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WASHINGTON DC

Urbanisation as a path to prosperity

Growing up in New York City in the 1970s, Edward Glaeser saw a great metropolis in decline. Crime was soaring. Garbage piled up on sidewalks as striking sanitation workers walked off the job. The city teetered on the edge of bankruptcy.

By the mid-1980s, it was clear that New York would bounce back. But it could still be a scary place; there was a triple homicide across the street from his school on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Glaeser was nevertheless captivated by New York's bustling street life and spent hours roaming its neighborhoods.

"It was both wonderful and terrifying, and it was hard not to be obsessed by it," Glaeser recalls in an interview at his office at Harvard University.

Today, that sense of wonder still permeates Glaeser's work as an urban econo-

mist. He deploys the economist's theoretical tool kit to explore questions inspired by his youth in New York.

Why do some cities fail while others flourish? What accounts for sky-high housing costs in San Francisco? How does the growth of cities differ in rich and poor countries?

"I have always thought of myself as fundamentally a curious child," Glaeser, 52, says. Rather than "pushing well-established literature forward," he seeks to comprehend "something that I really don't understand when I start out."

While still a graduate student at the University of Chicago, Glaeser made his mark as a theorist of the benefits of agglomeration—the idea that dense and diverse cities are hothouses of innovation, energy, and creativity that fuel economic growth.

In the years since, his work has ranged across a



Chris Wellisz

brehtaking variety of subjects, from rent control and real estate bubbles to property rights, civil disobedience, and carbon emissions.

"For a couple decades now, Ed has been the leading thinker about the economics of place," says Lawrence

Summers, a Harvard professor who served as director of the National Economic Council under US President Barack Obama. "And the economics of urban areas are increasingly being seen as central to broad economic concerns."

Glaeser and Summers are collaborating on a study of the hardening divide between well-educated, affluent coastal regions of the United States and islands of economic stagnation in what they call the "eastern heartland," the interior

states east of the Mississippi River.

There, in cities like Flint, Michigan, the proportion of prime-age men who aren't working has been rising—along with rates of opioid addiction, disability, and mortality.

How can policy help? Traditionally, economists have been skeptical of the value of place-based policies like enterprise zones that offer tax breaks to investors, saying it is better to help people, not places.

People, they assumed, would move to where the jobs were. But labor mobility has declined in recent decades, partly because of high housing costs, partly because demand for relatively unskilled factory work has diminished.

Breaking with economic orthodoxy, Glaeser and Summers say that the federal government should tailor

pro-employment measures, such as reducing the payroll tax or increasing tax credits to low earners, to fit the needs of economically distressed areas such as West Virginia. They also make the case for boosting investment in education.

As a Chicago-trained economist, Glaeser is a strong believer in the magic of free markets and opposes measures that distort incentives. "I have always been against spatial redistribution, taking from rich areas and giving to poor areas," he says. "That doesn't mean that you want the same policies everywhere."

Urban economics seemed like a natural pursuit for Glaeser. His German-born father, Ludwig, was an architect who taught him how the built environment shapes people's lives. His mother, Elizabeth, was an asset manager who introduced him to economics. Glaeser recalls how she used the example of competing cobblers to explain marginal cost pricing.

"I remember thinking what an amazing and fascinating thing it is to think about the impact of competition," he says. He was 10 years old.

In high school, Glaeser excelled at history and mathematics. As a Princeton University undergraduate, he considered majoring in political science before choosing economics, seeing it as a path to Wall Street.

But dreams of a career in finance ended with the stock market crash of 1987, just as he started job interviews. So he opted for graduate school, because "it didn't seem like I was cutting off many options," he says.

"Then I got to Chicago, and that was when I really fell in love with economics."

Glaeser keeps a framed photograph of himself with Gary Becker, the Chicago economist and Nobel prize laureate. Becker taught him that the discipline's conceptual tools could be used to explore topics that had once been the domain of fields like sociology or anthropology—topics like racial discrimination, fertility, and the family.

"It was that sense of the creative side of economics that could work on a virtually unlimited canvas and try to make sense of any problem that you thought was important—that was the part that was so exciting to me," Glaeser says.

At the time, Chicago economists Robert Lucas and Paul Romer were developing the so-called endogenous growth theory, which focused on the role of innovation and the exchange of ideas in economic development.

As Glaeser recalls it, Lucas pointed to cities as places where knowledge spillovers occur—meaning people can benefit from other people's ideas without paying for them. Think of a city like Detroit early last century, where Henry Ford used his experience as chief engineer at the Edison Illuminating Company to start his automobile business.

That concept inspired a groundbreaking 1992 paper, "Growth in Cities," Glaeser and three co-authors set out to use cities as a laboratory in which to test the new growth theories. Using 30 years of data covering 170 US cities, they found that local competition and diversity, rather than specialization, are the prime motors of urban growth.

The paper instantly made Glaeser a star and earned him a job offer from Harvard.

Glaeser "showed that urban variety, not specialization in one particular thing, was a big driver of employment growth," says Joseph Gyourko, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and a long-time collaborator. "It was Ed's first really well-cited article, so it did start him on his path."

Gyourko and Glaeser started working together in the early 2000s, when Glaeser took a year's sabbatical at Penn. They wondered why some cities, such as Detroit, declined so slowly, and why so many people stayed instead of moving elsewhere. They hit upon a simple answer: housing is durable, and as cities slump, it becomes cheaper to live there.

That insight prompted a related question: Why is housing so much more expensive than the cost of construction in cities like New York and Boston? The answer: land-use restrictions limit density, curbing the supply of housing and driving up prices. It was basic economics, yet until then, urban economists hadn't focused on the role of regulation.

Glaeser argues that excessive regulation is destructive of the very essence of urban life—density. Cities thrive on the creativity that occurs when people living cheek by jowl exchange ideas and know-how. Sunbelt cities like Houston have grown because an easy regulatory environment keeps housing inexpensive.

To economists like Glaeser, building and zoning regulations are a tax on development. Some level of tax makes economic sense, because construction imposes costs on residents in the form of noise, congestion, and pollution.

But overly stringent regulation, often pushed by residents who want to keep out newcomers and protect their property values, can make housing unaffordable for most people.

Glaeser is similarly skeptical of historic preservation rules, to the dismay of followers of Jane Jacobs, the legendary critic of urban-renewal projects who celebrated the lively street life of New York's old ethnic neighborhoods.

Glaeser is a big Jacobs fan—he owns an autographed copy of her 1961 classic, 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities—but argues that her efforts to oppose development in Greenwich Village were at odds with her support for low-income housing.

"I believe that many of our oldest buildings are treasures," he says. "But don't simultaneously pretend that that's a route toward affordability. Affordability is created by mass-produced cheap housing or mass-produced cheap commercial space. And you might not like it aesthetically, but that is the affordable route."

In 2000, Glaeser published "Consumer City," a paper he wrote with Jed Kolko and Albert Saiz. In it, he took the concept of agglomeration a step further, arguing that people are drawn not only to the opportunities that cities offer, but also to amenities such as theaters, museums, and restaurants.

"We know that cities can attract the disproportionately young and innovative," says Richard Florida, a professor of urban studies at the University of Toronto. "Ed was identifying the factors driving that, this whole idea that cities are not only places of production, but places of consumption."



PUBLICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Issued pursuant to regulations 7 and 8 of the Banking and Financial Institutions (Disclosures) Regulations, 2014

PUBLICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT DECEMBER, 2019

Table with columns: Current Quarter 31.12.2019, Current Quarter 30.09.2019. Rows include Assets (Cash, Balances with Bank of Tanzania, Investments in Government securities, etc.) and Liabilities (Deposits from other banks, Customer deposits, etc.).

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

Table with columns: Current Quarter 31/12/2019, Comparative Quarter (Previous Year) 31/12/2018, Current Year Cumulative 31/12/2019, Comparative Year Cumulative (Previous Year) 31/12/2018. Rows include Interest Income, Interest Expense, Net Interest Income, etc.

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2019

Table with columns: Share Capital, Retained Earnings, Regulatory Reserve, General Reserve, Others, Total. Rows include Current Quarter Balance at the beginning, Profit for the year, etc.

CONDENSED CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE QUARTER YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2019

Table with columns: Current Quarter 31Dec19, Previous Quarter 30Sep19, Current Year Cumulative 31Dec19, Comparative Year Cumulative 30Dec18. Rows include Cash flow from operating activities, Cash flow from investing activities, Cash flow from financing activities.

SELECTED EXPLANATORY NOTES

FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2019

In preparation of the quarterly financial statements, consistent accounting policies have been used as those applicable to the previous year audited financial statements (if there were changes during the quarter, the changes are explained as per IAS 34 & 105)

Table with columns: Name, Title, Signature, Date. Rows include Xiong Zhenglin (Chief Executive Officer), Raymond Mwaola (Finance Manager), Victoria Edward (Head of Internal Audit).

We, the undersigned directors, attest to the faithful representation of the above statements. We declare that the statements have been examined by us and, to the best of our knowledge and belief, have been prepared in accordance with international Financial Reporting Standards and the requirements of the Banking and Financial Institutions Act, 2016 and they present a true and fair view.

The Banking and Financial Institutions (Disclosures) Regulations, 2014

MINIMUM DISCLOSURES OF CHARGES AND FEES (Made under Regulation 11)

Table with columns: No., ITEM/TRANSACTION, CHARGE/FEE, TZS, USD. Rows include Current Accounts (Required minimum opening balance, Monthly service fee), Savings Accounts (Required minimum opening balance, Monthly service fee), Foreign Exchange Transaction, Loans (Processing/Arrangement/Appraisal fee), etc.

Table with columns: No., ITEM/TRANSACTION, CHARGE/FEE, TZS, USD. Rows include Savings Accounts (Required minimum opening balance, Monthly service fee), Foreign Exchange Transaction, Loans (Processing/Arrangement/Appraisal fee), etc.

We, the undersigned have examined the above information and hereby declare that the information is true and correct to the best of our knowledge and information.

Table with columns: Name, Signature, Designation, Date. Rows include Xiong Zhenglin (Chief Executive Officer), Joseph Phares (Ag: Head of Business & Operations).

NMB BANK SCORES RECORD 52PC NET PROFIT INCREASE IN 2019

By Property Watch Reporter

THE country's largest commercial bank increased its net profit by 52 percent from 97.7bn/- in 2018 to 148.6bn/- last year thanks to surging operating income, reduced impairment and prudent cost control measures.

Acting Managing Director, Ruth Zaipuna said in Dar es Salaam this week that operating income increased by 5 percent while impairment charges fell by 27 percent which resulted in flat year on year operating costs.

"The bank's interest income increased by 4 percent from 601.6bn/- in 2018 to 626.3bn/- in 2019, non-funded income increased by 14 percent from 195.9bn/- in 2018 to 224bn/- in 2019, while impairment charges dropped by 27 percent year on year from 137.3bn/- in 2018 to 100.4bn in 2019," Zaipuna said.

She said during the past year, there was a significant improvement in the quality of the bank's loan book thanks to good loan repayments by clients.

She said the Dar es Salaam based lender's total assets grew by 15 percent from over 5.68trn/- to over 6.54trn/- over the same period. "Loans and advances to customers increased to 3,619bn/-, representing a 12 percent increase from 3,272bn/- recorded in the previous year," the NMB chief added.

Correspondingly, NMB's asset growth was funded by a 629bn/- increase in customer deposits as well as the bank's retail bond, which raised 83.3bn/- in liquidity. "Overall customer deposits rose by 15 percent from 4,280bn/- in the previous



NMB Bank Plc's headquarters in Dar es Salaam.

year to 4,871bn/- in 2019," Zaipuna noted.

