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Drugs research targeting three tropical diseases

SÃO PAULO

AN international consortium led by Brazilian researchers hopes to speed up the discovery of new drugs to be used in the treatment of malaria, visceral leishmaniasis and chagas disease.

Leishmaniasis and chagas are categorised as neglected tropical diseases because they affect mainly poor populations in low-income countries and attract less treatment and research funding than major diseases like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

The consortium involves researchers at the universities of Campinas (Unicamp) and São Paulo (USP), both in São Paulo state, and two international organizations, Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV) and Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi).

“Our goal is to deliver a therapeutic alternative that brings a little more quality of life to the patient during treatment,” said Jadel Kratz, drug discovery manager at DNDi. With an investment of about US\$ 10.7 million from participants over the next five years, researchers expect to produce compounds that can be developed into drugs to combat the three tropical diseases.

Jadel Kratz, drug discovery manager at



Our goal is to deliver a therapeutic alternative that brings a little more quality of life to the patient during treatment

DNDi in Latin America, told SciDev.Net that the partnership will also support the training of new specialists in the treatment of neglected diseases at Brazilian universities while bringing new job opportunities and infrastructure investments to these institutions.

The task of analysing and preparing a new antimalarial drug will be divided between the synthetic organic chemistry laboratory of the University of Campinas and Switzerland-based MMV, which focuses on reducing the burden of malaria in endemic countries.

Carlos Dias, a chemist at Unicamp and consortium coordinator, told SciDev.Net that by analysing the structure of molecules included in the MMV's portfolio, scientists will try to identify those that may be used to treat malaria in a single dose, avoiding cases of drug resistance.

MMV maintains a database of molecules ready to be studied, synthesised and used in the development of new medications.

“The idea is to develop a pill capable of maintaining a high enough concentration in blood plasma to eliminate the malaria

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TAEC suspends 72 hospitals from key radiation services



Zanzibar President Dr. Ali Mohamed Shein and Kolon Project Manager Cho Kwang Lae unveil a plaque to symbolize the start of initial rice agriculture infrastructure for an irrigation scheme at Kinyasini Kisongoni, in Zanzibar North “A” district as part of activities to mark the 56th anniversary of the Zanzibar Revolution. Photo: State House

We cannot play with people's health. Thorough inspections have to be carried out at least two times a year, and that is why we have been able to identify challenges in the health centres countrywide, hence we have suspended their services. And if any hospital/health centre shows it has abided by the conditions we will allow it to offer these services

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

PROVISION of radiation services has been suspended in 72 hospitals in various regions.

The Tanzania Atomic Energy Commission (TAEC) said yesterday that the 72 hospitals are located in 23 regions and the Isles and they were suspended for contravening the Atomic Energy Act (Act No 7 of 2003).

TAEC Head of Communications Peter Ngamillo said in an interview that the commission reached the decision following inspection conducted at different times up to December 26.

TAEC decided to suspend radiation services at the hospital due to lack of qualified radiologists, defective machines including X-Ray, CT-scan and radio therapy machines.

There was also a lack of licenses to deal with the services and lack of warning signs at hospital premises to show that radiology was being conducted.

“We cannot play with people's health. Thorough inspections have to be carried out at least two times a year, and that is why we have been able to identify challenges in the health centres countrywide, hence we



There was also a lack of licenses to deal with the services and lack of warning signs at hospital premises to show that radiology was being conducted

have suspended their services. And if any hospital/health centre shows it has abided by the conditions we will allow it to offer these services.”

Affected hospitals and health centres are Kaloleni Health Centre, Kansay Health Centre, Karatu Designated District Hospital, Mong'ola Health Centre, Al-Hilal Polyclinic, Magomeni Health Centre (Dental Unit), Mnaazi Mmoja Hospital (Dental Unit), Mselemu Medical Centre, Mwananyamala Hospital (Dental Unit), and Mama Ngoma Health Centre.

He mentioned others as Sinza Health Centre (Dental Unit), Magereza Dispensary - Ukonga, St. Bernard Charitable Hospital, Skol Building Contractor, Sinza Africa Sana, and Dar Health Centre.

Others are Al-Jumaa Charitable Dispensary, Kinondoni Municipality - Dar es Salaam Metropolitan Development Project (Dmdp) - Tarura, Kigamboni Health Centre (Partial Closure), China Railways Seventh Group, Mlali Rehabilitation Centre and Ilula Lutheran Hospital.

He named other affected hospitals and health centres as Izimbya Health Centre, Ndolage Hospital, Nyakaiga Hospital, Mugana Hospital, Nyakaiga Hospital, Ufufuo Hospital, Matyazo Hospital, Bwambo Health Centre, Gonja District Hospital and

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KIA sounds out airlines to airlift agro products

By Getrude Mbago

THE Kilimanjaro Airport Development Company (KADCO) is in talks with major global airlines to enable cargo planes land at the airport to transport agricultural products abroad.

KADCO managing director Christopher Mukoma said in an interview that if the discussion goes well traders especially for horticulture products will be able to transport the products to other countries in a smooth and timely manner.

Mukoma acknowledged that currently there are no cargo flights but by March such flights will start landing at the airport.

“We are in discussion with two big air companies,



Mukoma acknowledged that currently there are no cargo flights but by March such flights will start landing at the airport

and once the airlines commence their flights, they will be taking cargos at KIA, Mwanza and Mbeya to ensure that the airplanes fly with enough cargo there and will soon starting landing. This is good news for traders, and we are calling on them to be ready to use the airport to export their products,” he said.

Cargo flights were not landing at the airport due to low amount of cargo, he stated.

“One flight can carry a minimum of 30 tonnes per trip but we hardly receive ten tonnes from traders, but the situation has continued to improve,” he said. “You know these flights have to come empty expecting to carry enough cargo

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Police nab man with 66 forged rubber stamps

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

POLICE in Mbeya Region is holding one Abraham Obed (55), resident of Isanga Ward in Mbeya City for holding 66 forged rubber stamps of various institutions including the Police Force, Judiciary and Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA).

Speaking to reporters in his office yesterday, Mbeya Regional Police Commander SACP Ulrich Matei (pictured) said the suspect was arrested



December 31 2019 at 5.00 in the evening along Sokoine Street in Sisimba Ward.

He said the police had received a tip from some city residents accusing the suspect of copying rubber stamps and using them to stamp on documents with fake claims.

Matei said after receiving the tip they started investigating and when he was arrested he was found with the rubber stamps including documents with the stamps' imprints on them.

He mentioned other institutions affected by his copying of rubber stamps as NMB Bank, Access Bank, Mbeya District Trade Officer, and various street local government chairmen and ward secretaries.

He said the suspect was also found with a laptop,

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TAEC suspends 72 hospitals from key radiation services

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Kilimanjaro Health Centre.

Others are Papri Medical Centre (Moshi), Regional Dermatology Centre, Same District Hospital, St. Joseph Uchira Dispensary, Usangi District Hospital, Rondo Hospital, Sokoine Regional Referral Hospital, Balang'alalu Health Centre, Gendabi Health Centre, Kibara Mission Hospital, Chunya District Hospital, Matema Lutheran Hospital and Mbarali District Hospital.

Others hospitals and health centres that were suspended as to offering radiation services are Holycross Health Centre, Mtibwa Hospital, St. Harry Health Centre, Sumve District Hospital,

Ngudu District Hospital, Misungwi District Hospital, Bulongwa Mission Hospital, Uwemba Hospital and Ute District Hospital.

Others are Dr. Atman Health, Namanyere D. D. Hospital, St. Elizabeth Hospital, Lituhi, Ruanda Mission Hospital, Maganzo Health Centre, Meatu District Hospital, Songambe Hospital, Igalilimi Health Centre and Kolandoto Hospital.

The rest are Ileje District Hospital, Isoko District Hospital, Jema Diagnostic Centre, Milambo Military Hospital, Korogwe District Hospital, Pangani District Hospital, St. Francis Hospital, Wete Hospital and Pemba AirPort.

KIA sounds out airlines to airlift agro products

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when going back."

KIA has enough cold room facilities that can handle up to 110 tonnes of cargo, the director noted.

More improvements will be conducted in the course of this year focusing on marketing the airport inside and outside the country to attract more visitors.

"During the year 2020, we expect to invest more in marketing. We will come up with innovative marketing strategies to attract more air companies, visitors and traders to transport their cargos," he stated.

So far at least 13 companies conduct daily flights at KIA with several others conducting scheduled flights.

"Airlines using KIA are Kenya Airways, Turkish Airlines, Qatar Airways and Fly Dubai. We also have others from Australia," he elaborated.

Following massive rehabilitation and upgrading of KIA, the terminal can now receive and serve up to eleven big planes at once.

The rehabilitation and upgrading of the terminal involved the extension of its runways, taxiways, aprons and passengers' waiting building.

"After the major renovations that have been conducted, the airport is now able to handle 1.2 million passengers annually, from 500,000 passengers it could handle in the past," he specified.

KADCO manages KIA, the country's second largest terminal after the Julius Nyerere International Airport (JKNIA) in Dar es Salaam.

Dubbed the safest terminal in East Africa, KIA is strategically located about halfway between Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions and since these are the main tourist portals in the north, KIA remains Tanzania's major tourists' landing spot.

In 2013, Kilimanjaro Airport was declared overall winner of the 'Routes Africa Airport Marketing Award,' one among prestigious awards in the industry voted for and judged by the airline industry.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa talks with patients and relatives after visiting Ruangwa district hospital yesterday. Photo: PMO

Police nab man with 66 forged rubber stamps

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insurance stickers for motor vehicles and various students' academic certificates.

"In the past the suspect was an insurance agent working with GMT Company but later he was suspended and started this illegal business. He did not want to go to farm," said Matei.

He said recently some teachers were nabbed with fake documents to apply for bank loans and it is now believed the suspect was involved.

He said they are still investigating the matter to know the extent of his offences and the police is liaising with TRA to interrogate the man to find out about illegal transactions by using the

rubber stamps.

He also said they will liaise with other institutions to find out losses, if any, they have sustained from the activities of the suspect.

Meanwhile Matei confirmed that two children from one family - Faisal Mashaka (5) and Farhana Mashaka (1 year and five months) who were

reported missing from their home in Mbeya in controversial circumstances have been found in Tabora.

He said the police have already dispatched officers to Tabora with the children's parents to fetch them.

One man is being held by the police in Tabora in connection with the incident, he added.



Mkumbululu and Luatala villagers in Masasi district, Mtwara region crossing Mkoo river situated at Mchaulu ward. The bridge linking their villages was swept away by severe flooding recently. Photo: Correspondent Hamisi Nasiri.

Colleges sign agreement with NSSF to acquire houses for 17,820 students

By Guardian Reporter

FOLLOWING acute shortage of accommodation for university students, four universities and one institution have signed agreement with National Social Security Fund (NSSF) to acquire its houses at Mtoni Kijichi for 17,820 students.

Under the signed agreement, the houses will be used as hostels for university students from Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE), Institute of Finance Management (IFM), Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) and Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA). Speaking shortly after signing of the

agreement, NSSF Director General, William Urio said the decision will ensure safety and security of students since the houses are located at better and safe place.

Urio said each of the universities will have a specific number of students residing at the hostels. He said the number of students from DUCE is (3,000), IFM (3,500), DIT (320), TIA (5,000) and 6,000 from the Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy.

"We have signed the agreement; universities management will take the good news to students. Our responsibility is to make sure the agreed numbers of students get accommodation at our houses", he noted.

The DG added that its Mtoni Kijichi

structures are nearing completion, noting there are completed houses which can now accommodate 4,000 students.

DUCE Vice President, Prof Stephen Maluka applauded the government for coming up with a solution to hostels' problems for university students. He said the university has 6,000 students but it can only accommodate 320 students only.

Deputy Head of Academic department at the Institute of Finance Management, Immanuel Mnzava thanked NSSF for providing students with the houses.

President of university students' government at DUCE, Deogratius Medson commended the move by universities and NSSF since hostel is a

major problem.

Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy's Vice President of the students' government, Amida Hussein said the hostels will facilitate comfortable shelter for the students.

Earlier, Urio called upon banks and financial institutions to come up with a special loan program for students. He said students can be given loans with lower interest rates to enable them purchase NSSF houses.

He said the houses are available for every interested Tanzanian, adding the houses occupy between three and five rooms.

He said that banks can also negotiate with NSSF to purchase the houses for its staffs.

Drugs research targeting three tropical diseases

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parasite within seven days," Dias noted. Currently, people infected have to take drugs every day for many days. This is the case for artemisinin, a drug used to treat malaria, obtained from the herb *Artemisia annua* and used against the protozoan *Plasmodium falciparum*, the most lethal malaria-causing parasite.

However, since the 2000s artemisinin started losing some of its potency against the disease in countries in Africa and Southeast Asia.

In 2018 there were an estimated 228 million cases of malaria worldwide, resulting in 405,000 deaths, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Ninety-three per cent of those cases were in the Africa region.

Unicamp's chemistry laboratory will also work with the University of São Paulo's centre for structural molecular biotechnology and the DNDi to develop new drugs against chagas disease and visceral leishmaniasis, the most severe form of the potentially fatal skin disease spread by sandflies.

The DNDi is an offshoot of the humanitarian organisation Doctors without Borders (MSF) that enters into partnerships to conduct research and make available new treatments for neglected diseases.

It is estimated that eight million people globally are infected with *Trypanosoma cruzi*, responsible for Chagas disease. The debilitating disease is one of Latin America's biggest public health concerns, causing more than 10,000 deaths each year.

There are currently only two drugs available for Chagas disease: nifurtimox and benznidazole. "Both were discovered half a century ago, require prolonged treatment (60 to 90 days) and cause undesirable side effects," Kratz explained.

Drugs used for leishmaniasis also have serious drawbacks in terms of

safety, strength, stability and cost. "They have low tolerability, long duration and are difficult to administer," said Kratz.

"Our goal is to deliver a therapeutic alternative that brings a little more quality of life to the patient during treatment," he asserted.

Daniel Martins-de-Souza, a biochemist at Unicamp, says the initiative is important for developing countries in Latin America and other regions where these diseases represent a major public health problem.

"It seems that this issue is now being taken seriously by researchers and funding agencies," he said. "Although it is not easy developing new medicines, the consortium brings together all the essential elements for success in finding new drugs for these neglected diseases."

"We must not accept the existence of diseases of this kind nowadays," he added.



It seems that this issue is now being taken seriously by researchers and funding agencies," he said. "Although it is not easy developing new medicines, the consortium brings together all the essential elements for success in finding new drugs for these neglected diseases"



Journalist Erick Kabendera (L) at Kisutu Resident Magistrate Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday. He is charged with money laundering and leading organised crime. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Dr Shein lays foundation stone for rehabilitation, construction of irrigation infrastructures, schemes

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein has laid foundation stone for the construction and rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructures and schemes to increase agriculture productivity and income among farmers.

Worth \$64.3 million (equivalent to 147bn/-), the project among other things, involve improvement of irrigation infrastructures in the area totaling 1,524 hectares and seven irrigation basins in Unguja and Pemba.

Speaking during the occasion, Dr Shein insisted that any land which has been set aside for agriculture activities should be used as planned and not otherwise.

"Now, as we have the land to conduct agriculture activities, let do it because many years ago before revolution, Zanzibaris had no freedom to use their land, few powerful people owned plots and plots of land discriminating majority of poor people," he said.

He said that the major aim of the government is to ensure that people's lives are improved citing agriculture as one of the potential areas to fulfill the goal.

"We have been compensating farmers their expenses by 75 through providing them agricultural inputs to improve their farming and double their yields...We have been investing in researches and various projects to ensure that the agriculture sector benefits majority of Isles people," he said.

President Shein further said that the project has been delayed following bureaucracy challenges within the ministry but everything has been resolved now.

He directed officials to supervise

the project and make sure that it is completed within the next two years.

Deputy Representative of Exim Bank of Korea Kang Sang Jin said that the project is going to transform Zanzibar's economy.

He vowed to continue strengthen cooperation between the two countries for mutual benefit.

Permanent Secretary in the ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Livestock and Fisheries said that at least 49 water wells will be drilled in Cheju, Kibokwa and Kilombero basin.

"In the \$64.3 million projects funds, \$50 million has been provided by Exim Bank as loan and Zanzibar will provide \$14.8 million," he said

He said that in year 2018, the government entered into agreement with a Korean firm, Kokon Hansol JV so as to revive and construct irrigation infrastructures in the Isles.

Minister warns Kahama gold smugglers

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

MINERALS minister Doto Biteko has said that a number of traders are now using small and informal mineral processing factories to smuggle gold warning them to stop doing so as the government was on alert all the time to monitor them.

The minister who conducted an impromptu visit at one of the informal factory located at Bunango village in Bugarama ward, Kahama district in Shinyanga region, said those who engage in the illegal trade will face stern measures. "I was informed by a Good Samaritan on the existence of informal factories here, bad enough, these people are conducting the activities in people's

settlements thus risking their health and environment," he said.

According to him, despite the government's efforts to improve environment of small scale miners to operate, some of them are still reluctant to accept the changes.

"The informal factory has a capacity of carrying 700kg of gold, so you can see the picture how much minerals have been smuggled due to illegal processing activities carried in the area," he said.

Biteko directed security bodies to search and arrest all people responsible for the illegal businesses including the village's leadership, owner of the houses.

He wanted all traders to adhere to the country's laws, saying that anybody

smuggling minerals out of the country will face the full force of the law.

The minister urged business persons in the minerals sector to sell their gemstones at minerals trading centers built by the government across the country.

Masoud Bakari, one of the leaders at the village said he is aware that there are some youth who are engaging in mineral processing activities but wasn't aware on the issue of smuggling.

"After identifying their activities, we gave them a go ahead permission because they came at the village's office to introduce themselves," he said.

In March, this year when speaking during the launch of the Geita Gold Market Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said "All

mineral-producing regions should set up the trading centres as soon as possible to serve small miners."

The Premier said the Geita centre would serve as a model for others adding that all the centres to be built were aimed at controlling smuggling of gold and other minerals.

Reports cites Tanzania as the Africa's fourth-biggest gold producer after South Africa, Ghana and Mali and gold exports are a key source of foreign exchange.

It exported gold worth \$1.549 billion last year, up slightly from \$1.541 billion in 2017, central bank data shows. The mining sector contributes around 4.8 per cent to Tanzania's gross domestic product (GDP), according to the government.

LOSS OF CERTIFICATE



NAZRINA SARFARAZ HASHMI do hereby announce the loss of Her Certificate of ALL INDIA SECONDARY SCHOOL EXAMINATION 2000 (ORIGINAL CERTIFICATE) which issued by INDIAN SCHOOL DAR ES SALAAM TANZANIA, 2000. Whoever finds it, kindly report to the nearest police station. REF NO. DAR/MS/VRB/1180/2020.



USAID | TANZANIA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) No. 72062120RFA00003

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Tanzania is seeking applications for **Cooperative Agreements** from qualified Tanzanian organizations to implement a Comprehensive HIV activity in the Police and Prison facilities.

The purpose of the Police and Prison activity in partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs in Tanzania is to reduce HIV, and tuberculosis (TB) transmission through detection, care, and treatment of people living with HIV and TB in police and prison settings. This includes prisoners, servicemen and women in the uniformed forces, their dependents, and civilians living in the vicinity.

If interested, you can follow this link to access the Notice of funding Opportunity

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=72062120RFA00003>.

Please note that eligibility of this award is restricted to local Tanzanian entities.



STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 2018 AND FOR SIX MONTH PERIOD OF 01 JANUARY-30 JUNE 2019

This publication of the Financial Statement of ACDI-VOCA is made in accordance with regulation 13(a) of the Non Governmental Organisations Act (Amendments), Regulations 2018 which requires Non Governmental Organisations receiving funds exceeding Tshs.20 Million to publish bi annually the funds received and its expenditure.

Below is the Statement showing support and grants Received and Expenditures incurred for the year ended 31 December 2018 (Audited) and for the six month period of 01 January-31 June 2019 (Unaudited).

	January to June 2019 (Unaudited)	January to December 2018 (Audited)
SUPPORT AND GRANTS REVENUE	2,461,467,830.39	6,716,343,064.47
EXPENSES		
Salaries and benefits	1,199,629,628.32	2,591,947,524.84
Travel and Transportation	466,890,457.67	1,313,133,223.53
Professional fees	60,142,200.00	139,262,212.69
Participant training	49,238,344.00	313,936,369.60
Grants	418,396,267.98	1,476,493,060.99
Occupancy	38,424,007.07	189,132,964.25
Equipment	5,805,601.20	112,892,903.60
Postage and delivery	184,000.00	16,864,500.00
Repairs and maintenance	97,644,903.98	257,517,351.05
Insurance	4,732,503.28	7,485,023.20
Bank fees	9,536,544.09	35,751,456.58
Supplies	31,061,300.00	69,375,280.00
Printing and publication	1,289,016.00	2,547,600.00
Meetings and conferences	16,553,000.00	52,453,540.00
Other expenses	240,000.00	4,651,500.01
Telecommunication	61,700,056.80	132,898,554.14
Total Expenses	2,461,467,830.39	6,716,343,064.48
Change in net assets	-	(0.01)

Support and revenue: ACDI/VOCA Tanzania receives all its support and revenue from ACDI/VOCA headquarters. These support and revenues are recognized on cost-reimbursement basis from U.S. Government funded grants implementation in Tanzania. Revenues are directly related to the costs incurred on cost-reimbursement contracts. Revenues are recognized as expenses are incurred.



Title	: Driver
Domain	: Administration
Grade	: G-2
Post Number	: 6TZFSC0713RP
Organizational Unit	: UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office
Duty Station	: Dar es Salaam
Type of contract	: Fixed-Term
Recruitment open for	: Only candidates entitled to work in Tanzania can apply for this post
Annual salary	: TZS 22,487,000.00
Deadline (midnight, Dar es Salaam time):	23rd January 2020

UNESCO Core Values: Commitment to the Organization, Integrity, Respect for Diversity, Professionalism

Overview of the functions of the post

Under the authority of the Head of UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office, and the direct supervision of the Finance and Administrative Officer, the Driver provides reliable and safe driving services ensuring high accuracy of work to the Head of the Office and high-ranking UN officials and visitors, and coordinates routes and schedules work of other drivers.

The incumbent of the post will undertake the following responsibilities:

- Ensure provision of reliable and safe driving services by: Driving office vehicles for the transport of UNESCO Personnel and other high-ranking officials and visitors and delivery and collection of mail, documents and other items; Meeting official personnel and visitors at the airport including visa and customs formalities arrangement when required;
- Ensure cost-effectiveness in the use of vehicle through accurate maintenance of daily vehicle logs, provision of inputs to preparation of the vehicle maintenance plans and reports.
- Ensure proper day-to-day maintenance of the assigned vehicle through timely minor repairs, arrangements for major repairs, timely changes of oil, check of tires, brakes, car washing, etc.
- Ensure availability of all the required documents/supplies including vehicle insurance, vehicle logs, office directory, and map of the city/country, first aid kit, and necessary spare parts in the assigned vehicle.
- Ensure that all immediate actions required by rules and regulations are taken in case of involvement in accidents.
- Perform any other tasks assigned by the Head of Office

Competencies

A successful candidate will be required to demonstrate the following competencies:

Core Competencies

Accountability
Communication
Teamwork Innovation
Results focus
Planning and organizing
Knowledge sharing and continuous improvement

For detailed information please consult the [UNESCO Competency Framework](#)

Required qualifications

Education

- Secondary Education
- Completed national valid Driver's license and valid defensive driving certificate.

Work Experience

- Minimum of 2 years of work experience as a driver in international organizations, embassies or UN system with a safe driving record.

