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National Pg 3
Arusha RAS dies in crash



National Pg 4
Refunds for bank customers



National Pg 5
142.7bn/- project to electrify Kigoma



National Pg 6
Govt to improve marine transport



Z'bar signs pact on fishing ports

By Guardian Reporter

THE Zanzibar government and a Spanish company, Tange & Intertorco Group, yesterday sealed a pact for carrying out a feasibility study and construction of a joint fishing port at Mpigaduri in Unguja, a port at Mkoani, Pemba and for power generation from natural gas.

The MoU signing was witnessed by President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, with the Energy and Water Permanent Secretary Dr Magereza Mzee Miraji signing for the Zanzibar government, and Allan Kessler, the firm's Group Managing Director.

Blue Economy and Fishing permanent secretary Dr About Suleiman Jumbe signed the MoU for the fishing ports, whilst Michael Angaga signed for the company.

After the signing, President Mwinyi said he was pleased with the big project that incorporates Unguja and Pemba fishing ports as it will feature seven berths for fishing vessels - five at Mpigaduri and two at Mkoani.

Purchasing of fishing vessels for deep



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi witnesses the signing of a gas energy project MoU by Tange managing director Allan Kessler (L) and Zanzibar's Water, Energy and Minerals ministry permanent secretary, Dr Mngereza Mzee Miraji, at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

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'Tanzania can borrow a leaf on coffee value chain know-how'

By Henry Mwangonde

TANZANIA should borrow a leaf from Ethiopia- Africa's leading coffee producer on how to add value in the coffee value chain to gain better access to global markets.

Yonas Yosef Sanbe (pictured), ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia said in an interview Tuesday that his country has set up a coffee management system taking up production, processing and marketing.

About 25 percent of the Ethiopian population

depends on coffee for employment directly or indirectly, which makes up to 25m people are employed from production, processing and marketing, locally or exports.

He said the country has managed to make a huge market locally for the crop, with 50-percent of the harvests consumed at home, he said, noting that Ethiopia is among the leading coffee producing countries in the world and the first in consumption of coffee in Africa.

"If the international market collapses we are assured that half of the coffee will be sold because we have a huge market locally, as the consumption of coffee is part of local culture," he stated.

Ambassador Sanbe said preparation and drinking of coffee is a unique culture in Ethiopia where coffee drinking is often a ceremony, and usually coffee is not drunk alone.

Coming up with high quality coffee depends on various things including soil types, fertilizer

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E-Govt 'saves' 60bn/- yearly

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

THE government is now saving at least 60bn/- each year following the launch of the Government Electronic Payment Gateway (GePG), system for bill payments, transactions and digital receipt issuance.

Treasury Permanent Secretary Doto James said this observation at the ongoing training session for senior media personnel to raise awareness on GePG and its advantages.

"After embarking on GePG, Tanzania Forestry Services (TFS) for instance increased its annual

“The government no longer transacts with cash, only through control numbers and this has also necessitated the issuance of electronic receipts directly to clients' mobile phones

collection from 95bn/- to 115bn/-," he said.

The Weights and Measures Agency (WMA) more than doubled its yearly collections from 1bn/- to 2.5bn/- at present after successfully implementing GePG, he further noted.

The Tanzania Electricity Supply Co. Ltd on the other hand jettisoned its collection agents, after getting onto the Government Electronic Payment Gateway, where it has managed to save 38bn/- on average per year.

John Saus, head of the Directorate of Financial Information Systems Management in the ministry explained that so far more than 670 government agencies and other public institutions are linked to GePG, enabling the Treasury to track all relevant transactions regardless on a 24 hour basis.

"The government no longer

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Ministry tracks pay for Kili tour guides

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

THE government has challenged tour operators especially for Mount Kilimanjaro to make sure all the workers including porters, chefs and tour guides hired to serve tourists climbing the mountain are paid in accordance with provided guidelines.

The 2015 tour operators guidelines indicate that a tour guide should be paid US \$ 20 per day, equivalent to



at least 40,000/-, a chef should be paid US \$ 15 (not less than 30,000/- and porters be paid US \$ 10 (around 20,000/-) per day.

Natural Resources and Tourism deputy minister Mary Masanja (pictured) said this in the National Assembly yesterday when responding to a question from Vunjo MP Dr Charles Kimei, who raised concerns that some operators fail to observe set guidelines in paying tour guides and porters.

The legislator also wanted the government to put in place procedures requiring tour operators to give priority to youths residing

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Vunjo legislator Dr Charles Kimei contributes to debate in the National Assembly in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Z'bar signs pact on fishing ports

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sea fishing and a floating barge for construction and repairs of fishing vessels for small fishermen are also envisaged, along with a factory for making fishing gear, including nets.

A fish processing factory will also be built, including a fertilizer plant that will use fish remains as raw materials, the president noted, elaborating that other structures to be constructed include an international fish auction mart, rooms for cold storage of fish, and a fishing industry training centre.

When the projects are implemented, Zanzibar will register more rapid economic growth, as the projects involve the government collaborating with 12 firms from Norway, Spain, Germany, South Korea and the United States, he said.

He appealed to potential investors to out their feet into Zanzibar as there are many project openings now that government was bent on implementing a whole series of projects for

development.

Areas that need rapid development include the Bwawani Hotel in the Zanzibar Stone Town area and airports in Unguja and Pemba islands, he further noted.

The government has already received applications from various investors interested in airports projects, he told the gathering, projecting that with this pace, Zanzibar will be home to bigger investment drives.

The projects will transform living standards for Zanzibaris substantially, the president emphasised, praising Tangen & Intertorco Group for showing the way in taking up the government's blue economy policy.

Light was now being seen at the end of the tunnel, as MoU signing events will continue as part efforts to transforming the Isles economy, he stated.

On his part, the group managing director said Zanzibar is part of Tanzania which also continues to attract investors from the world's various sources of venture capital.

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applied and the climatic pattern where it is grown, he said.

"Geographical location as well as processing and harvesting systems also matter, for example picking only the ripe bean assures farmers of quality coffee," he said in illustration.

Crop marketing benefits from established coffee trade unions, cooperative associations that enhance the farmers' economic skills by elevating their bargaining powers when marketing the commodity, he elaborated.

The envoy also commented on the importance of a recent

'Tanzania can borrow a leaf on coffee value chain know-how'

visit by Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde saying it was aimed at strengthening the relations between the two countries especially in trade and investment.

There are also issues of people to people relations as when strengthened, they will bring benefits to the people of both countries, he said.

"What we want to see is that Tanzanian businessmen invest

in Ethiopia and vice versa. Our embassy is ready to oversee this and in this we are establishing the Tanzania Ethiopia Friendship Association in the coming days," he said.

Ethiopia plans to train its diplomats in Kiswahili skills and negotiations are in top gear with the Centre for Foreign Relations in Dar es Salaam to facilitate the promotion of strong relations with Tanzania and other East

African states, he said.

Tanzania-Ethiopia relations were laid at the time of independence, with the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

This is displayed in various instances including the Haile Selassie Road in Dar es Salaam and a secondary school in Zanzibar also honouring the memory of Ethiopia's famous imperial ruler, he added

E-Govt 'saves' 60bn/- yearly

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transacts with cash, only through control numbers and this has also necessitated the issuance of electronic receipts directly to clients' mobile phones," explained John Saus.

In line with the Public Finance Act 2001, the government has

adopted the Electronic Payment Gateway system to improve revenue collection management, launched for the first time in 2017.

It is intended to centralise revenue collection management, enhancing visibility of the transactions at all stages of the collection and remittance process, he added.

Health minister mentions excessive drinking as one of major leading causes of mental health problems

By Guardian Reporter

HEALTH. Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children Minister Dr Dorothy Gwajima has cited excessive drinking as one of the major leading causes of mental health problems thus calling on Tanzanians to avoid taking much alcohol to prevent the vice.

Dr Gwajima said this yesterday in the House when responding to a supplementary question from Lucy Mayenga, a CCM-Special Seat MP who sought to know what the government was doing to support patients with mental disorders.

In her question the legislator wanted to know the efforts done by the government to approve the disorders of the patients who face various crimes.

"We have witnessed the processes to approve their disorders to these people taking too long when they face various crimes," Mayenga said.

Dr Gwajima said that apart from alcoholism, mental disorders can also be caused by biological factors such as genetic disposition, aggression, and stress.

"Excessive use of alcohol, cannabis, genetic issues and violence are some of the causes of mental illness, so people should be careful on what they take into their bodies to prevent the disease," she said.

She called on the public including key leaders to support the fight against violence so as to combat mental illness in the country.

The minister further said that failure to cope with the hardships of life also contributes to the mental illnesses.

In her basic question, Mariam Kisangi, special-seat (CCM) sought

to know what the source of mental health problems was and how the government was supporting the patients.

Responding, the ministry's deputy minister Dr Godwin Mollle said that precisely, there is no single cause of mental illness but the disease involves a combination of triggers that the person carries in his/her genes.

"Biologically, the presence of genes in the body increases a person's risk of developing a mental illness. Other causes include chronic illness and the use of alcohol such as marijuana, alcohol and other alcoholic products," he explained.

He said in supporting mental health patients; the government has enacted a law which governs the provision of mental health services in the country. The law provides guidance and procedures on how to receive and take care of the people with mental illness.

Dr Mollle further added that the government has also ensured that mental health treatment services including medicines are available from the level of Regional Referral Hospitals to the Mirembe National Mental Health Hospital.



We have witnessed the processes to approve their disorders to these people taking too long when they face various crimes



John Sausi, Financial Information System Management director in the Finance and Planning ministry, pictured in Arusha city yesterday briefing editors on the importance of using the Government Electronic Payment Gateway app. Photo: Finance ministry

Ministry tracks pay for Kili tour guides

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in the villages near Mount Kilimanjaro when it comes to recruiting such employees.

"There are many youths living on the slopes of the mountain, along the climbing routes but very few of them secure jobs from tour operators," he stated.

Elaborating, the deputy minister said that tourists may spend between five and seven days to reach the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro.

In December 2015, tourism stakeholders including tour operators and leaders of tour guide associations agreed on the set payment standards, she said, affirming that the ministry closely monitors their operations.

"The government is aware of the challenges that porters and tour guides face," she said, indicating that a number of strategies are in place to ensure that the agreed rates are paid accordingly.

These include collaborating with the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities) in preparing legal contracts that porters, chefs and tour guides will have to sign before starting to work, she explained.

The contracts will clearly state the amount of payments that workers will be paid and the total amount they will get after completing their contractual periods, she specified.

A copy of the contract should

be left at the starting gate while the other copy is given to the tourist guide, chef or porter, she pursued, underlined that workers need to make sure the contracts are signed by both parties before starting work.

Despite that the ministry has been following up at the gates to ensure proper implementation of the agreed procedures, it is now following up complaints on delayed payments and claims of low pay to some porters, she added.



Yonas Yosef Sanbe, Ethiopia's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Tanzania, fields questions during an interview with The Guardian in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. Photo: Henry Mwangonde

Govt signs four 7.5bn/- worth contracts on improvement of national broadband network

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE government has signed four contracts worth 7.5bn/- with some three local technology companies to improve national broadband network.

Speaking during the brief signing ceremony held at the parliament grounds, Minister for Information and Communication Technology, Dr Faustine Ndugulile urged the companies to work day and night so as to complete the projects within time, adding that there will be no extension of time.

During the event, the Permanent Secretary in the ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Dr Zainab Chaula on behalf of the government signed the agreements with contractors from Tanzania Telecommunication Company Limited (TTCL), Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) and Raddy Fibre Solutions Limited.

The projects include building and expansion of the national broadband to strengthen communication from Singida to Mbeya regions, some parts of Mtwara region in effort to connect Tanzania and Mozambique as well as to connect government city in Dodoma and Msalato area in the city.

The minister stated that some 409 kilometers will be joined with the national broadband and some 12 district councils will be issued with post codes which indicates street and road names, house numbers in the implementation of the first phase of the post code project.

Headed that the aim is to ensure that 80 percent of Tanzanians get clear communication network by 2025 and participate in building the digital economy through online business, among others.

"I believe in patriotic Tanzanian contractors but you will eliminate yourselves once you come up with flimsy reasons why you cannot complete the project on time," said Ndugulile, calling on the contractors to work day and night.

At the same time, the minister said his ministry is going on with the process to work on the issue of air time communication bundles, appealing to the public to remain patient until the end of this month when the ministry shall issue an official statement.

He said the aim is to reach a solution that will not affect revenues of service providers, government revenue and the common wananchi. Ndugulile urged the public not to accept any directives on personal transactions through phone and instead go to centers of agents registered by the telecommunication companies.

"We want to improve the agency system for telecommunication companies in effort to identify untrustworthy agents and take legal action against them," he added.

The minister noted that the government is keenly tracing those using offensive language, defamation and fraudsters online, saying a group of 17 that lead online gang groups in Morogoro have been arrested and will soon be arraigned in court.

He maintained that the government has the goodwill to build conducive environment for communication network since the constitution provides room for criticism using the right language.

"We want to improve the agency system for telecommunication companies in effort to identify untrustworthy agents and take legal action against them"

Arusha RAS, Richard Kwitega dies in road crash involving bus, his car

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame,

Arusha

THE Arusha regional administrative Secretary, Richard Kwitega is dead. He was killed in a road accident on Wednesday evening, as he was travelling from Arusha to Dodoma to attend an official meeting.

Kwitega was travelling in his official Toyota Land-Cruiser VX, which was being driven by one

Lubango. The car reportedly collided head-on with an oncoming bus at the Mdori section of Babati District at about 3.00pm.

The Arusha Regional Commissioner, Idd Kimanta on announcing the incident, said the entire office was shocked by the news of RAS Kwitega's untimely death; "His vehicle collided with a bus known as 'Makara,' which was travelling from Babati to Arusha before the accident occurred at

Mdori.

"He was rushed to Magugu Health Center for initial treatments but unfortunately Kwitega died there," stated the regional commissioner, adding that arrangements to transport the late Regional Administrative Secretary's body from Babati to Arusha have started.

Earlier in the Morning, the jovial Kwitega was with a number of media personnel at the Arusha

Mini-Treasury Hall, where he officially opened the editorial training sessions regarding the Government Electronic Payment Gateway (GePG), system of bill payments, transactions and digital receipt issuance.

The two-day seminar was organised by the Ministry of Finance and Planning. RAS Kwitega opened the sessions on behalf of the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Dotto James.

Deputy speaker gives seven days to Njau to submit proof of vote rigging during 2020 General Election

By Felister

Peter, Dodoma

DEPUTY Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Tulia Ackson has given seven days to Special Seats legislator Felister Njau (CHADEMA) to submit proof of vote rigging allegations in the 2020 General Election.

Dr Ackson ordered the MP to make sure all the documents are submitted to the Parliamentary Privileges, Ethics and Powers Committee by Wednesday next week.

"All the proof must be submitted by February 10th 2021 for the committee to discuss the matter and come up with decisions before completion of the ongoing 2nd meeting of the 12th parliament," asserted the Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker said the directive is in accordance with

Parliamentary Standing Orders Number 70, Section 4, 5 and 6 which prevents MPs from lying in parliament. "You have violated the Parliamentary Standing Orders for the second time, you are the one who knows the truth. The law requires anyone speaking in the August House to only speak

the truth and avoid uttering words without evidence," she added.

When debating President John Magufuli's speech at the inauguration of the 12th Parliament in November last year, Njau complained over votes rigging and violation of democracy during the

civic polls in 2019 and the 2020 general elections.

"I was the campaign manager for Halima Mdee who was contesting for the Kawe parliamentary seat in the 2020 general elections. There were a number of irregularities during the voting exercise...our team seized five boxes of fake votes," she claimed.



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SOLICITATION NO: RFP-ADF-PRG-21-0004
Tanzania Country Program Coordinator (CPC)
January 28, 2021

JOB VACANCY COUNTRY PROGRAM COORDINATOR (CPC)

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of the Fiscal Service, on behalf of the United States African Development Foundation (USADF), is posting this job vacancy to seek a qualified individual to serve as a Country Program Coordinator (CPC) for its field office in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania under a personal service contract for a base period of 12-months and four 12-month option periods.

The United States African Development Foundation (USADF) is an agency of the United States Government. USADF provides grant funding to private businesses, farmers' cooperatives, associations, and various community-based organizations, especially those serving marginalized peoples engaged in economic and social development activities.

The Foundation started its grant funding activities in Tanzania in 2008. USADF's office in Dar es Salaam provides on-going support to projects that have been financed and also continues to identify viable local self-help groups, NGOs, and small and medium-sized enterprises that show potential to create employment opportunities, generate sustainable incomes and have broad social impact beyond the grant activity

REQUIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

1. Citizen of the Country of Tanzania (signed statement only with initial application)
2. A bachelor's degree from an accredited university in agriculture, business administration, management, public administration, finance, accounting, community development, economics, or a related field
3. High level of motivation, personal commitment, and ethical standards.
4. Fluency in written and spoken Swahili and English.
5. Willingness to travel extensively throughout Tanzania.
6. Demonstrated ability to operate independently in high visibility, high-pressure environments and operate in a complex office environment, emergency and/or political crisis situations with minimal supervision;
7. Knowledge of grant management or commercial/micro-lending;
8. Experience working with marginalized groups and/or community-based enterprises.
9. Experience managing client relationships, especially in grants management, banking, business development, or international development context.
10. Experience with or education related to financial management/accounting
11. Experience auditing, monitoring, or evaluating international development programs.
12. Five years of professional experience in business development, finance, banking, auditing, monitoring and evaluation, and/or management of international development program.
13. Knowledge of community needs assessment, mobilization, community enterprises participatory development, and/or monitoring the implementation of an assistance activity under a grant or cooperative agreement.

PREFERRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

1. Experience working with international donors
2. Experience with grant management or commercial/micro lending.
3. Knowledge of and commitment to USADF mission and priorities.
4. Knowledge or experience with community needs assessments.
5. Experience with participatory development methods.

HOW TO APPLY

This job announcement is solely intended to advertise the Tanzania Country Program Coordinator (CPC) position opening. To apply for this position, YOU MUST RESPOND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SOLICITATION RFP-ADF- PRG-21-0004 POSTED AT <https://beta.sam.gov/>.

A COPY OF THE SOLICITATION CAN ALSO BE OBTAINED AT: <https://usadf.gov/career-opportunities>

BoT, DIB raising funds to repay customers of 'revoked' banks

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

THE Bank of Tanzania (BoT) and the Deposit Insurance Board (DIB) are working to collect assets and liabilities of seven banks whose licences have been revoked to raise funds to repay customers with deposits of more than 1.5m/-, the house heard yesterday.

In between 2017 and 2018, the Bank of Tanzania revoked licenses of seven banks including the FBME bank, and placed it under liquidation after it was accused by the United States government for involvement in money laundering. Others are the Covenant Bank for Women, Efatha Bank, Meru Community Bank, Njombe Community Bank, Mbinga Community Bank and Kagera Farmers Cooperative Bank.

Deputy Minister for Finance and Planning, Mwanaidi Ali Khamis told Members of Parliament that the government handed the matter to DIB which its mission is to effectively contribute to the country's financial stability by maintaining public confidence in the financial system through prompt payment of protected depositors to depositors of a failed member bank or financial institutions.

"DIB has been repaying the bank's customers with deposits of up to 1.5m/- to fulfil its basic legal obligations; payment procedures are ongoing for those with more than 1.5m/- including some customers who have yet shown up to take their monies," said Khamis.

She told the House that DIB has been continuing with the liquidation exercise of the particular banks whereas until December 2020, it had already collected and paid 4.9bn/- to customers in six banks with exception of those from FBME Bank.

The payment is equivalent to 77.27 percent of the total

amount (6.3bn/-) allocated for compensation, she said.

A total of 21,675 out of 57,076 customers of the banks have been so far paid.

"Customers with deposits of more than 1.5m/- will be paid compensation from monies to be collected by DIB under the ongoing liquidation exercise which includes selling of the banks' properties," said the Deputy Minister, Mwigulu Nchemba said the government has been scrutinizing the banks before their provided with operation licenses.

"We have been conducting comprehensive appraisal to specific banks to establish their assets and liabilities as well as their commercial potential," he added.

According to him, payments to customers of FBME Bank have been delayed due to a number of factors taking into consideration that the bank was operating in two different countries.

The central bank put FBME under its surveillance in July 2014 following a report from the US Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) describing the bank as a 'primary money laundering concern'.

FBME Bank is registered in the East African country but has been conducting most of its business operations elsewhere, notably in Cyprus.

In 1982, FBME Bank established its Nicosia, Cyprus, operations as a subsidiary of the Federal Bank of Lebanon SAL.

In 1986, FBME Bank changed its country of incorporation to the Cayman Islands and its banking presence in Cyprus was transformed to that of a branch of the Cayman.

In his basic question, Jang'ombe Member of Parliament (CCM), Ali Hassan King wanted to know the fate of FBME Bank customers who have not been compensated.



Martha Mganga (R, in hat), chairperson of the Arusha Region chapter of the Tanzania Federation of Disabled Persons' Organisations, presents a National Health Insurance Fund membership card in Arusha city yesterday to one of 100 children with disabilities sponsored for the purpose by Arusha Urban legislator Mrisho Gambo (right behind the child). Photo: Correspondent Getrude Mpezya

Government allocates US\$450m for power substation construction in Songwe Region

By Guardian Reporter, Songwe

THE government has allocated US\$450 million for the construction of a power substation in Songwe that will distribute electricity to Tunduma, Ikana, Laela up to Kamsamba in all areas that are yet to have power infrastructures.

Minerals Minister Dr Medard Kalemani revealed this here at the weekend during his inspection visit of various development projects.

He said there is about 2,000 square kilometres in Songwe Region that has no power substation and added that its

construction will eradicate power woes in Songwe Region.

He said the construction process has already begun, adding that the substation will be constructed near Tunduma and will supply power towards Katavi Region that would later be extended to Kigoma and Geita regions.

He added: "There was no national power grid in this zone hence Songwe Region was adversely affected. But as for now there are robust plans for solving the problem, and within 18 months reliable power will be available in Songwe Region."

Dr Kalemani said frequent

power outages in the region are caused by transmission of electricity over long distances and lack of a substation.

In regard to rural power electrification in Songwe Region, the minister said when plans for the programme were being made in 2008, Songwe Region was part of Mbeya Region and many villages that received power were those near to Mbeya Region.

He said Mbeya has 502 villages but those that remained and received power were 91 only, adding that Mbeya Region has many more villages than Songwe Region that has between 300 and 500 villages.

He said the government has provided 851bn/- for rural electrification in the entire country, for the villages that are yet to be connected to power.

He said there are 12,268 villages in the country, "but 10,109 are already been connected with power, whereas only 2,059 villages remain. Our aim is to ensure all the remaining villages get power within 18 months beginning February 5 this year."

He called on contractors who will be contracted to distribute power to villages to ensure they do the work diligently and to complete the work within 18 months.



Brig Gen Wilbert Ibuge (R), Permanent Secretary in the Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation ministry, exchanges greetings with Tanzania's High Commissioner to India, Baraka Luvanda, shortly before talks in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Foreign Affairs ministry

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

RUVUMA Regional Commissioner Christina Mndeme has instructed Divisional Secretaries and all district officials to supervise water sources protection for their sustainability.

She issued the instructions here early this week when opening a stakeholders meeting on the water sector in the region.

The RC also directed people engaged in economic activities in water sources to be removed and legal steps to be taken against them according to the 2004 NEMC law and the 2019 RUWASA Act.

In addition, she called on all local councils and the regional

Protect water sources for sustainability, Ruvuma RC tells district council officials

secretariat to be fully accountable in the implementation of all their duties as listed in the Water Supply and Sanitation Act of 2019.

"RUWASA District Managers in collaboration with all councils must ensure all existing projects and others to be built establish independent water consumers' bodies according to the 2019 Water Supply and Sanitation Act by May 31 this year," she stressed.