With approximately 22 percent market share in both loans and customer deposits, NMB has the largest balance sheet in the banking industry and remains the most profitable in the marketing

dwarfing most of Tier 1 banks.

The bank wishes to thank customers, shareholders, investors, the government and staff for their continued support, trust and confidence. We look forward to a more successful 2020, the CEO

added. NMB Bank Plc is a full service commercial bank with focus on three main business divisions, namely: retail, wholesale and Treasury instruments. With 224 physical branches and more than 800 ATMs, the bank is the

largest in the country in terms of network, profit and number of customers who peaked over three million last year backed by a strong over 3,400 staff based. The bank is listed on the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange in Tanzania.

Deputy minister dares private sector to back growth of small industries as their Indian peers

By Beatrice Philemon

THE country's private sector has been challenged to learn from their Indian peers on how they developed the country's affluent small scale industries which constitutes the bulk of the Asian nation's manufacturing base.

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Dr Damas Ndumbaro said in Dar es Salaam last week during a closing ceremony of India's 71st republic day that small scale industries are a panacea to unemployment among youth hence an important investment vehicle to promote.

"Our founding fathers, the late Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere and the late Mahatma Gandhi have already built strong foundations for us, so it's time for Tanzania to learn from India in -terms of technology and other issues relating to industrial growth," Dr Ndumbaro said.

Currently India is the fifth largest economy in the world thanks to its competent manufacturing industry, an impressive information communication technology industry and affordable medical services industry which has attracted the bulk of global patient tourism business.

He said India is one of the largest trading partners of Tanzania accounting for 16 percent of bilateral trade while Tanzania Investment Center also ranks the Asian nation as 4th top investor in the country.

"Looking ahead I have no doubt that our partnership will broaden and strengthen further," the Deputy Minister added.

On his part, Indian High Commissioner to Tanzania, Sanjiv Kohli said his country will continue to support the aspirations of Tanzanians in- terms of training through exchange of expertise and other technological transfer support.

"As India celebrates its republic day in Tanzania today, it remains one of the most advanced nations in the field of space, ICT, biotechnology and is now the third largest economy in the world in purchasing power parity terms," Kohli noted.

He said India is indeed proud and privileged to be one of Tanzania's leading trading and investment partner as it contributes towards economic development. "While talking of development, we recognize the need to create an enabling environment of peace and stability," he noted.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TANZANIA COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY

ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED



PUBLIC NOTICE

COMPLIANCE TO REGISTER AND USE DOT TZ (.tz) DOMAIN NAME IN THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Domain names are addresses used for electronic communications specifically for e-mails and web applications. These include addresses under dot tz country code Top Level Domain (.tz ccTLD). Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has the obligation of overseeing the management and administration of .tz ccTLD resource in the country.

Section 79 of the Electronic and Postal Communications Act (EPOCA) confers upon TCRA the role of regulating all electronic communication numbering and electronic addresses and ensuring efficient use by, among other, performing an oversight role on the Management of the .tz ccTLD.

Regulation 10 sub-regulations (1) and (2) of the Electronic and Postal Communications (Electronic Communication Numbering and Addressing) Regulations Government Notice No. 62 published on 23/2/2018 provide that:-

- (1) Any company, government and non-governmental organizations, society, partnership or community registered and conducting business in Tanzania shall register and use domain names with dot-tz ccTLD;
- (2) Dot-tz Electronic Communications shall be used for all official correspondences unless where proved technically not possible.

2.0 THE NOTICE:

NOTICE is hereby given to the public and all business entities registered in Tanzania, to register and use .tz domain names in order to comply with the above Regulatory requirements.

Failure to register and use .tz domain is an offence and may attract a fine and/or imprisonment as stipulated under Electronic and Postal Communications Act. Cap.306.

3.0 REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

For .tz domain registration services visit www.karibu.tz and for more information regarding the registration of .tz domain names and other related issues kindly contact TCRA at:-

Director General,
Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority,
Mawasiliano Towers,
20 Sam Nujoma Road,
P.O. Box 474,
14414 DAR ES SALAAM.
Tel: +255 22 21 99 760 -9/+255 22 24 12 011 -2/+255 784 55 82 70-1
Email: dg@tcra.go.tz

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Director General
Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority

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Salary : Local Terms and Conditions apply

Sightsavers has an opportunity for a motivated and passionate Research Advisor with a strong interest in health and disability research to join its Policy & Strategic Programme Support team. The post holder will work with our global Research team and will be responsible for supporting research and other evidence generating activities within Sightsavers' health, education and social inclusion programmes in East, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA).

The role is incredibly varied and the post holder will be as comfortable working with programme beneficiaries in the field as they are in formal settings with academic, civil society and government partners. The post-holder will maintain a diverse portfolio of work that spans the research cycle from identification of problems and developing funding applications, conducting research through to dissemination of results for programme, policy and academic purposes.

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Candidates must have a postgraduate degree (or equivalent) in public health, epidemiology, statistics, social or behavioral sciences or a related discipline. They will have a good working knowledge of different research methods including both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Candidates with a good knowledge of survey research, including a practical and well-organised approach to the analysis of survey data will be of particular interest.

In addition, international travel for up to 16 weeks a year (often to rural locations) and level IV (fluency-speaking/reading/writing) English ability is required.

This is not an exhaustive list of duties or required professional skills, please read the complete Job Description for further details

Closing date: 16th February 2020
Interviews: Week commencing 2nd March 2020

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PIZZA HUT, KFC RESTAURANTS EXPAND PRESENCE IN THE MARKET

By Property Watch Reporter

DOUGH Works Limited, the franchise owners of Pizza Hut in Tanzania, has opened its eighth restaurant in the local market.

Alongside the opening of two new Pizza Hut restaurants since December last year, Dough Works recently acquired the KFC franchise comprising of four restaurants in the country in October last year.

In three months only, the KFC franchise saw a rapid expansion of two new outlets making a total of six KFC restaurants by the end of 2019. KFC currently has locations in Kariakoo, at Diamond Plaza, in Masaki, Mlimani City, T3-JNIA, and Mikochei Plaza and currently employs over 400 staff.

"We are excited to grow and reach more people with the world's most famous Pizza," the company said in a statement to announce the opening ceremony of the new Pizza Hut restaurant at Mikochei Plaza where the restaurant staff, guests and stakeholders celebrated together



A Pizza Hut outlet in Dar es Salaam.

over fresh pizzas and drinks.

Between KFC and Pizza Hut, a total of 14 outlets serve over a thousand of diners daily for lunch and dinner, while also providing home and office deliveries, bringing the world's most favourite pizza and chicken conveniently to their doorsteps, the statement added.

The company's Director, Vikram Desai shared his enthusiasm for the restaurant openings saying, "Our team at Dough Works could not be any more excited and honoured with the addition of the four new Pizza Hut & KFC locations."

"The opening of these new branches brings further convenience and a dining experience like no other to the people of Tanzania. In addition to the plan of opening more stores, we have identified locations for branches in Dodoma and are running feasibility studies for locations in Mwanza. We are thrilled to further immerse this global brand in our community, creating a further 150 new jobs by the end of 2020," Desai added.

RRA warns of hefty penalties that await property tax defaulters



An affluent part of Kigali.

KIGALI

As part of Rwanda Revenue Authority's efforts to ensure compliance in property tax registration, declaration and payment, authorities have warned of heavy fines against tax defaulters.

The warning follows an extension of the deadline for declaration and payment for property tax to January 31, 2020. Tax registration and declaration are resultant to a 2018 law determining the sources of revenue and property of decentralized entities.

Business times caught up with Ernest Karasira, the Deputy Commissioner for region and centralised tax, who gave insights into the procedures, processes for paying property taxes as well as consequences awaiting defaulters.

Below are the excerpts:

What's the scope of property tax?

Property tax is paid for immovable properties such as houses, land and land parcels. Tax payers were supposed to pay taxes for the year 2019 by December. However, at the end of December, considering the number of those who were supposed to have registered

and declared property taxes, we realised that the number was still low and that is why we extended the deadline since the issue had not mainly been caused by them.

However, there are other taxes such as rental income tax that is declared and paid for the year of 2019 and trading license paid for the year of 2020 that are always paid in January.

What are the steps in declaring and paying these taxes?

There are steps that must be followed in declaring and paying all of these three types of taxes-property tax, rental income and trading license. The first step is to register to pay the tax. After registering, the system sends an SMS to taxpayer's mobile number showing them their Tax Identification Number and password.

The next step is to declare and pay. During this time, taxpayers can use our website, RRA.GOV.RW. Under the "pay district revenues" tab as well as "Taxes" there is a provision to enter one's Tax Identification Number and password to make declarations.

All taxes one is registered for can be found on the site

and the system automatically calculates the tax you have to pay. The system creates a declaration form which one can use for payment. This document shows RRA reference number which is key and can be used to pay taxes via various mediums including bank, mobile money, MOBICASH and online banking among others. Once a paying is made upon the reference number, a confirmation message is received within 5 minutes or so.

How can a Rwandan abroad declare and pay taxes?

Those who are abroad and have TIN number and password can declare and pay from anywhere as long as they can access RRA website. What of people with limited digital skills, how do they get to navigate the system?

They can visit the nearest RRA offices in different sectors where they receive assistance on the process. Alternatively they can visit Cyber Cafes since we have trained them on supporting taxpayers.

What is the progress in paying?

For now, when you

consider the population or the total of taxpayers that were supposed to submit their declaration, there is quite a number of eligible tax payers yet to comply.

Some have registered, declared and filed but have not paid. The latest figures show that those who paid were less than 50 per cent in regards to property tax, rental income tax and trade licensing. May be this week, the number is likely to go up. We are urging all people to fast-track the payment. We will even call them on mobile phones to remind them so that they respect the deadline. Otherwise, they face penalties.

What are the consequences of not complying with the deadline?

Those who do not abide by the deadline are in two categories. The first one is "late payers": These are those who declared on time but didn't pay property tax on time. These ones pay fines equaling to 10 per cent of total amount of taxes they owed. And if they continue to delay, they pay additional fines of 1.5 per cent every month.

However, that 10 per cent is not applied every month

and never exceeds Rwf100,000 despite whatever amount of taxes. The second category are "non-filers": Those didn't declare on time and, of course, didn't pay taxes. For this category, besides the fines mentioned above (10 per cent, 1.5 per cent), they also pay an additional fine of 40 per cent of taxes that they were eligible to pay.

What would you say are the broad impacts of tax defaulting?

The consequences are many. The decentralised taxes are considered in district performance contracts and action plan. If people do not pay taxes on time, we miss our target as RRA and implementation of many projects in the country can be affected. Second, taxpayers face heavy fines which affect their personal development.

What is your target in terms of district revenue and what was the performance last year?

In 2018/2019, we collected Rwf60.6 billion in district revenues against the target of Rwf60.1 billion. In 2019/2020, we are looking to collect Rwf67.8 billion.

Africa Data Centres confirms progress on Midrand facility

JOHANNESBURG

Africa Data Centres, pan-African network of vendor- and carrier-neutral datacentres, has begun construction of its latest datacentre facility, located in Midrand, Gauteng in South Africa, and this is scheduled for completion in 2021.

The company currently has five datacentres in major regional hubs including Midrand, Cape Town, Nairobi, Harare and Kigali. According to Xavier Matagne, Group Development Director at Africa Data Centres, the new facility is unique because certain elements of the project will be built on-site, while others, most notably the critical plant rooms, are prefabricated off-site and added at the appropriate phase of construction.