Skills and competencies

- Good knowledge of driving rules and local traffic regulations is essential,
- Ability to diagnose any technical error/ faults may occur in vehicles,
- Ability to provide daily maintenance for the vehicles,
- Ability to fix minor technical faults,
- Familiarity with relevant Power Spectral Density (PSD) communication equipment, computer applications (MS Word, Excel, Power point),
- Good knowledge of the city, local roads and conditions where the Office is located,
- Proven knowledge of driving rules and regulations as chauffeur protocol and courtesies, and local roads and conditions.

Languages

- Excellent and/or very good knowledge of English.

Assessment

An assessment exercise may be used in the evaluation of candidates.

How to apply?

Interested candidates should submit their application through the UNESCO Careers Portal: <https://careers.unesco.org>

Interested and suitable candidates should ensure that their application is submitted on or before **23rd January 2020 (Midnight, Dar es Salaam time)**.

WRITTEN EXAMINATION AND PRACTICAL TEST MAY BE USED IN THE EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES Only short-listed candidates will be contacted

Benefits and entitlements

UNESCO's salaries are calculated in US dollars but paid in local currency and exempt from income tax. Other benefits include: 30 days annual leave, family allowance, pension plan and medical insurance. More details can be found on the ICSC Website.

Please note that UNESCO is a no-smoking Organization.

UNESCO is committed to promoting geographical distribution and gender equality within its Secretariat. Therefore, women candidates are strongly encouraged to apply, as are nationals from non- and under-represented Member States. Persons with disabilities equally are encouraged to apply.

Worldwide mobility is required as staff members must be ready to serve in other duty stations in accordance with UNESCO's geographical mobility policy.

UNESCO applies a zero tolerance policy against all forms of harassment.

UNESCO DOES NOT CHARGE A FEE AT ANY STAGE OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS.



Title	: Secretary
Domain	: Administration
Grade	: G-4
Post Number	: 6TZFSC0712RP
Organizational Unit	: UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office
Duty Station	: Dar es Salaam
Type of contract	: Fixed-Term
Recruitment open for	: Only candidates entitled to work in Tanzania can apply for this post
Annual salary	: TZS 31,048,000.00
Deadline (midnight, Dar es Salaam time):	23rd January 2020

UNESCO Core Values: Commitment to the Organization, Integrity, Respect for Diversity, Professionalism

Overview of the functions of the post

Under the authority and the direct supervision of the Head of UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office, the incumbent is responsible for the smooth and efficient functioning of the Head of Office's secretariat.

The incumbent of the post will undertake the following responsibilities:

- Ensure the efficient functioning of the office of the Head of Office by preparing daily agenda, scheduling meetings and appointments with government authorities, institutions, etc.
- Review, record, distribute and process incoming mail; follows up on impending actions; routes information and queries for response as appropriate. Respond or draft responses to standard/ routine correspondence and other communications.
- Provide secretarial, administrative and logistics support to meetings, committees, conferences etc.; prepare invitation letters; compile and distribute working documents and other material; take notes of internal meetings; make travel and hotel arrangements and prepare travel authorizations/ claims for the supervisor and/or the participants; compile, calculate and prepare cost estimations; prepare standard limited components of budget/ expenditure.
- Maintain and update the Office electronic and paper records/files (e.g. information databases, mailing lists, participant lists); classifies and codes material; provides information to colleagues on records management standards and practices; and facilitates file transfers and retrievals. Create spreadsheets and presentations; prepare graphs, charts and other visual aids.
- Ensure the liaison between the Head of Office and his/her staff and timely communication with UNESCO Headquarters on the follow-up of activities and relevant administrative issues.

Competencies

A successful candidate will be required to demonstrate the following competencies:

Core Competencies

Accountability
Communication
Teamwork Innovation
Results focus
Planning and organizing
Knowledge sharing and continuous improvement

For detailed information please consult the

Required qualifications

Education

- Completed secondary, technical or vocational school.

Work Experience

- Minimum 3 years of relevant experience in secretarial and/or administrative tasks in administration services.

Skills and competencies

- Excellent interpersonal and communication abilities, including written and oral communication,
- Good IT skills and good knowledge of standard office software packages (MS Word, Excel, etc),
- Ability to work in international teams,
- Initiative, service-oriented, and accuracy,
- Discretion and ability to deal with sensitive issues,
- Flexibility to adjust to different working schedules and priorities.

Languages

- Excellent knowledge of English (oral and written).

Desirable qualifications

Education

- Specialized training/certification in secretarial, administrative or related field.

Skills and competencies

- Knowledge of UNESCO rules, administrative procedures and standard practices.

Languages

- Good Knowledge of Swahili

Assessment

An assessment exercise may be used in the evaluation of candidates.

How to apply?

Interested candidates should submit their application through the UNESCO Careers Portal:

<https://careers.unesco.org>

Interested and suitable candidates should ensure that their application is submitted on or before **23rd January 2020 (Midnight, Dar es Salaam time)**.

WRITTEN EXAMINATION AND PRACTICAL TEST MAY BE USED IN THE EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES Only short-listed candidates will be contacted

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Tanzania Electrical Supply Company technicians in Rungwe district, Mbeya region switch off electricity to save lives of the people after a lorry had knocked down the poles yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

TARI saves over 5 billion/- used when importing oil palm seeds

By Guardian Correspondent, Kigoma

TANZANIA Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) has saved the government 5.4bn/- that would have been spent to purchase 900,000 "Tenela" modern oil palm seeds for free distribution to farmers in the programme to develop oil palm growing in Kigoma Region.

Instead, in using its experts from TARI-Kihinga who are researching oil palm crop, it has succeeded to produce the same "Tenela" seeds and distribute for free to government institutions and farmers in all districts of Kigoma Region to implement the directives from Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa.

Speaking during the distribution of 50,000 "Tenela" seeds to Kwitanga prison that is cultivating a total of 60,000 acres of the oil palm crop, TARI Director General Dr Geoffrey Mkamillo said the government's money has been saved after the researchers used their own expertise to produce the seeds that were initially supposed to be imported from outside the country.

He said the seeds are used to produce palm oil in various countries that grow the crop and sold at an average price of between 6,000/- to 8,000/- for private institutions that import from foreign countries as well as big oil palm growers in Kigoma.

Dr Mkamillo said the researchers from TARI-Kihinga succeeded to fuse "Dura" oil palm seed that has been grown by farmers for many years but produce little yields with "Persifela" with a large shell by using modern technology to produce "Tenela" which is used in many oil palm growing

countries including Malaysia that leads in palm oil production in the world.

Kigoma Region Agricultural Officer Joseph Rubuye said the strategy now is for all councils to partner with TARI to make seedbeds for high quality "Tenela" oil palm seeds and distribute for free to farmers.

He stressed that every oil palm farmer in Kigoma Region will be given "Tenela" seeds for free from respective council authorities adding that what is required is for farmers to register themselves and state the size of their farms. He said they will also be accorded with extension officers from TARI for farming expertise.

Some of oil palm farmers in Kigoma Region including Pili Ryyiyagazi from Kigoma Rural District asked the government to speed up distribution of the seeds.

He said old "Dura" seeds used since the times of their grand fathers were now not profitable as they take an average of ten years to start production while "Tenela" seeds start producing only after three years.



Some of oil palm farmers in Kigoma Region including Pili Ryyiyagazi from Kigoma Rural District asked the government to speed up distribution of the seeds

Entrepreneurs receive training on packaging

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

ENTREPRENEURS in Arusha city have resolved to take short-term training lessons in making packaging bags, alternatives to paper bags for goods to alleviate any shortage that may arise following government's ban on plastic bags six months ago.

Speaking yesterday at the end of two week training in making paper bags at Tanganyika Polytechnic College, the entrepreneurs thanked the government for banning plastic bags

because it has enabled them to learn skills in making alternate packaging materials that would ensure them of income.

Speaking on behalf of their colleagues, Martha Mwakidebe, Rose Chisala and Neema Mgendi hailed the government's ban on plastic bags saying it offered them opportunities through self-employment.

Tanzania Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) Tanzania Manager Nina Nchimbi who was the guest of honour at the event called

upon the entrepreneurs to use the opportunity to establish small industries for making packaging materials as in doing so they will be supporting the government's call for the country to attain middle income nation status.

He also congratulated Tanganyika Polytechnic College for the initiative in starting such a training for entrepreneurs.

Earlier Head of the College Abdul Semvua said the training is the third since they started the programme

which aims to support the government's plastic ban, by finding ways to produce alternatives.

"We have had great success since we began the programme, many who have been trained are now producing packaging material and have started to reap profit," Semvua said.

Earlier, the Head of the Curriculum Department at the college Richard Masika said the aim of the college is to build capacity and confidence into the entrepreneurs to establish small industries.

Govt plans sensitisation of surrounding communities on participatory wildlife management, says Kanyasu

By Correspondent Wilhelm

Mulinda, Mwanza

NATURAL Resources and Tourism Deputy Minister, Constantine Kanyasu has said the government is working to reduce human-wildlife conflicts at national parks and wildlife protected areas.

Kanyasu told journalists here that some of the strategies include formation of new laws and sensitization of wananchi surrounding the parks and protect areas to participate in conservation and maintain the corridors used by wild animals.

The move, Kanyasu said will also reduce conflicts between people leaving near the parks and authorities. He added that human encroachment to the protected wildlife areas has been a challenge but also affects the ecosystem that wild animals depend on to survive.

He said the government is now preparing a new law that will help to control invasion into the protected areas and make sure the normal animal corridors are open throughout for their passage. He said the Wildlife Act gives the ministry powers to establish such laws.

"Increased human activities have affected some animal passages thus resulting into wild animals considered to invade people's settlements and farms," said the deputy minister.

Kanyasu stated that the ministry is also going to increase the number of experts in areas bordering

the national parks intending to control and reduce harm that can be caused by the animals.

He said the plans also include sensitisation of people surrounding national parks on participatory wildlife management to avoid regular conflicts between wild animals and humans.

The deputy minister

highlighted that to reduce human-wildlife conflicts it is important for people to maintain the traditional passage of animals. He said the wild animals normally trace their passage even after over five years. "When they trace their traditional passages in the wild, people complain of invasion, but it is actually the humans who

have invaded the animal areas," said Kanyasu.

According to him, the ministry has now reviewed the amount of compensation people get after being attacked by wild animals. He said the government compensates only those whose complaints have been officially logged to relevant authorities.

PREQUALIFICATION OF SUPPLIERS FOR GOODS AND SERVICES.

Raha Ltd, Tanzania is a telecommunication service provider offering Internet & digital services hereby invites applications for expression of interest from eligible and competent suppliers and service providers for a prequalification process under the listed categories provided in the list below here under for the period of 2020/2021

1	Repair & Maintenance of AC Units for Headquarters, Branch offices and Data Centre
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Interested and eligible suppliers are invited to apply by sending their proposal not later than 17/01/2020 to the following addresses.

Raha Limited,
IT Plaza, 8th/9th Floor Ohio Street/Garden Avenue
P. O. Box: 6458 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Email: accounts@liquidtelecom.co.tz



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (NEMC)
BARAZA LA TAIFA LA HIFADHI NA USIMAMIZI WA MAZINGIRA

PUBLIC NOTICE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERTS AND FIRMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERTS

- Section 83 of the Environmental Management Act, 2004 directs that the Environmental Impact Assessments and Environmental Audits shall be conducted by Experts or Firms of Experts whose names and qualifications have been registered as such by the Council, and Regulation 16 and 27 of the Environmental (Registration of Experts) Regulations, 2005 confer powers to the Council to certify individuals and Firms of Experts as Environmental Expert and Firm of Environmental Experts respectively.
- The Council hereby invites eligible and qualified individuals and/or Firms to apply for certification and registration as Environmental Experts or Firm of Environmental Experts.
- Applications shall be submitted to the Registrar of Environmental Experts by filling a Form to be obtained from the office of the National Environment Management Council. Where an individual and/or Firm intends to apply to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment Study and Environmental Audit, two separate applications shall be submitted.
- Application fee for registration of individual citizens and local Firms is Tshs. 100,000/= and Tshs. 360,000/= respectively whereas fees for foreign individuals and Firms are Tshs. 450,000/= and Tshs. 900,000/= respectively.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Individual Applicants should:

- Possess at least a first degree in a relevant discipline or its equivalent from an accredited University or Institution;
- Have training in Environmental Impact Assessment and/or Environmental Audit;
- Have knowledge and experience in environmental management in general and competence in carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and/or Environmental Audit (EA);
- Provide an abstract of the Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Audit report(s) involved in and a letter of recommendation from an individual or firms that supervised your work;
- Provide names of at least three referees who are conversant with environmental issues and particularly Environmental Impact Assessment; and
- Fulfillment of other requirements as stipulated in pertinent laws for practicing individual environmental experts.

2. Applying Firms should note that:

- Firms registered under other laws may apply to be registered as Consulting Firms of Environmental Experts Under these Regulations;
- They must have experience in carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment and/or Environmental Audit;
- Firms of Experts to be registered under these Regulations shall, within its members, have at least two certified and registered Environmental Experts and two specialists from different specializations to constitute a Multi-disciplinary Team;
- Firms shall, together with the application forms, present:
 - The name/names of persons who have been certified and registered to practice;
 - The kind of expertise the firm intends to offer in the conduct or preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Audits; and
 - The certificate of registration of Business name.
- Fulfillment of other requirements as stipulated in pertinent laws for practicing firms of environmental experts.

The applications, in duplicate, accompanied with the curriculum vitae, certified copies of relevant certificates and the prescribed fees should be submitted to the following address not later than 15th February, 2020.

The Registrar of Environmental Experts
National Environment Management Council
35 Regent Estate,
P.O. BOX 63154,
11404 Dar es Salaam.
Tel. No: +255 22 277 4852 or 0787 684430

- Successful applicants will be informed about subsequent requirements for completing the registration process.
- Please note that FOREIGN firms may only apply to carry out SPECIFIC Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Audit.

In case you need any further clarification please do not hesitate to visit NEMC's office located at Plot No. 28, 29 & 30 in Dar es Salaam, or NEMC Zonal Offices in Arusha, Dodoma, Mbeya, Mwanza, Mtwara and Kigoma.

Announced by:
Director General, National Environment Management Council (NEMC),
Plot No. 28, 29 & 30-35 Regent Street, P.O. Box 63154, Dar es Salaam.
Telephone: +255 22 2774889, Direct line +255 22 2774852
Mobile: 0713 608930/0692108566
Fax: +255 222774901
Email: dg@nemc.or.tz

Researchers, stakeholders highlight need to prioritise beekeeping in rural areas

By Guardian Correspondent, Kibaha

THE government has been called upon to prioritise promoting beekeeping at various places across the country to enable wananchi graduate from poverty and boost the country's honey production.

Forest Researcher, Ibrahim Hussein made the call when talking to journalists after a workshop that brought together beekeeping and forest stakeholders from various villages in Coast region. Beneficiaries of the training are beekeepers from Twikinde, Pangani, Wazee Bamba and Mwambisi groups.

The training workshop was organised by a non-governmental organisation dubbed Kibaha Nature Conservation Initiative.

Hussein noted that beekeeping is positioned to help many Tanzanians graduate from poverty due to high demand of honey within and outside the country.

He said the trained beekeepers will be supervised by experts from the forestry department and Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) to ensure they produce quality honey that can be marketed around the world.

"The government should prioritize beekeeping as one of the economic activities to people living in rural areas; we have also donated 40 beehives to make sure they immediately engage in modern beekeeping after the training," he said adding that the organisation will also provide beehives to individual villagers to help them battle poverty.

Chairman of CCM parents' wing in Kibaha, Edwin Shunda said the training to beekeepers was part of implementation of the party's directive. He said beekeepers are now expected to produce quality honey that can compete regionally.

He said the parent's wing has also

been provided with 25 beehives, insisting members will engage in beekeeping to raise funds.

Training beneficiary, Cleophamary Edwin said: "practicing modern beekeeping will enable us generate income and improve the welfare of our families and the nation as well".

According to the Tanzania Forest Service (TFS), Tanzania has the potential to produce over 100,000 tonnes of honey per year but currently produces slightly over 50,000 tonnes.

Tanzania has a total land of 945,203 sq km where 4.53 per cent is arable and 6.2 per cent is water. The forest cover of Tanzania is 38.8 million ha which is 39 per cent of the land cover.

According to the Tanzania Honey Council (THC) beekeeping can be practiced countrywide although production potential varies from one location to the other.

The sector employs about 2 million people and generates about US \$ 2 million p.a. It also helps in bio-diversity and in increasing agricultural production through pollination.

Data from THC indicates that the country's production potential is huge having about 38.8 million ha of forests and woodlands ideal for beekeeping. Utilization of this potential is only about 7 per cent.

Several policies which affect beekeeping in Tanzania include the National Beekeeping Policy (NBP) which was formulated in 1998 with the purpose of enhancing the sector's economic contribution and management of natural resources through active participation of all stakeholders.

Two instruments have been put in place to effect its implementation; The National Beekeeping Programme 2001-2010 and the Beekeeping Act No. 15 of 2002.



Riders and passengers who do not wear helmets are at risk of suffering a traumatic brain injury if they are in an accident. Without protection, the head is vulnerable to a traumatic impact in an accident even when traveling at low speeds. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Govt promises favourable environment to investors

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has said it will continue cooperating with business people, investors and all development stakeholders investing in the country including putting in place friendly environment for them.

This pledge was given here on Wednesday by Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth and Employment) Anthony Mavunde when laying a cornerstone of a petrol station owned by Admire Oil, the oil firm that is conducting business in various regions in the country.

Mavunde said the fifth-phase government of President John Magufuli values investors due to their contribution in employment and increase of GDP.

"I congratulate the firm's leadership for coming to invest in Dodoma because in doing so it will increase employment opportunities for the youths after taking into consideration that you have already employed 20 Dodoma residents up to now," said the Deputy Minister.

"We, in the government will continue to encourage other investors to come and invest in this city which is the seat

of the government, but also there are other areas that are investors friendly especially for building factories," he added.

Earlier Admire Oils spokesperson Mohamed Ibrahim thanked the government for its continued cooperation with investors, as it motivates them to make investments in many areas.

"President Magufuli's government has provided friendly environment for investors especially local investors and we pledge to continue cooperating with our president to realise his dreams in making the country a middle income

industrial nation," Ibrahim said.

"We all know the aim of every businessman is to invest and reap profits, but our firm is among those whose main aim is to offer employment to women and youths," he added.

He said they have employed many youths, about 150 countrywide and among them many are women so as to assist them economically.

He also said Admire Oil has many branches in various regions but their largest petrol station is in Coast Region. He said other regions include Mwanza, Arusha, Mbeya, Dar es Salaam and Dodoma.



Save the Children

Consultancy Work

Connect Barrier and Facilitator Analysis

Background

Save the Children has been operational in Tanzania since 1986 providing development and humanitarian relief programs to children in support of the Government of Tanzania priorities and policies both directly and through local partners. Current programs focus on child protection, child rights governance, education, nutrition, health and emergency response with current operational presence in Kibondo, Shinyanga, Zanzibar, Mbozi, Dodoma, Rukwa, Iringa and Morogoro.

In September 2019, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) awarded the "Connecting first-time parents to contraceptive services through diverse platforms (Connect)" project to Save the Children. Connect aims to increase use of postpartum family planning among first-time parents (FTPs; ages 15-24) by layering an additional activity onto large-scale health and nutrition initiatives that already reach FTPs. In Tanzania, Connect will partner with USAID's Lische Endelevu nutrition project. The project will develop, test, scale, and evaluate a "program enhancement"—a modification to existing activities that leverages the project's reach to better meet the needs of FTPs.

To inform the design of program enhancements, Connect will conduct a "barrier and facilitator analysis" that explores FTPs' touchpoints with the health system and factors that shape first-time parents use (and non-use) of essential health and family planning services throughout the pregnancy and postpartum periods.

Desired skills and experience:

- Strong English language skills, both written and oral
- At least 10 years' experience with qualitative data collection, including the use of participatory approaches
- At least 10 years' experience in conducting research in health care settings, with young adults and adolescents related to maternal/newborn health and family planning
- Ability to collect data electronically, including loading questionnaires into tablets/smart phones

For more details and Terms of Reference, please open the link below;
<https://tanzania.savethechildren.net/tor-connect-project>

Full applications should be sent to the email address below:

Tanzania.Tenders@savethechildren.org with the title 'Connect Consultancy' no later than 10:30 a.m. (EAT) on Monday 20th January 2020,

Save the Children – Tanzania Program
Country Office, Plot No. 257 Kiko Avenue, Mwai Kibaki Road, Mikocheni
P.O. BOX 1041, Dar es Salaam - Tanzania

21572301

LATRA camps at Moshi bus station to nab fare hikers

By Guardian Correspondent, Moshi

LAND Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA) in Kilimanjaro Region has established a camp at Moshi Central Bus Station to deal with unauthorized agents and other middlemen who sell travel tickets at hiked prices.

Yesterday this paper witnessed LATRA officials in a small vehicle - Toyota Pickup inside the bus station that serves for buses destined to other regions with officials examining tickets and interrogating some passengers whether they were sold the tickets without following procedures.

One LATRA official identified by one name - Masoud - said LATRA was looking for those who hike ticket fares for passengers travelling from Moshi to other regions, in particular Dar es Salaam as they return from end of the year holidays.

It was reported that LATRA officials examine passengers' tickets and arrest agents and middlemen who charge higher fares following complaints from them.

Currently the Moshi Central Bus Station is congested with passengers travelling to Dar es Salaam, Tanga and Morogoro as well as Dodoma, Iringa, Mbeya, Mwanza and Shinyanga via

Singida.

Passengers who talked to this paper said they are charged 35,000/- as fare from Moshi to Dar es Salaam in ordinary buses and up to 40,000/- in luxury buses. As of now Moshi municipality is full of guests travelling to other regions in the country. It is also congested with small vehicles also travelling to other regions.

Yesterday this paper saw Peter Mizabwa, head of a special Police Road Traffic Operation putting camp at the central bus station with his personnel ready to deal with a huge influx of passengers, including inspection of the buses themselves.



A vegetable vendor hunting for customers in Dodoma as captured yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph



Packaging requirements for fresh fruits and vegetables are extremely important. A properly designed produce container should contain, protect, and identify the produce, satisfying everyone from grower to consumer. Fruits vendors along Uhuru road in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Selemani Mpochi

Arumeru DC vows to address chronic land controversies

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

ARUMERU District Commissioner (DC) Jerry Muro has assured residents in the area that he will tirelessly work to address challenges facing them including chronic land disputes.

According to him, his office has set a number of strategies including putting in place special lawyers to listen and assist various people who face legal challenges.

"Land disputes facing a number of families here have brought a number of impacts including destroying peace between communities, we are committed to ensure that we address them," Muro said when speaking to the residents in Meru district council.

He said the lawyers will also be there to assist poor people handle cases in court.

"There is a number of people with various cases in court but they can't afford to hire a lawyer due to low income, so I have decided to find four lawyers who will be working to support you in the cases, and I will pay the lawyers from my pocket," he said.

For his part, Arusha Regional Police Commander Jonathan Shana warned police officers on engaging in land disputes.

"I will not spare any police officer, whenever I find out that he/she involves in promoting land disputes, you are obliged to protect people lives and their properties," he said.

He wanted the public to provide support by notifying him through his mobile phone whenever they come across any police officer conducting the unethical action.

Meru District Executive Director Emmanuel Mkonjo assured the RPC that he will give all the needed support to ensure that the area remain safe and peaceful.



Land disputes facing a number of families here have brought a number of impacts including destroying peace between communities, we are committed to ensure that we address them

NAIROBI

Kenya says poaching of iconic species reduces by 90 percent

KENYA has said that poaching of iconic wildlife species like elephants and rhinos has reduced by 90 percent in the last six years thanks to enhanced surveillance, community engagement and stiff penalties for offenders.

