40 Kumekucha  
7:00 Habari  
8:00 Al Jazeera  
9:00 Watoto wetu  
10:00 Shika Bamba 5  
10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt  
11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt  
12:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang  
13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin  
16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe  
16:20 Igizo: Mtego  
17:00 Shamsham za Pwani  
18:00 Jiji Letu  
18:15 Korean drama: Hwarang  
19:00 Jungu Kuu  
19:30 Shika Bamba  
20:00 Habari  
21:00 Art and lifestyle  
21:30 ITV TOP 10  
22:10 Isidingo rpt  
00:30 DWTV

## SUNDAY 27 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi  
6:00 HABARI  
6:40 Kumekucha  
7:00 Habari  
8:00 Al Jazeera  
09:00 Watoto Wetu  
10:00 Isidingo  
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt  
12:00 Movie rpt: Kizaizai  
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo  
15:30 Mwangaza  
16:30 ITV Top 10  
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo  
18:00 Jiji Letu  
18:15 Mapishi  
18:30 Matukio ya wiki  
19:30 Igizo: Mtego  
20:00 Habari  
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko  
21:05 Mizengwe  
21:30 Mjue Zaidi  
22:14 Bongo Movie: Hiari Yangu  
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin

## CAPITAL

## Mon 21 Dec

06:00 Al Jazeera  
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)  
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)  
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death  
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)  
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan  
16:30 Tanzania Yetu rpt  
17:00 Eco@Africa rpt  
17:30 Meza huru  
19:00 The Décor rpt  
19:30 Shamba lulu  
20:00 Series: Itohan  
20:45 The Monday Agenda  
21:30 Capital Prime News  
22:00 Kipima Joto  
00:00 Al Jazeera

## Tues 22 Dec

06:00 Al Jazeera  
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)  
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)  
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death  
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)  
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan  
16:30 Capchat rpt  
17:30 Meza huru  
19:00 Innovation  
19:30 Jagina rpt  
20:00 Series: Itohan  
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death  
21:30 Capital Prime  
22:00 Turning the spotlight rpt  
22:30 Eco@Africa  
23:00 Al Jazeera

## Wed 23 Dec

06:00 Al Jazeera  
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)  
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)  
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death  
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)  
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan  
16:30 Culinary delight rpt  
17:00 Innovation rpt  
17:30 Meza huru  
19:30 Watoto ni chetu  
20:00 Series: Itohan  
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death  
21:30 Capital Prime News  
22:00 Dakika 45:  
22:45 The Décor  
23:15 Al Jazeera

## Thurs 24 Dec

06:00 Al Jazeera  
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)  
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)  
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death  
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)  
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan  
16:30 Business edition rpt  
17:00 In good shape  
17:30 Meza huru  
19:00 Turning the spotlight  
19:30 Tanzania yetu  
20:00 Series: Itohan  
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death  
21:30 Capital Prime News

## 22:00

Capchat rpt  
23:00 Al Jazeera

## Frid 25 Dec

06:00 Al Jazeera  
09:00 Movie: I think I love My Wife  
10:30 Movie: Forget About It  
12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt  
12:30 Eco@Africa rpt  
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death  
14:00 Movie: Marines  
15:30 Out&About rpt  
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan  
16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt  
17:30 Movie: Behind Enemy Life  
19:00 Rev  
19:30 Eco@Africa  
20:00 Aibu Yako  
21:30 Local Pgm: Business Edition  
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death  
21:30 Capital Prime News  
22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt  
00:00 Al Jazeera

## Sat 26 Dec

08:00 Al Jazeera  
09:00 Rev rpt  
09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt  
10:00 Culinary delight rpt  
10:30 Innovation rpt  
11:00 Out n' about rpt  
11:30 Sports Gazette rpt  
12:00 Usafiri wako rpt  
12:30 Eco@Africa rpt  
13:00 Business edition rpt  
13:30 Korean Drama rpt: The Slave hunter  
14:30 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death  
17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt  
17:45 Bundesliga kick off  
18:15 Capchat rpt  
19:15 Mizengwe  
19:30 The Décor  
20:00 Korean Drama: The Slave hunter  
21:00 Out n' About  
21:30 Movie: Deadly Plealedge  
23:00 Series rpt: Itohan  
01:00 Al Jazeera

## Sun 27 Dec

08:00 Al Jazeera  
09:00 In good shape  
10:00 Capchat rpt  
11:00 Sports Gazette rpt  
11:30 Korean Drama rpt: The Slave hunter  
12:00 Jagina rpt  
12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt  
13:00 In good shape rpt  
13:30 Series rpt: Itohan  
15:15 Aibu yako  
15:30 Rev rpt  
16:00 Dakika 45 rpt  
16:45 Mizengwe rpt  
17:00 The Décor rpt  
17:30 Meza huru  
19:00 Turning the Spotlight rpt  
19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights  
20:00 Korean Drama: The Slave hunter  
21:00 Shift  
21:15 Capchat live  
22:15 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death  
00:00 Al Jazeera



## WORLD

## UK-EU trade deal a welcome development, but difficulties remain in implementation

LONDON

AFTER rounds of painful and intense negotiations, Britain and the European Union (EU) finally secured a post-Brexit trade deal on Thursday, paving the way for avoiding a possible nightmare of chaotic economic break on Jan. 1, 2021.

With only seven days left before the end of the Brexit transition period, the trade deal is a great relief for people on both sides of the English Channel who do not want to see a disorderly Brexit. Indeed, a late deal is better than no deal.

The last-gasp deal, which put an end to nine-month hard talks, is really a result of the UK-EU efforts to cover extra miles to iron out their major differences through diplomatic negotiations. Failure to reach a free trade agreement means bilateral trade will fall back on World Trade Organization (WTO) rules in 2021.

The British and EU negotiators both have been determined to seek an agreement even with the two sides diverging greatly on fair competition, governance and fisheries.

As time elapsed, fishing rights re-

mained the last major sticking point between them.

As Brexit is an unprecedented move in the EU history, it remains unknown whether the deal can provide answers to a question unobserved in the modern history of humankind.

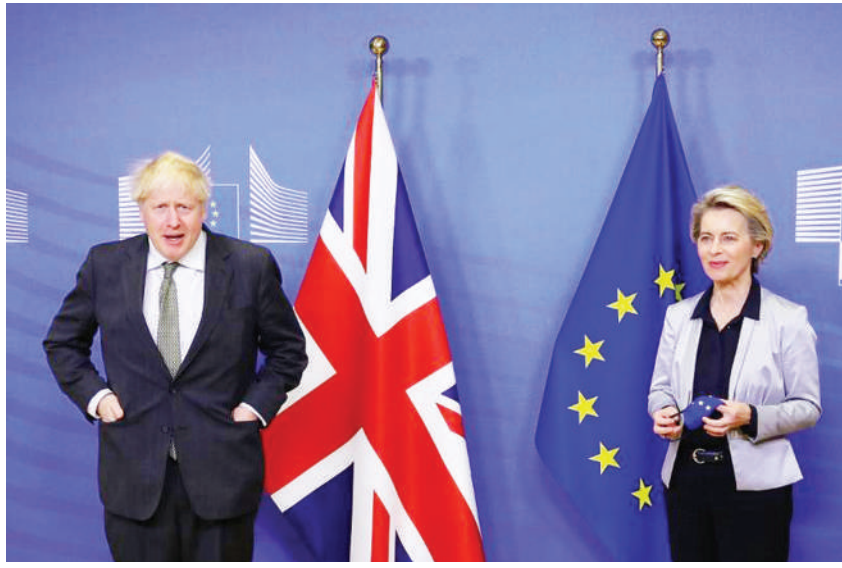
On the one hand, the new deal brings essential certainties to a world which is experiencing profound changes unseen in a century.

However, on the other hand, the deal is far from enough to clean all the aftermath of Brexit once and for all, thus leaving relevant parties -- and even the world at large -- more question marks about the near future.

The deal, which runs for some 2,000 pages, will be hugely welcomed by businesses who had feared a chaotic no-deal outcome.

The hard-won trade deal, which came more than 1,640 days after the 2016 referendum vote in Britain to leave the EU, would help avoid the imposition of tariffs and duties that would cost Britain and the EU billions of dollars in trade and hundreds of thousands of jobs.