"These modules, which are essential to operations, will be built in factories abroad where they can be thoroughly tested before being shipped to South Africa and plugged into the building," he says.

Matagne cites several reasons for this approach; "Firstly, to ensure the highest standards and quality, it is better to test these modules in a controlled environment as opposed to a construction environment. Secondly, given the time pressures that are natural for this type of project prefabricating them in this way, significantly reduced time to market."

Matagne says the new facility will not only boost the South African economy by creating employment, but it will also enhance the local market through the addition of global skills.

"Our new facility will offer customers the flexibility they require from a co-location facility, irrespective of whether they are a small business needing a single low-density rack or one of the largest enterprises requiring multiple very high-density racks" he adds.

Africa Data Centres believes the facility is unique in that it has been specifically designed to distribute power and cooling efficiently and cost-effectively "to meet a wide range of customer demands and densities."

Matagne adds that the company fully understand the energy challenges South Africa is currently facing and as such, efficiency is a major focus at the Johannesburg data centre.

"We will be monitoring the facility 24/7/365 and continually looking for ways to reduce power consumption, through the design and operations." Over and above being power efficient the facility has been designed to be fully scalable, he explains.

"From day one, it will be possible to operate the data centre, even with a limited amount of electrical and mechanical equipment installed and we will incrementally increase the capacity of the site as the IT load starts to grow."

In November 2019, Stephane Duproz, chief executive officer, Africa Data Centres, spoke to ITWeb Africa on the sidelines of AfricaCom, and said there was a major opportunity to develop and leverage a network of neutral datacentres across the continent.



Inside Africa Data Centres facility in Midrand, South Africa.

Manufacturers want tax breaks on warehouses

NAIROBI

Manufacturers want buyers of warehouses to be shielded from taxation from the fiscal year starting July 1 to lower operating costs for factories and spur uptake of unoccupied property.

In proposals forwarded to the Treasury and National Assembly for consideration in Finance Bill 2020, the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) is pushing for a 100 per cent investment deduction allowance for investors who buy space for manufacturing purposes.

This, if passed, will see manufacturers who buy space for operations deduct cash equivalent of the cost of the property from earnings before taxation. The proposal seeks to give manufacturers who buy warehouses the same tax incentive enjoyed by those who build new property under the Income Tax Act where investment deduction is 100 per cent.

The investment deduction rises to 150 per cent of capital expenditure for manufacturers who spent more than Sh200 million on building or machinery outside Nairobi.

CONSTRUCTION

CENTRAL LONDON HOUSE SALES SOAR AS BUYERS OVERCOME 'BREXIT DIP'

LONDON

Central London property buyers seem to no longer be phased by "the Brexit dip" following the victory for the Conservatives in the general election, with sales increasing by 34 per cent in last quarter of 2019 compared to the same period the previous year.

New research from property data firm LonRes shows that central London house prices rose 2.4 per cent in Q4 2019 following five consecutive quarters of price falls, driven by three years of Brexit turmoil.

The report found the increase in sales was most pronounced on homes costing over £5 million where there was a 78 per cent increase compared to the fourth quarter of 2018. This followed a slow third quarter of 2019, when deals over £5 million fell by 33 per cent on the same period a year earlier as buyers held off, due to uncertainty over the British general election and Brexit. Property buyers also held off due to potential changes to stamp duty rates mooted by the government.

"The market was improving prior to the election but the result has sustained activity. In the sec-

ond half of 2019 despite political uncertainty buyers were seeing value in prime central London and started to return," Marcus Dixon, head of research at LonRes told The National.

"For overseas buyers too a weaker sterling created buying opportunities," Mr Dixon added. In the run up to the general election on December 12, the opposition Labour party said in its manifesto that it would tax holiday homes an extra £3,200 a year each. Such a move may have stoked fear for some property buyers in the capital.

For properties over £5m the increase in activity was not matched by rising prices in the final quarter, with buyers paying on average 4.5 per cent less per square foot than in Q4 2018. Properties priced between £2m and £5m increased by 41.7 per cent in the final quarter of last year compared to the corresponding period in 2018, while prices rose 3.2 per cent.

Properties priced under £2m increased by 19.7 per cent year-on-year, but the market saw a 3.3 per cent fall in achieved prices. The number of homes sold in the final quarter of 2019 was up 20 per cent compared with the same three months last year.

Mr Dixon said: "Undoubtedly there were sales in Q4 that would have ordinarily gone through in Q3, yet comparing the second half of 2019 with 2018 still shows a 19 per cent increase in sales volumes.

"Fewer [available] properties, with sustained levels of demand helped push up average prices which increased by 2.4 per cent across prime central London in Q4 2019 compared with the last three months of 2018. This represented the first annual increase for six quarters.

A fourth quarter survey from LonRes subscribers seen by The National found that nearly 40 per cent of participants said demand from the Middle East had increased from the same time last year. 45.4 per cent thought demand from the region had stayed the same while only 16 per cent believed it had decreased.

Another survey on Thursday gave a promising outlook for London house prices, indicating that the capital was benefiting from a post-election relief spike. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) reported that the number of surveyors reporting new buyer enquiries jumped to its highest level since January 2016.



Parts of high end apartments in London.

Australia's CIMIC expects to take \$1.8bn hit on Middle East exit

DUBAI

Australian contracting group Cimic is exiting the Middle East, a move which it says, could result in an \$1.8 billion hit to its bottom line.

The company, formerly known as Leighton Contracting, owned a minority stake in BIC Contracting, formerly known as Habtoor Leighton Group, since 2007, but is now in talks with a "shortlist of potential acquirers for all or part of BICC", the company said in a statement to the Australian stock exchange, where its share trade.

"In addition, in the

context of an accelerated deterioration of local market conditions, BICC is engaging in confidential discussions with its lenders, creditors, clients and other stakeholders," Cimic said in its statement.

"After thorough evaluation of all available options, Cimic has decided to exit the region and to focus its resources and capital allocation on growth opportunities in its main core markets and geographies."

Leighton Contracting bought a 45 per cent stake in Dubai-based businessman Khalaf Al Habtoor's contracting arm, Al Habtoor

Engineering, in September 2007 for A\$870m. The company was involved in a number of flagship projects around the region, including the construction of Dubai's Jumeirah Beach Hotel, work on both Abu Dhabi and Dubai's international Airports and the building of Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank's headquarters. It is currently working on the construction of residences at Dubai's Al Habtoor City.

However, the subsequent slump in the UAE property market led to the company extending millions of dollars of loans and injecting further equity into the business. A

plan to have the business "IPO ready" by 2016 and float it on a regional exchange never materialised, and Mr Al Habtoor sold his stake in 2016, after which the business was renamed BIC Contracting.

"CIMIC has reassessed its financial exposure to BICC, mainly shareholder loans and financial guarantees. CIMIC will recognise a one-off post-tax impact of around \$1.8 billion in its 2019 financial statements, representing all of CIMIC's exposure in relation to BICC," the company's statement said.

This will include a cash outlay of about \$700

million this year as financial guarantees relating to BICC liabilities materialise, it added. Aside from the hit it will take on writing down its BICC stake, the company said it expects to achieve a net profit of A\$800m for 2019.

Cimic Group is majority-owned by Germany's Hochtief, which is owned by Spanish construction giant Actividades de Construcción y Servicios. ACS said in a separate statement on Thursday that Cimic's exit from the Middle East will have a "one-time negative impact" of €400m on its result.



Contractor BICC has built the hotels and residential towers at the Habtoor City complex in Dubai.

French company to build world's first factory to produce hydrogen from wind

PARIS

French start-up Lhyfe is about to open the world's first wind-powered hydrogen production facility, according to a report by website Windpower Monthly.

The plan is to construct an electrolyser, which extracts hydrogen from water, powered by eight-turbines. The demonstrator plant is earmarked for Bouin, a commune 50km southwest of Nantes on France's Atlantic coast. The site is owned by the local council, which is one of three local authorities in the Vendée region to have invested €3m in the plan.

"This is the first time an industrial-sized electrolyser will be powered with 100% renewable energy," the start-up's founder, Matthieu Guesné, told Windpower Monthly. As well as the production plant, the company will build an R&D centre and offices on a 4,000 sq m site. Construction is due to begin in the next few months and be completed at the beginning of 2021.

The Nantes-based company, which was founded in 2017, aims to produce hydrogen by splitting HO₂ molecules and to sell it at

about the same price as petrol or diesel. By 2021, the company hopes to be producing 1,000kg a day, to be delivered initially to the nearby town of La Roche-sur-Yon, where a hydrogen station will be installed to fuel buses and refuse collection vehicles. The company hopes other towns in the Vendée will also adapt vehicles to use the fuel.

If the plant is successful, Lhyfe plans to offer it as a modular turnkey solution that can be powered by all forms of renewable energy. In the future, the company intends to produce hydrogen from offshore wind projects. Guisné said: "The idea is to have small dedicated offshore wind projects, about 50km from the coast where they cannot be seen and where wind is constant."

On 16 January, Lhyfe announced that it had raised €8m from four investors: lubrication company Noria, Vendée Energie, wastewater company Ovide, development agency Ouest Croissance and finance company Océan Participations. Hydrogen from water, known as "green" hydrogen, has a lower carbon footprint than "blue" hydrogen from natural gas or "brown" hydrogen from coal.

Saudi investors in talks to buy London's Ritz hotel, says report

LONDON

A private investment group representing wealthy Saudi Arabian families is reportedly in talks to buy London's famous Ritz hotel.

Sir David and Sir Frederick Barclay were reviewing interest from Sidra Capital in Jeddah, the Financial Times reported on Monday. The Ritz, one of London's most famous properties, has not changed ownership in 25 years.

The amount offered for the hotel is not known, but a financial source said the Barclays wanted at least £750 million. The process to sell the five-star hotel has been under way for several weeks and several parties have expressed interest in it, the source said.

The sale was first discussed last year when the Barclay brothers announced a review of their business interests. The five-star hotel has long been a symbol of

high society and luxury. It opened in 1906 and was named after its developer, Cesar Ritz.

It has hosted a range of well-known figures, including comedy actor Charlie Chaplin and former prime minister David Lloyd George.

The Saudi group has had its eye on the British capital's hotel sector, having lost a bid to buy Grosvenor House on Park Lane in 2018. It already owns a string of properties in the UK, including Kinnaid House, near Trafalgar Square.

Sidra also has investments in buildings in Scotland on lease to Sainsbury's, Britain's second largest supermarket, and a Travel Lodge in London Heathrow Airport's Terminal 5. It also owns property in the US, the UAE and in the Netherlands, including 89 high-end villas that are part of the Living Legends project in Dubai.

WORLD

Brexit: Tears and cheers as EU lawmakers give final nod

BRUSSELS

The European Parliament gave final approval to Britain's divorce from the European Union on Wednesday, paving the way for the country to quit the bloc today after nearly half a century and delivering a major setback for European integration.

After an emotional debate during which several speakers shed tears, EU lawmakers voted 621 for and 49 against the Brexit agreement sealed between Britain and the 27 other member states last October, more than three years since Britons voted out.

Thirteen lawmakers abstained and the chamber then broke into a rendition of Auld Lang Syne, a traditional Scottish folk song of farewell. Britain's 73 departing EU lawmakers headed for an "Au Revoir" party in the EU chamber after the vote.

Earlier on Wednesday, Britain's ambassador to the EU handed documents formalizing Brexit to a senior EU official. Against a backdrop of British and

EU flags at the bloc's Brussels headquarters, Tim Barrow, smiling, passed over a dark blue leather file embossed with the emblem of the United Kingdom.