John Waweru, director-general of Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) said that investments in robust anti-poaching efforts have paid dividends as evidenced by a significant decline in the number of giant land mammals killed by criminals for their trophies.

"In appreciation of the critical role the wildlife sector plays in

national development and security, the government has enhanced its investments in anti-poaching and law enforcement operations," said Waweru. As a result, Kenya has been able to reduce the level of poaching of iconic species by over 90 percent in the last six years," he added.

Statistics from KWS indicate that the number of elephants poached reduced from 384 in 2012 to 38 in 2018 while the number of rhinos killed by poachers

reduced from 30 in 2012 to 4 in 2018.

"Our law enforcement units have embarked on structured engagement with local communities, private ranches and other conservation stakeholders to counter poaching threats and other wildlife crimes," said Waweru. Waweru said the government is committed to eradicate poaching and enhance security of wildlife heritage that contributes nearly 14 percent to Kenya's GDP.



VISHWA HINDI DIWAS

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Hasya Kavi Sammelan

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United Nations Children's Fund
UNICEF, Tanzania Country Office
Plot 133, Karume Road, Oysterbay
P.O. Box 4076, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

LRPS-2019-9155075)

Date Issued: 20th December 2019

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

Wishes to invite Request for Proposal for

Provision of consultancy services for the review of the existing drawings, design & preparation of additional drawings and preparation of detailed BOQs for the Comprehensive Emergency Maternal Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC) facilities in Dodoma region (LRPS-2019-9155075)

Proposals by hand delivery must be submitted to UNICEF Dar es Salaam, Tanzania Office latest by 20th January 2020. The validity of the proposals must be at least 90 days. More details about this RFP can be found via this link <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/Index/101851>

Proposals should be submitted to the following:

Supply and Procurement Specialist
UNICEF Tanzania Country Office
Plot 133 Karume Road, Oysterbay
P.O. Box 4076
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

IMPORTANT:

Proposals received after the closing date and time will be considered invalid



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FRIDAY 3 JANUARY 2020

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Climatic disasters of 2020 likely to be more intense than 2019

CHRONICLERS have been taking records of climatic tragedies over the past year, and a new write up by Christian Aid, a UK charity, enumerates the ferocity of weather-related disasters over the outgoing year. Ordinarily it would be safe enough or hopeful to expect that things will be better in the incoming year, but no premise appears to exist for such optimism. The reasons are clear and vivid; one is being discussed, earth warming and the other reason is mostly covered up.

Looking at the spate of disasters during the outgoing year is sobering - with the UK charity saying that around 15 climate disasters during 2019 cost over US\$1 billion. They chiefly related to extreme weather driven by climate change, and these situations arose in every continent, killing, injuring and displacing millions and occasioning destruction running into billions of dollars.

Horrendous as it appears, these phenomena are likely to persist in the coming year, and as the trend has shown since Katrina slashed the US eastern coast in 2005, their ferocity seems to arise, though in a linear fashion. They are random bursts of disaster.

First thought in this foreboding is the fact that temperatures are rising, and 2019 was the second hottest year in history, though the term 'history' is unnecessary as all this is a recent phenomenon. It would be more appropriate to say it is the second hottest year since 2010 or at most since 2000 if not 2015, as any space of five years alters the baseline on which comparisons are being made. US skeptics making policy in the Republican Party denied this 'inconvenient truth' for a long time,

but the US now accepts the facts. But it doesn't accept current solutions.

In the past we used to see Mozambique being lashed by western Indian Ocean storms on its long coastline and especially the southern part, but the ferocity of the two tornadoes mid 2019 was phenomenal. In the coming year these phenomena are likely to be repeated, but no one can sell where disaster falls, though some parts of the world are favored by location to host more tornadoes. At the same time during 2019 Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe dried out, to the angst and horror of environmentalists around the world, looking in anguish at the cliffs.

Strangely enough some people and even some countries are likely to make some money out of this situation, as sorting out disaster situations implies directing public revenues into unforeseen needs, ordering unexpected goods and services. Some in Russian economic think tanks even suggest that earth warming shall make Russia great again, that melting snows shall facilitate agriculture, etc. But if Aral Sea and others hadn't disappeared by massive irrigation and elimination of forest cover, are there no chances that Russia would be even greater, by now?

Closer to home, climate change pushes Sahel conditions southward and Kenya for instance had even less of its land 200 - 300 km from Nairobi hard to put to farming as rain is sporadic. The country becomes a net importer of maize even as it has long been specializing in producing maize seeds rather than maize for lack of acreage, giving the benefit to Tanzania. We have an advantage in maize exports but is it an opportunity or just sadness, as all part of a wonderful world?

WHO methodology for prevalence survey on antibiotic use in hospitals absolutely necessary

AN antibiotic is a type of antimicrobial substance active against bacteria and is the most important type of antibacterial agent for fighting bacterial infections. Antibiotic medications are widely used in the treatment and prevention of such infections. They may either kill or inhibit the growth of bacteria. A limited number of antibiotics also possess antiprotozoal activity. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses such as the common cold or influenza; drugs which inhibit viruses are termed antiviral drugs or antivirals rather than antibiotics.

The World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the government has trained health care workers and other experts to carry out a survey on antibiotic use in six hospitals to address antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

WHO Essential Medicines Advisor, Rose Shija said during the two-day training in September this year said that it was part of the organization initiatives to support the country efforts to address antimicrobial resistance.

She said the participants from the six hospitals were trained how to collect point of care data that will improve monitoring of use of antibiotics among patients. The health care professionals were from regional hospitals of Iringa, Morogoro, Kitete, Mount Meru, Shinyanga and Dodoma.

"Provision of appropriate data and information that can be used by the health workers to improve the use of antibiotics in their facilities is key in ensuring that antibiotics are viable for a long period of time."

Shija added that participants were equipped with skills to use tools that will be used to conduct a point prevalence survey aimed at getting information about how medical practitioners prescribe antibiotics and how patients use them.

The increased resistance of bacteria to antibiotic medicines used to treat

human diseases caused by bacteria leads to the development and spread of resistant types of bacteria that cannot be defeated by commonly used antibiotic medicines.

Since 2016, WHO has been implementing the global programme on surveillance of antimicrobial consumption to support countries, especially in the African region, in monitoring the quantities of antimicrobials used at the national level based on aggregated data sources such as sales and dispensation, i.e. antimicrobial consumption (AMC).

Understanding patient's antimicrobials consumption patterns is critical for optimizing the use of existing antimicrobial medicines and preservation of their efficacy.

According to the WHO resistance to antimicrobials was a serious health concern worldwide.

Tanzania has adopted the global action plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and has developed National Action Plan for AMR using a "One Health Approach".

"Practical sessions collecting data at Mwananyamala hospital in Dar es Salaam followed the lectures so participants got hands on experience using the designed data entry tool," said Siana Mapunjo, AMR Focal Person at the Ministry for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MOHCDGEC).

She said after the training, participants will go to their respective hospitals to conduct the survey where they collect information on antibiotic use in all wards.

Data collected include the patient profile, indications for antibiotic use, the antibiotics used in the previous day as well as prescribing in compliance with the standard treatment guidelines and availability of antimicrobial medicines.

Mapunjo said results from the survey will be used to improve antibiotic use in the respective hospitals and eventually in the country.

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By Henry Weah, Sr

IN Liberia a power struggle brews between two of the country's most egotistic men. One of them is currently the country's president and a buffoon of the lowest quality who is probably the dumbest person to become president in the history of the world, while the other is a populist, loud mouth radio personality who has been known to wheel and deal with anyone for a buck.

How the Liberian state was able to descend this low is something that can only be understood if the country's history is looked at in its truest context.

In 1821 some blacks who were gathered mostly from plantations around the United States were put on a ship headed for the shores of Africa. The people on that ship had been promised a one-way passage from the United States in exchange for their freedom.

The plan to remove blacks from the United States had been conceived a few years before under the guise of philanthropy and serving Christianity, but the reality was that it was actually in response to repeated uprisings of the slave population in the southern states of the United States. Those revolts had led to the deaths of many whites who were increasingly the minority in many slave areas.

In January 1817 a meeting was hosted in the AME Bethel Church in Philadelphia. The intention of the meeting was to encourage blacks to move en masse to the African continent in furtherance of the resettlement plan of the American Colonization society. The 3000 men gathered in the church gave a resounding no answer to the proposal.

That no answer therefore meant that black people who were living free and had a level of sophistication and perhaps knew something about governance refused to join the resettlement program. As a result, the people who were eventually brought back where those with little or no education and certainly no understanding of how a government should function.

So mostly figuratively blind illiterates were taken from the United States and settled on the shores that came to be known as Liberia. They were made to think that they were better than those they met. They instituted a system of apartheid and transplanted the plantation system of governance they knew.

That smallminded plantation mentality has lived with Liberia since those early days. It was therefore with little surprise when George Weah got involved in politics in 2004 and consistently remained a serious contender until he was voted into office in 2017.

Weah epitomizes those figuratively blind illiterates that were dumped on our shores 200 years ago. They thought that running a plantation was not

Dumb and dumbest: The comedy of Liberia's continuing political tragedy



George Weah got involved in politics in 2004 and consistently remained a serious contender until he was voted into office in 2017



Henry Costa: He can't keep misleading people



Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is a Liberian politician who served as the 24th President of Liberia from 2006 to 2018. Sirleaf was the first elected female head of state in Africa. Ellen Eugenia Johnson was born in Monrovia to a Gola father and Kru-German mother. She was educated at the College of West Africa

such a difficult thing, hence running a country will be a piece of cake. Mr. Weah also thinks similarly - that running a country is all about giving orders which is an easy feat for anyone.

It is that way of thinking that has helped Weah to destroy a relatively functioning economy in so short a time. Even after the economic situation has gotten progressively

worse under his leadership, he still does not realize that someone as intellectually disadvantaged as him has one of three choices when given leadership: First, you surround yourself with people far smarter than you who you would give a free reign to act, second put in the extra effort and learn what statecraft entails; third do not do one and two and rely on your ignorance

as your strength and surround yourself with sycophant.

Sadly, Weah chose the third option and is therefore moving with supersonic speed towards destruction. He succeeded in destroying the country's economy within six months of ascending to power. Interestingly, he is self-deluded into thinking, as he has repeatedly claimed, that he is the best president Liberia has had in a hundred years. The man's self-delusion is simply astounding.

The Liberian people's realization that Weah was a mistake, has not led them to learn any lessons. They have trooped in droves to Weah's archnemes, a trickster called Henry Costa. Costa came to prominence some years ago when he burst on the scene as a vitriolic critic of the kleptocratic government of Ellen Sirleaf.

While Costa is relatively well read when compared to the average educated Liberian, it is not hard to see that he is actually a dumb person who has no circumspection. You only have to listen to the fellow doing his radio show to realize that he is a walking time bomb, who because of his relative sophistication is perhaps more dangerous than Mr. Weah who is clearly not up to the task of leadership.

Henry Costa is a fickle, narrow minded, small minded person who thinks that the world revolves around him. The fellow runs a radio show that has no structure and is usually very superficial on content. He is prone to be discussing one thing and jump to another with no warning. He is easily distracted and acts child-like most times.

In 1994 a comedy movie was released in the United States. It was called Dumb and Dumber, starring Jim Carey and Jeff Daniels. The two were dimwits in the movie who decided to drive across the US to return a case they did not know contained ransom money.

In the tragic situation of Liberia, which is definitely not a comedy, we have two men who are clearly dumb (Costa) and dumbest (Weah). Both are tussling over a country though they have very little understanding of what to do to move it forward.

While Henry Costa has a bit more intellectual finesse about him which makes him say some logical things about the running of a state, Mr. Weah has absolutely no clue on how to run a state and sadly he has no intention of learning the rudiments of the workings of a state.

Liberia is at a very sad place. The country needs to be rescued. Serious and well learned people have to step up so that the country can move from having the option of dumb and dumbest as the alternatives it must currently choose from.

The new year career change tips

As another year begins, we are enthusiastic, full of fireworks and with lots of well laid intentions for new beginnings.

So many of us become reflective, looking back on how things have been and whether we are a little closer to reaching our goals. If you've spent the last year dreading each work day and thinking up excuses for taking sick days, it may just be time for a career change.

The lack of passion in the modern workplace is pervasive. Perhaps it's because we chose our careers in college and not in our junior schooling years. Those days when we had no idea of what was in store for us or perhaps an increasingly competitive job market makes us reluctant to change.

One of the biggest obstacles to a career change is that most people don't know what they want to do with their lives. They know that their current careers don't suit them, but they



have never been taught the art of career guidance. If you are uncertain about your career, but just don't know what you want to do with your life, then these tips and rhetoric questions will certainly be eye opening.

What's your skill set?

If you are waiting for divine

inspiration to suddenly reveal your true calling, that's just impossible. Instead, go about making this decision the way all big, important decisions are made, with an educated guess, a little research and some nerves.

Start by creating a list of skills. Think about what you have been good at since you were a little kid.

Don't confine yourself to what you have listed on your resume; think outside of the box here. Don't trust this task to memory alone; go online and do some aptitude tests. These are helpful in not only revealing your hidden talents, they also suggest the kinds of careers your skills



would support.

Inquire from your Closest allies, family, friends

No one has insights into your abilities and interests quite like the people who know you best. Ask your friends and family members to suggest careers at which they think you will be good. You will be really surprised at what they come up with and they may have some inspired ideas for a career change.

Do some trial

When you have narrowed down your possible careers to a manageable list, give each of them a try. One of the biggest disappointments is that a career may not be what you imagined it

would be. For example, if you have an idea of being a lawyer that you got from watching Scandal with the gladiators and Oliver Pope you will almost certainly be disappointed with the piles of paperwork it actually entails.

To avoid these kinds of problems, find people you know in your industry of interest and talk to them about their day-to-day lives. Search online as well.

Start where you are

You don't have to quit your job to start exploring new avenues. You can use what you already have to tap into different careers until you find what you like. Let's say for instance you are thinking about being an accountant. After speaking with a couple

of accountants to see what their lives are like and taking a book keeping and financial statements courses, you're still really interested. Start by offering attend to books of accounts of small businesses and see how much interest that will spark in you.

If you aren't happy in your career, start thinking about changing your lifestyle today. The longer you wait, the harder it will be to make a move. Start with exploring your talents, and put in the time and research you would if you were making any other big life decision like investments or buying a house. When you put the time and effort in, you're bound to find something that really interests you.

By Faras Ghani

End of the deadline: What now for US-North Korea talks?

Kim Jong Un has made it clear there will "never be denuclearisation on the Korean Peninsula" if Washington adheres to "its hostile policy", as the North Korean leader's year-end deadline for the Trump government to restart negotiations elapsed.

Kim and US President Donald Trump met twice last year - in Hanoi, Vietnam, and in the Korean Demilitarized Zone, which divides the two Koreas - but failed to reach an agreement that seemed imminent after the landmark 2018 Singapore talks.

The North Korean leader had issued a year-end deadline to the Trump administration to get back to the negotiating table.

The US regarded the ultimatum as artificial and, in his New Year's address following a four-day Workers' Party meeting in the North Korean capital Pyongyang, Kim made it clear there were no grounds for North Korea to be bound by a self-declared moratorium on testing nuclear bombs and intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

"We will steadily develop necessary and prerequisite strategic weapons for the security of the state until the US rolls back its hostile policy towards the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and a lasting and durable peacekeeping mechanism is built," Kim said in his New Year's address following a four-day Workers' Party meeting in Pyongyang.

"The present situation warning of long confrontation with the US urgently requires us to make it a fait accompli that we have to live under the sanctions by the hostile forces in the future, too, and to strengthen the internal power from all aspects."

The North Korean leader also revealed plans to introduce a "new strategic weapon" in the near future, state media reported him as saying.

"We will reliably put on constant alert the powerful nuclear deterrent capable of containing the nuclear threats from the US and



The two leaders met twice last year but negotiations remain deadlocked. FILE PHOTO

guaranteeing our long-term security."

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo expressed hope that the North Korean leader would "choose peace and prosperity over conflict and war" but analysts suggest that lack of an agreement is the result of a conflicting approach to the talks.

"It seems the US and North Korea were unable to agree on the fundamental approach to negotiations, much less the content of them," Jenny Town, fellow at the Stimson Center and managing editor of 38 North, told Al Jazeera.

"The US keeps striving for a working-level process to

establish a detailed plan of implementation before an agreement is signed. The North Koreans, with Kim actively involved in the negotiation, seem to want an agreement to some top-level goals first.

"Once that's signed, they can then hand down the mandate to the working level."

Who wants what

Matthew Kroenig, associate professor at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, echoed those views before adding that the sequence of what each side needs has been significant in matters remaining unresolved.

"Trump is a showman. He wanted to meet Kim directly.

He believes that he's a master negotiator and only he could sit down with Kim and achieve a breakthrough," Kroenig told Al Jazeera.

"The second disagreement is about sequencing. North Korea wants sanctions lifted upfront in order to continue talks while the US has been very clear: The sanctions will remain until denuclearisation is underway.

"That's the biggest obstacle, for the US to get North Korea to give up the weapons. Kim's goal is to keep and expand and also modernise his nuclear missile programme."

In response to Kim's statements on Wednesday,

President Trump reiterated the relationship he says the two leaders have.

"He likes me, I like him. We get along. He's representing his country, I'm representing my country. We have to do what we have to do," Trump said. "But he did sign a contract, he did sign an agreement talking about denuclearisation."

Trump and Kim's first historic Singapore summit in June 2018 came after months of growing tensions marked by nuclear and missile tests, fresh sanctions and threats of "total destruction", and ended with a vague statement that failed to produce tangible progress.

The lead-up to the second

summit in Hanoi last year promised a different world after the talks. Both leaders greeted each other with smiles, sitting together and oozing optimism.

But the optimism was cut short, a working lunch cancelled and President Trump decided to "walk away" from the negotiation table in the Vietnamese capital, leaving North Korea without sanctions relief and the US without Pyongyang's commitment towards the denuclearisation it sought.

"Pyongyang sees nuclear missile programme as key to its survival," Kroenig added. "North Korea is not interested

in an agreement, they are pretending to negotiate as long as they get the sanctions lifted without having any intention of giving up the nuclear programme.

"The stakes are higher for the US in getting a deal to denuclearise North Korea, it's a major national security policy."

Trump's belief, according to Kroenig, that he can succeed where other US presidents failed is driving his confidence in the negotiations and the hope for a landmark agreement.

His patience with the lack of progress and his choice of words while addressing the North Korean leader have also been seen as key to avoid an angry response - in words or action - from Pyongyang.

But some believe the emotions coming out of North Korea on Wednesday may signal a shift in approach.

"North Korea has, in effect, put an ICBM to Trump's head in order to gain the two concessions it wants most: sanctions relief and some sort of security guarantee," said Harry Kazianis of the Center for the National Interest in Washington.

"Kim is playing a dangerous game of geopolitical chicken," Kazianis was quoted as telling the AFP news agency. He added that Washington could respond with "more sanctions, an increased military presence in East Asia and more fire and fury-style threats coming from Trump's Twitter account".

And as the US enters its election year, Trump's push for a diplomatic solution could help his campaign.

For North Korea, who before the Hanoi summit warned it faced a food shortfall of around 1.4 million tonnes in 2019, lifting the economic sanctions would have a significant effect on the country.

"Both sides have really squandered a rare opportunity. The political will is something we haven't seen in a long time," Town said.

"But the US and North Korean created obstacles to progress over the past two years, and both sides will stand to lose from their own intransigence."

AGENCIES

20 years of Putin: From political unknown to dominant force

By Mansur Mirovalev

Twenty years ago on December 31, Russian President Boris Yeltsin "stole the millennium".

The ailing, alcoholic and unpopular leader interrupted the New Year's Eve celebrations by resigning and proclaiming his new prime minister as "acting president" before a snap vote in March 2000.

The premier was a political unknown - a mediocrity ex-KGB colonel named Vladimir Putin who wore oversized, old-fashioned suits and briefly worked as a taxi driver before becoming a city hall official in his native St Petersburg.

The political Cinderella man had a fairy godmother - omnipotent oligarch Boris Berezovsky, who lobbied for Putin.

In 2013, Berezovsky, then an exile, was found hanged in his house outside London - shortly after beseeching Putin to let him return to Russia.

Critics say Putin reversed the democratic reforms of last Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

At the dawn of his rule, Putin looked up to Western leaders, volunteered to help the United States's offensive in Afghanistan, and told US President Bill Clinton



Russia has supported al-Assad during his country's brutal civil war. File photo

in 2000 that Russia should join NATO.

But Western counterparts never treated him like an equal partner, and Putin gradually changed.

"He is Russia's best ruler in many centuries," Dmitri Kiselyov, a TV presenter who heads RT, a state-backed outlet that broadcasts news in dozens of languages, said in February.

Kiselyov lauds Putin's revival of "traditional values" and lambasts the West.

Yegor Zhukov, a 21-year-old political blogger, has a different perspective.

"The only traditional institution the current Russian state respects and strengthens is its autocracy that never hesitates to break the lives of anyone who sincerely wants to benefit their motherland," he told a Moscow court that handed him a three-year suspended sentence in early December for participating in protests in July.

In 2018, the nation that stretches from the Baltic to the Pacific had been shaken by protests over municipal elections, rubbish disposal, construction of churches in parks and redistribution of regional borders.

Each protest became politicised and was punished with arrests, convictions and draconian fines.

Some analysts, however, believe protests embolden Putin.

"The protests are strengthening Putin's ratings because it consolidates around him the public groups that stand against any violent change of power," Alexey Mukhin, a Moscow-based analyst, told Al Jazeera.

Falling economy, falling popularity

Critics note that after two decades in power and despite a windfall of petrodollars, Putin

and his allies failed to address Russia's most fundamental problems - its dependence on energy exports, plummeting birth rates and industrial production, brain drain, an HIV/AIDS epidemic and corruption.

"Corruption in Russia stopped being a problem, it became a system," opposition leader Boris Nemtsov wrote in his 2011 analysis, concluding that Russia's annual "corruption turnover" amounted to \$300bn, a quarter of gross domestic product.

Four years later, Nemtsov was shot outside the Kremlin's walls.

The 2014 annexation of Crimea disrupted economic ties with Ukraine and brought Western sanctions that further hobbled Russia's economy and affected its most vulnerable demographic - that also happens to be Putin's support base - the elderly.

"To a Russian grandma, the sanctions mean less opportunities for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, of course, if she wants them to live in a modernised country, not in a besieged fortress," Alexey Kushch, a Ukrainian analyst, told Al Jazeera.

But Vladimir Evseyev, a 67-year-old pensioner in the central city of Tver, told Al Jazeera: "Putin wants to preserve peace, but if someone wants to mess with us - he will respond. It's OK if our pensions are 15,000 rubles (\$250), but we don't want war."

According to a December survey by independent pollster Le-

vada, 68 percent of Russians support Putin - far lower than the 86 percent approval rating he enjoyed after annexing Ukraine's Crimean peninsula.

Saving Bashar al-Assad In 1999, Russia's presence in the Middle East was reduced to a navy outpost in the Syrian port of Tartus.

Today, Putin plays regional kingmaker.

Russia's involvement in the Syrian conflict helped save Bashar al-Assad's rule.

"Assad's regime is saved and, moreover, somehow strengthened. Even in the Arab world, it is unofficially acknowledged," Alexey Malashenko, a Moscow-based analyst, told Al Jazeera.

Putin has also shielded Iran from sanctions, supplied it with arms and helped Tehran complete the Bushehr nuclear power station.

And he is reportedly trying to boost renegade Libyan military commander Khalifa Haftar as the war-torn North African nation's leader - with the help of hundreds of mercenaries.