In other words, the deal offers much



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, left, is welcomed by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, right, in the Berlaymont building at the EU headquarters in Brussels on Dec 9, 2020. (File photo)

needed reassurance to large and small-sized businesses in the country, as it will help them escape from the 10-percent tariffs for cars and more than 35 percent for dairy products, which could be "deeply damaging for both businesses and consumers."

Thanks to the deal, the 27-member regional bloc has successfully demonstrated to the world its strong will to defend unity and collective interests, as well as its wisdom in settling a "century divorce."

For the rest of the world, the new deal has saved the world economy from another Black Swan event -- a no-deal scenario with a severe impact and possible damage to global stability and development.

The above-mentioned benefits are more than enough to make the deal a historic one, but are insufficient to

end the Brexit aftermath conclusively.

For one thing, the deal cannot heal the division between Remain and Leave campaigns inside Britain. For some Brexiters, Britain has made too many unnecessary or even unjustified compromises in the imperfect deal.

Like a powder keg, the mood of dissatisfaction would probably be exploited by some Brexit politicians to interrupt the implementation of the deal in the future. In addition, as some British analysts fear, the "successful" divorce may somehow encourage the Leave campaign in Scotland in the near future.

Besides, bidding farewell to the EU does not automatically establish a "Global Britain." Both chances and challenges lie ahead on London's journey to be "global."

## 42 killed in crackdown on perpetrators of latest civilians'

ADDIS ABABA

THE Ethiopian Defense Forces killed some 42 "anti-peace elements" as part of the crackdown on perpetrators of the latest "gruesome" attack that killed at least 100 civilians in Ethiopia's western Benishangul-Gumuz regional state, local government officials said on Thursday.

On late Wednesday, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), a federal rights group established by the Ethiopian parliament, said in a statement that more than 100 people had been killed in a recent armed attack in Bekuji, Metekel zone of Benishangul-Gumuz region at around 10:00

pm local time on Tuesday.

According to the EHRC, the attack was carried out by armed men who set fire and shot at residents while they were asleep.

The incident revealed "the ever-deteriorating human rights protection in the region," the commission warned, adding that "attacks have intensified in appearance and scale recently."

On Thursday, the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional Government Communication Office disclosed that some 42 "anti-peace elements" who are said to be behind the attack on civilians have been "destroyed", state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting Corporate

(FBC) reported. As part of the crackdown on perpetrators of the attack, a large number of weapons and arrows used by anti-peace forces were seized by the Ethiopian army, it was noted.

The Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed also on early Thursday revealed that the government has deployed an "integrated necessary force" in the area, with an aim to address the root causes of the problem.

"I am deeply saddened by the inhumane treatment of our people. Our efforts to solve the problem in various ways have not yielded the desired results," Ahmed said via a twitter post. The Ethiopian premier

also urged the general public "to work as hard as we can to achieve the desired results."

Meanwhile, state-affiliated FBC also reported the arrest of five senior regional and federal Ethiopian government officials in connection with the killing of innocent civilians in the region.

The EHRC also on Thursday revealed that it has obtained testimonies of houses being burned in Benishangul-Gumuz's Chelenko and Doshe districts.

It also noted that the attacks followed the departure of National Defense Forces contingents from the area on Tuesday, which was previously positioned in the surroundings

to restore calm and allegedly accompany one federal and two regional officials on their official mission.

While previous incidents involved assailants staging their attacks from "forests and bushes," victims of the incident in their testimonies to the EHRC stressed they were able to recognize those involved in the attack "by name and sight."

The EHRC, which has been repeatedly calling for stronger collaboration between the federal and regional governments and a greater focus on the recurring nature of the attacks, stressed that "the attacks have since only increased in scope and frequency."

Xinhua

## Former Japan PM Abe apologises for cherry blossom scandal

BY BLOOMBERG

FORMER Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe offered his apologies after one of his aides was summarily indicted over a political funding scandal that has also cast a shadow over the current premier.

Tokyo prosecutors said Thursday Abe won't be charged over allegations his political funding group illegally subsidized parties for hundreds of voters. The aide was charged with failing to record financial details relating to the use of the funds in conjunction with events surrounding a cherry blossom viewing party, they said.

"I am offering my deepest apology to the public and members of the Diet from ruling and opposition parties," Abe told a news conference. "While these financial reports were made with-

out my knowledge, I am keenly aware of my moral responsibility and would like to express my deep regret," he added.

Abe denied any wrongdoing but said that in retrospect and with the better information he has now, some of his previous statements to parliament over the event were wrong. "My understanding was that everything had been done according to law," he said.

His statements in parliament have contradicted the findings of the prosecutors as reported in the media at least 118 times, public broadcaster NHK reported Tuesday, citing a parliamentary research bureau.

The scandal over the gatherings held at a Tokyo hotel the night before an annual publicly-funded cherry blossom viewing party has tarnished the image of current Prime Minister Yoshi-



A huge screen shows a live broadcast of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe speaking in a press conference, in Osaka, western Japan on Thursday. AP

hide Suga, who served as Abe's right-hand man throughout his record term of almost eight consecutive years in office.

Suga also apologized Thursday for making false statements while he was chief cabinet secretary, saying he had checked with Abe before answering questions in parliament.

With less than a year to go before the next election must be called, Suga, who defended Abe over the allegations, has seen his support slump due to the scandal and diminishing public confidence over his handling of the pandemic. Voter support tumbled to 39 percent in a December survey by the Asahi newspaper,

compared with 56 percent a month earlier.

Abe, who stepped down in September for health reasons, has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing over the gatherings. He will face questions over the issue in parliament on Friday, TBS said, while his aide has been fined about US\$10,000, Kyodo news said. From the end of 2019, then-premier Abe faced stiff questioning in parliament from opposition members over the blossom parties. Kyodo and other Japanese media outlets reported that Abe submitted to voluntary questioning by prosecutors Monday.

While it is highly unusual for a former Japanese prime minister to be convicted of a crime, Kakuei Tanaka was convicted on bribery charges in a case involving aircraft manufacturer Lockheed in 1983.

Agencies

## China's CoronaVac meets WHO standards, Brazil says

SAO PAULO

BRAZIL'S state-run Butantan Institute on Wednesday said the Chinese-developed COVID-19 vaccine CoronaVac has met the standards of efficacy required by the World Health Organization.

Around 13,000 Brazilian volunteers have taken part in trials of the vaccine, which was made by Sinovac Life Science.

"The data corroborate that it is the safest vaccine on the market and we achieved the superiority in efficacy required by the WHO and Brazil's Health Regulatory Agency (Anvisa)," Dimas Covas, director of the institute, said in a news conference.

The level of efficacy required by the WHO is greater than 50 percent, he said.

Also at the conference was Jean Gorinchteyn, secretary of health for the Sao Paulo state government.

"We have reached the level of effectiveness that allows us to request the registration for emergency use of the vaccine both here and in China. It is a historic day for Brazilian science because of the hope it brings to Brazilians," Covas said.

The state signed a contract with Sinovac Life Science in June to develop the CoronaVac vaccine at the Butantan Institute, the main supplier of vaccines for the Brazilian health ministry and the largest flu vaccine manufacturer in the southern hemisphere, according to the institute's website.

Gorinchteyn said the authorities expect to begin statewide vaccination of essential workers and those most at risk on Jan 25, after CoronaVac is registered with Anvisa.

The contract provides for 46 million doses until the end of February.

CoronaVac has now been incorporated by Brazil's health ministry into its 2021 national COVID-19 vaccination campaign.

Gorinchteyn said a shipment of 5.5 million doses will arrive at the Campinas international airport on Thursday, raising the total doses of the CoronaVac vaccine in Brazil to 10.8 million.

Covas said the contract with Sinovac allows the Butantan Institute to reach agreements with other countries.

"There are contracts in the signing phase and the one that is most advanced so far is with Argentina. We should sign this agreement this week or next," said Covas.

Xinhua

## Japan aims to eliminate gasoline vehicles by mid-2030s

TOKYO

Japan aims to eliminate gasoline-powered vehicles in the next 15 years, the government said yesterday in a plan to reach net zero carbon emissions and generate nearly US\$2 trillion a year in green growth by 2050.