After protracted divorce talks, Britain will leave the club it joined in 1973 at midnight Brussels time (2300 GMT) on Friday, when British flags will be removed from EU offices and the EU flag lowered on the British premises there.

With a status-quo transition period running only until year-end, fresh talks - covering everything from trade to security - will begin soon on a new relationship.

"We are considering a zero-tariff, zero-quota free trade agreement. But the precondition is that EU and British businesses continue to compete on a level playing field. We will certainly not expose our companies to unfair competition," European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen told the chamber.

Chief EU negotiator Michel Barnier told envoys of the remaining 27 members earlier on Wednesday that a



European Parliament President David Sassoli, center, stands with other British members of the European Parliament and members of the political group Socialist and Democrats as they participate in a ceremony prior to the vote on the UK's withdrawal from the EU at the European Parliament in Brussels, yesterday. (AP)

loose association agreement like the EU has with Ukraine should serve as the basis for new relations, diplomatic sources said.

"We will not give ground on issues that are important to us," Barnier said, according to sources briefed on the closed-door meeting.

"THE UK DIDN'T FIT"

On his last working day as a member of the European Parliament, leading Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage told reporters there was "no going back" once the UK leaves.

"The UK didn't fit, we'd be better off out," he said, describing euroscepticism as a settled view in the UK, where "Leave" won the 2016 referendum by a narrow 52 to 48 percent margin.

He said British Prime Minister Boris Johnson promised him there would be no so-called 'level playing field' clauses on fair competition in the

new EU-UK deal, highlighting a major point of contention with the bloc in the coming talks.

As Farage beamed, his Brexit Party lawmakers waved goodbye to the chamber with mini Union Jack flags and chanted "Hurray!", but their Socialist compatriot Jude Kirton-Darling choked back tears. "It's probably the saddest day of my life so far. Brexit is something that attacks the very foundation of our identity," said Kirton-Darling, who plans to stay in Brussels with her Belgian husband.

Guy Verhofstadt, a liberal EU lawmaker from Belgium and a staunch europhile, lamented Brexit as a historic debacle: "It's sad to see a country leaving that twice liberated us, twice gave its blood to liberate Europe."

As a new reality dawns on Europe from Saturday, the UK's Permanent Representation to the EU, or UKRep, will become a foreign mission - already dubbed "UKmissEU" by some.

Trump signs new N. American trade pact, shuns Democrats

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Donald Trump on Wednesday signed a new North American trade agreement during an outdoor ceremony at the White House attended by about 400 guests - but not the key Democrats who helped secure congressional passage of the deal.

Trump, on trial in the US Senate on charges of abusing power and obstructing Congress, welcomed Republican senators at the South Lawn event by name. Other guests included lawmakers from around the country, workers, farmers and chief executives, and officials from Mexico and Canada, the White House said.

The US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) will replace the 26-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement, including tougher rules on labor and automotive content but leaving \$1.2 trillion in annual US-Mexico-Canada trade flows largely unchanged.

"Today, we are finally ending the NAFTA nightmare and signing into law the brand-new US-Mexico-Canada Agreement," Trump told the crowd. Flanked by a group of Amer-

ican workers wearing hard hats, Trump said the agreement would bolster US economic growth, benefiting farmers, workers and manufacturers.

He said his concerns about NAFTA-triggered outsourcing had triggered his run for the presidency in 2016.

A wide array of business groups welcomed the agreement, which also won a rare endorsement of the AFL-CIO union federation. Mexico has already approved the deal, but it must still be ratified by Canada's parliament before it can take effect.

The influential United Autoworkers said the new deal would not restore hundreds of thousands of US manufacturing jobs lost to Mexico after NAFTA, and vowed to be aggressive in pushing for enforcement of the trade agreement's provisions.

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, a Vermont senator who voted against the pact earlier this month, said the NAFTA replacement deal would not stop the offshoring of US jobs and amounted to "a giveaway to the fossil fuel industry." He said he would immediately renegotiate the pact



if elected. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, speaking in Ottawa, said his minority government would continue to answer questions posed by various industries and other groups.

"We have questions and we have a process for ratification. I just look forward to getting, getting through it responsibly and rapidly because it's so important for Canadians," he said.

No Democrats

Excluded from the event were House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, House Ways and

Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal and other Democrats who negotiated with the Trump administration for months to expand the pact's labor, environmental and enforcement provisions and pave the way for its approval by the Democratic-controlled House.

Trump did not mention the work done by Pelosi or other Democrats on the trade pact, but US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, in his remarks at the ceremony, acknowledged the role that House leaders played in getting the deal done.

Partisan tensions were running high as US senators started to pose questions in Trump's impeachment trial, ahead of a key vote later this week on whether to allow the calling of witnesses like former national security adviser John Bolton.

The White House on Wednesday objected to the publication of a book written by Bolton that depicts Trump as playing a central role in a pressure campaign on Ukraine to launch investigations of Democrats, including former Vice President Joe Biden, a top contender for the Democratic nomination to face Trump in this year's election.

Pelosi told reporters that Democrats had ensured "vast improvements" to the USMCA before it was approved, despite their absence from Trump's White House event, adding, "I hope he understands what he's signing today."

Neal told reporters some Republican senators thought the deal was "too Democratic." He said the final accord won stronger protections for workers, better enforcement of environmental provisions and steps to prevent higher drug prices.

Representative Rosa DeLauro told reporters in a separate teleconference that Democrats would remain vigilant on oversight of the improved trade deal and would fight for even better climate protections in future trade deals.

The US Senate this month overwhelmingly approved legislation to implement the USMCA, sending the measure to Trump for signing into law.

US lawmakers said it was unclear when the accord would take effect, since Canada's main opposition Conservative Party had expressed concerns about aspects of the deal and there was no exact timeline for ratification there.

China deserves 'gratitude and respect' for efforts to fight virus outbreak - WHO chief

GENEVA

THE director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday that China deserves the international community's gratitude and respect for having taken very serious measures to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak and prevent exporting cases overseas.

Addressing journalists at a press conference in Geneva, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus thanked the Chinese government for the extraordinary steps it has taken to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus.

Tedros reiterated that almost 99 percent of cases and all deaths have been within China, with only 68 confirmed cases and no deaths in 15 countries and regions outside China. "For that, China deserves our gratitude and respect ... China is implementing very serious measures and we cannot ask for more," he said.

The WHO chief returned to Geneva on Wednesday from China, where he met with the Chinese leadership to discuss cooperation on implementing containment measures in Wuhan (the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak) and public measures in other cities and provinces, as well as on conducting studies on the severity and transmissibility of the virus, and sharing data and biological material.

He revealed that one of the strategies the WHO and China have agreed on and are following is serious and strong intervention at the epicenter, which helps limit the spread of the virus.

The WHO chief also thanked China for having identified the pathogen in a short time and shared it immediately, which has led to the rapid development of diagnostic tools.

"China has been completely committed to transparency, both internally and externally, and has agreed to work with other countries that need support," he reiterated, citing the latest case in Germany which, due to the immediate notification and sharing of information by the Chinese government, was very quickly identified and given medical care.

The cooperation between China and Germany in responding to the outbreak is a good illustration of how China is engaging with the WHO and other countries based on the principles of solidarity and cooperation, Tedros said.

"The level of commitment (of the leadership) in China is incredible; I will praise China again and again, because its actions actually helped in reducing the spread of the novel coronavirus to other countries ... we shall tell the truth and that's the truth," he concluded.

A WHO team of international experts is to visit China as soon as possible to increase the understanding of the outbreak and guide global response efforts.

Tedros also announced that the WHO Emergency Committee will meet again on Thursday to discuss the outbreak.

Earlier, the committee already met twice on Jan. 22 and Jan. 23, and decided that the outbreak had not been a "public health emergency of international concern," citing major reasons that the cases of infection outside China were still limited in number and that the Chinese authorities had already implemented very forceful containment measures.

Xinhua



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with visiting World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, on Wednesday. (Xinhua)

Xi's Davos speeches three years ago still bear significance today

By Chen Xu

IN early 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Switzerland and delivered two speeches at the opening session of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting and the United Nations Office at Geneva.

The two historic speeches, titled Jointly Shoulder Responsibility of Our Times, Promote Global Growth, and Work Together to Build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind, triggered sustained and wide response from the international society, and have been frequently cited by heads of international organizations and ambassadors to the United Nations.

Klaus Schwab, executive chairman of the WEF said on multiple occasions that President Xi's speeches have demonstrated Chinese wisdom and responsibility, and represented a major

highlight that is unforgettable in WEF history.

In the past three years, as economic globalization and polarization are forging ahead against headwinds, and a new round of technological and industrial revolution is gaining momentum, global countries are increasingly becoming a community with a shared future in which they see intertwined interests.

Meanwhile, the fierce gambling between major countries, the rising instability and uncertainties of the international situation, as well as the severe impacts on global governance made by unilateralism and protectionism are posing serious threats for global countries.

As a result, the world needs to re-think about how countries and civilizations should get along with each other.

At the critical moment of history,

Xi's speeches made three years ago are shining with charm and carry practical significance.

Faced with complicated international situation in the past three years, under the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee with comrade Xi Jinping at the core, Chinese diplomacy has promoted the building of a community with a shared future for mankind with concrete actions, and injected positive energy to stabilizing the general situation of the world, remaining true to its original aspiration of seeking revitalization for the nation and peace for the world.

China follows the path of peaceful development, an independent foreign policy of peace and a win-win strategy of opening-up.

By promoting the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, it is shar-

ing development opportunities with the world.

It upholds the international system with the UN at its core and the international order anchored upon international law. It actively participates in the reform and construction of the global governance system, and is a major force protecting multilateralism.

China will continue upholding the important vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind, and keep acting as a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, and an upholder of the international order.

Geneva is where Chinese multilateral diplomacy started, and also one of the most active centers for multilateral diplomacy.

In the past three years, faced with new situation, new missions and new tasks, we have firmly safeguarded na-

tional sovereignty, security and development interests, actively joined the making of international rules on human rights, strategic security and arms control, public health, intellectual property, trade development, telecommunication and labor protection, and enhanced friendly cooperation with international organizations and multilateral institutions such as the United Nations.

By making Chinese voices, raising Chinese schemes and contributing Chinese wisdom, we demonstrated China's importance, and have promoted the joint efforts for enhancing multilateral cooperation and improving global governance.

"Building a community with a shared future is an exciting goal, and it requires efforts from generation after generation. China is ready to work with all the other UN member states as

well as international organizations and agencies to advance the great cause of building a community with a shared future for mankind." As the WEF Annual Meeting 2020 has kicked off, Xi's remarks made three years ago are still resounding today.

Taking this strong spiritual power, we will carry the noble character of "not claiming credit but always making sure to contribute a share to the success of the cause," and seize the day and live it to the full, so as to make constant success of multilateral diplomacy in Geneva.

(Chen Xu is the Permanent Representative and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland.)



Students showcase the prizes they won in a celebration organized by ECNU.

International students celebrate Spring Festival in their own way in Shanghai

AS the Year of the Rat approaches, millions of Chinese people leave for their distant homes to reunite with their loved ones and celebrate the Spring Festival. Some young foreign expats, especially college students, take the opportunity to stay in China, intending to experience Chinese culture through this festival at close range.

Baek Seohui, a junior student learning commercial Chinese in East China Normal University (ECNU) in Shanghai, told the Global Times that people in South Korea celebrate their New Year's Day on the same day Chinese do.