Reviving a Soviet ghost Putin's pet project is the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), a Moscow-led free-trade bloc. It includes Central Asia's economic powerhouse, Kazakhstan, its impoverished neighbour

Kyrgyzstan, Armenia and Belarus.

Uzbekistan, Central Asia's most populous nation, is eyeing membership.

It recently let Russia use its airspace, backed Moscow's anti-Ukrainian United Nations resolutions and signed up for a Russian-built nuclear power plant.

"All these trends make one wonder whether Uzbekistan is giving up its political independence," Alisher Ilkhamov, a London-based Central Asia expert, told Al Jazeera.

The determination of Ukraine's pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich to join the Union led to the Euro-maidan protests that toppled him in 2014.

Putin responded with Crimea's annexation and the backing of separatists in southeastern Ukraine in what Ukrainians see as a bigger challenge to the existing world order.

"This war was not declared only on Ukraine. It was declared on the collective West," Crimea native and Ukrainian observer Pavel Kazarin wrote in late December.

The Kremlin "is not hiding its final goal - to break old rules and create new ones. The ones that will determine another position of a once-defeated empire."

AGENCIES

By Omar Havana

Not many photos have changed my life, but there is one that changed me as a person, hopefully for the better.

April 25, 2015 is a day that I will never forget. It was the day I lived through my first earthquake in my then home in Kathmandu, Nepal. I was sleeping on what should have been a lazy Saturday, when my wife woke me up. The house was moving.

When it started to shake even harder, we decided to run. We lived on the sixth floor of a 12-storey building. We ran downstairs wearing only our pyjamas. On our way down, the walls in the stairwell chipped off, and from the windows, we could see huge waves pour out of the swimming pool.

I ran without being sure of what had happened, but when I reached the street and saw the fear on people's faces, I realised it had been a huge earthquake. From that moment, the earthquake in Nepal became for me not just an event to photograph, but the story of a country I love.

For the first few days, we slept on the streets of Kathmandu along with the many who had lost their houses or were afraid of returning home as dozens of aftershocks continued to rock the country. Two Nepali colleagues, Niri Shrestha and Navech Chitrakar, became family during those days. We walked together for hours through the damaged zones. The smell of death came from the debris. Every street that we passed was a scene of horror as neighbours and police dug through the rubble looking for life, working against the clock.

From the second day, I focused on Bhaktapur, a city just outside Kathmandu, where just a couple of weeks earlier I had photographed Bisket Jatra, a festival of joy. Its beauty was captivating. In the days after the earthquake, however, Bhaktapur

The child who taught me what it means to hope



'He showed me how to smile and to keep walking forward. I will always be grateful to him.' [Omar Havana/Al Jazeera]

resembled a war zone. The streets were covered in debris. Processions of bodies were taken to the hospitals to be identified by family members. Then the bodies were brought to the cremation site for families to pay their last tributes to their loved ones.

Sadness and frustration occupied my thoughts. I had to leave as my wedding was taking place in France on May 22 and there was no way I could delay it. From thousands of kilometres away in France, I could not stop following the news, speaking to my friends in Nepal. The international media started to forget about Nepal.

A month later, when I returned to Kathmandu, it was as if the earthquake had just struck. But something was

changing. There was hope again, life was returning to normal and a message started to be heard around the country: "We will rise again."

I felt that the people of Nepal were giving the world a lesson about life, but that no one was listening. I wanted to tell this story. Little by little, this became a project - and a personal journey - which I called Endurance.

I photographed Endurance for a total of seven months, although the project lasted four years. I have thousands of photographs, but there is one that makes my heart beat even today - it is of a young boy walking to school the day it reopened.

To go to school, this child had to cross a square in Bhak-

tapur where 27 people had died in buildings that fell in the earthquake. For me, this picture represents the strength of the Nepalese people, walking through the rubble of a disaster towards a future full of hope. And it captures what a father in that square once told me about his child's role in rebuilding Nepal.

A square in Bhaktapur

The square in Bhaktapur became the centre of my project. I grew close to the people there and listened to their stories. Before the earthquake, it was a typical square where children played, and elderly people sat and chatted. But in the months after the earthquake, it was hard to find a square metre without rubble.

Residents tried to salvage what they could from the ruins of their homes. Day after day, I saw the same people working hard while their frustration grew due to the lack of help from the authorities. But there was no time to lose. Neighbours joined forces to demolish houses, risking their lives. Nepal needed to be rebuilt.

One day, I was smoking a cigarette when I saw a man coming out of a tiny hole, no more than a metre in diameter, from the remains of his home. The ruins could collapse again, but he went in and out without stopping, taking out papers, notebooks and books. I saw him do this several times, before I ran to him to tell him he was crazy for doing this and that he could die if the rubble

moved. But he smiled at me calmly and said: "Nepal has to be rebuilt, and everybody is focusing on the buildings, on the bricks. That's a mistake. Nepal has many problems, and the earthquake is just one of them, but if we want to rebuild this country, we need education."

"I have lost members of my family, my house. I have lost everything in the earthquake, but I have a child of nine years, and she is the future of Nepal. The reconstruction of this country is her education and as a father I risk my life to recover the books and notebooks from the ruins of my house. This country won't be rebuilt with brick. Nepal can only be rebuilt with education."

Walking to school through rubble

On July 20, at least two schools in Bhaktapur reopened. Where before had been mostly silence, the streets were now filled with the happy sound of children's voices preparing for school.

I photographed children heading to school. Finally, there were happy photos to take. When I decided I had enough material, I was walking out of the square to have a coffee with my driver before heading back to Kathmandu when something stopped me.

There was a boy of about seven years of age, carrying his backpack and walking quietly on his way to school. He was alone in the square and something very fragile in the way he walked caught my attention. There was something special about his calm steps. In my eyes, he represented the happiness and hope felt by Nepalese as schools restarted. And he reminded me of the father's powerful words about reconstructing through education. I wanted to show that Nepal was rising again, despite the huge obstacles in the way. I followed him for a few metres, taking photos.

Afterwards, I wanted to see his face, partly for reassurance that everything would be OK for us both. So I ran in front of him and smiled at him. I did not take a photo then, but I will never forget his beautiful smile.

I now keep a copy of this photo above my desk so that I do not forget that despite life's problems to never lose hope. He showed me how to smile and to keep walking forward. I will always be grateful to him.

The hope that the Nepalese had, politicians stole; many have not received the help promised by the government. People with money today have better houses, but the poor lost everything. As that father taught me, hope for Nepal lies in education. I hope that children will be the ones to make the country a better place for everyone.

AGENCIES

Towards zero poaching: Enlisting the power of traditional leaders, indigenous knowledge

By Guardian correspondent,

Arusha

THAT morning, six youths from Robanda, a village near Serengeti National Park, sneaked into the park with intent to kill wildlife in order to get game meat that they would later sell to villagers. Poaching is a source of income for some villagers living near Serengeti. There are few other sources of income but many youths believe that they can make quick money, and most of the time safely, instead of toiling in the farms.

The six youths had intended to set snares in order to catch large animals like buffalo. They also carried machetes which would become handy when they wanted a quick catch. Poaching was a regular activity in the village but that day was different. The previous evening the village traditional leader had ordered that no one should go to poach the following morning. He did not explain why he had issued the order; rarely do such leaders explain the issues. They give orders and their subjects must follow these orders.

The youths heard the order given by the elder. They decided to be defiant and went ahead with their plans. But once they were a few metres inside the Serengeti, one of them saw a small bird fly directly towards him and land his head. Instead of chasing it away with his bare hands he used the machete to kill it and in due course made a deep cut on his head. A lot of blood gashed from his skull and the group had to rush back to the village for treatment.

"There was no bird that flew and landed on the youth's head. It all had to do with defying the traditional leader's orders; if they say people should not kill wild animals in the national park then they shouldn't do it. That is why I think these leaders are an integral part in fighting poaching," explained Gutera Magea a resident of Robanada. He was once a seasoned poacher himself but decided to quit after realising that poaching was no longer viable. "Life was no longer worth living because I was always on the run to avoid law enforcers. I sometimes had to dress like a woman in order to hide my identity. There are cases when I was nearly shot dead and very often I went home in the dead of the night when I was sure no one would be looking for me," he explains.

Magea was giving testimony on the importance of participation of traditional leaders in the fight against poaching at the Community Based Natural Resources Management Forum held in Arusha in December last year. Among other things the forum focused on the role and contribution of villagers living adjacent to national parks and other conserved areas in curbing poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

There is need to solicit the support of traditional leaders because of the power they have over members of their communities. Their instructions are still revered except in a few cases when youths tend to ignore these leaders on false arguments of modernity. Generally, however, these leaders com-



mand respect from their community members and no guns or prison sentences will sway that loyalty.

But it is also true that community members are both a problem and a solution to poaching. They benefit from tourism through sale of local goods and services. Local retailers also bring basic services and goods to communities with capital that can be traced back to tourism.

"The most important thing about communities is that they know the poachers among themselves and those who come from outside their area. These outsiders don't know the area well and must get assistance from locals in order to fulfill their missions. That is why community members are an important part of the solution to the problem," says

John Salehe from Serengeti District.

Community members have their own networks which are strong, tricky and too complicated to be dismantled easily. But the traditional leaders know them and have their own way of dealing with them. They only need to be given opportunity to play this role. The leaders know each and everyone who is in the poaching networks and their specific roles. All they need is recognition and opportunity to participate in implanting measures to deal with poaching.

"That goes with the rest of community members. They want to be recognized that they can contribute towards zero-poaching and not to be told what to do and what not to do," says Emmanuel Sulle

from UNDP.

"These people have their own way of conserving and managing wildlife that they have implemented for decades. Let us acknowledge this fact and stop thinking that they lack education and that is why poaching for game meat and government trophies has been going on. The missing link is recognition; community members want to be valued," he said, adding that under current circumstances communities feel that wild animals get more recognition than them and therefore see no point in conserving and protecting wildlife.

There are also views that the relationship between park and conservation authorities and community members is to a great extent, still sour. Cases have been

cited of community members being killed by warders or sustaining fatal injuries when they are caught poaching. "This creates a spirit of 'revenge' with poachers from communities killing many animals that they don't need. The carcasses are left to rot in the park. One of the best ways to arrest this situation is for authorities to work closely with communities and listen to their views and opinions," says Robert Mande from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism.

"We need these communities to participate in conservation if we are to achieve zero-poaching. After exhausting all strategies and having recorded little success so far, community participation is inevitable. It might not be the silver bullet

we are looking for but it is certainly the best option we are left with," says Sulle.

Perhaps the big question here is what next for community members once they stop poaching, bearing in mind that this is a major source of income for most of the youths. One of the answers lies in enabling youths to form groups that can access soft loans to start various income generating projects poultry farming, horticulture and small retail businesses. Although these might initially not bring in much money for families, they will certainly enable them to live a decent life without having to run around in fear of law enforcers.

"Such businesses will definitely grow, albeit slowly, because there is ready market for the goods and services produced within the community," says John Salehe.

He also advocates establishment of Community Conservation Banks (COCOBA) which would help those interested to start retail businesses. Salehe who was once a poacher decide to start a retail business four years ago with initial capital of 150,000/-. Today he runs a business worth 3m/- having secured funding from the village COCOBA which he pioneered. He also suggests that conservation authorities and village governments should look for the possibility of employment for the youth who abandon poaching so that they can get alternative sources of livelihoods.

A COCOBA is a mutual savings bank. Each COCOBA group is formed by 15 to 30 community members who meet once a week and contribute their shares

to the bank as per the group's agreement. After six months, members can take small loans from the community's savings. These loans provide their starting capital for small businesses - on the condition that these are conservation-friendly. And these businesses then help to generate income for their household. The loans also make it possible for the villagers to start businesses and to invest in alternative ways to generate income thus reducing dependence on poaching.

"Today, we have 36 groups in the Serengeti district alone and almost 1,000 people are participating. Some groups have generated savings of up to 25,000 USD," says Masengeri Tumbuya Rurai, Project Leader of the Frankfurt Zoological Society's Serengeti Ecosystem Management Project.

"Many people from these communities were involved in poaching in the past. We approached them and encouraged them to think of alternative ways to generate income. Now they can choose to invest in environmentally-friendly economic activities like beekeeping, small shops and chicken-farming, which provide eggs and meat for the families and the wider community," he says.

Recently the number of COCOBA groups has grown in the Serengeti ecosystem having been established in Serengeti, Meatu and Loliondo.

The point is people know that poaching is bad and would like to top it, but they have no answers to how they will live if there are no alternative sources of income.

Climate change: My Roots in Africa startup is planting trees with blockchain

By Miriam Jackson

Forests in West and East Africa, the place conservation efforts usually are not matching deforestation actions, have undergone nearly full decline between the 1900s and 2017, in keeping with a comparability of reconstructed African forests by a workforce of ecology and evolutionary biology scientists at Yale College.

One purpose for that is that folks dwelling in rural areas in Africa nonetheless rely upon wooden from felled bushes for his or her cooking, in keeping with the Africa Vitality Outlook 2019 report.

By means of a social impression initiative, the group needs to plant and assign greater than 200 million bushes throughout Africa by 2024 earlier than the top of the UN Worldwide Decade for Individuals of African Descent.

From any a part of the world, My Roots in Africa Venture, makes it attainable for anybody to put a request to have a tree named, planted or gifted in honor of themselves or anybody they love.

How a library of tree DNA could protect the world's forests

"My Roots in Africa is... Uber for bushes, connecting native communities impacted by air pollution or deforestation, with world residents seeking to plant their roots in Africa," mentioned Kamil Olufowobi, MIPAD's



Founder and CEO.

"It presents a possibility the place Africa wins, the diaspora wins, and all of humanity wins. It helps the diaspora to cut back their barrier of entry to Africa.

The brand new initiative might be formally launched in February 2020 on the sidelines of the African Union Summit and goals to drive help for the Nice Inexperienced Wall whereas additionally selling local weather motion one of many United Nations' Sustainable Improvement Objectives.

"For each new tree that's planted, we will title one that's current after you. Many diasporans wish to hook up with Africa and there's a deep sentimental and emotional connection that this program brings which is 'now I've roots in Africa'," Olufowobi instructed CNN.

To additional personalize the service, MIPAD partnered with Decagon Institute to deploy information science and synthetic intelligence to determine and geotag bushes planted utilizing blockchain know-how.

It will allow its subscribers to know the precise location of their allotted tree and be capable to see it utilizing satellite tv for

pc imagery together with Google Maps. It additionally helps stop allocating the identical tree to a couple of particular person.

Planting bushes remotely

MIPAD says it's already working with metropolis parks and forestry departments in each main African metropolis to assist individuals plant their tree remotely.

"We get the orders positioned and the park and forestry departments are those who do the implementation. They're the house owners of the bushes, all we're doing is being the voice of Africa to the diaspora saying 'you'll be able to help Africa and in return, you'll be able to have your root planted,'" Olufowobi mentioned.

Ethiopia plants more than 350 million trees in 12 hours

MIPAD is banking on its historical past of connecting Africans to get them concerned within the undertaking.

Consistent with the UN's declaration of the Worldwide Decade for Individuals of African Descent, MIPAD recognized individuals of African descent from all elements of the world and has up to now

honored round 500 individuals in over 60 nations.

A number of African nations are additionally planting bushes.

In July 2019, Ethiopia planted 350 million bushes in a day, setting a brand new world document. The federal government has additionally joined greater than 20 different African nations in pledging to revive 100 million hectares of land as a part of the African Forest Panoroma Restoration Initiative.

About 5 months after this feat, Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari introduced that the continent's most populous nation will plant an additional 25 million bushes as a part of the Nice Inexperienced Wall - an formidable undertaking aiming to plant bushes spanning 8000 km and stretching the breadth of Africa from Senegal to Djibouti.

'Africa is our collective duty'

The continuity of long-term initiatives reminiscent of planting tens of millions of bushes and combating local weather change is a significant concern in a number of African democracies the place incoming governments usually disregard or abandon long-term initiatives by their predecessors.

Olumide Idowu, co-founder of the Worldwide Local weather Change Improvement Initiative argued that afforestation initiatives will assist Africa to sort out threats posed by local weather change reminiscent of floods, droughts and warmth stress and forests.

Idowu mentioned developed nations may help protect Africa's forests in the event that they scale back the demand for tropical hardwoods contemplating that the timber export market is a giant driver of deforestation.

To restore the injury that has been performed already and to safe the way forward for the continent's forests, the MIPAD CEO mentioned Africa wants assist from all over the world.

"All of humanity, we had been Africans first earlier than we had been the rest."

Increased investment in agriculture is critical in Africa's hunger fight

By Mohamed Aw-Dahir

THERE are a number of significant changes that are happening in Africa, the most important being that it is a continent with some of the fastest growing economies. Five of the world's fastest growing economies are in Africa.

This has resulted in increased wealth in a segment of the population, with its attendant shift in food consumption patterns.

Africa's population is also growing fast. For instance, between 2015 and 2050, the populations of 28 African countries are estimated to have more than doubled.

According to UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), 2015 report, the population of ten African countries namely: Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Somalia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, are projected to increase by at least five-fold by 2100.

Increase in population growth in Africa, especially the youth segment, presents an opportunity to unleash the potential of the sizeable and growing demographic; it, however, also means more mouths to feed.

Combining the effects of consumption pattern changes and the high population means that the agriculture sector must

respond by not only producing more food, but also food that appeals to a wealthier society.

African countries will likely continue to experience lower agricultural yields due to the impact of climate change, encroachment of agricultural lands - particularly crop and rangelands and, biodiversity loss.

In order to ensure sustainability of the agriculture sector, increased and quality investments need to be channeled into the sector.

Evidences supported by data and analysis from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) shows that agriculture plays an important role in economic development and poverty reduction as it creates employment opportunities and contributes to household income and food availability.

A majority of Africa's poor population lives in rural areas. Increasing investments into the agriculture sector can therefore play a critical role in poverty alleviation, especially rural poverty, since the majority of rural poor depend on agricultural activities for their livelihoods.

Further, agriculture is key not only to on-farm activities - it largely supports off-farm activities that contribute directly and indirectly to increased household incomes, hence reduction of poverty and inequality.

WASHINGTON

How Trump's impeachment trial would differ from a criminal one

U.S. President Donald Trump on Dec. 19 became the third U.S. president to be impeached when the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives voted to charge him with abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. The Republican-controlled Senate is due to weigh these charges in a trial in January.

In the unlikely event he is found guilty, Trump would be removed from office.

Trump and his Republican allies have attacked the impeachment effort as illegitimate, invoking concepts like "due process" and "hearsay" that are commonly associated with criminal cases.

While U.S. senators will serve as jurors, legal experts say an impeachment trial will look fundamentally different from a U.S. criminal proceeding. Here are the reasons why.

HOW DOES AN IMPEACHMENT TRIAL WORK?

In an impeachment probe, the House functions like a prosecutor's office. If the chamber charges a president with committing impeachable offenses, a group of House members presents evidence of wrongdoing during a trial before the Senate, which acts as a jury in deciding whether the president should be removed from office.

Historically, presidents facing impeachment trials have been granted some protections like what defendants receive in criminal cases, such as the right to have a lawyer present and request witness testimony. But legal experts say impeachment proceedings were never intended to be conducted like criminal cases.

In a 1974 report, the House Judiciary Committee said impeachment was a remedial process, rather than punitive one.

"Impeachment and the criminal law serve fundamentally different purposes," the report stated. "The purpose of impeachment is not personal punishment; its function is primarily to maintain constitutional government."

DO SENATORS NEED TO BE IMPARTIAL?

U.S. judges are required to ensure that jurors are fair and do not prejudice a case.

Similarly, under the U.S. Constitution and Senate rules, senators take an oath and swear they will be impartial.

But as a practical matter, senators can declare their allegiance before trial and cannot be disqualified for bias, said Frank Bowman, an impeach-

ment scholar at the University of Missouri School of Law.

"You can imagine what a mess the trial would be if disqualification motions would be entertained. Everybody would be moving to disqualify everybody, and then the question would be what body decides such a motion," Bowman said.

IS HEARSAY EVIDENCE ALLOWED?

U.S. law restricts what evidence is admissible in a criminal case. The complex rules limit the use of "hearsay," or secondhand information.

Such evidentiary rules do not apply to impeachment.

Republican lawmakers have criticized the House's impeachment probe as a political exercise based on hearsay. They say witnesses like former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch, who testified at House hearings, never spoke directly to Trump and therefore lack credibility.

U.S. Chief Justice John Roberts could conceivably block evidence from being used in the Senate trial on the grounds that it is irrelevant or hearsay, but such a determination could be overturned by a majority vote of the Senate, legal experts said.

Roberts does not want to be seen as partisan, so he will likely "tread very carefully" and let senators make important decisions, Bowman said.

WHAT IS THE STANDARD OF PROOF?

Jurors in criminal cases are instructed not to convict a defendant unless there is proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

There is no formal standard of proof in impeachment proceedings, said Jessica Levinson, a professor at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles.

"One would think there is an answer to this basic procedural question, but there is not," Levinson said.

Jurors in criminal cases are asked to make factual determinations, Bowman said. Senators, on the other hand, are making both factual determinations and political judgments, making it difficult to set a standard of proof, Bowman said.

HOW MANY SENATORS MUST VOTE TO CONVICT?

Under the U.S. Constitution, a two-thirds vote of the Senate is required to convict the president. That differs from most criminal trials, where jurors must reach a unanimous verdict.



Since welcoming Mohammed bin Salman to Washington last year, Donald Trump has nurtured the Saudi crown prince as an ally in his battle to isolate Iran. FILE PHOTO

MEANWHILE, HERE ARE 10 THINGS THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION DID IN 2019 THAT YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

It was another turbulent year for US President Donald Trump.

From the conclusion of the FBI investigation into allegations his 2016 campaign colluded with Russia to his impeachment, Trump may have spent as much time defending his presidency and actions as he did governing in 2019.

But there were also many decisions his administration made that did not get as much attention.

Here are the top 10 things the Trump administration did that you may have missed:

1. Top adviser with white nationalist ties?

Stephen Miller, a top adviser to Trump, has been a driving force behind Trump's immigration policies. A former Senate aide, Miller joined Trump's campaign early in the primary season and has helped shape much of the administration's domestic policies.

Miller is considered one of the architects of Trump's so-called Muslim ban which prohibits the entry into the US of citizens from five Muslim-majority countries, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen, and restricts a small number of North Koreans and Venezuelans from coming into the country. He was also one of the main proponents of the US's practice of separating undocumented migrant children from their parents at the US southern border.

But Miller has also been accused of having ties to white nationalist organisations. According to a November investigative report by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), a US-based watchdog group, prior to taking the White House job, Miller regularly sent reporters links to white supremacist groups as "research" to back his arguments on immigration. This included a number of emails sent to right-wing website Breitbart. A White House official defended Miller, saying he "hates bigotry in all forms"

despite calls from members of Congress to fire him.

The SPLC report came a few months after an under-reported incident when the Department of Justice (DOJ) sent out an email to employees with a link to a white nationalist organisation. A DOJ official said the email was a mistake.

"The daily EOIR [Executive Office for Immigration Review] morning news briefings are compiled by a contractor and the blog post should not have been included," the official said.

2. Nuclear technology to Saudi Arabia

As the US persistently shakes its finger at Iran and North Korea for attempting to develop a nuclear weapons programme, it quietly okayed the sale of nuclear technology and expertise to Saudi Arabia, which plans to build at least two nuclear power plants. In March, reports revealed that the US had secretly approved six authorisations for companies to sell nuclear power technology to Saudi Arabia.

But as tensions simmer between the Saudi kingdom and its regional rival Iran, there is widespread concern that sharing nuclear technology with Riyadh could lead to a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Concerns were compounded after Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) said in a 2018 interview that he would develop nuclear arms if Iran did.