She also directed the quarterly council meetings in all councils should include a permanent topic whereby RUWASA district

managers will submit reports on the water situation and registration of water consumers' bodies

Mndeme also directed RUWASA in the region and districts to work together with Songea Urban Water and Sanitation Authority (SOUASA) as well as with water basins authorities to prepare plans for water sources protection.

"I also order that moneys accrued from consumers' water bills should be audited by the councils' internal auditors to ascertain its expenditure and you

must take steps against all the people who deliberately destroy water sources and infrastructures thereof," she added.

RUWASA Manager for Ruvuma Region Rebman Ngashonga cited RUWASA's responsibilities as including preparing plans for water projects surveys, construction and management.

He cited other responsibilities as including development of water sources through research on water under the surface, drilling boreholes and infrastructures refurbishment.

Use BPS in importing fertiliser to reduce cost, regulator urges smallholder farmers

By Guardian Reporter

SMALLHOLDER farmers through their cooperative unions-Iringa Farmers Cooperative Union (IFCU) and Mbeya through Madibira Agricultural and Marketing Cooperative Society (MAMCOS) who imported fertilizers directly from factories in Morocco (DAP) and China (Urea) last year.

Addressing journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday, TFRA Executive Director, Dr Stephan Ngailo said that purchasing fertiliser through BPS is cost-effective and farmers get the input to arrive on time and at a cheap price.

"When BPS was introduced in 2017/18 farming season, the price of fertiliser has gone down by 11 to 40 percent. In some areas, farmers who used the system get a bag of input at a cheap price below the government's recommended price. That's why we're encouraging farmers to explore this opportunity because of the countless benefits," Dr Ngailo said.

He added that the system allows farmers to use the fertiliser during the farming season (when they don't have money) and pay the money after selling their agro-produce.

According to him, BPS free farmers from higher interest rates from bank loans and it increases competition in the fertiliser market as it provides room for retailers and wholesalers to get into importation of the input.

The idea, he said is to increase crop production, boost the country's food security as well as raw materials for the agro-processing industries, hence improve farmers' income and the country at large.

He encouraged farmers to borrow a leaf from two cooperative unions-Iringa Farmers Cooperative Union (IFCU) and Mbeya through Madibira Agricultural and Marketing Cooperative Society (MAMCOS) who imported fertilizers directly from factories in Morocco (DAP) and China (Urea) last year.

Between January and December 2020 TFRA trained 1,024 leaders of AMCOS in Rukwa, Songwe, Mbeya, Iringa, Ruvuma, Njombe, Morogoro, Shinyanga, Geita, and Kagera regions with the aim of encouraging them to import fertiliser through BPS.

He, however, said that in 2021/2022 farmers' co-operative unions are expected to import 330,000 tonnes of fertiliser-CAN, SA, NPK (for tobacco, tea, and coffee), DAP, and Urea through BPS.

He said that TFRA was working closely with different crop boards and the Tanzania Cooperative Development Commission (TCDC) to encourage farmers to submit fertiliser importation before May this year.

"This is to ensure that the fertiliser arrives in the country on time," Dr Ngailo said.

TFRA was established by the Fertilizer Act No. 9 of 2009 and became operational in August 2012 with the purpose of making provisions for regulating the manufacturing, importation, exportation, distribution, and utilization of agricultural fertilizers. Since the inception of TFRA, deliberate efforts have been made to create a conducive working environment that supports the institutional mandates provided in the Act and its regulations.



Ubungo Municipal Council eye specialist Dr Bernadetta Twinomukama pictured yesterday attending to a patient at a four-day free health diagnosis camp organised by Dar es Salaam's Kairuki Hospital to commemorate the life of its founder, the late Prof Hubert Kairuki. The venue is the city's Mbezi Luis suburb. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Ministry of Livestock reveals how donkey processing firm violated EPZA's regulations

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE Livestock and Fisheries ministry yesterday explained why the Shinyanga-based donkey processing company, Fang Hua Investment, was closed, saying it violated Export Processing Zones Authority (EPZA) regulations.

A statement issued by the head of communication unit at the ministry, Rehema Mbulalina indicates that the Chinese company was slaughtering and processing donkey meat under the EPZA laws but upon violation of section 373 of 2012, the company's license was revoked in September 2020.

"Upon realization that the company had lost EPZA certification, the ministry of Livestock and Fisheries also withdrew its license," reads the statement in part.

According to the statement, the investors are aware that after losing EPZA accreditation, the only option to get a new license to slaughter and process donkey again is by registering with the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC).

The statement further explained that upon realization that the company had not taken that step, the ministry wrote a reminding letter to Fang Hua Investment but the company has not heeded the advice.

"Until now the company has not taken any step to register at TIC and submit new application for new license at the ministry of Livestock and Fisheries to slaughter and process donkeys," said the statement.

The explanations came at a time when there have been complaints for a cross section of donkey traders and stakeholders who throw accusations at the ministry for deliberately delaying license for the investor.

But in her statement, Mbulalina said it is the company that has failed to follow the rightful channels to get new processing license. She said the position of the ministry of Livestock and Fisheries is that the company must get TIC certification and forward request for license at the ministry.

She urged the investor to say the truth to

its stakeholders and also called on donkey traders to understand the real matter and see how to do business with the company.

According to the communication officer, it was not the ministry's will to expose issues of the company to the public but was forced to provide clarification on the matter to avoid further misleading statements that have caused confusion among donkey traders and other stakeholders.

In May last year, the company director, Jiao Zhil told The Guardian that plans were underway to make animal feeds from the bones that were initially being thrown as useless by-products.

Speaking about the bones for export, he said industries in his country have learnt to extract oil from the bones, suitable for making lotion that smoothen body skin.

"We have almost everything in place for the production of chicken feeds from bones and we also export them for oil extraction in China," he said adding that they no longer throw away donkey bones like it was before.

The company's Operations Manager, Mingyang Yan said the company process at least 30 donkeys per day, noting that they have requested the government to allow them slaughter more donkeys.

She said they have come up with a multiplication programme to ensure they have reliable source of donkeys. This, she said is done through contract farming with farmers within Shinyanga municipality and its environs.

Under the programme, the company has signed contract with some 110 people with 751 donkeys in different district councils in Shinyanga region.

"The company has entered two types of contracts with farmers aimed at increasing production of donkeys and the continuity of our business," she said. In the first contract farmers are paid Sh 300 per month for every donkey in effort to help them raise the animals and later sell to the company.

In the second contract, the company has given farmers donkeys and pay them Sh 5000 per donkey every month and they later take to the company when needed.

'142.7bn/- worth project to electrify Kigoma Region to be complete December next year'

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

THE 142.7bn/- worth project to connect Kigoma Region to the national power grid will be complete in December next year, Energy Minister Dr Medard Kalemani has said.

The minister said this in the National Assembly yesterday when responding to a question posed by the Kasulu Rural legislator, Augustine Vuma (CCM) who was concerned with the frequent power cuts in the region. The MP wanted the government to exactly state as to when Kigoma will be connected to the main power grid.

Completion of the project will, among other things, end decades of dependency on unreliable power sources and power cuts in the western region.

According to Dr Kalemani, for a long time, Kigoma Region has been using electricity from generators and Heavy

Fuel Oil (HFO) as a result of frequent power cuts in the region.

"On average, Kigoma uses 5.2 Megawatts per day but the supply hasn't been sufficient enough causing a frequent power cut, a move that has been disturbing some production activities in the region," he said.

The project will involve construction of a 132KV power transmission line from Tabora to Kigoma through Urambo and Nguruka at a distance of 395km.

Also there will be a construction of a power cooling station at Urambo, Nguruka and Kidahwe, the project commenced in June last year.

Upon completion of the project will also improve supply, reliability and affordability of electricity in the Kigoma region as the service will also help to improve social welfare of the people and ensure economic transformation of the region which is in line with Tanzania's

vision 2025.

In another development, Dr Kalemani said the exercise of connecting over 2,000 villages that were not connected with electricity through the Rural Energy (REA) will commence on 15th February this year.

"The projects will be set to be completed within 18 months, to ensure all villages are connected to power service," he assured.

In his supplementary question, Lushoto Member of Parliament, Shaabani Shekilindi (CCM) asked the government on when it would electrify all villages in his constituency.

Responding, the Deputy Minister for Energy, Stephen Byabato said a total of 16.8bn/- has been allocated for construction of 33KV power line at a distance of 131.8km, where a total of 1,984 new customers in Lushoto will be connected with electricity.

JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA
WIZARA YA MAWASILIANO NA
TEKNOLOJIA YA HABARI
MAMLAKA YA MAWASILIANO TANZANIA
 ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED

MAPITIO YA ADHABU ILIYOTOLEWA

DHIDI YA WASAFI TV

MUHTASARI

Mnamo tarehe 05 Januari, 2021, Mamlaka ya Mawasiliano Tanzania (TCRA) ilitoa Uamuzi wa kuifungia Televisioni ya Wasafi (WASAFI TV) kwa kipindi cha miezi sita (6), kutokana na kukiuka Kanuni za Mawasiliano ya Kielektroniki na Posta (Maudhui ya Utangazaji wa Redio na Televisheni), 2018.

Kufuatia uamuzi huo, mnamo tarehe 21 Januari, 2021 Wasafi TV iliwasilisha Maombi TCRA na vielelezo zaidi ikiomba kupitia upya uamuzi wake. Tarehe 28 Januari, 2021 Wasafi ilifika TCRA kwa ajili ya kusikilizwa Maombi hayo. Wasafi iliwasilisha ushahidi mpya kuonyesha kuwa endapo ushahidi huo ungewasilishwa awali wakati wa usikilizwaji, TCRA isingeweza kutoa adhabu ya kufungiwa miezi sita (6). Vilevile Wasafi TV ilikiri kurusha matangazo mubashara kinyume na masharti ya leseni yao. Wasafi iliomba TCRA kupitia upya uamuzi wake na kupunguza adhabu dhidi yake.

Baada ya kusikiliza wasilisho la WASAFI TV, TCRA imetafakari upya uamuzi wake wa tarehe 5 January, 2021 kwa kuzingatia ushahidi uliowasilishwa pamoja na hatua zilichukuliwa na WASAFI TV baada ya kosa kutendeka, na hivyo basi, TCRA imeamua kama ifuatavyo: -

UAMUZI WA TCRA DHIDI YA WASAFI TV

TCRA imeamua kama ifuatavyo: -

1. WASAFI TV itaendelea kutumikia adhabu hiyo mpaka tarehe 28 Februari, 2021;
2. WASAFI TV inaelekezwa kuzingatia masharti ya leseni ya kutoa huduma za maudhui ya kulipia kwa njia ya televisheni (subscription content); na
3. Iwapo Wasafi TV itashindwa, itakataa au kukaidi Uamuzi huu, hatua zaidi za kisheria na kiudhibiti zitachukuliwa dhidi ya Wasafi TV.

IMETOLEWA NA
MKURUGENZI MKUU
MAMLAKA YA MAWASILIANO TANZANIA
 04.02.2021

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TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

JOB VACANCY – ADVERTISEMENT

Project Support Officer – East Africa

1. BACKGROUND:

TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, works to ensure that trade in wild animals and plants is not a threat to the conservation of nature. We are now looking to expand our Project support team based in TRAFFIC's East Africa Office in Tanzania.

TRAFFIC is a strategic alliance of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and is an international network, active on five continents.

TRAFFIC implements a diverse portfolio of work funded by a variety of donors in the government and private sector. This position provides support to the management of projects to ensure that project implementing teams operate effectively, on time and according to donor requirements. The Project Support Officer will work closely with East Africa's Project Managers and administrators and wider project implementation staff.

2. OVERALL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provides technical support on a range of East Africa's projects from the trade in timber, bushmeat and species such as birds, reptiles and fish;
- Works with Project leads to ensure the timely preparation and submission of project reports, and any other documents required by donors, including review and quality control elements;
- Supports on proposal development and proposal submissions;
- Supports as needed with project administration including scheduling meeting, writing minutes and agendas and circulating reference material for preparation of meetings;
- Attends training on technical matters as well as Donor requirements, including keeping up to date on Donor rules and regulations; and,
- Supports the East Africa Team as needed to ensure projects have a lasting impact.

8. SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

- Be educated to a university degree level in a relevant science discipline (i.e. biology/zoology/ecology, environmental studies, wildlife management).
- Minimum 2 years of experience working on wildlife conservation.
- A willingness and ability to travel frequently and widely within the region and to work under pressure.
- Experience in in project planning and implementation.
- Fluency in spoken and written English and Kiswahili is essential.
- Familiarity with standard word processing, spreadsheet, presentation (ppt), and data base software, and with electronic communication technology.
- Be eligible to work in Tanzania.

Additional information. Applications must include a Cover Letter and complete CV with full contact details of three referees and should be addressed to TRAFFIC East Africa Support Manager through traffictz@traffico.org by **February 14th by 11:59 pm**. Indicate the name of the position on the subject line of your email.

We thank everyone for their interest in this position but only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.
The interviews will take place virtually.

Govt urged to empower local entrepreneurs to create jobs

By Correspondent Felix Andrew

THE government has been called to support local entrepreneurs who have decided to invest in communities so as to enable them to create more employment opportunities and contribute to state coffers.

This was said yesterday in Dar es Salaam by a resident identified as Moshi Kaftanyi during the launching of water vending machine at Mabibo hostel.

Kaftanyi who is also the local leader at Makuburi-Kibangu ward, said that the government has to increase its support to entrepreneurs who have shown interest to support the community.

He congratulated the management of Heritage Pure Drinking Water company for installing the low cost water vending machine at Mabibo hostel.

"This place accumulates many people, most of them are students, by bringing the affordable water services close to them would be a relief," he said.

He asked other entrepreneurs to emulate examples shown by introducing affordable services on behalf of the government.

Speaking, a student at University of Dar es Salaam identified as Edson Laurent said that they are happy to get the services close to their door.

He said the service which is affordable and most friendly has come at a right time particularly this time when the Dar es Salaam city experiences hot weather.

He also asked the government to provide enough support to local entrepreneurs in order to realise their dreams.

Mabibo resident identified as Willfred Mwambuja urged the local entrepreneurs to make the project sustainable.

"This water vending machine

project at Mabibo hostel should be sustainable to enable students and community living around to get the services at any time," he said.

Speaking earlier, the Chief Executive Officer of Heritage Pure Drinking Water Dr Edwinus Lyaya, said that they have installed the machine in which water undergoes some process before it is tapped.

He said the machine filtrates, mineralizes and sterilizes water a process which takes not more than five minutes.

According to him similar machines have been installed at Mawasiliano bus stand at Ubungo area, Kariakoo, Muhimbili (Muhas), Tegeta Nyuki, Ilala and Mabibo hostel. A litre of water is sold at 200m/-

He said the company would install affordable water technology to densely populated areas such as bus stands, hospitals, stadiums, markets, schools and colleges.

The idea is to provide low-cost, highly efficient automatic drinking water dispensers in densely populated areas of the city of Dar es Salaam.

He said the project is designed to eliminate recurring outbreaks of cholera in the city by providing safe, affordable and easily accessible drinking water, and secondly, to reduce the use of plastic bottled-water, that causes environmental pollution due to lack of effective systems of recycling plastic water bottle and in addition also higher price of bottled (in Disposable plastic bottles) drinking water makes one to think about finding a solution of that problem for the betterment of our society and environment.

"We will install another water vending machine at Tandika area at the end of this week, similar exercise would be taken to other areas in near future," he said.



Kilolo (Iringa Region) legislator Justin Nyamoga (in white shirt) helps in cooking 'ugali' at Mahenge village earlier this week shortly after presenting 79 bags of cement for use in construction work at a ward secondary school. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

By Guardian Reporter

THE Rockefeller Foundation has announced an initial US\$34.95 million to ensure more equitable access to Covid-19 testing and vaccines; leverage innovation, data, machine-learning; combat the escalating food crisis and scale up access to renewable energy in Africa.

Collaborating with 24 organizations, businesses, and government agencies, this pan-African effort will also focus on 10 countries: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

In a statement availed to the media yesterday, Dr Rajiv Shah, president of The Rockefeller Foundation said the announcement comes 100 days after the Foundation's landmark commitment of USD 1 billion over three years to help end the Covid-19 pandemic and drive a

Rockefeller Foundation committing an initial \$35m to Covid-19 response efforts in Africa

more inclusive and sustainable global recovery.

"Since foundation first opened its Africa Regional Office in Nairobi in 1966, the region has remained a top priority for us," "With this initial round of funding, we are beginning to deliver on our billion-dollar pledge to help end the Covid-19 pandemic in Africa and for us all, while investing in wealth-building opportunities for those who have been shut out of economic progress and are bearing the brunt of this pandemic," he said.

William Asiko, managing director and head of the Rockefeller Foundation's Africa Regional Office added; "We are very pleased to be committing over USD 30 million to ensure a sustainable, equitable Covid-19

response in Africa."

He said a significant portion of the funding will benefit the Africa Centres for Disease Control (CDC)'s effort to accelerate testing and tracing in several countries across the continent. These efforts will allow governments at national and subnational levels to make informed policy decisions about lifting restrictions on movement and thereby re-opening economic activity.

He noted the Covid-19 has deepened food insecurity and hunger across the world and in Africa. The World Food Programme estimates that hunger has doubled as a result of the pandemic, leaving more than 270 million people without enough to eat.

"The Rockefeller Foundation's

efforts focus on responding to the urgency of the Covid-19-triggered food crises while advancing more sustainable, nourishing, and equitable food systems across Africa."

The Rockefeller Foundation is a global organization which works to advance new frontiers of science, data, and innovation to solve global challenges related to health, food, power, and economic mobility. As a science-driven philanthropy focused on building collaborative relationships with partners and grantees, the Foundation seeks to inspire and foster large-scale human impact that promotes the well-being of humanity throughout the world by identifying and accelerating breakthrough solutions, ideas, and conversations.



China Railway Seventh Group Company Ltd workers pictured yesterday continuing with the construction of a concrete wall meant in part to 'fortify' a flood-prone area at Chang'ombe in Dar es Salaam city's Temeke municipality. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

By Wilhelm Mulinda, Mwanza

Govt in bid to improve maritime transport

THE government plans to start building new four ships and do major rehabilitation on two old ones in this financial year in a bid to improve maritime transport in the country.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of state-owned Marine Services Company Ltd, Eric Hamissi said here yesterday that two new ships will operate on Lake Tanganyika.

Hamissi noted that another

one will be on Lake Victoria and a cargo ship to ply on Indian Ocean between Comoro, Madagascar, Seychelles and the coast of Tanzania.

He mentioned ships to be rehabilitated as Mv Liemba plying on Lake Tanganyika and Mv Umoja serving on Lake Victoria.

Commenting on the performance of the company

he noted that it has managed to transport 154,000 passengers within five months on Lake Victoria from August 2020 to January this year by using two ships only namely: Mv Victoria and Mv Butiama.

This is a big achievement, citing an example that in 2013/14 financial year the company only transported 279,000 passengers

by using six ships of Mv Liemba, Mv Victoria, Mv Clarias, Mv Songea, Mv Mwongozo and Mv Iringa, he said.

According to him, success reached by the company just in the past five months is 65 percent increase in terms of revenue as compared to half year of 2013/14 financial year.

Also he said that journey on

Lake Victoria aboard Mv Victoria nowadays takes a short time unlike in the past where it took many hours to move from one point to another on the waterbody.

He pointed out that no one can travel between seven and eight hours from Mwanza to Bukoba via Kemondo as opposed to between 10 and 12 hours in 2013/14 financial year.

He thanked for the fifth phase government under President John Magufuli for coming up with innovation to revive the company that has helped much to created a lot of employment opportunities to people as well as improving maritime transport in the country.

Before big investment that government has done in the company under President Magufuli, the firm was nearly to collapse totally, he said.

Ruvuma to plant 40,000 hectares of commercial trees come end of 2025

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

RUVUMA Region plans to plant commercial trees in a 40,000-hectare areas by 2025.

Ruvuma Region's Natural Resources and Tourism consultant, Afrikanus Challe said the ongoing project is of ten years and began 2015, and will involve tree planting in central and local government areas, colleges, schools and in villages.

Challe mentioned species of trees being planted as those fit for raw materials in the wood industries including pine, eucalyptus and teak.

"By 2020 a total of Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS) planted trees in 4,785 hectares, local councils in 425 hectares, colleges and schools 420 hectares and individuals 23,964 hectares.

Challe said Ruvuma Region aims

to establish two new tree farms in Tunduru and Nyasa districts.

For his part the coordinator of Forestry and Value Chains Development Programme (FORVAC) for Tunduma region, Marcel Mtunda said they have prepared 4m seedlings for commercial pine and eucalyptus trees to be planted in specially allocated areas in the region including Ifinga, Liuli, Liumbe, Upolo, Mpepo, Kipiki and Kihangamahuka.

He said the region was implementing a project for adding value to forest products in collaboration with FORVAC in all five districts of the region.

"This project will enable villages to take care of village reserve forests for profit creation and so far Tunduru District has received one chain saw that has begun operating in Sauti Moja village," Mtunda said.



Grace Wille (R), assistant chief conservator with the Tanzania Forest Service Agency's Kiwira Forest Plantation in Mbeya Region, symbolically presents 20 desks to Rungwe District Council acting executive director Castory Makeula on Tuesday. It was a donation by the agency to Isyonje Primary School. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

Govt issues 586m/- to support water projects in Musoma District's Suguti, Nyambono wards

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

THE government has issued 586m/- for the implementation of water projects from Lake Victoria to the villages in Suguti and Nyambono wards in Musoma District, Mara Region.

District Commissioner Dr Vicent Anney said this here that 356m/- will be used to construct water infrastructures for Suguti ward and 230m/- will be used for the Nyambono project.

Dr Anney said that the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) is currently implanting various projects so as to ensure that all the 68 villages in the district have steady supply of clean and safe water.

"The agency has also installed a pump with a capacity of pumping 67,000 litres per hour at the Suguti village where Lake Victoria is located, so as to distribute water in various villages including the Kusenyi, Chirorwe and Wanyere," Dr Anney told The Guardian in an interview.

Similarly, a 200,000 litres water tank has been built at the Chirorwe Village, so as to supply water in Nyambono ward. Another tank with capacity of keeping 200,000 litres of water is being constructed at the Saragana village so as to supply water to the village's residents as well as those in the Nyambono village," he added.

The district commissioner

further clarified residents in the Bugoji Ward which has three villages of Bugoji, Kaburabura and Kanderema, will receive clean and safe water from the Saragana water tank.

RUWASA district manager Eng Said Yamlinga said they have already conducted trials for the Bulinga to Bujaga water project so as to identify if there are defects in the infrastructures.

"In the Bulinga to Bujaga water project, we have also constructed a 150,000 litres water tank as well as 14 distribution centres. Another tank has been constructed at the Busungu village with capacity to carry 2.25 million litres of water, this also includes construction of 15 distribution centres to supply

water in the villages of Busungu, Kwikerege and Bukima," he explained.

The engineer said that the Busungu water project benefits villages of Bukima, Rusoli, Bulinga and Kwikerege and once completed, it will bring huge relief to the residents who have been grappling for years to access the service. Reports show that, only 57 percent of Tanzania's population has access to an improved source of safe water, and only 34 percent of Tanzania's population has access to improved sanitation. Under these circumstances, the poor, particularly women and girls spend a significant amount of time travelling some distance to collect water.

Strengthen cancer services, Dr Moeti tells African govts

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Health Organization (WHO) regional director for Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti has called on governments to strengthen cancer services, capacity-building of health workers at the district level, along with implementation of a comprehensive surveillance system, and investment in digital innovations to improve cancer care.

She made the call in her message on the commemoration of the World Cancer Day, under the theme "I am and I will", marking the end point of this three-year campaign, which has sought to reduce fear, increase understanding and change behaviours and attitudes around cancer. The day is marked on February 4 to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.

She said: "We all have a role to play in reducing stigma around cancer, improving understanding of this disease and encouraging people to seek early screening and care."

According to Dr Moeti, over the past 20 years, new cancer cases have more than doubled in the African Region, from 338,000 cases reported in 2002 to almost 846,000 cases in 2020.