Reunion and communication

"We wear traditional costumes and eat niangao [a special treat made of glutinous rice flour] soup to celebrate our New Year's Day," she noted. "During China's Spring Festival, all things are in red. I felt strange the first time I saw it. But now, I feel a sense of happiness when I see red."

Baek goes back to South Korea every year to celebrate New Year's Day. This is the first year she is celebrating in China. On Thursday night, ECNU hosted around 200 international students from 40 countries and regions with Chinese cuisine and interactive games.

"It [the party] is an opportunity to make friends, just as important as reunion with old friends," Canadian national Ian Heystee, an exchange student at ECNU, told the Global Times.

"Zodiac years are a big deal here in China and I've been asked often what my animal year is," he said.

Indonesian students in Shanghai University of Sport (SUS) tried a small-scale Chinese style gala held on their campus on Thursday, January 16, which featured singing, a Chinese calligraphy event with their teachers, singing together, a violin performance and even a Wushu performance.

Rahmadani Eka Anjar, together with nine of her Indonesian companions, presented their own performance by singing "Sing Sing So" in both Indonesian and Chinese languages. It is an Indonesian folk song also famous in China.

Eka is excited for the upcoming festival. "I think for Chinese people, Spring Festival is quite a big day. We really want to know what it is," she said, noting that she and her classmates will go around Shanghai to see how people celebrate

the festival. "If there is any chance, we also want to join them," she said.

Music has no boundaries. When waiting for their turn at the back stage, an Indonesian student playing the guitar and a Chinese student playing the violin came together to sing English and Chinese lyrics, with the others humming to the beats in unison.

"The music creates sparks by which Chinese and foreign students naturally resonate, communicate and integrate with each other," said Niu Tingting, an SUS teacher in charge of international students' affairs.

She hopes such activities could let them know more about Chinese culture and also bring them a sense of belonging.

Finally belonging

Shanghai's night view along the Huangpu River is iconic enough to attract both frequent and new visitors. Despite cold winter temperatures, the international students of Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) were awestruck by the view from a cruise along the river on January 14.

While sailing to the Lujiazui area, the crowd on board burst into "wows." "Shanghai is so beautiful," Pakistani student Ume Habiba said excitedly.

This is her second year spending the Spring Festival in China. "We are going to Harbin in Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, where my Chinese friends will welcome us to their home and [we will] join some traditional activities and eat local food like dumplings," she said.

"During Spring Festival, China looks so beautiful everywhere," Habiba said. "I love being in China. We feel like [we are] at home because Chinese people are so helping and supportive."

Italian Chinese Liu Xin, a 23-year-old SISU graduate student, plans to visit her grandmother who is still living in China.

"I am looking forward to seeing how people celebrate the festival here," Liu said, explaining that this is her first time spending the festival in China, where her parents were born.

"Italian Chinese living in Milan value Spring Festival a lot," Liu said. The local Chinese organize lion dancing while people teach Italian friends to make dumplings and understand Chinese traditions, Liu noted.

Global Times

Jack Ma pledges US\$14.5 million to help fight coronavirus

By Bloomberg

ALIBABA co-founder Jack Ma has become the latest technology industry figure offering to help fight the coronavirus outbreak.

China's richest man will donate 100 million yuan (US\$14.5 million) through his charitable foundation, joining Bill and Melinda Gates in pledging assistance.

That's on top of an offer by his Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. to establish a 1 billion yuan fund and share its artificial intelligence expertise with researchers.

"We know that the battle between



humanity and disease is a long journey," the foundation said in a post on its Twitter-like Weibo account. "This money will help various medical research efforts and help disease prevention."

China's tech industry has responded

rapidly to an outbreak that's infected thousands and killed more than 150 around the globe.

Pony Ma's Tencent Holdings Ltd. donated 300 million yuan of goods and will provide mapping and data services; ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing is ferrying medical workers in designated vehicles across certain cities; Robin Li's Baidu Inc. and TikTok owner ByteDance Inc. are contributing financial aid.

While Ma and his industry have been accused of foisting extreme overtime on its employees, many companies like Tencent have extended the Lunar New Year holidays by a week or more in the wake of the outbreak. **Agencies**

As coronavirus multiplies, there's also good news

By Wang Xiaodong, Zou Shuo in Beijing, Yang Cheng in Tianjin, and Lia Zhu in San Francisco

THE number of confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus on the Chinese mainland has exceeded the total number of SARS cases recorded during that outbreak 17 years ago. But there is no need to panic, experts said on Wednesday, even though more cases are expected over the next few days.

The number of confirmed cases of the new coronavirus reached 5,974 on Tuesday an increase of 1,459 over the day before, including 132 deaths, since the outbreak was first reported late December, according to the National Health Commission on Wednesday.

In addition, the number of suspected cases rose to 9,239.

In Hubei province, the epicenter of the outbreak, 840 new cases were reported on Tuesday, bringing the total number of confirmed cases there to 3,554.

A suspected case was reported on Tuesday in the Tibet autonomous region, which, if confirmed, would mean that every province, autonomous region and municipality on the mainland has acquired the novel coronavirus.

Wednesday's data mean the new virus has exceeded the spread of SARS in its first month. With SARS severe acute respiratory syndrome a total of 5,327 severe cases were reported on the Chinese mainland between the end of 2002 and Aug 16, 2003, including 349 deaths, according to what was then the Ministry of Health.

In addition, cases of infected foreigners on the mainland were first reported in South China's Guangdong province as of Wednesday.

Guangzhou released on Wednesday a public letter and details of multilingual service hotlines for foreigners to



Workers bring the pieces together. Work is expected to be done by Feb 3, about seven days after it began.

get help. Wuhan and Tianjin also have provided foreigners with timely consultations and assistance on epidemic prevention and control by opening a 24-hour hotline service.

Zhong Nanshan, a prominent expert in respiratory diseases and a member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, said the recent novel coronavirus outbreak may hit its peak in a week or 10 days. The outbreak will not last as long as the SARS outbreak more than five months in part because of strong measures to contain the outbreak adopted by the central government, he said.

There are still no effective drugs to combat the virus, but researchers and medical staff have been working on several methods, and life-support technologies have improved greatly since SARS, so the death rate will be less, he told Xinhua News Agency.

So far, there has been no official statement about when the epidemic will peak or how long it will last. Gauden Galea, the World Health Organization's representative in China, said in an earlier interview with China Daily

that the WHO is organizing a number of researchers to model the case numbers, but no conclusion has been reached yet.

Zeng Guang, chief epidemiologist at the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said that compared with SARS, which involved many critical cases, the recent coronavirus outbreak is less severe. People in a large number of confirmed cases showed mild symptoms, according to a report in Health Times on Wednesday.

However, the new virus is more difficult to control and prevent than SARS. It can jump between humans during incubation, which lasts up to 14 days, he said.

With the lockdown of Wuhan, Hubei province, the presumed source of the outbreak, the number of cases exported from the city will gradually be reduced, and the rise in cases in other parts of China will likewise slow, Zeng said.

Meanwhile, warming weather will also restrain the spread of respiratory diseases and contribute to control and prevention, he said. **Agencies**

UN seeks 70m USD to control locust plague in Horn of Africa

NAIROBI

THE Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) said Wednesday it requires 7 billion shillings (about 70 million U.S. dollars) to tackle the locust plague that has already infested the Horn of Africa.

FAO said the funds will be used to support rapid control operations and meas-

ures to protect livelihoods and prevent deterioration of the food security situation.

"It is the worst outbreak of Desert Locusts seen in the region for decades," FAO said in its latest update on the Desert Locust upsurge, warning of an unprecedented threat to food security and livelihoods especially in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia.

According to FAO's latest update, the current situation would be further worsened by new breeding that will produce more locust infestations in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. South Sudan and Uganda are at risk and there is also concern about new swarms forming in Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen.

"As swarms continue to rise there is now serious concern that South Sudan

and Uganda are under threat because some of the swarms in Kenya are only 200kms from the country's borders with its neighbors," the FAO said.

Keith Cressman, FAO's senior locust forecasting officer, said locust swarms have started laying eggs and another generation of breeding will increase locust numbers.

"Urgent efforts must be made to stop

them from increasing to protect the livelihoods of farmers and livestock holders," Cressman said.

According to FAO, tens of thousands of hectares of croplands and pasture have been damaged in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia with potentially severe consequences in a region where 11.9 million people are already food insecure.

Xinhua

Xinhua

Qingdao sees improved infrastructure for NEVs

AS one of the first batch of pilot cities for new energy vehicle (NEV) application, Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province is seeing rapid growth of the number of NEVs and charging facilities since 2013.

Li Ting is a civil servant working in the city's West Coast New Area who used to commute between his office and home by a gasoline-fueled vehicle. Now, with improved ecology for NEVs, Li has turned into a big fan of electric cars.

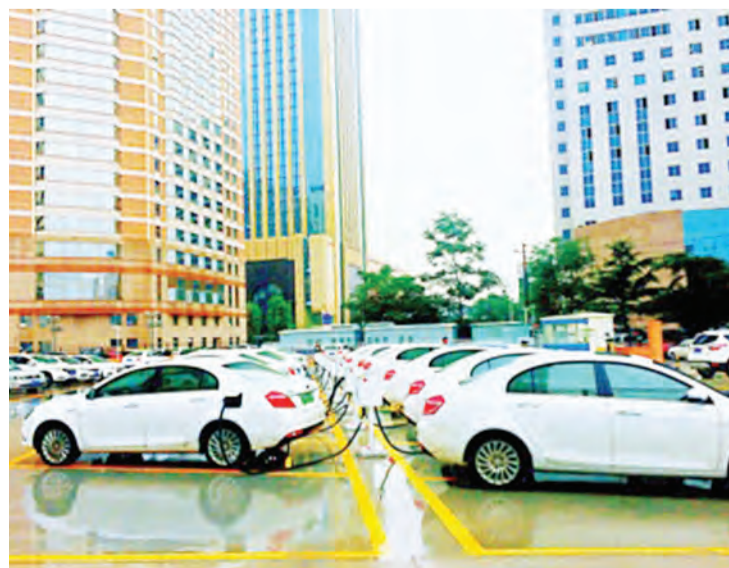
After the Spring Festival of 2019, Li bought a two-seat electric car and received a green plate - one that is exclusive for NEVs. Now he drives the new car to work every day.

"The car is small and flexible,

so it is easy to make U-turns and park. That's why I bought it," Li explained, saying the NEV makes less noise and has a quick launch.

What's more, over 50 charging poles have been deployed beside Li's office building thanks to Qingdao's efforts to improve infrastructure for electric vehicles. According to Li, who drives around 30 kilometers per day commuting between offices and home, a full charge enables week-long driving.

Zhou Dachuan, general manager of an NEV project of SAIC-GM-Wuling Automobile in Qingdao, said he once installed charging poles at 10 parking spaces he rented in a residential complex in the West Coast New Area, and soon many residents there bought their



New energy vehicles are being charged at a charging station in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province. Photo provided by TELD Shandong branch

NEVs.

"The people actually need electric vehicles, and the convenient charging facilities helped us sell our cars," Zhou said.

To have a more reasonable distribution of charging infrastructure across the city, Qingdao had a thorough investigation of people's need in different parts of the city, and launched an online platform which makes drivers find charging poles more easily.

At present, 8 new energy companies have registered in Qingdao and started constructing and operating charging facilities, including the State Grid Electric Vehicle Service Company Shandong branch and TELD, the operator of China's largest charging network.