The "green growth strategy," targeting the hydrogen and auto industries, is meant as an action plan to achieve Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's October pledge to eliminate carbon emissions on a net basis by mid-century.

Suga has made green investment a top priority to help revive the economy hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and to bring Japan into line with the European Union, China and other economies setting ambitious emissions targets.

"The government has set up ambitious targets to achieve a carbon neutral society in 2050," said Yukari Takamura, professor at the University of Tokyo.

"Making clear goals and policy direction in the green growth strategy will give incentives for companies to invest in future technology."

The government will offer tax incentives and other financial support to companies, targeting 90 trillion yen (\$870 billion) a year in additional economic growth through green investment and sales by 2030 and 190 trillion yen (US\$1.8 trillion) by 2050.

A 2 trillion yen green fund will support corporate investment in green technology. The plan seeks to replace the sale of new gasoline-powered vehicles with electric vehicles, including hybrid and fuel-cell vehicles, by the mid-2030s.

To accelerate the spread of electric vehicles, the government targets slashing the cost of vehicle batteries by more than half to 10,000 yen or less per kilowatt hour by 2030.

It aims to boost hydrogen consumption to 3 million tonnes by 2030 and to about 20 million tonnes by 2050 from 200 tonnes in 2017, in areas such as power generation and transportation. The strategy identifies 14 industries, such as offshore wind and fuel ammonia, and target the installation of up to 45 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind power by 2040.

Japan also aims to use renewable energy "as much as possible" by 2050, mainly through off-shore wind farms, with reference goal of renewable energy sources accounting for 50 percent to 60 percent of the nation's power by 2050, up from less than 20 percent now, while reducing reliance on nuclear power.

Agencies

## Young people become important driving force for rural revitalisation in E China's Shandong

YOUNG people are the beneficiaries of and important contributors to rural revitalization. Since 2018, east China's Shandong province has launched and implemented a program to help young people make innovations and start their own businesses in rural areas.

So far, the province has selected and trained 128,000 young role models in villages, inspiring a great number of young people to actively contribute to rural revitalization in the front line.

In Yanmappo village, Huacun township, Sishui county, Jining, Shandong province, greenhouses are arrayed neatly in rows.

Experts can provide guidance online via video link on when to water

the crops and fertilize the soil, according to Wang Fei, Party branch secretary of Yanmappo village. He is excited about the intelligent planting technologies supported by Internet of Things (IoT).

After retiring from military service, he has served as auxiliary police officer, run steamed-bun business and sold mobile phones. Eventually, he decided to return to his hometown and pick up farm work.

Wang is grateful that Huacun township organized an agricultural investigation group back then, and he was a member of the group.

It was through the investigation that he gained more knowledge of the planting techniques of fruits such as yellow peaches and watermelons,

said Wang.

After the investigation trip, he started to grow fruits in greenhouses during the day and learn related scientific and technological knowledge at night.

His hard work paid off. In 2014, the villager witnessed a bumper crop of fruits for the first time and earned nearly 100,000 yuan (about \$15,303).

As his greenhouses continue to yield rich fruits, Wang has also hired poverty-stricken residents in the surrounding areas and taught villagers planting technologies for free.

Meanwhile, the local Party committee and government have supported Wang's poverty alleviation

efforts through the combination of government funds and social capital.

Up till now, Wang has provided over 150 jobs and helped more than 500 poor households.

Wang Minggang, a 31-year-old villager in Shimenzikou village, Jiaolai neighborhood, Jiaozhou city, Shandong province, has also helped his fellow villagers become rich by running fruits greenhouses.

Wang is the person in charge of a family farm in Shimenzikou village. After he retired from the army and came back to his hometown in 2014, he has actively learned planting technologies and tried to grow cherries in greenhouses.

When the cherries matured that

year, over 3,000 tourists came to the greenhouses for cherry-picking experience.

Through repeated trials and continuous learning, Wang's business has got bigger and bigger, with the number of his greenhouses rising from one to nine.

He has also shared the knowledge and techniques he knew with local villagers to help more people become better off.

As the COVID-19 epidemic has affected offline sales of his fruits this year, Wang learned to promote fruits via online channels. By filming the fruits in greenhouses and releasing short videos on short video sharing platforms, Wang has effectively boosted the online sales of his

fruits day by day.

"I couldn't have made it without the help of the Jiaozhou municipal committee of the Communist Youth League of China," said Wang, adding that the committee has not only offered people information about the market, but provided support and guidance through relevant policies, effectively helping young entrepreneurs in rural areas with problems concerning platforms, technologies and sales channels.

While running his own business in the past few years, Wang has received the guidance and help from the local government personally, according to him, who said he has the confidence and determination to run the family farm well. *People's Daily*



## China's economy enjoys strong resilience

THE year 2020 has been a very unusual year of special significance in the history of New China. Not only is the country about to conclude its 13th Five Year Plan (2016-2020), but it has started to sprint for building a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

This year, the whole country has been united as one to win the critical battle against poverty and achieve the goal of finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the time the Communist Party of China (CPC) celebrates its centenary in 2021.

In 2020, China faced all sorts of challenges. The sudden outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic has dealt an unprecedented blow to China's economic and social development.

Facing complex and grim internal and external environment, China withstood an arduous test of history and scored a major strategic achievement in controlling COVID-19. It has become the first major economy to return to growth since the pandemic and has taken the lead in the world in both coronavirus control and economic recovery.

Multiple facts illustrate that the fundamentals sustaining China's steady and long-term economic growth remain unchanged.

Economic indexes of China saw positive growth. Its service sector achieved positive growth in May, and both imports and exports registered positive growth in June. China's retail sales of consumer goods recovered growth in July. The country's economy expanded 0.7 percent in the first three quarters.

China has also gained an increasingly stronger momentum of economic development. It has stepped up efforts to increase investment. Projects such as the Shanghai-Suzhou-Nantong Yangtze River Bridge were completed, and major projects including the Sichuan-Tibet railway were advanced. China has sped up the construction of new infrastructure including 5G and artificial intelligence (AI). Its fixed-asset investment went up 0.8 percent year on year in the first three quarters.

China's consumption has been gradually picking up. During the eight-day National Day holiday, overlapping the Mid-Autumn Festival, the number of visitors was about 80 percent of the number during the same holiday last year. Hundreds of millions of consumers participated in this year's Double 11 shopping festival.

In October, the country's catering revenue increased 0.8 percent from the same period last year, marking positive growth for the first time this year.

China's foreign trade also registered steady growth. The country saw its foreign trade rise by 0.7 percent year on year in the first nine months of 2020.

China's steady economic growth is also underlined by its high-quality development with new features. New business models such as telecommuting and online education, and new technologies including cloud computing and AI, have grown rapidly.

Besides, more growth poles have been fostered in new sectors such as the digital economy and smart manufacturing. Since the beginning of this year, China's new growth drivers have thrived.

People's well-being has also been effectively protected. Between January and October, China created 10.09 million new jobs in its urban areas, meeting its annual target ahead of schedule.

People's Daily



In this photo provided by Maitrise Notre-Dame de Paris, cello player Gautier Capucon and the Notre Dame Cathedral choir record a Christmas concert on Dec 19, 2020, inside Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

## Fire-ravaged Notre-Dame rings in X'mas with choir in hard hats

PARIS

FOR the first time since a fire that nearly destroyed it, the Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris played host to a Christmas Eve choral concert, an annual tradition in France.

In a concession to the fact that the Gothic cathedral is still being rebuilt, the choristers wore construction hard hats and boiler suits, and there was no audience.

The concert was recorded at the cathedral earlier this month, and was broadcast on French television just before midnight on Thursday.

The choristers performed classical pieces by composers Mozart and Schubert, but also a more light-hearted repertoire, including Jingle Bells.

"It was very moving," said cellist Gautier Capucon, describing the experience of recording the concert. Along with an organist, he provided the musical accompaniment for the choir.

"It was the first time we had all been back at Notre-Dame cathedral since the fire, so it was a moment full of emotion," he said in an interview with television station franceinfo.

The cathedral, a landmark of Gothic architecture dating to the 13th century and a major tourist attraction, caught fire on April 15, 2019. The blaze destroyed the spire and roof.