The most common forms are cancers of the breast, cervix, prostate, bowel, colon, rectum and liver. The risk factors include older age and family history, use of tobacco and alcohol, a diet high in sugar, salt and fat, physical inactivity, being overweight, and exposure to specific chemicals, among others.

Industry interference is a growing challenge, including promotion and marketing of known cancer-causing products, such as tobacco. Forty-four countries in the Region have ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control towards reducing tobacco use

and 20 have ratified the WHO Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

She said that in many communities in African countries, people have limited access to cancer screening and early detection, diagnosis and treatment. For example, only about 30% of African children diagnosed with cancer survive, compared to 80% of children in high-income economies. Challenges in access to cancer care are further compounded in times of crisis, like the current COVID-19 pandemic.

"The African Region also bears the highest burden of cervical cancer among WHO regions, and so the World Health Assembly's adoption in 2020 of the Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem was of key relevance to African countries."

As part of the first wave countries implementing this strategy, Eswatini, Guinea, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia are scaling-up comprehensive cervical cancer programmes.

"Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine introduction needs to increase to prevent cervical cancer. So far 17 African countries have introduced HPV vaccination nationwide, including Rwanda and Zimbabwe, who are both achieving high national HPV vaccine coverage with the commitment of their governments and partners."

Looking ahead, the rising cancer burden will place additional pressures on resource-constrained health systems and on patients and their families who incur catastrophic costs to access services.

"As countries work towards achieving universal health coverage with WHO's support, provision of cancer services, including pain relief, should be integrated in benefits packages and social insurance schemes."

UNEP says improved sanitation key to hastening pandemic recovery in Africa

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

AFRICAN countries should prioritise investments in sanitation and wastewater management as part of their post-pandemic recovery agenda, a senior UN Environment Programme (UNEP) official has said.

Leticia Carvalho, head of UNEP's Marine and Freshwater Branch said that revamping Africa's sanitation infrastructure will boost the continent's quest to achieve inclusive growth amid shocks linked to the pandemic.

"As the world seeks to recover better after COVID-19, prioritizing wastewater and sanitation infrastructure in Africa is critical," Carvalho said during the launch of the inaugural Sanitation and Wastewater Atlas of Africa compiled by UNEP in conjunction with African Development Bank (AfDB). The atlas, which was developed over a period of four

years aims to benchmark Africa's progress towards attaining Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets on safe sanitation and wastewater management.

It calls for policy shift, innovative financing, strategic partnership and community engagement in order to revitalize the sanitation and hygiene agenda in Africa.

Publication of the atlas, which is part of a four-year project jointly implemented by UNEP, AfDB and Norwegian not for profit organization, GRID-Arendal, shed light on the current status of sanitation and wastewater management in Africa.

It highlights the interlinkage between human, ecosystem health, circular economy and their role in the continent's socio-economic development.

According to the Atlas, more than half of the population in 34 out of 38 sub-Saharan African nations lack access to basic hand washing facilities.

Carvalho said that African countries can achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 on universal access to clean water and sanitation by 2030 subject to robust financing and enactment of progressive policies.

Wambui Gichuri, AfDB's acting vice-president for Agriculture, Human and Social Development said that African countries should explore new sources of sanitation financing in order to promote human health and spur growth.

"Africa cannot have a healthy society without adequate access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene. The new Sanitation and Wastewater Atlas of Africa can inform strategic investment going forward," said Gichuri.

Clever Mafuta, head of Waste Program at GRID-Arendal said the atlas is a repository of vast information on innovations that can transform wastewater management and sanitation systems in Africa.



Hat vendor in business along the Oysterbay stretch of Dar es Salaam's Ali Hassan Mwinyi Road earlier this week. The going price was between 5,000/- and 15,000/- per piece, largely depending on type and quality. Photo: Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma



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Request for Quotation
RFQ No. 4216
Purchase of Medical Supplies

Due Date and Time for Receipt of Offers: Wednesday 17 February 2021 at 11:00 AM EAT

Jhpiego (pronounced "ja-pie-go"), is an international non-profit health organization affiliated with the Johns Hopkins University.

For more than 45 years and in over 40 countries, Jhpiego has empowered front-line health workers by designing and implementing effective, low-cost, hands-on solutions to strengthen the delivery of health care services for women and their families. By putting evidence-based health innovations into everyday practice, Jhpiego works to break down barriers to high-quality health care for the world's most vulnerable populations. Jhpiego's focus is on training and support for health care providers-including doctors, nurses, midwives and health educators working in limited-resource settings throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Jhpiego's program management strategy recognizes the technical complexity and geographical, cultural, socio-economic and political diversity among our programs. We develop global program initiatives and technical interventions that can be adapted for country-specific applications. In support of this field-driven philosophy, Jhpiego uses a decentralized organizational structure that consists of a global "delivery system" designed to implement the entire portfolio of Jhpiego awards with assistance from key technical, programmatic and administrative staff.

Jhpiego Tanzania office hereby invites sealed quotations from eligible suppliers for purchase of medical supplies.

Interested eligible bidders may request for a complete set of bidding documents from the following email address: TZ-Jhpiegobids@jhpiego.org

A prospective bidder having any question regarding this RFQ shall send an email 3 days prior to the due date and time for submission of offers to the email address provided in this advert.

All proposals in one original plus one copy, properly filled in, and enclosed in plain envelopes must be delivered to the address given below before **Wednesday 17 February 2021 at 11:00 AM EAT**.

Jhpiego reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal, and to annul the bidding process and reject all proposals at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to bidders. Late proposals, electronic proposals, proposals not received shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstances.

Offers must be delivered on to the address below;

**Country Director,
Jhpiego Tanzania.**
Plot No. 72, Block 45B, Victoria Area, New Bagamoyo Road
P.O. Box 9170, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Tel: +255 756 888 388

THURSDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2021

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Geothermal power potential can improve the energy mix

PLENTY of efforts is being injected into the exploitation of the country's geothermal power potential, which is seen heading towards 5,000MW.

Energy minister Dr Medard Kalemari hinted during a just-ended visit to a geothermal power source at Majimoto in Mbozi District, Songwe Region.

What is perhaps most noticeable on this resource is that it has an uneven scatter of source points, in which case its exploitation will be selective, especially relating to local demand for that particular type of energy.

Part of project identification will be the time it needs to wait for connection with the national grid - or if there are auxiliary benefits tied to it.

It would be quite helpful if the rates of using geothermal power are less intense in terms of costing than routine national grid power, and if any such developments can be made at the local level where the pricing of electricity will reflect such benefits.

The Tanzania Geothermal Development Corporation (TGDC) would do well to see how its power sourcing can operate differently from Tanesco in terms of costs so that it can more rapidly develop those sources and enable residents of surrounding areas to benefit from cheaper electricity.

TGDC is making efforts for geothermal power connection in small industries like chicken production, fish farming, tourist attractions, crop drying and other activities, with power generation likely to be amplified in the next two years.

In that the power is renewable, it has some upstart costing and then a flat maintenance costing structure. However, its accessibility to the sort of small

firms or domestic units envisaged will depend on how the costing or pricing is calculated.

That may not affect the corporation's take-up directly as all such units ought to be connected with electricity, whether grid or geothermal, but it will definitely affect productivity.

It is meanwhile evident that some parts of the country are more suited for geothermal power generation, like Mbeya and Songwe regions, with several hot water sources which put together could produce up to 165MW of such power.

Other sources listed are Lake Natron in Arusha Region, Luhoi (Coast Region) as well as Kiejo Mbaka and Ngozi (Mbeya Region).

The ministry has expressed readiness to begin with 200MW to be obtained from Majimoto in Songwe Region, starting with 38MW, surely a fraction of the 1,602MW total power generated in the country at the moment, but none of it geothermal.

The government says it intends to push ahead with geothermal power production fairly rapidly, with 20bn/- already disbursed for the project where just over 1.029bn/- has been spent on the Songwe project.

TGDC has first to manage situations where water temperatures of between 100 and 140 degrees Celsius are needed to produce geothermal electricity. The heat currently obtained is 70 to 80 degrees - which is said to be propitious for other uses.

The corporation has invented chick hatching technology using geothermal power, a device for regulating water temperature and others, including an application that can serve as a model to be applied to other needs. That is only just the beginning for itself and other innovators, but it means much.

Psychological improvement at workplaces priority issue

ANOTHER stage of application of the Japanese industrial work ethic known as Kaizen is being organised for the next five years, expected to reach around 700 companies especially in manufacturing industries.

Over 700 small, medium-sized and large-scale industries in the country are set to benefit from the project on strengthening manufacturing enterprises through quality and productivity improvement.

The technique has in the past decade been accepted by the Industry and Trade ministry in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The ministerial unit says it has so far reached 132 enterprises.

Kaizen experts impart essential skills targeted at helping to transform the way enterprises do business, in order to enhance the margins of benefit.

The Tanzania Kaizen Unit (TKU) at the ministry issued these projections ahead of the commemoration of Kaizen Day - tomorrow.

It is not easy for most readers to fathom the meaning of the philosophy, but institutions would not use vast resources on something that is just experimental and is not readily practicable.

So trusting in the application of Kaizen is a matter of testimony that what the Japanese discovered works, and can be applied in Tanzanian conditions too.

Experts in the method say that Kaizen is a human resources tool directed at fostering teamwork,

mindset change, self-reliance, creativity and ingenuity to come up with ideas for solutions to problems that people face regularly.

The framework is meant to direct people's mindsets at hard work, teamwork and creativity in the manufacturing sector. This is supposed to increase the production of quality products to win greater access in local and international markets, and they obviously can't say so without reason or proof.

This programme is a vital aspect of current Japan-Tanzania cultural cooperation, where an aspect of Japanese industrial culture is being applied to our conditions, as there are numerous factors which affect or condition workplace habits.

Capacity to deliver on intended objectives has to do with both the resource programming and human resources readiness to take up such goals, and their ability to work in harmony.

Anyone with knowledge of management realises that what is often complicated isn't the merely technical in what manufacturing or service industries do, but wide gaps in capacity to work in harmony. The fact that Kaizen Day is being marked on the birth date of the Arusha Declaration in 1967 is also symptomatic of something else, that it may be considered a spiritual extension of the wishes of the Declaration.

Kaizen mirrors the current ethos of zero tolerance of laxity, embezzlement and bribes, which often hamper goal realisation and thus stands to come in very handy.

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By Anja Gassner

THE UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a treaty meant to develop national strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources, or biological diversity, of countries across the globe. This is a general strategy that all countries must then adopt at the local level.

It is known as the international legal instrument for "the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources".

Already ratified by 196 nations, the legally-binding international convention is currently negotiating new targets for the next 30 years. Decisions are made by the parties to the convention, supported by a range of observers including NGOs, researchers and academics.

But the Convention is about to make a mistake: it concentrates primarily on protected areas when it should also recognise the potential of managing agricultural landscapes for biodiversity.

In its "modified zero draft", released in October 20-20, only one of 20 targets refers to "agricultural and other managed ecosystems". But its focus is essentially on biodiversity for food.

It misses the point that agro-ecosystems can contribute to conservation through providing habitat to wild species and harbouring fragments of natural habitat, such as forests and wetlands.

Africa's protected areas cover an area of 20.4 million square km or 15.1 per cent of the landmass, with experts saying this isn't enough.

For instance, 7 per cent of Kenya's land is formally protected but between 20 and 30 per cent of contiguous habitat is needed to maintain populations of "umbrella" species. Protecting these species indirectly protects many other species within its habitat.

Given population pressure, it is not politically feasible to increase the extent of protected areas. The question is how Africa could possibly then provide space for its wildlife and food production.

Agriculture dominates sub-Saharan African economies. It contributes on average 15 per cent of total GDP, covers vast tracts of land and is often the main source of livelihoods in rural areas.

We argue that the new framework must recognise the importance of agriculture for conservation. And that the best

New targets to protect biodiversity must consider farmers, agriculture



way to protect Africa's biodiversity is to integrate conservation measures on working lands. This will also create jobs and income opportunities for farming communities.

An international treaty that draws attention away from this huge stock of land - where biodiversity conservation could be actively supported with investments into mixed farming regimes - runs the risk of skewing policies.

It will also miss the opportunity to bring ministries of agriculture and environment together to tackle one of the biggest challenges of the decade.

The Convention has traditionally seen agriculture as one of the biggest threats to biodiversity. It has promoted the protection of natural ecosystems by concentrating on preventing further expansion of agriculture.

However, evidence shows that farms that share landscapes with wild nature, such as remnant forests and trees, benefit from the ecosystem services provided.

Farming systems that integrate conservation combine a diversity of crops, animals and trees - with different spatial and seasonal arrangements - and mimic natural water and nutrient processes.

This creates less need for artificial inputs like fertiliser, herbicides and pesticides. These farming systems are in line with the traditional farming practices of small holders in sub-Saharan Africa and integrate well with traditional knowledge and practices.

There are examples of the successful relationship between farmers, agriculture and conservation all over the continent.

For instance, in Ethiopia, cereal farmers use nearby forests to feed

livestock. The livestock roam the forest during the day and return to farms at night, providing farmers with organic fertiliser.

This is important for smallholder farmers because the availability and accessibility of agricultural inputs - such as fertiliser - remain low.

Farms close to forests have better soil fertility and produced more nutritious food than those part of an intensified cereal landscape. And forests benefit because they're not being cleared for agriculture.

Another example is the 400 sq-km Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya's Laikipia County. Ol Pejeta is home to 130 black rhinos and 7,500 cattle. It has increased the black rhino population by 100 per cent in ten years.

In 2019, it employed 700 people and generated US\$1.4 million from livestock production and US\$4.8 million from tourism.

The business model is multi-dimensional. By optimising tourism and livestock production, the conservancy can generate higher economic returns per hectare than by specialising on one dimension.

Their success demonstrates that one key to wildlife conservation in Kenya is not to protect more areas, but turn conservation into a profitable business.

The debate about whether agriculture should be kept separate from conservation shouldn't be presented as a black or white choice. There are many shades of grey in land-use planning.

"Land sparing" - where agriculture is kept separate - is supposed to address trade-offs between productivity and conservation by maximising productivity in one place while leaving other places in "natural

condition.

One critique of this is that in most cases crop productivity is the sole criterion of performance, not managing the trade-offs between economic, social and environmental objectives.

Other studies, show that incorporating other criteria - for example livestock productivity, sustainability, resilience, equitability, ecosystem service provision - may portray a different situation: one less dominated by short term trade-offs, but rather by synergies where one land use might support other objectives. This would contribute to more food security in the long run.

International biodiversity policy will have impact on land use over the next 30 years. Countries will plan investments around policies they have signed.

Donors will align with international commitments. Developing countries will find that funding is channelled through instruments aligned with global policies.

International funding instruments need to be available so that African governments can ensure their farming communities live and prosper in harmony with nature. African farmers deserve a convention that recognises the importance of protected natural landscapes but also of managing wild biodiversity sustainably in farming landscapes.

Anja Gassner is Global Landscapes Forum science advisor and senior scientist with World Agroforestry (ICRAF). This is an international institute founded in 1978 as "International Council for Research in Agroforestry". It specialises in the sustainable management, protection and regulation of tropical rainforest and natural reserves.

My life has been ruined by an anti-baldness drug - 2

By Dana Smith

THE first comprehensive studies looking into the condition were published in 2011, and PFS remains poorly understood, as are the predispositions that lead to a subset of men being affected in this way, sometimes from as little as one pill.

Finasteride is available worldwide, from specialist hair treatment centres like the one I visited in London to online pharmacies and conventional doctors.

Merck reported Propecia sales of \$183 million in 2015, down from a peak of \$447 million in 2010. Health market research firm IQVIA says that approximately 570 million finasteride pills were dispensed in the United States alone between April 2017 and April 2018.

A conservative estimate by academic researchers put the number of Propecia users with persistent erectile dysfunction at 1.4 per cent, although not everyone with PFS will have sexual side-effects.

PFS has a “traditionally counterintuitive clinical presentation given the condition’s persistence and even worsening after the causal medication has left the patient’s system” reads a summary on Propecia Help.

It elaborates: “This atypical presentation of side-effects and the broad spectrum of treatment-resistant and often permanent health problems caused by exposure to finasteride have resulted in sufferers facing great difficulty in achieving the necessary acknowledgement of medical professionals.”

And therein lies the problem with this drug. Though apparently responsible for 59 suicides, finasteride is not killing people directly and often fails to leave any clues in blood tests.

This is why Merck, the pharmaceutical company that still manufactures and sells it, has gotten away with it for so long and with such a margin of plausible deniability of negligence.

In 2017, researchers at the University of Milano-Bicocca and University of Milano published a significant study into PFS. Baldness is caused by testosterone combining with an enzyme to create the hormone dihydrotestosterone (DHT), and finasteride works by blocking the creation of the enzyme.

The trouble is that finasteride appears to alter other neurosteroids, which can have an attendant effect on neurotransmitters - the critical chemical messaging system in our brains.

If you were to analyse my cerebrospinal fluid, the irregularities you would find include, as the study found, decreased levels of the hormones progesterone and pregnenolone and increased levels of testosterone and dehydroepiandrosterone.

Researchers concluded that finasteride had “broad consequence on neuroactive steroid levels of PFS patients”. These imbalances seem to explain the problems sufferers experience with brain function, mood swings, thought processing, and profound psychological anguish.

That same study also clinically confirmed erectile dysfunction, while another study in the Journal of Sexual Medicine estimated that anything from 5 to 23 per cent of Propecia users suffer from sexual dysfunction, with half of those permanently affected.



Other studies, too, are slowly beginning to corroborate the cognitive, mental and sexual complaints of PFS sufferers.

In short: A few sympathetic doctors and scientists in the US and Europe are confirming that the nervous systems of sufferers are seriously, and quite possibly irreversibly, damaged.

Merck is one of the world’s five biggest pharmaceutical companies, carrying a market cap of \$185 billion as of this writing. In 2017, it reported \$35.4 billion in revenue from its pharmaceutical wing.

Along with Propecia, the firm sells the cancer immunotherapy drug Keytruda, HPV vaccine Gardasil, and diabetes pill Januvia, among many other medications.

A more sinister picture of Merck and the wider pharmaceutical industry has begun to come into view. There have been several recent cases of drugs hurried to market while crucial data about side-effects or efficacy was withheld from regulators by drug companies or with regulators withholding information

from doctors. Many similar cases have taken years to rectify, if at all.

More than 1,400 lawsuits have been filed against Merck in the US and Canada since 2011, claiming permanent sexual problems, cognitive impairment, and depression. In 2012, the company was forced by the US Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) to change the wording on Propecia’s label from “temporary” to “persistent (see permanent)”. Temporary and permanent are just words, but the semantics are important.

Hundreds of YouTube videos variously show vloggers experimenting with, warning about, or showing off new hair growth they credit to Propecia, while Merck’s public literature and official PR continues to discount victims’ testimony regarding permanent side-effects.

Merck has consistently denied any causal links and did not amend labelling until 2008 in Sweden, 2011 in the rest of Europe, and 2012 in the US in response to demands by regulators.

When asked to address these concerns, Merck said: “Merck does not believe that reliable scientific evidence supports the existence of Post-Finasteride Syndrome. Merck stands behind the efficacy and safety profile of Propecia. For your convenience, please see our prescribing information.”

When presented with my story, The Belgravia Centre said that Propecia is a licensed and regulated drug issued in accordance with legal requirements:

“The safety of our patients is Belgravia’s principal concern. We provide a number of therapies to support healthy hair growth and treat hair loss and always follow appropriate safety precautions in the interests of our patients. “At all material times (including in 2012 when you received treatment with Propecia), treatment has been recommended and prescribed by our consultants strictly in accordance with the licence for the product.

“Patients are advised of the most common or important side-effects that may potentially be experienced consistent with the manufacturer’s product information and patients who are most likely to experience side-effects, based on the product information, are not prescribed Propecia.

“All patients are strongly advised to read the full Patient Information leaflet (PIL) supplied in each pack of Propecia before taking their medication.”

One sufferer, Kevin Malley, went

on hunger strike for several weeks in 2012 outside Merck’s plush hexagonal headquarters in Kenilworth, New Jersey - one of a steady flow of reports helping to keep the problem in the public consciousness.

A small foundation is fundraising for research into finasteride in the hope of finding a cure for PFS. An activist site called Rxisk, which supports people who have suffered side effects at the hands of big pharma, is raising money to put a \$100,000 reward up for anyone who can find a cure.

For now, there is no cure for PFS - and the condition is probably incurable. It has left me saddled with depression, general anxiety, and anhedonia: the inability to feel pleasure from normally pleasurable things. When I ran a marathon, I mostly derived contentment from knowing how it ought to feel.

There are other peculiar side-effects that don’t really fit into any recognisable schema. [A schema is a cognitive structure that serves as a framework for one’s knowledge about people, places, objects, and events. Schemas help people organise their knowledge of the world and understand new information.]

Despite having 20/20 vision, my eyesight became almost immediately blurred and out of focus when I started taking finasteride. I find it hard to hold eye contact with someone, something often interpreted as a kind of shorthand for being untrustworthy. It’s an odd, otiose consequence of a hair loss drug.

I also find myself clenching my jaw. I get “brain zaps”, which are like galvanic spasms in the cerebrum, and I have permanent dark circles under my eyes.

Like many other sufferers, I’m unable to sleep deeply. I wake up multiple times a night - and, in the morning, I feel as though I’ve been hit by a truck filled with Ambien or ketamine (to induce anaesthesia). For me, there is no rest or feeling rested.

A specific prognostic sort of anxiety sets in at night sometimes when I think about the lives of the people I love moving along while I’ve only been partially here.

It’s one thing cursing the passage of time, but quite another being barely present to experience it. I carry a deep longing and a sadness for who I could have been and how my life might have turned out.

As my friends blossom into fully functioning adults, I sometimes feel some contempt towards them living and thriving as

COVID has seen journalists ‘reinvent decades of working practices in days’

By Faisal Kalim

“DOING good journalism in the era of Covid-19 has been likened to war reporting,” says Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF) CEO Antonio Zappulla.

“Journalists have been risking their lives to document the frontlines of a battle against an invisible enemy. They placed themselves at the epicentre of the disease to bring us the information we needed in order to protect ourselves,” he adds.

Damian Radcliffe, Professor of Journalism at the University of Oregon, meanwhile says that the challenges faced by journalists as a result of Covid-19 must be understood and addressed in order to safeguard a diverse and healthy media ecosystem and freedom of speech.

“From user behaviour to news consumption and the approach adopted by social media platforms, this pandemic has set significant precedents,” he notes.

Radcliffe says much of the turbulence in the profession has been well documented since the beginning of the pandemic.

He adds, though: “It became clear over the past few months that there was an additional, important and untold dimension to this narrative: the way the Covid-19 crisis affected journalists and the media industry specifically in the Global South.”

The TRF has published a report that attempts to fill this gap. The report, “The impact of Covid-19 on journalism in Emerging Economies and the Global South”, is the work of Radcliffe himself. It is based on interviews with 55 journalists - all alumni of training programmes run by the TRF.

These first-hand insights cover the challenges faced by journalists in those regions, the strategies they are using to adapt to changes and solve problems, and the kind of support they require.

While the pandemic has been hard on publishing, it has not been as destructive as some industry insiders initially predicted. It has certainly not been an “extinction-level event” for the media industry around the world.

“These fears now look somewhat overblown,” writes Radcliffe, adding: “But, whatever the outcome, it’s clear the news industry that emerges on the other side of this crisis will look very different from the one that went into it.”

“Covid-19 has had a twin impact on journalism: not only has it presented a unique set of challenges for journalists, but it has also accentuated and accelerated several major structural issues that predate the pandemic,” notes Radcliffe.

The challenges faced by journalism and the publishing industry before Covid-19 - and exacerbated by it - include attempts to curtail press freedom, declining revenues, and the ubiquity of fake news which has also affected trust in journalism.



Problems arising out of the pandemic include digital dependency due to work from home arrangements, job/income loss, and health problems - both mental and physical - due to anxiety and various restrictions. At least that is going by Radcliffe.