"To build charging infrastructure, the builders must take the layout and users' accessibility into consideration," said Ding Wei, general manager of TELD's Qingdao branch, adding that the charging speed is also an important factor.

So far, Qingdao has completed 1,122 charging stations, and 30 more are under construction. It has over 17,300 charging poles, or 3.5 for each electric vehicle. Charging stations in downtown Qingdao are built at an interval of less than 2 kilometers, and those in central area are built at an interval of less than 1 kilometer.

"We have built smart charging poles and developed a mobile application, so that the poles and users' phones are connected," Ding

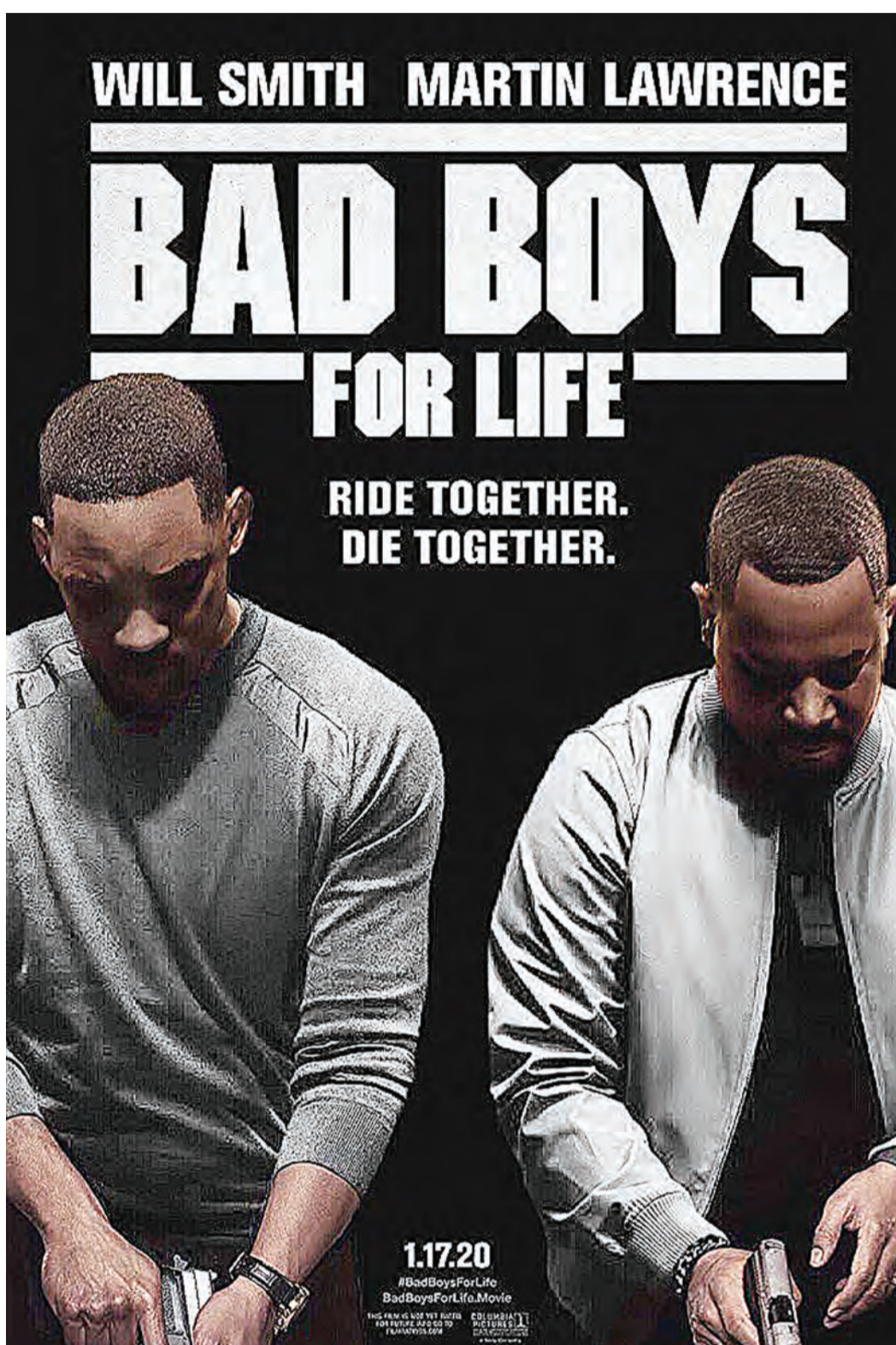
introduced. Users can search for the nearest charging stations on the application, he said.

Experts noted that to boost NEV sales, improved infrastructure alone is not enough, and relevant R&D is also needed to extend the range of electric cars

People's Daily



To build charging infrastructure, the builders must take the layout and users' accessibility into consideration



Box Office: 'Bad Boys for Life' rules over 'The Gentlemen'

LOS ANGELES

STX's "The Gentlemen" proved no match for Sony's "Bad Boys for Life," which again left box office competitors in the dust after collecting \$34 million (£25.9 million) in its sophomore outing.

Those ticket sales, pushing the Will Smith and Martin Lawrence-led sequel past the \$100 million mark, were easily enough to claim the No. 1 spot for the second consecutive weekend. The movie continues to impress and has generated \$130 million in the U.S. to date.

Though "The Gentlemen" had a respectable opening weekend, it's likely that "Bad Boys for Life" infringed upon the core demographic for "The Gentlemen," another action comedy aimed at male audiences. It debuted in fourth place, pocketing \$11 million from 2,165 venues. STX bought U.S. rights from Miramax for \$7 million; VVS Films is distributing in Canada.

"The Gentlemen" has made \$22.5 million at the international box office, where Entertainment Film, Roadshow and Miramax are handling its rollout.

The star-studded action comedy – directed by Guy Ritchie and featuring Matthew McConaughey, Charlie Hunnam and Henry Golding – follows an American expat looking to cash out of his London-based marijuana empire. But expectedly, that plan doesn't go off without a hitch. "The Gentlemen" has earned decent reviews and landed a



The star-studded action comedy – directed by Guy Ritchie and featuring Matthew McConaughey, Charlie Hunnam and Henry Golding – follows an American expat looking to cash out of his London-based marijuana empire. But expectedly, that plan doesn't go off without a hitch. "The Gentlemen" has earned decent reviews and landed a "B+" CinemaScore from moviegoers, a majority of which were males over the age of 35.

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Another new movie, Universal's thriller "The Turning," debuted in sixth place with \$7.3 million, in line with expectations. Surprisingly, even with an "F" CinemaScore from audiences, "The Turning" had a bigger opening weekend than "Cats," the studio's recent big-budget flop that lost the studio around \$100 million. "The Turning, based on a 1989 haunted ghost tale, centres on a nanny (Mackenzie Davis) tasked with taking care of two disturbed orphans (Finn Wolfhard and Brooklynn Prince).

In second place, Universal's "1917" impresses again in theatres after adding a strong \$15.8 million in its third weekend of wide release. Director Sam Mendes' World War I epic, widely seen as this year's Oscars frontrunner, hit triple digits this weekend with its domestic haul sitting at \$104.2 million. Overseas, "1917" amassed \$23.71 million from 50 foreign territories, bringing ticket sales to \$96.6 million internationally and \$200 million worldwide.

Another awards darling, Sony's "Little Women," is approaching a similar milestone in the U.S. Greta Gerwig's take on the classic tale has made a sizable \$93.75 million to date. The A-list adaptation placed at No. 8, bringing in another \$4.7 million.

Universal's "Dolittle," the latest take on the vet who can speak to animals, landed at No. 3, pulling in \$12.5 million for a domestic tally of \$44 million. The family friendly adventure starring Robert Downey Jr. cost \$180 million to produce, meaning it'll need to play in theatres for a significant amount of time to avoid losing money.

In box office milestones, Disney's "Star Wars: Rise of Skywalker" surpassed the \$500 million mark, one of 15 films to ever reach that benchmark. Globally, the final film in the sequel trilogy has made \$1.046 billion.

Through the last week in January, overall domestic box office sales remain up over 12% from 2019. Theatres are expected to get another jolt in February when Warner Bros. comic-book adventure "Birds of Prey" graces the big screen.

REUTERS

Vanessa Bryant statement: 'We are completely devastated'

BY TIM REYNOLDS

VANESSA Bryant made her first public comment Wednesday since the helicopter crash that killed her husband Kobe Bryant, one of their daughters and seven others, taking to Instagram to thank people for the global outpouring of support since the tragedy.

She also announced the formation of a fund to help support the other families that were affected by the crash.

"Thank you for all the prayers. We definitely need them," Vanessa Bryant wrote. "We are completely devastated by the sudden loss of my adoring husband, Kobe – the amazing father of our children; and my beautiful, sweet Gianna – a loving, thoughtful, and wonderful daughter, and amazing sister to Natalia, Bianka, and Capri. We are also devastated for the families who lost their loved ones on Sunday, and we share in their grief intimately."

The Bryants would have celebrated their 19th wedding anniversary this April. They had four daughters including Gianna, the 13-year-old who died in the crash.

"There aren't enough words to describe our pain right now," Vanessa Bryant wrote. "I take comfort in knowing that Kobe and Gigi both knew that they were so deeply loved. We were so incredibly blessed to have them in our lives. I wish they were here with us forever. They were our beautiful blessings taken from us too soon."

It was the first statement from the Bryant family since the crash. The Los Angeles Lakers – the team that Bryant spent 20 years with, winning five championships – held a media availability Wednesday as well, the team's first since learning of Bryant's death.

The Lakers were to play against the Los Angeles Clippers on Tuesday, a game the NBA postponed out of respect to Bryant, the other victims and the grieving process. The Lakers will next play on Friday, at home against Portland.

"I'm not sure what our lives hold beyond today, and it's impossible to imagine life without them," Vanessa Bryant wrote. "But we wake up each day, trying to keep pushing because Kobe, and our baby girl, Gigi, are shining on us to light the way. Our love for them is endless –

er



In this April 13, 2016, file photo, Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant poses for pictures with his wife Vanessa, left, and daughters Natalia, second from right, and Gianna as they stand on the court after an NBA basketball game against the Utah Jazz, in Los Angeles. Bryant, the 18-time NBA All-Star who won five championships and became one of the greatest basketball players of his generation during a 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers, died in a helicopter crash Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. (AP Photo)

and that's to say, immeasurable. I just wish I could hug them, kiss them and bless them. Have them here with us, forever."

There has been no announcement on funeral or memorial plans yet for Kobe and Gianna Bryant. Vanessa Bryant asked for a continued respect of her family's privacy as they begin to "navigate this new reality."

Meanwhile, the crash that killed nine people including Kobe Bryant has led to calls for crash-warning systems to be installed in more helicopters, but regulators and pilots worry that the instrument can trigger too many alarms and prove distracting.

"Another warning system screaming at you isn't going to help," said Brian Alexander, a helicopter pilot and aviation lawyer. "You don't want to inundate the pilot."

All nine people killed in the crash were officially identified as of Wednesday night, according to the Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner. The victims had previously been identified publicly by friends and family.

The death of the basketball star Sunday has highlighted the debate over the merits of what's known as the Terrain Awareness and Warning System, or TAWS, which would have sounded a voice alarm if the aircraft was in danger of hitting the ground or some object, such as a tower or a wire.

It is required in medical

helicopters but not in commercial ones like the one used by Bryant.

