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National Pg 2
Centre fights against cutworms



National Pg 3
No more 'Nanene' shows



National Pg 4
Valuation of empowerment funds



National Pg 5
Judges elected to African court



'Post-harvest losses eat up 40pc of crop output'

●MPs want investments to modernise agriculture

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

LEGISLATORS yesterday asked the government to invest heavily in agriculture to transform the sector from predominantly subsistence to commercial farming.

Debating the recently tabled national development plan 2021/2022 and the third five-year development plan (2021/2022-2025/2026), the lawmakers specifically pointed out production of quality seeds, construction and development of irrigation infrastructure as urgently needed to change agriculture for the better.

Special Seats MP, Pindi Chana said development of the sector should go together with availability of reliable and coordinated markets for crops, especially maize.

She said that maize farmers are still struggling to access markets within and outside the country, after investing a lot in cultivating the crop, also raising concerns over high prices of fertilizers where a 50kg bag is sold at 50,000/-.

Chana insisted on the urgency of controlling post-harvest losses, noting that they take up anything from 30 per cent and 40 per cent of harvested



US Ambassador to Tanzania Donald Wright (L) greets the East African Community Secretary General Ambassador Liberat Mumukoko in style while presenting his credentials at the EAC headquarters in Arusha yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Asraji Mvungi

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RENOVATIONS

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CANCER CENTRE

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RENT COLLECTION

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Govt sticks with local inspection of vehicles

By Correspondent Felix Andrew

THE government has defended its decision to inspect all imported used vehicles in the country beginning next month, saying it will create more jobs and boost revenue collection.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday at a sensitization meeting with importers of used vehicles, the Director General of the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) Dr Yusuf Ngenya said the decision will see more Tanzanians hired in the designated garages for inspection.

"Conducting vehicle inspection in the country has many advantages; it helps increase employment opportunities for our garages and the government would earn income for development activities," he said.

Most importers were not happy with the procedure being conducted abroad and thus they asked the government to change the requirement, he stated.

Dr Ngenya said the government has decided to engage vehicle importers on the changes, asking them to stick to the required standards before importing used cars into the country.

He said before the changes importers were obliged to complete all these procedures abroad through agents who were appointed by the bureau. The government has now decided to conduct the inspection exercise locally using its own experts, he explained.

"We have been assigned to conduct destination inspection already and preparations have started. We ask for sufficient cooperation from all stakeholders once we start," he declared.

He said the decision to conduct vehicle inspection locally was taken to reduce unnecessarily cumbersome procedures and improve the country's economy.

Vehicle importer Yusuf Kimwemwe, representing the others, asked TBS to collaborate with the Tanzania Ports Authority to fast track the services, urging the TBS

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State hiring 12,000 health staff this FY

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

THE government has said it will employ 12,476 health workers at different levels before the end of the 2020/2021 financial year.

The Deputy Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Dr Godwin Mollel said that apart from addressing the shortage of staffing in public health facilities, the government has also constructed new hospitals, health centres and dispensaries across the country.

The government took initiatives to expand its zonal hospitals and construction of ten regional referral hospitals, he said, noting that a

“As to when the government will allocate health workers in Tanga Region, he said some of the 12,476 workers will be posted in the region

total of 102 hospitals have been constructed in various districts as well as 487 health centres and 1,198 dispensaries.

He was responding to a question from Special Seats MP, Mwantumu Zodo who inquired about government strategies to curb the shortage of health workers, asserting that there is a shortage of 16,000 healthcare providers countrywide.

The deputy minister said the government has been taking measures to address the shortage of health workers and thus from 2016 to 2020, it has employed a total of 14,000 health practitioners.

Around 565 health workers were employed on contract basis, he said, noting that those under special arrangements were paid salaries from hospital collections as well as financial support from development partners.

"We will continue to employ health

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Minister raps Posts, directs law review

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

COMMUNICATIONS and Information Technology minister Dr Faustine Ndugulile has said there is need for the government to change laws governing the Tanzania Posts Corporation (TPC) to modernize its operations.

Dr Ndugulile (pictured) gave the remarks here yesterday when opening TPC Workers Council,



saying that the law is now obsolete and it does not go with the current environment, thus the need for its review.

"I have already instructed drafting minor amendments to the law, but there is need now to see how we can make major amendments to enable it go with the present environment," he said.

The policy used by the corporation is also outdated and need review, he stated, affirming that right now there are reviews for amendments being done and when ready, their provisions should go in tandem with the present situation.

He similarly directed the

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Prime Minister Kasimu Majaliwa (R) exchanges ideas with Constitutional and Justice minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba (L) and Home Affairs minister George Simbachawene during the House session in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

By Guardian Correspondent, Simiyu

Effective method to get rid of cutworms - Tari

THE Tanzania Agriculture Research Institute (TARI) has said that spraying pesticides during the night is the best and effective way to fight cutworms that feed on foliage, buds and shoots in farms.

Mshaghuley Ishika coordinator for agricultural technologies at TARI said most of the farmers have been making mistakes by spraying pesticides during in the morning and afternoon, which is not a proper time to do the exercise.

He made the remarks here when he met with farmers and extension officers from Simiyu, Shinyanga, and Mara Region to commemorate 'Farmers Field Day' held at Nyakabindi research centre.

He urged farmers to start applying the method now and they will be happy with the results.

"We have decided to spend our time to educate the farmers on the proper time of spraying pesticides in their farms.

According to him, TARI has found

the new method more effective so if farmers could adopt it and start spraying the pesticides during the night, they will achieve their goals.

"During night the cutworms' heads are usually up and legs down which makes it easier to kill them with the pesticide, but in the morning and during afternoon, the insects' heads are usually down and leg up and it is difficult for the pesticides to work effectively," he explained.

Ishika further urged farmers in Simiyu and the surrounding regions to utilise the presence of the research centre so as to learn various ways that could add value to their crops.

"Farmers can also get quality seeds at the centre, it is high time now for the farmers to apply modern farming

methods which include choosing quality seeds from better yields," he said.

Paschalina Hayuna, an extension and research services officer from the Ministry of Agriculture said that the ministry is well prepared to ensure that the Nyakabindi centre provides the best services to farmers.

She said that the government had already instructed the Agricultural Seed Agency (ASA) to ensure that they supply quality seeds to farmers which include establishing special shop of seeds at Nyakabindi research centre.

Itilima District Commissioner (DC) Benson Kilangi urged the ministry to speed up the pace of supplying seeds to the farmers as shortages of seeds have been forcing them to buy sub-standards seeds.

'Post-harvest losses eat up 40pc of crop output'

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maize.

Apart from the National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA), the government should come up with plans to encourage other maize buyers such as the World Food Programme (WFP) and support from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Special Seats MP Halima Mdee (Chadema) said the country's agriculture sector still lags behind with limited funding and investments, pointing out that the budget allocation for the Ministry of Agriculture is small, as in this financial year the portfolio received 188bn/-.

"There should be efforts to improve irrigation schemes to engage in commercial farming and cultivate throughout the year," she said, underlining that the agriculture sector is crucial since it contributes 26 percent of the national income.

Mdee highlighted the need to protect and improve the private sector since it is expected to contribute more than 40trn/- to the country's economy in five years of implementing the third five-year development plan.

Ludewa MP, Joseph Kamonga advised the government to invest in fertilizer manufacturing factories to reduce the cost of production and ensure reliable availability and distribution of agricultural inputs. Fertilizers are sold at high prices rising to 56,000/- and even up to 65,000/- per bag, he stated.

Farmers use at least four fertilizer bags per acre which is too expensive taking into consideration that they are not sure of markets for their crops, he asserted, telling the House that the country must prioritize investing in the agriculture since it employs over 70 percent of the population.

The MP underscored the need to increase funding for research institutions and setting up soil testing laboratories in districts for experts to test the soil and advice farmers accordingly.

Special Seats MP Benadetha Mshashu urged the revival of dormant irrigation schemes across the country to boost the production of food and cash crops. Efforts should be directed to production of quality

seeds as well as empowering the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) which is mandated to coordinate researches that are demand-driven, to solve problems that limit increased production of crops.

The MP maintained that there are still market problems for most agricultural products, thus the government needs to look into ways to ensure coordinated markets, for farmers to benefit from their sweat.

Nominated MP Humphrey Polepole said there were a number of economic successes recorded during implementation of the second five-year development plan, and further development progress is expected in the third five-year development plan-2021/2022-2025/2026.

He said that implementation of strategic flagship projects is a clear indication of economic development, with the government managing to control inflation as it has been reduced from five to around three percent.

"We have been able to produce enough electricity. We started with 1,300MW and we are now generating 1,600MW," the party publicist underlined, noting that plans are ongoing to connect the remaining 2,000 villages to the main grid.

He said the government has also prioritized protection of local factories as well as restricting importation of goods which are extensively produced in the country.

Kawe MP Josephat Gwajima said the fifth phase government has done a number of things towards ensuring economic development, like connecting more villages to the main power grid. He said in 2015 only 2,018 villages were connected to the main power grid, but to date 10,263 villages have been connected.

When President John Magufuli took office 2015 the state-owned electricity firm-TANESCO was receiving a 438bn/- subsidy each year, but it is now operating independently, he stated.

Tanzania has about 29 million hectares of land that has potential for irrigation farming, but unfortunately due to limited infrastructure less than 700,000 hectares have irrigation infrastructures, the MP intoned.

State hiring 12,000 health staff this FY

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practitioners to replace vacancies left by retiring personnel or those being incapacitated. We will have employed 12,476 health care providers up to the end of this financial year," he emphasised.

As to when the government will allocate health workers in Tanga Region, he said some of the 12,476

workers will be posted in the region.

Experts say World Health Organization (WHO) statistics affirm that the Tanzanian doctor-to-patient ratio stands at 1 doctor for 20,000 potential patients, far below the desirable doctor-population ratio pegged by WHO at 1:1,000.

Govt sticks with local inspection of vehicles

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management to work on the challenges and recommendations raised by stakeholders at the meeting.

Earlier presenting a paper on vehicle inspection, the TBS Director of Quality Control, Lazaro Msasalaga said that preparations for the exercise had commenced and TBS has set aside adequate space.

In that regard, the \$150 (346,366/-) inspection fee that was paid in the country of export on imported vehicles will now be paid in Tanzania.

"Any vehicles that will be inspected and found not to comply with the requirements will have to undergo upgrading and further inspection at the UDA yard adjacent to Dar es Salaam port before they are cleared and allowed on public roads," he specified. The vehicles will be inspected at reserved yards after it has been cleared by customs officials at the port, and if it is found not to meet the required standards, the owner will not be handed his vehicle. Instead he will be directed to rectify the error," he stated.

TBS will be out and out to ensure that all used cars imported into the country comply with the

set requirements for such cars before they are allowed on the roads.

Explaining the decision, he said TBS has already built capacity of vehicle inspectors, and it is only fair that they started practising what they have been trained to do at a great cost.

The decision to use own inspectors will ensure that local garages get business, and at the same time the government gets revenues in that exercise, he reiterated, noting that repairing imported vehicles will create employment for Tanzanians who will also gain experience on the work.

Since 2002 TBS inspects vehicles to be imported into the country using four contracted agents, one of whom is stationed in Dubai while the other three are stationed in Japan.

The main objective is to ensure that all used motor vehicles imported in the country meet all required standards of road worthiness.

"TBS has been securing inspection agencies through competitive international tender," he stated, adding that the National Institute of Transport (NIT) can conduct the job with high efficiency.



Temeke District Commissioner Godwin Gondwe (2nd L) inspects the ongoing construction of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) infrastructure from Gerezani to Mbagala area in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Story on Page 4. Photo: Maelezo

Minister raps Posts, directs law review

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corporation to strengthen its research unit, marketing and innovation to enable it operate without making losses.

He stated a vision of seeing the corporation transform and abandoning routine operations, by taking up innovative products to satisfy present day market demands.

"In my position I do not expect to see the corporation operate at a loss. You must be innovative; we should not just be selling postage stamps. We have to think of other products that are much needed, do research to find out what the public needs in the current environment and abandon analogy-based products," he stated.

The corporation ought to

increase its pace in income collection to hike its dividend to the government, unlike what it has been doing up to now, the minister affirmed, directing the TPC Workers Council to ensure it makes changes to TPC structure to improve operations.

"The corporation's structure is not perfect. We must have a friendly structure that will simplify operations, striking off a

situation where people are given responsibilities but have nothing to do.

There are regional postmasters who cannot give decisions even for buying stationery," he charged.

The Postmaster General and chairman of the Workers Council, Hassan Mwangombe said they will make sure they work on the directives given by the minister to enhance performance.



National Assembly Deputy Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson (L) speaks with the delegation from College of Business Education (CBE) in Dar es Salaam led by the College's Rector Prof. Emmanuel Mjema (R) at her office in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: National Assembly

Govt cancels 2021 'Nanenane' shows

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE government has cancelled this year's annual agricultural exhibitions commonly known as 'Nane Nane' and directed the funds budgeted for the show to be used to improve extension services.

It will also form a taskforce to evaluate the impact of the historic farmers' annual event and come up with new recommendations on how to improve it in the future.

The announcement was made here yesterday by Agriculture minister, Prof Adolf Nkenda, adding that the decision was reached after a two-days meeting that brought together agricultural extension officers from all the district councils and regions in the country.

"We are in communication with other ministries and government departments that had set budget for the 2021 'Nane Nane' exhibitions to channel the money towards agricultural extension services," said the minister.

The minister added, "Let no money be spent on issues related to the agricultural exhibitions and those who had set budgets for per diems have to cancel them and on journeys for the preparations should report back immediately".

Prof Nkenda added that the government is committed to improving extension services and enable extension officers reach farmers on the ground.

In December last year, the Permanent Secretary in the ministry, Gerald Kusaya said preparations for the 2021 Nane Nane had started, adding that the event was nationally scheduled to be held at Fatma Mwasa grounds in Tabora

Addressing a press conference here, he noted that the exhibitions that started in 1993 have been

held 28 times in six out of the eight agro-ecological zones. It is the first time the national exhibitions will be held in Western zone.

He said the farmers' exhibitions have been held in the following zones southern highland, northern highland, central, eastern, southern and Lake.

The PS noted that in all the zones, the exhibition have been held not less than three times consecutively to help raise capacity of the zones to host the event annually since it provides opportunity for farmers to showcase their products.

He said through the exhibitions farmers get more information and technology to improve the agricultural sector. "We expect more people to attend this year' agricultural exhibition and preparations for the national event are on high gear," said the PS.

He called on regional authorities to start planning for zonal exhibitions too, adding trend shows that the number of exhibitors increase almost every year, a good sign of development in agriculture sector.

Kusaya noted that despite COVID-19 pandemic, the number of exhibitors nationwide who showcased different technology, livestock, farming equipment among others increased from 2,750 in 2019 to 4,150 in 2020.

He said the exhibitions are held at different grounds in the eight zones of Eastern zone (MwalimuNyerer-Morogoro), Central (Nzuguni-Dodoma), Southern (Ngongo Lindi) Southern Highlands(John Mwakangale-Mbeya), Eastern Lake(Nyakabindi-Simiyu),Western Lake(Nyamhongolo-Mwanza),Western(Fatma Mwasa-Tabora) and Northern(Themiarusha).

Govt will spend 27bn/- to renovate old hospitals countrywide - minister

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

THE government plans to spend 27bn/- in the 2021/2022 financial year for renovation of old district hospitals across the country.

Deputy minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Government) Dr Festo Dugange made the statement in the National Assembly yesterday when responding to a supplementary question from Makete Member of Parliament, Festo Sanga (CCM).

According to the deputy minister, the aim is to improve infrastructure of the old hospitals for better service delivery in all public health facilities, including one in Makete District, Njombe Region.

"We will allocate 27bn/- in the coming financial year for renovation of structures at old hospitals across the country," he said.

Earlier, in his basic question, Mbeya Rural legislator, Benaya Kapinga (CCM) asked when the

government would construct the district hospital in Mbinga district council, Ruvuma Region.

Responding, the deputy minister said the government would consider construction of the hospitals in the coming financial year, since the council had already allocated the plot and location for the construction of the facility.

"The council missed the allocation for the construction in the previous financial years as by the time of disbursement, the

council was yet to agree on the location of the new site," he said.

Between the year 2015 and 2020, the government constructed 101 district hospitals, a move that has increased a number of the facilities from 77 in 2015 to 178 last year.

According to him, it is highly encouraged that the district hospitals to be constructed in the headquarters of the council in question are meant for effective service delivery, proper supervision and management.

Heavy rains sweep away bridge and cut off communication in 3 villages

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

RESIDENTS of three villages in Isuto Ward in Mbeya District had been cut off from road communication after floods swept away Idiwili river bridge.

This was revealed early this week during the visit by the District's CCM political committee that was visiting various development projects in the ward.

Ward residents said the villages that were cut off include Isuto, Idiwili and Shisonta.

Fatuma Harrison, one of the residents said following the bridge's collapse they were failing to access to basic social services from Mbalizi township due to suspension of road transport.

She said the problem is hardcore because earlier a big bridge was built but broke down even before being used whereupon the government decided to construct a temporary bridge while planning to build a permanent one.

She said as they were waiting, the temporary bridge was

also impassable due to being submerged during rains, hence vehicle owners suspended services for safety reasons.

Idiwili village chairman Lingson Mtafya said the residents communicate with great difficulties and appealed to the government to speed the construction of a permanent bridge.

He said as for now there was a danger for some people losing their lives in the event they are required to go for treatment at the district hospital or at Mbeya

As for now I advise the government, if possible, to increase the project's budget to avoid the repetition of poor workmanship

zonal referral hospital.

Mbeya District CCM chairman Hakimu Mwalupindi said the construction of the bridge was among priorities enlisted in the 2020 CCM election manifesto, hence he called on the residents to remain patient.

"As for now I advise the government, if possible, to increase the project's budget to avoid the repetition of poor workmanship," Mwalupindi said.

Mbeya District TARURA manager Eng Seleman Mziray said the contractor for the bridge has already been found and started preliminary work but stopped due to the heavy rains.

He said the contractor had started to dismantle the former bridge and dig the foundation for the new bridge, but it was discovered that the soil was too weak, hence stopped work due to heavy rains.

He said the new bridge will cost 229m/- and promised that they will supervise the work to make sure the bridge is built to the required standard.



Minister of State in the Vice President's Office Union and Environment Umyy Mwalimu (C) explains a point about Constituencies Development Catalyst Fund to Zanzibar MPs at Msekwa Hall in Dodoma on Tuesday. Others are Permanent Secretary in Vice President's Office Eng Joseph Malongo (R) and Jang'ombe legislator Ali Hassan Omar. Photo: VPO



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Health actors funds for constructing cancer war - minister

By Correspondent James Kandoya

Health stakeholders have mobilised resources worth 1.3bn/- to construct cancer ward at Bugando Medical Centre in Mwanza Region.

Speaking at the fund raising event, Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister Dr Dorothy Gwajima said that when completed in August this year, the ward will increase the ward capacity of attending 120 patients on daily basis.

Dr Gwajima added that the fund collected was cash money, pledges and equipment.

The minister said that the fund raising exercise has come at the right time while Tanzania joins other countries in the world to commemorate the world cancer week.

"We have a role to ensure that our people are acclimatised to regular medical check-up to diagnose the problem early and get treatment," she said.

She said the fund collected will to great extent help in the construction process adding that upon completion the building will help people in eight regions served by the hospital.

Explaining on the magnitude of the cancer in the country, Dr Gwajima said in every 100,000 people, there 76 new cases while the death toll is 68 in every 100 patients.

According to the minister, most of the patients attend at the health facilities at late stages, hence patients ending in getting palliative care.

She said in 2013 the ministry launched the first strategic plan to control cancer and in 2019, the government once again launched cancer regulation service to

improve service delivery.

The minister explained that the government had taken a number of initiatives such as ensuring availability of medicines and oncologists.

She said the government target is to reduce death related cancer by 50 per cent by 2030 adding that upon completion, the facility will serve nearby regions of Mwanza, Simiyu, Geita, Kagera, Tabora, Mara, Shinyanga and Kigoma.

The cancer unit at Bugando Medical Centre is the second and only other public cancer treatment centre to cater for the estimated 58 million Tanzanian citizens.

In Tanzania, an estimated 35,000 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in 2014, of whom about 21,000 (60 per cent) died that same year. The country has only two cancer hospitals, the main one: Ocean Road Cancer Institute located in Dar es Salaam.



We have a role to ensure that our people are acclimatised to regular medical check-up to diagnose the problem early and get treatment



Zanzibar minister of State in the President's Office, Regional Administration, Local Government and Special Departments Masoud Mohammed (R) exchanges views with Chaani Constituency Representative Nadil Abdullatif outside the House of Representatives in Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Rahma Suleiman

By Guardian Reporter

TEMEKE District Commissioner Godwin Gondwe has expressed his anger over delays and underperformance shown by the contractor for Gerezani-Mbagala Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) road project.

Speaking during an inspection tour yesterday, the DC said the contractor, Sino Hydro, had shown weaknesses in performance because the road had potholes even before coming into use.

"I am saddened by the contractor on the way he is carrying out duties, the road is yet to come into use but had cracks," he said.

He said President John

Temeke DC irritated with road project performance

Magufuli was implementing the project on behalf of Tanzanians but there are foreigners who are not doing well in the implementation of some of the country's projects.

The DC has directed the Tanzania National Roads Agency (Tanroads) to ensure all the project's shortfalls should be addressed otherwise legal measures must be taken.