The rapid spread of the pandemic has forced publishers to overhaul their working practices with unprecedented quickness. It has created many complexities for journalists as well as newsrooms across the world as “outlets scrambled to address issues related to workflows, tools and technology, training, management, newsgathering and engagement both with each other and with their audiences”.

News organisations have had to reinvent decades of working practices in days, says Hannah Storm, Director of the Ethical Journalism Network.

“Not surprisingly, given the all-encompassing nature of the pandemic, it has left an indelible mark on the working practices of a wide variety of journalists,” writes Radcliffe.

He adds: “Social distancing while reporting, working from home (where possible) and using new equipment, platforms and formats to do it, have all become part of the ‘new normal.’”

The challenges triggered by the pandemic have also highlighted the creativity and resilience of journalists. Several of them interviewed for the report say that it has

given them the opportunity to embrace new tools, skills and storytelling techniques.

It has also driven them to lean into technology and learn new skills related to data and health reporting. These adaptations will likely continue to be beneficial beyond the pandemic.

One example: Tom Trewinnard, co-founder and CEO of digital journalism consultancy Fathom, said in April 2020: “The coronavirus crisis will eventually end, but the distributed newsroom is here to stay.” He was referring to newsrooms that work in a decentralised manner using digital tools to communicate and collaborate.

For a special correspondent based in the Philippines: “There is the opportunity to go in-depth and also opportunities to venture into unexplored digital platforms that are more accessible and more cost-effective. There is also the opportunity for solidarity and collaboration. And the opportunity to avail of various learning events on the internet as one stays home and works from home.”

Many have attempted to develop new methods of storytelling and distribution so that readers can receive important public health messages in a variety of formats. In this vein, explainer videos and infographics have been highly popular.

Animation and explainer videos have been used by publishers, as well as health organisations and professionals. These include the World Health Organisation,

Stanford University’s School of Medicine, Canada-based YouTube channel AsapSCIENCE, and the Indian medic Dr G Bhanu Prakash.

Other innovative methods used to communicate vital public health messages and engage readers include an online ‘true or false’ quiz based on coronavirus. It was created by Meduza, a Russian and English language news provider based in Latvia.

Some outlets have explored different delivery mechanisms. WhatsApp, with a reported 2 billion users worldwide, has been used to distribute daily updates on the Covid-19 pandemic and address rumours and misinformation in the Ivory Coast.

The Continent, a pan-African weekly newspaper, had published 16 editions by mid-August 2020 and disseminated to 8,000 subscribers in 48 African countries using WhatsApp.

In Brazil, Agência Mural, a nonprofit that produces news, data and analysis about the outskirts of the Grande São Paulo metropolitan area, has created a daily 8-minute WhatsApp podcast called Em Quarentena (Quarantined).

“These examples demonstrate that, for all the trials journalism is facing as a result of Covid-19, journalists remain creative creatures seeking to cut through the noise and communicate with audiences,” writes Radcliffe.

He elaborates: “News outlets are continuing to produce important, impactful and inspired stories, offering journalism and news products that offer real value to the communities they serve.”

“Continuing to harness these possibilities will be important if we are to go on informing and engaging audiences as Covid-19 fatigue kicks in and potentially shapes both our media habits and everyday behaviours in a detrimental manner.”

Radcliffe is emphatic: “The external pressures on journalism are great, but so are the internal pressures on journalism to adapt and evolve. Covid-19 has further reinforced this.”

A WNIP dispatch. A long-serving business journalist, Faisal rose to become editorial manager of The CEO Magazine before turning his attention to developments in the media and digital publishing. His specialised focus is on the latest revenue generation strategies available to publishers.

Journalists carry the responsibility of covering complex stories accurately

By Priyanka Shankar and Inbar Preiss

THE year 2020 was filled with polarising events - a (Covid-19) pandemic, fervent protests from Belarus to Hong Kong to Venezuela, Black Lives Matter, the US elections, conflict in the Central African Republic and Brexit.

When it comes to reporting on such complex stories, journalists carry the responsibility of covering them accurately. But often, controversial stories do not have a two-sided reality, making it challenging for journalists to communicate every aspect of the conflict to their readers, listeners or viewers.

Analysing the coverage of the 2016 US elections, which was rooted in polarisation, misinformation and contention, American journalist Amanda Ripley was keen to discover how journalists could cover such difficult topics better.

She spoke to people with experience navigating conflict in creative ways - lawyers, conflict mediators, psychologists and religious leaders - to collect the best practices for journalists to adopt while reporting such stories.

"The lesson for journalists (or anyone) working amidst intractable conflict: complicate the narrative," says Ripley, adding: "Complexity leads to a fuller, more accurate story."

Ripley's research was developed into the "Complicating the Narratives" (CTN) training programme by The Solutions Journalism Network (SJN) and has been helping journalists around the world cover controversial stories differently.

But just how can you 'complicate the narrative'? According to Ripley, the main idea is for journalists to embrace the story's complexity and portray nuance, contradiction and ambiguity wherever possible.

Hélène Biandudi Hofer, the manager of SJN's CTN training programme, explains that when it comes to covering controversial issues using CTN, the goal should be to listen deeply while conducting interviews and also to provide empathy and transparency to your sources.

CTN provides concrete, practical tools that allow journalists to listen better, understand the underlying motives behind their sources' views and counter confirmation bias.

By doing so, journalists can begin to overcome the habit of believing news that supports their pre-existing beliefs and to open up to information that may challenge them.

The CTN programme includes hints for interviews, questions for sources, tools for active listening and an all-round approach to handling divisive topics.

"Looping" is one CTN technique that encourages better listening during interviews, increasing the accuracy of the source's information. The idea is to repeat back to the source the core message of what they have shared with you in order to make sure that you have understood it correctly.

This technique ensures that you have noted the correct information and that, perhaps more importantly, the source will feel heard and encouraged to share more.

The CTN training programme also includes a set of 22 questions that journalists can use in their interviews to get a wider view of a story. Some questions offer guidance on how to approach a source in a way that amplifies contradictions rather than hides them.

This helps reporters counter confirmation bias. For example, asking: "What do you want the other side to think of you?" can reveal valuable, complex information.

After the June 2020 murder of George Floyd (in the US),



protests emerged condemning police brutality and racism around the world. In Europe, statues of high-ranking colonial leaders were vandalised or torn down, propelling conversations about race, slavery and colonialism.

Europe is intricately interwoven with colonialism, but the issue is seldom found in public discourse. As editors at the pan-European magazine *Are We Europe*, we decided to embrace this complex challenge and open a conversation about Europe's relationship with its colonial past and present - by dedicating our quarterly magazine to the topic.

As we took on such a controversial and complex topic, we knew we needed guidance. CTN manager Nina Fasciaux, the European manager and international coordinator of SJN and Hofer, offered support to our editors at *Are We Europe*. Editors and contributors were trained in CTN, which empowered all our contributors to listen and think differently.

Are *We Europe* commissioned contributors from around the world to share how European colonialism has shaped their worldview, identities and communities - for better or for worse. Personal stories from countries like Namibia, The Philippines, Pakistan, Ireland, Australia and Hong Kong exposed different lived experiences and amplified the underreported angles on colonialism.

Our editorial team felt that too often the burden of these difficult conversations is left to the victims of colonialism, so we also gave a platform to Europeans to openly discuss their continent's colonial past rather than run away from it.

The stories in the issue ranged across topics and places - from land grabbing battles in Zimbabwe and the status of the English language in Pakistan to decolonising university curriculums in Belgium and uncovering the diversity problem in the development sector.

Through it all, CTN helped writers unpack their white saviour

complex, write about the impact of colonial rule on their identities and report on how Europe could commemorate its darker moments in history.

"Learning about CTN while working on my story encouraged me to ask questions, even when there may not be straightforward answers," says Teresa O'Connell, one of the contributors of the magazine. Through a personal story, she wrote about how after nine centuries of British colonial repression, the Irish have begun reclaiming their language and heritage.

"Embracing complexity made me more conscious of my bias talking to interviewees," notes O'Connell, adding: "This took the story in unexpected directions."

For the first time through this magazine, contributors also applied CTN to visual journalism. Acknowledging the stereotypical portrayal of former colonies as seen through "the white man's gaze", we selected photos series based on their ability to challenge these narratives.

Historical photographs, paintings, drawings and texts from public archives were remixed with contemporary elements in an effort to decolonise the lens and lend a certain reality and viscerality that the subject deserves.

At *Are We Europe*, CTN helped us listen more deeply with the pure intention of understanding our sources. It encouraged our team and contributors to challenge and acknowledge our inherent biases, and embrace complexity in a way that has enticed our readers.

"No matter how polarising or contentious a topic is, when journalists complicate the narratives there is a melody that emerges from the silence that has existed for far too many years," say Hofer and Fasciaux, adding: "It is the voices of those who desperately want and need to be heard."

• **A dispatch by the International Journalists' Network (IJNet), a project of the Washington-based International Centre for Journalists. Priyanka and Inbar are freelance journalists based in Brussels and were the chief editors of *Are We Europe's* magazine entitled: *Unsilencing: The Colonialism Issue*.**

'Grateful for my second life': A COVID-19 survivor's story

By Maherin Ahmed

UNITED Nations World Food Programme (WFP) staff member Mohammad Mahabul Alam tested negative for Covid-19. However, he lost his sense of taste and smell, and had difficulty breathing. In this diary piece, he shares his experience of travelling to Brussels with a medical evacuation team and conquering the disease:

"May 2020, we did not quite grasp the idea of a pandemic. We were learning about social distancing. Since it was Ramadhan, we were fasting.

One day, my father suddenly fainted. We checked his sugar level; everything was fine. We thought he was feeling weak. After a couple of days, he passed away.

It was not convenient to transport dead bodies from one city to another when the pandemic started. My colleague, Joydeb, arranged an official letter, should we face difficulties on the road. Without that letter, it would have been difficult to transport my father's body to my village.

Just after burying my father, I was feeling restless and uncomfortable. I assumed that it was just exhaustion.

While having supper that night, I could not feel any taste. Then I fainted. When I woke up, I had a bad cough. I left for Dhaka and went directly to the hospital. I ran some regular diagnostic tests. Though my Covid-19 test was negative, other reports were alarming. The UN doctors advised that I get admitted to the hospital immediately.

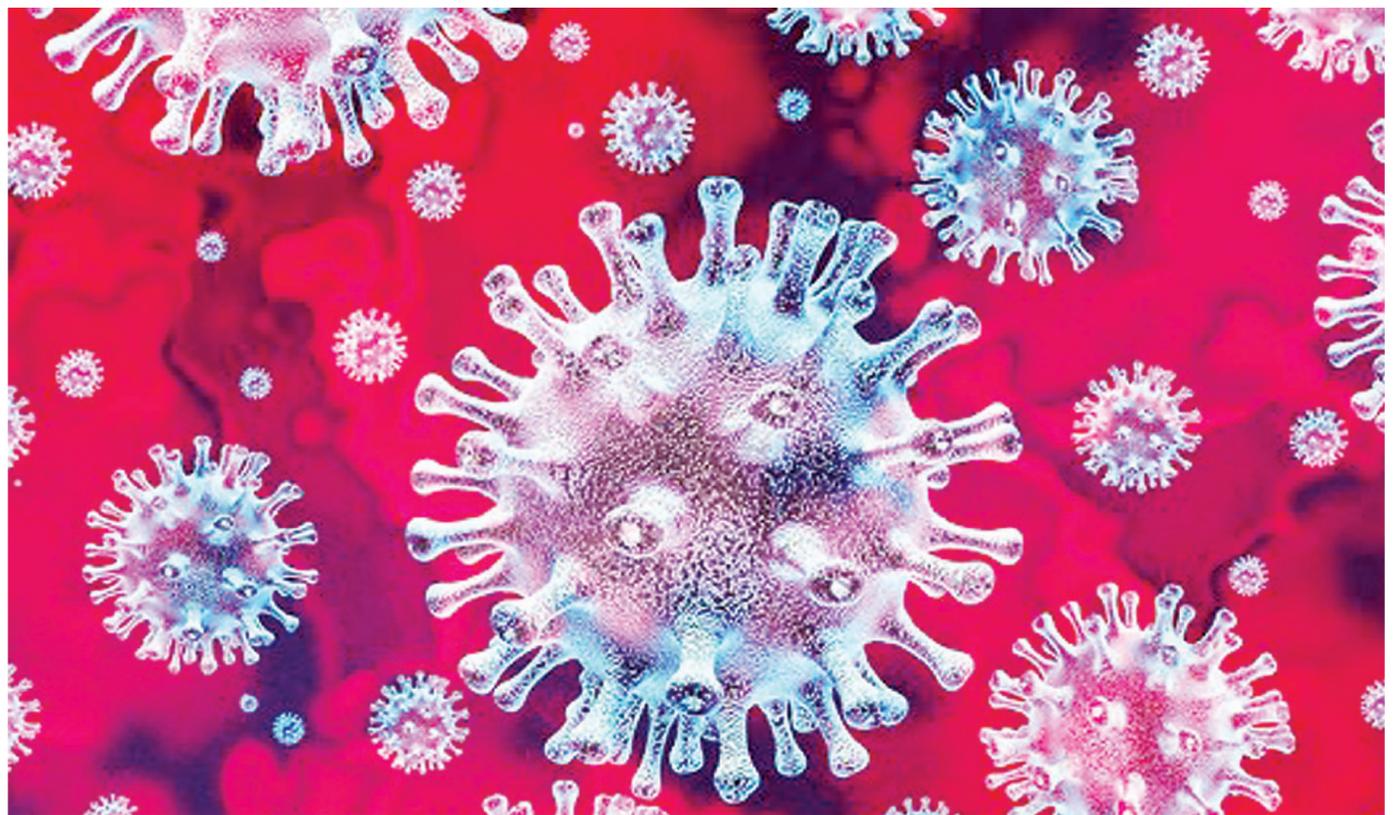
After four days, I was flown to Brussels. I was clueless about how smoothly all these arrangements fall into place. I remember our Country Director, Richard, was at the airport before I went into the air ambulance. I was placed in a plastic box.

I am claustrophobic (that is, I have extreme or irrational fear of confined places), and I was having difficulty breathing. I just lost my father, and then I was flying away, leaving my family behind. I thought if I will ever come back to my country, will I ever see my children again? Where will I be buried if I die?

When the plane took off, I wanted to jump. I requested the pilots to throw me out. I told them that I would sign any legal document authorising them to throw away my body from the air ambulance. I remember a doctor then gave an injection, and I fell asleep.

I woke up shortly before reaching Brussels. I was taken to Brussels' CHU Saint-Pierre hospital, a facility that was dedicated to Covid-19 patients.

My Covid-19 results came positive for the first time. Dr Zaher Wael was my doctor - and visited me every



day, wearing PPE (personal protection equipment).

My room in the hospital was locked; therefore, I could not leave even if I wanted to. I shifted from a small cage to a bigger one. My colleague, Nafi Zaman, arranged a phone card for me before I left. My phone was my only connection to the external world.

The hospital released me after six days, and I moved to an apartment in Brussels. I was surprised when Dr Zaher gave me his personal number so that I could keep him updated.

Bangladesh is heavily dense, but I could see only a few people in the streets in Brussels. I missed my daughters, my wife, and my mother. I wanted to see them, talk to them in person. I felt like I was floating from one place to another.

I am so grateful to everyone I have met in Brussels. Christine Grignon from the WFP Brussels office called me every day. I did not have any money with me. She sent me money from her account, and sometimes food as well.

Another colleague from Brussels, Danielle Buck, visited me a few times. Arifur Rahman from the Bangladesh Embassy sent me a home-cooked meal when I was missing it. He also checked on me regularly.

I remember I was crossing the road, and a car came so close to me that I thought it

would run me over. But the woman driving the car stopped and said "please, cross". I felt like I was the president!

I returned home to my family after 20 days. I would not have been alive if my colleagues in Bangladesh, the regional bureau, and Brussels did not care so much about me. I am grateful to them for my second life."

• **Covid Diaries is a series on WFP staff in Bangladesh who have recovered from Covid-19. Maherin Ahmed is with the UN agency's communications and partnerships wing in the country.**

Innovation to counter food supply-chain disruptions and spur recovery

ROME/BERLIN

INNOVATIVE solutions in agri-food systems helped households and countries contain disruptions in food supply chains during the COVID-19 pandemic, and more will be required to “build back better and build back greener”, FAO’s Director-General QU Dongyu has said.

Innovation occurs on the technology frontier but also in policy making and business models, he emphasized while speaking at a virtual

high-level panel on how to help strengthen the sustainability of food systems and prevent future pandemics.

The event was organized by FAO as part of the week-long Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) in Berlin. Other participants included Julia Klöckner, Germany’s Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture, Thoko Didiza, South Africa’s Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Jamshid Khodjaev, Uzbekistan’s Agriculture Minister, Christian Hofer, Director of Switzer-

land’s Federal Office for Agriculture, and Erik Fyrwald, Chief Executive Officer of Syngenta Group, a leading seed and crop-production company.

Examples of innovation supported agri-food systems include green channels connecting fresh food producers with urban centers, e-commerce solutions deployed across the spectrum of agri-food systems, and workarounds that have assured the functioning of food safety practices amid widespread restrictions on the move-

ment of people triggered by the COVID-19 emergency.

Lockdowns made people more dependent on the digital business model, Qu said, noting applications along the chain from “the farmer’s field to the consumer’s plate”. The point is to encourage efficiency, effectiveness and agility in actions and responses across the spectrum, he stressed.

In the wake of the pandemic and associated restrictions on the movement of people and goods, FAO led a worldwide effort to mitigate potential food price volatil-

ity and the risk of trade restrictions, organized and supported innovative institutional approaches - including an African Union Tripartite Ministerial Meeting spurring coherent integration of the agriculture, trade and finance policy portfolios of Members, and rolled out its Hand-in-Hand Initiative with the novel Geospatial Platform and Big Data lab.

“Innovation isn’t some theoretical idea - it’s a reality,” the Director-General said.

Looking ahead, FAO’s COVID-19 Response and Recovery

Programme, identifies as drivers: data for decision-making, social protection programs, boosting smallholder resilience, empowering rural women, trade facilitation and market transparency as well as the One Health approach - promoted jointly with the World Health Organization and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) - integrating human and animal disease strategies with those for protecting biodiversity and natural resources.

FAO is also improving real-time tools, using novel inputs

such as satellite imagery to machine-learning, to calibrate and classify crop prospects and monitor disruption risks to food production and trade.

That, and the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, welcomed in last year’s GFFA ministerial meeting and now being set up by FAO, can also help provide crucial support for Members implementing the One Health approach as well as boost productivity in general, the Director-General said.

More vigorous campaign needed to end FGM, stakeholders suggest

By Guardian Correspondent

TANZANIA today joins the rest of the world to commemorate the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), a traditional practice engrained within traditional customs in developing countries with the most occurrences reported in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

This year’s International Zero Tolerance for Genital Mutilation Day aims at mobilizing youth around the eliminations of harmful practices, including female genital mutilation under the theme: “Unleashing Youth Power: One decade of accelerating actions for zero female genital mutilation.”

There are so many ways to engage youths in the campaign one of which is to use the media, especially a radio in their localities.

Mirta Lourenço, UNESCO Chief of Media Development says radio is often the only way to reach many of the communities where FGM and forced marriage continue to prevail.

“Radio campaigns reach women and girls at risk. It changes the perceptions of women and men and informs women on their basic human rights,” says Lourenço.

Lydia Bupilipili, Bunda District Commissioner shares the same sentiments during her interview with this reporter at her office in Bunda.

She echoes Lourenço’s message citing on how she has been using Mazingira, a local radio station in the district to address harmful traditional customs in her localities inclusive of FGM.

“I am very proud as a government leader, to have Mazingira community radio in my area as it enables community members to get important information at a fast pace and in abundance.

“I use Mazingira FM whenever I need to say anything to wananchi, address GBV and FGM where incidents have gone down. If you want community

members to implement well, they have to get information. Verbal communication is vital to reach people on time,” stresses DC Bupilipili.

True to this year’s theme, in communities across the country, young journalists go out every day to bring us the stories that voice the sound of the voiceless in ending this and other harmful practices against women and girls. UNESCO supported interventions build the capacities of local radios and traditional leaders in a social cultural approach that aims to mobilize communities in a gender responsive, cultural appropriate and conflict sensitive action.

This is implemented within the broader UN and national development framework that aims to empower local radios to provide quality and accurate information to communities to make informed decisions about their daily lives; strengthen national capacities to prevent violence against women in and through the media including training on technology and new media/digital skills to empower young girls and; and reinforce community early warning systems by capacity building of community-based peace committees for the prevention of violence to the ward level.

Celebrating this day, reminds us that FGM has deep sociological roots that create societal norms in order for families to be accepted by the communities, a situation which requires concerted efforts to change mind set and perceptions.

Needless to speak, the fact that FGM is part of the cultural setup does not mean that it should go unattended as medical research indicate that it has both physical and psychological effects to girls and women.

Some of its effects include staphylococcus infections, (a group of bacteria (microbe or germ) that can cause a number of infectious diseases in various tissues of the body) urinary tract infections, (fistula, failure to withhold urine or stool) excessive and un-



controllable pain, and haemorrhaging, obstructed as well as prolonged labour during delivery.

To be precise, FGM violates the fundamental principles of human rights for girls and women to whom it is performed. In 2012, the UN General Assembly designated February 6th as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, to amplify and direct efforts on the elimination of the practice.

According to the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey and Malaria Indicator Survey (TDHS-MIS) 2015-2016 FGM has been outlawed for almost two decades, but is still prevalent in many areas in Tanzania.

Opinions about FGM/C within the 2015-16 TDHS-MIS, indicates that among the 86% of women who have heard about it, 95% believe that the practice is not required by their religion and that it should not be continued.

This is a positive sign for the country as the 2015-2016 TDHS-MIS indicates that the prevalence of FGM/C in Tanzania has gone down over the past two decades, dropping from 18% among women aged 15-49 in the 1996 TDHS to 10% in the 2015-16 TDHS-MIS respectively.

However, the achievements recorded have not come without efforts as the government in collaboration with various stakeholders such as UN agencies—UNESCO, UNFPA, UN Women, WHO, and UNICEF just to mention a few have been in the forefront to support anti FGM crusades in the country either through community radios or support towards local NGOs interventions and various dialogues to discuss the plan of action to curb the vice.

It is notable is to see the great role played by the media inclusive of community radios which have been sensitizing community members to shun away from the practice.

Rhino poaching in South Africa declines by 33 pc

By Special Correspondent,

JOHANNESBURG

THE killing of rhinos in the country declined by 33 percent as 394 rhinos were poached for their horn last

year compared to 594 killed in 2019, a report released on Monday revealed.

This marks the sixth year that rhino poaching has continued to decrease in South Africa.

Minister of Forestry and

Fisheries and Environmental Affairs Barbara Creecy said during 2020, the Kruger National Park, in which most poaching activities occurred, experienced 1,573 poacher activities, a decrease of 21.9 percent in comparison to

the number in 2019, which was 2,014. After 10 years of implementing various strategies to combat rhino poaching, South Africa managed to arrest the escalation of rhino losses, and has now seen a year-on-year reduction in the number of poached

rhinos.

Creecy believed while the lockdown assisted in the reduction, security measures were the key. “The role of rangers and security personnel who remained at their posts, and the additional steps taken by gov-

ernment to effectively deal with these and related offences, also played a significant role,” she said. She said the department would also be implementing a proactive and integrated approach which would not distinguish between national, provin-

cial and private parks.

“This Integrated Wildlife Zone approach prevents borders and boundaries from inhibiting planning and implementation to achieve maximum benefit,” Creecy said.



IRENA and SACREEE out to accelerate renewables deployment for good of southern African nations

By Special Correspondent

THE International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the Southern African Development Community’s (SADC) Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together on accelerating the deployment renewable energy solutions in Southern African countries.

Under the agreement, the two organisations will also cooperate on decentralised technologies, policy development, capacity building programmes and regional events aimed at attracting investments to the region.

IRENA noted that southern Africa has seen remarkable improvement in electricity access over the past decade.