National Transportation Safety Board officials say it is too early to tell whether a TAWS on Bryant's Sikorsky helicopter could have prevented the crash. But they think it should have been installed on the aircraft, and they criticized federal regulators for not carrying out the NTSB's recommendation over a decade ago to mandate such equipment on helicopters with six or more passenger seats. While some pilots believe TAWS is unnecessary and refer to its warnings as "nuisance alarms," Peter Goetz, a former managing director of the NTSB, said there is "no reasonable excuse" for the system not to be installed on all choppers.

"From a safety perspective, you want all the safety enhancements that are available," he said. "The trade-off is worth it."

The NTSB recommended that the Federal Aviation Administration require the system after a Sikorsky S-76A carrying workers to an offshore drilling ship, crashed in the Gulf of Mexico near Galveston, Texas, killing all 10 people aboard in 2004. Ten years later, the FAA mandated such systems on air ambulances only.

FAA officials had questioned the value of such technology on helicopters, which tend to fly close to buildings and the ground and could trigger too many alarms.

The pilot in Sunday's crash,

Ara Zobayan, had been climbing out of the clouds when the chartered aircraft went into a sudden and terrifying 1,200-foot (366-meter) descent that lasted nearly a minute, investigators said Tuesday. It slammed into a fog-shrouded hillside, scattering debris more than 500 feet (150 meters).

Bill English, investigator in charge of the NTSB's Major Investigations Division, said it was not clear yet whether "TAWS and this scenario are related to each other."

Pilot Bernard Ransor said the systems have improved over the years so that they don't go off all the time, and one of them may have saved him from a crash as he and another pilot were trying to land on a hospital helipad in Little Rock, Arkansas, over a decade ago.

"The TAWS alert went off: 'Obstacle! Pull up! Obstacle! Pull up!'" he recalled. "We looked at each other like 'What is this got to be?'" Then he looked around and saw it: a radio tower whose lights had gone out.

"I can't say we would have hit it, but it was closer than comfortable," he said.

Mike Sagely, a former military pilot with 35 years of helicopter flying experience who uses TAWS in his current work in the Los Angeles area, said that while he likes having the system, he agreed that the frequency of audible warnings can make some pilots tune out.

AP

Djokovic adds to Slam streak vs. Federer at Australian Open

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

NOVAK Djokovic was wondering, right along with everyone else, what sort of shape Roger Federer would be in for their Australian Open semifinal.

At age 38, despite dealing with a painful groin muscle and coming off a draining five-setter, Federer came out just fine, it seemed, and soon was up 4-1 and love-40, holding a trio of break chances as Djokovic served.

Didn't last. Federer couldn't sustain that level. Neither his body nor Djokovic would let him.

Casting aside a bit of a poor start during the rivals' 50th meeting, Djokovic stretched his Grand Slam winning streak against Federer to six in a row with a 7-6 (1), 6-4, 6-3 victory Thursday night that earned the defending champion a record eighth trip to the final at Melbourne Park.

"Today was horrible, to go through what I did. Nice entrance. Nice sendoff. And in between, it's one to forget, because you know you have a 3% chance to win," Federer said, adding that he discussed beforehand with his team how bad things would need to get for him to stop playing. "Once you can see it coming, that it's not going to work anymore, it's tough."

Djokovic now leads their head-to-head series 27-23, including 11-6



Switzerland's Roger Federer, right, congratulates Serbia's Novak Djokovic on winning their semifinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 30, 2020. (AP Photo)

at majors. Federer hasn't beaten him at one of the sport's four most important tournaments since 2012.

"I just want to say, respect to Roger for coming out tonight. He was obviously hurt," Djokovic said. "Wasn't at his best."

The No. 2-seeded Djokovic will try to collect a record-extending eighth Australian Open title on Sunday against No. 5 Dominic Thiem or No. 7 Alexander Zverev.

Djokovic also can claim a 17th major trophy overall to move closer to Federer's record of 20. Rafael Nadal, beaten by Thiem in the quarterfinals, is at 19.

In the women's final Saturday,

it'll be two-time major champion Garbiñe Muguruza of Spain against 21-year-old Sofia Kenin of the United States. It's Kenin's debut in a Grand Slam title match.

Clearly, for Djokovic vs. Federer, everything hinged on the first hour or so.

They played on a muggy, sweltering evening, with the temperature in the high 90s (high 30s Celsius) and no breeze to offer respite.

Almost from the moment his wild quarterfinal ended Tuesday after he'd saved seven match points and eked past Tenny Sandgren in five sets, speculation swirled about how well Fe-

derer would recover.

Might the muscle issue force him to pull out of the tournament? Why didn't he practice Wednesday?

As it happens, Federer showed up, of course. And gave what he could until the end.

He's never handed an opponent a walkover across more than 400 Grand Slam matches, never retired from any of his more than 1,500 career tour-level matches.

"I don't think I would have gone on court if I had no chance to win," Federer said. "We saw I was still able to make a match out of it."

Indeed, Federer appeared to be managing just fine at the outset.

And, oh, did this match set out well, in terms of the atmosphere, in terms of the tension, in terms of the tennis.

The proceedings began with a jolt of a 14-point game as a fugue of "Let's go, Roger!" and "No-le! No-le!" provided the soundtrack, prompting chair umpire Nico Helwetter to passively aggressively admonish spectators: "Please. Thank you."

There was an exchange of 17 strokes. Another of 15. There were two break points for Djokovic, nullified with the help of formidable serves. Federer took the game with three aces, three other clean winners and then broke to go up 2-0 on his way to 4-1. AP

Klopp doesn't care about records as Liverpool close in on title

LONDON

JURGEN Klopp insisted Liverpool are not motivated by making history after the runaway leaders took another step towards the Premier League title with a 2-0 win at West Ham on Wednesday.

Klopp's side have turned the title race into a procession and they moved 19 points clear at the top with their 23rd victory from 24 league games this season.

Mohamed Salah opened the scoring with a first half penalty at the London Stadium and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain wrapped up Liverpool's 15th successive league win after the interval.

Second placed Manchester City are now so far behind Liverpool that the question is not if but when the Reds clinch their first English league title since 1990.

The Reds have won 31 of their past 32 league fixtures, only dropping points in a 1-1 draw at Manchester United in October.

With 14 games left, Liverpool's incredible run has given historic overtones to their impending title coronation.

But Klopp is only concerned about getting Liverpool over the finish line, with any landmarks set on the way merely the icing on the cake.

"In a season you have to dig in, you don't breathe pretty much, then after 38 games you come out of the water and see how you did," Klopp said.

"I'm not too much concerned about records. We had a record at Dortmund and Bayern beat it the next season.

"I don't want to be boring. We just don't feel like that."

The European and World champions are now 41 games unbeaten in the league -- just eight away from the 49-match English top-flight record set by Arsenal's 'Invincibles' across 2003 and 2004.

Matching that Arsenal team's achievement in going an entire league season without defeat is within Liverpool's reach, as is Manchester City's Premier League record of 100 points.

- 'Proper history' -
Liverpool's latest success on a

chilly night in east London will be just a footnote when the full story of their likely title triumph is written, but they still managed to record another small piece of history.

They have now beaten all 19 of the other teams in the league at least once this season -- the first time the club have achieved that feat in the top-flight.

Told of the milestone, Klopp maintained his only motivation was to get the best from his team in each match, but he did stop to briefly salute the achievement.

"This game, it was not a brilliant performance. The difficulty tonight was to get rhythm, keep rhythm and stay concentrated. Their biggest chances came because we gave them away," he said.

"I trust these boys 100 percent with my kids, but they still made these ridiculous mistakes. It's completely normal that you don't always perform at the highest level.

"It is not a motivational problem for us. We are Liverpool, we have a proper history and everyone knows what we have to do to reach that.

"If it was easy to get this number of points other teams would have done it. It's just really incredibly difficult.

"If we reach any records we will take that when it happens."

West Ham manager David Moyes admitted Liverpool deserve their place among the Premier League's all-time great teams.

But, as a former boss of Liverpool's two greatest rivals, he unsurprisingly stopped short of anointing them the best English football has ever seen.

"They are as good as there has been at this moment in time. It's very difficult when you have been the manager of Everton and Manchester United to say that!" Moyes said.

"They are an excellent side. They have so many strings to their bow. But when you think of some of the great Manchester United and Arsenal teams of the past, it's difficult to judge them (as the best ever).

"Two years ago everyone was saying it was impossible to beat Manchester City."

AFP

Guardiola aims sly dig at Klopp's FA Cup snub: I won't diss the humble competition

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

PEP Guardiola aimed what appeared to be a dig at Liverpool and Jurgen Klopp after Manchester City booked their place in the Carabao Cup final.

City will face Aston Villa at Wembley on March 1, after a 3-2 aggregate win over Manchester United in the semi-final - despite losing 1-0 at home in Wednesday's second leg.

Guardiola made a point of the fact he has continued to name strong teams in the Carabao Cup, despite many fans seeing it as the least important trophy on offer.

Klopp has come in for criticism from some quarters in recent days after pledging to play his reserves in Liverpool's FA Cup fourth-round replay against Shrewsbury, which Klopp will also not be attending.

"People say we are complacent about what we have won," Guardiola told reporters.

"You don't try to diss the humble competition of the season, if you are not able to do it [win the Premier League] three times in a row with big games in the Premier League and Champions League and everyone there.

"When you win a lot, they say this competition does not matter, but with me this does not happen. It doesn't matter, we try to do it.

"Being at Wembley with a historic team like Villa, we are happy to be there."

(Agencies)

Man United can take little pleasure in derby win

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

ON a night when Manchester City celebrated a derby defeat and Manchester United were left disappointed with a win at the Etihad Stadium, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer continued his knack of winning a big game just in time and Pep Guardiola carried on his habit of reaching Carabao Cup finals.

United's 1-0 win courtesy of Nemanja Matic's goal saw Solskjaer become just the third manager after Jose Mourinho and Jurgen Klopp to inflict two home defeats on Guardiola as City were condemned to their first defeat in the League Cup for 1,190 days. But it was Guardiola who left the pitch at the final whistle punching the air after guiding his team to a third successive final.

It was a win that didn't feel like a win and a defeat that didn't feel like a defeat.

Solskjaer missed the chance to reach a first final as United manager, but the victory capped a significant day for the Norwegian. It began with news that Bruno Fernandes will join his squad after a fee was agreed with Sporting Lisbon and ended with a second win at the Etihad in the space of six weeks.

The pressure on his position hiked up again after the miserable defeat to Burnley at Old Trafford a week ago, but not for the first time he came up with a good result at the right time. Back-to-back victories over Tottenham and City in December came after draws with Sheffield United and Aston Villa and a Europa League defeat to Astana. The draw with Liverpool in October -- still the only points Klopp's side have dropped in the Premier League this season -- came after a run of five games without a win, which included dire defeats to West Ham and Newcastle, and a draw in 90 minutes against League One Rochdale. It is encouraging for Solskjaer to keep finding a way to step back from the brink, but he cannot keep putting himself in a position where it is needed. Victory here will mean very little if they cannot beat Wolves at home Saturday.



Manchester United's Nemanja Matic scores their first goal during the Carabao Cup semi final second leg match against Manchester City at Etihad Stadium in Manchester, England on Wednesday. REUTERS

"We know it's going to be inconsistent this season, but it shows how good we can be," Solskjaer said. "We want to eradicate defeats but everyone watching knows what we're trying to do. We're going to get there, these players will learn."

Guardiola said afterwards he "liked a lot the way they played." United remain very much a work in progress, even once Fernandes is signed.

Despite reaching another final, Guardiola was left to field questions about how his team had failed to score.