Trump, meanwhile, has been exercising a "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran after he withdrew the US from a 2015 nuclear pact that curbed Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief.

Trump replaces Obama-era climate change plan

Trump ran on a campaign promise to overturn environmental restrictions on major industries put in place by his predecessor Barack Obama. Trump has been particularly vocal in his protection of the coal industry, public enemy number one for many environmentalists when it comes to fighting climate change.

In June, the Trump administration officially ended the Clean Power Plan (CPP). Put in place by the Obama administration in 2015, CPP aimed to slash power plant carbon emissions by more than a third by 2030 by pushing utilities to drop coal in favour of cleaner fuels like natural gas, solar and wind power.

The Trump administration argued it was an example of overregulation, restricting American companies' ability to compete globally. It replaced CPP with the Affordable Clean Energy rule which does not curb rising carbon emissions from power plants and prolongs the operation of coal plants.

Twenty-two states are now suing the federal government, arguing it prolongs

US reliance on coal power and obstructs states that pursue cleaner electricity generation.

"The coal lobbyists and climate deniers running the Trump administration wrote every word of this illegal and dangerous rule," argued Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, one of the state officials leading the lawsuit.

In November, the Environmental Protection Agency took Trump's plan one step further by announcing it wants to roll back regulations on waste from coal plants, sparking fears that small communities around the US would be more vul-

nerable to adverse health effects.

4. IG says State Department targeted employee over ethnic background

The State Department's inspector general issued a report in November that found an employee of the department was improperly removed from her post by officials over her ethnic background, perceived political views and prior role in the Obama administration.

Sahar Nowrouzadeh is a State Department security specialist who was born in Connecticut but whose parents immigrated from Iran. The report found that employees in the administration had circulated conservative news articles with false claims that she was born in Iran and was a "Muslim spy".

Nowrouzadeh was demoted by the department under the guidance of US special representative for Iran, Brian Hook, who denied the decision was based on her background. But the IG drew a different conclusion and recommended discipline for a number of high-ranking state department officials.

5. Trump slashes US refugee cap

Trump has made slashing immigration a central focus of his presidency and re-election campaign. The number of refugees admitted into the US has hit his-

toric lows since he took office. In the 2019 fiscal year, 30,000 refugees were admitted in the country, a record low. And the State Department announced in September that it will cap the number of refugees allowed in the country in 2020 at 18,000, the lowest number since the resettlement programme was created in 1980.

The Trump administration also granted states and counties the right to block any refugee resettlements within their jurisdiction.

Officials said there are too many cases for courts and agents to handle. "The overwhelming backlog is completely unsustainable and needs to be addressed before we accept large numbers of refugees," a White House statement said.

6. Middle East peace summit in Bahrain

Trump's plan to negotiate a peace deal between Palestinians and Israelis has stalled repeatedly since he took office. In February, 2017, Trump stood with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House and promised, "We'll be working on it very, very diligently."

He put his son-in-law and top adviser, Jared Kushner,



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks to the media after participating in a video teleconference with members of the U.S. military at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida, U.S., December 24, 2019. PHOTO: REUTERS

on the case. Since then, Kushner has travelled to the region multiple times.

The Trump administration has unveiled a \$50bn economic plan to end the decades-old conflict between Israel and Palestinians. In June, Kushner opened a two-day conference in Bahrain to rally support for the plan, which expects donor nations and investors to contribute funds towards projects in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon.

Palestinian leaders rejected the plan and boycotted the conference, accusing it of pro-Israel bias after it shut down its consulate in Jerusalem and ordered the Palestinian mission in Washington, DC, to close. Earlier in 2019, the US cut all aid to the Palestinian territories.

Critics say Kushner's attempt to decide economic priorities first while initially sidestepping politics ignores the realities of the conflict.

The political portion of the peace plan has not been released.

7. Pushing South Korea to China

The US has held troops in South Korea since the ceasefire between North and South Korea in 1953. In 1991, Washington and Seoul signed the Special Measures Agreement (SMA), which lays out how the two countries cover the costs associated with protecting the Korean Peninsula.

The SMA was scheduled to expire at the end of 2019 and Trump reportedly took the opportunity to increase the price tag. In August 2019, Trump tweeted that South Korea was not paying its fair

share. In November, talks between the two countries over burden-sharing broke down after the US reportedly asked for five times the amount from Seoul to keep American troops there. That same week, South Korea signed an agreement with China for more military cooperation, pushing a close US ally towards a US adversary.

8. Conflict-of-interest woes

Trump, a former businessman, often compares the running of government to running a business. But he has repeatedly come under fire for using his position as president to promote his businesses, many of which bear his name on them.

In September, the US Air Force came under scrutiny after it was revealed that crews had been staying at Trump's Scottish resort in Turnberry during stopovers, ignoring cheaper options. A Pentagon investigation concluded the stays were within guidelines.

In October, another report surfaced he was pushing to have the G7 summit at his golf resort in Doral, Florida. Trump cancelled the plan after significant backlash, but was puzzled over why it was such a big deal. "I was willing to do this for free," Trump told reporters during a cabinet meeting.

He used the meeting to rail against what he calls, "this phony emoluments clause", an article in the US constitution that forbids the president from accepting gifts or "emoluments" from foreign leaders while in office.

In July, a federal appeals court threw out an emoluments case against him that argued profits from his Washington hotel were a violation of the clause.

9. Trump signs Hong Kong legislation

The Thanksgiving holiday in the US is a good time for presidential administrations to bury news. In November, Trump used the holiday to sign the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act. The legislation, passed by Congress, followed months of mass pro-democracy protests that rattled the Chinese government. The legislation threatens to bar entry of individuals who "violate internationally recognised human rights".

But the legislation also put Trump in a political bind. It came as the US and China held talks on a possible trade deal. Beijing said it "seriously interfered with Hong Kong affairs, seriously interfered with China's internal affairs, and seriously violated international law and basic norms of international relations". Trump said he supported the pro-democracy protesters, but China was "a friend".

The legislation also passed with veto-proof majorities in both houses of Congress.

10. Debt and deficit grow

As a businessman-candidate for the White House in 2016, Trump promised to get rid of the national debt "within eight years" if elected.

But as president, the US national debt has soared.

In January 2017, when Trump took office, the debt hovered around \$19 trillion. As of December 2019, that total is just over \$23 trillion, a 21 percent increase. The federal deficit continues to grow with massive spending on the US military causing a large portion of it.

In 2019, the deficit was its biggest in seven years with an even bigger one projected in 2020. Trump promised a 2017 tax cut would help pay down the debt and deficit as the economy improved.

AGENCIES

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD =030=

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

3 letter word: USE, SPA, EAT, SIT, UDO, ERA
 4 letter word: NONE, NORM, ELMS, BONE, MERE, SHOW
 5 letter word: RIDER, TRAIN, HELLO, ARENE, RADAR, INLET, SPADE
 6 letter word: SERENE, RODENT, CEMENT, TABORA, TOWERS, HADITH, MUSEUM
 7 letter word: ELEATIC, CREATOR
 9 letter word: SERENGETI, MERCHANTS

WORD FIT

M	I	W	A	N	Z	J	A	K				
E	R	C	H	E	R	I	C	A	L	I	O	N
S	A	R	N	I	A	S	A					
I	M	P	D	I	T	S						
H	A	N	A	A	I	S						
O	R	I	N	A	S	A						
M	I	A	I	A	I							
M	I	A	I	A	I							

Clues: Across

- Device for shaving (6)
- Gather (7)
- First Woman in the World (3)
- So be it (4)
- Somebody who tests products (6)
- Rental contract (5)
- Retrain (7)
- Believer that people are insincere (5)
- Increase (3)
- Scottish Trades Union Congress (4)
- Costing nothing (4)
- Jotted record (4)
- Floating (6)

Down:

- Game (5)
- Gather (7)
- First Woman in the World (3)
- Attractive (4)
- Almost never (6)
- Provoke a reaction (6)
- Alloy for making magnets (6)
- Confine in cages (7)
- Bear hardships (7)
- Half (4)
- One person, thing or group (4)

Comments: 0686 36 14 36

DR TULIA URGES BEACH FRONT HOTELS TO CLEAN UP AS RAMADA RESORT



The National Assembly Deputy Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson (with red t-shirt) joins Kilongawima local community members in Jangwani strip beach cleaning through the Ramada Resort Dar es Salaam Beach Clean Initiative in the city yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Property Watch Reporter

MANAGEMENTS of beach front hotels in the country have been urged to emulate Ramada Resort by Wyndham Dar es Salaam by regularly cleaning up their sandy environment to help a global campaign to keep oceans clean.

Deputy House Speaker, Dr Tulia Ackson said in Dar es Salaam yesterday after joining women from Mbezi Beach Africana who

were cleaning Ramada Resort's white sandy beaches, that oceans have been polluted by human activity hence need cleaning up.

"I congratulate management at Ramada Resort for engaging these women because apart from giving them an income, they are also helping to clean the beach which in turn means cleaning the ocean," Dr Ackson said.

She said what Ramada Hotel's management is doing is responsible corporate citizenship

which should be emulated by managements of other beach fronted hotels to attract more customers including foreign tourists but also engage local communities in their activities.

"We at Tulia Trust have been working with Ramada Hotel for many years to promote tradition cultural groups by making them earn an income for their dances which the hotel hosts here at different times in a year," she added.

She said initiatives being taken by Ramada Hotel's management will bear a lot of good among communities if the earn some cash for working in partnership with high end world class hotels. "the income which these women are earning for working two hours daily is improving their lives," the Deputy House Speaker noted.

Ramada Resort by Wyndham Dar es Salaam's sales and marketing director Bharath Swarup said they have engaged the women to also

sensitize them on the importance of maintaining clean beaches as an environmental conservation activity.

"Clean beaches in Dar es Salaam will also mean more tourists because people will come to relax where the white sandy beaches are clean," Swarup said pointing out that the hotel has since 2018 worked in partnership with the women who it pays daily to work for two hours cleaning up its beach front.

In strategic Djibouti, a microcosm of China's growing foothold in Africa

DJIBOUTI

Above ground in this tiny but strategically located country, signs of China's presence are everywhere.

Chinese entities have financed and built Africa's biggest port, a railway to Ethiopia and the country's first overseas naval base here. Under the sea, they are building a cable that will transmit data across a region that spans from Kenya to Yemen. The cable will connect to an Internet hub housing servers mostly run by China's state-owned telecom companies.

Beijing's extensive investments in Djibouti are a microcosm of how China has rapidly gained a strategic foothold across the continent. Western countries, including Africa's former colonizers, for decades have used hefty aid packages to leverage trade and security deals, but Chinese-financed projects have brought huge infrastructural development in less than a generation.

The construction is fueled mostly by lending from China's state-run banks. Spindles of Chinese-paved roads have unfurled across the continent, along with huge bridges, new airports, dams and power plants as part of Chinese President Xi Jinping's 152-country Belt and Road Initiative.

Overall, Chinese companies have invested twice as much money between 2014 and 2018 in African countries as American companies, spending \$72.2 billion, according to an analysis by Ernst & Young.

"The Chinese are thinking far into the long-term in Djibouti and Africa in general," said David Shinn, a former U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia who was also the State Department's desk officer for Djibouti as far back as the late 1960s. "Djibouti is one node in an economic chain that stretches across the northern rim of the Indian Ocean, from ports in Cambodia to Sri Lanka to Pakistan. They have a grand, strategic plan. We don't."

In Djibouti, that strategic plan is all the more evident because of the country's location at the entrance to the Red Sea, where about 10 percent of oil exports and 20 percent of commercial goods pass through the narrow strait right off Djibouti's coast on their way to and from the Suez Canal.

That location has made it a crucial waypoint for undersea cables, which transmit data between continents. China's investment in Internet infrastructure here comes as the region surrounding Djibouti is just starting to come online, including some places that are entirely reliant on Djibouti as a transit point for data transmission.

Opening the door to a small room with three servers, Habib Daoud Omar, an engineer who manages the site, said, "You are looking at all of Somaliland's Internet," referring to the autonomous region of northern Somalia. In another room, all of Yemen's Internet. Ninety percent of powerful-but-landlocked Ethiopia's Internet passes through the main chamber.

The transformative presence of China on so many fronts has loosened many African countries' dependence on Western governments for development.

Chinese loans come without the demands for improvements on human rights that often accompany American aid. China's inroads have helped it gain access to vital mineral resources, a vast market looking for its cheap goods located at the center of the world map, and reliable backing at global institutions such as the United Nations.

But critics of Chinese loans allege that they catch vulnerable, developing countries in "debt traps," depleting government coffers and sticking generations of taxpayers with gigantic bills, or else China's banks take ownership of the key strategic assets they built. Beijing now holds over 70 percent of Djibouti's gross domestic product in debt.

African governments have fiercely denied that such takeovers could happen, despite recent precedent in Sri Lanka, where a port in the president's strategically located but commercially unviable hometown was handed back to the Chinese company that financed its construction.

The Trump administration has sought to counter China's growing influence with a push for private investment, called Prosper Africa, though the investments envisioned would pale in comparison to Chinese loans. In Djibouti, even the commander of U.S. armed forces in Africa has appealed — if obliquely — for greater caution in dealing with China.

JICA supports construction of Malindi fish market in Zanzibar

By Property Watch Reporter

THE Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is supporting the Malindi Fish Landing Site and Marketing Facilities in Zanzibar Archipelago to provide a safe, sanitary, and efficient work environment for fishermen, porters, brokers, auctioneers and vendors thereby contributing to stable supply of fishes with higher quality.

Zanzibar President, Dr Ali Mohamed Shein is today expected to grace the foundation stone laying ceremony of the construction of the New Malindi Fish Landing and Marketing Facilities, according to a statement issued by JICA yesterday.

According to JICA, the construction works of the facilities will be undertaken by an experienced Japanese contractor—Rinkai Nissan Construction Company Ltd' and is expected to be completed within 18 months.

Malindi port on Zanzibar Island is not only the largest fishing port in the Zanzibar Archipelago but is also the major distribution base for marine products headed for Zanzibar Municipality and beyond.

However, the fishing wharf, seawall, nearby unloading and market facilities, and the general environment around the area have been in a state of disrepair for a long time, and have adversely affected the economy of Zanzibar, which, to a large extent, depends on fisheries activities.

"The government of Tanzania through JICA agreed to implement the project for development of Ma-



lindi Fish Landing and Marketing Facilities in Zanzibar which aims at redressing the above situation for the benefit of the people of Zanzibar and beyond", read part of the statement from JICA.

In his New Year message on Wednesday, Pres-

ident Shein said in 2019 the government recorded a number of achievements in the agriculture, fisheries and livestock sectors.

Dr Shein said the government has started taking initial steps to establish Zanzibar Fishing Corporation (ZAFICO) to replace the former in-

stitution that was in place.

He said in 2019 a modern fishing trawler - SH-EWA II was bought at a cost of 1.33bn/- and already ZAFICO is planning to buy another fishing trawler.

HOUSING SALES REMAIN PAIN POINT IN REALTY SECTOR

NEW DELHI

Residential property as an investment has always been the poor cousin of commercial real estate, and 2019 couldn't have been a better testimony to this statement, as housing sales were plagued by demand slowdown amid surplus inventory and office space leasing hit a record high.

While sale of residential properties increased only marginally despite plethora of steps taken by the government through the year, office space leasing rose 40% to touch an all-time high of 46.5 million sq ft – a trend that drew investors to lap up India's first Real Estate Investment Trust at an issue size of nearly 5,000 crore.

Real estate developers in the housing segment struggled to stay afloat due to poor sales and acute cash crunch, and homebuyers continued their battle to get their dream homes, dragging many builders to insolvency court.

"The year 2019 witnessed no significant momentum for the realty sector in India, economic slowdown to challenges such as liquidity crunch, delayed delivery of insolvent projects and un-regulated cases in National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) dented the growth of the sector," CREDAI (National) President Satish Magar told PTI.

The apex realtor body's Chairman Jaxay Shah listed liquidity as a major challenge currently faced by the sector.



Real estate developers in the housing segment struggled to stay afloat due to poor sales

tor. He, however, hopes for revival next year aided by steps taken by the government like tax sops, a sharp cut in GST rates on under-construction flats and a 25,000 crore fund to salvage stalled residential projects.

According to property brokerage firm Anarock, housing sales rose by a mere 5 per cent to 2,61,370 units in 2019 across seven major cities compared to 2,48,310 units in the previous year.

Usually, the July-December period sees a significant rise in sales driven

by festive demand. However, 2019 saw a decline in sales during the second half of the year, compared to the first six months of the year.

"Unrelenting liquidity crisis, lower-than-expected buyer sentiments and faltering gross domestic product (GDP) growth eventually put brakes on the overall housing growth in the second half of 2019," said Anuj Puri, Chairman, Anarock.

Anshuman Magazine, Chairman and CEO (India, South East Asia, Middle East and Africa) at CBRE, said

the non-banking financial company (NBFC) crisis and the resulting economic slowdown have slowed the recovery of residential sector.

The only silver lining in an otherwise dull residential property market was a surge in demand for affordable homes priced up to 45 lakh, driven by incentives like lower goods and services tax (GST) of one per cent, additional deduction of 1.5 lakh for interest paid on home loan and interest subsidy under the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme.

Completed units, which are exempted from GST and also risk-free, were in much demand.

Housing demand and supply consolidated towards realty firms that are either part of big corporate houses or have a decent track record in execution of projects. The number of developers operating in the property market fell drastically.

In contrast, the commercial property market was bullish.

According to property consultant JLL, the net leasing of office space touched a record 46.5 million sq ft this year driven by demand from IT/ITeS sector. Real estate sector attracted an investment worth over \$6 billion this year, largely in rent-yielding commercial assets by foreign investors, according to Colliers.

Co-working and co-living concept gained momentum, led by millennials who believe in shared economy, with big developers entering these two segments dominated by startups.

At the start of the year 2019, prop-

erty developers and consultant predicted significant revival in housing sales, albeit on the lower base, while the momentum in the commercial space would continue.

Even as office space absorption hit a record high, homebuyers kept postponing their decision to purchase – first waiting for lower GST rate (1% on affordable homes and 5% for other flats) made effective from April 1 and then uncertainty related to general elections.

Once bitten twice shy, buyers chose not to invest in properties of lesser-known builders.

A decision to ban subvention scheme, under which builders used to pay interest on home loans on behalf of home buyers, did not help the cause; rather deepened the liquidity crisis faced by the industry since the second half of 2018.

"To say it was a tough year for the housing sector is an understatement. Sales were anaemic," said Dhruv Agarwala, CEO of PropTiger and Housing.com.

Through the year, the government announced several measures, including a new 25,000-crore fund for stressed residential projects, sharp cut in GST rates for under construction flats and tax incentives to revive the real estate industry and boost economic growth from over six-year-low of 4.5% in the second quarter of this fiscal.

The RBI, too, pitched in with sharp cut of 135 basis points in key benchmark lending rates that softened home loan interest to around 8%.

Rwanda partners Qatar in delivering expanded international airport for Kigali city

KIGALI

Qatar Airways has agreed to take a 60% stake in the \$1.3bn international airport planned for Rwanda, the state-run Rwanda Development Board said on Twitter on 9 December.

The board said the partnership with Qatar included three agreements to build, own and operate the airport, which is under construction near the town of Bugesera, about 25km south of the capital Kigali.

This agreement supersedes an earlier deal with contractor Mota Engil, under which the Portuguese firm held a 75% stake in the project, and would operate the airport for 25 years after completion. Construction began in 2017.

Work on the airport was slowed at the end of 2018 after the government announced that it wanted to "make improvements to the design and quality and even expand it." Claver Gatete, Rwanda's infrastructure minister, told Rwanda's New Times newspaper that the government had "broadened its ambitions" and wanted to build a bigger airport with "multiple sustainability elements" and the capacity to act as a regional hub.

The first phase of construction, which is expected to last five years, will now provide an airport with a 7 million passenger capacity, rather than the 4.5 million originally planned at a cost of about \$820m. A second phase, scheduled for completion by 2032, would double this to 14 million.

The Rwandan government earlier this year bought out Mota Engil's shareholding. The decision followed a visit to Kigali in March by Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, the foreign minister of Qatar, during which the Bugesera project was discussed.

According to the Gatete, Mota Engil remains the contractor. He added that work on the scheme never halted completely, discussions with the contractor were under way to fully resume construction. When complete, the Bugesera airport will be Rwanda eighth, and its third international facility.

By Nicole Norflie

MINNESOTA architect Dean Dovolis got the inspiration for his firm's first overseas development project when he witnessed a wedding one night at his hotel in the small East African nation of Djibouti.

"I saw the dress and the dancing and the culture," Dovolis said.

That night Dovolis began to sketch a redesign of the country's international airport made to resemble a traditional necklace and a reimagined ministry building that had cascading rooflines meant to invoke the look of arm bracelets. For another design, Dovolis traced his hand for the footprint of a large residential development with villas and sea canals that would stretch out to the ocean.

Dovolis and the Minneapolis-based DJR Architecture firm that he leads has begun to design an elaborate series of development projects in collaboration with the government of the Republic of Djibouti that, when completed, could amount to more than \$1 billion in private and public investment.

The projects include a new international airport with passenger terminal and air cargo facilities, the construction of a consolidated government ministry building, the buildout of indoor hydroponic agriculture facilities and the creation of a massive residential and hospitality development on an artificial island similar to the Palm Islands in Dubai.

The unlikely joint venture is a large departure from DJR's portfolio of Twin Cities development projects, which have ranged from office buildings and beer taprooms to bank branches and a wide assortment of apartment developments.

"This is really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that I had no idea was going to show up," Dovolis said.

DJR was founded in 1985 and has its roots in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis where the firm worked early on with local nonprofits to create affordable housing and stimulate community development. The firm has grown to 35 architects who are led by Dovolis and firm principals Scott Nelson, Scott England and Sheldon Berg.

DJR became involved with the Djibouti projects when Dovolis and entrepreneur Diraneh Robleh met through a contact in Minnesota's East African community. Robleh – who grew up in Djibouti and now operates his own real estate firm, Universal Realty USA in the Twin Cit-



DJR designed an artificial island called the Sea Flower that could boast a casino and hotel, water park, and numerous condos and villas.

How Minnesota firms ended up as leaders of an East African country's redevelopment efforts

ies – had the desire to apply his real estate expertise in his homeland.

Through personal connections, Robleh was asked by Djibouti officials for assistance in helping to modernize developments in the country including renovation of the existing Djibouti-Ambouli International Airport and planning for a future international passenger and cargo terminal airport, as well as helping to create urban residential planning for the city and its burgeoning middle and upper class, among other goals.

"Right now, Africa doesn't need help, it needs partners," Robleh said.

Dovolis said the projects intrigued him, and he decided to visit Djibouti in September with Robleh to meet with government officials and discuss preliminary designs.

"I realized they were very

appreciative of the ideas we were trying to do," Dovolis said.

The projects, which are being developed by Robleh's newly formed Universal Construction Firm and designed by DJR, are part of a long-term strategy Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh has proposed to help position the country as a regional hub for trade and commerce by the year 2035. The strategy includes making improvements to infrastructure such as the airport.

The partnership came at a good time for the country, especially after the recent opening of the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone (DIFTZ), the largest of its kind in Africa, said Amareh Ali Said, Djibouti's commissioner of planning and former minister of budget, in a translated interview with the

Star Tribune.

"It came at the right time because of Djibouti's economic development rise," he said.

He said that Djibouti officials were also pleasantly surprised about the incorporation of the Djibouti culture in the DJR designs and were happy about the exchange of knowledge that happened between the American team and Djibouti officials. Much of the actual construction labor for the projects will be done by Djibouti workers, which was an important aspect of the partnership, he said.