French President Emmanuel Macron undertook to restore the cathedral within five years.

But to date, most work on the site has focused on making the building safe, including clearing up toxic lead from the roof and spire that melted in the fire.

In the meantime, Notre-Dame is closed to the public and masses are cancelled.

In April this year, seven people were allowed to attend a religious ceremony in the cathedral to mark Good Friday, when Christians commemorate the death of Jesus Christ.

Agencies

## South Africa rejects UK claims over new coronavirus

LONDON

SOUTH Africa's government rejected allegations that a new variant of the coronavirus found in the country has contributed to a second wave of infections in the UK and criticized its decision to impose travel restrictions.

A new virus variant that was detected in the UK has a mutation occurring at a site common with the South African strain, known as 501.V2, but they are "two completely independent lineages," Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said in a statement late Thursday.

There's no evidence that 501.V2 causes more severe disease or increased mortality than any other variant that's been sequenced around the world, he said.

Mkhize's comments came a day after UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock announced that flights from South Africa will be banned and that anyone who's been there in the past two weeks must quarantine immediately. Several other countries have also halted flights from South Africa.

The new UK strain was identified about a month before the South African variant appeared to have developed, Mkhize said, citing ongoing research by the Network for Genomic Surveillance in South Africa, which was launched in June. He described Hancock's announcement as "unfortunate."

South Africa reported a record number of new infections for a second consecutive day, with cases jumping by 14,305 to a cumulative total of 968,563, the health ministry said in a statement late Wednesday. The number of people diagnosed with COVID-19 who have died rose by 326 to 25,983.

UK

The British government on Wednesday said huge swathes of England would be placed under its strictest COVID-19 restrictions as a highly infectious virus variant sweeps the country, pushing the number of cases to a record level.



A staff member from Coronationville Secondary School distribute food portions and gifts in Coronationville, Johannesburg, on Wednesday. (AFP)

Britain reported almost 40,000 new infections as the mutated variant of the coronavirus, which could be up to 70 percent more transmissible than the original, causes the number of cases and hospital admissions to soar.

The number of recorded deaths - 744 - was also the highest figure since April.

"Against this backdrop of rising infections, rising hospitalizations and rising numbers of people dying from coronavirus, it is absolutely vital that we act," health minister Matt Hancock told a media briefing. "We simply cannot have the kind of Christmas that we all yearn for."

On Saturday, tight social mixing restrictions measures were brought in for London, south-east England and Wales while plans to ease curbs over Christmas across the nation were either dramatically scaled back or scrapped altogether.

Hancock said from Dec. 26, many more parts of southern England would be also be added to the highest level of social mixing restrictions,

joining the 16 million already in Tier 4, while other areas across the country currently in lower tiers would also face tighter curbs.

The governments in Scotland and Northern Ireland have already announced that nearly everyone living in those countries would be subjected to the highest level of restrictions after Christmas.

Hancock said there was on average 1909 COVID hospital admissions a day, with 18,943 people currently in hospital with the coronavirus, levels not seen since the peak of the first outbreak in April.

The UK and France agreed to keep the key Dover-Calais trade crossing, including Eurotunnel,

open over Christmas. Both ports will remain operational to allow hauliers and citizens to "return home as soon as possible," UK Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said on Twitter Wednesday morning. Coronavirus testing will also continue in Kent, the county where Dover is located, he said.

US

The US government will require all airline passengers arriving from the United Kingdom to test negative for COVID-19 within 72 hours of departure starting Monday amid concerns about a new coronavirus variant that may be more transmissible.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said in a statement that all airline passengers arriving from the UK must test negative in order to fly to the United States. The decision was a turnaround after the Trump administration told US airlines on Tuesday it was not planning to require any testing for arriving UK passengers.

## In Christmas message curbed by Covid, pope calls on nations to share vaccines



Pope Francis

VATICAN CITY

POPE Francis called in his Christmas message yesterday for nations to share Covid-19 vaccines, saying walls of nationalism could not be built to stop a pandemic that knows no borders.

In a sign of the times, Francis delivered his traditional "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and the world) message virtually from a lectern inside the Vatican instead of from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica before tens of thousands.

The pandemic and its social and economic effects dominated the message, in which Francis called for global unity and help for nations suffering from conflicts and humanitarian crises.

"At this moment in history, marked by the ecological crisis and grave economic and social imbalances only worsened by the coronavirus pan-

dem, it is all the more important for us to acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters," he said.

Stressing that health is an international issue, he appeared to criticise so-called 'vaccine nationalism', which U.N. officials fear will worsen the pandemic if poor nations receive the vaccine last.

"May the Son of God renew in political and government leaders a spirit of international cooperation, starting with health care, so that all will be ensured access to vaccines and treatment. In the face of a challenge that knows no borders, we cannot erect walls. All of us are in the same boat," he said.

Italians are under a nationwide lockdown for much of the Christmas and New Year holiday period. The restrictions mean people are not able to go to St. Peter's Square or the basilica for papal events, all of which have been moved indoors.

CURFEW

Christmas is above all a time to help oth-

ers because Jesus himself was born a poor outcast, Francis said on Thursday night at his Christmas Eve Mass, which started two hours early so the few participants could get home in time before a 10 p.m. curfew.

"May the Child of Bethlehem help us, then, to be generous, supportive and helpful, especially towards those who are vulnerable, the sick, those unemployed or experiencing hardship due to the economic effects of the pandemic, and women who have suffered domestic violence during these months of lockdown," he said in his Friday address.

Francis called for peace and reconciliation in Syria, Yemen, Libya, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Sudan, Nigeria and Cameroon and Iraq, which he is due to visit in early March.

He also asked to comfort those suffering from humanitarian crises or natural disasters in Burkina Fasso, Mali, Niger, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Agencies

## Russia says new US sanctions outrageous, destructive to bilateral ties

MOSCOW

THE expanded sanctions list published by the U.S. authorities in relation to Russian companies allegedly classified as "military end users" is a destructive move for bilateral ties, the Russian Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

"The latest innovations of the U.S. Department of Commerce aimed at modernizing its export regime, namely, the incorporation of the concept of 'military end user' and the inclusion of more than 40 Russian legal entities in the corresponding list, are perplexing and outrageous," Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said during her weekly briefing.

She emphasized that this was another unfriendly move on the part of the United States, aimed at containing Russia, that was disguised as concern for U.S. companies reportedly worried about selling sensitive products to others.

"We call once again on the U.S. side to listen to the voice of reason, at least ours, and, finally, to start adequately assessing the consequences of their destructive actions both for the general political atmosphere of relations between our countries and for their trade and economic component," she added.

The ministry considers that with this move, the United States undermines competition in global markets and acts to the detriment of its own businesses.

On Monday, the U.S. Department of Commerce drafted a sanctions list of 103 entities, among which were 45 Russian companies that were allegedly labelled as "military end users," claiming they have military ties.

Xinhua

## China makes solid progress in reducing poverty through the promotion of intangible cultural heritage

INTANGIBLE cultural heritage, apart from being protected, is also playing an important part in China's poverty alleviation efforts.

A total of over 2,200 intangible cultural heritage workshops have been built nationwide since July 2018 under the support of the country's Ministry of Culture and Tourism. These workshops have created half a million jobs, lifting more than 200,000 households out of poverty.

The lack of skills always hinders poor households from getting rid of poverty. However, many impoverished regions are blessed with abundant traditional handicrafts. Intangible cultural heritage resources, such as traditional paper cutting, embroidery, painting, forging, and architecture, all serve as advantages for these areas when they strive to get rid of poverty.

In Linxia Hui autonomous prefecture, northwest China's Gansu province, Zhang

Hongjie, who once suffered from poverty, has embraced a well-off life after learning brick carving at an intangible cultural heritage workshop. The workshop offers stable jobs for many from the local community, who can make an average of over 4,000 yuan (\$612) a month working there.

In the mountainous village of Maliao in Qiangdongnan Miao and Dong autonomous prefecture, southwest China's Guizhou province, silver forging and tourism have been prospering after the village established intangible cultural heritage workshops. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 earlier this year led to a significant drop in the number of tourists and sales of silver ornaments. Thanks to an intangible cultural heritage-themed shopping festival, which was organized by major e-commerce platforms under the support of China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Commerce and the State Council Leading Group

Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, the village finally found a way out to expand the sales. The shopping festival created an online outlet for relevant departments and enterprises of intangible cultural heritage, as well as intangible cultural heritage workshops.