By the time United mustered their first shot in the 35th minute, City had already had nine. The key difference, though, was that Matic's went in. Riyad Mahrez once and Sergio Aguero twice forced David de Gea into three good saves inside the first 20 minutes. Raheem Sterling looked to have a clear sight of goal before Harry Maguire snuffed out the danger.

The opening goal had been coming, but almost everyone inside the Etihad Stadium was stunned that it was United who got it.

On a rare raid into City's half, Jesse Lingard was chopped down by Rodri.

Bernardo Silva couldn't clear Fred's free kick, but Matic still had plenty to do when the ball skidded out to the corner of the area. Instead of taking a touch, the Serbian swivelled and smashed in a left-footed shot that brushed off the inside of the near post.

Whether it was because it came so against the run of play or because it was Matic's first goal since Boxing Day 2018, it was so surprising that it took a split second for everyone to realise what had happened. Matic was already halfway through his celebration when the United fans at the other end of the stadium erupted, sensing for the first time that a repeat of the famous Paris comeback might be on.

Matic was having an excellent game in the centre of midfield -- vindicating Solskjaer's suggestion in the buildup that he could earn a new contract -- but it ended prematurely. Booked in the second half for slicing down Mahrez, he picked up another yellow card 14 minutes before the end for stepping across Ilkay Gundogan as City raced forward. Solskjaer called the decision "a joke" but

stopped short of saying referee Kevin Friend had cost United a place at Wembley.

"I don't want to talk about the referee too much," Solskjaer said. "I want to talk about the players and the attitude they're showing. They've come here twice in six weeks and beaten City twice. You could not do that in 10 years and they've done it in six weeks." It was even more impressive given that United were without Marcus Rashford, Paul Pogba and Scott McTominay.

Guardiola also took the chance to praise his players -- rounding on critics who have claimed they have been unable to keep pace with Liverpool in the league because they have lost their hunger after so much success.

"Reaching the final shows when people say we are complacent about what we have won, you are not able to do it three years in a row," he said. "It is a good signal for us. It doesn't matter what competition, we try and do it."

A night of mixed emotions ended with everyone finding something to smile about.

(Agencies)

Can Pablo Mari fix Arsenal's defence after fixing Flamengo?

BY TIM VICKERY, ESPN SOUTH AMERICA CORRESPONDENT

CONSIDERING their centre-back problems this season, maybe Manchester City missed a trick when they let Pablo Mari go to Brazil last summer. Mikel Arteta, City's former assistant boss, certainly seems to think so. Now in charge at Arsenal, Arteta was in a hurry to bring in the 26-year-old Spanish defender, making him his first signing since taking charge at the Emirates.

After coming through the ranks at Valencia, Mari played for Mallorca and Gimnastic before being picked up by City in 2016. He spent one season on loan at Girona, another with NAC Breda in the Netherlands and a third with Deportivo La Coruna in the Spanish second division.

Then, last July, came the call to cross the Atlantic and join Rio de Janeiro giants Flamengo. They had a new coach, the veteran Jorge Jesus, who used his European contacts to help build one of the best club sides South American football has seen in years.

Flamengo cruised to their first Brazilian league title in a decade, racking up the goals along the way and turning their matches into a joyful celebration. They won the club's first Copa Libertadores, South America's Champions League, since 1981 -- and they gave Liverpool a game before going down 1-0 in the Club World Cup final last month.

The front four gained most of the plaudits, especially the goal-grabbing feats of strike duo Gabriel Barbosa and Bruno Henrique. But there was reason to believe that the most important member of the side all along was Mari.

Underpinning Flamengo's style of play was Jorge Jesus' insistence in playing a high defensive line. This is common in Europe but proved revolutionary in Brazil, where defences tend to sit very deep.

Pushing up enabled Flamengo to stay on the front foot, strangle op-



Pablo Mari

ponents in their half of the field and keep the sectors of the team close enough for the ball to flow. Without that high defensive line, Flamengo would not have enjoyed the same attacking prowess.

Yet it's a method of play that entails considerable risks. For a start, it leaves a lot of room in behind the centre-backs, which makes domestic Brazilian defenders very nervous. They do not want to be caught in open space.

They would rather retreat to their

own penalty area and look to head or kick the ball away from danger, thus leaving the team stretched out and obliging the midfielders to run back almost the full length of the pitch.

In Mari, Jorge Jesus found someone who was used to playing in a high line. While he's not blessed with outstanding pace, he's quick enough and has the positional sense to operate in the way that his coach needed.

Mari was thrown right into the deep end straight away after signing for Flamengo in July. Without a

proper preseason he was expected to immediately slot into a new team in an unfamiliar league and carry out a high risk role.

It could have gone wrong, and an early blunder or two might have turned the fans against him and undermined his confidence. Instead he looked instantly at home. He organised the high line, made possible its effective implementation, defended soundly and passed the ball crisply out from the back with his dependable left foot.

From being a virtual unknown in European football, he quickly became a Flamengo idol despite only playing 30 games for the club. But it was a glorious time to pull on the red and black shirt and he will certainly be sorely missed.

There was some haggling over the price, but after picking the player up for a reported €1.7 million, Flamengo will be making a healthy profit. And Mari can hardly turn the chance down, either.

He will not stand out in the Premier League as much as he has done in Brazil. But, 3 1/2 years after being signed by Manchester City, Arsenal are poised to give him the chance to show that he belongs in world class company.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Man United can take little pleasure in derby win

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Paul Manyanda, Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) official and cricket coach (L), hands over presents to youngsters who took part in the sport's recent junior development program, held in Tanga. Manyanda passed away in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TCA



Dar es Salaam swimmer, Sydney Harderman, competes in a past swimming competition which took place in the city.

Taliss-IST Club set to host swimming competition next month

By Correspondent Renatha Msungu

TALISS-IST Club's invitational swimming championships has been slated for February 22-23 at the International School of Tanganyika (IST) modern swimming pool at Masaki in Dar es Salaam.

Taliss-IST Club manager, Hadija Shebe, said the championships will feature clubs from Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

Hadija said the event is second according to the Tanzania Swimming Association (TSA) 2020's sports event calendar. The first event was organized by Morogoro International School (MIS).

Hadija said the next month event is expected to bring together more than 200 swimmers from various clubs.

She explained that swimmers will compete in various events categorized according to age.

Male and female swimmers will compete in U-8, U-9 and U-10, U-12, U-14, 15 years and above 15 years old.

She said that the swimmers will battle it out for medals in five styles, namely backstroke, butterfly, freestyle, breaststroke and individual medley. The swimmers will also compete in relay.

The event will see the country's top-ranked swimmers who will meet swimmers from other clubs in the country.

Hadija said they are now in intensive preparations ahead of the event that aims at promoting the game in the country.

"The event has been organized in order to make all swimmers busy and maintain their standard in the game," Hadija said.

Awards will be handed over to the first three positions in each event. The first, second and third will be awarded gold, silver, and bronze respectively.

Hadija said the age group winners will also be awarded trophies.

"Events will be swum on heat declared finals. Medals award for the open events will also be presented to winners based on the final place rather than the age group. Open events will contribute to the overall points of a swimmer," Hadija said.

According to Hadija, points will be allocated for the top swimmer to the 10th as the first swimmer will get 20 points, the second will earn 16 points while the third-placed will post 14 points and fourth-placed will receive 12 points respectively.

The fifth-placed swimmer will get 10 points, sixth (eight points), seventh (six points), eighth (four points), ninth (two points) and the 10th would be awarded one point.

Coach Vandebroek praises Simba SC players' mentality

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi

SIMBA SC head coach, Sven Vandebroek, has praised the team mentality and characters of his players that saw them grab a late winner against Namungo FC in a Vodacom Premier League match played in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday.

The Belgian tactician watched on as his stars just about grabbed all three points at home.

It was largely thanks to a controversial decision which allowed forward Meddie Kagere late winner to stand.

This was Simba's fourth consecutive victory in all competitions but they have failed to keep a clean sheet for the fifth game in a row after two goals from Lucas Kikoti and Bigirimana Blaise ensured Simba keeper

Beno Kakolanya concedes once again.

The last time Simba kept a clean sheet was on December 31 when they beat Ndanda 2-0 in a Vodacom Premier League match.

While talking to the press in a post match interview, on Thursday, Vandebroek hailed 'never give up' character his players showed but was once again concerned by his shaky defence.

"I have a feeling that most of the people will not talk about the game but the two goals we conceded once again. Yes, we can't hide it, we conceded a lot of goals in the past games. Every ball around our 18 is dangerous, so we worked on it and will keep working in the future to solve this," he said.

"Today, I had a feeling that my team

was not energetic enough, maybe fatigued. Many people were asking for a basic starting line-up but then you can see that some players can't swallow the load of many games in a row. In the next game, there will be some changes."

Against Alliance FC and Mwadui FC, Simba came back from behind to grab three points.

The Vodacom Premier League defending champions showed the same determination to get a hard fought victory against a spirited Namungo FC who had twice restored parity in the game.

"We won again at the last minute, that shows character and mentality, that we can fight till the end to get results. Mentally, we are fresh enough to push us to the limits," he emphasized.



Simba SC midfielder, Jonas Mkude (L), controls the ball in front of Namungo FC defender, Carlos Protas, when the clubs clashed in a Vodacom Premier League duel, which took place in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Flexibles by David Chikoko



Veteran TCA official passes away

By Guardian Reporter

CRICKET fraternity in Tanzania has been dealt a huge blow, as the sport's veteran coach and official, Paul Manyanda, passed away in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday.

Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Senior Development Officer Hamisi Abdallah said the coach passed away after he had suffered illness for some time.

Manyanda will be remembered by many in the sport's fraternity at both the domestic level and the East Africa region for his contribution in the sport's development, given he served with great passion.

"It is with the humble acceptance of the Almighty that we announce to our cricket family the passing away of coach, Paul Manyanda, who passed away on Tuesday," he disclosed.

"His contribution to cricket development in Tanzania has been immense and should not be forgotten."

A school teacher by profession, as disclosed by Abdallah, Manyanda was among the first batch of teachers who joined TCA development program in 2000.

"He left his profession and joined TCA and helped to start cricket in the regions, namely Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Tanga."

The three regions are currently regularly fielding squads in almost all events hosted by the national cricket governing body, as well as regional cricket bodies.

According to Abdallah, Manyanda was level 2 coach and umpire, he had officiated in ICC World Cricket League matches in several countries in Africa.

"For 20 years Manyanda served in cricket, he was a TCA Board Member until last year," he disclosed.

Manyanda was also the front-runner in establishing the girls' cricket teams.

As revealed by Abdallah, Manyanda's funeral ceremony will take place at his home at Pugu today and burial will take place at the same place at 4pm the same day.

Abdallah disclosed ;"At TCA we are touched by this loss and we pray the departed's soul to rest in peace."

TONIGHT @ 9:00

5 EATV FRIDAY

- 11:00 DADAZ LIVE
- 12:00 Mid Week Movie (r)
- 13:30 Kall Za Wana
- 14:00 Bonga Hits
- 15:00 Funguka
- 15:30 Wakilisha (r)
- 16:00 Ujenzi (r)
- 16:30 #HASHTAG
- 17:00 SSELEKT
- 17:55 Kuraso
- 18:00 eNewz
- 18:30 Skonga
- 19:30 EATV SAA I
- 19:45 MJADALA
- 20:00 DADAZ (r)
- 21:00 Friday Night Live
- 23:00 Kuraso (r)

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- 06:00 Supa Breakfast
- 10:00 MAMAMIA
- 12:00 Kipenga Xtra
- 13:00 Planei Bongo
- 14:00 EA Drive
- 20:00 Kipenga
- 21:00 Friday Night Live

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