Djibouti is a small but strategically located country bordered by Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea with access to the Gulf of Aden and beyond that the Indian Ocean. The country serves as a gateway to the Horn of Africa and the wider region of East Africa. But with

an area around 8,900 square miles, about the size of New Jersey, the country has limited natural resources.

The country also has limited rainfall; Djibouti City, the capital of Djibouti, is recognized as one of the driest cities in the world. The heat and dryness has limited Djibouti's agricultural potential and made it highly dependent on imports.

Last month, Robleh, Dovolis and a team of designers and investors toured parts of the country and met with Djibouti officials including the heads of the budget, housing, transport and agriculture ministries. President Guelleh signed off on the project proposals.

One of the first phases of the projects has been dubbed the Sea Flower, which when fully built out would likely cost close to \$1 billion, planners have projected.

The Sea Flower would be an artificial island in the shape of a hand constructed right off the northeastern tip of the capital city. The site would be developed in phases with plans for an outdoor market, hospitality venues and an array of villas and condos jutting out on the "fingers" with sea canals in between to allow small boats to dock.

The president has already signed off on the sale of the nearly 200 acres of space that would become the Sea Flower for an undisclosed price that is in the millions of U.S. dollars. A ribbon cutting is scheduled for mid-February for the beginning of the Sea Flower development, which would need to take stone and volcanic earth from inland to form the island. The Sea Flower will likely take five to seven years to develop.

One of the main initial

private investors in the Sea Flower project is Minnesota-based Cohesion Group, led by investor Christopher Bock. Bock said he has long dreamed to develop a casino and hotel, and he found the Sea Flower project to be a rare opportunity to build one in a still-underdeveloped area.

"It is something that wasn't on the radar," Bock said, about the potential growth of the tourism industry of Djibouti.

Another large project that Universal and DJR are working on is the redevelopment of the Djibouti-Ambouli International Airport, which has a single terminal building and is in need of major updates to make it acceptable for an influx of international tourists. Dovolis recounted how the limited infrastructure

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CONSTRUCTION

CAIRO

Egypt is expanding its search for hydrocarbon reserves. The country recently awarded the exploration rights to US's Chevron, Anglo-Dutch Shell and UAE's Mubadala. The search is being conducted in the Red Sea area for more energy reserves.

The first round of licensing was announced by the North African state earlier in 2019. Chevron and Shell were awarded one sector each, and one sector was jointly declared for Mubadala and Shell. As per Egypt's petroleum industry, the concessions cover over a total area of 10,000 square kilometers. The minimum investment is valued at Dh 1.12 million (\$326 million).

The exploration rights were put on auction after the discovery of the vast Zohr field in 2016 by Eni; Italian energy major. This discovery initiated a search for more hydrocarbon reserves along the western desert and Nile Delta. The discovery of reserves and search for more has enabled the Egypt's intentions to turn into a net exporter of natural gas, especially to European markets.

The discovered reserves will boost the fuel logistics sales in the global market. Egypt has also announced the probability for another round of auctions pertaining to blocks in the Red Sea.

CHEVRON, SHELL AND MUBADALA AWARDED OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION RIGHTS IN EGYPT



UAE and Saudi Arabia announced the presence of enormous quantities of oil in the Red Sea.

Mubadala Investment Group's oil and gas part Mubadala Petroleum, is

owned by the Abu Dhabi government. The government has total \$229 billion assets under it. The company bought a ten per cent stake in the Zohr field from Eni.

The political leadership of Emirates had previously considered investing

in Egypt seeking investment openings. Masoor AL Ahmed, the Chief Growth Officer of Mubadala stated that the company was looking for not only oil and gas logistics opportunities, but also other sectors like construction and renewable energy.

Per reports the UAE investment in Egypt amounts to nearly \$ 7.2 billion via 1,165 companies involved in various sectors like entertainment, fuel logistics, real estate, food and agriculture, information technology and tourism.

Turkish Airlines added Xi'an to its flight network

ISTANBUL

OFFERING its guests the opportunity to fly directly to 126 countries from Istanbul, Turkish Airlines added Xi'an, the Chinese city with three thousand years of history, to its flight network on December 30.

Xi'an became the flag carrier's fourth destination in Mainland China and the 318th destination in the world. The flights will be operated three times a week with Airbus A330 aircrafts.

Starting its flights to People's Republic of China back in 1999 with Beijing as its destination, Turkish Airlines reinforced its strong position in Asia with the Xi'an flights.

With this new addition, global carrier's flight network encompassed the entirety of the historical Silk Road that started in Xi'an and ended in Venice.

During the ceremony of the inaugural flight, Turkish Airlines General Manager Bilal Ekici stated; "We conclude the year by adding a very special city to our flight network after numerous innovations in various areas and the move to our new home that took place during 2019.

"We will carry our guests to 126 countries from Xi'an, one of the most significant historical capitals while transferring the historical Silk Road to above clouds with our cargo operations. Our new flights will also contribute to the tourist numbers coming to our country with the increasing attention from Chinese tourists to tourism centers of Turkey."

Turkish Airlines passengers traveling to Xi'an, one of the oldest civilizations of the world, will have the opportunity to explore the numerous cultural heritages along with the historical fabric of the three thousand years old city.

Serving as the capital of 13 different dynasties during the history of China, the region's most popular destination is the Terracotta Army, which draws over two million tourists annually.

Hidden underground for nearly 2200 years, it was first discovered during the excavations in 1974. Featuring eight thousand terracotta soldiers, it is considered as the Eighth Wonder of the World.



Turkish Airlines Air Hostess displays a Chinese house frame.

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leaves flight passengers exposed to the elements as they try to board their planes.

The old airport is being repurposed for mostly military use, so the plan is to build a new \$450 million airport with curved sun-shading screens for the passenger terminal inspired by the Djibouti wedding necklaces. Another design element would be the national emblem of Djibouti incorporated into the steel frames of the building.

The consolidated ministry building would allow the ministries and departments that make up the federal government in Djibouti to be in one main structure in the capital city. The building's gradually declining roofs and curved shape was inspired by traditional arm bracelets, Dovolis said. The building is envisioned to be clad with a high-tech fabric that provides solar shading while also generating energy.

In addition, officials have asked DJR to design a second smaller administrative building for the district of Balbala, where the government hopes to showcase sustainable design strategies including passive and active solar design, evaporative cooling and a rainwater capture system.

Because of its arid conditions, Djibouti is mostly dependent on imports for food. The agricultural village is seen as a way to make the country more self-sufficient, Robleh said. The project is being led by entrepreneur Mark Erjavec of agricultural investment fund Agro Fund One.

"We are literally trying to farm in a place where farming hasn't been done," Erjavec said.



Tesla batteries help power new solar water desalination plant in Africa

By Fred Lambert

GivePower has deployed a new water desalination plant in Africa using Tesla batteries and solar power that is now providing clean water to thousands of people.

The system has been deployed in Kiunga, a rural village in Kenya where the lack of clean water had people sometimes rely on saltwater wells or even contaminated water.

Desalination is a power-consuming process that is hard to implement in a place where power is already scarce.

GivePower's solution is to use off-grid solar with batteries to create what they call "solar water farms."

The Hearty Soul wrote about the one deployed in Kiunga: "The system uses solar panels that produce 50 kilowatts of energy, the energy is stored by two high-performance Tesla batteries, and it uses two water pumps that operate 24 hours per day.

The system uses solar panels that produce 50 kilowatts of energy, the energy is stored by two high-performance Tesla batteries, and it uses two water pumps that operate 24 hours per day.

The system is apparently using Tesla Powerwalls to power the process when the sun is not shining.

By running 24 hours a day, the system is capable of producing about 70,000 liters of drinkable water every day, which is enough for the entire village and more.

They claim that the quality of water it produces is better than water from a typical water desalination plant, and it also doesn't produce saline residues and pollutants.

GivePower believes that they can replicate the success of the system for other villages in need of clean water all

around the world.

It's not the first time that Tesla's energy storage systems have been deployed in Africa.

The company is participating in a new initiative by an African telecom to install 520 Powerwalls at their sites in order to keep their important network online despite frequent power outages.

Tesla has also been indirectly helping deploy energy storage and solar in Africa through its participation in an African startup that has already installed hundreds of thousands of small solar+storage systems on the continent.

WORLD

Rock-throwing Iraqi militias quit US Embassy after protests

BAGHDAD

SUPPORTERS of Iranian-backed Iraqi paramilitary groups who stormed the US Embassy's perimeter and hurled rocks in two days of protests withdrew on Wednesday after Washington dispatched extra troops and threatened reprisals against Tehran.

The demonstrators, angry at US air strikes against the Tehran-backed Kataib Hezbollah group in which at least 25 people were killed, threw stones at the building while US forces stationed on the rooftops fired tear gas to disperse them.

By mid-afternoon, most appeared to have obeyed a call to withdraw, issued by the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) umbrella group of mainly Shi'ite militia, which said the demonstrators' message had been heard.

Young men used palm tree branches to sweep the street in front of the embassy compound. Others packed up equipment and vans arrived to

take people away.

Some left to set up a protest camp in front of a nearby hotel. Iraq's military said all protesters had left by the evening. The protests marked a new turn in the shadow war between Washington and Tehran playing out across the Middle East.

US President Donald Trump, who faces a re-election campaign in 2020, threatened on Tuesday to retaliate against Iran but said later he did not want war. The unrest followed US air raids on Sunday against Kataib Hezbollah bases in retaliation for missile attacks that killed a US contractor in northern Iraq last week.

On Tuesday, crowds chanted: 'Death to America!', lit fires, and smashed surveillance cameras.

They breached an outer perimeter of the embassy but did not enter the main compound.

BIGGEST US EMBASSY

The huge embassy, built along the banks of the Tigris River in central



This Jan 1, 2020, image provided by Maxar Technologies shows black smoke coming out of the US Embassy compound in Baghdad. (PHOTO AP)

Baghdad's fortified "green zone" during the American occupation following the 2003 invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein, is the biggest US diplomatic mission in the world.

Washington said its diplomats were safe and it was rushing hundreds of extra troops to the region. The State Department said on Wednesday that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo decided to postpone his upcoming trip to Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Cyprus to remain in Washington and monitor the situation in Iraq.

The embassy said all public consular operations were suspended and all future appointments cancelled.

The anti-American action comes after months of protests in Iraq against the government and the Iran-backed militias that support it.

Many Iraqis complain their country has become a battlefield for a proxy war for influence between Washington and Tehran, and that their leaders are too beholden to outside powers.

Iraq's government has long faced frictions in its close relations with the two foes.

Trump spoke to Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi on Tuesday and demanded Iraq protect the embassy.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Wednesday condemned the US attacks.

Iran summoned a Swiss envoy, who represents US interests in Tehran, to complain about what it described as "warmongering" words from Washington.

Trump accused Iran of orchestrating the violence. US officials said 750 extra troops would initially be based out of Kuwait and as many as 4,000 troops could be sent to the region in coming days. More than 5,000 US troops are stationed in Iraq supporting local forces.

The air strikes have galvanized calls inside Iraq to expel them. Many in the crowd outside the embassy said ending Washington's presence in Iraq was their main goal.

Agencies

Israel's Netanyahu says he will seek immunity in graft cases

JERUSALEM

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday he would ask parliament to protect him from prosecution in the three graft cases he faces, a politically-risky move that could delay criminal proceedings against him for months.

Netanyahu (pictured) was indicted in November on charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust over allegations he granted state favors worth hundreds of millions of dollars to Israeli media barons in return for gifts and favorable coverage.

He denies any wrongdoing, saying he is the victim of a witch hunt by the media and left to oust a popular right-wing leader.

A trial cannot get under way once an immunity request is made, and Netanyahu announced the move in a speech on live television just four hours before a deadline for an application was to expire.

Netanyahu said in his address that the charges against him were politically motivated and he was entitled to parliament's protection.

"In a democracy, only the people decide who will lead them," said Netanyahu, who has been in power consecutively for the past decade and has likened the indictment against him to an attempted coup.

Under Israel law, a legislator seeking immunity can do so on numerous grounds that include an argument that the prosecution is not acting in good faith.

Had Netanyahu not filed the request by Wednesday's deadline, the indictment against him could have been submitted to a court as early as Sunday, setting proceedings in motion.

Amid deep political deadlock, parliament seems unlikely to decide the issue before Israel's March 2 election. Netanyahu will need the support of 61 of its 120 legislators for immunity to be granted, the same majority that eluded him in attempts to form a government after national ballots in April and September.

If immunity is ultimately granted – entitling Netanyahu to avoid standing trial as long as he is a member of parliament – Israel's Supreme Court is empowered to review the decision and strike it down.

Netanyahu's immunity request carried political risks, adding more ammunition to challengers who seek to portray him as an autocratic leader who sees himself as above the rule of law and who represents a danger to Israel's democratic and judicial foundations.

Responding to Netanyahu's speech, his main rival, Benny Gantz, a former armed forces chief who heads the centrist Blue and White party, said the prime minister was "jeopardizing the civic principle upon which we were all educated – that everyone is equal before the law".

Recent opinion polls have shown neither Blue and White nor Netanyahu's Likud party are within easy reach of a governing bloc in parliament in an election now two months away.

Agencies

Kremlin says Russia was able to reverse the trend of falling living standards

MOSCOW

RUSSIA has been able to reverse the negative trend of falling people's living standards, that's the major accomplishment of 2019, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

"For objective reasons, Russians' living standards were either stagnating or falling. This negative trend was observed over the past three or four years," he said. "This year, we were able to reverse that trend."

So far, we cannot talk about any substantial growth. Nevertheless, this trend has been reversed," Peskov stressed that all this is happening "against the backdrop of fully guaranteed macroeconomic stability."

"This is perhaps the main accomplishment, because, despite the unfriendly environment for the Russian economy and social sphere, they have fully retained their stability. That's our major achievement," he noted.

The Kremlin spokesman added that it was very difficult to single out one major accomplishment of this year, because, as Russian President Vladimir Putin says, "the primary goal is people's living standards."

Agencies

Ex-Guinea Bissau PM Embalo wins presidency; opponent disputes vote

BISSAU

FORMER prime minister and ex-army general Umaro Cissoko Embalo has won Guinea-Bissau's presidential vote, the electoral commission said on Wednesday, but his opponent complained of fraud and vowed to contest the result in court.

Embalo, 47, (pictured) won with 54% of Sunday's vote, the commission said, versus 46% for another ex-prime minister and ruling party candidate Domingos Simoes Pereira in the poll to succeed incumbent President Jose Mario Vaz.

Vaz's tenure was marred by political infighting, an ill-functioning parliament and corruption.

If Pereira's challenge fails, Embalo, who served as prime minister under Vaz from 2016-18, faces

the difficult task of overcoming a long-running political impasse and modernizing the West African nation of 1.6 million people.

Guinea Bissau has seen nine coups or attempted coups since independence from Portugal in 1974.

"I call for union, reconciliation and concord for a peaceful life in Guinea Bissau," Embalo told a press conference on Wednesday in which he also promised to revive the education and energy sectors. "We must believe in ourselves and put ourselves to work to create wealth and develop the country."

However, Pereira's complaint looks set to extend the political chaos that has dogged the tiny ocean-side country in recent years and made voters weary of the political class.



The 56-year-old, who easily won a November first round, told sup-

porters that in some polling stations votes surpassed the number of enrolled voters and he would file a complaint to the Supreme Court.

"There has been an infringement of the electoral truth and the most legitimate rights of the people of Guinea Bissau," he said.

Embalo's candidacy gained support from the main contenders who failed to reach the run-off, including Vaz.

The announcement of his victory sparked celebrations in the capital Bissau, which has remained calm and optimistic during an election many hoped would draw a line under weeks of turmoil including violent protests, an alleged coup attempt and the emergence of two competing prime ministers.

"We voted for Embalo for

change," said Kady Gassama, a 38-year-old cleaner. "We voted to bring the country out of the economic, political and social crisis."

The next president also faces widespread poverty and an unstable political system in which the majority party appoints the government but the president can dismiss it.

There have been seven prime ministers since Vaz took over in 2014 and instability has hurt the economy, which depends heavily on volatile prices for cashew nuts, the main income source for more than two thirds of households.

Trafficers also exploit Guinea-Bissau's unpoliced waters and maze of picturesque forested islands to ship South American cocaine destined for Europe.

Agencies

Plane crash deaths worldwide fell by more than 50% in 2019 - Group

WASHINGTON

THE number of people killed in large commercial airplane crashes fell by more than 50% in 2019 despite a high-profile Boeing 737 MAX crash in Ethiopia in March, a Dutch consulting firm said on Wednesday.

Aviation consulting firm To70 said there were 86 accidents involving large commercial planes - including eight fatal incidents - resulting in 257 fatalities last year. In 2018, there were 160 accidents, including 13 fatal ones, resulting in 534 deaths, the firm said.

To70 said the fatal accident rate

for large airplanes in commercial passenger air transport was just 0.18 fatal accident per million flights in 2019, or an average one fatal accident every 5.58 million flights, a significant improvement over 2018. The fatality numbers include passengers, air crew such as flight attendants and any people on the ground killed in a plane accident.

Large passenger airplanes in the study are aircraft used by nearly all travelers on airlines worldwide but excludes small commuter airplanes in service, including the Cessna Caravan and some smaller turbo-prop airplanes, according to To70.

On Dec 23, Boeing's (BA.N) board said it had fired Chief Executive Dennis Muilenburg after a pair of fatal crashes involving the 737 MAX forced it to announce it was halting output of its best-selling jetliner. The 737 MAX has been grounded since March after an October 2018 crash in Indonesia and the crash of a MAX in Ethiopia in March killed a total of 346 people.

To70 said the aviation industry spent significant effort in 2019 "focusing on so-called 'future threats' such as drones." But the MAX crashes "are a reminder that we need to retain our focus on the basics that

make civil aviation so safe: well-designed and well-built aircraft flown by fully informed and well-trained crews."

The Aviation Safety Network said on Wednesday that, despite the MAX crash, 2019 "was one of the safest years ever for commercial aviation." The 157 people killed in March on Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 accounted for more than half of all deaths last year worldwide in passenger airline crashes.

Over the last two decades, aviation deaths around the world have been falling dramatically even as travel has increased. As recently as 2005,

there were 1,015 deaths aboard commercial passenger flights worldwide, the Aviation Safety Network said.

In 2017, aviation had its safest year on record worldwide with only two fatal accidents involving regional turboprops that resulted in 13 deaths and no fatal crashes of passenger jets.

Last week, 12 people were killed when a Fokker 100 operated by Kazakh carrier Bek Air crashed near Almaty after takeoff. In May, a Russian Sukhoi Superjet 100 aircraft caught fire as it made an emergency landing at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport, killing 41 people.

Agencies

International community says Xi's New Year speech shows China's commitment to global peace, development

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping's New Year speech on Tuesday demonstrates that China is committed to safeguarding world peace and promoting global development, foreign scholars and officials have said.

Domestically, China has scored remarkable development achievements, a prominent example being its anti-poverty battle, which offers inspirations to many other countries, experts said.

In his speech, Xi pledged to achieve the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects in the "milestone" year. He also pledged to lift all rural residents living below the current poverty line out of poverty and eliminate poverty in all poor counties.

Tom Watkins, an advisor to the Mich-

igan-China Innovation Center, said Xi in the speech "grasps the notion that we all need to take a broad view of the world," adding that China "can take a bow for its effort to end poverty within its borders and around the globe."

Milenko Djuric, director of Public Relations and International Cooperation Center at the College of Tourism in Belgrade, said China's poverty reduction campaign "is a very good example of what we can strive to do here in Europe and in the rest of the world to help people ... overcome poverty."

In Xi's speech, the president also said that China will unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development, safeguard world peace and promote common development.

Senior Bangladeshi parliament member Rashed Khan Menon highlighted this part of Xi's speech, saying that Chi-



na can play an important role in safeguarding world peace.

The view was shared by many ana-

lysts around the world. McDonald Chipenzi, executive director of the Governance, Elections, Advocacy Research

Services Initiative, an advocacy body in Zambia, said China has a lot to offer in terms of ensuring world peace.

Chipenzi said Xi's pledge to follow peaceful development and maintain world peace is a notion that all major countries in the world should embrace.

William Jones, Washington bureau chief of the U.S. publication Executive Intelligence Review, said Xi "expressed a clear determination to move forward on its (China's) road of peaceful development with the Belt and Road Initiative, and a determination to move from a world based on geopolitical rivalries to one where we approach a community of common interests."

Saeed Chaudhry, director of the Islamabad Council for International Affairs, said Xi mentioned building a community with a shared future for mankind and working tirelessly to create a better

future for humanity. China's efforts made towards the goal have achieved tangible results in the last few years, Chaudhry said.

Ahmad Ashqar, a Syrian political expert and journalist, said a big part of China's opening-up policy "is to reach out to other nations and spread the good and benefit elsewhere."

"We saw the Belt and Road Initiative and how Syria in particular benefited from a series of aid shipments from China. We also saw how China has opened up on a larger scale in the two rounds of the China International Import Expo that took place in Shanghai and many Syrian companies took part in this fair," Ashqar said.

The expert added he believed that "China will benefit Syria in the post-war era, particularly in the development projects and reconstruction."

Xinhua

In 2019, China scores victory in containing financial risks

BEIJING

CHINA has tackled major financial risks with all-out efforts and a deft hand in the past year, as existing hazards have been gradually dissolved and a more mature system put in place to forestall potential dangers.

China's financial risks gradually abated after a few years of fast accumulation, as the country deals with exposed risks and improves the financial regulation system to steer clear of systemic risks, said a report on China's financial stability in 2019 by the People's Bank of China (PBOC), the central bank.

Among the most notable achievements, the leverage ratio was stabilized, the country's shadow banking assets at the end of June shrank to the lowest level since the end of 2016, and the legitimate interests of clients were protected during the takeover of Inner Mongolia-based Baoshang Bank to contain its credit risk.

Financial institutions are building up risk resistance, with commercial banks' provision coverage ratio, a measure of funds set aside to cover bad loans, at 187.63 percent by the end of the third quarter and the solvency adequacy ratio of China's insurance firms remaining within the reasonable range by late last year.

Noting that China's financial system is generally healthy and capable of defusing various risks, the annual Central Economic Work Conference urged continued efforts to keep the leverage ratio stable in 2020.

In the homestretch to winning the battle against financial risks by 2020, the country is prepared to effectively forestall risks and in the meantime improve the financial system for stronger resilience.

DEFUSING THE BOMB



Photo shows the headquarters of the People's Bank of China in Beijing

In the past year, China has reined in exposed financial risks regarding small and medium-sized banks and prevented them from spilling over.

No bank runs occurred after the May takeover of Baoshang Bank by the PBOC and the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission (CBIRC), and debt repayment and transfers have been completed for big institutional and interbank clients of the lender.

The PBOC conducted open market operations and used medium-term lending facilities to restore liquidity among small and medium-sized banks affected by the incident.

"Commercial banks, including small and medium-sized ones, have maintained profit growth with their risk level basically under control," said Lu Zhengwei, chief economist at Industrial Bank.

Official data showed more than 99.2

percent of small and medium-sized banks passing the required liquidity threshold by the end of the third quarter.

The PBOC said it will continue to closely watch the liquidity levels of small and medium-sized banks and offer more policy support for their sustainable development.

The CBIRC will replenish capital for smaller banks and urge them to dispose of non-performing loans, said Yang Liping, an official with the commission.

BUILDING THE SAFETY NET

The country's financial watchdogs have sought to strengthen weak links in regulations to prevent risks in 2019 in an active effort to forestall risks.

The government has rolled out interim regulations for the credit rating industry and started soliciting pub-

lic feedback on trial measures on the supervision of financial holding companies as well as the evaluation of systematically important banks.