This is largely due to a strong commitment from SADC member states to take advantage of the region’s vast renewable energy potential to improve energy security and meet rising energy demand.

As a result, the total share of renewables in power generation rose from 23% in 2015 to almost 39% in 2018. However, despite significant progress, electricity access remains a challenge.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has re-empha-

sised the importance of a reliable, affordable, clean energy,” said IRENA Director-General Francesco La Camera.

“It has served as a stark reminder that the new energy age must be inclusive, just and low-carbon if we are to achieve sustainable development in southern Africa and around the world. Africa can seize the moment for meaningful change, and dramatically improve socioeconomic outcomes by moving decisively towards the energy transformation. This agreement will bolster regional progress,” concluded La Camera.

By building capacity in the SADC region, IRENA and SACREEE aim to accelerate renewable energy deployment and achieve universal energy access by creating environments more conducive to renewable energy investments.

The two organisations will conduct joint activities under the Africa Clean Energy Corridor (ACEC) in the areas of renewable energy resource assessment, long-term planning, as well as investments, policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks. Implementation of activities under ACEC provides a comprehensive opportunity to avoid greenhouse gas emissions, in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

Lessons for reporting on variants of COVID-19 as concerns grow

By Lucia Ballon-Becerra

As governments around the world roll out Covid-19 vaccination campaigns, new strains of the virus have fuelled growing concerns among medical and other experts.

For instance, scientists have linked a variant in the UK to a more rapid spread of infection, and this has led the country to lock down even more strictly than previously. Another variant reported in South Africa also appears to be more transmissible than previous forms.

What do we know about these variants? Do the new strains respond differently to vaccines? Has the uncertainty behind Covid-19 and the ongoing nature of the situation better prepared experts and health systems for future outbreaks?

"The coronavirus outbreak has been one big learning experience about how quickly the situation can change and how we need to adapt as it transgresses," said zoologist Bernardo Gutierrez during a recent ICFJ Global Health Crisis Reporting Forum webinar.

Gutierrez is a researcher for the Department of Zoology at the University of Oxford, where he focuses on virus transmission. He joined Patrick Butler, ICFJ's vice president of content and community, in discussing the science behind mutations, detecting variants and preparation for future outbreaks.

Here are some key quotes and takeaways from Gutierrez during the session, including on the emergence of virus mutations: Virus mutations occur naturally and are quite common. As the virus transmits and circulates within local populations, it makes copies of itself and accumulates mutations.

Genome mutations occur at random, so the possibility that one of the random changes could improve the virus' ability to spread does exist. However, the majority of mutations are silent, meaning that the shifts do not affect the behaviour of the virus, the type of disease, nor the speed of transmission.

The UK and South African lineages have specific names - B.1.1.7 and B.1.351, respectively. The difference in names results from the underlying fact that these variants emerged from entirely independent origins.



On transmissibility rates: The two new variants have different mutations and can behave similarly to a certain extent in terms of transmissibility rates, but they are nonetheless different versions of the virus.

The South African variant has two particular mutations - sharing one with the U.K. variant - in an important part of the virus that could potentially be associated with its transmissibility.

It is difficult to determine whether an increase in cases is directly caused by a new variant. Correlation does not mean causation; an increment in the number of cases should not necessarily be interpreted as the product of a new variant. Whether the UK variant heavily contributes to the increase in infections is undergoing vigorous study. There have been estimates of 30 per cent to 70 per cent higher transmissibility for the UK variant, but there is a degree of uncertainty to these numbers.

The overall mean of these estimates seems to be somewhere near 50 per cent, which is why the UK variant is said to be 50 per cent more transmissible than previous forms of the virus. Identifying the full range of possible implications resulting from this change in transmissibility is still ongoing.

On detecting variants, and differences between countries: By the time cases are detected in some countries, there is already a degree of circulation within its communities. Identifying new variants requires genetic sequencing, a technique that is still uncommon across the world.

There are countries with a higher level of expertise and a wealth of resources, but there are some countries that are still in the process of building up their genomic surveillance - an analysis required for timely pathogen detection.

The UK variant has been discovered in at least 45 countries by now, but different

scientific approaches and circumstances yield different detecting outcomes, so it is likely present in many more.

When the virus first began to reach other countries, the resources available and the set-up of each surveillance system affected the ability to identify cases. Some public health agencies lacked the capacity, technology or resources necessary to detect cases early. The UK has long been advanced in genomic sequencing while the US is not yet as experienced, meaning that the new variant could be more widespread than currently recorded. For a country as large as the US, and one that manages surveillance and etymological data at the state level, implementing a single coordinated strategy is challenging.

The UK has implemented one of the most developed etymological surveillance strategies anywhere, which is a product of government support and effective coordination

among many public health agencies and academic institutions as well as early investments of resources and time.

On new variants and vaccine efficacy: When the body develops an immune response to a virus, it does not necessarily produce antibodies that specifically target a tiny part of the virus protein that coats the envelope of the virus particle. Instead, it develops different versions of antibodies that bind in slightly different ways across the protein, making antibodies and vaccines resilient to minor mutations.

The analysis so far suggests that the variants, particularly the UK one, are not expected to affect the efficacy of vaccines. The South African variant may have a bigger effect on the behaviour of the virus and may even pose resistance to the vaccine. However, owing to the ongoing nature of the development, it is not certain if this conclusion will hold.

On future outbreaks and

preparedness: Given the trends of increasing globalisation and travel, health systems and researchers around the globe need appropriate resources, protocols and robust monetary investments to contain future local outbreaks.

Performing genome surveillance - which requires infrastructure and expertise - would be the ideal approach to prepare adequately for potential outbreaks, but resource availability could pose a challenge in different parts of the world. There are still different levels of research and resources available in different countries.

The novel coronavirus - which causes Covid-19 - has provided many lessons for the scientific community. Now, the pandemic toolbox contains more knowledge on pandemic control

approaches, how diagnosis schemes are implemented, how information spreads, and the role of political differences.

With this experience, health systems and researchers will be better positioned in the future when planning strategies and communicating developing information in uncertain times.

In partnership with its parent organisation, the Washington-based International Centre for Journalists (ICJ), the International Journalists' Network (IJNet) is connecting journalists with health experts and newsroom leaders through a webinar series on Covid-19. The series is part of the ICFJ Global Health Crisis Reporting Forum. Lucia Ballon-Becerra is a programme assistant at ICFJ.

Tourism drives cultural and creative industries in SW China's Tibet

By Yuan Quan

Southwest China's Tibet autonomous region is seeing booming cultural and creative industries as a result of a rapid growth in tourism in recent years.

At the beginning of the year 2021, manufacturers of cultural and creative products from Tibet autonomous region brought various products to Zhongguancun Innoway, an innovation and entrepreneurship-themed block located at the core of Beijing's Zhongguancun Science Park.

Their products included Tibetan-style carpets woven from sheep's wool, bath cream with formulas deriving from world's intangible cultural heritage Lum medicinal bathing of Sowa Rigpa, knowledge and practices concerning life, health and illness prevention and treatment among the Tibetan people, and necklaces and earrings with distinctive Tibetan characteristics.

"In recent years, the growth in tourism industry in Tibet has driven the development of cultural and creative industries," said Ouyang Xu, chairman of Tibetan chamber of commerce in Beijing, adding that local small and medium-sized firms are trying to reach the domestic top level of the cultural and creative industries in terms of inheriting and promoting culture heritage, business operation and management, and creativity.

Li Aoran, a post-90s entrepreneur, has run her own business in Lhasa, capital of Tibet autonomous region, for seven years. Last year, she won a gold award in a local tourism creative and cultural commodities competition for her activated carbon ornaments made from highland barley straws.

"It was the second time I took part in the competition," Li said, stressing that the key to a successful business is creativity and innovation.

Li was once mainly engaged in making



A visitor posing for a photo in front of the Potala Palace, with a Chinese 50-yuan note in her hand. The Potala Palace is featured on the back of the 50-yuan note. (File photo)

Tibetan-style milk tea. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak last year, she stayed at home for a while. It was since then that she started to shift her attention to the development and utilization of highland barley straws.

Most of the existing activated carbon on the market are processed from wood and coal, according to Li.

"By turning Highland barley straws, renewable resource, to activated carbon products, we turn 'waste' into wealth, not only helping increase the income of local

farmers, but protecting the ecological environment of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau," Li explained.

"Activated carbon can absorb harmful gas and be used to purify water," Li said, adding that her company has developed colored activated carbon ornament series featuring Thangka, a unique style of traditional Tibetan scroll paintings, by integrating cultural and creative ideas with scientific and technological innovations.

Our products have bright market prospects,

said Li, who has achieved technological breakthroughs for processing highland barley straws into activated carbon with the help of experts.

Her achievements have made Li a minor celebrity in Lhasa's entrepreneurial circle. She has obtained patents in China on her activated carbon products made from highland barley straws.

These activated carbon products were listed on the country's list for national key projects that aim to promote economic

growth with scientific and technological innovations and breakthroughs in 2020, and have won support from China's Ministry of Science and Technology.

A biotechnology company based in east China's Jiangsu province has already reached Li's company for cooperation. "We have newly hired a number of young painters this year to design and create more cultural and creative products," Li told People's Daily.

In Lhasa, a local brand named Zhuofanlin has also achieved success in integrating the growth of its own with efforts to increase the income of locals.

Zhuofanlin, which sells various Tibetan-style handicrafts, has offered nearly 400 local handicraftsmen the opportunity to earn an additional income in their spare time or during the slack season.

"Zhuofanlin has provided jobs and free skills training for us. It has not only improved the quality of my life, but helped me find my own value," said a local craftsman while weaving wool into a doll with Tibetan characteristics for the brand. He can earn 3,000 yuan (\$463.5) to 5,000 yuan per month, according to the craftsman in his fifties.

Zhuofanlin has developed a relatively mature operating model, said an executive of Zhuofanlin, who explained that the brand finds suitable craftsmen, supports them in such aspects as technology, design, and market, improves existing products, expands market, provides loans for craftsmen, and sells products after confirming the quality.

With the support of the Women's Federation of Lhasa, Zhuofanlin established an organization that functions as both school and factory in May 2020. By offering skills training via courses, simulation, and practice, the organization has helped 365 women acquire vocational skills.



Thursday 4 February 2021

StanChart's Straight2Bank tailors corporates' platform

By The Banker Reporter

STRIGHT2BANK platform has been tailor made by Standard Chartered Bank Tanzania to provide several payment solutions to corporations in the market.

StanChart Tanzania's Head of Transaction Banking, Efeh Amoah said in an interview that Straight2Bank has provided clients with a single online platform for payments, letters of credit, bank guarantees and other services.

"Today, our corporate clients can meet all their payments obligations to the government, such as taxes, via Government electronic Payment Gateway (GePG) on our Straight2Bank platform," Amoah said adding that corporate can also pay salaries through the secure, easy to use payroll platform.

Amoah noted that Straight2Bank can make payments to over 1,000 suppliers via one transaction or one click, and pay directly to mobile wallets on the bank's platform. "Besides this, clients receive world class automated reporting that is often customisable

to their needs. We also offer solutions that address the challenge of seamless reconciliation for our clients," she added.

The StanChart Head of Transaction Banking further added that in the last decade, the world has seen unprecedented growth in digitization with vast opportunities in Africa where electronic commerce market is expected to hit US\$75 billion by 2025.

"Our clients have responded well to these trends and, in some cases, have led aspects of that growth. As a bank, we have built capabilities that help our corporates do their business seamlessly and digitally. One of the key thrusts of our offering is our online award-winning banking platform, Straight2Bank," she added.

Recognising that clients are at various stages of the digital journey, Amoah said the bank also make available a very wide range of integration options such that clients can seamlessly transact online even from early stages in their digitisation journeys. "At the other end, we also provide very sophisticated options for clients that require those capabili-



ties," she noted.

On security of the digital platforms, she said, "Let me also assure clients on the security of our platforms. We have invested heavily in that aspect and have continued to ensure that we keep on upgrading our platforms with more sophisticated security capabilities. Our clients can, therefore, continue to expect us to maintain the high standards for which our platform has, so often, been recognised both locally and globally."

"Corporates and financial institutions are now significantly evolving, looking for ways in which they can free up more time for focusing on their core business and on sustainable growth; and digitization creates a great opportunity," Amoah stated

(see full interview on page 15).

Mobile cash transactions hit record Sh5.2trn on phone payment reliefs

NAIROBI

KENYANS moved Sh5.21 trillion through their phones last year, an equivalent of half of the country's estimated GDP, spurred by relief measures on mobile phone payments to help to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Fresh data by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) shows the total transactions rose by 20 percent from Sh4.34 trillion the previous year.

This means that an average of Sh14.27 billion was transacted on mobile phones daily between January and December 2020 – some Sh2.81 billion higher than the Sh11.91 billion daily average in 2019. Mobile money agents of Safaricom's M-Pesa, Airtel Money and Telkom's TKash handled Sh3.98 trillion in 2018 – underlining the astronomical growth in the value of transactions over three years.

"A significant increase of mobile money usage has been noted over the period the measures have been in place, demonstrating that they were timely and effective," the CBK said at its Monetary Policy Committee meeting in December. "For instance, the monthly volume of person-to-person transactions increased by 87 per cent between February and October 2020."

The government introduced several measures, including doubling of the daily transaction limits to Sh300,000 and the removal of charges on small transactions below



An M-Pesa agent attending to a customer in Nyeri.

Sh1,000, to discourage the use of hard cash and help contain the spread of Covid-19.

Under the initiative by the CBK, other financial payments services companies and commercial banks also removed charges for customers who move money between their mobile wallets and bank accounts.

Data shows that the amount of cash handled by the agents from March to December when the

measures were in force was Sh4.49 trillion, more than the Sh4.34 trillion handled in the full year of 2019, highlighting the significance of the CBK directives. The cash handled by the agents maintained a steady month on month rise from Sh357.37 billion in May to hit Sh605.69 billion in December – a record high for a month since Kenya started tracking mobile money transactions.

The gradual re-opening of the economy from July

saw the cash handled by the mobile money agents cross the Sh400 billion mark in a month for the first time on the back of a rising demand for goods and services as sectors started the gradual return to normalcy. The CBK ended the free transactions last December, a reprieve for telcos that had since March lost billions of shillings in user charges. The measures were set to last for three months to June last year but the CBK extended them to December

amid protests from the telcos.

Safaricom said that it lost Sh9 billion between January and June last year due to the free M-Pesa transfers, contributing to its posting a six per cent drop in net profit to Sh33.07 billion – the first in nine years.

M-Pesa last month lowered the charges from Sh15 to Sh12 in a move aimed at maintaining customer numbers that had grown due to the free transactions. Safaricom controls 98.8 per cent of customers, according to the Communications Authority of Kenya (CA), while Airtel Money and other service providers hold 1.2 per cent market share.

Mobile money agents handled Sh450.98 billion in July last year, a 14 per cent rise from Sh392.17 billion the previous month after easing of the restrictions, including resumption of domestic and foreign flights, allowing hotels to re-open and lifting the travel ban into and out of Nairobi and Mombasa.

The CBK is pushing for a seamless transfer of funds between Safaricom and Airtel, including the Lipa na M-Pesa payment service, in a move meant to lower costs of transactions, enhance competition and maintain the rise in use of mobile platforms.

The banking regulator says that the interoperability in mobile transactions introduced in 2018 for sending money between Airtel and M-Pesa clients have not gone far enough to enable seamless transactions since it did not include merchants and agents.

Absa freezes monthly fees, hikes cash charges

JOHANNESBURG

ABSA has announced that monthly account fees for its "core" offers, including Transact, Gold Value Bundle, Premium Banking and Private Banking, will not increase in 2021.

Absa is the last of the four full-service banks to announce pricing for the year. FNB froze its fees in July 2020, while Standard Bank and Nedbank both announced in December that theirs would remain the same from January. Capitec will announce price changes later this month. It cut its monthly fee in 2019, held it steady last year, and is widely expected not to change it for a further year.

Absa is selling its changes as a "comprehensive, new-look pricing structure" – and it takes effect from March 1, which is atypical. Generally, pricing changes occur at the start of its financial year in January. This suggests the bank waited longer than normal to make the decision, perhaps weighed by concerns over the impact of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Free banking

It has scrapped the monthly fee on its Student Silver cheque account (this currently costs R29 a month). This account is bundled with an unlimited suite of standard



Absa Group CEO, Daniel Mminele.

transactions (withdrawals/deposits, payments, swipes, debit orders and airtime purchases) on the bank's electronic channels.

Given the aggressive nature of this change, this segment is clearly a renewed focus for the bank. Market pressures from lower or zero cost alternatives such as Capitec and TymeBank as well as other banks which have cut fees for entry-level accounts will have chipped away at this base for some time.

Immediate payments fee

Separately, it has cut the fee for immediate payments made to other banks. This is currently R65 but will drop to as little as R10 (for amounts less than or equal to R1 000) from March. Immediate payments for amounts above this will cost R49, making these 33% cheaper.

Cash charges continue rising

The bank has increased the fees for withdrawing and depositing cash at its ATMs by 10%. These charges are R2.20 per R100 (or part thereof), whether drawn or deposited.

Customers on its Gold Value Bundle or Premium Banking accounts have a set value of 'free' withdrawals and deposits per month (R4 500 and R6 500 respectively). Withdrawals at retailers' point-of-sale are free across these two bundled accounts. The changes also see these costs fall away on the entry-level Transact account. Strangely, the bank has added an option where

Gold and Premium bundled customers can "upgrade" their package to "receive unlimited free Absa ATM cash withdrawals" for R75 a month.

Nuisance transactions

It has halved its card replacement fee to R70 from March. However, the so-called "declined fee" where a transaction is unsuccessful will increase from R8.50 to R10. Dishonoured or returned payments currently cost R50 for the first three in a 12-month cycle, thereafter increasing to R150 each. This drops to R10 for the first four (thereafter, R150). Disputes of debit orders online or in its banking app will cost R5 within 40 days. This is currently free. Monthly account fees increase slightly on both its mid- and upper-mid-market (Gold and Premium Banking) credit cards.

The bank says it provided "R9.8 billion in payment relief to customers, and more than R250 million in relief through a combination of fee reductions and interest rate subsidies last year".

Some of the latter would've come from waived Saswitch penalties for drawing cash at other bank's ATMs during the peak of the pandemic. It also notes that the "embedded retrenchment, disability and death cover" on its core offers "paid out a further R160 million to customers in 2020."

EcoGraf confident in JPM to get Epanko's U\$60m project started

By The Banker Reporter

THE re-election of President John Magufuli in October last year and his commitment to boost private investment has given renewed confidence to Australian based EcoGraf to secure U\$60 million debt financing from a German based KfW IPEX Bank.

In its fourth quarter report dated December 2020, the company said during the period, Epanko debt financing meetings were held with government officials to speed up the U\$60 million debt financing proposal submitted.

"Tanzanian presidential elections held on the 28th of October with President Magufuli winning a second term and announcing intention to remove investment hurdles to support increased foreign investment," the company said.

EcoGraf through its subsidiary, TanzGraphite, further stated that during the quarter, progress was made towards obtaining the senior debt financing to develop Epanko Graphite Mine with positive feedback from a presentation of the KfW IPEX-Bank debt financing proposal to the government in August.

"Government due diligence processes have commenced with a view to preparing an internal submission for formal Government approval of the proposed loan arrangements," the report noted adding that the debt financing proposal was developed in conjunction with KfW IPEX-Bank with the aim of simplifying and fast-tracking the debt financing process.

The Australian Stock Exchange listed company further added that the financing proposal accommodates the government's requirements under the new mineral sector legislation and provides an opportunity for Tanzania to develop a world class graphite mine in the Ulanga District, Morogoro Region that will operate under globally leading Equator Principles for social and environmental



EcoGraf managing director Andrew Spinks.

planning.

The quarterly report names some of the key development achieved at Epanko Graphite as completion of a bankable feasibility study GR Engineering and a bank appointed independent engineer's review completed by SRK Consulting of UK; confirming that the BFS adequately addresses all technical aspects of the proposed development and the social and environmental planning aspects satisfy IFC Performance Standards and World Bank Group Environmental, Health and Safety Guidelines.

"Off-take commitments for the planned production secured in Asia (Sojitz

Corporation) and Europe (thyssenkrupp and a large European graphite trading group) plus resettlement action plan approved by the Tanzanian Government plus mining licence granted," the EcoGraf report added.

Another milestone was issuance of a letter of intent with GR Engineering for early works program and EPC construction contract. Having won re-election, President Magufuli endorsed a deal with London based Kabanga Nickel to their planned nickel project which supports the government's second term strategy.

EcoGraf is building a vertically integrated business to produce high purity

graphite for the lithium-ion battery and advanced manufacturing markets. "Over U\$30million has been invested to date to create two highly attractive, development ready graphite businesses," the report stated.

The first new state-of-the-art EcoGraf processing facility in Western Australia will manufacture spherical graphite products for export to Asia, Europe and North America using a superior, environmentally responsible purification technology to provide customers with sustainably produced, high performance battery anode graphite.



CBK governor Patrick Njoroge.

Borrowers blacklisted on CRBs hit 14 million

NAIROBI

The number of loan accounts negatively listed with credit reference bureaus (CRBs) has hit 14 million, underscoring the struggles Kenyans are having with repayments.

The blacklisted accounts jumped by a significant 45 percent in the five months between August and January after the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) lifted a three-month moratorium.

Data by Metropol—one of the three licensed CRBs alongside TransUnion and Creditinfo International—shows that the number of loans accounts in arrears for more than 90 days had jumped to 14,035,718 by January this year, up from 9,673,258 in August 2020.

"Obviously people are struggling with repayment even those who had restructured their loans. This is a temporary situation and I believe as the economy starts to pick up and cash flow improves people will begin to pay," Metropol managing director Sam Omukoko told the Business Daily.

The banking regulator had given a six-month suspension of CRB listings in April as part of the measures to cushion borrowers hit by the coronavirus pandemic. The moratorium lapsed in October, allowing financial institutions to start sending names of defaulters to the bureaus. Lenders, however, offered defaulters 90 days from October 1 to start repaying their loans or get listed with CRBs.

The huge rise in negative listings was driven by mobile loans following a proliferation of digital lenders targeting the banked and the unbanked alike, saddling borrowers with high interest rates and leaving regulators scrambling to keep up.

Last year the CBK revoked the approval of digital lenders to share data and exempted those who had borrowed less than Sh1,000, which was expected to bring the number of negatively listed borrowers down. The move barred 337 unregulated digital mobile lenders from forwarding the names of loan defaulters to CRBs. An internal memo showed that only 39 banks, 14 microfinance banks, 1,353 unregulated saccos, 164 regulated saccos were allowed to continue using the mechanism from the end of August.

The sharp rise in new listings underlies the crisis in the banking sector which are struggling with mounting unpaid loans whose share has grown to the highest level since August 2007 as a result of economic difficulties during the coronavirus pandemic.

Many workers who had tapped un-

secured loans on the strength of their salaries to purchase goods such as furniture and cars and meet expenses like school fees have struggled to keep up with repayments in the wake of retrenchments and pay cuts.

About 1.72 million workers lost jobs in three months to June when Kenya imposed a lockdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Recovery has been slow, with salary cuts persisting in many sectors.

Companies that had borrowed based on the forecast of cash flows have also been struggling to repay their bank loans, even as they defer capital projects such as launching new products or extending supply in new areas.

Borrowers defaulted on Sh73.05 billion bank loans in 10 months to December alone, highlighting the gravity of the Covid-19 induced economic hardship. New CBK data shows that the value of loans defaulted hit Sh423 billion or 14.1 per cent of the total Sh3 trillion loan book—a sharp rise from Sh351.73 billion that was in default by the end of March 2020.

The Sh71.26 billion spike in defaults between end of February and December is a stark contrast to an additional Sh5.4 billion that fell into default status in a similar period in 2019 and Sh31.1 billion in 2018.

The jump in gross non-performing loans (NPLs)—credit for which principal or interest has not been paid for 90 days or more—is despite borrowers having applied to defer payments on more than half of current loan book.