During the tour which began at the junction between the

railway and the port in Dar es Salaam included the security and defence committee which noticed various shortfalls which it said must be addressed immediately.

The DC said the contractor has been arrogant in performing duties, saying he had attempted to tamper with results of laboratory test results which showed the project is undervalued as well as sacking Tanzanians who had reported on the matter to

government authorities.

For his part, BRT Chief Executive Officer Ronald Rwakatare said the project was very important and there is need to construct it at the best standard level.

"The government has invested a lot of money in this project to reduce congestion in the city, therefore we want to see the contractor doing this job at his best level," he said.

According to him, about 217bn/- had been invested in the project.



Industry and Trade deputy minister Exaud Kigaha (C) speaks with textiles and clothing stakeholders in Dodoma yesterday at a meeting aimed to address the challenges facing the sector. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Correspondent, Zanzibar

FIVE members of the House of Representatives from ACT-Wazalendo party yesterday took oath of allegiance before House Speaker Zuberi Ali Maulid.

Three of the members hail from Pemba constituencies who won in last year's elections and while two were nominated by the Zanzibar President.

The two nominated members are Nassor Ahmed Mazrui, who is also the party's secretary general and Omar Said Shabani, the party attorney.

Others are Hassan Hamad Omar, Representative from

Five ACT-Wazalendo reps take oath of allegiance before House Speaker

Kojani Kisiwani in Pemba, Habib Ali Mohammed (Mtambwe) and Kombo Mwynyi Shekhe (Wingwi).

After they took the oath, they praised the work by various Zanzibar government ministers for serving Zanzibaris well.

When given chance to ask questions Kojani Representative Hassan Hamad Omar wanted to know strategies in boosting social services in Kojani Kisiwani Sub-District, saying government

ministers have exhibited good work pace in their performance in seeing Zanzibaris get better social services.

"Hon Speaker, I would like to convey my sincere thanks to the Phase VIII of government of Zanzibar for the good start and performance in serving Zanzibaris," he said.

The Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and SMZ

Special Department) Masoud Ali Mohamed said in boosting services in the Kojani Kisiwani Sub-district, already the government was in final stages in opening a sub-office for registering of social activities including Zanzibar Resident IDs.

He said the aim was to send these services close to the people in order to alleviate inconveniences experienced by them, all as part of decentralisation policy.

Premier directs empowerment funds operators to assess their activities, identify achievements

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has directed empowerment funds operators to evaluate their activities and services so as to identify achievements, challenges and areas that need improvement, especially in regard to the provision of loans to entrepreneurs.

He also called on the funds that provide security to various business people and entrepreneurs in the country to beef up for supervision, procedures and their operations by making special annual plans showing the aims of the securities to be provided in the year.

The PM issued the directives on yesterday when opening the fourth exhibition of funds for economic empowerment at Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium in Arusha.

He stressed that the government prefers loans to be provided on easy terms than is the case now.

He said the special plans to be prepared by the funds that provide security to business people and entrepreneurs should be submitted to the Prime Minister's Office and later reports of the implementation should be quarterly submitted.

The PM also used the opportunity to appeal to media organisations to fully participate in the exhibition in order to convey the right message to the people on economic opportunities from the funds and empowerment programmes.

He said the government's evaluation on the operations of the nation's programmes on empowerment shows that they had greatly contributed to the country's economic growth and poverty reduction.

He said 185 local councils in Tanzania mainland have provided

93.3bn/- via empowerment funds to special vulnerable groups including the youth, women and people with disabilities.

He added that the money was used to provide soft loans for 32,553 groups.

"I would like to use this opportunity to continue stressing that every local council should make sure to set aside 19 per cent of their internal revenues to be used as loans for youth (four per cent), women (four per cent) and people with disabilities (two per cent)."

The National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) executive secretary Beng'i Issa said the council has the responsibility in following up and monitoring various activities including empowerment programmes funds.



I would like to use this opportunity to continue stressing that every local council should make sure to set aside 19 per cent of their internal revenues to be used as loans for youth (four per cent), women (four per cent) and people with disabilities (two per cent)



M-Pesa director Epimack Mbeteni (C) admires the firm's service dubbed: 'M-pesa Lipa kwa Simu' to buy products at Red Tag shop in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Looking on is Vodacom customer Aziza Irvata (L). Through the service customers will be able to receive 10 per cent discount during Valentine's Day season. The mobile firm is implementing a strategy to ensure the community abandons the use of cash money. Looking on is shop attendant Asayo Hirashi. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

District councils to bolster issuance of special loans to women, youth and PWDs

By Felister Peter, Dodoma

IMPLEMENTATION of the Local Government Finance Act, CAP 290 which started in the 2018/2019 financial year has resulted in more district councils improving issuance of loans to special groups including women, youth and people with disabilities (PWDs).

Following introduction of the law, some 79 district councils have issued the loans by 100 percent whereas 54 district councils have implemented the Act by more than 85 percent.

The statement was issued in the National Assembly in Dodoma yesterday by Deputy Minister in the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government, Festo Dugange.

He was responding to a question from Special Seats MP, Asia Halamga (CCM) who questioned implementation of the law which requires district councils to allocate 10 percent of the internal revenues for issuance of loans to special groups.

The legislator wanted to know the number of district councils that have implemented the law by 100 percent.

Responding, Deputy Minister Dugange stated that current statistics indicate that provision of loans to the special groups—women, youth and people with disabilities have been improved following amendment of the Local Government Finance Act Cap 290 in July 2018.

Dugange added that the amendment included adding of Section 37A which insists on issuance of the loans in each financial year.

"Introduction of the law improved provision of the loans compared to previous years," said the deputy minister.

Elaborating, he said that before amendment of the law in the 2017/2018 financial year, loans amounting to 26.1bn/- were issued. He said the amount is small compared to loans worth 42.06bn/- which were issued after introduction of the law in the 2018/2019 financial year.

He added that loans worth 40.7bn/- were issued in the 2019/2020 financial year.

The deputy minister noted that the law requires all the district executive directors to issue the loans. Failure to provide loans to the special groups may result in disciplinary measures as per Section 24 (2) of the law.

Two new judges elected to African court on human and peoples' rights

By Guardian Reporter

THE just ended 34th African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government Ordinary Summit has appointed two new Judges to join the bench at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR).

The newly elected Judges are Justice Dumisa Buhle Ntsebeza SC from the Republic of South Africa and Justice Modibo Sacko from the Republic of Mali. They will both serve for a final six year term.

In a statement availed to the media, the newly elected Justices are replacing Justice Sylvain Oré from the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire (2010-2021), the current President of the Court, and Hon Justice Justice Ângelo Vasco Matusse (2014-2021) from the Republic of Mozambique.

The virtual summit of the continental leaders also saw the re-election of Lady Justice Imani Daud Aboud from Tanzania and Justice Rafaa Ben Achour from Tunisia joining the bench to serve for their second and final term of six years as required under Article 15 of the Protocol establishing the Court.

Justice Sylvain Oré, President of the Court said the newly elected Judges will be sworn-in during the 61st Ordinary Session scheduled for June, 2021.

He said the court is fully convinced of their deep commitment to human rights and to further strengthen protection of human rights in Africa.

AfCHPR, a judicial organ of the AU, is composed of eleven judges, nationals of AU member states. They are elected in their individual capacity. The court meets four times a year in ordinary sessions and may hold extra-ordinary sessions when the need arises.

Submit details of property for effective tax payment - Namtumbo DED directs

By Guardian Correspondent, Namtumbo

NAMTUMBO District Executive Director in Ruvuma Region, Evance Nachimbinya has directed the district's village and ward officials to collect revenue using small entrepreneurs' ID cards in regard to property and signboards.

He also instructed the officials that before such collection they are required to submit to his office details on the property worthy to be taxed including the number of signboards in their areas that are to be taxed.

Speaking here to ward and village officials recently Nachimbinya said property and signboards tax was being collected by TRA but as for now the government has returned the task to local government authorities to simplify their collection.

Earlier the District Trade Officer Revocatus Kavishe told the officials that they were required to abide by the laws and procedures in registering property for tax purposes, and not otherwise.

Kavishe claimed that experience has shown there are officials who do not abide by the legal requirements, and instead they listen to people whose intention is to evade paying tax.

Mario Mwageni, RUWASA official from Namtumbo Town said in his area the exercise was not new, but wanted to know what the law says in other areas that are under the jurisdiction of urban councils, saying the existing law only refer to property in urban councils only.

Property Tax official from TRA in Namtumbo District Samuel Masawe who attended the meeting claimed the buildings that are required to be charged with property tax were those built by concrete blocks with iron sheets roofs, with people living in them.

Namtumbo District Administrative officer Eleonora Lyimo also used the opportunity to call upon public officials to convene meetings according to the laws and stop politicking, and excess drinking.

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Wanted: Cooperation, coordination to combat effects of climate change

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE government, private sector, academia and civil society must cooperate and coordinate activities related to climate change if the country is to make any significant steps in adaptation to climate change.

Their combined efforts will also see the country implementing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) which sheds some light on how the country intends to reduce greenhouse gas emissions using local resources.

"Efforts made by government, private sector, civil society and development partners, among others, must be harmonized so as to register significant impact on implementation of NDCs. If we don't work together as one then our ambitions to reduce emissions will not only be unrealistic but the pace of implementing such ambitions will also be very slow," said Dr Sixbert Mwanga, Executive Director of Climate Action Network Tanzania (CAN Tz), during a consultative workshop to discuss how to support implementation of NDCs.

He explained that it was not upon the central government alone to ensure that the targets set in the NDCs are met. "It is the responsibility of all of us. But in order to work together we have to be transparent and share information about our activities and these activities must be coordinated so that there is efficient use of resources that will produce expected results," he stressed.

NDCs are long-term goals set by a country to cut down greenhouse gas emissions. The achievement of these goals is the basis of the Paris Agreement. NDCs thus present efforts by each country to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The Paris Agreement requires each party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve. Parties are thus expected to outline domestic mitigation measures, with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions.

Contributing to the panel discussion during the workshop, Dr Siima Salome Bakengesha from Tanzania Forestry Research Institute (TAFORI) stressed the importance of creating a friendly environment for the participation of stakeholders from diverse sectors, bearing in mind that everyone has something to contribute towards adaptation and mitigation and all voices must be taken on board. "When it comes to climate adaptation and mitigation we often talk about land, forestry, fisheries, pastoralism,

industry, agriculture but rarely do we acknowledge the importance of forests and communities who live adjacent to and own the forests. We forget that if these people are left behind, forests will be degraded and there will be rampant deforestation which may lead to land degradation, soil infertility, water shortage and desertification, all of which defeat measures of adaptation and mitigation," she warned, adding that successful implementation of NDCs must take onboard all groups while building strong cooperation between government and non-state actors.

Jamal Sagala from Pakaya Cultural and Environmental Group in Coast region pointed out that efforts to reduce impacts of climate change must help grassroots communities to undertake adaptation measures in order to become resilient to impacts of climate change.

"Communities of small farmers, small producers, fishermen and pastoralists, among others, are the hardest hit by climate change impacts and they must therefore be the focus of all measures taken to fight climate change. The grassroots bears the brunt of climate change impacts but also have the means to contribute to adaptation and mitigation," he said.

He noted however that these communities lack information and climate change knowledge and have therefore limited opportunity to participate in implementation of NDCs. "Inclusivity is lacking. This means efforts by grassroots communities are not incorporated in the national strategy which may result in inadequate inputs to implementation of NDCs," he said.

Earlier, Jopheline Bejamula from CAN Tz gave participants a snapshot of the organization's activities in Lushoto, Chalinze, Pangani and Bagamoyo districts where it is implementing the Aligning Climate Resilience, Renewable Energy expansion and Sustainable Development in Tanzania project. "The aim is to help small producers, farmers and pastoralists to become resilient to climate change through sustainable sources of livelihood," he said.

Through interaction and engagement with grassroots communities CAN Tz seeks to promote the use of renewable energy and upscale and integrate climate services by using extension officers and civil society organisations operating in the districts.

The two days consultative workshop organised by CAN Tz drew participants representing the central government, local government authorities, civil society organisations, academic and research institutions as well as UN agencies.



Arusha Urban legislator Mrisho Gambo (L) shares a light moment with journalists during the 4th National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) exhibition at Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium in Arusha yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

We are well prepared to supply power in all areas by 2025, Tanesco in Arusha says

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

THE Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TANESCO) in Arusha Region has assured residents that it is well prepared to supply power in all areas and households by 2025 so as to stimulate individual income and the country's development.

Tanesco's regional manager Andrew Ako made the remarks when addressing journalists at the ongoing 4th edition of the national economic empowerment council exhibitions held at the Sheikh Amri Abeid grounds.

According to him, the state owned power utility has so far connected 80 percent of residents and it is now working to ensure that it reaches the remaining 20 percent within the next

five years.

He said as the nation is building an industrial economy, one of the government's strategies is to ensure that electricity projects reach every corner of the country.

Ako urged the people in the villages and suburbs in the region that are yet to be reached by electricity projects to stay calm as the firm's goal is to ensure that every household is supplied with electricity so as to promote economic activities.

"We have been connecting households with power at a very low cost with some households getting the service for free, the major objective to support the government's efforts which aims to reach all people with power services and thus stimulate economic development,"

he said.

The regional manager said that the firm is currently implementing power projects worth 10bn/- which have now reached 80 percent stage of implementation.

The exhibitions were graced by the Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa who in his inaugural speech urged media stations to ensure that they communicate and educate the public on various opportunities showcased during the event.

He said that regular assessments have proven that various initiatives carried out by government's economic empowerment funds and programmes have contributed a lot in reducing poverty and improving the country's economy.



Cruelty to animals: A motorcycle rider transports two goats in a small wooden box in Pangani District, Tanga Region on Tuesday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

By Guardian Reporter

LANDS, Housing and Human Settlements Development deputy minister Dr Angeline Mabula has launched a special campaign to mobilise land rent paying with a slogan "Tell Landowner, Land Rent Concerns Him"

In the campaign land officers and members of street and village governments will distribute demand letters for land payment from house to house and bills

Dr Mabula launches special land rent collection campaign

for the areas formalised for ownership.

Speaking during the launch of the campaign in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Dr Mabula reminded land owners in the country to pay land rent in time to avoid inconveniences that may include seizure of property or even revocation of title deeds. "Paying tax is sign of patriotism as well as

spurring national development, hence land rent, just like it is for other taxes is important and contributes to the development of the society as well as economic development," she said.

However, she said some owners of land and farms have not been doing so in accordance with the requirement of the country's laws. She said since the time given for

land rent payment has passed, the ministry, through its officials have performed its responsibility by sending demand letters for paying the rent within 14 days, but many have not responded.

She said land officers countrywide will begin taking legal steps under Section 50 of the 1999 Land Act to refer to land tribunals in respective districts

all owners of land and farms who have not paid up land rent as demanded.

She also said for land owners who have violated conditions for land ownership by not paying rent have been given demand letters under Section 33(8) of the Act, but have not paid, the title deeds are being revoked in accordance with Section 48(l)(g) of the Land Act.

In regard to land rent exemptions for corporations and institutions that do not use the land for commercial purposes, Dr Mabula said the amendment made to the Land Act and published in (GN) No. 347 of 26/04/2019 explain that exemption to be given will only concern corporations and institutions that do not use the land for commercial purposes.

Children's rehabilitation centre in Moshi to provide vocational skills to children, youth with disabilities

By Correspondent James Lanka, Moshi

THE Kilimanjaro-based Gabriella Children's Rehabilitation Centre (GCRC) has established a special training centre so as to provide special vocational skills to children and youth with disabilities.

Brenda Shuma, founder and executive director of the centre said in an interview that the move is aimed to battle stigma and prejudice against people with disabilities.

She noted that children with autism, hyperactive brain disorders and learning disabilities are less acceptable in society due to several challenges including lack of inclusive policies and special training and skills for them.

Shuma, who is an occupational therapist, explained that African communities have a behavior of hiding children with disabilities at home, particularly those suffering from a brain disorder.

She said GCRC has also

introduced parents/caregivers children's rehabilitation programs at the centre on how to deal with difficult behaviors of the children and youth who face learning difficulties including autism, hyperactive brain disorders, and down syndrome.

According to her, the majority of parents were unaware that the condition could be treated by special treatment, including rehabilitation.

"Through our special VTC programs, children and youth with learning disabilities will be offered with the arts and crafts skills, tailoring, carpentry, welding, livestock keeping, brick making, herbal gardening to produce mint, thyme, lemongrass, and rosemary grasses, among many others; so that upon their completion of their training they will become more autonomous," she explained.

Commenting on the learning disabilities, the GCRC boss described autism as a developmental disability that

starts appearing in children at the age of three.

"Autism children often have an intellectual disability requiring specialist support, though some can have normal intelligence and live a relatively normal life," she added.

According to her, the disability may impact the child's ability to communicate and interact with others effectively and may have Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), a situation that makes the child or youth's brain to be active above normal.

"We need to give such children the skills that will make them become productive in society and enable them to enjoy their lives. Issues such as art and craft and cookery could be taught to improve their competitiveness in the market, including gardening and livestock keeping," she added.

Shuma pointed out that her organization has been working with several groups of young disabled children teaching them entrepreneurship skills.

Finance, Planning ministry embarking on addressing challenges facing industry

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE Ministry of Finance and Planning announced yesterday that it has embarked on addressing challenges facing the microfinance industry, insisting the institutions have positive impacts on poverty reduction specifically for underserved populations.

This was said by Deputy Permanent Secretary in the ministry, Adolf Ndunguru during the launch of the first training session of regional, districts and township council coordinators of microfinance services.

Ndunguru said the purpose of microfinance institutions is to finance the livelihood, health care, small business creation, agriculture, housing improvements among other needs; unfortunately the industry faces exponential challenges which limit its effectiveness.

"They provide loans on strict terms and conditions. Such terms have caused harm to citizens and it include high-interest rates," the senior official in the ministry said. "The institutions lack transparency in their terms of credit agreements further exploiting their clients."

Apparently the industry is locked with arbitrary disbursement of loans which results in serious debt arrears to their customers.

Ndunguru was equally worried at the approach microfinance operators have been instituting in debt collection as more individuals end up losing their assets.

"Also some of the microfinance institutions do not provide dividends or profits to members or customers who place between

25 and 30 per cent of their money as collateral for loans," he noted adding. "There is also a lack of a mechanism to protect consumers of small financial services."

He said the minister Dr Phillip Mpango launched a plan last year targeting to raise awareness on the microfinance service's policy, rules and laws. It has also been working with the Office of the President Regional Administration and Local Governments, Financial Sector Deepening Trust (FSDT), Central Bank, Tanzania Cooperative Development Commission and the press to reach a wider audience.

The deputy PS says the government had appointed focal persons at the ministry, regional and district level to coordinate and evaluate the subsector as well as registering microfinance business promoters and publish periodic performance reports.

Commissioner for Financial Sector Development in the Ministry Charles Mwamwaja detailed that the training will be conducted to at least 212 focal persons countrywide. He said the strategy will also help operators reach a wider number of underserved population.

"This training is to help the coordinators familiarize with the legal and policy instruments," he said. Explaining that it will open up their understanding of the financial subsector and help unearth opportunities for Tanzanians to benefit from existing microfinance services.

A survey by Finscope in 2017 revealed that 55.3 per cent of the country's workforce access financial services through microfinance institutions available across the country.



Mkinga District Council vice chairman Kadiri Ramadhani (L) speaks during the councillors meeting in the district yesterday. Others are the council's chairman Amani Kasinya (R) and executive director Rashid Gembe. Photo: Correspondent Oscar Kasimiri

Mbeya mobile phone repairers counselled to work in groups

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

MOBILE phones repairers in Mbeya Region have been advised to form groups for them to be easily empowered by various institutions in the field to go in tandem with the ever changing technology.

The advice was given early this week by Mbeya Region

TCRA Manager Eng Asajile John at a special joint meeting of phone repairers and TCRA officials.

He said the government has been taking various steps to ensure telephone communication is well managed including registering all simcards which he said numbered 49,000.

He said they have decided to

provide the training to phone repairers because some of them do so while violating the laws causing problems in communications.

"Form groups, and if possible establish an association so that it will be easy to get you for training, technology advancing in each passing day, hence it is important you keep abreast with these

changes," Asajile said.

He stressed that according to the law, every phone repairer should have a licence to allow him to operate otherwise stern measures would be taken for those violating this requirement.

Some mobile phone repairers in attendance said they will ensure they operate within the law's



Kimondo residents in Igoma ward, Mbeya District dipping livestock as the most effective way of controlling ticks on animals. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

Hanan's farmers urged to increase wheat production

By Guardian Correspondent,

Hanan's

MANYARA Region assistant cooperatives registrar Venance Msafiri has called upon wheat farmers in Hanang District to increase production of the crop to enable the country become self-reliant in wheat production.

Msafiri issued the call at Katesh in the district when speaking to cooperative officials aimed at charting robust strategies to revive wheat cultivation.

"Farmers are called upon to cultivate this crop in order for the government to stop importing wheat and there is the need for modern wheat farming practices," Msafiri said.

He said an acre of wheat is supposed to yield 2.1 tonnes of wheat using modern farming methods beginning from farm preparations to quality seeds.

"We want the farmers to get 20 bags of wheat from one acre and I think we should move away from traditional farming methods to attain development," he explained.

He however said in order to revive the crop, from now on the government will supply 50 tonnes of seeds to the district.

He appealed to farmers to support him and promised to establish a training centre for wheat farming in the district.