Pan Shixue, a silversmith, was quite excited about the online shopping festival. Receiving e-commerce training, he discovered the huge potential of online shopping. "Now our silver ornaments are directly linked with the urban markets, and we are confident for future development," the man told the People's Daily.

Training sessions of traditional handicrafts have been widely launched at the intangible cultural heritage workshops across China by relevant departments to improve impoverished households' ability to design and manufacture products, and expand businesses. Besides, these departments

have also held various exhibitions and promotional events at intangible cultural heritage workshops, introduced these workshops' products to tourist sites and public service areas, and amplified the promotion and marketing efforts of these products both online and offline.

Intangible cultural heritage workshops, as a "hematopoiesis machine" of poverty reduction, not only pass expertise on to the impoverished, but also expand their vision and inspire them to generate more ideas.

For Mu Shuping, a woman from Sanshipu village, Yuntian township, Longxi county of northwest China's Gansu province, used to work out-of-town for a living together with her husband, a major source of income for local impoverished groups. After the village built an embroidery workshop for poverty alleviation, Mu and other 20 women received training and have been employed.

People's Daily





Matukio Chuma speaks prior to a recent launch of his book titled 'Matukio' in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT SABATO KASIKA

## Dar author counsels musicians, film industry practitioners

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

THE Mr University Tanzania 2002 winner, Matukio Chuma, has appealed to domestic artistes and film industry practitioners to opt out of entertaining fake life and the latter should, instead, be genuine.

Chuma issued the comments shortly after he had launched his book titled 'Matukio' in Dar es Salaam recently.

Chuma stated the musicians need to understand themselves, know their value and make the most of their talent so they can achieve success.

He disclosed his book, which has been written in English and Swahili languages, issues an insight into his life and how youths can achieve success in life.

"I feel sad to say some of our musicians are using social media negatively, they take pictures with borrowed cars and post the photos on their social media handles, portraying themselves as people who live luxuriously," he said.

He pointed out the actual fact is

the musicians hardly live the life they depict on social media.

Chuma stated the society wants to see the artistes act genuinely and opt out of fake lives, which can, in the end, put them in trouble.

He insisted the musicians should live within their means.

He revealed: "Globalization has plenty of opportunities but some of the youths, including musicians, are using it negatively via, among others, living fake life."

"I have put lots of details in my book, therefore, they should buy the book, read it so they can learn."

Chuma noted he has decided to write the book, which issues his experience and advice for youths, with a view to seeing to it his message keeps on reaching people and change youths' lives.

He disclosed he is one of youths that have worked for major international corporations whilst aged 24, therefore, he has a lot to tell his fellow Tanzanian youths so they can learn.

## Dar hoops player praises Christmas bonanza

By Guardian Reporter

DAR ES SALAAM basketball player, Alex Mbwana, has hailed the sport's recent bonanza, known as 'Castle Light Christmas', which took place in the city, noting the bonanza has helped him and his fellow players stay in great shape prior to featuring in the next season's Regional Basketball Association (RBA) League.

Mbwana was a member of Young Stars team, which was one of the bonanza's participating teams, with the event taking place at Don Bosco courts, Upanga.

Young Stars emerged as the bonanza's winners, beating Magone 83-69 in the final.

Mbwana, who turns out for Diamond Trust Bank (DTB) team in the RBA League, congratulated the Don Bosco Sports Center's leadership for inviting his team to take part in the bonanza.

"This bonanza has helped us shape up for the next season after a long rest following the completion of this season's tournaments, RBA League, National Basketball League (NBL) and the CRDB Taifa Cup," he noted.

Evarist Mapunda, one of 'Castle Light Christmas' bonanza's coordinators, noted they issued invitation to players that take part in RBA League to feature for teams lined up for the bonanza.

Mapunda hailed the Seregenti Breweries Limited (SBL) for backing the bonanza.

A section of famous domestic hoops players that took part in bonanza are Baraka Sadiki, Filbert Mwaipungu, Cornelius Mgaza, who turned out for Young Stars.

Magone team fielded players including Amin Mtambo and Mwalimu Heri.

The Dev 1 team's Kassim Bory saluted Don Bosco Sports Center's leadership for bringing together several famous basketball players in the city.

He pointed out the bonanza did not experience any challenge.

Don Bosco team's Selemani Simba noted the bonanza has helped to bring to the fore talent in the game.

He disclosed: "The hosting of this bo-

nanza will motivate players to put impressive performance in international tournaments."

Young Stars won the 2020 Castle Light Christmas bonanza with a hard fought 83-69 victory over Magone in the pulsating final.

The game was very tight in the early minutes of the first half, as both teams resorted to defending tactics.

After a tight battle in the opening exchanges, Magone slightly lost steam towards the end of the first quarter, allowing Young Stars to take a 20-17 lead.

The second half was even more thrilling. Magone, looking unperturbed, pressed upfront relentlessly in search of points.

After a tight battle, they managed to take the quarter 17-16. Young Stars returned for the third quarter still looking hungry for points and marched to a 24-15 lead.

Young Stars scored their points through Mbwana, who netted 24, he also led in three points brace by doing it three times while doing blocks twice.

He provided assists to his teammates nine times, but he made three turnovers.

Magone coach, Joseph Peter Aleluya, said many turnovers by his players contributed to their defeat.

"We took the ball to our opponents' danger zone several times, but poor finishing cost us," he disclosed.

Magone's Mtambo posted 20 points, Heri added 16 points and Juma Ally slotted in eight points.

In the bonanza's Veterans League, NMB side lifted the top honour, cruising to 69-62 win over Savio Veterans at the same venue.

NMB squad's playmaker, Danford Kisinda, fought bravely to score 20 points while his team mate, Joas Maheta, notched 15 points.

Kisinda also led in three points brace by doing it three times while doing blocks four times.

Savio Veterans' Bategeki and Simon Chelu put up incredible show in the match, but their team mates let them down.

# Soccer followers ought to fully support Namungo FC, Simba SC

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THE new season for CAF club competitions, the CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup, is already underway, with Mainland Tanzania's sides, Simba SC and Namungo FC, still stamping their authority in the competitions.

The two squads have booked a place in the first round of the tournaments, seeing off opponents from Nigeria and South Sudan in the preliminary rounds.

Simba SC knocked Plateau United of Nigeria out of the preliminary stage of the CAF Champions League by 1-0 aggregate win.

The Tanzania's envoys in the premier continental club tournament posted 1-0 win over their Nigerian opponents in the first leg in Jos.

The second leg duel, held in Dar es Salaam, had the teams settling for a 0-0 draw, which meant Simba SC booked a place in the first round thanks to the side's away victory.

Lindi-based Namungo FC knocked South Sudan's Al Rabita out of the one-legged preliminary stage tie of the CAF Confederation Cup.

Namungo FC trounced Al Rabita 3-0 in the first leg clash, which took place at Azam Complex in Dar es Salaam.

Namungo FC thereafter advanced to the first round of the tournament after CAF had cancelled the outfit's second leg against the South Sudan club.

The clash, which was scheduled to be played at the Azam Complex, did not take place because, according to CAF, the South Sudan Football Association (SSFA) failed to fulfill conditions for holding the tie, which had Al Rabita serving as hosts.

The second leg, played in Sudan, ended with Almal Atbara notching 1-0 victory over KVZ Sports Club to advance to the first round.

Simba SC faces a tricky task of posting good results in the return leg of the first round of CAF Champions League against Zimbabwe's FC



Sudan's Al Hilal El Obeid's keeper, Yonis Hassan, saves an attempt by one of Tanzania's Namungo FC players when the outfits met in the first leg of the first round of this season's CAF Confederation Cup, which took place at Azam Complex in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. Namungo FC won 2-0. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Platinum, if the Tanzanian side is to make it to the tournament's group stage.

The FC Platinum edged Simba SC 1-0 in the first leg of the first which took place in Harare on Wednesday.

Namungo FC has had a good start in the outfit's pursuit of qualification for the play offs of the CAF Confederation Cup.