Customers extended repayment periods on loans worth Sh1.63 trillion by end of December, an equivalent of 54.2 percent of total loan book. CBK governor Patrick Njoroge, however, said the current levels of defaults are still manageable and that he expects the ratio to rise to 16 percent or 17 percent if economic recovery delays.

"Credit risk remains elevated and that is expected given where the economy is. We have done some analyses and assuming that the economy remains flat and the benefits of reopening the economy do not come through, NPLs will rise to 16 or 17 percent of gross loans," said Dr Njoroge.

"Those numbers are still manageable because banks have been doing what they needed to. They needed to be conservative and make provisions for their loans." The huge jumps in provisioning by end of September saw banks' earnings fall sharply, with Standard Chartered Bank Kenya, Absa Kenya, Cooperative Bank of Kenya, DTB, I&M Holdings and NCBA all issuing profit warnings.

Emirates, GE Digital partner to offer mobile application against Covid-19

By The Banker

IN a bid to ease coronavirus requirements, Emirates Airlines has partnered with GE Digital Aviation Software and TE Food to trial TrustOne, a mobile application that allows passengers to undergo tests at special discounted rates.

The application, created in partnership between GE Digital Aviation Software and TE Food, will help passengers adhere to the latest regulations and protocols, making travel seamless and more convenient.

"With this latest solution, provided in partnership by GE Digital Aviation Software and TE Food, passengers will be able to easily source accurate information on tests, approved laboratories to get tested, as well as other vital measures to be taken prior to travel," said Emirates' Chief Operating Officer, Adel Al Redha.

"We look forward to working with our partners on a successful trial and to expand the app's offering and benefits to our customers in the future," Al Redha said adding that travellers with an upcoming flight booking will be offered special rates for Covid-19 PCR tests through Eurofins—one of the global independent market leaders in testing and laboratory services—at one of its global lab facilities.

The application will first be launched as a trial, and the first phase has commenced in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), France, the United Kingdom, Spain and the Netherlands. Passengers travelling from the UAE can benefit from preferred rates of AED 130 if they do their Covid-19 PCR test at the authorised laboratories via the application. Travellers from other countries can expect to pay competitive rates of approximately EUR70 and EUR90, depending on the country they are travelling from.

Meanwhile the General Manager



Emirates' Chief Operating Officer, Adel Al Redha.

Commercial, at GE Digital, Rami Aynati, said the partnership between GE Digital and Emirates shows that the airline is dedicated to being at the leading edge of innovation.

"We're extremely excited to make the TrustOne application available to its customers. This is the first step in making international travel during the pandemic as convenient as possible by facilitating pre-travel requirements," said Aynati adding that the application will be further enhanced with more capabilities to meet all government testing and verification requirements.

During the initial trial, customers will still need to print the PCR certificates as per the current requirements of the destination they are travelling to. "The second phase of the trial, expected to commence in a few months, will expand the list of markets and allow customers to use the application to validate their test results when checking in at the airport," the statement. In 2020, Eurofins reacted quickly to meet the global challenge of COVID-19, by creating the capacity for over 10 million patient tests per month to support efforts to identify and suppress the virus.

MARKETTRENDS

Security situation and pandemic lower Mozambique's growth forecast to 1.8pc

MAPUTO

THE Standard Bank's economic studies unit yesterday revised its growth forecast for Mozambique's economy this year downward to 1.8% in response to the security situation in the north of the country and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are lowering our 2021 GDP forecast from 2% to 1.8% this year as the pandemic and internal security challenges are likely to continue to worsen sentiment and economic recovery," the unit's analysis of various African economies reads.

According to the report, the adverse risks in the country, including violence in Cabo Delgado, attacks on civilians in Sofala and Manica and the abduction of businesspeople, are worsening its economic growth outlook.

"Our base scenario now incorporates slower growth due to risks, and in some quarters the scenario was 2 percentage points lower, reflecting a possible delay in the implementation of the US\$20 billion [about €16.5 billion] project led by Total, whose first export (of liquefied natural gas) is expected to take place in 2024," the document declares.

In addition to the attacks that forced Total to significantly reduce the number of workers at the natural gas project construction site, "the acceleration of Covid-19 infections, which have entailed the introduction of new containment measures, may also delay economic recovery," the analysts warn.

Corporates' banking needs being met by StanChart's digital platforms

A CORPORATE is likened to an 'individual.' Although comprised of individual directors, officers, and shareholders, a corporate is a legal entity in and of itself and has its own obligations. It has legal rights and responsibilities, including tax filings.

In recognition of corporates as 'individuals,' Standard Chartered Bank Tanzania has ensured that they not only have a dedicated segment but that they also have unique products and services that are tailor made to enable them carry out their businesses and obligations seamlessly from a banking perspective.

In this exclusive interview, StanChart Tanzania's Head of Transaction Banking, EFEH AMOAH expounds on the subject, excerpts:

Tell us more about your bank's focus on corporate banking?

Standard Chartered Bank Tanzania serves a wide range of customer segments in the markets in which we are present. We cover both individual, SMEs and large corporates. Our consumer, private and business banking has a strategic focus on individuals as well as SMEs with distinct offerings for each. Beyond this, our corporate, commercial and institutional banking arm provides cutting edge solutions for corporates across all sectors of the economy. Our clients in the Corporate Segment range from financial institutions, local companies, to multinationals and development organizations.

An interesting aspect about corporates is that, similar to individuals, they too have distinct banking needs. They have to raise funds for their businesses,

pay salaries, taxes and carry out a number of other banking activities.

At Standard Chartered Bank Tanzania, we are cognizant of the contribution of corporates to the country's economic growth. Not only do they make a significant contribution to gross domestic product, but also contribute strongly to the government's development plans as well as the livelihoods of many Tanzanian households.

For example, some of our local corporate clients employ over 20,000 Tanzanians at various levels and they also pay taxes. This translates to the improved livelihood beyond the directly employed individuals as they also positively impact others within their circles, that is, their immediate and extended families as well as friends.

It is for this reason that we have specialized products, services and platforms for our corporate clients similar to what we have for our individual clients and the SME sector. Our corporate Banking solutions range from enabling our clients make their statutory payments through the Government Electronic Payment Gateway, GePG, staff and supplier payments, working capital support, distributor and supplier financing, collection and reconciliation, among others.

Are both local and foreign corporate accorded the same services?

Our corporate clients, both local and international, operate within a dynamic business environment that requires them to be astute and nimble in managing their resources. They have to manage various aspects ranging from ensuring top quality pro-



duction, if they are in the manufacturing sector; upgrading their resources, both human and technological; and managing governance and other important aspects of business.

At Standard Chartered Bank we have, firstly, spent a lot of time in understanding each of our corporate clients. Relations with many of them go back several decades and, we, therefore, know their line of business, their growth prospects, diversification and expansion plans and much more. Based on the crisp understanding we have, therefore, partnered with them to offer them customised working capital solutions that have enabled them deliver on their strategic initiatives. Our dedicated advisory teams have been at the forefront of many critical client transactions, bringing the wealth of our diverse footprint and decades of experience to bear for them.

Can you explain a bit on transaction banking digital products for corporate clients?

In the last decade, the world has seen unprecedented growth in digitization. The opportunities in Africa are vast with the electronic commerce market for example, expected to hit US\$75 billion by 2025. Our clients have responded well to these trends and, in some cases, have led aspects of that growth. As a bank, we have built capabilities that help our corporates do their business seamlessly and digitally. One of the key thrusts of our offering is our online award-winning banking platform, Straight2Bank.

Straight2Bank has provided clients with a single online platform for payments, letters of credit, bank guarantees

and other services. Today, our corporate clients can meet all their payments obligations to the government, such as taxes, via Government electronic Payment Gateway (GePG) on our Straight2Bank platform.

They can also pay salaries through our secure, easy to use payroll platform, make payments to over 1,000 suppliers via one transaction or one click, and pay directly to mobile wallets on the bank's platform. Besides this, clients receive world class automated reporting that is often customisable to their needs. We also offer solutions that address the challenge of seamless reconciliation for our clients.

Recognising that our clients are at various stages of the digital journey, we also make available a very wide range of integration options such that clients can seamlessly transact online even from early stages in their digitisation journeys. At the other end, we also provide very sophisticated options for clients that require those capabilities.

What about security on these digital platforms?

Let me also assure clients on the security of our platforms. We have invested heavily in that aspect and have continued to ensure that we keep on upgrading our platforms with more sophisticated security capabilities. Our clients can, therefore, continue to expect us to maintain the high standards for which our platform has, so often, been recognised both locally and globally.

How have corporates in Tanzania embraced digital banking?

Corporates and financial institutions are now significantly evolving, looking for ways in which they can free up more time for focusing on their core business and on sustainable growth; and digitization creates a great opportunity.

Whilst doubling Africa's e-Commerce sales to US\$75 billion by 2025 is great, it is still barely one percent of total sales on the continent and demonstrates the scale of the opportunity we have. That is counterbalanced by the fact that this continent has the fastest rate of new broadband connections in the world.

Recent industry statistics show that Tan-

zania already has a digital outlook with over 18trn/- worth of transactions done online in 2020. Standard Chartered's online banking platform supports trillions of shillings in transactions each year. Indeed, over 99 percent of Standard Chartered Bank's corporate cash payment transactions are done online.

The Straight2Bank online platform has provided a convenient and secure portal for corporate clients to settle their statutory payments. We are proud of the fact that for many years, the Standard Chartered online banking platform has channelled over 25 percent of government, now GePG, payments.

With Sub-Saharan Africa accounting for over 45 percent of the world's mobile money payments, that channel has fully established itself within the payments ecosystem. Today, the bank clears significant volumes of such mobile wallet transactions monthly for corporate clients alone on online platform. Additionally, thousands of payroll transactions are done via platform yearly. Other clients are taking us up on our SWIFT, API, e-commerce and digital supplier financing capabilities. This shows that Tanzanian corporates are really nimble and connected with technology advancements for their banking needs.

Do you think this is a good trend and what should be done to further enhance the use of digital banking channels by corporates in Tanzania?

With a focus on corporate digital transactions at Standard Chartered Bank, the last two years, 2019 and 2020, have seen a rise in utilization of our digital platforms with the number of payment transactions growing from 60 to 99 percent.

In 2021, we further assisted our clients to move new transactions like requesting bank guarantees, letters of credit and invoice financing online. From a base of zero percent, we have 40 percent of such transactions moved to online platform in the last four months. Digital channels can add much more value than is immediately obvious. Most corporates are yet to harvest the full potential of the digital capabilities that are currently available.

Get your finances in shape for 2021

By Desideria Mwegelo, Head of Marketing at Stanbic Bank Tanzania

2020 was an unprecedented year. It proved to the world that nothing is guaranteed. The coronavirus outbreak shook the world like never before. The pandemic drew both positive and negative

learnings for businesses, economies as well as individuals.

What was clear is that we need to begin to plan for an uncertain future. One key area that people begun to plan was their finances. People became more cautious about spending and things that were considered leisure spending had to stop since financial

priorities for many people was to cater for basic needs in their homes.

As the New Year begins, perhaps you are resolving to keep up that focus in a new and more positive way. We at Stanbic Bank are committed to helping customers realise their dreams by providing simple solutions that can help you plan your finances better. Here are six power tips to get your finances in shape for 2021.

Set up a detailed budget

Knowing where your money goes every month is essential to getting on track financially. And to that end, you'll need a budget. Your budget doesn't have to be anything fancy – a basic spreadsheet will do. List each recurring monthly expense, as well as any expenses that don't pop up monthly, but you need to pay for nonetheless.

Of course, to account for all of your expenses, you need to comb through your bank account and credit/debit card statements from the past year. But once you have your expenses mapped out, you can see where you're overspending and find ways to cut back.

Enroll in an Automatic Savings Plan (ASP)

If you have a financial resolution to save more money this year, using automated savings will help you to follow through. Through automated saving, cash is drawn directly from your current/main account and deposited into your savings account. With Stanbic Bank, you can now open an account remotely without the need to visit a

branch. You can also schedule payments on our application from the comfort of your home.

Have a clear, concise financial goal for the year

Set up clear goals about what you want to accomplish with your finances, example purchasing a house, a car or your dream vacation. Be mindful of how you spend your money and how it's impacting those financial goals. I usually set aside a separate spending account that can be built into my budget and does not affect those goals.

Begin Investing

Investing allows you to grow your money at a much quicker rate. Many people invest money successfully on their own, but if you are just starting out, you may consider visiting your bank where a financial expert will advise you on how you can achieve your investment goals.

Also, the financial expert will enable you to understand the current market conditions and the risks and benefits of investing. This process will help you find investments that match your current comfort level when it comes to risks.

Resolve to understand your debt in 2021

Whether it's a student loan, personal loan or a car loan, take the time to understand the terms of the debt. Example: Who do you owe money to?; How much total debt do you have?; How long do you have to pay it back?; What is the interest rate for each piece of debt?; and Are you being charged additional fees? Once you understand your debt it is much easier to plan and start to become debt-free.

Improve your financial literacy

"Education is an investment in yourself." Everyone should take a little time to educate themselves on financial literacy because being smart with your money will make all aspects of your life easier. Stanbic website has some great resources to get you started.

At the end of 2021, you should be able to look back at your finances and be proud of yourself for staying on track. The secret is simple; begin with a plan, have clear goals and keep track of your spending.

BANKING & FINANCE



Desideria Mwegelo

FirstRand engagement on remuneration fails to pack a punch

JOHANNESBURG

ON December 2 last year an unprecedented 58.68% of FirstRand shareholders voted against the remuneration implementation report at the banking group's AGM. In addition just over 30% voted against the remuneration policy.

It was a tense meeting dominated by heated discussion of FirstRand's remuneration policy with the level of opposition appearing to be an entirely novel experience for the board. At the previous AGM only 19.5% of shareholders had voted against implementation of the remuneration policy which meant

the board was able to escape the indignity of having to invite shareholders to a teleconference to discuss their concerns that year.

The JSE requires such an "engagement with shareholders" if less than 75% of them vote in support of the remuneration policy or the implementation report. Last week FirstRand held that engagement – it was a teleconference hosted by the group's chair Rodger Jardine and the chair of the remuneration committee, Louis von Zeuner. Remarkably, despite the unprecedented number of shareholders indicating concerns about FirstRand's executive remuneration, a mere 2.18% of the

bank's shareholders bothered to attend.

It could be that the parties who manage the pension funds and unit trusts making up a large percentage of FirstRand's shareholders aren't that concerned about the issue; that these institutional entities rely on proxy advisory services who do nothing more than recommend how to vote on a resolution and offer no follow-up facility; or that the largest of these institutions have the luxury of direct and private access to the FirstRand board to discuss their concerns and so do not bother with broader engagements. There's also the suspicion among some

shareholders that the engagements lead nowhere.

Ambivalence

This is certainly not the first time shareholders have voted in large numbers against a company's remuneration policy and then not bothered to attend the follow-up engagement; PSG's Piet Mouton is one of many CEOs to express frustration about shareholders' seeming ambivalence on the issue.

It is possible that institutional shareholders, alert to the fact that their voting records are now open to public scrutiny, use the remuneration vote as a form of virtue-signaling. But, as with all virtue-signalling, the

superficiality of its commitment does not include sufficient effort to attend a follow-up engagement.

FirstRand's Sens statement announcing that it had held the meeting appeared keen to dismiss its relevance: "A total of five shareholders, cumulatively holding 2.18% of FirstRand's total issued shares, participated in the call." The bank tells Moneyweb the issues raised were exactly the same as those at the AGM. However it seems that, as in most post-AGM remuneration-related "engagements with shareholders", there was little attempt to understand shareholders' concerns.

If the JSE-regulated engagements are proving ineffectual, which appears to be the case given the large number of companies that regularly notch up 25%-plus opposition to remuneration at consecutive AGMs, perhaps it is time for a tougher regime. Currently South Africa has one of the most lax in the world. However a tougher, and more appropriate, regime could be on the cards.

WORLD

Myanmar police file charges against Aung San Suu Kyi after coup

MYANMAR police have filed charges against ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi for illegally importing communications equipment and she will be detained until Feb. 15 for investigations, according to a police document.

The move followed a military coup on Monday and the detention of Nobel Peace laureate Suu Kyi and other civilian politicians. The takeover cut short Myanmar's long transition to democracy and drew condemnation from the United States and other Western countries.

A police request to a court detailing the accusations against Suu Kyi, 75, said six walkie-talkie radios had been found in a search of her home in the capital Naypyidaw. The radios were imported illegally and used without permission, it said.

The document reviewed on Wednesday requested Suu Kyi's detention "in order to question witnesses, request evidence and seek legal counsel after questioning the defendant".

A separate document showed police filed charges against ousted President Win Myint for violating protocols to stop the spread of coronavirus during campaigning for an election last November.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) won the election in a landslide but the military claimed it was marred by fraud and justified its seizure of power on those grounds. Reuters was not immedi-

ately able to reach the police, the government or the court for comment.

The chair of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Parliamentarians for Human Rights, Charles Santiago, said the new charges were ludicrous.

"This is an absurd move by the junta to try to legitimize their illegal power grab," he said in a statement.

The electoral commission had said the vote was fair.

Suu Kyi spent about 15 years under house arrest between 1989 and 2010 as she led the country's democracy movement, and she remains hugely popular at home despite damage to her international reputation over the plight of Muslim Rohingya refugees in 2017.

The NLD made no immediate comment. A party official said on Tuesday he had learned she was under house arrest in the capital, Naypyidaw, and was in good health.

PARTY SAYS OFFICES RAIDED

The party said earlier in a statement that its offices had been raided in several regions and it urged authorities to stop what it called unlawful acts after its election victory.

Opposition to the junta headed by Army chief General Min Aung Hlaing has begun to emerge in Myanmar.

Staff at scores of government hospitals



Aung San Suu Kyi

across the country of 54 million people stopped work or wore red ribbons as part of a civil disobedience campaign.

The newly formed Myanmar Civil Disobedience Movement said doctors at 70 hospitals and medical departments in 30 towns had joined the protest. It accused the army of putting its interests above a coronavirus outbreak that has killed more than 3,100 people in Myanmar, one of the highest tolls in Southeast Asia.

"We really cannot accept this," said 49-year-old Myo Myo Mon, who was among the doctors who stopped work to protest.

"We will do this in a sustainable way, we will do it in a non-violent way... This is the route our state counselor desires," she said, referring to Suu Kyi by her title.

The latest coup is a massive blow to hopes that Myanmar is on a path to stable democracy. The junta has declared a one-year state of emergency and has promised to hold fair elections, but has not said when.

G7 CONDEMNS COUP

The Group of Seven largest developed economies condemned the coup on Wednesday and said the election result must be respected.

"We call upon the military to immediately end the state of emergency, restore power to the democratically-elected government, to release all those unjustly detained and to respect human rights and the rule of law," the G7 said in a statement.

China has not specifically condemned the coup in its neighbour but the foreign ministry rejected the suggestion that it supported or gave tacit consent to it.

"We wish that all sides in Myanmar can appropriately resolve their differences and uphold political and social stability," foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a briefing.

At the United Nations on Tuesday, its special envoy for Myanmar, Christine Schraner Burgener, urged the Security Council to "collectively send a clear signal in support of democracy in Myanmar".

But a diplomat with China's U.N. mission said it would be difficult to reach consensus on the draft statement and that any action should avoid escalating tension or complicating the situation.

U.S. President Joe Biden has threatened to reimpose sanctions on the generals who seized power.

U.S. Army General Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, tried but was unable to connect to Myanmar's military following the coup.

The military had ruled the former British colony from 1962 until Suu Kyi's party came to power in 2015 under a constitution that guarantees the generals a major role in government.

Her international standing as a human rights champion was badly damaged over the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims in 2017 and her defence of the military against accusations of genocide. **Agencies**

US govt urged to focus on cooperation

WASHINGTON

IT is a task for both China and the United States to take their relationship back to "a predictable and constructive track", a senior Chinese diplomat said on Tuesday while outlining detailed possibilities for the two countries to work together.

The world's two largest economies should build a model of interaction that "focuses on peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation", said Yang Jiechi, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee.

The veteran diplomat, who once served as China's ambassador to the US, made the remark in an online dialogue with the National Committee on United States-China Relations, a decades-old organization that promotes friendly bilateral exchanges.

Yang (pictured) called on the two countries to repair their ties and honor common global duties now that Joe Biden has taken office as US president. Yang also emphasized China's unchanged commitment to opening up to the world, including the US, observers said.

Yang made a four-point proposal in his speech: China should be seen as it is; normal interactions need to be restored; proper management of differences is called for; and mutually beneficial cooperation ought to be broadened.

The US should strictly abide by the one-China principle and stop interfering in the affairs of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Tibet and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous regions, as they "constitute a red line that must not be crossed", Yang said.

"Any trespassing would end up undermining China-US relations and the United States' own interests," he said.

He also urged the new administration to "remove the stumbling blocks to people-to-people exchanges, like harassing Chinese students, restricting Chinese media outlets, shutting down Confucius Institutes and suppressing Chinese companies", adding that the measures are "wrong" and "unpopular".

Trade issues should not be politicized, and the concept of "national security" should not be abused, Yang said, adding that "it falls on both sides to provide a fair, open and non-discriminatory environment for each other's companies".

Beijing is ready for closer macroeconomic policy coordination and more cooperation with Washington to keep the global industrial and supply chains safe and maintain global economic and financial stability, he said.

"We hope the new administration will respond to the will of both peoples and follow the trend of history," Yang said.

The two nations' bilateral trade volume now takes up a fifth of the world's total, and two-way investment has skyrocketed to almost US\$240 billion.

The combined economies of China and the US now account for a third of the world's total.

Yang named areas crucial in the bilateral and global contexts, such as the response to COVID-19, economic recovery and climate change, as ideal for cooperation.

Yuan Zheng, deputy director of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of American Studies, said Yang's proposal is among Beijing's constructive ideas for China-US ties. The proposal charts a possible course for the future trajectory of their relations, Yuan said, and "now it is time for Washington to respond in a positive way".

Agencies

Two Chinese virus vaccines 'remain active against South African variant'

KARACHI

BEIJING - Two COVID-19 vaccines from Chinese companies, including Sinopharm, triggered immunity against a highly transmissible coronavirus variant first found in South Africa, but their effect appeared weaker, a small-sample lab study released on Tuesday showed.

Variants of the virus have stirred concern that they might weaken effects of vaccines and treatments developed prior to

their emergence.

Twelve serum samples each taken from recipients of two vaccines developed by a subsidiary of China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm) and a unit of Chongqing Zhifei Biological Products retained neutralizing activity against the South African variant, their researchers said in a paper.

The paper was written by researchers from Sinopharm-affiliated Beijing Institute of Biological Products, the Institute of Microbiology of Chinese Academy of

Sciences, which is co-developing a candidate with Zhifei unit, and two other Chinese agencies. However, the samples' activity against the variant was weaker than against the original virus and another variant currently spreading globally, according to the paper published on website BioRxiv ahead its peer-review.

The activity reduction "should be taken into account for its impact for the clinical efficacy of these vaccines," they said. The Sinopharm vaccine is approved in China for general public use

and is also used in several other countries including the United Arab Emirates. The Zhifei shot is in late-stage clinical trials in China and overseas.

Preliminary clinical trial data on vaccines from Novavax Inc and Johnson & Johnson also showed they were significantly less effective at preventing COVID-19 in trial participants in South Africa, where the potent new variant is widespread.

CanSino to continue advancing phase-3 trials

In another development, Chi-

na's CanSino Biologics has got green light to continue phase-3 trials of its COVID-19 vaccine with the support of findings of an independent data monitoring committee, according to recent media reports.

The independent committee "found the drugmaker's COVID-19 vaccine met its pre-specified primary safety and efficacy targets under an interim analysis of phase-3 trial data," Reuters cited the biopharmaceutical company to report on Monday.

Xinhua

Pakistan court orders release of mastermind in Daniel Pearl case

ISLAMABAD

PAKISTAN'S Supreme Court ordered the release from prison on Tuesday of a British-born militant who had been convicted in the kidnapping and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl by al Qaeda and Pakistani Islamist militants in 2002.