"Demonstration farms will be established here and there will be an endless infinite 'gold mine' for wheat, hence we should mobilise for modern farming practices," he explained, while promising in the coming farming season the price of wheat will be not less than 800/- per kg.

Agricultural officer for the northern Zone from the Cereals and Other Produce Board of Tanzania (CPB) Ayubu Mushema told farmers to register themselves for the seeds distribution procedures.

He said Tanzania's annual wheat production was 100,000 tonnes and the demand is one million tonnes, hence he called on them to grab the opportunity.

Rift Valley Cooperative Union (RIVACU), chairman Michael Txasara said in the past cooperatives, the churches and the post office were trusted because cooperatives officials used to educate students in various schools and colleges.

...I think we should move away from traditional farming methods to attain development

AfDB president 'optimistic' about Africa's post-COVID-19 recovery

By Special Correspondent

AFRICAN Development Bank (AfDB) president Akinwumi Adesina said he was optimistic about the outlook for Africa's economic recovery despite the current challenges facing the continent, particularly the coronavirus pandemic.

Adesina made the comments during a virtual ceremony of the

African Leadership Magazine's African of the Year valedictory meeting.

"There is a light at the end of the tunnel. I'm very positive that African economies will bounce back over the next two years," he said.

"As we look forward to the future, we will do so with confidence, hope, and a sharper focus."

Africa's economy, like much of the world's, has taken a battering by the effects of the pandemic with trade and supply chains being disrupted, and some industries such as aviation and tourism being among the worst affected.

A report by the AfDB last year said Africa stood to lose between 25 and 30 million jobs in 2020 depending on the level of

economic contraction due to the effects of the pandemic.

Even as he projected a recovery in the near future, Adesina pointed out that Africa should also build "forward and faster".

Adesina said it was crucial to empower the continent's youth and women to ensure it reached its full economic potential.

"Together we will create new opportunities for Africa's youth and trigger a youth-based wealth system in Africa. Together we will ensure that growth delivers financing for women of Africa," he said.

Despite boasting the largest population of young people in the world, youth unemployment is a major challenge the continent still grapples with.

He also called on stakeholders to invest in the youth rather than offer them handouts in order to "unlock entrepreneurship and put their skills to work".

"I see the youths as an asset to Africa. That's why AfDB is going full steam ahead with our Jobs for Youth strategy, aiming for 25 million new positions before 2025."

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Darwin: A worthy symbol of scientific advancement

MODERN science is typically divided into three major branches that consist of the natural sciences for example biology, chemistry, and physics, which study nature in the broadest sense; the social sciences such as economics, psychology, and sociology, which study individuals and societies; and the formal sciences including logic, mathematics, and theoretical computer science, which study abstract concepts.

There is disagreement, however, on whether the formal sciences actually constitute a science as they do not rely on empirical evidence. Disciplines that use existing scientific knowledge for practical purposes, such as engineering and medicine, are described as applied sciences.

Science is based on research, which is commonly conducted in academic and research institutions as well as in government agencies and companies.

The practical impact of scientific research has led to the emergence of science policies that seek to influence the scientific enterprise by prioritising the development of commercial products, armaments, health care, and environmental protection.

Charles Robert Darwin born in 12 February 1809 and died on 19 April 1882 was an English naturalist, geologist and biologist, best known for his contributions to the science of evolution. His proposition that all species of life have descended over time from common ancestors is now widely accepted, and considered a foundational concept in science. In a joint publication with Alfred Russel Wallace, he introduced his scientific theory that this branching pattern of evolution

resulted from a process that he called natural selection, in which the struggle for existence has a similar effect to the artificial selection involved in selective breeding. Darwin has been described as one of the most influential figures in human history, and he was honoured by burial in Westminster Abbey.

Darwin published his theory of evolution with compelling evidence in his 1859 book *On the Origin of Species*. By the 1870s, the scientific community and a majority of the educated public had accepted evolution as a fact. Darwin's scientific discovery is the unifying theory of the life sciences, explaining the diversity of life.

Darwin's early interest in nature led him to neglect his medical education at the University of Edinburgh; instead, he helped to investigate marine invertebrates. Studies at the University of Cambridge (Christ's College) encouraged his passion for natural science.

Puzzled by the geographical distribution of wildlife and fossils he collected on the voyage, Darwin began detailed investigations, and in 1838 conceived his theory of natural selection.

Although he discussed his ideas with several naturalists, he needed time for extensive research and his geological work had priority.

Darwin's work established evolutionary descent with modification as the dominant scientific explanation of diversification in nature. In 1871 he examined human evolution and sexual selection in *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, followed by *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872).

Reinventing industrial strategy can facilitate development in Tanzania

AGRIBUSINESS is the business of agricultural production which involves the production, protection, sales and marketing of the product to satisfy the customers need. The term is a portmanteau of agriculture and business and was coined in 1957 by John Davis and Ray Goldberg. It includes agrichemicals, breeding, crop production (farming or contract farming), distribution, farm machinery, processing, and seed supply, as well as marketing and retail sales. All agents of the food and fiber value chain and those institutions that influence it are part of the agribusiness system.

Within the agriculture industry, agribusiness refers to the range of activities and disciplines encompassed by modern food production. There are academic degrees specialising in agribusiness, departments of agribusiness, agribusiness trade associations, and agribusiness publications.

In the context of agribusiness management in academia, each individual element of agriculture production and distribution may be described as agribusinesses. However, the term agribusiness most often emphasises the interdependence of these various sectors within the production chain.

Over 1.5 million agribusiness entrepreneurs in the agricultural value chain in Tanzania have benefited from the PASS Trust credit guarantee scheme that has enabled them access funds from commercial banks and thus expand their businesses.

Implemented by the Private Agricultural Sector Support (PASS) Trust, the scheme also receives support from various financial institutions in the country.

Acting managing director Anna Shanalingigwa said recently that since its inception in 2000, PASS has been assisting Tanzanians in developing solid and bankable investment project write ups as well as facilitating access to finance through credit guarantee scheme with commercial banks.

She said that through its Credit Guarantee Scheme, PASS has enabled the creation of at least 1.5 million jobs through support to an estimated 42,000 agricultural projects that have benefited a total of 1,593 agribusiness entrepreneurs in Tanzania whereby 45 percent of these beneficiaries according to PASS Trust are women engaged in agribusiness.

"Our contribution in the agricultural sector Financing is immense because without our credit guarantee, many entrepreneurs will not access financing and loans from banks and therefore will not be able to increase and improve their production. So, PASS ensures that we play our role as a link with financial institutions and ensure they secure funds for agricultural development," she said.

According to her, working with various financial institutions in the country, PASS has continued to significantly contribute towards the growth of the agricultural sector in Tanzania by providing credit guarantee to agribusiness entrepreneurs who otherwise would not get credit.

The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

Managing Editor: WALLACE MAUGGO
Circulation Manager: EMMANUEL LYIMO

Newsdesk

News Editor: LUSEKELO PHILEMON
0757154767
General line: 0745700710
E-mail: guardian@guardian.co.tz

Advertising

Mobile: 0782253676
E-mails: advertise@guardian.co.tz
Website: www.ippmedia.com
epaper.ippmedia.com

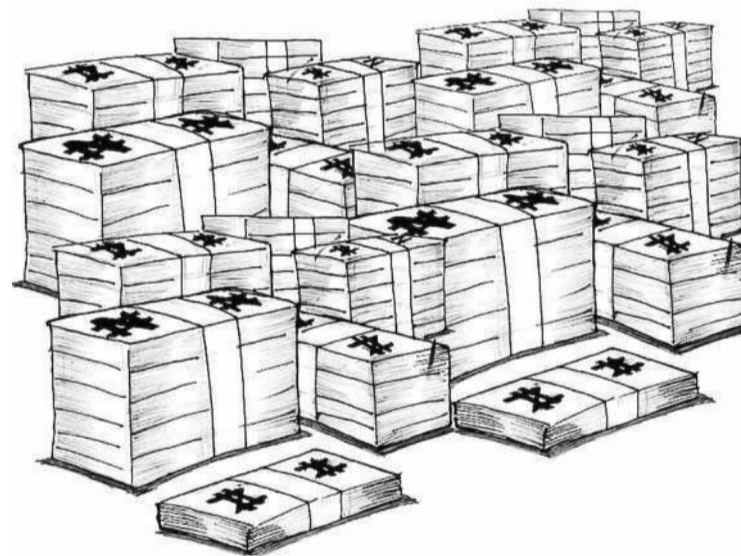


Fighting graft and the 2020 CPI

By Special Correspondent

THE recently released 2020 Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI) which scored Nigeria 25 out of 100 points is another dent to a government that came to power with a pledge to fight corruption. The current ranking is another wake-up call. Dropping three places and scoring lower points than in the 2019 CPI ranking—a composite index which draws upon a series of surveys in both the private and public sectors of any country—is an indication that corruption is perceived to have worsened in the country within the last one year. According to TI, Nigeria is now ranked 149 out of 180 countries, which is three steps lower than its 146th position in 2019. With the present ranking, Nigeria is now the most corrupt country in West Africa, second only to Guinea-Bissau.

The response of the federal government is predictable and kneejerk, with the usual denial and some outlandish claims that are not backed by verifiable facts. To be consistently rated low on the anti-corruption war in addition to all critical indices of development is a sad reminder of what we have left undone. What is certain here is that government, at all levels, has not got it right in



terms of judicious allocation of resources for the benefit of the populace. There is therefore an urgent need for transparency and accountability not only in government but also in the private sector.

In calling for a holistic approach in the efforts to combat corruption in Nigeria, participants at a seminar in Abuja last year identified a lack of institutional capacity in the anti-graft agencies and leadership deficiency. It was observed that the absence of credible data has made fighting corruption difficult in the country while both the domestic and international communities still perceive government efforts as slow, selective and grossly

ineffective.

In the course of the sessions, the roles of the executive, the legislature, judiciary and the media were dissected by the participants while the conclusion was that without all these critical stakeholders working together, it would be difficult to successfully tackle the menace of graft in the Nigerian system. Anti-corruption efforts, it was also agreed, should be driven more by institutions rather than personalities.

Other conclusions were that there should be a national policy and comprehensive strategy based on accurate awareness of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to fighting corruption

within the Nigerian society. The approach, it was agreed, must also include taking the highest risk with potential to make the maximum impact by including prevention, education and enforcement. At the end, there was a consensus that in the efforts to rid the country of the stigma of corruption, a lot more remains to be done by the agencies saddled with the assignment. The federal government was urged to involve the people at the grassroots whose drive would further complement the efforts of the institutionalised agencies.

Meanwhile, if there is any development that has badly stained this administration and exposed its hypocrisy in the so-called fight against corruption, it is in the manner it has effectively castrated the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Months after a presidential panel which probed the suspended chairman, Ibrahim Magu, submitted its report, nothing had been done to redress whatever may be the problems at the agency whose leadership has now been occupied for more than five years in acting capacity.

Rather than query the assessment of TI, these are some of the issues the federal government should begin to address if it is genuinely interested in fighting corruption.

I survived the worst of COVID-19

By Special Correspondent

TODAY it's my 6th day at home recuperating very well after a discharge from hospital following staring death in the eye and escaping from it.

I survived COVID-19 and here is my story for awareness.

On the night of December 22, 2020, I had a fever and a sore throat.

The following day in the morning, I had a test for COVID-19 and it was confirmed that I was positive.

Since I had mild symptoms consisting of a mild cough, the doctor whom I consulted prescribed the necessary medication but this doctor failed to tell me a simple message: "If this

cough persists beyond four days, please seek medical attention." (I later contacted him about this and he has been very contrite about what he did not do.)

The lack of this information or advice for me was to be near fatal for me.

I did lots of home remedies of steaming, zumbani, garlic, etc trying to heal. I can tell you that those things don't work. But they aren't harmful but will give you a false sense of security when your situation is fast deteriorating.

I had a cough and a headache for 11 days until a friend visited me at home where I was isolating. He asked me to buy a pulse oximeter and it was noticed that my oxygen saturation wasn't enough. Panic!

I was attended to by another private doctor at home and then

put on an oxygen concentrator at home for two days (December 30-31) with no meaningful change. It was him who made the prudent decision that I'd better be hospitalised. The following day on New Year's Day I was hospitalised in Harare at a private facility. I was taken first into the High Dependency Unit, and then Intensive Care Unit as the situation got worse.

I was put on life support for the severest stage of this disease and I was being treated of its worst form: Covid-19 pneumonia while I had an underlying condition as a Type 2 diabetic. You can imagine the double trouble. My lungs were now in their worst! My oxygen saturation was not improving.

In all this, as a patient you are by

yourself with the medical team. No visitors allowed.

For a total of 32 days I was fighting this disease and for 22 days I was hospitalised.

Although I have since lost 12kg that some of you who know me physically may fail to easily recognise me, my life was not lost. It was too close to death!

I can't thank my friend, the private doctor and the medical team enough. It was very tough for me, but I'm thrilled to be alive.

To you all my family members, relatives and friends, your messages to me while I was in hospital gave me hope, courage and strength to live and fight the disease.

The will to live or that positive urge to stay alive is a wonder! I survived the worst of COVID-19!!!

Vaccine vs variant: Promising data in Israel's race to defeat pandemic

JERUSALEM

ISRAEL'S swift vaccination rollout has made it the largest real-world study of Pfizer Inc's COVID-19 vaccine. Results are trickling in, and they are promising.

More than half of eligible Israelis - about 3.5 million people - have now been fully or partially vaccinated. Older and at-risk groups, the first to be inoculated, are seeing a dramatic drop in illnesses.

Among the first fully-vaccinated group there was a 53% reduction in new cases, a 39% decline in hospitalizations and a 31% drop in severe illnesses from mid-January until Feb. 6, said Eran Segal, data scientist at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel.

In the same period, among people under age 60 who became eligible for shots later, new cases dropped 20% but hospitalizations and severe illness rose 15% and 29%, respectively.

Reuters interviewed leading scientists in Israel and abroad, Israeli health officials, hospital heads and two of the country's largest healthcare providers about what new data shows from the world's most efficient vaccine rollout.

The vaccine drive has provided a database offering insights into how effective the vaccines are outside of controlled clinical trials, and at what point countries might attain sought-after but elusive herd immunity.

More will be known in two weeks, as teams analyse vaccine effectiveness in younger groups of Israelis, as well as targeted populations such as people with diabetes, cancer and pregnant women, among a patient base at least 10 times larger than those in clinical studies.

"We need to have enough variety of people in that subgroup and enough follow-up time so you can make the right conclusions, and we are getting to that point," said Ran Balicer, chief innovation officer of HMO Clalit, which covers more than half the Israeli population.

Pfizer is monitoring the Israeli rollout on a weekly basis for insights that can be used around the world.

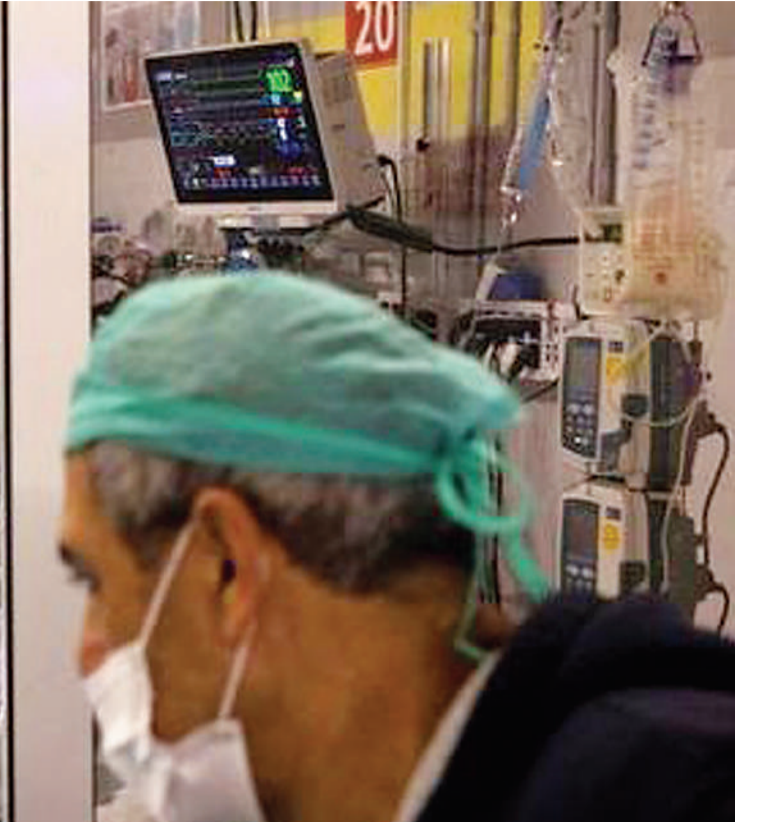
As a small country with universal healthcare, advanced data capabilities and the promise of a swift rollout, Israel provided Pfizer with a unique opportunity to study the real-world impact of the vaccine developed with Germany's BioNTech.

But the company said it remained "difficult to forecast the precise time when herd protection may start to manifest" because of many variables at play, including social distancing measures and the number of new infections generated by each case, known as the reproduction rate.

Even Israel, in the vanguard of the global vaccine drive, has lowered expectations of emerging quickly from the pandemic because of soaring cases.

A third national lockdown has struggled to contain transmission, attributed to the fast-spreading UK variant of the virus. On a positive note, the Pfizer/BioNTech shot appears to be effective against it.

"We've so far identified the same 90% to 95% efficacy



against the British strain," said Hezi Levi, director-general of the Israeli Health Ministry.

"It is still early though, because we have only now finished the first week after the second dose," he said, adding: "It's too early to say anything about the South African variant."

WHICH ARM?

Israel began its vaccination programme Dec. 19 - the day after Hanukkah - after paying a premium for supplies of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine.

Four days later, the more contagious UK variant was detected in four people. While the vaccine is preventing illness in older people, the variant now makes up about 80% of new cases.

Finding themselves in a race between the vaccine and the new variant, Israel began giving shots to those over 60 and gradually opened the programme to the rest of the population.

Every detail was digitally tracked, down to in which arm the patient was jabbed and what vial it came from.

One week after receiving the second Pfizer dose - the point at which full protection is expected to kick in - 254 out of 416,900 people were infected, according to Maccabi, a leading Israeli healthcare provider.

Comparing this against an unvaccinated group revealed a vaccine efficacy of 91%, Maccabi said.

By 22 days after full vaccination, no infections were recorded.

Israeli experts are confident the vaccines rather than lockdown measures brought the numbers down, based on studying different cities, age groups and pre-vaccine lockdowns.

The comparisons were "convincing in telling us this is the effect of the vaccination," said Weizmann Institute's Segal.

With 80% of senior citizens partially or fully vaccinated, a more complete picture will begin to emerge as soon as this week.

"And we do expect further decline in the overall cases and in the cases of severe morbidity," said Balicer, of HMO

Clalit.

VACCINES AND TRANSMISSION

There may be early signs that vaccinations are tamping down virus transmission in addition to illness.

At Israel's biggest COVID-19 testing centre, run by MyHeritage, researchers have tracked a significant decrease in the amount of virus infected people carry, known as cT value, among the most-vaccinated age groups.

This suggests that even if vaccinated people get infected, they are less likely to infect others, said MyHeritage Chief Science Officer Yaniv Erlich.

"The data so far is probably most clear from Israel. I do believe that these vaccines will reduce onward transmission," said Stefan Baral, from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in Maryland.

DIMINISHING RETURNS

It is unclear whether Israel will be able to keep up its world-leading vaccination pace.

"When you vaccinate fast and a lot,

you eventually get to the hardcore - those who are less willing or harder to reach," said Boaz Lev, head of the Health Ministry's advisory panel.

The vaccination pace is seen even more crucial with the British variant's rapid transmission.

"In the race between the UK variant spreading and the vaccinations, the end result is that we are seeing a kind of plateau in terms of the severely ill," said Segal.

The big question is whether vaccines can eradicate the pandemic.

Michal Linial, a professor of molecular biology and bioinformatics at Jerusalem's Hebrew University, said data from past decades suggests viruses become endemic and seasonal. She predicted this coronavirus would become far less aggressive, perhaps requiring a booster shot within three years.

"The virus is not going anywhere," she concluded.

Agencies

China's Lijiang achieves new progress by integrating culture and tourism

By Yang Wenming.

THE Old Town of Lijiang, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in southwest China's Yunnan province, has returned to its unsophistication from excessive commercial development thanks to the town's efforts to incorporate more cultural elements into its tourism development.

Today, cultural experience programs are easier to be seen in the old town, such as workshops of Dongba paper, wood carving, and embroidery, while hackneyed shops selling flower cakes and African drums are dwindling. Today, it takes at least two days to visit all the 23 cultural courtyards in the old town.

How to retain its cultural appeal while launching commercial programs to cater for the demands of tourists is front and center for the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

"Commercialization is not an issue, but excessive commercialization has impacted the old town's traditional culture," said Mu Sheng, deputy director of the old town's protection and administration bureau.

In the old days, high-return commercial programs in the old town were always massively followed and even copied, which led to a situation where businesses were homogeneous. It was also a problem for many old towns across China.

This forced Lijiang to explore a new path of development. By integrating culture and tourism, the old town introduced a dynamic list to encourage courtyards boasting traditional cultures, trying to dilute the town's commercial density with more cultural elements.

The dynamic list was implemented in the core zones of the old town in 2019. Sixteen types of businesses such as cybercafes, electronic toys, and modern construction materials were banned from market



A special Dongba wedding ceremony is held for a nurse assisting Hubei to fight COVID-19, Oct. 25, 2020. (File photo)

access. Bars became a restricted business that existing ones could be maintained, but none shall be approved anymore.

"By doing this we are forcing existing businesses to transform or upgrade. While we curb excessive commercialization, we also encourage cultural inheritors and handicraftsmen to establish shops that carry forward or demonstrate featured and traditional cultures," Mu said. These businesses enjoy green lights in approval, as well as a series of favorable policies such as rent reduction and subsidies, he continued.

"We don't sell anything in the hall. What we only charge is a flat rate for experience. All we want to do is to inherit the culture of the Naxi ethnic group," said He Runyuan, who quit a decent job and now runs a Naxi hieroglyph experience hall in Lijiang.

In his eyes, the old town is not in short of businesses, but culture. "The inheritance of culture is not a matter of money," the man told People's Daily. His experience hall received policy support and a subsidy, and is now a great destination for tourists who want to learn Naxi culture.

Miao Liwei, a content producer on short video platforms and chairman of Lijiang's new media association, now runs a B&B in the old town. "What attracts tourists


is not culture itself, but the culture in stories," Miao said. He believes good communication methods help the inheritance of culture. It calls for supports from both the government and market to run the cultural courtyard business and revitalize traditional culture, the man noted.

Today, Lijiang is laying more importance on improving tourism experience, from decorating a street with traditional Chinese oil-paper umbrellas, to supporting role playing detective game rooms.

"Our revenue of role playing games alone has exceeded 5 million yuan (\$770,831)," said Li Zexi, who runs a game room in Lijiang. According to the man, players must learn the history of the old town and some of the Dongba characters in order to play the games. The immersive experience is now attracting many young people.

Apart from native Lijiang residents, out-of-town couple Liang Qin and Peng Ping have trained over 400 embroidery masters at a school they set up in the old town. "The traditional embroidery skills of Lijiang is more practical, but today we're digging into its artistic value," Liang said, expecting the local embroidery skill to make its own name one day. **People's Daily**

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
TANZANIA COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY
ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED**



**NOTICE TO IMPORTERS, DISTRIBUTORS, AND SELLERS OF
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT ON TYPE APPROVAL OF
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT**


The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), established under the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority Act No.12 of 2003, is mandated among other duties, to license communications and broadcasting operators and type approve the electronic communications equipment for use in the United Republic of Tanzania.

In this respect, The Electronic and Postal Communications (Electronic Communications Equipment Standards) Regulations, 2018 makes it a responsibility of whoever imports, distributes, or sells electronic communications equipment in the United Republic of Tanzania to first obtain Type Approval from the Authority. Accordingly, TCRA conducts type approval of electronic communications equipment to ascertain that they conform to the specified requirements or standards for their use in the URT. The equipment which requires type approval includes but not limited to: -


1. Terminal electronic communications equipment such as Mobile Phones, Basic Telephone Sets, Data Modems, VHF/UHF Radio, Wireless Modules, GPS tracking devices, Short-range devices, etc.
2. Office communication devices such as PABX that are connected to common networks.
3. Network communication equipment such as Switching equipment, Base stations, Routers, Servers, Transmission equipment, etc.
4. Broadcasting equipment such as Television, Set-Top-Box, Radios, amplifiers etc.

The main objective of the Type Approval is to ensure that electronic communications equipment intended for use in the country complies with the national and international standards and do not pose any health or safety hazards to users; minimizing the harmful electromagnetic interference in public networks thus enhance the quality of service and ensuring interoperability of customer equipment with telecommunications networks and interconnection between networks.

The importation, distribution, or sale of any electronic communications equipment use electrical plug to connect to outlets such as mobile phones, shall comply to the Tanzania Bureau of Standard (TBS) standards. For example Tanzania uses type G plug, which is the plug with two flat parallel pins and a grounding pin. The central earth pin is 4mm by 7.93 mm and 22.73 mm long, centered and spaced vertically 22.2mm from the outer pins are 4mm by 6.35 mm and 17.7 mm long. Alternatively, plug type C can be used with an adapter which shall be provided by the seller. It is required all chargers for mobile phones and other devices comply with the required plug type as elaborated further in below pictures.



Type G Plug



Type C Plug

Type Approval of electronic communications equipment is performed based on the MODEL of the respective equipment through online Type Approval system accessible at <https://otas.tcra.go.tz/>. For that matter, all Electronic Communication Equipment shall have their chargers with power plugs that meet TBS standards for them to be type approved by TCRA. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority.

**Issued by:
Director General,
Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority
Mawasiliano Towers, 20 Sam Nujoma Road
P.O Box 474
14414 Dar Es Salaam
E-Mail: dg@tcra.go.tz**

28 years on, China-Europe land bridge forging stronger ties

NANJING/BERLIN.

AT the port of Lianyungang in east China's Jiangsu Province, several cranes are seen slowly lifting colorful containers and arranging them in a line, ready to be transported by China-Europe freight trains.

The commodities, including face masks, elevators and construction materials, will be shipped to Asian and European destinations before the Spring Festival, which falls on Feb. 12 this year.

The city of Lianyungang is the eastern terminal of the 10,900-km-long New Eurasian Land Bridge (NELB), an international passageway linking the Pacific and the Atlantic. The bridge runs from China's coastal cities of Lianyungang and Rizhao to Rotterdam of the Netherlands and Belgium's Antwerp, passing through Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland and Germany. It serves more than 30 countries and regions.

In the past five years, international freight trains made about 4,000 trips from Lianyungang's port.

"In January alone, 32 China-Europe freight trains went through the port of Lianyungang, and 23 freight trains are slated for departure in February," said Zuo Xuemei, vice general manager of Lianyungang China-Kazakhstan International Logistics Co., Ltd.

YEARS OF CHANGE

On Dec. 1, 1992, a locomotive pulled the first international freight train to Central Asia and Europe from Lianyungang, marking the official opening of the NELB. The locomotive has been preserved to this day in the port of Lianyungang, bearing testimony to the transformation of economic and trade cooperation between China and Europe.

Shen Gang, with Sinotrans Land Bridge Transportation Co., Ltd., said the company is the pioneer in providing transportation services on the NELB.

"The first international train was loaded with 30 containers and 15 carriages of bulk cargo," said Shen. "At first, it was an internal-combustion locomotive with an average speed of 40 km per hour. Today, the railway has been electrified, with an average speed of 80 to 120 km per hour."

Last year, 554 China-Europe freight trains departed from and arrived in Lianyungang.

Recalling the old days, Shen said earlier workers had to go with the trains to ensure the safe arrival of commodities. "However, now we can obtain logistics information through the internet at any time, making the whole process more convenient and effective," Shen added.

Bruce Wei, the general manager of World Jaguar Logistics Inc., Lianyungang Branch, started engaging in railway transportation services along the NELB in 2012. Products delivered through this route have undergone significant changes over the years, he said.

"In the past, the main goods were second-hand automobiles and construction materials. But, today elevators, electronic products and solar panels are also shipped, which reflects improvements in people's living standards along the NELB," Wei said.

The NELB is not just a mere transport corridor, it also links the inland Chinese provinces with Europe and connects all the inland countries between them, said Li Yuan, a professor at the Institute of East Asian Studies, the University of Duisburg-Essen.

When the pandemic hit hard global maritime logistics, made-in-China medical supplies were consistently sent to Europe through the Eurasian continental bridge. This signifies the importance of the land-based transportation corridor, Li said.

Last year, China-Europe freight trains transported 5,580 tonnes of anti-epidemic supplies to European countries including Germany, Serbia, Poland and Austria from the



Workers load a container onto a train at Urumqi China-Europe Railway Express Hub in Urumqi, capital of northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, March 12, 2020. (Xinhua)

central Chinese city of Wuhan alone, authorities said in December.

CLOSER COOPERATION

China has become the biggest trade partner of the EU while the EU is now China's second-largest trade partner. The EU is also China's third-largest source and destination of investment.

On Dec. 30, it was announced that China and the European Union completed investment agreement negotiations as scheduled after 35 rounds of negotiations, a milestone in the development of China-EU relations. The agreement will provide greater market access, higher level of the business environment, stronger institutional guarantees and brighter cooperation prospects for mutual investment.

"The strengthening of economic ties, especially the elimination of investment and trade barriers between China and Europe, will lead to the steady recovery and growth of the global economy in the post-pandemic era," Li said.

Over the years, the land bridge has helped bring closer economic and trade cooperation between China and Europe.

In the German inland port city of Duisburg, containers specifically made for China-Europe freight trains are often seen in various transfer hubs. They are used to export clothes, electronic products and domestic appliances from China to Europe. Meanwhile, more and more cars, machinery and food continue to enter China from Europe via the land bridge.

Xavier Wanderpepen, who is responsible for China-Europe rail freight activities at Forwardis, a subsidiary of France's national railway company SNCF Logistics, was impressed by the surge of freight train operations between China and Europe during the first half of 2020.

"In my company, since April 2020, demand for trains has increased sharply. The increase is more than 20 percent compared to 2019," Wanderpepen said.

According to official figures, a record 12,400 China-Europe freight

train trips were made in 2020, up 50 percent from the previous year. This is also the first time freight train trips between China and Europe have exceeded 10,000 per year.

Riding on the success of booming cooperation, Chinese and European companies are also seeing an increase in exchanges. In Duisburg, for example, more than 100 Chinese companies have started doing business, compared to just 40 in 2014, according to official figures. An investment center and a commercial association have also been established there.

Even during the COVID-19 outbreak, China and Europe saw growth in bilateral trade, with the import and export between China and 27 European Union member nations rising about 2.6 percent year on year during the first seven months of 2020.

"The China-Europe freight trains have played a big role in the economic development along the New Eurasian Land Bridge and in the growth of China-Europe bilateral trade in 2020,"

said Chen Fengying, a researcher with the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations.

Strengthening bilateral economic relations between the two sides would generate more business opportunities, create new jobs, and increase confidence in the economic recovery of China, Europe and the rest of the world, said Li Yuan.

Chinese and European firms have huge opportunities for cooperation to build new economic corridors along the NELB, Li added.

Logistics diversification is an advantage, and good land-based connections, such as the NELB, will make connections "broader and more robust," said Dr. Michael Borchmann, former ministerial director of the State of Hesse, Germany, and senior adviser of the China International Investment Promotion Agency.

Xinhua

Forgotten conflicts 2021: When will the crisis in the Central African Republic end?

BANGUI

LAST October, an ICRC medical team helped a woman deliver a baby boy in the bush on their way to a health center we support in Grévaï, a small town in the north-central region of CAR. On her way to the market, by foot, the woman went into labour and only by chance did not have to go through it alone, surviving along with her baby.

That same year, my colleagues at the main hospital in Nana-Grébizi prefecture surrounding the town of Kaga-Bandoro helped a young couple deliver triplets - a moment of joy but also one that made the father cry, concerned about how to feed his family of now seven children. Our team at the hospital's nutritional unit, where we help treat malnourished children, already knew they would see the three baby boys again before long.

Our doctor there also told me about premature babies who had to be revived several times during their first days before their health eventually stabilised.

These stories are just a glimpse into what people here face every day when it comes to accessing basic goods and services, such as food and health care. These things cannot be taken for granted. The local health workers at the Kaga-Bandoro hospital and the nearby health centers in Grévaï and Ouandago are doing the best they can with the limited resources they have.

But the needs remain enormous and working conditions remain difficult due to insecurity, making it hard to recruit and retain personnel, allowing impunity and criminality to reign and hampering development of proper infrastructure.

The crisis in CAR is a neglected one, receiving little attention despite the humanitarian consequences it has triggered since the outbreak of civil war around 2013. More than half of the country's 4.9 million inhabitants live in desperate need, making it one of the



Amidst post-election violence in the Central African Republic (CAR), more than 200,000 people have fled for their own safety, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said in January 2021.

worst, but most poorly known, humanitarian crises in the world. Sporadic violence is pervasive.

Security conditions are volatile. Armed groups maintain a presence throughout the country, and acts of criminality, such as armed burglaries, are reportedly widespread. Communal tensions - related to resource competition between farming and pastoral communities, for instance - give rise to violence.

It has been two years since the signature of the latest peace agreement in February 2019 between the government and 14 armed groups. These groups control some 70 percent of the country. And as CAR struggles with post-electoral violence, conflict, insecurity, and criminality, the compounding impact of climate change and COVID-19 are making a bad situation even worse.

For weeks now, the country has been experiencing a new period of violence between a coalition of

six armed groups who have launched an offensive to disrupt the presidential elections and take the capital Bangui. Before this latest violent outbreak, one in four Central Africans had been forced to flee their homes - living on the streets, struggling for survival in the bush, or sheltering in displacement and refugee camps.

Some of them had started returning home, but this violent outbreak has made that impossible, forcing even more people to flee. Many people have had to abandon everything and start over several times in the last few years. Over years of crisis, many of our Central African colleagues at the ICRC have also been displaced, lost their homes and loved ones, and carry memories that will never fade. I truly hope they don't have to go through that again.

The widespread violence in CAR continues to have a serious impact on people's lives. Citizens' homes and livelihoods, such as crops and livestock, have been

looted or destroyed. Access to safe drinking water is difficult in many places due to insecurity or lack of proper water infrastructure. A mother I met lost her baby because of unsafe drinking water - another loss that could have been prevented. Not least, sexual violence related to this insecurity is underreported, affecting mostly women and girls who work in the fields, go fishing, search for firewood, or fetch water for their families.

Violence in general is frequent, leaving generations with physical and mental scars. In Nana-Grébizi, our mental health team works with displaced children who have experienced violence as well as with survivors of sexual violence. They try to help them learn to live with their trauma that is almost impossible to forget.

CAR also remains one of the most dangerous countries for humanitarians, making it difficult to access certain areas and communities, due to widespread instability, crime, and the range of armed groups. The more actors, the more difficult it is to build structured dialogue and to obtain reliable security guarantees.

During the rainy season, some areas are also unreachable by road for months, and transport infrastructure remains underdeveloped in many places. During the ongoing clashes last year, the ICRC's office in Bouar, in the Nana-Mambéré prefecture in western CAR, was raided, forcing us to drastically reduce our activities in the region until security in the town could be restored. Such attacks only punish the local communities, depriving them of desperately needed help.

In the wake of the peace agreement, violence briefly declined in the country. However, since September 2019, this trend has reversed, with recent clashes only making it worse. For sustainable results, authorities and their partners should address insecurity and impunity in the long run.

IPS

EU-Africa partnership must reflect the 'realities of African agriculture'

By **Natasha Foote**

FUTURE agrifood partnerships between the EU and Africa take into account the realities of farming in Africa, especially in the context of a drive for a greener transition, agrifood stakeholders have warned.

The comments come in the context of talks between the two continents aimed at agreeing a new EU-Africa 'strategic partnership'.

Although discussions between the European Commission and African Union have stalled in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, the pandemic has also underscored the need for stronger cooperation be-

tween the bloc and the African continent, highlighting both the growing urgency of the climate crisis and food security, and the interdependence of the two continents.

Portugal, which holds the rotating EU Council presidency until July, is keen to push the agenda, with a Portuguese diplomat stressing back in January that "Africa should and could be a key partner of the EU".

Agriculture is one of the key focus areas of the partnership, with the EU's focus being on facilitating a green transition in line with its Green Deal ambitions.

However, visions for a green transition must be keeping with the specific circumstanc-

es on the African continent, stakeholders highlighted during a recent event on sustainable food systems and trade.

"It is important that the strategy and partnership areas are adapted to the reality on our continent. We need an African green transition that takes into account the ongoing yield gap and the lower use of modern innovative practices and instruments in Africa," Antonie Delpot, head of South Africa and strategic partnerships for Africa and the Middle East for Syngenta, highlighted.

"Compared to Europe, we need an African green transition that enables Africa to make the most of technology and innovation, but in a sus-

tainable way and in partnership with the different parts of society, including the private sector," he said.

Delpot highlighted that Africa's main trading partner is the EU, with trade with the EU accounting for 31% of Africa's exports and 29% of its imports, and stressed the importance of regulation impacting both continents being "fit for purpose" in order for to maximise the potential for free trade agreements.

Climatic, pest pressure

One way in which differences must be acknowledged between the two continents is in climatic and pest pressures.

Highlighting the difficulties

that Kenyan producers face in adapting to changing regulatory frameworks elsewhere in the world, Okisegere Ojepat, chief executive officer of the Fresh Produce Consortium of Kenya said that the country's unique geographical location straddling the equator creates challenging climatic conditions throughout the year.

Pointing out that the warm climates are the perfect breeding ground for pests, he said that for Kenyan farmers, any limitation or withdrawal of certain molecules without offering alternatives can leave the farming sector vulnerable.

"So whereas we want to produce more, to feed our-

selves and then export, we are not able to do that," he said, highlighting that frequent regulatory changes are the "biggest barrier" facing producers in the region to enter the marketplace and to trading with the EU.

"We see notifications of certain molecules withdrawn without being given an opportunity to discuss and to agree on how we are going to have ways of working together," he said.

'Equal' partnership

As such, Ojepat stressed there was a need to have a "more accommodative global space" for discussions that have far-reaching conse-

quences on producers.

"What I want to see in this strategy between EU and Africa is a more acceptable partnership, where there's no big brother, where we all partners, where we all have in roles to play," he said, adding that he wants to see a "win-win situation across the globe".

"For me, the best way forward at the global level is to appreciate that we are all participants, in whatever level you are, that we are passionate, and we bring to the table unique products, unique characteristics. And we bring to the table unique opportunities that are open to each one of us," he stressed.

Young agri-entrepreneur shines in rural Zimbabwe

HARARE

WHILE agriculture forms an integral part of Zimbabwe's economy, many young people still think of it as back-breaking labor that offers little economic benefit. However, things are slowly changing; a growing number of young people are starting to see agriculture as a viable career option.

28-year-old Terence Maphosa is among a new generation of agri-entrepreneurs who are invigorating the agriculture sector with their innovative initiatives.

A Political Science graduate from the University of Zimbabwe, Maphosa's dream was to land a white-collar job in the city after finishing college.

A year and a half after graduating from college, circumstances pushed Maphosa to start breeding and selling indigenous chicken breeds popularly known as roadrunners at his rural home in Mhondoro-Ngezi, about 170 km from the capital Harare.

Roadrunner is a colloquial name for a free-range exotic breed of chicken that scavenges for food. Their meat is tougher and is considered by many to be tastier than broilers.

His breeds include the Black Australorp, Koekoek, Light Sussex, Kuroila and Jersey Giant.

While many young people in Zimbabwe view agriculture as the domain for the less educated and consider rural to urban migration as the only ticket out of poverty, Maphosa has made a name for himself in the village.

Apart from rearing exotic chicken, Maphosa is also involved in crop farming – but he focuses on corn, sunflowers, sorghum and soya crops as a means to reduce the costs of buying feeds.

Indigenous chickens have gained popularity among Zimbabweans as they offer a healthier organic option and a business opportunity.

Unlike broilers, the birds are cheaper to rear as they thrive on natural foods such as grains, worms and insects.

Maphosa's success in agribusiness has caught the at-

tention of many young people on social media where he regularly posts about his day-to-day life.

"A lot of youngsters are now appreciating farming, and slowly we are getting there," he told Xinhua.

"The reason why our generation doesn't see farming as something lucrative is because of our background. When growing up, we were taught to go to school, to be doctors, to be nurses, to be lawyers, to be engineers, nobody pushed us to be farmers. So apparently, they did not push us to be practical, they pushed us to work those white-collar jobs," he said.

Thanks to farmers such as Maphosa, a resurgence of interest among young farmers is happening, more and more young people are starting to see agriculture as a viable career path.

"People are now showing the desire and hunger to go into farming, specifically in my field, the roadrunner business," he said.

Maphosa said agriculture's image is changing, youth are now turning to farming and value addition of farm produce.

"The way we are doing things, I wouldn't deny we are making farming look cool, like being proud of your surroundings, you influence the next person to say let me try this," he said.

Through Maphosa's social media posts, young people at home and abroad are being motivated to venture into agribusiness.

His Twitter account has gained a significant following, and his name has become a subject of discussion on Twitter.

Maphosa's simple and authentic rural life, and his appreciation of traditional Zimbabwean food has also attracted the admiration of many.

With more educated youth such as Maphosa joining farming, youngsters are beginning to view agriculture as an intellectually stimulating and economically sustainable career.

Like most developing countries, agriculture remains the mainstay of Zimbabwe's economy. Attracting young people to rural agriculture is vital since



nearly 60 percent of Zimbabwe's population lives in rural areas.

In addition, agricultural activities provide employment and income for 60-70 percent of Zimbabwe's population, supplies 60 percent of the raw materials required by the industrial sector and contributes 40 percent of Zimbabwe's total export earnings, according to the Food and Agricultural Organization.

Agriculture also contributes approximately 17 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

With people below the age of 35 constituting more than 50 percent of the country's population, and given the country's high youth unemployment rate, the agricultural sector offers huge potential for job creation.

The Zimbabwean government has over the years taken various initiatives to support youth in agriculture. The government sees the inclusion of the youth, in the agricultural sector as key in its efforts to plug the country's food supply gap and to achieve food security at both household and national level

AfDB support for climate finance measures in West Africa

ABIDJAN

THE African Development Bank (AfDB) will financially support West African countries to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) targets under the Paris Agreement.

The AfDB will underwrite the preparation of concept notes which explore the use of international transferable mitigation outcomes (ITMOs) in certain West African

countries.

The project is financed through the African Climate Technology and Finance Center and Network (ACT-FCN), an AfDB-managed initiative that draws on funds from the GEF Trust Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund. The project will be implemented by a consortium led by Triple E Systems. ACT-FCN aims to support sub-Saharan African member countries in scaling-up the

deployment of low-carbon and climate-resilient technologies for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Gareth Phillips, AfDB manager of Climate and Environment Finance: "This intervention will put in place a robust platform, including processes, procedures and structures that will ensure real and practical participation of the West African sub-region in the use of ITMOs to deliver some of their NDC

aspirations. It will form the basis for the replication of these activities in other African countries."

The initiative will help governments develop technical capacity and institutional infrastructure to enable the private sector to access new sources of climate finance. It will also promote new financing mechanisms for energy efficiency and mitigation projects.

Climate finance for carbon

markets only works if there is regional cooperation

ITMOs promote low carbon technologies and accelerate the implementation of projects and programmes for energy efficiency projects. The process involves the implementation of an approved project that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and creates mitigation outcomes using approved accounting procedures. These steps are followed by

the transfer of the mitigation outcomes from the host party to a buying party. Corresponding adjustments in the registries of both parties ensure environmental integrity.

The Paris Agreement's Article 6 permits the use of markets for the transfer of ITMOs between countries to meet the commitments contained in their NDCs. The project will leverage the active engagement of several

West African countries in climate negotiations specifically through the use of international carbon markets. Established in 2017 the West African Alliance for Carbon Markets and Climate Finance (the West African Alliance or WAA) is an alliance of 16 West African countries which promote sub-regional cooperation on carbon markets. The WAA will provide the opportunity to expand the reach of carbon pricing to enable full

Anti-FGM campaigns start bearing fruit in Tanzania

By **Guardian Reporter**

A number of initiatives deployed by the government and human rights activists have started bearing fruits in some parts of the country. The prevalence of the ritual that marks a rite of passage among some communities has now fallen to around 10 per cent from 18 per cent 25 years ago.

An increasing number of girls are attending alternative rites of passage and more cases are being reported and handled by the police thanks to campaigns by activists and non-governmental organizations.

In Tanzania, FGM is criminal. The East African nation has also adopted a National Plan of Action to end violence against women and children and is committed to ending violence against women and children in all its forms, including female genital mutilation, by 2030.

"We have worked alongside influential community leaders, lobbied elected offi-

cial, arrested perpetrators and collaborated with converted circumcisers to organize rite of passage festivals without the female cut," says Getrude Shinje Dyabene an officer at Legal and Human Right Centre and the National Coordinator of the Coalition Against Female Genital Mutilation.

However, the practice persists in Arusha, Dodoma, Manyara, Mara, Singida regions which have higher prevalence. One in 10 women in Tanzania has been circumcised.

While official data depict a decrease in the practice, it has been handed down from generation to generation, keeping it alive despite the endeavours to root it out.

"As we lobby elected officials, they pressure them [community leaders] to end FGM [female genital mutilation] or risk losing elections," says Koshuma Mtengeti, a programme officer at children dignity forum that promotes reproductive health rights.

In some instances, community leaders pretend to abandon the practice then or-



ganize alternative rite of passage festivals for girls only to continue with female genital mutilation in disguise.

Perpetrators are increasingly targeting children below one year, which represent 35% of women that have undergone female genital mutilation in Tanzania.

"FGM is more than traditional practice. Its supporters hold it to religiously. It is

linked to dignity, status in one side and on the other it is an economic activity enforced by individuals that have clout in households and in the community," Dyabene says.

Nine in 10 women in Tanzania believe that female circumcision should be stopped. "Women should be empowered to put their belief in practice," she points

out. To reach out to the 2030 target, information on the medical and social consequences of female circumcision needs to be provided in the health worker curriculums and on-the-job training programmes. This will raise awareness of health care workers and help manage and prevent FGM.

WHO is supporting Tanzania's Ministry of Health to review the nursing and midwives training curriculum and prepare a competency-based module on female genital mutilation to help end the practice.

To eliminate female circumcision, health and rights activists call for a firmer resolve by elected officials to support law enforcement and step up advocacy.

"We keep campaigning that circumcision is both psychologically and biologically detrimental. Our arguments must address the counter-arguments that perpetuate female circumcision with economic, religious and psychological incentives," says Mtengeti.

How my Dad captured this famous photo of Martin Luther King Jr.

By Dorothy M. Davis, TAMPA, Florida

My dad, Griff Davis, was a boyhood friend of Martin Luther King, Jr. They ran in the same crowd and, after graduating from Morehouse College, stayed in touch their whole lives. Dad, who was both an international photojournalist and U.S. Foreign Service officer, captured a famous photo of a rising "M.L.," as they called him in Atlanta, and Vice President Richard Nixon meeting for the first time in newly independent Ghana in 1957. That photo couldn't have been made in America at the time.

Dad was 24 when he graduated from Morehouse in 1947. After M.L. graduated a year later at 19, they both set out to make their lives, knowing that they had a right to dream and the tools to make those dreams come true. They only needed experience.

In 1947, Langston Hughes arrived at Atlanta University as the visiting professor for creative writing. Recognizing that Dad was the photographer for the campuses of the Atlanta University Center and the Atlanta Daily World, Hughes adopted him as his photographer in Atlanta.

Dad became the first roving editor of *Ebony* magazine at Hughes' recommendation to its founder and publisher. He subsequently graduated in the Class of '49 from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism while renting a room in Hughes' home. It turned into his home base while working as the only African-American international freelance photojournalist for *Black Star*, the first privately owned picture agency in the United States. His work appeared in *Fortune*, *Ebony*, *Time*, *Modern Photography*, *Steelways* and *Der Spiegel*.

During this time, he made three separate trips to Liberia, which with Ethiopia were the only independent black countries in Africa and among the charter members of the United Nations in 1945.

My parents returned to Liberia in late 1952 after Dad passed the foreign service exam, the beginning of his 35-year career. Unlike their white counterparts, African-American Foreign Service officers at the time were posted by the U.S. State Department only to Liberia or Haiti.

When Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah led the Gold Coast to independence from Britain in 1957 to become the new nation of Ghana, our family was ending a four-year tour in Liberia. Back in the United States in 1955, Rosa Parks had been arrested after refusing to give up her bus seat, and King had come to national prominence as the leader of the Montgomery bus boycott.

Vice President Richard Nixon and Patricia Nixon led the official U.S. delegation to Ghana's Independence Day cer-



In commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday this iconic photograph of the first meeting of King and Richard Nixon will be displayed at the Florida Museum of Photographic Arts, 400 N. Ashley Dr., Tampa, through April 19 as part of the inside exhibition, "Griff Davis- Langston Hughes, Letters and Photographs, 1947-1967"

emonies – Nixon's first trip to Africa. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King had been invited by Ghana's prime minister himself on the heels of the end of the Montgomery bus boycott. It was also the Kings' first trip to Africa.

Having attended Lincoln University, Kwame Nkrumah was very aware of the racial dynamics in the United States and had been following the

American civil rights movement. He could equate it to the colonialism in his own country. Recognizing the common fight for freedom between the two movements, he used the Independence Day celebrations of Ghana as a global platform to bring key people together. This included Ralph Bunche, the first person of color to have won the Nobel Peace Prize, in his

new capacity as undersecretary of the United Nations.

The U.S. Information Service (USIS) assigned my Dad to cover Nixon's visit to Liberia and Ghana, one of only 20 official photographers to cover Ghana's independence celebrations. It was the first African country to become decolonized.

The Kings arrived in Accra, the capi-

tal, on March 4, 1957 and attended a reception at Legon University. That's where he met Nixon. As the official photographer for the Nixon delegation and former photojournalist, my father took the picture of their first meeting.

Dad said, "When they met, Nixon invited M.L. to come by his office the next time he travelled to Washington. ... It was ironic to me that Montgomery, Ala., and Washington, D.C., had to meet at Accra, outside the United States. However, it was only a short time later that M.L. and his nonviolent movement entered upon the national scene in America."

The next time my father saw M.L. and Coretta Scott King was back in the U.S. at my Dad's 10th year class reunion at Morehouse in June 1957. They were building the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In 1963, my father attended the March on Washington in Washington, DC and heard M.L. give his "I Have A Dream" speech. It reminded him of their teachings at Morehouse. He last saw M.L. at the Capitol in Montgomery at the conclusion of the March from Selma in 1965. In 1966, our family was posted to Nigeria. M.L. was scheduled to visit Nigeria the week after he was assassinated.

All through the years since their college days, M.L. and Dad exchanged greeting cards at Christmas. This is the message in the last Christmas card:

"We who know we are brothers," M.L. said, "have a duty to bring others back into the broken family of man, into our world house. In the context of the modern world, we must live together as brothers or we shall perish divided as fools." **IPS**

Will the right people get the Covid-19 vaccine first in South Africa?

By Elna Schütz

THE government recently released information on which groups of people in South Africa will be first to receive Covid-19 vaccinations. While local experts welcome most of the prioritisation choices, some practical nuances remain ambiguous.

The Department of Health published its Vaccine Rollout Strategy on 3 January, based on an advisory from the Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) on Covid-19 vaccines. The framework for allocation explains that since vaccine amounts are limited, prioritisation is needed and based on both evidence-based practicalities and ethical considerations, including African indigenous values.

The rollout plan has three phases, starting with a target population of 1.25 million frontline healthcare workers (HCWs).

The second phase includes essential workers such as police officers, miners, teachers, various government officials and those working in the food, retail, security, funeral, and banking sectors. People in congregate settings, such as care homes, prisons, shelters and workers in the hospitality, tourism and educational sectors are also included. Another phase two population group is people above the age of 60 and adults over 18 who have comorbidities such as chronic lung disease, poorly controlled cardiovascular disease, HIV, tuberculosis and obesity. The combined target population of phase 2 is about 16.6 million.

Last, all others over 18 years old make up phase 3, which has a target population of more than 22 million people.

Professor Landon Myer, head of the School of Public Health and Family Medicine at the University of Cape Town, called the plan "well thought out and sensible - a considered balance of priorities to protect vulnerable populations, protecting ongoing government functions and ensuring ongoing economic activity."

Professor Leslie London, a steering committee member of the People's Health Movement South Africa (PHM) explains that it is also not radically different to international norms, such as guidelines from the World Health Organisation. "It's not a big surprise, because it's more or less following what other countries have done and what other guidelines have said, but in South Africa, I think there are quite a few specificities which might apply differently."

Frontlines first

Starting with medical and health personnel makes intuitive sense, given their importance and vulnerability during the pandemic. "With a sharply limited number of doses available in the first phase, the focus on HCWs is strategic on several fronts - and sends a valuable signal at a critical time," says Myer.

However, with it being unclear just how many doses of which vaccine will ultimately be used and when, rationing and prioritisation across this group may also take place. Professor Keymanthri Moodley, a medi-



A nurse in a Covid-19 isolation ward gives patients meals. The vaccine rollout plan has three phases, starting with a target population of 1.25 million frontline healthcare workers. (Photo: James Oatway) **Less**

cal ethics expert speaking in her personal capacity, says "the challenge arises when vaccine demand exceeds supply and there needs to be a choice amongst [HCWs]". Those at highest risk from occupational exposure and personal health risk ought to be prioritised for the first rollout of vaccines," she says.

From a civil society perspective, London adds that there needs to be equity among frontline health workers, including community healthcare workers. "I think the thing that's particularly important for us is that healthcare workers, meaning all healthcare workers and community healthcare workers, got the short end of the stick during the first and second waves." He refers specifically to difficulties some healthcare workers faced in accessing personal protective equipment and hopes that the vaccine rollout will not reflect this imbalance again.

"We don't want to see community health workers rationed out, because they are high risk, and they should be protected because they are kind of the arms and feet of the health service and community," he says.

Some experts speaking to *Spotlight* emphasised that other workers in the healthcare community, such as traditional healers and medical students, should be included in phase one. Now that the electronic vaccination registration portal has been launched, it is clear that these groups are indeed included.

Branching out

"The devil, however, as in almost all countries whose vaccination policies I am following, is in the details of phase 2," says Professor Gesine Meyer-Rath, from the Boston University School of Public Health and the Health Economics and Epidemiology Research Of-

face at the University of the Witwatersrand. She says how the sequencing of this phase will go is important and will reflect what the government most wants to achieve, for instance in prioritising between workers helping society function and those at high health risk.

Myer says the exact list of essential jobs and sectors is somewhat debatable - for instance, whether mining and retail workers should be included. However, the list is, overall, acceptable. The prioritisation of people with pre-existing conditions is fairly understandable, although he questions the notion of "uncontrolled" chronic diseases such as diabetes as a helpful and constant qualifier.

Including people in congregate settings, particularly prisoners, has drawn some public criticism. Public health lawyer Safura Abdool Karim says this is a smart move because of the overcrowded and poorly sanitised nature of many prisons and the turnover of people. "Thinking about prisons as something that's isolated from us is a mistake," she says.

"There are very strong human rights and constitutional imperatives for the [government] to prioritise access to prisoners, because those people are wards of the state, so the [government] has a level of responsibility. Above and beyond that, we know that prisons were a massive hotspot for infections in the first wave," says Abdool Karim.

"I think the categories are fine in and of themselves, the whole issue is context," says London. "I think there's too much preoccupation with whether the government has made the right prioritisation. I find it quite distracting. The real issue is being able to implement it in a way that is equitable."

For instance, he is concerned about people in rural

areas accessing the vaccines. "Rural areas have been relatively spared of our epidemic, which means that a lot of vulnerable people in rural areas don't have natural immunity following infection, to the extent that it [confers] you with immunity." There is also concern about equity among provinces.

Abdool Karim explains that there is also concern about equity given South Africa's tiered medical system. "It's not tenable, in terms of our constitutional democracy to, for example, have preferential access given to people who have medical aid or access to private facilities, but we know that there's a lot more healthcare capacity in the private sector." She says that while the rollout plan may be enough, for now, information about this more granular allocation in the second and third phases will need to be clarified.

Louis Reynolds, also on the PHM steering committee, is a retired paediatrician and particularly noticed the age restriction. "I think certainly that the 18-year age limit seems a bit hard and arbitrary, given the fact that children younger than 18 are also susceptible." He explains that children younger than 10 seem to be less susceptible to Covid-19 and don't pick up more severe forms of the disease, but that from around 12 years old, children seem to react more like adults and perhaps should be considered for the vaccines.

Meyer-Rath explains that the prioritisation may also be influenced by the practicality of which populations are easiest to reach and not only the most vulnerable. "Speed seems to be of the essence, lest we end up in a situation where sub-optimal levels of population immunity give rise to additional mutations increasing the virus's transmissibility."

Clarity on process

The vaccine rollout plan has been long awaited and now gives some clarity on the order of who will get the jab and when, but experts say that it is unclear how the government came up with this order and whether enough perspectives were involved. Abdool Karim says that while the vaccine MAC membership itself was clear, she would have wanted to understand the further layers of consultation and partnership that informed the rollout.

"Public consultation ought to have been initiated by the vaccine MAC when it was established," says Moodley. She says that data should have been collected from healthcare workers to inform the decision-making process for phase one. In particular, healthcare workers should be surveyed to understand levels of willingness to accept the vaccine and personal and occupational risk levels. She says that this could have been the basis of a scoring system to determine who to prioritise with the vaccine.

"The process of determining a schedule of rationing any scarce health resource is highly controversial at the best of times, but perhaps becomes less controversial in an emergency setting such as this," says Myer. He adds that while public participation is critical, it is not fully feasible given the time pressure of the pandemic. **DM/MC**



Thursday 11 February 2021

PM commends NMB, PASS Trust partnership in bailing out farmers

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has welcomed a strategic partnership entered between NMB Bank Plc and PASS Trust saying it will help speed up the government's blue print to graduate smallholder into commercial farmers.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said in Arusha earlier this week while opening a National Economic Empowerment Council exhibition that the two institutions will enable mechanization of smallholder farmers who constitute the bulk of the country's agriculture producers.

"I see this PASS Trust and NMB partnership as a game changer for our farmers because it enables them access funding to buy equipment such as tractors easily," Majaliwa said after handing over a multi-million shillings tractor to Babati based smallholder farmer, Hamis Twalib thanks to a PASS Credit Guarantee.

He paid tribute to PASS Trust and NMB managements for their innovative thinking which aligns well with the government's plans to mechanise the agriculture sector as a precondition towards becoming a semi industrialised economy by 2025.

"I wish to encourage other smallholder farmers who are facing challenges in accessing credit to buy agro-equipment to approach PASS Trust and NMB Bank who are doing a great job," the PM said while promising the two institutions full state cooperation.

He acknowledged the role being played by PASS Trust and NMB in ensuring that smallholder subsistence farmers become commercial producers and agribusiness entrepreneurs. "The government is very happy to be associated with this kind of innovative thinking to bring change to our agriculture sector," he added.

Briefing the PM when he visited NMB's pavilion, the bank's Northern Zone Manager, Aikansia Muro said the bank is committed towards investing in the agriculture sector through its value chain to speed up smallholder farmers' development.

"NMB has invested heavily in agriculture and continues to do so by working with various partners at different levels to assist farmers," Muro said while noting that PASS Trust is one of such valuable partners that the bank works with.

During the event, PASS Trust also presented PASS Credit Guarantee certificate to NMB Bank



NMB Bank Plc's northern zone manager, Aikansia Muro (L) briefing Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa on the bank's investment made in the agriculture sector during a National Economic Empowerment Council exhibition held in Arusha earlier this week. Centre is PASS Trust acting executive director, Anna Shanalingigwa. Photo courtesy of NMB.

on behalf of 20 smallholder farmers and agribusiness entrepreneurs valued at 96m/- to allow them get loans from NMB Bank. The loans acquired will be invested in boosting agriculture production among the recipients hence improving their own incomes.

"We are happy that since inception in 2000, we have been able to support some 42,000 agribusiness projects in the country worth over 1bn/- that has benefited a record over 1.5 million smallholder farmers who include women," said PASS Trust acting Executive Director, Anna Shanalingigwa.

Shanalingigwa said her institution has created not less than 2.5 million jobs through its guarantee facility over the period. "Our goal is to continue supporting smallholder farmers and agribusiness entrepreneurs grow and gradually graduate into agro-processing companies," she assured.

Bill ups deposit refund in failed banks to Sh1m

NAIROBI

THE Treasury is fighting a bid to change the law to allow depositors in collapsed banks receive compensation of up to Sh1 million for each account. A draft Bill set for debate in Parliament seeks to increase the payout for each account in a failed bank from the current cap of Sh500,000 per depositor.

The Treasury, the Attorney-General and the Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation (KDIC)— an independent agency that manages the deposit refund in collapsed banks — have opposed the increase, arguing it would create a Sh1 trillion liability for the State. The compensation was in July last year increased to Sh500,000 from Sh1 million, marking the first rise in 30 years.

The low compensation had exposed wealthy savers to higher losses in the event of bank closures because the refund was not adjusted to take into account changing economic realities over the three decades. KDIC reckons that time is not right for another adjustment.

"I do not think it is workable and we have raised objections, the National Treasury and the AG have also written to Parliament warning that the government will have to allocate Sh1 trillion to cover the deposits," Mohamud Mohamud, the KDIC chief executive officer, said in an interview Tuesday.



Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation CEO Mohamud Ahmed Mahamud.

The Bill scraps a clause that states that depositors can only receive a maximum of Sh500,000 despite holding multiple accounts in a collapsed bank. The proposed law also compels KDIC to pay the refund within six months after the collapse of a bank failing which its executives risk a fine of Sh1 million or three years jail or both.

"The principal object of this Bill is to amend sec-

tion 28 of the Kenya Deposit Insurance Act 2012 in order to increase the maximum amount a person with an account in an institution under liquidation is to be paid by KDIC," says the Bill. "It further seeks to delete the provision limiting the maximum a person is to be paid by the corporation despite having different accounts."

MPs had earlier proposed to raise the amount of

bank deposits guaranteed in case of a collapse by 20 times to Sh2 million per customer. Depositors and investors in Kenya were rattled four years ago when the Central Bank of Kenya took control of three mid-sized lenders after they failed to meet their statutory obligations.

Out of the three lenders placed under receivership in 2015 and 2016, Dubai Bank is facing

liquidation. However, Chase Bank and Imperial Bank had their good loans and deposits transferred to State Bank of Mauritius (SBM) and KCB respectively. Mr Mohamud said the deposit insurance fund currently has Sh120 billion against an exposure of Sh650 billion after KDIC revised the cover to Sh500,000.

The revised cap now covers about 20 percent of all bank deposits from the previous eight percent. KDIC is funded by charging commercial banks a small percentage of their deposits in the form of insurance. Currently, all banks pay an annual premium at a flat rate of 0.15 percent of the average total deposit liabilities or Sh300,000 per bank, whichever is higher.

The fee is applied uniformly while the assessments are conducted in July and premium payments expected by August of each year. Banks are from July expected to pay premiums based on the risks and not a uniform rate.

Mr Mohamud reckons that increasing coverage to Sh1 million will see 99.9 percent of all bank accounts liable for compensation. "It will create market discipline and banks will be reckless. Why would they care if all depositors can be paid by the government," he said, adding that it would be in breach of international practice.

AfDB commits financially to help W. Africa countries achieve carbon emission reductions

ABIDJAN

THE African Development Bank has extended financial support to a project that will strengthen the efforts of West African countries to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) targets under the Paris climate accord.

The bank will underwrite the preparation of concept notes exploring the use of internationally transferable mitigation outcomes (ITMOs) in selected West African countries.

The project is financed through the African Climate Technology and Finance Center and Network (ACTFCN), a Bank-managed initiative that draws on funds from the GEF Trust Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund. The pro-

ject is being implemented by a consortium led by Triple E Systems.

"This intervention will put in place a robust platform, including processes, procedures, and structures that will ensure real and practical participation of the West African sub-region in the use of ITMOs to deliver some of their NDC aspirations. It will form the basis for the replication of these activities in other African countries," said Gareth Phillips, Manager of Climate and Environment Finance at the African Development Bank.

The initiative will help governments develop technical capacity and institutional infrastructure to enable the private sector to access new sources of climate finance as

well as promote new financing mechanisms for energy efficiency and mitigation projects.

ITMOs promote low carbon technologies and accelerate the implementation of projects and programs for energy efficiency projects. The process involves the implementation of an approved project that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and creates mitigation outcomes utilizing approved accounting procedures.

These steps are followed by the transfer of the mitigation outcomes from the host party to a buying party. Corresponding adjustments in the registries of both parties ensure environmental integrity.

The Paris agreement permits the use of markets for the transfer of ITMOs between

countries to meet the commitments contained in their NDCs.

The project will also leverage the active engagement of several West African countries in climate negotiations, particularly around Article 6 of the Paris accord, and the activities of the West African Alliance for Carbon Markets and Climate Finance (the West African Alliance or WAA), which provide the opportunity to expand the reach of carbon pricing to enable full implementation of NDCs.

ACTFCN aims to support sub-Saharan African member countries in scaling-up the deployment of low-carbon and climate-resilient technologies for climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Gareth Phillips, Manager of Climate and Environment Finance at the African Development Bank.

RC Kunenge commends bank for making good its GCF affiliation



CRDB Bank Plc's corporate banking manager, Crispin Sichele, making a presentation during a Dar es Salaam Region's local authority and sub location officials meeting held in the commercial capital mid this week. Regional Commissioner, Abubakar Kunenge also addressed the meeting. Photo courtesy of CRDB.

By The Banker Reporter

A CAMPAIGN to make the country green by planting trees and conserving the environment being championed by CRDB Bank Plc has earned praises from Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner, Abubakar Kunenge.

Addressing a meeting of local government and sub location officials held in Dar es Salaam mid this week, Kunenge said CRDB is making good its affiliation to South Korea based Green Climate Fund which encourages investment in conservation and environmentally friendly projects.

The meeting which was sponsored by the bank was aimed at discussing how to boost revenue collection, maintain clean environments, improve infrastructure and garbage collection, among other things.

Kunenge said the bank has been a trusted partner to the state in all aspects of development including a nationwide campaign to make Tanzania green which was launched in Dar es Salaam last year targeting to

plant millions of trees.

“Let me take this opportunity to thank CRDB Bank's leadership for working with us in Dar es Salaam in many areas but also for sponsoring this important meeting,” he said adding that the local authority and sub location officials have an opportunity to discuss several issues relating to their region.

In a presentation during the meeting, CRDB Bank's Corporate Banking Manager Crispin Sichele said the

bank has been working with grass root state officials in addressing issues of environmental conservation, garbage management and revenue collection boosting.

“At this meeting, we are also going to train these officials on financial management and digitised revenue collection for the government,” said Sichele who added that helping the local authorities to boost their revenue has always been an important agenda for the bank.

SSA could green-light 74m tons per year LNG capacity by 2030

By The Banker Reporter

SUB Saharan Africa could approve an additional 74 million metric tons per year of liquefied natural gas (LNG) export capacity by 2030 if market conditions allow, an African Coalition for Trade and Investment in Natural Gas said in a report published this week.

ACTING said sub-Saharan Africa has significant potential to expand its LNG export capacity and to grow its own gas consumption, particularly through gas-to-power projects. The region remains a limited gas producer despite its abundant reserves and has not yet fully benefited from its own gas resources, the ACTING report stated. The region currently has 33.8 million mt/year of LNG export capacity across four countries – Angola, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria.

In addition, a further 26 million mt/year of export capacity is under construction – Nigeria LNG's seventh train, BP's floating LNG production project in Mauritania/Senegal, and two new export facilities in Mozambique (the Total-operated Mozambique LNG project and Eni's Coral FLNG).

“By 2025, sub-Saharan Africa will house four onshore LNG terminals and three FLNG units, able to export 60 million mt/year of LNG,” ACTING said in its report which noted that another round of SSA's LNG export capacity approvals could take place by 2030, green-lighting another 74 million mt/year of export capacity, but that it would be very much dependent on market conditions.

“The quantities of gas found offshore Mauritania, Senegal and Mozambique are such that they could justify over 90 million mt/year of LNG export capacity combined, more than Qatar,” the report noted. ACTING said the 15.2 million mt/



Songas Limited's natural gas plant on Songo Songo Island in Kilwa District.

year Rovuma LNG export project in Mozambique was “likely to get FID in the near future” but cautioned about further growth. “Anything beyond that is very uncertain, at best,” it said. “Simply put, the outlook for future sub-Saharan African LNG export projects is unclear.”

In the medium and long term, market conditions could affect the approval of a number of projects, it said. These include the further development of BP's Mauritania/Senegal project in subsequent phases, originally designed to bring total

capacity to 10 million mt/year.

Other projects that could account for some of the additional 74 million mt/year of new capacity are Senegal's 10 million mt/year Yakaar-Teranga LNG hub, Mauritania's 10 million mt/year Bir Allah-Orca LNG hub, and the expansion of Total's Mozambique LNG facility to 42 million mt/year. “Such projects now depend on their developers' ability to optimize cost and find new synergies, especially when it comes to brownfield expansion plans,” the ACTING report added.



The quantities of gas found offshore Mauritania, Senegal and Mozambique are such that they could justify over 90 million mt/year of LNG export capacity combined, more than Qatar,



KDIC chief executive Mohamud Ahmed Mohamud

Kenyan Banks pay Sh5.5 billion deposit insurance premiums

NAIROBI

BANKS have paid Sh5.5 billion in deposit insurance after the lapse of a six-month moratorium to ease their cash constraints amid the adverse effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

Mohamud Ahmed Mohamud, the chief executive officer of the Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation (KIDC), said the banks remitted the payments in December, boosting the corporation's fund used to insure the Sh4.02 trillion customer deposits as at November.

“All the banks paid by December 31, after the six-month window extension expired,” Mr Mohamud said. The Sh5.5 billion premiums were calculated at a flat rate of 0.15 per cent of the total deposits per annum using an old formula which lapsed in July last year. Under a new arrangement, banks are required to pay premiums based on their individual risk profiles – capturing elements such as their liquidity positions, capital adequacy, asset quality and governance structures. Those deemed risky would pay higher premium to the fund compared with their relatively stable counterparts. KDIC has enforced the revised deposit insurance coverage limit of Sh500,000, up from Sh100,000.

However, the risk-based assessment model that was scheduled to be rolled out in July 2020 was extended to July 2021 since the banks were already struggling with rising defaults and pressure to restructure loans. Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) data shows that the value of loans defaulted hit Sh423 billion or 14.1 percent of the total Sh3 trillion loan book. Customers also extended repayment periods on loans worth Sh1.63 trillion by end of December, an equivalent of 54.2 percent of total

loan book.

The deposit insurance fund, run by KIDC, was created to compensate depositors of collapsed institutions and to boost confidence in the banking industry that had been rocked by a series of bank failures in the 1980s and early 1990s.

It began retooling its operations following the return of bank collapses that hit Dubai Bank, Imperial Bank and Chase Bank in less than a year after the institutions faced liquidity challenges and couldn't meet depositor demands. Mr Mohamud said KDIC and regulators would focus on forestalling bank failures or ensuring minimal disruption of depositors and the banking industry at large.

The coronavirus pandemic has piled new liquidity pressures on banks which now want the regulator to lend them money cheaply to support their operations, but do so discreetly so that they are not viewed as weak.

In a credit survey report, banks made proposals to the CBK and the Treasury come up with other specific measures that particularly cushion institutions, including encouraging use of the discount window at minimal rate and without the stigma that is associated with the use of the facility. Borrowing from the regulator through the discount window is often seen as an indication that the appropriate bank is desperate for money and cannot get it from other banks at the interbank market – putting at risk of a fallout with investors and depositors.

Traditionally the regulator is the lender of last resort for banks after exhausting all other avenues, including borrowing from each other. The CBK currently charges 13 percent to access money at the discount window.

Africa's central banks eager to explore digital currencies

LONDON

THREE African countries participated for the first time in a Bank for International Settlements (BIS) survey that shows about a fifth of the world's central banks are likely to issue their own digital currencies in the next three years.

Central banks from Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania joined the BIS annual central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) survey to increase Africa's tally in the total 65 apex banks that took part in the 2020 version released this week.

They join the likes of Cape Verde, Egypt, Eswatini, Morocco and South Africa, which have been involved in the assessment in the past. “During the course of 2020, work on CBDCs continued apace amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The vast majority of central banks in the survey – 86% – are now exploring the benefits and drawbacks of CBDCs,” states the BIS, which serves as a bank for central banks.

Its latest report shows that most central banks are exploring CBDCs (about 60% of central banks up from 42% in 2019) and moving into more advanced stages of CBDC engagement (14%), progressing from conceptual research to practical experimentation, as interest in CBDCs continues to be shaped by local circumstances.

It also points out that central banks from emerging markets and developing economies have relatively stronger motivations to issue a CBDC as financial inclusion and payments efficiency objectives drive top the general purpose for their CBDC work. Meanwhile, even as the tally rises, no African country has officially confirmed it has concluded plans to issue a CBDC.

StanChart urges corporates to exploit its digital banking channels

IN part 2 of the exclusive interview with StanChart Tanzania's Head of Transaction Banking, Efeh Amoah, she talks about why both local and foreign corporates should join digital banking, excerpts:

What do you think are the challenges that corporates face in embracing digital banking capabilities?

Adopting digital can be seen as a journey for clients. For some it is quick, but for others it can take time. Some feedback we get is that there are barriers in connectivity or understanding how the platform works, or even if it's safety. It has been our privilege to walk that path with many of our clients, helping them from a place of discomfort to full adoption of valuable digital capabilities.

How exactly do you address such challenges?

We tailor our client engagements with their different phases

of digital transition and adoption in mind, so that no matter a client's stage of transition or adoption, they find their path smoothed and their processes enhanced with the support they receive from us. This is how we have been able to successfully enable almost 100 percent of corporate cash payments online. We see this as part of what we contribute, as we add value to our clients' business on a day to day basis.

What are the opportunities for growth in the space of digital banking for corporates?

Developments in technology are advancing rapidly. The Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence and blockchain, are just a few of the many introductions into our world. We can see how fast Tanzania accelerated its digital capabilities with the coronavirus outbreak. Many corporates have also shown a willingness to evolve their banking requirements to digital platforms.



At Standard Chartered, we have taken a digital-first approach for banking. We are already investing in forward looking technologies so that clients who bank with us will find us leading and supporting them to stay in step, and in many cases ahead of change. We are doing this for clients doing business solely in Tanzania, for multina-

tionals and for Tanzanian companies flying the country's flag high in markets beyond the host nation.

Can you explain a bit on this?

Be it in the aspects of payments, collections or trade financing, we have already looked at what our clients' needs are likely to be in the next five to ten years and how they will want solutions provided to them, thus ensuring that we are staying abreast and ahead of their expectations. We are, therefore, investing in many of the digital advancements, merging them securely into solutions that our clients can readily use. We are providing a strong push for e-commerce and are ready to support our clients in this area.

Beyond this, Standard Chartered is actively looking out for co-creation opportunities where we jointly build products and solutions with clients. We already have a couple of such projects underway and are keen to do more. We will remain plugged in and continue to invest in cutting edge technology in various ways.

What advice do you have for corporates in Tanzania in relation to leverag-

ing on digital banking capabilities?

Digital banking is here to stay. The benefits of security, convenience, speed and efficiency remain a strong reason for corporates to embrace digital banking. Besides this, digital banking is facilitating business transactions in ways that manual banking could not.

Solutions that bring valuable returns to corporate clients are being provided for both our clients and their own business ecosystem - including suppliers and buyers.

These capabilities have also enabled corporates to be plugged in to global supply chains and markets, enabling these corporates to create new products, expand existing capacity and bring new value to their existing markets.

This drives growth for the economy with a direct impact on gross domestic product and often on per capita income. I, therefore, urge existing corporate clients to continue leveraging on our digital banking platforms and invite those that are not banking with us to try these exceptional platforms. At Standard Chartered Bank, and in line with our brand promise, 'Here for good,' we will continue to be part of this story for both corporate clients and the country as a whole.

WBank pledges \$500m to support Rwanda's COVID-19 recovery plan

KIGALI

THE World Bank Group is preparing a \$500 million financing facility for Rwanda to be announced in coming days.

The support will go into supporting vaccine procurement and deployment, financial support to Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises, commercializing agriculture and promoting digital inclusion all part of supporting Rwanda's resilient recovery. This is according to Rolande Pryce, the World Bank Country Manager for Rwanda.

While the details on the timelines of

availability of funds remain scanty, the fund is expected to come in handy in speeding up Covid-19 vaccine access, as well as facilitating the resumption and recovery of business activities.

Among the gaps that the funds are expected to fill is curbing poverty levels which the World Bank estimates could go as a result of lockdowns, social distancing, and increased costs associated with the pandemic.

In the latest World Bank's Rwanda Economic Update, it is estimated that the poverty headcount is likely to rise by 5.1 percentage points (more than 550,000

people) in 2021, with more than 80 per cent of the new poor in rural areas. Across the continent, an estimated 32 million people could be plunged into poverty. Studies by the World Bank showed that the impact of Covid-19 disproportionately affects women in Rwanda.

While the employment to population ratio decreased by 5 percentage points from 48.3 to 43 per cent through the lockdown period, the lender noted that there was a larger decrease among female workers (6.2 per cent points versus 4 per cent among male workers).



Rolande Pryce, the World Bank Country Manager for Rwanda.

BANKING & FINANCE

This the bank found to be partly because women are more likely to be seasonal workers and more likely to be taking care of a sick relative. The poverty effect, World Bank experts say is likely to be more in rural areas with rural residents taking longer to recover and graduate economically.

"Although the welfare losses in the rural areas are lower than those in the urban areas in the short term, rural households are more likely to remain trapped in poverty over the long term. The long-term adverse effect of the pandemic increases disproportionately more among rural households and the poorest households, accentuating inequality," Calvin Djiofack, the World Bank Senior Economist. The Bank however noted that ongoing responses by the government in social protection has played a role in curbing the increase in poverty.

"Rwanda's social protection system responded quickly and helped mitigate the increase in poverty. It was well prepared to respond to the pandemic. Rwanda made significant pre-COVID investments in its flagship safety net, Vision 2020 Umurenge program (VUP), including an expansion in the number of beneficiaries through human capital-focused innovations," he said.

Based on projections, the Bank estimates that if the government continues further expansion, and fully achieves the targets set out in the Economic Recovery Plan, social safety nets could reduce poverty by up to 1.75 percentage points in 2021.

The increase in poverty and reduced productivity, experts say could be felt across the economy for years with estimations that in the absence of robust interventions, GDP by 2030 would be 22 per cent lower in the baseline than in a scenario without COVID.

Rwanda is attempting to steer the economy back in line with the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) estimated at US\$900 million over the two fiscal years 2019/20 and 2020/21. The recovery plan aims to scale up social safety net programs for the most vulnerable, build key infrastructures, and support strategic enterprises, including small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Amina Rwakunda, the Chief Economist at the Ministry of Finance, noted that the government is soon set to launch additional support to the investment sector from resources they are currently mobilising. Anastase Shyaka, the Minister for Local Government, said that while the pandemic has had multi-dimensional effects including health, economic and social aspects, the government has made attempts to create balance to ensure that progress in one aspect is not at the expense of the other.

Shyaka said that this involved ensuring that certain sectors of the economy can be maintained even during lockdowns. Responding to the country's response to poverty levels which are feared to be rising, Shyaka said that the government had adjusted and improved the timeliness in the disbursement of direct support input in social protection.

JP Morgan hopes to tap Tidjane Thiam's network with \$250m fund

DAVOS

TIDJANE Thiam is ready to make a comeback in the financial world. According to the Financial Times, the Franco-Ivorian executive, who previously served as chief executive of British insurer Prudential and Swiss banking giant Credit Suisse, was asked by US bank JPMorgan Chase to participate in the launch of a special purpose acquisition company (SPAC).

By the British newspaper's account - which a representative of Mr Thiam was not immediately able to corroborate - JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon gave the green light for the SPAC and is personally involved in the venture. Dimon is a regular at Davos, attended on several occasions by Thiam during his tenure at Credit Suisse (from 2015 to early 2020).

The FT reported that the soon-to-be-created acquisition company is planning to raise \$250m to carry out acquisitions in the financial services

sector in both Western countries and emerging markets. The SPAC will be listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE).

Formerly viewed as exotic structures "relegated to the backwaters of finance", a 2017 report on mobilising African institutional investment for infrastructure published by Africa Investor defines SPACs as "corporations formed by private individuals to facilitate investment through an initial public offering (IPO)."

SPACs help raise money ahead of acquisitions and secure the listing of investment firms seeking to buy a range of assets down the road. While no specifics have been released regarding Thiam's role in the acquisition company, the FT indicated that the SPAC "is in discussions with sovereign wealth funds [...] and several potential board members."

'Blank cheque'

The successful launch of these



Former Sarb deputy registrar of banks, Michael Blackburn.

acquisition vehicles depends largely on the expertise of the sponsors backing the projects and their ability to woo investors prior to finding future targets, which is why they are also called "blank cheque vehicles."

In addition to having extensive experience in the realm of European finance, the Franco-Ivorian financier

developed a vast network of contacts - including investors and high earners (known as "ultra-high-net-worth individuals" [UHNWI] in financial speak) - during his stint at Credit Suisse, where he focused on wealth management. Back then, the Franco-Ivorian banker's teams flaunted how he was courted by

UHNWIs, especially Asian ones.

While at Prudential he also led an unsuccessful push to expand the company's business in Asia and completed the British insurer's first foray into the African market with the 2013 acquisition of Ghana's Express Life Insurance.

A total \$44bn raised

SPACs began having a moment early in 2020, spurred by market uncertainty in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. At the end of September 2020, EY analysts observed that "122 SPACs globally have been created, totalling \$44.1bn," while "[i]n Q3 2020 alone, proceeds from SPAC IPOs (\$32.2bn) exceeded the 2019 total proceeds (\$15.8bn) by more than 100%."

Scott Kleinman, co-president of US private equity firm Apollo Global Management (\$433bn in assets under management), said last October: "If you think about it from an investor's perspective, the SPAC is an incredibly efficient way for an institutional investor to access the private markets." On 6 January, Kleinman launched his second blank cheque company, Apollo Strategic Growth Capital II, which is looking to raise \$400m in an IPO.

Back in June 2015, South Africa's Renergen Limited was one of the first SPACs to be listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) after raising 75m rand (€5.5m). This past June, Renergen announced it had signed an agreement with French oil and gas major Total "for the joint marketing and distribution of liquefied natural gas (LNG) through Total's service stations."

Russia does not think dialogue with EU flopped following Borrell's visit, diplomat says

MOSCOW

RUSSIA does not share the opinion EU foreign diplomacy chief Josep Borrell's recent talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Moscow signified failure in the dialogue with the EU, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, Maria Zakharova told the Ekho Moskvy radio station yesterday.

"It is not so. Incidentally, he [Borrell] does not share such a viewpoint, either. At a news conference following the talks he said nothing about some failure or Cold War times. It all began when he returned to Brussels," Zakharova (pictured) said.

She stressed that at a joint news conference with Lavrov Borrell described the talks in a positive vein. He mentioned both disagreements and opportunities for bilateral cooperation.

"Nobody forced him into making such comments. He took the floor and said it all entirely on his own... <...> Then he returned to Brussels and something went wrong," Zakharova said.

She stressed that upon Borrell's return to Brussels the European Union turned hysterical. Many in the European Parliament began to speculate that the Moscow visit by the EU high representative for foreign affairs and security policy was utter flop and began to threaten to oust him from office.

Borrell paid a visit to Russia on February 4-6. His meeting with Lavrov took place on February 5.

The top European diplomat then said that the European Union and Russia held an open and honest dialogue on all issues of bilateral and international relations, including the struggle against the novel coronavirus pandemic and global climate change, the restoration of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme, Ukraine, Brussels' support for Alexey Navalny and the expulsion of Western diplomats from Russia for participating in unauthorized protest demonstrations.

Agencies



Xi calls for drawing new China-CEEC cooperation blueprint

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Tuesday lauded the cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries (CEEC), calling on relevant countries to keep up the momentum and work together for a new chapter in China-CEEC cooperation.

"China-CEEC cooperation is part and parcel of China-EU relations, whose good progress means new opportunities for China-CEEC cooperation," said Xi while delivering a keynote speech at the China-CEEC Summit via video link.

"17 PLUS 1 COULD MAKE MORE THAN 18"

Xi lauded China-CEEC cooperation, saying that "17 plus 1 could make more than 18."

In 2020, overall China-EU relations made new progress despite the challenges caused by the pandemic. The two sides concluded schedule negotiations on the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment and signed a geographical indications agreement. They also launched partnerships for green and digital cooperation.

"The two sides also stood firm for multilateralism and took on global challenges together," Xi said.

"Today, trade between China and CEE countries is nearly 85 percent bigger than nine years ago," Xi noted, adding that the China-Europe Railway Express has reached most of the CEE countries, running more than 30,000 freight services so far.

The China-CEEC cooperation mechanism came into being in 2012 against the backdrop of the European debt crisis.

"Impressive progress has been made in several cooperation projects, including the Port of Piraeus in Greece, the Smederevo Steel Plant in Serbia, and the Peljesac Bridge in Croatia," said Xi.

China-CEEC cooperation is based on mutual respect and has no political strings attached, Xi stressed. He added that all countries involved, regardless of their size, are equal partners in a cooperation mechanism featuring extensive consultation, joint contributions, and shared benefits.

Xi lauded the progress jointly made by China and CEE countries in the Belt and Road cooperation. He said that



President Xi Jinping

through solidarity, coordination, and cooperation to complete the pressing task of pandemic responses.

COVID-19 vaccines serve as a powerful weapon to defeat the ravaging coronavirus, and those developed and produced by China are gaining popularity. Serbia has received one million doses of vaccines from a Chinese company so far, and there is ongoing cooperation between Hungary and Chinese vaccine companies.

"China will actively consider such cooperation with other CEE countries if there is a need," said Xi.

Noting China and CEE countries need to develop smooth avenues of cooperation for interconnected development, Xi proposed pursuing high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. It means speeding up significant projects like the Budapest-Belgrade Railway and continuing the development of the China-Europe Railway Express to unlock the full potential of cooperation.

To achieve concrete cooperation results and increasing cooperation

outcomes that benefit both sides, Xi mentioned in particular, the coming five years. He said China intends to "import more than 170 billion U.S. dollars of goods from CEE countries" and will "work to double CEE countries' agricultural exports to China and raise two-way agricultural trade by 50 percent."

Also, eyeing green development and forging drivers of future-oriented cooperation, Xi urged advancing international cooperation on climate change. He also urged the joint implementation of the Paris Agreement and capitalizing on various emerging business forms to widen the cooperation of the digital economy, e-commerce, and the health sector.

"The proposals put forward by Xi for advancing cooperation with CEE countries have given adequate consideration to the core interests of those countries. It has also demonstrated China's sense of global responsibility and the readiness to work for win-win results," said Liu Zuokui, a researcher with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

CHINA'S OPENING-UP TO BROADEN HORIZONS FOR COOPERATION

"China and CEE countries share the conviction that openness brings opportunities and inclusiveness ensures diversity. This is the key to the sustained vibrancy of China-CEEC cooperation," said Xi.

During the speech, Xi pledged that China would continue to open its doors wider with a focus on institutional opening-up that covers rules, regulations, management, and standards to broaden the horizons for China-CEEC cooperation.

"We will continue our efforts to foster a business environment based on mar-

ket principles, governed by law, and up to international standards," he said.

This year marks the beginning of China's 14th Five-Year Plan for economic and social development and the start of the country's new journey toward building a modern socialist country.

China has also been fostering a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other.

"This will unlock the full potential of China's vast market and domestic demand generated by the 1.4 billion population, including the over 400 million Chinese in the middle-income group. It will thus boost global demand and create more opportunities for the rest of the world," Xi said.

The Chinese president vowed to take a more active role in bilateral, multilateral, and regional cooperation that delivers higher levels of mutual benefit for all.

"We also welcome the participation of other countries and international organizations in our cooperation to achieve win-win results," said Xi.

Xinhua

Chinese and Nigerian presidents exchange congratulations on 50th anniversary of ties

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping yesterday exchanged congratulatory messages with his Nigerian counterpart, Muhammadu Buhari, on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the two countries' diplomatic relations.

In his message, Xi noted that over the past half century, the two countries have seen their traditional friendship growing stronger and practical cooperation bearing rich fruit, and have coordinated closely on international and regional affairs.

In recent years, the China-Nigeria strategic partnership has shown a sound momentum of development, and has effectively improved people's well-being in both countries, Xi said.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 epidemic, China has joined hands with African nations, including Nigeria, to fight it, which has demonstrated the brotherly friendship between China and Africa featuring solidarity in the face of adversity, he added.

Xi stressed that he attaches great importance to the development of China-Nigeria relations, and stands ready to work with Buhari to take the 50th anniversary as an opportunity to make positive contributions to the building of a closer China-Africa community with a shared future.

He suggested that the two sides carry forward their traditional friendship and deepen cooperation in various fields within the frameworks of the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

For his part, Buhari said that since the establishment of the diplomatic ties 50 years ago, Nigeria and China have been trusting each other and working closely, and have achieved fruitful results in cooperation, bringing enormous benefits for the two countries and their people.

Nigeria appreciates China's support in such fields as railway, highway, electric power and national defense, Buhari said, adding that China has been fighting together with Nigeria and other African countries against COVID-19 since the outbreak of the pandemic, which enriches the connotation of the bilateral ties.

Facing major global challenges, the two countries have been upholding multilateralism and the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, and also staying committed to defending common interests of developing countries, the Nigerian president said.

Nigeria is willing to work with China to ensure a successful meeting of the FOCAC this year, he added.

Xinhua

WEF prepares for August summit in Singapore and size unsure

SINGAPORE

HAVING delayed its "Davos" summit in Singapore twice already, the World Economic Forum is pressing on with plans to gather in August, but how big the meeting is will depend on how COVID-19 concerns play out, the organization's president said.

Speaking to Reuters in Singapore late Tuesday after holding preparatory meetings with the city-state's government, Borge Brende said he hoped the summit would attract at least 1,000 leaders from politics, business and civil society.

Brende said entry requirements and health regimes in Singapore will ultimately be decided by the government, but added: "all participants that are eligible for participation at our events will be welcomed, vaccinated or not vaccinated."

Agencies

Protests rock Myanmar for fifth day, West condemns security response

YANGON

PROTESTERS took to the streets of Myanmar for a fifth day yesterday, vowing to keep up demonstrations against last week's military coup even after a woman was shot and critically wounded during clashes the previous day.

The United States and United Nations condemned Tuesday's use of force against the protesters who are demanding the reversal of the Feb. 1 coup and the release of deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and other leaders of her National League for Democracy (NLD).

"We cannot stay quiet," youth leader Esther Ze Naw told Reuters. "If there is blood shed during our peaceful protests, then there will be more if we let them take over the country."

Thousands of people joined demonstrations in the main city of Yangon. In the capital, Naypyitaw, hundreds of government workers marched in support of a growing civil disobedience campaign.

A group of police in Kayah state in the east joined the protesters and marched in uniform with a sign that said "We don't want dictatorship", according to pictures published in media.

There were no reports of violence on Wednesday but soldiers took over a clinic that had been treating wounded protesters in Naypyitaw on Tuesday, a doctor there said.



Another doctor said a woman protester was expected to die from a gunshot wound to the head sustained during a Tuesday confrontation with police in Naypyitaw.

She was wounded when police fired, mostly into the air, to clear the protesters. Three other people were being treated for wounds from suspected rubber bullets, doctors said.

Protesters were also hurt in Mandalay and other cities, where security forces used water cannon and arrested dozens.

Four policemen were injured on Tuesday as they tried to disperse protesters, some of whom threw stones and bricks, the military said.

The military has imposed restrictions on gatherings and a night curfew in the biggest cities.

'DISPROPORTIONATE'

The protests are the largest in Myanmar in more than a decade, reviving memories of almost half a century of direct army rule and spasms of bloody uprisings until the military began relinquishing some power in 2011.

The military justified its takeover on the grounds of fraud in a Nov. 8 election that Suu Kyi's NLD party won by a landslide, as expected. The electoral commission dismissed the army's complaints.

Western countries have condemned the coup but taken little concrete action to press for the restoration of democracy.

The U.S. State Department said it was reviewing assistance to Myanmar to ensure those responsible for the coup faced "significant consequences".

"We repeat our calls for the military to relinquish power, restore democratically elected government, release those detained and lift all telecommunication restrictions and to refrain from violence," spokesman Ned Price said in Washington.

The United Nations called on Myanmar's security forces to respect people's right to protest peacefully.

"The use of disproportionate force against demonstrators is unacceptable," Ola Almgren, the U.N. representative in Myanmar, said.

Avinash Paliwal, a senior lecturer in international relations at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, said Myanmar will not be as isolated now as it was in the past, with China, India, Southeast Asian neighbours and Japan unlikely to cut ties.

Zhenjiang in east China builds 'smart brain' for vegetable planting

BY BAI GUANGDI

TOMATOES are planted on shelves hanging a meter or so above the ground and winding up in a digital greenhouse run by Xingang, an agricultural tech firm in Zhenjiang Economic & Technical Development Zone of east China's Jiangsu province.

"By hanging the plants above the ground, we not only save space, but also make sure that every tomato here is evenly exposed to the sunshine," said Wang Mingjing, head of the company's general office.

Zhenjiang's temperature has fallen below zero degree Celsius in January, but the digital greenhouse was kept at 25 degrees Celsius by an intelligent management system and modern facilities. Technical director of the company Lu Lian told People's Daily that the intelligent system has made planting much smarter.

"We can monitor and control the temperature, humidity and illumination in the greenhouse remotely, so that the indoor environment is always warm despite the changes outside," he said.

An injector-like tube is stuck into the growth medium of every tomato plant



A woman picks tomatoes grown with soilless culture method in Zhenjiang, east China's Jiangsu province, June 16, 2020. File photo

to feed the plant water and nutrition, which also irrigates the plant by drip feed. According to Lu, the nutrient solution is automatically prepared by smart equipment in the greenhouse based on the growth of the plants and illumination. The growth period of the plants is around 9 months, and each of the plant yields about 15 kilograms of tomatoes each year, which means the plants' eco-

nomical profit is three to four times of traditional ones.

Wang told People's Daily that the tomatoes are pesticide-free, as the soilless culture prevents soil borne diseases and also filters irrigation water for a second time, which lowers the occurrence of diseases from the source and thus ensures food safety. Besides, each of the tomato has a QR code that shows its

growth information and examining reports, Wang added.

The high-efficient agricultural philosophy is not limited to planting, but extending to every link of crop production. In recent years, Zhenjiang Economic & Technical Development Zone has vigorously developed modern agricultural facilities and nurtured a batch of emerging entities. Smart greenhouses, frost prevention machines, precise planting systems, water and fertilizer all-in-one machines, as well as automatic spraying and dripping system are widely adopted.

By the end of 2020, Zhenjiang has 527,000 mu (35,133 hectares) of agricultural facilities, accounting for 24.2% of its total farming area. A total of 43,719 greenhouses were built, covering 45,015 mu of land.

Li Chuande, deputy director of Zhenjiang's bureau of agriculture and rural affairs, noted that the city will develop high-efficient agriculture, advance agricultural mechanization, and establish demonstration zones of environmental friendly management, so as to bring more green and healthy food to customers and tangible benefits to farmers.

People's Daily

SPORT



Erasto Nyoni

Nyoni set to miss Simba SC vs AS Vita Club clash

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

EXPERIENCED Simba SC players, forward John Bocco and midfielder Erasto Nyoni, will miss the outfit's opening match of this season's CAF Champions League's Group A against DR Congo's AS Vita Club because of injuries.

Simba jetted off to Kinshasa mid this week ahead of tomorrow's clash to be played at the 125,000-capacity Stade des Martyrs.

Skipper Bocco was last seen on a football pitch when Simba played FC Platinum of Zimbabwe in the continental showpiece's first round clash, which took place at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

The towering goal getter was moreover one of goal scorers for Simba in the match which ended with the squad winning 4-0. Nyoni also played in that match. The duo have, after the match, not featured in the club's other matches including the recent competition, known as Simba Super Cup.

Both players were included in the senior national team that participated in this year's African Nations Championship (CHAN) hosted by Cameroon.

However they did not play for the team in any of the matches, much as they were part of the side which made its way into the country.

Nyoni later joined the squad in Yaoundé, he but did not play due to injuries. He had to make his way back to Tanzania whilst the national side was still taking part in the

showpiece.

Simba's young defender, David Kameta, will also miss tomorrow's game, as he has been selected to join the national U-20 football team 'Ngorongoro Heroes' which is due to leave for Mauritania soon to take part in the Africa U-20 Cup of Nations tournament.

Simba's Board of Directors' member Mulamu Ngh'ambi said the two players have not yet recovered enough to play the match which is expected to be a highly competitive one.

He said: "The squad leaves tomorrow (Tuesday) and all players will be in the squad except Bocco and Erasto who are yet to fully recover."

"Perfect Chikwende will also not be able to play due to the competition's regulations as he already played the tournament while with FC Platinum of Zimbabwe," Nghambi explained.

He nonetheless said that they are well prepared for the matches, and their goal is to qualify for the tournament's quarterfinals.

After the tie, Simba will return to action against the tournament's defending champions, Egypt's Al Ahly, at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on February 23, and later play Sudan's El Merreikh in Khartoum between March 5-6.

Simba will again play El Merreikh at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium on March 16 and, later, face AS Vita Club between April 2-3 at the same venue.

The club will conclude by playing the groups' stage match against Al Ahly in Cairo between April 9 and April 10.

The top two teams in the group will qualify for the knockout stage of the competition featuring six teams.

Yanga fans win cash from betting firm

By Guardian Reporter

TWO football fans have won a total of 85,996,360/- after correctly predicting 12 football matches, held in various parts of the world, through a draw for a betting game, dubbed 'Perfect 12', conducted by M-Bet Tanzania.

The winners, who are domestic football club Yanga's fanatics, are Dominic Mdimi, a football follower residing in Singida, and Njombe's Valentino Ngole.

Mdimi won the draw for the second time, as he, in October 2019, won 36m/- in the same betting platform.

Speaking yesterday, M-Bet Tanzania firm's Marketing Manager Allen Mushi said Mdimi and Valentino are the seventh winners of the betting game this season.

Mushi stated they proud to continue changing Tanzanians' lives through the firm's betting platform.

Mdimi noted his victory stemmed from being careful in choosing a team after making analysis on the strengths of the team before predicting.

"I am the Arsenal fan, but automatically I am facing lots of challenges when betting for the team. This is due to the current performances of the team, it is not consistent," he disclosed.

Ngole said he was extremely relieved by the victory as it would enable him to open a business to supplement his income.

"I used to predict to get as little like 200,000/- and sometimes below that amount, I did not give up and now I have managed to get money that will enable me to open business," he stated.

SPORTS

Government seeks better supervision of sports in schools



Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Joyce Ndalichako (R), emphasizes a point during a session for discussing how to improve sports in primary and secondary schools in the country which took place in Dodoma early this week. Sitting (L-R) are Minister of State in the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), Suleiman Jafo, and Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Innocent Bashungwa. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THE government has instructed principals of all primary and secondary schools in the country to ensure that sports are properly taught in schools in order to prepare the pupils and students in various sports.

The resolution was reached in Dodoma on Monday in a joint meeting between the Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Office of the President of the Regional Administration and Local Government, and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

The meeting discussed how to improve sports in primary and secondary schools.

Minister of State in the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), Suleiman Jafo, said: "I instruct the head teachers of all schools in the

country, to effectively manage sports programs by ensuring that the subject is taught and slotted into the curriculum and at the right time, students participate effectively in sports programs."

"We will manage the agenda well and ensure that regional and district education officers monitor sports in their areas," he disclosed.

Jafo explained that in order for the country to achieve success in sports, all councils in the country are to be tasked with setting aside plots for sports activities.

He also instructed the directors in those councils to effectively manage sports infrastructure and ensure sports areas are not invaded.

Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Joyce Ndalichako, said her ministry is finalizing the preparation of sports curricula and revamping the existing curriculum so that the subject will be productive for students who have started sitting for exams in Form Four.

She noted the procedures for finding more professionals are nearing completion.

Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Innocent Bashungwa, thanked the ministries for observing the commitment of the Fifth Phase Government under President John Pombe Magufuli to

bring life to the national teams for various sports disciplines.

He noted talents from primary and secondary schools are a testimony to the government's efforts.

In addition, the session also aims at revitalizing the effectiveness of secondary and primary schools sports competitions including the formation of a new National Committee for supervising the games.

Allocation of sufficient budget for the Inter-Primary Schools Games Union (UMITASHUMTA) Inter-Secondary Schools' Games Union (UMISSETA) is moreover to be discussed.

Airtel launches television channel to support local musicians

By Guardian Reporter

TELECOMMS firm, Airtel Tanzania, has launched a Television channel, Airtel TV, with a view to promoting digital life style and enhance access to local content in the country.

The content, the company said, shall be viewed through video streaming via Airtel TV Application, commonly referred to as 'Airtel TV App', bringing a great experience to Airtel customers across Tanzania.

The firm stated the Airtel TV App has various content which includes movies, drama, documentaries, music and cartoons which are both local and international.

Speaking during the launch of the Airtel TV App in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Tanzania Film Board's Managing Director, Kiagho Kilonzo, said the launch of Airtel TV is a testimony that the entertainment industry in the country and particularly the movie industry is growing and can be provided through different platforms.

He added: "I take this opportunity to congratulate Airtel for launching Airtel TV, as now our musicians will have a digitized platform to showcase their works and hence not only increase reach of their work but also their income."

"I call upon our artists across the country to take the lead and provide more local content which has gained popularity since it connects with the viewers in Tanzania. I am certain the future is brighter for our artists and the industry with Airtel introducing Airtel TV through smartphones."

"The advancement in technology has brought about new ways of creating media content and platforms like mobile service are now able to broadcast TV as we witness in today's launch of Airtel TV," Kilonzo said.

He stated: "The Tanzania Film Board commends Airtel TV and the value that you will bring to the entertainment industry."

"In this regard, we continue supporting this effort and will work diligently with Airtel to monitor strongly, what societies get exposed to, in order to safeguard our young ones from immorality and safe guard



Tanzania Film Board's Managing Director, Kiagho Kilonzo (C), speaks to the press in Dar es Salaam yesterday during the launch of a Television channel, 'Airtel TV', aimed at promoting digital life style and enhance access to local content in the country. The Airtel TV Application, commonly referred to as 'Airtel TV App', will be bringing a great experience to Airtel customers across Tanzania with various content including movies, drama, documentaries, music and cartoons which are both local and international. He is flanked by Airtel Tanzania Director of Communications, Beatrice Singano (L), and Tanzania Film Actors Federation's president Elia Mjata. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

our cultural values."

Airtel's Director of Communications Beatrice Singano said the firm is committed to keeping on bringing innovative products and services in Tanzania to suit customers' needs and lifestyle.

She noted the new Airtel TV App will allow customers to enjoy various contents on the go from news to movies, music, reality shows, children's shows as well as documentaries.

She added the content provided will be from across the globe including but not limited to Hollywood, Bollywood, and Nollywood channels and definitely local films, Bongo movies.

"We are pleased to bring to you a modern platform that provides videos on demand with the number expected to increase in the course of the year as we add more educational channels to cater for all our customers," she disclosed.

"We will continue working with the Tanzania Film Board, BASATA and Cosota to ensure all rules and regulations in offering Airtel TV content are followed and do support our cultural beliefs," she noted.

On subscription, Beatrice stated that the Airtel TV App shall not require any subscription fee and it can be downloaded via Apple store, and Android phones.

One of respected domestic actors, who has been in the film industry for quite a long time, commended Airtel for coming up with the Airtel TV App, noting it will give the industry a platform for showcasing their talent through smartphones.

Tanzania Federation of Actors' president, Elia Mjata, disclosed: "The launch of Airtel TV clearly demonstrates the passion which Airtel Tanzania has to Bongo Movies. This is a good platform where our work will be viewed all over the world."

He added: "I take this opportunity to urge my fellow Bongo Movie artist and producers to use their talent while considering our cultural values and believes whenever they produce their work."

He said: "Airtel TV assures us more coverage, we will be crossing more borders than before and hence popularity will be everything to increase demand."

Bayern Munich eye historic joy of six in Club World Cup final

DOHA

EUROPEAN champions Bayern Munich are eager to make history by beating Mexico's Tigres in the Club World Cup final in Qatar on Thursday to complete the rare clean sweep of six titles inside 12 months.

The German giants are bidding to become only the second club after Barcelona, who managed it in 2009, to win all six domestic and international titles available in a single season.

Having already claimed the Champions League, UEFA Super Cup, German Super Cup, Bundesliga and German Cup titles in 2020, Bayern want to complete the set.

Bayern captain Manuel Neuer has made it clear the German giants are "up for it, we can make history," sentiments echoed by head coach Hansi Flick.

"We came here to win the title. That would be the icing on the cake and also a special success in Bayern Munich's successful club history," said Flick ahead of the final in Al Rayyan, on the outskirts of Doha.

After brushing past African champions Al Ahly of Egypt with a 2-0 win in Monday's semi-final, thanks to two Robert Lewandowski goals, only Tigres now block Bayern's path.

The CONCACAF champions beat Brazilian giants Palmeiras 1-0 in Sunday's other semi-final and are also hoping to make history of their own.

"No other Mexican team have gone this far, but now we want more," said Tigres forward Carlos Gonzalez after veteran French striker Andre-Pierre Gignac, 35, scored the winning goal against Palmeiras.

"We came here hoping to lift the trophy and now that we're close, we're encouraged and motivated that we can achieve our goal."

Flick gave his Bayern stars Tuesday off to prepare for the final in which he expects a much tougher test against Tigres.

"They are a very dynamic team, very athletic with a lot of power. We have to counter that well," he warned.

Bayern's top scorer Lewandowski continues to send goal records tumbling having netted 29 times in 27 Bayern games this season, but he wants more.

"I hope we play even better football - it will be a big game, we are ready for it," he said after his man-of-the-match performance on Monday.

Bayern are without midfielders Leon Goretzka and Javi Martinez, who had been due to fly to Qatar for the final, but remain in Munich under quarantine after testing positive for Covid-19.

"It's important that they train in Munich and be ready for Monday," Flick added, referring to Bayern's next Bundesliga game against Arminia Bielefeld four days after the Club World Cup final.

AFP

COVID-19 chaos: Man Utd, Arsenal ties moved

LONDON

MANCHESTER United's first-leg round-of-32 Europa League match against Real Sociedad has been switched to Juventus' Allianz Arena while Arsenal's tilt against Benfica will be held at Rome's Stadio Olimpico due to the ongoing troubles caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The United Kingdom has strict quarantine rules for international travel, while Spain and Portugal have barred arrivals from the UK. The date of the matches is unchanged from Feb. 18, while the second leg on Feb. 25 will be held at Old Trafford.

However, the second leg of the Arsenal-Benfica clash will be moved from London's Emirates Stadium to the Georgios Karaiskakis Stadium in Athens on Feb. 25.

A statement said: "UEFA can confirm that the UEFA Europa League Round of 32 first leg match between Real Sociedad and Manchester United FC will now take place at the Juventus Stadium in Turin."

"UEFA would like to thank Real Sociedad and Manchester United FC for their close cooperation and assistance in finding a solution to the issue at hand, as well as the Italian Football Federation and Juventus for their support and agreeing to host the match in question."

UEFA's statement on the Benfica-Arsenal match was similar, expressing gratitude to the clubs as well as to the Italian FA and AS Roma for

their assistance to stage the match. Roma shares the stadium with rivals Lazio.

United's match had to be moved due to Spain's ban on arrivals from Britain, with the exception of passengers who are residents or citizens of Spain or Andorra.

The travel ban is in effect until March 2, which will also jeopardise Atletico Madrid's Champions League round-of-16 first leg at home to Chelsea. That match is due to take place at the Wanda Metropolitano stadium on Feb. 23 but can no longer be held in Spain.

Atletico Madrid did not wish to comment on how the ban affected the match, while Spanish newspaper Marca said the game could be moved to Bucharest, more than 3,000 kilometres from Madrid.

The fixture cannot take place in France, Germany, Belgium, or Portugal as those countries are also restricting travel to and from the UK.

Also in the Champions League, Manchester City's first leg round-of-16 tie against Borussia Monchengladbach has been moved from Germany to Budapest due to COVID-19 protocols, UEFA have announced. The date of the match will remain the same with Pep Guardiola's side set to meet the Bundesliga club on Feb. 24.

The announcement comes after Liverpool's Champions League tie against RB Leipzig next week was moved on Sunday from Germany to neutral Budapest.

(Agencies)

Mourinho confident Spurs will deliver trophies to keep Kane

LONDON

JOSE Mourinho said Tuesday that he is confident he can deliver the trophies required to convince England captain Harry Kane to stay at Tottenham.

Kane, 27, has made it clear he wants to see signs of progress with Tottenham before he will commit his long-term future to the club.

The clearest way to prove Tottenham are heading in the right direction would be to give Kane the first major silverware of his career.

Kane scored his 20th goal of the season against West Bromwich Albion on Sunday, making him Tottenham's all-time joint second highest scorer.

While Tottenham haven't won a leading trophy since the 2008 League Cup, they are still in with a chance on several fronts this term.

Mourinho's men are in the League Cup final against Manchester City and continue their FA Cup journey with a fifth round trip to Everton on Wednesday before next week's Europa League campaign resumes.

Tottenham have wobbled in the Premier League of late, putting their top four place in danger, but Mourinho is not losing any sleep over keeping Kane just yet.

"To win a trophy, he just needs to win one game. I know that it is a big, difficult game," Mourinho told reporters.

Manchester City are England's dominant club once again

By Mark Ogden, Senior Writer, ESPN FC

THERE is an inescapable sense of déjà vu about Manchester City right now and, if it proves to be correct, they will end the season having achieved another domestic treble.

Sunday's 4-1 victory at Liverpool in the Premier League sent City five points clear at the top of table, with a game in hand on all of their rivals, and delivered a chilling warning to the chasing pack that Pep Guardiola's side are threatening to disappear over the horizon. If they win their game in hand against Everton at Goodison Park on Feb. 17, the rest will be playing for the dubious distinction of finishing second.

But as City prepare to travel to Wales to face Championship promotion contenders Swansea City in the FA Cup fifth round on Wednesday, it is not just the Premier League trophy that could be added to the growing honours list at the Etihad Stadium.

City are already in the Carabao Cup final; they will face Tottenham at Wembley on April 25 as strong favourites to win the competition for the fourth year in a row. And with a lower-league outfit standing between them and a place in the FA Cup quarterfinals, that achievement of sweeping the board of major domestic honours in 2019 may yet be repeated just two years later by Guardiola's latest outstanding team.

Of course, every cup competition carries an element of jeopardy for even the biggest clubs, as Bayern Munich and Real Madrid have discovered to their cost in domestic cups this season with defeats against Holstein Kiel and Alcyano, respectively. But City have developed an aura of invincibility in the FA Cup



Ilkay Gundogan's goals have helped propel Manchester City toward reclaiming their dominance in England. (Agencies)

and Carabao Cup in recent seasons, which makes it almost impossible to bet against them emerging victorious again in both competitions this time around.

Guardiola's team has not been eliminated from the Carabao Cup since a fourth-round defeat against Jose Mourinho's Manchester United in October 2016, while last season's FA Cup semifinal defeat against Arsenal was their only defeat in that competition since February 2018. City have become a cup juggernaut in England, and none of the top clubs still standing in the FA Cup - United, Everton, Spurs, Leicester and Chelsea - will hold any fears for Guardiola or his players.

Two years ago, City's biggest scare en route to winning both cups was a quarterfinal at Swansea, when the home side led 2-0 until the 69th minute. Three goals in the final 21 minutes turned the tie on its head for City and they never looked back from that point on, beating Brighton & Hove Albion in the semifinal before equalling

the all-time biggest FA Cup Final winning margin with a 6-0 win against Watford at Wembley.

Will it be any different this time, and can anybody stop City from another domestic treble?

The manner of Sunday's victory at Liverpool emphasised City's status as, by some distance, the best team in the country right now. They are on a run of 14 straight wins in all competitions, and they are unbeaten in 21 games. Back in 2019, City won 18 and drew one of their final 19 domestic games, so their form is showing a familiar pattern of dominance. But while the statistics offer compelling evidence of their surge towards silverware, it is also worth looking at the depth of Guardiola's squad for another key factor to support the theory that they can pull off another treble.

Sunday's 4-1 win at Liverpool - the first time City have scored four at Anfield since 1937 - was achieved without the injured Kevin De Bruyne and Sergio Aguero, who has yet to over-

come the effects of COVID-19. It was also secured with the likes of Aymeric Laporte, Kyle Walker, Fernandinho, Ferran Torres and Benjamin Mendy consigned to the bench as unused substitutes. Gabriel Jesus, usually the man to fill in for Aguero, played for just 18 minutes as a second-half substitute.

No other Premier League team has such a depth of experience beyond the starting XI and, in the weeks ahead, Guardiola will be able to rotate his squad and ensure ongoing freshness while City's rivals struggle to keep pace with the unique demands of a season that has been shortened and congested as a consequence of the pandemic. That said, Guardiola will believe he has little need to change a winning team right now because his players are performing at such impressive levels.

Phil Foden's display at Anfield quite rightly claimed the headlines, as the 20-year-old stole the show with his stunning late goal. But it's also worth noting that no player has scored more league goals since the start of December than Ilkay Gundogan - the midfielder's two at Anfield made it nine since Dec. 1 - and Mohamed Salah's second-half penalty for Liverpool was the first Premier League goal conceded by City goalkeeper Ederson Moraes in 831 minutes. Only Edwin van der Sar and Petr Cech have recorded lengthier shutouts in Premier League history.

Unlike in 2019, when their toe-to-toe title battle with Liverpool kept them at the front and centre of the spotlight, City have flown under the radar for much of this season, having made their worst start for over 10 years. But the end result might just be the same - more success and more history - because they are simply so much better than everyone else.

Can Gareth Bale rescue his Spurs return from failure?

By Ian Darke, ESPN.com writer

THE Gareth Bale story has become sad, and even a little embarrassing. After getting away from Real Madrid on loan in the 2020 "summer" transfer window, his bold comeback at Spurs has turned into the non-event of the season.

Once regarded as arguably one of the top five players in the world, he has started only two games and played a meagre 230 minutes in the Premier League all season. His latest appearance saw him hooked just after the hour mark in a limp display at Brighton. Even when Spurs were trailing against Chelsea in their next match, crying out for attacking menace, manager Jose Mourinho left Bale on the bench. And that is where he stayed on Sunday, looking a little forlorn in sub-zero temperatures, as he watched his teammates beat West Bromwich Albion.

Mourinho has even become tetchy when the subject is raised, telling one reporter "you don't deserve an answer" and then, rather cryptically, remarking that "everyone is doing their best." But, of course, this is nothing like Bale's best. And with Spurs paying a big chunk of his wages (around £200,000 per week) someone worked out that he's costing the North London club roughly £32,000 per touch of the ball in the Premier League.

On the basis of performances, there's seemingly no chance that Spurs would have any interest in making the deal permanent. This would present a major problem for Real Madrid because he would return as a non-European Union player after Brexit, and the Spanish clubs are only allowed three such players.

It was never meant to be like this. Remember back in the autumn, when Bale's loan signing from Real Madrid set pulses racing in North London? Could he form a lethal attacking trio alongside Harry Kane and Heung-Min Son to help Spurs claim their first trophy since the 2007-08 League Cup? The other two have done their bit, of course, with a combined 37 goals between them, but only once have they started alongside Bale... and that was three months ago at West Brom.

Tottenham fans had been dreaming that they might see a revival of the young star who terrorised defences all over England with his Olympian speed, devastating crosses and nose for goal - after all, he managed 26 in his final season when he was named



Bale, center, has been rather muted and short of minutes in what was supposed to be a brilliant return to Tottenham for the former star. (Agencies)

Player of the Year for a second time. Having been purchased for £5 million from Southampton in 2007, he was sold to Real Madrid for £85m in 2013 and proceeded to win 13 trophies including four Champions League titles and two La Liga crowns, scoring some memorable goals along the way. Remember, too, the brilliant goal against Barcelona in the Copa Del Rey Final when he made a detour off the pitch and sprinted beyond a helpless Marc Bartra before finishing a quite stunning solo effort.

At the European Championships in 2016, he led from the front and inspired Wales to a place in the semifinals, no small feat given Wales had never qualified for the Euros before. Then injuries mounted up and coach Zinedine Zidane made it clear that the Welshman was no part of his plans in Madrid. Real fans cruelly labelled him "the golfer," given his love for the sport; the fact that his Spanish was

very limited did not help either.

When he moved back to Spurs on Sept. 19, his agent Jonathan Barnett said: "I hope he will get some happiness back in his life." Except that has not really happened, and it is a shame.

Bale is a likable and decent man and, by all accounts, a genial presence at the training ground, where he has helped his fellow Welshman Joe Rodon to settle in after his move from Swansea. His early failures to make the Tottenham team could be explained by the fact that he was on a programme to rebuild his fitness after injuries and a prolonged lack of game time in Madrid. But that period is long gone. Putting it bluntly, Bale is not being selected now because the manager does not feel he's the right man for the job. So he finds himself behind Son, Stephen Bergwijn, Eric Lamela and Lucas Moura in the pecking order.

Mourinho says the problem is

"complex," which perhaps hints at a crisis of confidence or even self-belief caused by disillusionment from his time cast into the shadows at the Bernabeu. No one is really saying, perhaps it's unfair to wonder about whether this magnificent athlete has perhaps lost his appetite, but the question is relevant given that he appeared happy to go and play in China at the age of 30.

It's possible that another European Championship campaign this summer will restart the engines: Wales have been handed a tough, but manageable group with Italy, Turkey and Switzerland. He seems at his happiest and most motivated when performing with that Welsh dragon on his chest.

Ultimate, the hope remains that someone can relight the fires for Gareth Bale. He has been too good and achieved too much for his career to fade away like this.

Gwiji by David Chikoko

HOW IMPARTIAL ARE YOU?

AS A REFEREE I AM VERY FAIR. ALWAYS GOING FOR THE WINNER



SPORT

Manchester City are England's dominant club once again

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



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

Simba SC players urged to put spirited displays against AS Vita Club

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

TANZANIA'S Simba SC's head coach, Didier Gomes Da Rosa, has asked his players to put spirited displays showing in their CAF Champions League's Group A game against DR Congo's AS Vita Club, to be played in Kinshasa tomorrow.

The French tactician insisted his players need to replicate the first half performance they displayed against Azam FC during Vodacom Premier League (VPL) tie, which took place in Dar es Salaam last Sunday.

The country's envoys in the CAF Champions League left for DR Congo on Tuesday ahead of their first assignment in the premier continental club tournament's group stage where a win will be a big boost for them.

Their target is to reach as far as in the semi-finals and tomorrow's game against the Congolese opponents is the former's first hurdle.

But, speaking recently in Dar es Salaam after guiding his team to a 2-2 draw with Azam FC in the VPL duel, Da Rosa stated it will be nice for his charges should they showcase the performance against AS Vita Club.

He stated: "We had a very nice game against Azam in the first half and I am sure that if we will approach AS Vita Club on Friday in the same way, it will be very nice for Simba."

Simba had led 1-0 against Azam FC in the opening period and put impressive showing despite missing clear chances.

However, the second half was not that easy for them as Azam FC went on to hold Simba to the 2-2 draw.

Da Rosa noted: "We had a chance to score almost four goals in the first half but, unfortunately, we failed to utilize well the created chances."

"We need to improve on scoring and make sure that the chances we hunt are used well," he said.

He added that he has full confidence in his team and, thus, he blames no one after the 2-2 draw as his side is committed and motivated. The game was Da Rosa's second in the VPL contest of which his side has scored four goals and conceded three goals in the process.

Simba had previously edged Dodoma Jiji FC 2-1.

In his remarks, Azam FC's assistant coach Vivien Bahati admitted that Simba gave them a bumpy ride in the first half, forcing his side to come up with new tactics in the second half.

He disclosed: "In the first half, we had one holding midfielder, thus, after the break, we had to deploy two holding midfielders, Mudathir Yahya and Yahya Zayd, the duo did a good job."

He said: "With them, we were able to equalize the opening goal and net the second goal but unfortunately, we failed to defend well their corner kick hence awarding them an opportunity to equalize."

"By the time they equalized, we had 11 players behind the ball but failed to clear it something which is not good and we need to work on it to avoid repeating the same mistakes in our coming games," he said.

Azam FC's midfielder, Iddy Selemeni, who netted the equaliser, and provided the crucial assist for the second goal, disclosed they were told to work hard in the second stanza.

"In the first half, we were a bit afraid of Simba because of their lethal strikers, we had no reason to fight back and force the draw," he said.

Root moves to No. 3 in Test batting rankings, Virat Kohli slips to fifth

LONDON

ENGLAND captain Joe Root's match-winning 218 in the first Test against India has taken him to No. 3 in the ICC Test batting rankings, while India captain Virat Kohli has slipped to No. 5.

Root, who came into the tour on the back of an incredible run in the two-Test series in Sri Lanka - where he scored 426 runs - made a double-century on the second day of the Test in Chennai and helped England pile up 578 runs.

He followed it up with a quick 40 in the second innings to stretch England's lead, which eventually helped them go 1-0 up in the four-match series and kept them in contention for the World Test Championship (WTC) final.

Kohli, who returned from paternity break having missed the last three Tests against Australia, dropped points after making scores of 11 and 72 - the highest in India's second innings - in Chennai.

Australia's Marnus Labuschagne also slipped to No. 4 as a result of Root's gain. Kane Williamson at No. 1 and Steven Smith at No. 2, however, retained their positions in the table.

With 883 rating points, Root is ahead of Kohli for the first time since November 2017, and is currently 36 points behind Williamson and eight behind Smith.

There were gains for England in the bowling department as well, with James Anderson rising to the third spot from sixth - moving past Neil Wagner, Josh Hazlewood and Tim Southee - following his match haul of 5 for 63 in the first Test.

Stuart Broad, who was not in the playing XI in Chennai, is only four rating points ahead of him at No. 2 in the chart, which is led by Australia's Pat Cummins.

England spinners Jack Leach and Dom Bess, who played major roles in the Chennai win, also reached their career-best rating points, moving up to the 37th and 41st positions respectively.

Meanwhile Rishabh Pant, who made an 88-ball 91 in the first innings, became the first full-time wicketkeeper from India to reach 700 rating points among batsmen, retaining his 13th position.

Following West Indies' historic win in the first Test against Bangladesh in Chattogram, Kyle Mayers, who made 210 not out on debut in the fourth-innings chase, recorded the highest-ever rating points - 448 - for a West Indies batter on debut and entered the table at 70th spot.

Pakistan's 2-0 sweep over South Africa at home saw Hasan Ali - who picked up ten wickets in Rawalpindi - go up 21 places to No. 23.

Among Pakistan batters, Mohammad Rizwan, who was also named Player of the Series, moved up 19 places to a career-best 16th place after his scores of 26 and 115. AGENCIES

TCA steps up cricket promotion in schools



Pupils from one of Arusha's primary schools, which received cricket equipment from Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA), display the gear in the city recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TCA

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) has stepped up promotion of the game in the country after presenting the game's equipment to six schools in Arusha.

Arusha Regional Sports and Cultural Officer Benson Maneno presented the cricket equipment to the schools.

Atif Salim, TCA information officer, mentioned some of the schools which are beneficiaries of the equipment as Sinoni Primary School, Ukombozi Primary School, Suye Secondary School, Sinoni Secondary School, Arusha Day Secondary School and Ngarenaro Secondary School.

Salim disclosed the TCA gears towards enhancing the skill levels of the youths by providing them with equipment to further grow their talents under the supervision of the association's development officers.

In another development, Strikers cricketers have made their plan to become a force to reckon with in the 2021 Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) Cup T20 tournament's Division B clear, commanding an emphatic nine-wicket victory over Annadil Seife side in a clash, which took place in the city last weekend.

Annadil Seife went in to bat first and recorded 131 runs for seven wickets in 20 overs.

Opening batsman Hussein Jiwajee posted 22 runs which consisted of

four fours, seeing to it his side hold its own against Strikers.

They had to contend with two quick dismissals of top order batsmen, Huzeifa Alibhai and Juzer Ghor, with the latter chipping in with eight runs that included a four, whereas the former was dismissed for duck.

Ammar Patwa somewhat helped to boost confidence in the side, in which he posted 28 runs not out, clearing the boundary on three occasions.

There was an early exit of Khuzeima Burhanpur that scored three runs. His dismissal nevertheless did not weaken the team's tenacity, thanks to Taher Essajee's impressive performance.

Essajee was ultimately the top run getter, notching 38 runs not out, which included a boundary.

Dawood Adamjee recorded 10 runs to somewhat boost his team's total. Strikers' bowlers, led by Ravi Patil, worked hard in a bid to keep their opponents' batsmen in check, with Patil ending as the bowler with most wickets.

He was impressive with the ball, given he took four wickets, leaking 20 runs in four overs.

Skipper Raahil Amarshi made his presence felt, he recorded two wickets and 23 runs in four overs.

Needing 132 runs to post victory, Strikers put spirited performance and ultimately notched victory as they notched 135 runs for one wicket in 13.2 overs.

Amarshi, slotted in as an opener, showcased his batting prowess to help Strikers mount a successful chase with his 72 runs not out which included 10 fours. Fellow opener Karim Khan scored put solid knocks and notched 35 runs which consisted of four fours.

Khan's dismissal did not weaken the team's resolve, considering Vaibhav Bhatia stepped up to make certain of the victory given he nailed one boundary on his way notching 17 runs not out.

The competition, hosted by the regional cricket body, DC, under the auspices of TCA, gears towards boosting effort to develop the game at the domestic level.

The TCA information officer, Salim, noted the competition, which started on January 23, is mainly for the second squads of teams which are playing in this season's DC Gymkhana Cup tournament, which has regulation demanding participating outfits fielding one team each.

He stated TCA opted to enter three squads, among others, a women squad in the DC Gymkhana Cup tournament's Division B to see to it the women outfit gains experience.

EATV THURSDAY

MORNING @ 11:00

DADAZ.

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 MPYA
12:30 Bongo Hits
13:00 Msosi Kitaani (r)
13:30 Kall 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 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:30 EATV SAA I
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 Kiblashara Zaidi

DADAZ.

DADAZ A show that explores social and political issues from a feminine perspective.

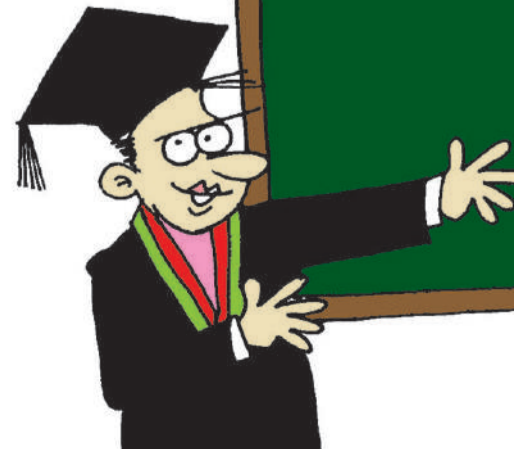
eastafrika RADIO

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

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