Tightened regulations sped up the exposure of commercial banks' non-performing assets and pushed them to make more efforts to get rid of bad loans, resulting in 176.5 billion yuan (about US\$25.3 billion) more in bad loans disposed of in the first three quarters than the same period of 2018.

As another fixture of the safety net against risks, China's deposit insurance fund played a critical role in safeguarding the assets of Baoshang Bank's individual, institutional and interbank clients.

The PBOC report on China's financial stability called for efforts to improve the legal framework of risk control for financial institutions and

advance amendments to laws and regulations on corporate bankruptcy and commercial banks.

MORE INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Serving the real economy and fending off financial risks rely on deepening financial reform and opening up for institutional support, said the State Council's financial stability and development committee during its 10th meeting in November.

The capital market reform is a highlight of China's endeavors to improve the financial system where the upcoming adoption of a registration-based IPO system and the now piloting spin-off listings are expected to improve the quality of listed companies.

Meanwhile, China's financial opening-up efforts, especially measures to pilot the cross-border transfer of non-performing debts, have paved the way for foreign capital to enter the country's non-performing asset industry and help free up more credit for small and micro enterprises and the private sector.

The country's real economy is benefiting from endeavors to optimize the financial system, with newly added social financing in the first 11 months rising 3.43 trillion yuan from the same period in 2018.

The October tone-setting fourth plenary session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China urged the establishment of a modern financial system featuring high adaptability, competitiveness and inclusiveness, as well as an institutional shield against financial risks.

In a modern financial system, risks can be discovered, diverted or prevented in time, said Guan Tao, former spokesman of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange. *Xinhua*



UN chief 'concerned' by DPRK statement on ending nuclear tests moratorium

UNITED NATION

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to not resume the nuclear and missile tests, said his spokesman.

"The Secretary-General is deeply concerned by the statement of the DPRK, which has indicated the end of a moratorium on nuclear and missile tests," said Stephane Dujarric, the spokesman.

The UN chief "very much hopes" that the tests will not resume, in line with relevant Security Council resolutions, said Dujarric, adding that non-proliferation remains a fundamental pillar of global nuclear security and must be preserved.

Guterres supports the resumption of a dialogue that will lead to complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, Dujarric added. "Diplomatic engagement is the only pathway to sustainable peace."

DPRK's official media reported on Wednesday that country's top leader Kim Jong Un had signaled his country no longer felt bound by its self-imposed moratorium on testing nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles. *Xinhua*

Putin's 2020 agenda to focus on 75th victory day celebrations

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin's 2020 agenda will include domestic and international events, while the focus will be on the 75th anniversary celebration of the Soviet Union's Victory over Nazi Germany in the Great Patriotic War.

Putin (pictured) has invited dozens of foreign leaders to attend the May 9 Victory Day celebration. Many have already confirmed their participation, while others haven't made up their mind yet. In particular, US President Donald Trump expressed interest in visiting Moscow but it is yet unclear if the domestic situation in the US and his heavy schedule will allow Trump to make a visit to Russia.

Domestic agenda

The Russian president is expected to deliver his state-of-the-nation address to the Federal Assembly (parliament) on January 15. Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said earlier that the address would set short-term goals and objectives.

Putin's agenda will also include meetings of Russia's State Council, various presidential councils and commissions.

In addition, the head of state receives credentials from foreign ambassadors to Russia once a year and gives awards to prominent Russians. He also holds regular

meetings with members of Russia's Security Council, the government and parliamentary parties, as well as with regional governors. Putin also makes visits to the country's regions at least once a month.

Putin is likely to hold another annual televised question and answer session dubbed The Direct Line, which usually takes place in late spring or in early summer, and his annual news conference, usually held in December.

The president will continue monitoring the implementation of the National Projects launched in accordance with the May 2018 Decree.

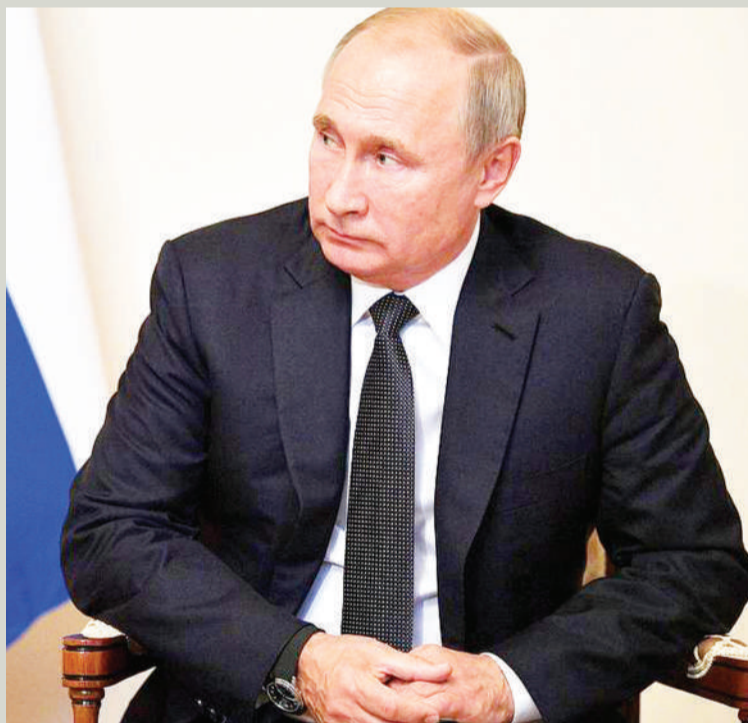
Immediate plans

Putin will start his 2020 series of foreign visits with a visit to Turkey. According to Peskov, the presidents of Russia and Turkey will meet in early January to attend the launch ceremony of the Turk-Stream gas pipeline.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry, in turn, said that the meeting was set to take place on January 8.

Later in the month, Putin is expected to make a visit to Israel to attend events dedicated to the Auschwitz concentration camp liberation anniversary, the Holocaust Remembrance Day and the unveiling ceremony of a monument to the victims of the Siege of Leningrad.

The Kremlin spokesman also



told TASS earlier that the Russian president's January 23 visit to Palestine was under consideration.

Multilateral events

Putin will participate in a number of big international events in 2020.

The next G20 summit is scheduled to take place in the Saudi capital of Riyadh on November 21-22, and the next Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit will be held in the Malaysian city of Pu-

trajaya on November 11-12.

Russia's St. Petersburg will host the summits of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the BRICS group on July 21-23.

Putin always takes part in major international economic forums that take place in Russia.

The St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) is set to be held on June 3-6, while the Far Eastern city of Vladivostok will host the Eastern Economic Forum on September 2-5.

Pope apologises for slapping pilgrim's arm who tugged him

VATICAN CITY

POPE Francis apologized on Wednesday for having angrily slapped a woman's arm when she had grabbed hold of his hand and yanked him toward her, saying he had lost his patience and set a "bad example".

His unusual apology came after he used his first homily of the new year to denounce violence against women, which he compared to profaning God.

Pope Francis, 83, (pictured) had a sharp encounter with a woman on Tuesday evening during a walkabout in St Peter's Square.

The pilgrim, who has not been identified, unexpectedly seized his hand and pulled him toward her, causing him evident alarm. A clearly disgruntled Francis wrenched himself free by slapping down at her arm.

"So many times we lose patience, even me, and I apologize for yesterday's bad example," the pope told thousands of pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square on Wednesday at the end of the traditional New Year Mass.

He had used the service to issue a forthright condemnation of the abuse of women in modern society.



"All violence inflicted on women is a desecration of God," he told a packed St Peter's Basilica.

"How often is a woman's body sacrificed on the profane altar of advertising, profit, pornography," he said, adding that the female body "must be freed from consumerism, it must be respected and honored".

Despite creating life, women "are continually offended, beaten, raped, forced into prostitution" and made to have abortions, he said. "We can understand our level of humanity by the way we treat a woman's body," he told the congregation.

During his homily, Francis also addressed another theme close to his heart, immigration, saying women who moved abroad to provide for their children should be honored, not scorned.

"Today even motherhood is

humiliated, because the only growth that interests us is economic growth," he said.

"There are mothers, who risk perilous journeys to desperately try to give the fruit of the womb a better future and are judged to be redundant by people whose bellies are full of things, but whose hearts are empty of love."

The leader of the Roman Catholic Church, which allows only unmarried men to be ordained as priests, also said women "must be fully involved in decision-making processes".

The pope said last April the Church had to acknowledge a history of male domination and sexual abuse of women. A month later, he appointed for the first time four women to an important Vatican department that prepares the major meetings of world bishops.

What the international landscape will be like in 2020

BEIJING

IN 2020, what kind of stormy days will the world face or what type of sunny days will the world witness?

BREXIT: LESS MISTY

In 2020, the fog that has blurred for years Britain's way to fulfill Brexit is expected to temporarily lift. After British Prime Minister Boris Johnson led the Conservatives to victory in a snap election, the House of Commons has given overwhelming backing for Johnson's re-shaped Brexit deal in principle, which has raised the probability of a formal Brexit on Jan. 31, 2020.

Even though Britain has taken such a crucial step, it does not mean that Brexit is done. According to the current Brexit agreement, after the divorce between Britain and the

European Union, negotiations on the economic and trade relationship in post-Brexit era will begin, which may trigger a new round of protracted games.

U.S. ELECTIONS: CONTINUED HEAT

The U.S. presidential election will be held in November 2020. Catalyzed by the impeachment case against President Donald Trump, U.S. political polarization has intensified, and so have the conflicts between Democrats and Republicans. The race is to be continued in 2020.

After the U.S. House of Representatives recently passed two articles of impeachment against Trump, the Senate is expected to begin a trial in January. With Republicans controlling the majority in the Senate, the case is highly ex-

pected to be vetoed.

Nevertheless, how will the case affect Trump's election? There is little doubt that the outcome of the presidential election will exert a significant influence on the United States and the rest of the world as well.

RUSSIA-WEST RELATIONS: GENERALLY FROSTY

Just like a never-ending winter, the frosty relations between Russia and Western countries have lasted for more than five years since the Ukraine crisis. The differences between Russia and the United States remain difficult to resolve on thorny issues such as the Syrian crisis and the Iran nuclear issue.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said at an annual press conference that he is willing to promote the normalization of Russia-Europe re-

lations. Moreover, leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany concluded their first meeting in three years in Paris in December, agreeing to meet each other again in four months.

It is expected that the temperature will still remain low in 2020, but there is still hope for occasional warmth.

KOREAN PENINSULA: UNPREDICTABLE

The year 2019 has been on a roller coaster for the Korean Peninsula. On Feb. 28, top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Kim Jong Un and Trump ended their second summit in the Vietnamese capital Hanoi. The two met again in June in the inter-Korean border village of Panmunjom.

On Oct. 5, negotiators from both countries met in Stockholm, Swe-

den in an effort to resume denuclearization talks. However, the talks ended without progress. The two sides jumped into a war of words at the end of the year.

The situation of the peninsula is set to remain unpredictable in 2020. The DPRK hopes to get rid of sanctions early through negotiations and is committed to developing its economy. Although the United States has said that it is willing to resolve the nuclear issue of the peninsula through negotiations, it has yet to walk the talk. As the United States enters an election year, the situation of the peninsula will become even more elusive.

IRAN NUCLEAR ISSUE: OVERCAST

Since May this year, Iran has gradually suspended the implementation of the Iran nuclear deal in response to the U.S. withdrawal

from the agreement and the resumption of U.S. sanctions.

As it is bracing for the 2020 presidential election, the United States is less likely to launch a military strike against Iran, but more likely to continue to exert "maximum pressure" on the Middle East country.

Despite great pressure from sanctions, Iran's economy is not projected to collapse in the short term. Moreover, Iran will not easily throw in the towel as it still holds such strategic cards as restarting the nuclear process and blocking the Strait of Hormuz.

In 2020, the intensity of U.S. sanctions against Iran, the speed at which Iran resumes nuclear activities and the extent to which some European nations will mediate are all likely to affect the progress of the Iran nuclear issue.

It is expected that the cloud will

not disperse soon.

GLOBAL TRADE: WARMING UP IN EAST

In 2019, international economic and trade frictions have intensified and the global free trade system has been under threat.

The United States has taken unilateral actions against its major trading partners, damaging global trade as a whole.

The International Monetary Fund and other institutions have forecast that the world's major economies are likely to suffer a slowdown in growth in 2020. The downward pressure on the economy may lead to a further contraction in demand, thus causing rising protectionism from some countries and increasing the uncertainty of global growth. *Xinhua*



David Stern

Former NBA Commissioner David Stern dies at 77

NEW YORK

DAVID Stern had basketball as a passion and law as a profession, one he figured he could return to if a job at the NBA didn't work out.

He never did.

Instead he went to Europe, Asia and plenty of other places around the world, bringing with him a league that was previously an afterthought in the U.S. and turning it into a global powerhouse.

Stern, who spent 30 years as the NBA's longest-serving commissioner and one of the best in sports history, died Wednesday. He was 77.

"Without David Stern, the NBA would not be what it is today," Hall of Famer Michael Jordan said. "He guided the league through turbulent times and grew the league into an international phenomenon, creating opportunities that few could have imagined before."

Stern suffered a brain hemorrhage on Dec. 12 and underwent emergency surgery. The league said he died with his wife, Dianne, and their family at his bedside.

"The entire basketball community is heartbroken," the National Basketball Players Association said. "David Stern earned and deserved inclusion in our land of giants."

Stern had been involved with the NBA for nearly two decades before he became its fourth commissioner on Feb. 1, 1984. By the time he left his position in 2014 – he wouldn't say or let league staffers say "retire," because he never stopped working – a league that fought for a foothold before him had grown to a more than \$5 billion a year industry and made NBA basketball perhaps the world's most popular sport after soccer.

"Because of David, the NBA is a truly global brand – making him not only one of the greatest sports commissioners of all time, but also one of the most influential business leaders of his generation," said Adam Silver, who followed Stern as commissioner. "Every member of the NBA family is the beneficiary of David's vision, generosity and inspiration."

Lakers forward LeBron James echoed Silver.

"We lost a great visionary," James said. "Him and Dr. James Naismith are the two most important people for the game of basketball. Dr. Naismith because he invented the game and David for his vision, his vision to make this game global."

Thriving on good debate in the boardroom and good games in the arena, Stern would say one of his greatest achievements was guiding a league of mostly black players that was plagued by drug problems in the 1970s to popularity with mainstream America.

He had a hand in nearly every initiative to do that, from the drug testing program, to the implementation of the salary cap, to the creation of a dress code.

But for Stern, it was always about "the game," and his morning often included reading about the previous night's results in the newspaper – even after technological advances he embraced made reading NBA.com easier than ever.

"The game is what brought us here. It's always about the game and everything else we do is about making the stage or the presentation of the game even stronger, and the game itself is in the best shape that it's ever been in," he said on the eve of the 2009-10 season, calling it "a new golden age for the NBA."

One that was largely created by Stern during a three-decade run that turned countless ballplayers into celebrities who were known

around the globe by one name: Magic, Michael, Kobe, LeBron, just to name a few.

Stern oversaw the birth of seven new franchises and the creation of the WNBA and NBA Development League, now the G League, providing countless opportunities to pursue careers playing basketball in the United States that previously weren't available.

Not bad for a guy who once thought his job might be a temporary one.

Stern had been the league's outside counsel from 1966 to '78 and spent two years as the NBA's general counsel, figuring he could always go back to his legal career if he found things weren't working out after a couple of years.

Instead, after serving as the NBA's executive vice president of business and legal affairs from 1980-84, he replaced Larry O'Brien as commissioner.

Overlooked and ignored only a few years earlier, when it couldn't even get its championship round on live network TV, the NBA saw its popularity quickly surge thanks to the rebirth of the Lakers-Celtics rivalry behind Magic Johnson and Larry Bird, followed by the entrance of Jordan just a few months after Stern became commissioner.

"There are no words that can really describe the far-reaching impact of Commissioner Stern's brilliance, vision, fairness and hard work over so many years," Bird said. "When you think of all that he accomplished worldwide on behalf of thousands of players, so many fans, all of the jobs he created for team and arena employees and all of the people that benefitted from the many layers of growth in the sport and industry that David spearheaded and then passed on to others, there is no doubt Commissioner Stern lifted the NBA to new heights and he will be greatly missed by all of us."

Under Stern, the NBA would play nearly 150 international games and be televised in more than 200 countries and territories, and in more than 40 languages, and the NBA Finals and All-Star weekend would grow into international spectacles. The 2010 All-Star game drew more than 108,000 fans to Dallas Cowboys Stadium, a record to watch a basketball game.

"It was David Stern being a marketing genius who turned the league around. That's why our brand is so strong," said Johnson, who announced he was retiring because of HIV in 1991 but returned the following year at the All-Star Game with Stern's backing.

"It was David Stern who took this league worldwide."

He was fiercely protective of his players and referees when he felt they were unfairly criticized, such as when members of the Indiana Pacers brawled with Detroit fans in 2004, or when an FBI investigation in 2007 found that Tim Donaghy had bet on games he officiated, throwing the entire referee operations department into turmoil. With his voice rising and spit flying, Stern would publicly rebuke media outlets, even individual writers, if he felt they had taken cheap shots.

But he was also a relentless negotiator against those same employees in collective bargaining, and his loyalty to his owners and commitment to getting them favorable deals led to his greatest failures, lockouts in 1998 and 2011 that were the only times the NBA lost games to work stoppages. Though he had already passed off the heavy lifting to Silver by the latter one, it was Stern who faced the greatest criticism, as well as the damage to a legacy that had otherwise rarely been tarnished. **AP**

AT set to send athlete to qualifying race for 2020 Tokyo Olympics

BY CORRESPONDENT JOSEPH MCHEK-

ADONA

ATLETICS Tanzania (AT) has said plans are on the cards to send athlete, Ally Gulam, to Japan to seek qualifying time for this year's Tokyo Olympics.

The Tokyo Olympics will be held from July 24 to August 9 and AT through the association's information officer Tullo Chambo said the aim is to have many local athletes who will represent the country in long and middle distance races at the Olympics.

Tullo stopped short of disclosing the name and date of the race Gulam will compete in Japan but insisted that it will take place soon.

Currently, two athletes Alphonse Simbu and Failuna Matanga are the local athletes who qualified for the 2020 Olympics.

The two, according to Chambo, will camp in Kenya at a place



Athletes battle it out in a recent championship held at the National Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

and dates which will be announced soon.

He said as the days for the 2020 Olympics are approaching AT are leaving no stone unturned in a bid to see to it domestic runners win medals at the Olympics.

"We have plans to send ath-

lete Ally Gulam to Japan so that he can seek qualifying time for Olympic Games, our aim is to see to it that our athletes are bringing home medals from the Olympic Games," he said.

He also disclosed that their target this year is to win medals at major global competitions

such as the World Cross Country Championship and World Under-20 Games.

The association as well targets to rope in more youthful athletes who can represent the country at future international events.



Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James (23) goes up to basket under pressure from Phoenix Suns' Deandre Ayton (22) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2020, in Los Angeles. (AP Photo)

West-leading Lakers beat Suns 117-107 for 3rd win in row

LOS ANGELES

THE Lakers built a huge early lead against Phoenix only to see it shrink to single digits.

They still won their third in a row, but considered it a lesson learned.

LeBron James notched his eighth triple-double of the season, Anthony Davis had 26 points and 11 rebounds, and the Western Conference leaders opened the new year with a 117-107 victory on Wednesday night.

"We can't allow ourselves to fall into a trap like that," Davis said. "You got to learn how to handle success within games."

James finished with 31 points, 13 rebounds and 12 assists in a game that appeared well in hand by the end of a dominant first quarter. He had double-figure points and assists by halftime.

"We wanted to get off to a good start and protect home as well as we can," James said.

The Suns rallied in the fourth, getting within seven points after trailing by 36 earlier in the game. That forced the Lakers' starters back in, and James steadied them with eight points to close out the win.

"You always got to be engaged until the clock hits zero," James said.

The Lakers shot 70% in a ferocious opening quarter when they made their first 11 shots. Danny Green had their first miss on a 3-point attempt, but the Lakers controlled the offensive rebound and JaVale McGee found Green for a dunk.

"I'm asking our guys to dominate everybody they play," Lakers coach Frank Vogel said. "Our guys took that message to heart."

The Lakers missed just eight attempts in the first. James airballed a shot, but they snagged the rebound and Avery Bradley scored to salvage the possession.

The Lakers put together a 25-4 run in which the Suns were limited to only free

throws. Among the highlights, Davis dunked over Aron Baynes and let out a roar, and later Davis threw down a reverse dunk on James' pass. Not to be outshone, James followed with a two-handed jam that ignited the crowd. Los Angeles led 43-17 at the end of the quarter.

Kyle Kuzma, sporting blond hair, had three 3-pointers in the second. Bradley scored on a smooth behind-the-back pass from James. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope beat the shot clock with a casual heave on a 3-pointer. Dwight Howard chipped in eight points and the Lakers shot 61% in taking a 74-41 lead into halftime.

Kuzma added 19 points and Bradley had a season-high 18.

Devin Booker scored 32 points and Kelly Oubre Jr. added 26 for the Suns. Phoenix had won two in a row after losing eight straight. "We turned it up a notch in the second half and came out swinging," Booker said. "We did it with defense and a will to play and a competitive spirit. We know we can do it. We'll figure it out. Anytime you go 2-2 on a road trip, it's a good road trip."

Meanwhile, Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Bucks were happy to get another win though they know they didn't play up to their standards.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 32 points and 17 rebounds, and the Bucks held off a strong challenge from short-handed Minnesota in a 106-104 victory over the Timberwolves on Wednesday night.

"Not paying our best but still finding a way to win is good," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "But this isn't the formula."

Antetokounmpo got his 30th double-double in 33 games this season and Khris Middleton added 13 points despite shooting 5 for 18 as league-best Milwaukee hit just 42.6% of its shots overall and only 9 of 36 from 3-point range. Brook Lopez scored 11

points and Eric Bledsoe had 10.

"We missed a lot of good shots and came out a little slow," Middleton said.

Shabazz Napier had 22 points to lead Minnesota, and Gorgui Deng scored 15, Josh Okogie added 12 and Jarret Culver 10.

Minnesota was playing without its two best players as Karl-Anthony Towns and Jeff Teague sat with knee injuries. The Timberwolves were also missing Treveon Graham and Andrew Wiggins, who were battling flu-like symptoms.

"That presented a lot of opportunities for a lot of guys and I thought a lot of guys stepped up," Napier said.

Napier, starting in place of Teague, scored 15 points on 5-of-7 shooting in the first half, but then had just seven after the break.

Milwaukee slumped out of the gate. The Bucks had just four points through the first six minutes and didn't take a lead until Lopez converted a three-point play to make it 31-29 with 8:41 left in the second quarter.

They went into halftime with a 52-51 lead despite shooting 34% from the floor. Minnesota connected at a 41.7% clip but made only 3 of 14 3-pointers while the Bucks knocked down 8 of 26 from beyond the arc.

A 15-6 run capped off by Antetokounmpo's 3 out of halftime put the Bucks ahead by 10 and they took a 77-71 lead into the fourth.

Culver's driving dunk over Lopez got the Timberwolves within a basket with 9:38 to play but he was called for a technical foul on the play that ultimately set up Kyle Korver's 3 to put the Bucks back up by six, 87-81 with 8:45 remaining.

Minnesota responded with five straight points to pull within one but Antetokounmpo's driving layup and Middleton's 3 snuffed out the rally.

The Timberwolves mounted one last challenge in **AP**

Mourinho: Yellow card was fair because I was rude to an idiot

LONDON

JOSE Mourinho has said the yellow card he received during Tottenham's 1-0 Premier League defeat at Southampton was "fair," because he was "rude to an idiot."

Spurs coach Mourinho was booked by referee Mike Dean on 77 minutes after the Portuguese approached the Southampton bench.

Mourinho seemed to cause an argument by making a comment to members of Southampton's coaching staff, leading Dean to present the yellow card to the former Manchester United boss, who nodded in agreement.

"I clearly deserved the yellow card as I was rude," Mourinho said after the game.

"But I was rude to an idiot. Because I was rude I deserved the yellow card."

Moments earlier the Spurs coach saw his captain Harry Kane depart the pitch with an injury. The England striker limped off while clutching his hamstring, having sustained the issue as he netted an offside strike.

"It is negative, hamstring is always negative," Mourinho said of the injury. "Is it a tear, is it a small thing, is it a spasm, is it a contraction? At this moment I cannot say."

Mourinho was also frustrated by Tanguy Ndombele's first-half injury, which saw the 23-year-old substituted.

"He is always injured," Mourinho said. "He's injured, he's not injured, he plays one match. We are full

of hopes and this is since the beginning of the season.

"Of course it is a concern -- you think you have a player, you think the player is in an evolution process, he plays very well against Norwich, you think today he is ready for it and he is not ready for it."

Another source of frustration for the Portuguese was VAR's involvement in the game, which was settled by Danny Ings' 13th league goal of the season.

In particular, Mourinho said Spurs should have been awarded a penalty for a foul on Dele Alli.

"For me, at this moment, the referees are not the referees," he said. "VAR should be called video referees. Our [disallowed] goal I also don't know, but I confess that I didn't watch it yet."

"What I know is that the Dele Alli penalty was a penalty and the VAR didn't interfere. Then they interfered in the analysis of a penalty that from 75 yards away I knew was not a penalty."

"I think they gave the VAR analysis to try to make us blind about the penalty that was a penalty. They decide not even to analyse on the VAR. This is going in a very bad direction."

The defeat saw Spurs remain on 30 points, six behind fourth-placed Chelsea. It also meant the club's wait for a clean sheet away in the Premier League extended to exactly one year.

(Agencies)

'Pogba been advised by his people' - Solskjaer

LONDON

MANCHESTER United boss Ole Gunnar Solskjaer isn't sure how long Paul Pogba will be absent, but revealed the midfielder is set to have an ankle operation after being advised by 'his people'.

The France international was again missing from the squad as the Red Devils went down 2-0 to Arsenal in a lacklustre performance at the Emirates on New Year's Day.

When asked to estimate Pogba's return date from injury, Solskjaer was vague but pointedly let slip that the player's advisors had made the decision to have surgery on the troublesome ankle.

"Three or four weeks maybe, I don't know," Solskjaer said to MOTD post-match.

"He's been advised to have an operation by his people and he'll probably do that"

The Norwegian coach continued in his press conference: "We've had scans and it's nothing major, it's something that needs to be looked and sorted as soon as possible."

"We've had consultants and the club have looked at him too and that's what we've been advised."

Pogba has made only made

eight appearances for United in all competitions this season and this is his second aborted comeback from the ankle injury he suffered following the match against Southampton on August 30.

The World Cup winner recently returned to the Red Devils first-team squad - coming off the bench against Watford and Newcastle United in the two league matches before Christmas - but has been absent from subsequent matches at Burnley and Arsenal.

Pogba, who has been consistently linked with a move away from Old Trafford over the past 12 months, posted a cryptic story on Instagram in the hours before the Gunners game, with the caption, 'best way to start 2020' accompanied by a video inside a luxury car.

His agent Mino Raiola fired a broadside at Manchester United on New Year's Eve, insisting he won't send players to sign for the club in its current state, saying "they would ruin even [Diego] Maradona, Pele and [Paolo] Maldini".

Despite the defeat to Arsenal, Manchester United remain in fifth position and are five points adrift of fourth-placed Chelsea.

Khaka has assured me he will stay at Arsenal - Arteta

LONDON

GRANIT Khaka has given Mikel Arteta assurances that he will stay at Arsenal, according to the Gunners head coach, who gave an optimistic view of the midfielder's future at the club.

Khaka had reportedly agreed to join Hertha Berlin in the transfer window, with his future at Arsenal in doubt ever since he reacted angrily to being replaced during the 2-2 draw with Crystal Palace in October.

But after missing Arsenal's 2-1 defeat to Chelsea on December 29, Khaka started 2020 in positive fashion with a strong performance in his side's 2-0 victory over Manchester United on New Year's Day.

Asked whether the 27-year-old had given him assurances that he would stay at Emirates Stadium, Arteta told reporters: "He did, yes."

"I think he's going to stay. I really like him. If we get him on board, he can be a tremendous player for us."

First-half goals from Nicolas Pepe

and Sokratis Papastathopoulos helped Arteta to his first victory since taking over as Arsenal boss and he praised his side's improved performance.

Arteta suggested there is more to come from his players, who he said are not yet at the level of fitness he expects of them.

"Everything we tried to do against them worked really, really well," Arteta told BT Sport.

"I think we had enough chances to put the game to bed much earlier and in the second half we knew that physically we were going to drop: at the moment we are not ready to maintain that level of intensity through 90 minutes."

"But the spirit, the commitment and the desire the boys are playing with at the moment is terrific."

Gunners defender David Luiz echoed his coach's comments, and indicated that Arteta's arrival has transformed the spirit in the Arsenal camp.

(Agencies)

Arteta earns first win as Arsenal sink Man Utd, but Spurs, Chelsea stumble

LONDON

ARSENAL rang in the new year by giving boss Mikel Arteta his first victory as lacklustre Manchester United crashed to a 2-0 defeat, while Tottenham and Chelsea also slipped up in the Premier League's top four race on Wednesday.

Arteta had watched Arsenal take only one point from his first two matches, with last weekend's 2-1 defeat against Chelsea especially painful after the Blues scored twice in the final minutes.

But Arsenal had played well for long periods in that London derby and they produced an even more sparkling display to put United to the sword at the Emirates Stadium.

The Gunners took the lead in the eighth minute when Sead Kolasinac's cross ran through to Nicolas Pepe at the far post and the Ivory Coast winger beat David De Gea from close-range.

Arsenal, who last won in the league at West Ham on December 9, got a deserved second goal in the 43rd minute when De Gea kept out Alexandre Lacazette's flick and Sokratis reacted quickest to lash home.

Arteta's team are nine points adrift of the top four, but their second win in 16 matches in all competitions offers hope of a brighter future under the former Arsenal midfielder's management.

"It feels great, incredible. I'm so happy and proud of the players," Arteta said.

"Physically the level dropped in the second half but the commitment and desire was terrific."

"The performances are getting better so I was desperate for the win and we got it."

United are fifth, five points behind fourth-placed Chelsea, after the latest in a long list of underwhelming performances in a troubled campaign.

"We started decent the first five or six minutes, didn't capitalise, and



Arsenal's Nicolas Pepe turns the ball home for the opening goal of the game against Manchester United. (Agencies)

then they played really well," United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said.

"We were too slow in the first half, but that's credit to them. Some tired heads maybe."

Chelsea remain in pole position to secure the fourth Champions League qualification place but manager Frank Lampard will rue conceding a spectacular late equaliser in the 1-1 draw at Brighton.

Cesar Azpilicueta gave Chelsea the lead, tapping in from close-range in the 10th minute.

But Brighton scored the goal their persistence deserved in the 84th minute when Iranian substitute Alireza Jahanbakhsh acrobatically found the bottom-left corner with an overhead kick.

"It was frustrating for different reasons," Lampard said. "We weren't ruthless enough. We got the goal and we had the possession. But we just didn't kill the game off."

Those dropped points gave Jose Mourinho's Spurs the chance to crank up the pressure on Chelsea and United, but they slipped to a 1-0

defeat at Southampton and England captain Harry Kane limped off with a hamstring injury.

- Spurs unravel -

Tottenham fell behind to a 17th-minute Danny Ings goal and Kane injured himself as he converted Christian Eriksen's free-kick in the second half but was flagged offside.

Mourinho's frustration boiled over as he was shown a yellow card after an altercation with the Southampton bench.

"I was rude," Mourinho said. "I clearly deserved the yellow card. I had bad words."

Elsewhere at the top of the table, second-placed Leicester cruised to a 3-0 win at Newcastle and Manchester City beat Everton 2-1 to hand Carlo Ancelotti his first defeat since taking over as manager.

Leicester appear to have put a mini-slump behind them, courtesy of goals from Ayoze Perez, James Maddison and Hamza Choudhury to move to within 10 points of leaders Liverpool.

City remain in third after their

home win against Everton, a single point behind Leicester.

Gabriel Jesus scored twice in the second half at the Etihad before Richarlison pulled a goal back for Everton but City held on despite some nervy moments.

"This period is so tough. When you are far away from the first position sometimes people give up, but we never give up," City boss Pep Guardiola said.

Struggling West Ham made a flying start under Moyes, returning to the London Stadium for a second stint as manager, hammering hapless Bournemouth 4-0 and lifting themselves out of the relegation zone, with the visitors now in the bottom three.

Watford continued their impressive run under new manager Nigel Pearson, holding on to beat seventh-placed Wolves 2-1.

Villa beat Burnley 2-1 with first-half goals from Wesley and Jack Grealish while Norwich drew 1-1 with Crystal Palace.

AFP

Arsenal looks rejuvenated under Arteta

BY LEANDER SCHAERLAECKENS

FOR a time, things were so dire for Arsenal that it couldn't even get a new manager bounce.

Almost everybody gets a new manager bounce. A new boss takes over and there's a brief honeymoon period when a new belief sets in amongst the players and everything that was hard becomes easy for a little while. Results pick up, before things usually regress to the mean until the new man's ideas begin to take hold, if they ever do.

On Wednesday, West Ham United provided a good example as David Moyes began his second rescue assignment with the club with a whopping 4-0 win over Bournemouth, just the Hammers' third win since September.

But when Arsenal fired Unai Emery on Nov. 29, caretaker Freddie Ljungberg, getting a serious audition for a full-time appointment, did not provide a bounce. In his three weeks in charge, the Gunners won just one of four Premier League matches, losing two. They tied their only Europa League match.

In came Mikel Arteta, poached from Manchester City, where he seemed destined to succeed Pep Guardiola either this summer or the next. Arteta had apparently been passed over for Emery 18 months ago, when Arsene Wenger finally retired, but he was installed this time around. Like Ljungberg, he had no senior team managerial experience. And he, too, found the going hard.

Arteta, thrown in right before the absurd holiday congestion of games, started with a scoreless tie at a sinking Everton - although he delegated the coaching for that game to Ljungberg, who stayed on - and a 1-1 draw at Bournemouth, plunging the club into an unimaginable 12th place at the halfway point.

On Sunday, things started to turn. Arsenal had the better of Chelsea for most of the game, looking tight and structured for once, and nursed a lead before giving away two



Mikel Arteta

late goals on a howler by goalkeeper Bernd Leno and a defensive lapse, squandering what would have been just a second win in 12 league matches and 15 games in all competitions - not to mention Arteta's first victory.

That made it Arsenal's worst record after 20 games in the Premier League era, and the fourth straight home loss tied a club record.

But on Wednesday, on the first day of the new year, an unmistakable ray of sunshine peeked through the dark pall that's hung over Arsenal for, well, several years.

Because the 2-0 home victory over longtime rivals Manchester United didn't just rocket the Gunners to within four points of United's fifth place. It was convincing and deserved. They were the same old players, the flawed and limited and underwhelming and underperforming players of the last few years, but it was a different Arsenal.

An Arsenal that, in the first half especially, pressed high and hard and played with a fresh zeal. It worked hard, crowding a forgettable United going forward and tracking back in numbers. It seemed to have clear ideas and an entirely new belief in itself.

These are all uncommon occurrences at the Emirates Stadium. And they haven't been seen at the same time in a great many months.

After United fired off a threatening opening salvo, it was all Arsenal in the first half. And the embattled record signing Nicolas Pepe was the first to capitalize. In the eighth minute, Sead Kolasinac finished off a nice buildup over the left flank with a low cutback cross that deflected to Pepe, who swept it home.

Finally finding the room he needs on the right flank to cut inside and weak havoc, Pepe also pinged a shot off the post after a distribution screw-up from United goalkeeper Da-

vid de Gea.

On the brink of halftime, Arsenal converted its dominance into a second goal. A corner was flicked on at the near post by Lacazette. De Gea saved but the ball set up for Sokratis Papastathopoulos, who rammed it into the net.

In the second half, Arsenal took a more reactive approach, allowing United to take the initiative and responding with counter-attacks. That ploy, too, seemed to work out for Arteta, as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's ponderous attackers forged practically nothing of note and Arsenal had several good looks on the break.

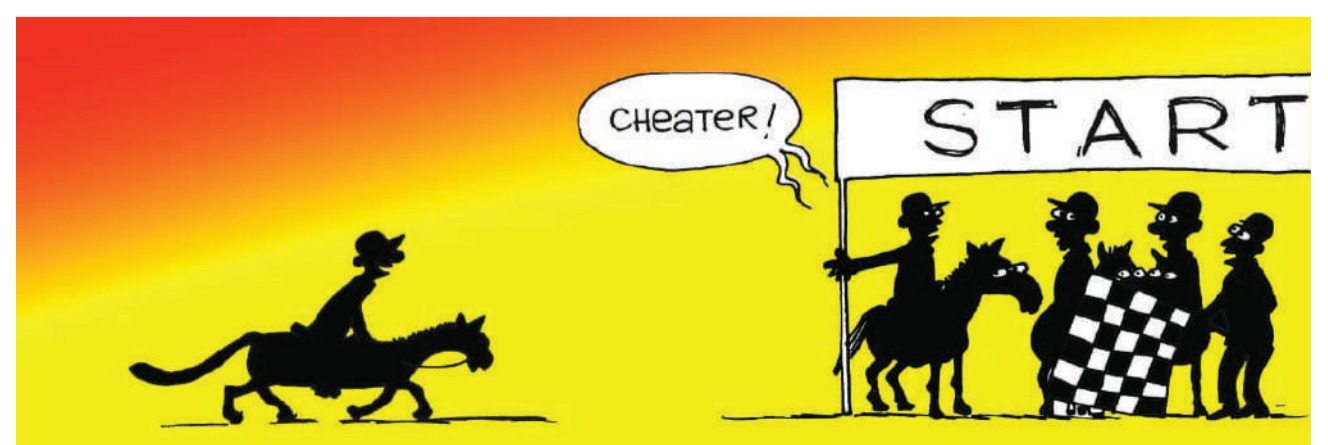
On the day, everything Arsenal attempted tactically seemed to work, which represents a dramatic reversal from the last three months or so.

But there were other encouraging signs. Playmaker Mesut Ozil, seen as the poster child for Arsenal's slow decline, looked reborn, unlocking United's lines with his daring passes again and again. Pepe looked confident. Lacazette and fellow forward Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang weren't getting in each other's way. The defense held up under long spells of pressure. Granit Khaka didn't do anything dumb.

It might be that Mikel Arteta's effect will be less of a bounce than a slow upward climb, and that might prove more sustainable in the end anyway.

(Agencies)

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Arteta earns first win as Arsenal sink Man Utd, but Spurs, Chelsea stumble

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TONIGHT @ 21:00

FRIDAY

10:59 Jikoni Na Jane
11:00 DADAZ (live)
13:30 Kaili Za Wangi
14:00 Radio-PlanetBongo Live
15:00 FUNCUKA
16:30 #HASHITAG
17:00 5SELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 enawz
18:30 Skonga
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:30 MJADALA
21:00 Friday Night Live

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE (FNL)
is where EATV and East Africa Radio combine to bring you an explosion of Friday Night entertainment. The base gets louder, the fun gets addictive and the guest list is exclusive! It's a party on TV.

east africa RADIO

05:00 EA Breakfast
09:00 Supamix
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Simba SC close to clean bill of health for derby



Simba players take part in drills at the outfit's ground in Dar es Salaam recently to shape up for the Vodacom Premier League assignments. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBAS C

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA Sports Club head coach Sven Vandebroek could have a relatively clean bill of health going into their crucial home league match against rivals Young Africans (Yanga) slated for tomorrow in Dar es Salaam.

Simba, nicknamed Msimbazi Reds, through their spokesman, Haji

Manara, have confirmed the all players except Miraj Athuman and Rashid Juma are in good shape.

"The squad is in good shape except Miraj Athuman and Rashid Juma who are nursing injuries, Nyoni has returning to

November, is now back to full training. We have a winning mentality, because we are the defending champions and we have not lost to Yanga since 2015/16 season," Manara said.

Defender Erasto Nyoni, who was injured prior to the CECAFA Senior Challenge Cup break in

November, is now back to full fitness and ready to pull on the famous Red and White jersey on Saturday.

Youngster Juma has struggled to break into the first team this season leaving Miraj as the only key injury concern.

Miraj picked an injury while on duty with Mainland Tanzania team, Kilimanjaro Heroes, in the 2019 CECAFA Senior Challenge Cup tournament in Kampala, Uganda last month.

Miraj, who was signed from Lipuli at the start of this season, has been one of the outstanding players for Simba having been directly involved in nine goals in all competitions in this campaign.

Coach Vandebroek will no doubt be pleased to have a full squad at his disposal for his first Dar derby match since taking over from Patrik Aussems.

He was happy to see striker John Bocco returning into action and helping the club to beat Ndanda 2-0 thanks to goals from Deo Kanda and Francis Kahata at the National Stadium on Tuesday.

Simba are in a rich vein of form having won five consecutive matches in the league and sit pretty at the top of the Vodacom Premier League standings enjoying a sizeable eight-point cushion to their nearest challengers, Azam FC. Yanga who have played two less matches are third with 24 points.

Simba took four points off Yanga in last season's league meetings, drawing 0-0 in September 2018 in the first leg, before winning 1-0 in the reverse fixture in 2019.

Mtibwa Sugar, Mbao look to start 2020 on a high

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

MTIBWA Sugar welcome Mbao FC for a Vodacom Premier League clash at the CCM Gairo Stadium, Morogoro with both teams desperate to return to winning ways.

Mtibwa have managed just five wins in their opening 14 league matches, a record that leaves them with at 10th place on the table with 19 points collected.

Considering Mtibwa Sugar surprisingly lost 1-0 at home against Alliance FC in their last outing, head coach Zuberi Katwila knows that today's home game presents a fantastic opportunity for his side to pick up three much-needed points.

The sugar millers have taken 10 points from their last five home matches thus far in the league campaign and are slight favourites to collect maximum points.

In head-to-head terms, this will be the seventh top-flight meeting of Mtibwa Sugar and Mbao FC, each side has won two, lost two and drew two matches.

Mbao, meanwhile, are just two points behind their hosts and are also looking to bounce back to winning ways after losing out to Lipuli 3-0 on Monday.

However, at 14th place, they are not too far off a potential relegation scrap as they sit just five points clear of 17th-placed KMC.

Mtibwa Sugar's line-up from their 1-0 home loss against Alliance on December 30:

Shaban Kado, Salum Kanoni, Dickson Job, Abdulhalim Humoud, Awadh Salum, Ally Makarani, Riphath Hamis, Haroun Chango, Salum Kihimbwa.



Mtibwa Sugar SC players participate in drills in Morogoro recently to shape up for the Vodacom Premier League. PHOTO: COURTESY OF MTIBWA SUGAR

Mbao's line-up from their 3-0 loss to Lipuli:

Abdallah Makaganaga, Abraham Mohamed, Pascal Liponda, Kauswa Manumbu, Herbet Lukindo, Rajabu Rajabu, Adil Sultan, Jordan John, Waziri Shentembo, Ignasi Mgere, Haji Mussa.

There are five other league matches today, Ruvo Shooting host Biashara United at Mlandizi, Coast Region.

Police Tanzania will test their mettle against Mbeya City, Coastal Union who are in a rich vein of form having won five consecutive matches in the league will have will continue their push for the top four when they take on Prisons at Mkwakwani Stadium.

Alliance will visit Lipuli in Iringa hoping to collect at least a point on the road while JKT Tanzania will face a struggling Ndanda FC side that currently find themselves in 19th place with only eight points to their name after managing one win in their opening 14 league matches in this campaign.

Niyonzima jets in ahead of derby

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

RWANDAN midfielder Haruna Niyonzima finally arrived in Tanzania yesterday to complete his return to Young Africans (Yanga).

As long as there are no last minute hiccups, the experienced midfielders could be registered in time to make his debut against Simba in Vodacom Premier League clash on Saturday.

"I can confirm Niyonzima will arrive at 11am after initially being expected to jet in the morning. We thought it wise to change his arrival time to give him a rousing welcome befitting his status," Yanga information officer, Hassan Bumbuli, told reporters in a press conference.

Haruna started his football career with Etincelles in Rwanda before he caught the interest of giants Rayon Sports who signed him in 2006.

He joined rivals APR the following year where he played for three-and-a-half years before Yanga acquired his services in 2011.

He played for Yanga for six seasons winning the league four times, and the Federation Cup once.

He then crossed over to rivals Simba at the end of the 2016/17 season after failing to agree to a new deal.

Two league titles at Simba made him the most decorated foreigners with six league titles to his name. In his eight years in Tanzania, he has been named Player of the Year and Foreign Player of the Year in Tanzania.

Injuries restricted him to a few handful appearances in his first season at Msimbazi Street squad before a resurgent second season saw him play an important role in the squad.

However he was deemed surplus to requirements and was let go to join AS Kigali of Rwanda where he has only played for half a season.

Now, he joins a Yanga side fighting for their first league title in three years. With 11 games played, head coach Boniface Mkwasa's side are in third place, 10 points off league leaders and arch-rivals Simba albeit with matches in hand.

Though many football pundits agree that he no longer has legs for a high tempo match, they still see him as a valuable addition due to his experience and intelligence. With Niyonzima being one of the most creative players in the region, Yanga hope he will help them unlock defenses not only against their rivals but also in more matches to come.

Singida United will not be relegated, says coach

By Guardian Correspondent

SINGIDA United coach Ramadhan Nsanzurwimo has said they are not going to be relegated despite their current position on the Vodacom Premier League standings.

Singida United are currently 16th rooted at the bottom of the table, having collected seven points, but Nsanzurwimo is confident that his side will escape relegation.

They conceded 2-1 loss to Azam FC in an encounter which took place in Arusha a day back.

They have registered one win, four draws and nine defeats so far in the opening 14 league matches. In their last five games Singida United managed to get a single win when they defeated Mbeya City 1-0 back in November before losing to Prisons and Azam FC.

Speaking to reporters

after seeing his side concede a late goal that denied them a point against Azam FC, Nsanzurwimo insisted they have a squad good enough to beat the drop.

"We have a good squad that needs to gel. The Mapinduzi Cup break will give us more time to work on the team. We are not going to be relegated," he disclosed. "It's not like we were playing badly but it's just that we lacked experi-

ence but I'm confident that with more players coming we will be fine. The first half belonged to Azam FC while we were the better side in the second half until when we lost concentration and conceded in the dying minutes."

"Our defenders were ball watching, it was three against one but they allowed Azam FC to get into space and score the winning goal. We definitely

need to improve on our defending," he said.

The once ambitious team was promoted back to the top flight in 2017/18 season and ended the campaign at a respectable fifth place but have since struggled. Last season they avoided relegation by two points, finishing at 14th place.

As they attempt to avoid relegation, Singida United have bolstered their squad with experienced cam-

aigners in the ongoing transfer window. Striker Ame Ally and Tumba Swedi, midfielders, Sixtus Mwasekaga, Idd Chuji and Haruna Mushi, defender Haji Mwinyi, and Malawian keeper Owen Chaima have been added to complement the youthful squad.

Their next league assignment is on Sunday when they host KMC at Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium in Arusha.

Flexibles by David Chikoko



Haruna Niyonzima