In a decision that is expected to draw criticism from the United States, the court recommended that Ahmad Omar Saeed Sheikh be transferred to a government safe house as a stepping stone to his full release after spending 18 years on death row.

"He should be moved to a comfortable residential environment, something like a rest house where he can live a normal life," said Justice Omar

Ata Bandyal.

Bandyal headed a panel of three judges that reviewed the case, following a petition from the government after the court upheld last Thursday a lower court's decision to acquit Sheikh and three accomplices of all charges except abduction.

The court said Sheikh should be kept at a secure location under a "supervision and some surveillance," his lawyer Rauf Ahmad Sheikh told reporters.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken "reinforced" Washington's concern over the case in a telephone call on Friday with Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi.

Pearl's family had also petitioned for the Supreme Court



Saeed Sheikh (left), the father of British-born militant Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh

to reverse the acquittal so that "Sheikh and co-conspirators are brought to justice for the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl," Faisal Siddiqi, a lawyer for the family, said.

On assignment for the Wall Street Journal in the months after al Qaeda 9/11 attacks on the United States, Pearl was kidnapped in Karachi and

later beheaded. The militants videoed his execution.

Al Qaeda's number three leader Khalid Sheikh Mohammed later confessed to killing Pearl, while Sheikh, a former student at the London School of Economics, played key role in luring the journalist into a trap with the help of other Pakistani militants.

Captured in Pakistan in 2003, Mohammed is being held at the US detention centre at Guantanamo Bay, on the island of Cuba, where he is awaiting trial on multiple counts, and could face the death penalty.

Sheikh's fortunes changed last year, when a high court decided only the kidnapping conviction should stand, commuting his death sentence to seven years in jail, which he

had already served.

Sheikh's father, Ahmad Saeed Sheikh, attended Tuesday's hearing. "It is not a complete freedom. It is a step toward freedom," he told Reuters Television.

The judge said family members should be allowed to visit Sheikh once he was moved from prison.

The terms of Sheikh's release will become clearer once a written order is made public. "Even if court orders for release, the government has prepared other cases to charge him under a terrorism act and for treason," said Hassan Abbas, a Washington based international security professor. "The bigger challenge for Islamabad will be pressure from the US."

Agencies

Putin busy working instead of thinking about his place in history – Kremlin

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin is busy working, instead of thinking about his place in history, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday.

The spokesman told reporters on Wednesday that the Kremlin had not heard Alexey Navalny's speech during a court session on Tuesday, in which he talked about the Russian president.

Peskov noted that it is not up to Navalny to "talk about Putin's place in history, definitely not, that's up to the country's people to decide," he stressed.

When asked whether the Russian president thinks about his place in history, the spokesman recalled that Putin had stated earlier that this is not what he indulges in.

"The president is working every day. You see how many issues, how many pending matters there are," Peskov said. The spokesman mentioned the issue of mortgage on preferential terms as an example. He noted that these matters are "absolutely far from scholasticism, but they concern the lives of millions and millions of Russians."

"This is what the president and the government are dealing with every day. It would be silly if instead of that, he was listening to some speeches by convicts or musing about his place in history," the spokesman concluded.



Young people become major driver of consumption upgrading in China

YOUNG people in China are becoming the main consumer group of many popular products, including "mystery" toy boxes, sneakers, designer toys, garage kits, e-sports products, as well as high-end cosmetics and beauty products, injecting fresh impetus into the country's consumption upgrading trend.

"I try my best to save money, and then buy the stuff I want instead of putting the money into a bank account," said a post-2000s college student nicknamed A Nian, who decided to finally place the order for a new Apple product over a month later after she was attracted by the product.

According to A Nian, she could afford the product with the money she had saved.

Many of her friends have basically the same attitude towards consumption as

her, A Nian said, adding that "They are willing to spend money on things they like, whether for better looks or following fashion trends, or simply because they want to have the same products people around them have."

Although young people born after 1995 or 2000 may not have much disposable income, as they are either still students or newcomers to workplace, they dare to spend money, which is regarded as a distinct feature of the age group.

Partly because of the rise of China's Generation Z (people born between 1995 and 2010), the country's luxury sales were estimated to grow by a stunning 48 percent in 2020, when the global luxury market declined at an expected rate of 23 percent, according to a report from Bain & Com-

pany.

The report added that the purchase of luxury collaborations and limited editions by people born after the 1995s grew 300 percent to 400 percent between January and October 2020.

Data also show that young consumers between the ages of 18 and 29 account for over 57 percent of the consumers of high-end luxury beauty brands. Meanwhile, the post-90s generation has become the largest potential consumer group in luxury car industry.

China has about 170 million people aged between 20 and 29. As people in the age group is about to enter a golden age of career development and income growth, their spending habits are expected to become more personalized and quality-ori-

ented.

Since 2010, Internet-related industries have risen in China and e-commerce has brought unprecedented convenience and efficiency to consumers' shopping experience, according to Fu Yifu, a senior researcher at the Suning Institute of Finance, noting that the country is witnessing more personalized and quality-oriented consumer behaviors and more distinctive features of consumption upgrade than ever.

As the Chinese economy and society continue to advance while residents' income rises, more and more consumers have developed an awareness that they should spend money for themselves, Fu noted, adding that consumer units in the country have also begun to shift from households to individuals, and that spend-

ing on personalized and brand products has grown rapidly.

Young consumers have shown distinguishing features compared with consumers from other age groups, according to Li Yang, an associate professor of marketing at the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business (CKGSB).

They are more confident, pursue individuality, have diversified interests, enjoy social interaction, and feel a stronger sense of identity in domestic brands, Li added.

The rise of young consumers means that their personalized consumption of quality products is expected to promote industrial upgrading and bring enormous opportunities to the high-quality development of industries and economy, Fu said.

People's Daily



Chinese and German technicians of Scherzinger Pump Technology Kunshan Co. Ltd. inspect products at German GIP Industrial Park, Kunshan, east China's Jiangsu province, Aug. 3. File photo

China's FDI bucks trend in 2020

CHINA'S paid-in foreign direct investment (FDI) bucked the trend in the past year despite the complicated international situation and severe impacts from COVID-19, registering increase in size, growth margin, and global share.

In 2020, paid-in FDI reached a record 999.98 billion yuan (\$154.32 billion), up 6.2% year-on-year. Over 100 foreign companies were established in China on average each day.

German science and technology company Merck secured remarkable performance in China over the last year. It was among the first group of enterprises in Shanghai to resume production from COVID-19, released its latest investment plan in the performance materials sector at the China International Import Expo, and maintained steady growth in its three major businesses of life science, healthcare and performance materials.

The year of 2020 was full of uncertainty for global economy, said Li Ye, vice president of Merck Holding (China) Ltd. However, the Chinese market still showed strong resilience, she added. "The quick control of the pandemic as well as the policies issued to help enterprises stabilized the confidence of foreign companies investing in China," she said.

The international FDI experienced a huge plunge around the globe the last year except in China. The country's paid-in FDI kept positive monthly growth for 9 consecutive months since April, and recovered positive growth in July.

According to a recent investigation by the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), nearly 60 percent of foreign businesses in China saw improved or equal revenue and profits in 2020 from a year ago, and nearly 90 percent said they were optimistic or cautiously optimistic about their prospects in China.

The growth of paid-in FDI was inseparable from China's efforts to coordinate epidemic prevention and control and economic and social development, said Cao Hongying, executive vice president of the China Association of Enterprises with Foreign

Investment. Taking forceful measures, China was the first country to control the pandemic and resume production, and the only major economy that achieved positive growth, which offered a firm foundation and guarantee for stabilizing foreign investment, Cao explained.

Though the COVID-19 pandemic is still spreading across the world, Samsung's projects in China are still proceeding in an orderly manner. This benefited from the strong support and guarantee by the Chinese government, said Deuk-kyu Hwang, president and head of Samsung China. The company sent over 5,500 foreign engineers to China from overseas by 24 planes last year, so as to ensure the construction of its major projects in the country, he continued.

The South Korean conglomerate invested \$5.4 billion in China last year, 83 percent of which went to central and western regions. Ninety-eight percent of the investment was in high-tech industry, Hwang said. The implementation of foreign investment law and China's equal attitude toward domestic and foreign companies very much inspired the group and reinforced its confidence to develop in China, he added.

Accelerating its pace of opening up, China is constantly upgrading its business environment. The country established three new pilot free trade zones, further shortened negative lists of foreign investment, and expanded the catalogue of industries where foreign investment is encouraged. Besides, China also inked the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and completed the negotiation on China-EU Comprehensive Agreement on Investment.

The MOFCOM also established a taskforce to serve 697 major foreign investment projects, helping them tackle over 3,000 challenges such as short supply of anti-pandemic materials, customs clearance, and work resumption of industrial chains. In addition, the taskforce also facilitated entrance for over 16,000 foreign employees.

People's Daily



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Uganda orders for 18 mln COVID-19 vaccine doses

KAMPALA

UGANDA has approved the purchase of 18 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine from the Serum Institute of India, said a government statement.

Uganda Media Center in a statement released on Tuesday said cabinet ministers in a meeting on Monday approved the purchase of the vaccine that will be used to vaccinate the elderly, people with underlying health issues, health workers, and security personnel among other essential social service providers.

The statement said a total of 9 million people will receive the vaccine in two doses separated by 28 days. A tentative al-

location of more than 3.5 million doses are expected by the end of this month or early next month. The balance is expected on a quarterly basis, said the government source.

The statement said there is an emerging opportunity of acquiring vaccines through the African Union mechanism coordinated by the African Vaccines Delivery Alliance.

Through this initiative, an initial 270 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines for the continent have been secured.

There is growing interest from

the private sector to participate in the COVID-19 vaccination efforts. "The interest of the private sector ranges from financing for vaccines targeting their staff and host communities on one hand to supporting the general service delivery components," the statement said.

It said the Ministry of Health has developed a draft concept note to guide the participation of the private sector, detailing the regulatory process and controls to ensure harmonious implementation of the vaccination activities in the country. *Xinhua*



US will 'find or invent any excuse' to slap sanctions on Russia, says diplomat

MOSCOW

THE United States always comes up with various excuses for imposing anti-Russian sanctions, and it does not need any specific reasons to do so, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told the Soloviev Live YouTube channel, commenting on remarks by Senator Mitt Romney, a Republican from Utah, about slapping sanctions on "those responsible" because of blogger Alexey Navalny's case.

"Didn't they [the Americans - TASS] promise sanctions last week, a month ago, six months ago? When I hear that, I recall every previous time they promised sanctions. By the way, the excuses are entirely different. They do not need any. They will always find and invent them," she emphasized.

Sanctions being taken against Russia must be retaliated against, but Russia will do this not aggressively, but in a well-considered way, Zakharova (pictured) said.

"Taking well-considered and not aggressive action is always more useful and effective. Retaliation [against anti-Russian sanctions] must certainly follow," she said.

Zakharova added that the response would be public and well-reasoned.

"If no symmetric or proportionate action is taken, where the United States crosses a red line, it will feel absolute impunity," she said.



I recall every previous time they promised sanctions. By the way, the excuses are entirely different. They do not need any

UK mourns 'hero' Captain Tom Moore with flowers and lights

MARSTON MORETAINE, ENGLAND

WITH flowers and lights, Britain paid tribute yesterday to Captain Tom Moore, 100, who touched the hearts of millions by offering a simple message of hope and self-sacrifice during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Moore, who raised tens of millions of pounds for the National Health Service by walking up and down his garden, died on Tuesday in Bedford Hospital after suffering COVID-19 and pneumonia. He had been fighting cancer for 5 years.

Outside his home in Marston Moretaine, 50 miles (80 km) north of London, children laid flowers. One message read: "Rest in Peace Captain Tom. We love you. X."

"You will always be our hero," read another message. "Thank you for your warmth and your wonderful smile. Rest in Peace."

His picture was shown on Piccadilly Circus in central London while the London Eye, Wembley Stadium and the Blackpool Tower shone lights of honour.

Condolences poured in from Queen Elizabeth II, Prime Minister Boris Johnson and even the White House while soccer players, school children and his family shed tears for a man who millions consider a lockdown hero.

Amid the death and gloom of the COVID-19 pandemic, war veteran Moore's wit and inspiration struck a chord with mil-



A tribute to Captain Sir Tom Moore is broadcast on the Piccadilly Circus lights in central London yesterday in memory of charity fundraiser who died Tuesday in Bedford hospital after testing positive for COVID-19. AP

lions: his message to the world was that the sun would shine again.

"For all those people who are finding it difficult at the moment: the sun will shine on you again and the clouds will go away," said Moore, dressed in a blazer and tie and displaying his war medals, after completing his walk in April.

"You've all got to remember that we will get through it in the end, it will all be right, it might take time," Moore said. "At the end of the day we shall all be ok again."

Raised in Yorkshire, northern England, Moore served in India, Burma and Sumatra during World War Two. Always polite and dapper in public, Moore had a mischievous humour.

When asked about speculation he would be knighted by

the queen, he quipped that he would find it funny to be known as "Sir Thomas Moore" - a reference to the Tudor statesman.

He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth at a ceremony at Windsor Castle.

"Her Majesty very much enjoyed meeting Captain Sir Tom and his family at Windsor last year," Buckingham Palace said. "Her thoughts and those of the Royal Family are with them."

Health Minister Matt Hancock said the country would mark his memory.

"We should find a way to make sure that we mark the memory of Captain Tom and thank him for the contribution that he made for the NHS (health service)," Hancock told BBC television.

"He touched the heart of the nation and we should remember that."

Agencies

CHICAGO

ALMOST all the immigrants who came to the United States were full of dreams.

How are they and their children faring after decades living here? Several first-and second-generation immigrants shared their thoughts.

"I only knew America from television, but I was most surprised by the systemic racism," said 41-year-old Karla Thomas, who came to America from Trinidad 24 years ago to study at the University of Mississippi, and has lived there ever since.

"The segregation is like no other place anywhere else in recent times. In Trinidad, my neighborhood and friends were of a variety of races, Indian, Asian, black, Caucasian." Thomas has studied the US history

Dream turns sour for many US immigrants

of opioid issues and referred to it as an example of racism and the problem with healthcare.

"Jail for crack, medical care for opioids, both drugs are from the same source, which brings us to healthcare," Thomas said. "How can (we) call America the greatest country, while we can't provide healthcare to everyone?"

Eva Strobeck, a 56-year-old biology tutor at Malcolm X College in Chicago, echoed Thomas' observations, saying drug addiction is a huge problem. "Until recently, a majority of people on probation was for some sort of cannabis possession and drug trafficking and that created an incarceration problem." Strobeck's mother married a US

citizen and came from Poland 65 years ago. Ozzie Ramsey's parents came to the United States 50 years ago from Jamaica with an American dream in mind. People would say that this is "the land of the free" and all of these opportunities, and they think one can work hard and get what he wants.

However, too many people in this country are in bad shape and have mental health issues, the 47-year-old owner of a photography business said. "America won't pull back the veil and reveal the whole truth until you get here.... I don't think America has ever been the promise of America."

Thirty-nine-year-old E.B. Barnes said she hopes the United States

would be more inclusive.

"It's my belief that the United States has been divided along racial lines and there are groups that are predominantly white that continue to fan the flames of injustice and hate under the guise of politics."

Barnes left the Philippines to join her father's family in the US 31 years ago. Now a higher education consultant and a doctoral student, Barnes still remembers the experience of being followed in stores and publicly mocked when she was young. "It was difficult to feel like a US citizen."

Forty-one-year-old Diane Robertson and her husband transferred jobs to the US from Scotland 14 years ago. She still cannot get used to the US healthcare system. "In the USA, it is totally different."

Xinhua

Xinjiang's economy outshines epidemic in 2020 amid continued stability

URUMQI

NORTHWEST China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region has registered better-than-expected economic growth in 2020 despite the impact of COVID-19.

With continued stability over the years, local people's sense of contentment and happiness has been consolidated and rural residents are among the biggest beneficiaries.

Xinjiang's economy expanded 3.4 percent year on year in 2020, 1.1 percentage points higher than the national GDP growth, according to the local government work report delivered to the annual session of the regional legislature,

which opened Monday.

The economic expansion has coincided with a period of improved, sustained stability in the region.

Xinjiang has "completely reversed the past situation marked by frequent violent terrorist activities, with no occurrence of terrorist incidents across the region over the past more than four years," said Shohrat Zakir, chairman of the regional government, as he delivered the work report.

"People of all ethnic groups have significantly increased their sense of fulfillment, happiness and security," Shohrat Zakir said.

Xinjiang will stay committed to fighting terrorism and maintaining stability with ef-



Children have fun in "Dove Lane" in the old town Tuancheng of Hotan City, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, May 27, 2020. [File photo]

fective, law-based measures, he said.

In a historic feat, the region has eliminated absolute poverty, with some 3.06 million rural residents lifted out of

poverty in the past five years.

Xinjiang sailed through three rounds of COVID-19 cluster outbreaks last year, which weighed upon the performance of one of China's

main agricultural bases.

The secondary sector, including manufacturing and construction, was the primary contributor to growth. Fixed-asset investment grew 16.2 percent over the previous year. On the upside, the region registered robust growth from new economic drivers, with a 276-percent year-on-year growth in online retail sales and a 25-percent year-on-year increase in high-tech manufacturing added value.

The per capita disposable income of rural residents reached 14,056 yuan (about 2,171 U.S. dollars), up 7.1 percent, as the region's anti-poverty campaign bore fruit. The increase was paced at 8.3 percent annually on aver-

age over the past five years, as more surplus rural labor force found stable jobs.

In pursuing high-quality development, Xinjiang aims to keep its average annual economic growth rate at 6 percent or above in the 2021-2025 period, driven by key engines like the labor-intensive sector, the emerging industries and tourism, according to the government work report.

Aiming to develop itself as a core area of the Silk Road Economic Belt, the region will also expand opening-up and strengthen exchanges and cooperation with neighboring countries, the report said.

Xinjiang is well known for its outstanding natural beauty, attracting hundreds of mil-

lions of tourists from home and abroad every year.

The region received more than 158 million tourists in 2020, and the regional government expects to receive more than 200 million this year and 400 million by 2025.

"We've seen a tourism boom in recent years, as more people find Xinjiang a safe and beautiful place," said An Ping, a local lawmaker and owner of a two-story restaurant in Turpan, one of Xinjiang's best-known tourist destinations.

"My main wish this year is for the COVID-19 epidemic to come to an end. I believe our business will rebound to the previous boom once the tourism market heats up," An said. *Xinhua*

SPORT



Himid Mao

Mao moves to new outfit in Egypt

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

TANZANIAN midfielder, Himid Mao Mkami, has completed a move to another Egypt Premier League club, Entag El-Harby SC, leaving the league's outfit ENPPI.

The 28-year-old Mao (pictured), has joined the club as a free agent, following the expiry of his contract with ENPPI at the end of last season.

Mao becomes the fourth player to be signed by Entag El-Harby SC preceded by Ahmed Saber also from ENPPI, Mohamed Sosta from Aswan and goalkeeper Ahmed Busca.

Entag El-Harby SC has made a poor start to this season's Egypt Premier League, a move

that has seen them placed lowly in the league standing, with just five points after playing nine games.

The flow of negative results led to the sacking of the club's coach Mokhtar Mokhtar, who was replaced by Hamada Sedky.

The recruitment of Mao is part of Entag El-Harby SC squad's development, and it is believed they will be able to compete with other clubs participating in the Egypt Premier League.

Mao started playing football in Egypt in July 2018, signing with Petrojet, but he a year later moved to ENPPI, playing 22 games last season.

In total, the midfielder has played 54 games in Egypt, scoring three goals and providing one assist for Petrojet and ENPPI.

Clock ticking as Williams returns to Australia looking for 24

MELBOURNE

SERENA Williams has had plenty of time to reflect on her quest for a record equalling 24th Grand Slam title while being quarantined in five-star comfort for two weeks ahead of the Australian Open.

Stuck on number 23 for four years, Williams has brushed off failures and near misses at matching Margaret Court's mark with the self-assurance of someone convinced her time will come.

But time is running out for the 39-year-old American to reach the career milestone that has become one of the sport's longest running storylines.

So it will be again when play begins on Monday at Melbourne Park.

"It's good to always have goals that you try to reach and kind of see what happens," said Williams, who ended her 14-day COVID-19 quarantine with an exhibition match against Naomi Osaka followed by a visit to the zoo with three-year-old daughter Olympia.

Australia has long been a happy place for Williams with seven of her 23 major titles coming at Melbourne Park, including her last in 2017 when she beat sister Venus in the final and later announced she was pregnant.

The ensuing years on court, however, have been barren and turbulent.

The winner of 73 career titles, only once in the last four years -- a lower level Australian Open tuneup event in 2020 -- has Williams celebrated a win.

Four times -- twice at both Wimbledon and U.S. Open -- Williams has come agonizingly close to that 24th Slam, only to be denied at the final hurdle. At the All-England Club in 2018 she was dismissed 6-3 6-3 by Angelique Kerber and a year later humbled 6-2 6-2 by Simona Halep.

There were very similar unhappy endings at Flushing Meadows where the woman many consider the greatest of all-time was unceremoniously dispatched by two up-and-comers; Japan's Osaka and Canada's Bianca Andreescu, who celebrated their first Grand Slam at Williams's expense.

Williams was left in rage and tears at the 2018 U.S. Open during an ill-tempered final won by Osaka 6-2 6-4.

The following year it was Andreescu, playing in the U.S. Open main draw for the first time, delivering the disappointment with a 6-3 7-5 victory.

Williams's downward spiral accelerated last season.

Her best result was a semi-final appearance at the U.S. Open with a third round exit in Australia and a second round loss at the French Open.

After each failure there was dejection but seldom any mention of defeat.

"It's really not about 24 or 23 or 25 it's really just about going out there and giving my best effort no matter what," said Williams ahead of the 2019 Wimbledon final. "I feel like I have things to lose but I also have nothing to lose, it's like I am in the middle."

Serena Williams has had plenty of time to reflect on her quest for a record equalling 24th Grand Slam title while being quarantined in five-star comfort for two weeks ahead of the Australian Open.

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SPORTS

Ugandan musician to perform in Dar

By Francis Kajubi

FRANCE's Embassy in Tanzania, in collaboration with Golden Tulip Hotel, is hosting Ugandan musician, Sandra Nankoma, to perform at the hotel in Dar es Salaam tonight before the jazz and soul music fans who will show up for the concert.

The free entrance indoor concert is organised with the purpose of promoting jazz and soul music in Tanzania as the embassy targets to organise similar events for the rest of the East African countries.

Addressing the press in the city yesterday, Cecille Frobort, the embassy's Head of Development Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, stated that the Ugandan jazz singer is an award winner of the Best Artiste out of Africa and Caribbean presented by the French Institut Francaise in Paris in 2017.

"Sandra is a jazz and soul singer who has collaborated with numerous French artists and music producers. The French embassy is proud to have invited her to come and perform in Tanzania and she will continue to lead a program for supporting culture in Tanzania and contribute locally to the goal of building a new unprecedented relationship between the African continent and France in the field of culture," Cecille added.

Moreover, she said that France's Embassy in Tanzania is targeting to support female artists across Africa to spearhead the spirit of gender equality through arts.

"President Emmanuel Macron spearheads this commitment through the feminist foreign policy. France is advocating gender equality in international forums, leads programs for the emancipation of women and supports especially feminist activists around the world such as Sandra," she added. Sandra revealed that jazz and soul music fans should expect a great show as she will be performing with live instruments.

She stated: "I would like to assure all jazz and soul music fans that their



Ugandan musician, Sandra Nankoma. PHOTO: FRANCIS KAJUBI

day for enjoyment has finally come so let them come and have fun. I am calling upon underground female artists to work hard for their talents and get them blown to the world."

She disclosed: "Jazz and soul music has not grown to the required level in the region, so, the embassy deserves kudos for its initiatives that are intended at making this kind of music popular in the region."

The artiste is convinced that music is the vehicle for social change as important

as gender equality.