The Tanzanian side beat Sudan's Al Hilal Obeid 2-0 in the first leg of the showpiece, which took place in Dar es Salaam the same day.

Soccer fans in Tanzania certainly have to feel proud of the achievement posted by Simba SC and Namungo FC so far.

Should the sides register good results in their respective games, they will qualify for the group stages of the tournaments.

It is time for soccer followers in Tanzania to fully support the sides with a view to seeing to it they excel and consequently improve the country's football.

Much as the soccer lovers have different affiliations as far as soccer fanaticism is concerned they have to put the fanaticism aside and stand by Namungo FC

and Simba SC.

If the two sides will do well in the continental competitions, the country will gain good reputation.

There is also possibility for CAF to increase the number of the country's clubs which will participate in the tournaments next season.

The fans should be proud of Simba SC and Namungo FC, they should cheer them on and show them that they can scale great heights in the events.

These tournaments are the biggest stage, as far as club tournaments in Africa are concerned.

The two clubs' players will have an opportunity to attract the attention of soccer scouts from both in and outside Africa, if the players will showcase impressive performance.

Domestic soccer followers have every reason to love their teams. This culture will help the followers motivate the clubs to give their all in pursuit of impressive spells in the tournaments.

There is moreover no need for the fans to put much pressure on the clubs when the outfits register less impressive results in the tournaments.

Should the Isles Premier League become competitive, the tournament will produce sides which will have what it takes to excel in continental club tournaments.

Zanzibar clubs' leaderships should moreover do all they can to have their sides' players train intensively for the domestic tournament, a move which will help the sides live up to expectations.

It is hoped that Zanzibar clubs will turn into serious competitors in continental club tournaments, should the Isles' soccer stakeholders unite and lobby for the sides' success in the competitions.

# Why Zanzibar soccer clubs falter in CAF club tournaments

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

ZANZIBAR is one of countries which fielded clubs in this season's Africa club competitions, CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup.

The continental tournaments, which take place every year, involve sides which performed well in their respective countries' tournaments.

A country's Premier League winners play in CAF Champions League, whereas an outfit which wins the country FA Cup takes part in the CAF Confederation Cup.

The Isles were, in this season's continental club tournaments, represented by Mlandege and KVZ Sports Club.

Mlandege featured in CAF Champions League, KVZ Sports Club participated in CAF Confederation Cup.

Both sides kissed the competitions goodbye in the preliminary stage, suffering loss to clubs from Tunisia and Sudan.

Mlandege were bundled out

of the CAF Champions League's preliminary stage by Tunisia football giants, CS Sfaxiens, in which the Tunisian club had an 8-1 aggregate win over the former.

The KVZ Sports Club conceded a 3-1 aggregate loss to Sudan's Almal Atbara in the CAF Confederation Cup's preliminary stage.

Zanzibar soccer sides have, for many years, failed to make their presence in the tournaments felt, they have, to put it simply, been merely making up numbers in the events.

It has truly been frustrating to witness Zanzibar outfits crash out of the continental competitions in the early stages.

The Isles' sides need to find out reasons for their below par showing in the tournaments and set up better plans for achieving success in the tournaments.

Zanzibar had in the past managed to make its presence in the then CAF Winners Cup felt, thanks to an impressive showing by the Isles' squad, Malindi. Malindi went as far as sailing

through to the last four of the competition in the late 1990s.

Soccer stakeholders in Zanzibar should not dwell on blaming each other for the sides' poor showing in the continental competitions.

The stakeholders should reorganize and see to it the Isles' outfits post good results in the tournaments in future.

The Zanzibar teams need to carefully assess the strategies that Malindi deployed in their participation in the CAF Winners Cup and possibly make use of the tactics.

Mainland Tanzania's sides have to some extent been managing to hold their own against other countries' clubs in the competitions, given the former have been roping in competent players.

Zanzibar's teams therefore need to borrow a leaf from the Mainland Tanzania sides' books if the former are to at least secure a place in the tournaments' first round.

Zanzibar Football Federation (ZFF) should fully cooperate with the rest of the game

The fans' decision to buy the clubs' jerseys and turn up for the clubs' fixtures greatly helps to motivate the outfits.

The situation will moreover give the fans a sense of belonging and spur the players to put stellar performances in the games.

The sides' good performance in the tournaments will help to raise the clubs' players' standard and the aspect will in turn have a positive impact on the national teams.

The fans should increase their love for their teams and look for the best way to empower the outfits financially.

The outfits' officials should further look for a good way they can involve their squads' fans in various aspects of the teams' day-to-day operations.

Simba SC and Namungo FC have to focus on making good preparations for their coming matches.

Simba SC, in particular, has good history in continental club tournaments, given the side has gone as far as making it to the final of the CAF Confederation Cup in 1993.

The Mainland Tanzania champions need to better a record they set in the 2018/19 season, which had them making it to the last eight stage of CAF Champions League.

Qualification for the last eight stage of the 2020/21 CAF Champions League is within Simba SC's reach, if the club prepares well for the first round's game against FC Platinum

Simba SC should study their opponents well, as the approach will help them achieve better results.

It is hoped that everything will go well for Simba SC and Namungo FC in their respective assignments.



## Under pressure Premier League managers hope for x-mass cheer

LONDON

SLAVEN Bilic's sacking by West Brom last week made him the earliest managerial departure in a Premier League season for six years after it took 18 games for Cardiff City to dismiss Neil Warnock in 2014.

The next sacking may not be long in coming with several bosses having serious question marks over their futures.

AFP Sport looks at three bosses who could do with some Christmas cheer:

Arteta to banish the Blues

Mikel Arteta's FA Cup success last season and then victory over Liverpool in the Community Shield suggested the turbulent period for Arsenal under his predecessor Unai Emery had been laid to rest.

However, heading into a tough home clash with highflying London rivals Chelsea on Saturday the bright new dawn has clouded over and the former Gunners captain's future after just over a year in charge is in doubt.

The 38-year-old Spaniard has overseen their worst start since the 1974/75 season -- they have scored just 12 goals to boot -- and lie just four points above the relegation zone.

It says a lot about the gloom surrounding the club the board have inserted clauses in the players contracts of a cut in pay should they be relegated for the first time since 1912/13 when they were known as Woolwich Arsenal.

Arteta will hope the board keep the faith and listened to the sterling defence his former boss at Manchester City Pep Guardiola mounted after the Gunners lost 4-1 to them in the League Cup on Tuesday.

"It's just a question of time and he will do well. Football changes in one week so quick," said Guardiola.

Bruce to get Magpies flying

Steve Bruce knows all about the ups and downs of football management especially after Newcastle's disappointing League Cup quarter-final exit at the hands of second-tier Brentford.

The Magpies look reasonably comfortable in 12th place in the table.

However, with a trip to Manchester City on Saturday and then welcoming champions Liverpool a few days later the eight points separating them from the relegation zone could be whittled away such is the volatility of this campaign.

Bruce, 59, is believed to enjoy the support of Magpies owner Mike Ashley but there are growing rumblings of discontent from the fans who aside from seeing a chance of a trophy disappear are far from happy with the unimaginative style of play.

Bruce has not been helped by losing two influential players captain Jamaal Lascelles and French star Allan Saint-Maximin who are both suffering the after-effects of Covid-19.

Bruce said after the Brentford defeat he had not lost the dressingroom, though, it was hardly the most convincing of responses.

"Are the players playing for me? I think they are," he said.

"Maybe they're not playing well enough, but it's not without effort and determination."

Final cut for Blades' Wilder

Bilic might well scratching his head at being the first manager sacked when he compares notes with Sheffield United's Chris Wilder.

The Blades' board have shown admirable gratitude and restraint in retaining faith with the 53-year-old Englishman despite garnering just two points this season -- the worst start in Premier League history.

Wilder is living off the currency he gained through guiding Sheffield United to the Premier League and then ninth spot last term.

Wilder has a tough test at home to Everton on Saturday but the board's patience may snap if he fails to secure points at Burnley on Tuesday.

A 3-2 loss to Manchester United and then a draw with struggling Brighton has given hope to Wilder.

"If we don't show that right attitude, we're toast -- we understand that, so it won't happen," he said.

"At least there's a little bit of light at the end of the tunnel after the last two games."

Fixtures (kick-offs GMT)

Today

Leicester v Man Utd (1230), Arsenal v Chelsea (1730), Manchester City v Newcastle (2000), Aston Villa v Crystal Palace (1500), Fulham v Southampton (1500), Sheffield United v Everton (2000)

Tomorrow

Leeds v Burnley (1200), Liverpool v West Brom (1630), Wolves v Tottenham Hotspur (1915), West Ham v Brighton (1415)

AFP

# For PSG, firing Tuchel, choosing Pochettino was a long time coming

By Julien Laurens, ESPN Correspondent

THOMAS Tuchel can't say that he didn't see it coming. The now-former Paris Saint-Germain manager -- sources told ESPN that the German has been relieved of his duties -- had sensed for some time that he was swimming against the tide.

He knew the Ligue 1 defeats at home against Marseille and Lyon for the first time in more than a decade would count against him. He knew that the third place in the table at Christmas was not a good look. He knew that, despite he and his team showing great character to get through to the Champions League round of 16, it was not enough because of how poor they had been throughout the campaign.

He will be able to recall RMC Sport's interview with PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi straight after the win at Manchester United. When asked if it was Tuchel's victory, Al-Khelaifi answered that the players had been amazing and demonstrated fantastic spirit. There was nothing for the manager, not a single word of praise or congratulations.

Yet, it wasn't always like that. Al-Khelaifi had often hailed Tuchel as the best coach in the world, like in September 2018, after he won his first five Ligue 1 matches, or two months later, when his side beat Liverpool in the Champions League at the Parc des Princes.

Things, of course, have changed. In the president's eyes, Tuchel is no longer the right man for the job. He never really was for sporting

director Leonardo.

Tuchel was appointed by Leonardo's predecessor, Antero Henrique, and the Brazilian never accepted the coach he inherited. The two fell out many times, both in private and in public, most recently in the summer when they disagreed on transfers. Tuchel wanted a centre-back, specifically Germany international Antonio Rudiger of Chelsea. Leonardo wanted a defensive midfielder, so he signed one in Danilo Pereira. To make a point, Tuchel played him at centre-back, which was both childish and unnecessary. Once Leonardo told the media in October that Tuchel's comments and attitude were damaging for the club, it was evident his days were numbered.

In the end, Tuchel departs with the best win percentage of any manager in Ligue 1 history (75.6%) and the highest average of points per game (2.37, tied with Unai Emery). He took the club to its first Champions League final, just last August, when on another night his team would have taken their chances and beaten Bayern Munich. But he is still set to get sacked, sources tell ESPN, six months before the end of his contract, which won't cost the club too much.

Tuchel's biggest problem is that he never really managed to give his PSG team a genuine identity. The style of play this season was poor; PSG were never convincing, and there were no patterns or themes to their style of play. In fairness to him, he never had the opportunity to

properly prepare for this campaign. There was no preseason because of the Champions League run, and due to several injuries and positive COVID-19 cases, he was never able to field his strongest team.

There's also the added context that he never felt at ease in the French capital. As Tuchel himself admitted on French TV on Wednesday after his team's 4-0 win against Strasbourg, "Paris are definitely a particular club." And he was growing tired of it. In an interview with German broadcaster Sport 1 just before the Strasbourg game, he expressed his frustration.

"Here in Paris, expectations are extreme, inside and outside the club," Tuchel said. "We feel that recognition, especially in the league, is not the same than for Bayern, for example. It is missing a bit. They always say, 'They have [Angel] Di Maria, [Kylian] Mbappe and Neymar; it is normal that they win in Bordeaux, it is not an achievement."

"Sometimes, it is very easy to deal with this dressing room. Other times, it is a big challenge because a club like PSG has many influences, beyond that of the interests of the team. I just love football, and in a club like [PSG], it is not always about football. Some days, I think it could be so simple. It was only a substitution; why is it talked about for two weeks? Then, I tell myself, 'But I only want to be a coach.'"

Clearly, there was a fatigue about Tuchel, considering both the context in Paris and the particular energy at PSG. And he's right: It's not a club like many others. There are high expectations, ceaseless politics and demanding fans, owners and media. There are endless agendas to navigate, and it must all be done under a microscope. Tuchel arguably wasn't made for this sort of job, and never seemed to really figure out a way to deal with all of it.

Even the dressing room and the key players were not all that disappointed he was dismissed. There was a time when he had the full support of his squad, but he fell out with Mbappe last year and some of his questionable

tactical decisions lost him a lot of credit. Two weeks ago, Leonardo and Al-Khelaifi contacted Mauricio Pochettino, and that was the end for Tuchel. With Pochettino, PSG are getting a very different coach. To start with -- and this could well be his biggest asset -- the Argentine knows the club well. He played for PSG, he was the club's captain and he built a strong relationship with the city, the club and the fans. He is loved there, even if he was only there for two seasons (2001 to 2003). His ambition was always to come back as manager.

Furthermore, he won't have a (re)building job to do like he did at Tottenham Hotspur. He will probably have less money available in Paris than his predecessors because of the economic climate, but he will have a great squad at his disposal, two world-class superstars, some great youngsters and experienced players like Di Maria.

He also has the players to fit his 4-2-3-1 formation. The 14-month break he has had since he was ousted from Spurs has revitalised

him. He was tired after five years of Sisyphean work in North London, culminating with the Champions League final loss to Liverpool. In short, Pochettino ticks all the boxes for what PSG need right now. He is a hard-working manager with a clear identity in terms of intensity and style, emphasising counterpressing and verticality with his teams. He speaks the three languages needed to communicate with his dressing room (French, English and Spanish), and he also has a political side to him, capable of handling such scrutiny. He is more than just a coach and boasts a very different mindset than Tuchel's.

Now, though, only the results will matter. Winning the league and doing well in the Champions League are the two main objectives. Pochettino, as a former Espanyol player and manager, will look forward to facing Barcelona in Europe in February. And as the club is negotiating with Neymar and Mbappe to extend their contracts, they are hoping that it will be an advantage to have brought in Pochettino so early and not have any uncertainty about life after Tuchel.



Thomas Tuchel never truly fit in high-pressure world of PSG. (Agencies)

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The last time PSG replaced their manager at Christmas was December 2011, when Antoine Kombouare was replaced by Carlo Ancelotti. Les Parisiens were top of the league but ended up losing the title to Montpellier. Pochettino will arrive with the team in third, just a point behind Lille and Lyon. Will things work out straight away this time?

## Talk of title is for others not Solskjaer's United

LONDON

OLE Gunnar Solskjaer said on Thursday talk of Manchester United winning their first Premier League title since 2013 will remain out of bounds amongst him and his players.

The 47-year-old Norwegian finds himself now being praised after guiding United into third place in the table -- five points off leaders Liverpool -- having been favoured for the sack earlier in the season.

United could move into second if they beat Leicester, who presently occupy that place, on Saturday.

Solskjaer takes them to the Foxes on the back of reaching the League Cup semi-finals -- where they will meet holders Manchester City.

"There is noise around Man Utd anyway, so for us it's about improving as a team, taking one game at a time -- and we have to, that's the name of the game," said Solskjaer when asked about the title.

"That is the only way that you are going to challenge for anything

at the end of the season anyway so it's not something that we talk about."

Solskjaer -- who guided United to three semi-finals last season -- said being complimented added another factor for him and the players to deal with.

"The only thing that we talk about and focus on is improving day by day and learning, and how to deal with certain situations," he said.

"Maybe now at the moment we are getting praise and that's another thing to learn to deal with."

Solskjaer nevertheless said Wednesday's League Cup victory over Everton is priceless for morale.

"Every time you win a game you get energy and it boosts your morale and belief," said Solskjaer.

"Results breed good spirit and good mood and it breeds confidence."

United's ability to be title challengers has been based around their superb away record having won all six of



Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

their games.

However, they have

needed to come from behind each time and

Solskjaer knows they cannot keep on doing that.

"It's going to catch up with you if you are going to give teams a lead," he said.

"Leicester are one of those teams that you definitely don't want to give a one or two goal lead to because they have so many players on the transition that you can easily concede two or three or four."

Solskjaer can take heart from United's most recent visit to Leicester on the last day of last season when they beat

them 2-0.

"They are a very good side with a very good coach and I have enjoyed watching them under Brendan (Rodgers)," he said.

"It was a big test for us to go to their stadium in the summer and we passed that one with flying colours.

"We played a controlled game but I know it will not be the same now because it's a different time of the season and they have got some threats that you have to look for."

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko





# Dar cricket club clinches 2020 Lions Cup competition's title

## SPORT

For PSG, firing Tuchel, choosing Pochettino was a long time coming

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Alfa Zulu Patel cricket team pictured with a trophy after lifting the 2020 Lions Cup competition's silverware, notching 21-run victory over Bin Slum Castilla outfit in a recent final which took place in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: COURTESY OF LIONS CRICKET CLUB

By Guardian Reporter

**A**LFA Zulu Patel cricket squad has clinched the 2020 Lions Cup competition's top honour after posting 21-run victory over Bin Slum Castilla team in the final which took place at Leaders Club venue in Dar es Salaam early this week.

The tournament, which is an annual feature, is hosted by Lions Cricket Club with the aim of backing efforts to promote cricket at the domestic level.

Four sides, Harab Lions, Bin Slum Castilla, JPPIL Royal Strikers and Alfa Zulu Patel featured in this season's competition, which saw the outfits lock horns in 12-over formatted matches.

Alfa Zulu Patel squad registered victory in two outings to make it to the final, whereas Bin Slum Castilla team won three matches to sail through to the final.

The final had Alfa Zulu Patel side notching 115 runs for seven wickets in 12 overs after winning the toss and choosing to start batting.

Top order batsman, Harsh Patel, was the top run getter in

the innings, ending three runs short of a half century and nailing six fours.

Anil Thakur also played pivotal role in the side's acquisition of the imposing score, given he notched 27 runs not out which consisted of two fours and a six.

Dhaval Patel chipped in with 13 runs, Chetan Patel was one run short of double digit figure, as his side made its plan to finish the innings with a good score clear.

Ali Sumar had most wickets for Bin Slum Castilla team, ending with four and giving away 24 runs in three overs.

Bin Slum Castilla team then lost steam in the chase, recording 94 runs and dropping five wickets in 12 overs.

Despite Pramod Shetty, Mohamed Salim and Sumar playing their hearts out, their efforts failed to help their side turn tables on Alfa Zulu Patel side.

Sumar wrapped up an impressive

all-round performance, notching 22 runs which consisted of a four.

Shetty and Salim ended with 21 runs and 19 runs respectively, with their scores comprising three fours apiece, Chetan Borkhataria chipped in with 15 runs which included a four.

Mehul Patel had the most impressive bowling spell for Alfa Zulu Patel team, ending with two wickets and conceding 29 runs in three overs.

Lions Cricket Club's Chairman, Atif Salim, said: "The tournament has been a season closing event after a successful 2020 season for our club."

"The aim of the tournament throughout the years is to bring in new talents and give them chance to excel within the club and it was delightful to see majority of our youths actively take part in the league which is a stepping stone to the players' achievement in the future," he noted.

"The tournament always attracts some good performances and sev-

eral players were awarded individual awards for their performances."

"We would like to thank all of our sponsors, Harab Motors Tz Ltd, Bin Slum, Jumbo Printing and Packaging Industries Ltd and Alfa Zulu Travel and Tours Ltd."

"Special mention as well goes to Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA), which has continuously supported the sport's development in the country at all levels."

"We officially close the 2020 season and we would like to thank all of our fans for the incredible support they showed in what was a difficult year to many around the world."

Sumar was voted as the tournament's best player, Mubin Haroon was presented with the event's best batsman prize, Mehul walked away with the tournament's best bowler prize.

The tournament's best upcoming player honour, Salim said, went to Amaan Sameer.



Dar es Salaam's karate players demonstrate the game's skills at a recent event which took place in the city.

## Regional karate associations to discuss next season's plans

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

REGIONAL karate associations, along with various karate clubs in Tanzania, are in the process of meeting to present proposals to be submitted to Tanzania Shotokan Karate Association (TASHOKA), which will help in the preparation for the sport's calendar for next season.

The session is set to take place after the completion of this season's East Africa Shotokan Karate Championship which climaxed last week in Dar es Salaam.

The championship saw a competitor from In the competition from Burundi ending as winner of Kata movements, while in the Kumite section a Tanzanian karate player based in Dar es Salaam ended as winner.

In women's Kumite section, a Kilimanjaro karate player emerged as winner, Kata section ended with a Dar es Salaam karate player having the last laugh.

The Director of the Information and Public Relations Department of the Tanzania Karate Federation (JKA/WF-Tz), Lawrence Mapunda, said at present the regional associations are in the process of meeting to discuss the proposals that will be included in the national karate governing body's next year's annual calendar.

He said before the joint session, the JKA/WF-Tz leaders met to evaluate various issues including competitions held this year.

He noted they moreover are assessing plans for next year as they will run two major seminars, with one set to take place mid next year, the other will take place at the end of the year.

It should be recalled that, earlier this month after the culmination of a karate seminar, known as 'Gasshuku 2020 Karate', held in Ruvuma from December 4 to December 6, various karate leaders agreed to invest their energy in the sport to ensure it spreads to all regions in the country.

The seminar focused on encouraging and evaluating local karate players' standards, including creating a good neighbourhood between one club and another.

It involved more than 50 karate players from Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Iringa regions, Masasi, Nachingwea and Nyasa districts, as well as other international federations that exist in the country.

Mapunda said that the sport's future in the country looks promising, as the training, which takes place annually, has witnessed a significant increase in number of karate players, as well as an increase in the game's clubs.

## Mbeya City FC head coach seeks to strengthen squad

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

MBEYA City FC's head coach, Mathias Lule, has made clear his plan for restructuring his squad with a view to posting good results in the 2020/21 Vodacom Premier League (VPL) and avoiding a drop to the First Division League (FDL).

The 41-year-old Ugandan coach unveiled the plan yesterday after a few days of taking charge of the side's technical bench.

Lule was in charge when Mbeya City FC was away to Gwambina FC in Misungwi, Mwanza on Tuesday, the duel ended with the squads locked to 1-1 draw.

Mbeya City FC netted the duel's opening goal via muscular forward, Kibu Prosper, on the 33rd minute but the hosts then equalized via Japhet Mayunga on the 90th minute.

The results have left Lule's Mbeya City FC sitting 17th in the domestic top flight's log with 13 points.

The club turns out to be the one with the lowest number of winning matches in the tournament, they have won only two matches against JKT Tanzania and Kagera Sugar.

In addition to winning two matches, the squad has recorded draw in seven



Mbeya City FC's new head coach, Mathias Lule.

clashes and lost eight matches.

Out of the eight losses, they have conceded four losses in a row at the beginning of this season but they too have an inferior goal difference of -20.

Coach Lule said that despite having a short time in the team, his players have shown that they have willingness to perform well.

He noted that if the players will work on the shortcomings that he identified in this mini transfer window period, then they will get better results in the second phase.

He disclosed: "If we make improvements in some positions, then we can expect to get better results especially in our future league matches, as we will use this period to work on the mistakes I have seen in the players including converting opportunities they get."

"I have seen the weakness in many matches we have been losing but the players are also wasting a lot of chances so now is the time for us to do what we see is right for the development of our team," he stated.

Lule's appointment followed a lengthy period of his inactivity after he was part of Uganda's Cranes' staff whose employment contracts were terminated upon the completion of the 2019 AFCON finals.

His other qualifications are a diploma in youth football he got in Denmark and Sweden. He is making his way back to Tanzania following his spell at Stand United in 2014.

He was then elevated to the head coach status of the Uganda U-17 national team, 'Hippos', and was later appointed as an assistant coach for the senior team, 'Cranes'.

His most remarkable achievement is helping the squad qualify for the 2019 AFCON finals and the next year's Africa Nations Championship (CHAN) which will take place in Morocco.

He, in his heyday in soccer, played for outfits, namely State House, Iganga and Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) FC, before he retired from the beautiful game to concentrate on coaching.

As a former defender, he preaches solid and compact play with occasional quick counter attacking football.

Lule's official employment contract with Mbeya City FC took effect on December 2 this year

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