She noted she is keen on promoting the beauty and the richness of the African culture.

"I'm calling upon equal treatment of female artistes when it comes to either endorsement or promotions in the mainstream. Female artistes have been left behind for decades now when it comes to endorsements. I'm calling for a change of mindsets among the entertainment industry stakeholders towards female artistes," she said.

Mkude now joins Simba SC training



Simba's midfielder, Jonas Mkude.

By Correspondents Ismail Tano & Nassir Nchimbi

MIDFIELDER Jonas Mkude has finally been allowed to resumed training at his outfit, Simba SC, this week with the rest of the side's players after facing a one-month suspension by Simba's Disciplinary Committee which is under Dar es Salaam Special Zone's Police Commissioner, Suleiman Kova.

Mkude, who has been absent for a total of eight matches that Simba took part in all competitions, moreover missed three games during coach Sven Vandebroek tenure at the club.

The player missed, among others, Simba's tie with Majimaji FC in the Azam Sports Federation Cup tournament's third round.

Mkude was also left out of the club's Vodacom Premier League (VPL)'s match against Ifeju FC, and this season's CAF Champions League game between Simba and Zimbabwe's FC Platinum, which took place in Dar es Salaam before Vandebroek resigned from the team on January 7 this year and moved to Moroccan side, FAR Rabat.

Simba, under caretaker coach, Seleman Matola, missed mkude's services in this year's Mapinduzi

Cup tournament, which took place in Zanzibar and ended with Yanga clinching the showpiece's top honour, edging age-ol rivals, Simba, 4-3 in penalty shootout of the final on January 13.

Mkude was as well not included in Simba's participation in a tournament, dubbed 'Simba Super Cup', which took place Dar es salaam last week.

Foreign squads, Tout Puissant Mazembe of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Al Hilal of Sudan, also took part in the tournament.

Simba, coached by new gaffer Didier Gomes, lifted the 'Simba Super Cup' silverware, cruising to 4-1 victory over Al Hilal and holding TP Mazembe to 0-0 draw.

According to Simba's Disciplinary committee, Mkude was accused of committing three offenses.

He was accused of failure to attend an orientation seminar involving the squad's players, technical bench and officials. The penalty was 1m/-.

He was moreover accused of failing to arrive on time in the side's camp while the club was preparing for the VPL game against Coastal Union.

The punishment he received for the offense was a severe reprimand and a fine of 1m/-, he was moreover placed in custody for six months.

The player was alleged to have failed to attend the squad's camp on December 26, 2020 without permission.

In this allegation, the committee found him not guilty after it unmistakably confirmed the charge.

The Disciplinary Committee asked Mkude to return to the camp immediately to continue training and if he does not do so he will have committed another offense of misconduct.

Mkude was required to pay all fines within one month.

On January 21, this year, Mkude, through his personal social media account, apologized and said there were issues between him and the Simba's leadership.

He disclosed: "I apologize to the players, members, fans, technical bench and management, I ask them to forgive me because a human being is wrong."

"What I promise you is, such a tendency will never happen again," Mkude said.

Mkude, a key midfielder at the club, had missed eight games including the return leg of this season's CAF Champions League's first round against FC Platinum of Zimbabwe, which took place in Dar es Salaam.

Mkude has won multiple trophies with the side, including the VPL's top honour three times.

Tebas: Spain taxes Messi twice what Italy would

MADRID

THE leak of Lionel Messi's multimillion dollar contract with Barcelona has brought attention to the high amount of taxes football players pay in Spain, prompting the league to raise concerns about the departure of its top stars.

Details of Messi's €555 million (\$671 million) contract over four seasons were released by the El Mundo newspaper on Sunday, upsetting the club and instigating the promise of lawsuits.

The contract made headlines everywhere, and Spanish league president Javier Tebas took the opportunity on Monday to underline the high amount of taxes owed by Messi. He noted that the Argentina great has to pay about €270m (\$326m) in taxes for his contract, nearly half of its value.

Tebas said that in Italy, for example, a player with a similar contract would have to pay about €135m (\$163m) in taxes.

"We will have an exodus of talent to other countries," Tebas wrote on Twitter. "The [league] will lose players who help generate 1.37% of the country's GDP and more than 180,000 jobs."

Tebas has long criticised Spain's tax requirements for football players, saying they put the league at a disadvantage in transfer negotiations. He has pushed for the Spanish government to change some of its tax rules that may scare some players away.

Rules in Italy and France are considered less strict on players than in Spain.

Local tax authorities in Spain

have been going after football stars in recent years, accusing several of them of fraud over how they have interpreted the local laws, especially regarding image rights.

Authorities amped their monitoring of players' tax filings and have been making a point of bringing attention to alleged irregularities.

Messi himself was convicted of tax fraud in Spain in 2017, receiving a 21-month suspended prison sentence that ended up as a fine.

Cristiano Ronaldo and Neymar also were among the several players targeted by authorities. Neymar left for French club Paris Saint-Germain and Ronaldo for Italian team Juventus.

Jose Mourinho was investigated as well for the time he was coach of Real Madrid.

Among the details on Messi's leaked contract was a fidelity clause and a bonus for signing an extension back in 2017.

El Mundo said Monday that Messi had to learn Catalan and was encouraged to "make every effort to integrate into Catalan society."

The Spanish daily also said Messi asked to be relieved of the contract if the Catalonia region gained independence from Spain.

The 33-year-old Messi has been with Barcelona for nearly two decades, helping them win more than 30 titles.

He asked to leave the club last season, saying he was not happy with the direction they were headed, but his request was denied.

He can leave for free at the end of this season.

(Agencies)

Neymar: I will never stop partying; I'm not immature

PARIS

PARIS Saint-Germain and Brazil forward Neymar has said he will never stop partying despite claims he is immature.

Neymar is known for hosting lavish celebrations with big personalities in attendance, inevitably drawing media attention.

"So, who doesn't like to party? Everyone likes to have fun," Neymar said in an interview with French station TF1.

"I know when I can go, I know when I can do it, when I can't."

"Contrary to what people think, that I'm immature, that I don't know what I do."

Neymar, who will turn 29 on Friday and could soon sign a new deal with PSG, was criticised for staging a weeklong New Year's Eve party for a reported 150 people at his seafront mansion in Rio de Janeiro, despite a rise in COVID-19 cases.

He added that he does not believe his social life hinders his performance on the pitch and said he needs to blow off some steam from football.

"I've been in football for several years," he said. "If you stay 100% with your head focused on just playing football, in my opinion, you end up exploding. It is

my time to relax, to be calm. ... I will never stop doing it."

Former Tottenham coach Mauricio Pochettino, who took over as PSG coach on Jan. 2, was asked whether he would give Neymar permission to take part in his sister Rafaella's birthday party in Brazil on March 11, which the player has attended in previous years.

"We will see when the time comes. When I started coaching, I said to myself that I would be inflexible, and I wouldn't let anyone go out," Pochettino said.

"After 12 years of coaching, I've come to realise how important it is to be flexible, and I like to negotiate everything."

The new generation likes to give their opinion and to be listened to. You get nothing from imposing things; you have to negotiate."

Since arriving in August 2017 at the Parc des Princes on a world-record €222 million signing from Barcelona, Neymar has won three Ligue 1 titles, to go with two Coupe de France, two Coupe de la Ligue and two Trophee des Champions. He's also finished Champions League runner-up.

Neymar has scored 83 goals in 101 appearances with PSG.

(Agencies)

Indian Super League coach sacked over 'unacceptable' rape comments

NEW DELHI

FORMER South Africa coach Stuart Baxter has been sacked as the manager of Indian Super League's Odisha FC for "unacceptable" comments about rape during a post-match interview, the club said.

On Monday, after his side lost 1-0 to Jamshedpur, the English manager and former player said in a complaint against referees: "I think one of my players would have to rape someone or get raped himself if he was going to get a penalty."

Odisha said shortly after that it "unreservedly" apologised for the 67-year-old's remarks, before tweeting Tuesday that Baxter had been sacked.

"Odisha FC has decided to terminate Head Coach, Stuart Baxter's contract with immediate effect," the club tweeted.

"The interim coach for the remain-

der of the season will be announced soon."

Club owner Rohan Sharma added Monday on Twitter that he was "absolutely disgusted and infuriated by the comments".

"I've said Odisha FC is a safe space for all, and to make light of a serious awful crime in such an offhanded way is reprehensible. I sincerely apologize to everyone on my behalf and the clubs," he added.

Baxter coached South Africa from 2004-05 and again in 2017-19, and joined Odisha in the middle of last year. He also coached Kaizer Chiefs and SuperSport United during his time in South Africa.

An average of nearly 90 rapes were reported in India every day in 2019, according to data by the National Crime Records Bureau, but large numbers are thought to go unreported.

AFP

Club World Cup participants - can anyone stop Bayern Munich?

DOHA

BAYERN Munich jet off to Qatar this week targeting another title at the FIFA Club World Cup, taking their place in the six-team tournament as winners of last year's UEFA Champions League.

These are the teams who will be challenging the Germans, overwhelming favourites to make it an eighth straight European winner of the competition:

Palmeiras

As winners of the Copa Libertadores, South America's premier club competition, Palmeiras represent Bayern's primary threat in Qatar. Of the four Club World Cups not won by a European club, all have gone to teams from Brazil, with Corinthians taking the honours in 2000 and 2012, Sao Paulo in 2005 and Internacional in 2006.

Palmeiras, Brazil's most successful club with 10 national titles, secured the Libertadores trophy for the second time over the weekend, defeating Sao Paulo state rivals Santos 1-0 courtesy of Breno Lopes' goal in the ninth minute of stoppage time.

Former Shakhtar Donetsk star Luiz Adriano, who returned to Brazil in 2019 after more than a decade in Europe, initially earned a move to Ukraine after starring for Internacional in the 2006 tournament, as the Porto Alegre outfit defeated Barcelona 2-1 in the final.

Gabriel Menino, a versatile midfielder but also touted as the heir apparent at right-back to Dani Alves for Brazil, is one to watch while a host of Europe's top clubs are reportedly courting 18-year-old attacker Gabriel Veron, who missed the Copa Libertadores final due to injury.

Al Ahly

The Egyptian giants celebrated a record-extending ninth African Champions League title last year, defeating Cairo rivals Zamalek in the first final featuring clubs from the same country.

South African Pitso Mosimane became only the third coach to win the competition with two clubs,



Robert Lewandowski and Thomas Mueller have another trophy in their sights, this time at the Club World Cup in Qatar. (Agencies)

having led Mamelodi Sundowns to the 2016 title. Al Ahly conceded just eight goals in 34 games in cruising to a fifth successive league triumph, and won the Egyptian Cup on penalties in December.

They will be appearing at the Club World Cup for the sixth time, their best showing a third-place finish 15 years ago when they were beaten in the semi-finals by eventual champions Internacional of Brazil.

Mohamed 'Afsha' Magdy, whose late winner saw off Zamalek to punch Al Ahly's ticket to Qatar, is one of several Egyptian internationals in the squad.

Ulsan Hyundai

The South Korean club return to Qatar barely six weeks after their Asian Champions League success. Ulsan reeled off nine successive wins once the delayed tournament restarted after its relocation to the Gulf state.

Former national team star Hong Myung-bo, a cornerstone of the side that reached the 2002 World Cup semi-finals, has replaced Kim Do-hoon as coach.

Veteran striker Junior Negrao spent much of his career bouncing around

the Brazilian lower leagues but has found a place to call home in Ulsan.

His double in the December final secured victory over Iran's Persepolis, and a haul of 26 goals in 27 K-League games last term mark him out as the man to watch for the Koreans.

Tigres UANL

The Mexican side ended their long wait for an elusive CONCACAF Champions League crown with a dramatic victory over Los Angeles FC in the 2020 final.

After finishing runners-up in three of the past four editions, Tigres finally got their hands on the trophy as former Marseille and France striker Andre-Pierre Gignac hit a late winner in Orlando.

Gignac, 35, has been a huge success at the Liga-MX outfit, scoring 144 goals in 244 games since joining on a free transfer in 2015, although his effectiveness could be hampered by a hip injury sustained last month.

Mexican champions on seven occasions, most recently in 2019, Tigres are making their Club World Cup debut. No team from the region has ever reached the final.

Al Duhail

The reigning champions of the host nation, Al Duhail received a bye through the first round after would-be Oceania representatives Auckland City withdrew because of the pandemic and related quarantine measures required by the New Zealand authorities.

Managed by former France international and ex-Rennes and Nottingham Forest coach Sabri Lamouchi, Al Duhail can count on the experience of Morocco international Medhi Benatia, formerly of Bayern and Juventus, in defence.

Much of Al Duhail's firepower is derived from Brazilian duo Edmilson Junior and Dudu, the latter incidentally appearing twice for Palmeiras in the Copa Libertadores group stage before moving on loan to Qatar in July.

Almoez Ali, who scored a tournament-record nine goals in Qatar's 2019 Asian Cup triumph, is another player to monitor while Kenya striker Michael Olunga recently joined from Japanese club Kashiwa Reysol.

AFP

Wan-Bissaka showcases attacking ability United need to coax out of him

MANCHESTER, England

IT was not just the margin of victory that was a surprise as Manchester United thrashed Southampton 9-0 at Old Trafford on Tuesday. As well as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's team emphatically ending their problems in front of goal with their biggest win since beating Ipswich by the same scoreline in March 1995, a chaotic 90 minutes also featured a red card for 19-year-old Southampton midfielder Alexandre Jankewitz after just 77 seconds of his first Premier League start and Aaron Wan-Bissaka popping up with a rare goal to give United the lead and spark the rout.

Two from substitute Anthony Martial, a Bruno Fernandes penalty and goals from Marcus Rashford, Edinson Cavani, Scott McTominay and Daniel James also contributed to a nightmare night for the Saints, who ended the game with nine men following Jan Bednarek's late dismissal. Bednarek summed up his team's misfortune by having already scored an own goal and conceded a penalty. Southampton manager Ralph Hasenhuttl at least knows his players are capable of recovering from such a severe result after losing 9-0 to Leicester just 15 months ago.

Solskjaer's men took advantage of the visitors' reduced numbers to record their biggest win in nearly 26 years, and among a host of positives as United moved level on points at the top of the Premier League table with Manchester City, Wan-Bissaka's contribution provided a glimpse of the team the Norwegian hopes they are becoming.

"Definitely the right side has traditionally been a challenge for us going forward," Solskjaer said afterward. "We haven't found a right-back to fill the [Antonio] Valencia void, but Aaron is getting better. I can't remember one full-back crossing for another to score."

That's exactly what Luke Shaw



Aaron Wan-Bissaka

did for Wan-Bissaka, who had raced almost the length of the pitch to get into the box.

There is no doubting Wan-Bissaka's defensive ability, especially in one-on-one situations, but he has work to do to earn a place among the best full-backs in the world, primarily because he is still learning how to make goals as well as stop them. The very best players in his position can do both, and at £50 million -- making him one of the 10 most expensive defenders in the world -- he will be expected to get there eventually.

It says everything about the type of right-back Wan-Bissaka is that before the game kicked off, he had recorded more tackles than any other player in the Premier League this season but had the same number

of assists as Victor Lindelof. He has another now after picking out Martial with a perfect cross, and could have had one more if Cavani had made more of a good chance before the Uruguayan was replaced at half-time.

It was Wan-Bissaka's defensive attributes that first attracted Solskjaer -- particularly two outstanding performances against Manchester City's Leroy Sane while playing for Crystal Palace -- but there is an acceptance that his attacking output can improve. It's something Solskjaer and his staff are working on. They are prepared to be patient given he is still only 23 and because of an understanding that racing forward out of defence is not as important at Selhurst Park as it is at Old Trafford.

"When you play at Man United as a full-back, you do have to provide assists," said Solskjaer last season. "We always knew that he was going to be hard to beat. He's one of the best one-versus-one defenders I've ever seen, but he used to be a winger when he was younger, so he's got it in him."

"We rely on the full-backs to go forward in the way we want to play. He's getting better on the ball; he doesn't give the ball away a lot. He's not been asked to venture forward much earlier in his career."

Wan-Bissaka -- one of a number of outstanding performers against Southampton -- only needs to look at United's other flank for inspiration.

Shaw has benefitted from the added competition created by the arrival of Alex Telles in the summer and is enjoying his best run of form since moving from Southampton as a teenager. Against his former club, he created five chances and made goals for Wan-Bissaka and Cavani, despite playing for only 45 minutes.

Sources have told ESPN that United are exploring the possibility of signing another right-back in the hope it might do for Wan-Bissaka what the signing of Telles has done for Shaw. England Under-21 international Max Aarons, currently at Norwich City, is one of the names in the frame ahead of the summer.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Club World Cup participants - can anyone stop Bayern Munich?

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Amissi Tambwe

International Red Cross Committee donates equipment to TPC

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THE International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) yesterday handed over assorted items worth 23m/- to Tanzania Wheelchair Basketball Association (TWBA) through Tanzania Paralympic Committee (TPC).

Speaking at the handover function, which took place in Dar es Salaam, Vincent Kaduma an official from ICRC, disclosed they are delighted to be associated with TWBA and Paralympic sports in the country.

He mentioned the items as balls, jerseys and 12 special wheelchairs to be used for playing wheelchair basketball.

Kaduma said the aim is to help in promoting wheelchair sports among people with disabilities and see to it Paralympic athletes effectively compete in local and international events.

"The ICRC has been supporting Paralympic sports in the country, we are delighted to be associated with Paralympic sports, this is the fifth year in a row we are supporting them," he said.

Tuma Dandi, TPC Chairman, thanked ICRC for the support, saying it will go a long way in promoting Paralympic sports, especially wheelchair basketball in the country.

Dandi asked TWBA leaders to make sure that they are taking care of the equipment, noting the equipment will help in growth of the sport.

"We really thank ICRC for this support, this will help in promoting and developing wheelchair sports in the country, and I'm appealing to TWBA leaders to take care of the equipment," he said.

He also urged TWBA to reach out to all regions of the country, saying there are abundant talents in the sport.

"There are many talented athletes in Arusha, Mbeya and Iringa who can be drafted into the national wheelchair hoops team, I'm calling on TWBA leaders to make sure that we are visiting all regions to look for talents," he said.

The TPC boss asked companies, organizations and individuals to support his committee so as to realize its dream of reaching out to many people with disabilities.

He said currently TPC is looking for financial and material support so as to organize a residential camp for powerlifting, Para swimmers and Para athletes who are to prepare for a qualification event for Tokyo Paralympics, which is expected to take place later this year.

Simba SC plays Dodoma Jiji FC, eager to trim lead at VPL top



Simba SC players participate in training in Dar es Salaam recently to shape up for the Vodacom Premier League and CAF Champions League fixtures. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

THE Vodacom Premier League (VPL) returns earlier with two rescheduled fixtures to take place today after a one month break.

Simba SC, Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC, Namungo FC and Dodoma Jiji FC will be in action.

The four teams had played less than 18 games when the league went into break to allow Tanzania's Taifa Stars participation in this year's African Nations Championship (CHAN) tournament and some of VPL sides to feature in Mapinduzi Cup tournament.

In Dodoma, the VPL defending champions Simba have the momentum ahead of their resumption tie with newly promoted Dodoma Jiji FC at Jamhuri Stadium.

Simba are confident after emerging as winners of a mini-tournament, known as 'Simba Super Cup', that involved DR Congo's TP Mazembe and Sudan's Al Hilal.

Simba beat Al Hilal 4-1 last week before settling for a goalless stalemate with TP Mazembe in their most recent fixture on Sunday.

They are unbeaten in their last eight league matches and they are on a five-game winning run as they sit second on the 18-team VPL log.

Simba's newly appointed head coach Didier Gomes da Rosa has insisted on the importance of this clash together with the weekend's blockbuster against Azam FC.

They have a chance to trim Yanga's lead at the summit to three points if the former can beat Dodoma Jiji FC today and rivals Azam FC on Sunday.

"You know that the Premier League is the main target, it is very important for us to win the league every year to continue playing in the Champions League," Gomes said when speaking to the media after the TP Mazembe match.

"It is very important, so we have to win the two next matches against Dodoma Jiji FC and Azam FC," he disclosed.

Dodoma Jiji FC, meanwhile will be hoping the one-month break can provide a platform for them to reignite their season, but it will be a tough ask against the strongest team in the country.

With the side occupying the 10th place on the VPL standing with 22 points from 17 games, the club is separated only by goal-difference from seventh-placed KMC FC, who have played a similar number of matches.

In Dar es Salaam, hosts KMC FC will be aiming at leapfrogging Polisi Tanzania when they take on Namungo FC at Uhuru Stadium.

The Councillors are placed seventh in the league's standing but they are only one point behind sixth-placed Polisi Tanzania, who have played one more game at this stage.

Yanga say ready to pay former striker

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

VODACOM Premier League (VPL) leaders, Yanga, have assured their fans and supporters they will settle their debt with the club's former forward, Amissi Tambwe.

Yesterday reports went viral that the world football governing body, FIFA, directed that Yanga have faced a ban from signing new players for three transfer windows due to failure by the team to pay Tambwe his three-month salary and part of the sign-on fee amounting to 41m/-.

However, yesterday afternoon, Yanga through their spokesman, Antonio Nugaz, confirmed to have received the letter from FIFA and he said they will pay the debt as soon as possible.

"Let me assure our fans that we have received the letter from FIFA's Players Status Committee (PSC) informing us to pay 41m-, we will pay it as soon as possible and continue signing new players," he said.

Tambwe, who had a good spell at the club, first sued Yanga after the club failed to pay him the debt, including sign-on fees and salaries, after his unceremonious exit from the club at the end of the 2018/19 season.

It is reported that despite the FIFA ruling Yanga must pay the player, the club lodged a complaint with the Court of Arbitration of Sports (CAS) in Zurich, who also supported Tambwe by insisting the player must be paid his dues.

One of domestic radio stations first broke the news, the station played an interview with Tambwe's lawyer Felix Majani, who announced the news.

He said if Yanga fail to pay the debt in prescribed time, the outfit will be deducted points from the Premier League and the outfit will also be handed a heavy fine.

Azam FC in high spirit ahead of VPL, Federation Cup matches

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

VODACOM Premier League side Azam FC's head coach George Lwandamina says the team are ready for the coming league's matches and Federation Cup tournament's fixture.

The Zambian tactician issued the comments on Tuesday after his side had posted 1-1 draw with Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) football giants, TP Mazembe, in a friendly clash at Azam Complex in Dar es Salaam.

During the league break, Azam FC has played five friendly games, winning three, posting draw in one and

losing one.

"I think my boys are now ready for resumption of league games, the friendly games we have played have helped us be ready for the coming games, they were good as they kept my players fit and ready," he said.

Azam are placed third in the Premier League's table and they will resume the top flight with a match against defending champions Simba in the city on Sunday.

On Tuesday, Azam scored their goal through midfielder Never Tigere.

The visitors equalized through Adam Boso in a entertaining and

competitive friendly match.

Meanwhile, Azam FC's information officer Thabit Zakaria said morale in the team's camp is high after the recovery of midfielder Abubakary Salum and defender Aggrey Morris.

The players were injured during the side's training ahead of the friendly match against Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC.

Zakaria said the two, who are influential in the team, are now fit but he noted it is the prerogative of the head coach to either feature them on Sunday or not.

“

Let me assure our fans that we have received the letter from FIFA's Players Status Committee (PSC) informing us to pay 41m-, we will pay it as soon as possible and continue signing new players

Flexibles by David Chikoko



EATV THURSDAY

MORNING @ 11:00

DADAZ.

DADAZ.

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 MPYA
12:30 Bongo Hits
13:00 Msosi Kitaani (r)
13:30 Kali Za Wana
14:00 Ujenzi (r)
14:30 DK10 Za Maangamizi
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Wagonga Ulimbo (r)
16:00 Ubongo Kids (r)
16:30 #HSHTAG
17:00 5SELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:30 EATV SAA I
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 Kibiashara Zaidi

DADAZ A show that explores social and political issues from a feminine perspective.

eastafrica RADIO

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

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM