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Segerea incident: MPs, party officials charged

By Guardian Reporter

FOURTEEN members of the opposition Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (Chadema), among them top officials and three legislators, appeared before the Kisumu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday charged with seven counts including rebuffing a lawful order, destruction of property and use of offensive language.

The MPs are Halima Mdee (Kawe), Ester Bulaya (Bunda) and Special Seats MP Joyce Kishoa. Mdee is also the chairperson of the party's women's wing, BAWATA.

Non-legislative elected officials include Ubungo Mayor Boniface Jacob and Segerea Councillor Patrick Assenga, who were brought before magistrate Huruma Shaidi.

State prosecutors side led by senior advocates Lenatus Mkude, Mkunde Mshanga and Ester Martin named other suspects as Henry Kilewo, Yohana Kaunya, Kedmon Mhembo, Mshewa Karua, Khadija Mwago, Pendo Raphael, Cedilia Michael, Happy Abdallah and Stephen Kitomari.

In the first count, Prosecutor Mkude claimed that on March 13th at the Segerea

In the fourth count, it was claimed that Mdee uttered offensive words to Sergeant John of the Prison Force directing him to open the gate

prison in Ilala district, Dar es Salaam all the suspects and others not present in court rejected a lawful order which wanted them to disappear from the Segerea prison's gate.

In the second charge, Prosecutor Mshanga said that on the same day, the suspects conducted an illegal gathering at Segerea prison thus raising fear and breaching the peace among the surrounding community.

It was also claimed in the third count that at the Segerea prison, the suspects and others not in court mobilized people and caused damage of the prison's main gate against the law.

In the fourth count, it was claimed that Mdee uttered offensive words to Sergeant John of the Prison Force directing him to open the gate.

It was alleged that on the same day, Bulaya uttered offensive words to Sergeant John also ordering him to open the gate, which resulted into chaos.

In the sixth count, Ubungo Mayor Boniface Jacob is alleged to have uttered offensive words to Sergeant John of the Prison Force ordering him to open the gate, thus leading to a breach of peace in the area.

It was alleged that Jacob assaulted Sergeant John by pulling him and tearing part of his uniform while knowing the

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Ministry drawing up Covid-19 patients tracking mechanism

By Guardian Reporter

IN intensifying measures to prevent spread of the coronavirus, the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children has come up with a mechanism to track and monitor recovered patients including those testing negative after the 14 days mandatory quarantine.

Minister Ummu Mwalimu said in a travel advisory circulated to the media yesterday that the ministry will keep the relevant records including residential address of ex-patients and those under isolation for further screening.

"After the 14-day quarantine, passengers who have not developed symptoms of Covid-19 may leave the facilities and register personal information for future personal tracking purposes," she said.

She warned Tanzanians to avoid non-essential travels to Covid-19 affected countries.

So far two patients who tested positive for Ccoronavirus last week and isolated have reportedly received a clean bill of health.

The duo is Tanzania national Isabella Mwampamba, the first case announced on Monday last week after reporting to hospital upon arrival at the Kilimanjaro International Airport from Belgium, and a Ghanaian national who was a confirmed on Tuesday after landing in Zanzibar from Germany.

This is in addition to rapper Khamis Mwinjuma alias Mwana FA who last week declared that he was amongst patients who were quarantined

So far two patients who tested positive for coronavirus last week and isolated have reportedly received a clean bill of health

after testing positive for Covid-19 upon arrival from abroad but was "doing very well, not sick anymore."

Speaking in Dodoma yesterday, President John Magufuli said that Mwampamba who checked herself into isolation upon arrival had since gone through several Covid-19 tests which all came out negative.

The Ghanaian patient was isolated at a quarantine centre at Kidimmi in Unguja Central District and had entered the country on Wednesday May 11th from Germany.

In his address to the nation on Sunday, President Magufuli said all persons arriving from countries affected by coronavirus will undergo mandatory individual isolation for 14 days at their own cost starting yesterday.

The decision followed the doubling of cases from six as of mid last week to 12 at the weekend. Eleven of the confirmed positive cases had arrived in Tanzania from affected countries except one person, implying that this was the first local transmission to have been registered.

In efforts to curb the virus transmission globally, the World Health Organization (WHO) has called upon member countries to enhance preventive measures after the virus reached the level of a global pandemic as the outbreak continues to spread outside China.



Minister Ummu Mwalimu



People travelling from Mbeya to Tabora Region and parts of Chunya District cross Lupa River on foot at the weekend to see how to proceed with their journeys, with Chunya district commissioner having ordered the closure of the bridge over the river after it was damaged by floodwaters. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

...ATE wants temporary tax liability exemptions

By Getrude Mbago

THE Tanzania Employers Association (ATE) has called on the government to consider tax exemptions including Pay as You Earn (PAYE) as companies struggle to conduct business in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The association urged the government to also exempt employers from the Skills and Development Levy (SDL) and the Workers' Compensation Fund (WCF) levy for at least three months.

"Tanzania's situation is not that bad to bar people from going to work. However we appeal for freezing of some provisions in the country's Labour Act to

Dr Aggrey Mulimuka, the ATE Executive Director told a media conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the current law doesn't favour employers

enable employees to apply for 'leave without payment' whenever they feel so," it stated.

Dr Aggrey Mulimuka, the ATE Executive Director, told a media conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the current law doesn't favour employers.

The Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) has meanwhile said that it is conducting an assessment to find out how much the disease has affected businesses, employment and economic operations.

TPSF chairperson Angelina Ngalula told journalists that the organisation has been

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White House expert rejects Covid-19 cure declarations

WASHINGTON

THE top infectious disease expert in the US, Dr Anthony Fauci, has described challenges of working in the Trump administration during the coronavirus pandemic in an interview with the journal Science published Sunday.

Asked how he responds to 'falsehoods' from the president during press conferences, Fauci said, "I can't jump in front of the microphone and push him down," the interview record says.



"OK, he said it. Let's try and get it corrected for the next time," Fauci said.

Dr Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious, has advised six presidents and has played a central role in the White House Coronavirus Task Force.

"I'm sort of exhausted," he said in the interview. "But other than that, I'm o.k. I mean, I'm not, to my knowledge, coronavirus infected. To my knowledge, I haven't been fired."

While Fauci said he and the president "disagree on some things," he described Trump as responsive: "He goes his own way. He has his own style. But on substantive issues, he does listen to what I say."

Dr Fauci was specifically asked about some

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...ATE wants temporary tax liability exemptions

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saddened by the outbreak and initiated collective efforts of various stakeholders to ensure that the disease is tackled.

To complement the government's effort in the fight against Covid-19, TPSF has formed a specialized team, the Crisis Management Committee which will among other things mobilize resources to collect equipment to be distributed in risky areas.

"We are aware that the Covid-19 outbreak has affected and will continue affecting the country's workforce and production. Areas most affected are horticulture, tourism and hospitality but we are going to mobilize efforts to make sure that businesses persist," she said.

Apart from resource mobilization, the newly formed committee will also strengthen efforts to educate the public on preventive measures of the disease, protect employment as well as conduct an impact survey to find out how much of business, trade and other activities have been affected by the disease.

"We are going to work tirelessly to ensure that we collect essential equipment and other support from stakeholders and directed them to areas that need much support especially on border points, hospitals, markets and transport stations among others," she said.

She further warned that stern measures will be taken against traders and business people who will be found hiking prices of commodities.

"We will not hesitate to annul membership and then take further legal measures to any member who would hike prices of products or services during this period," she said.

Ngalula also urged traders, businesspeople, industrialists and other employers to report to TPSF whenever they see that their activities are critically being affected by the disease.

Recent figures by the World Health Organization (WHO) the number of confirmed cases worldwide as more than 200,000 confirmed and deaths of more than 10,000 people, the vast majority in China and Italy.



Indeed, desperate times call for desperate measures... Residents of Endagulda in Mbulu District, Manyara Region, build a makeshift bridge at a river crossing in Yaeda Chini valley yesterday to facilitate movement between their village and a neighbouring one. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

White House expert rejects Covid-19 cure declarations

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of Trump's comments, including his assertion that China should have told US officials about the coronavirus three months sooner. That would have been around September, and there is no evidence Chinese officials were aware of the virus at that time.

"It just doesn't comport with facts," said the interviewer, Jon Cohen.

"I know, but what do you want me to do?" Fauci replied. "I mean, seriously Jon, let's get real. What do you want me to do?"

Fauci also said he had never used the term "China virus." Asked if he ever would, Fauci responded, "No."

In the interview, Fauci described testing as "one clear issue that needs to be relooked at. Why were we not able to mobilize on a broader scale?" But asking those questions right now was "premature," Fauci said. "We really need to look forward."

Cohen, the Science reporter, also brought up a widely memed moment from Friday's White House press briefing.

As the president spoke of the "Deep State Department," Fauci was caught on camera putting his hand over his face in apparent frustration.

"Have you been criticized for what you did?" Cohen asked.

"No comment," Fauci intoned.

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sergeant was executing his duties.

All the accused pleaded 'not guilty' and they are out on bail. The case was adjourned to April 23 for preliminary hearing.



National Assembly Speaker Job Ndugai (C, back to camera) chairs a meeting of the House's Steering Committee in Dodoma yesterday. Photo courtesy of National Assembly

Five TRC employees killed as train and motor trolley involved in collision at Mwakinyumbi

By Guardian Reporter

FIVE Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) employees have died after the rescue train collided head on with a motor trolley (No HDT-3) between Mwakinyumbi and Gendagenda stations in Coast region.

A statement issued yesterday and signed by the Head of the TRC

Information and Public Relations, Jamila Mbarouk said the accident occurred on a railway line between Ruvu and Mruanzi junctions.

The statement said a total of six TRC employees were involved in the accident of whom four died on the spot and two injured ones were taken to Korogwe District Hospital at Magunga for treatment.

Among the two injured employees one later died making five the number who died.

Those who lost their lives in the accident were Ramadhani Gumbo - Transport Manager for Tanga Region, Eng Fabiola Moshi - Repair Manager of Passenger coaches for Dar es Salaam Zone, Joseph Komba - Assistant Transport Manager for Dar es Salaam

Zone, Philibert M. Kajuna - Expert on Rail Safety and George Urio - the driver of the motor trolley.

As we went to press the injured employee Elizabeth Bona the train controller was still receiving treatment at the hospital.

An investigation that will involve other institutions will be initiated to find out the cause of the accident.

'7m already registered in electronic voter updating'

By Henry Mwangonde

SEVEN million new voters have been registered in the first phase of updating the electronic voter register, according to the National Electoral Commission (NEC).

The number of new voters is equivalent to 30.41 per cent of all eligible voters registered to practice their constitutional right in the 2015 general elections.

During his meeting with election stakeholders in Dar es Salaam yesterday, NEC chairman Judge (rt) Semistocles Kajjage said phase one of the electronic voter register upgrading which commenced in July, last year and ended in January, this year covered only three regions - Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Dar es Salaam.

"We have surpassed our target to register 13.41 per cent new voters by registering 7,043,247 people. This increased the total number of registered voters in the country to 30,187,987", said Judge Kajjage adding the second phase upgrading of the voter register was scheduled for March 26th this year but it has been postponed to April 17th due to the outbreak of Coronavirus.

The chairman explained that during the exercise 3,225,778 people turned out to verify their information equivalent to 13.93 per cent of the 23,161,440 voters who were registered in 2015.

"The number of voters may change upon completion of the second phase of the verification exercise", he stated. Judge Kajjage said during the exercise 16,707 voters were removed from the permanent voter register due to various reasons including lack of qualifications as eligible voters and some who were reported dead.

He said the commission encountered various challenges during the exercise including difficulties to reach some of the places due to damaged infrastructures caused by ongoing rains and low turnout especially in Dar es Salaam because on most of the days people were at work.

Meanwhile, Chadema director of elections, Reginald Munisi queried whether NEC would provide parties and stakeholders with a copy of the provisional voters register.

Responding Judge Kajjage insisted the law only allows NEC to hand stakeholders complete voters register and not the provisional one.

The Registrar for Political Parties, Judge Francis Mutungi hailed the electoral body for the job well done, saying sensitisation campaign should continue so that the many people register to vote in the coming elections.

The meeting brought together all elections stakeholders including political parties as well as representatives from the ministry of health who took time to educate participants on various measures to prevent from being infected with COVID-19.

Tanzania is expected to go for general elections later this year where voters will elect the president, Members of Parliament and Ward Councilors.



We have surpassed our target to register 13.41 per cent new voters by registering 7,043,247 people. This increased the total number of registered voters in the country to 30,187,987



Members of the Parliamentary Investment Committee tour Kilimamjaro International Airport at the weekend. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Coronavirus: Crops stakeholders meetings suspended for 2 months

By Guardian Reporter

FOLLOWING the Coronavirus outbreak the Ministry of Agriculture has suspended all agricultural crops stakeholders meetings planned for March and April this year until further notice.

In addition all agricultural crops boards and institutions thereof to continue with their preparations of various guidelines to be used for 2020/2021 season.

The directives were given yesterday in Dodoma by Minister for Agriculture Japhet Hasunga who added the government will not involve itself in setting prices for farmers crops starting 2019/20 season and instead all cooperative societies in collaboration with farmers and other stakeholders should set the prices taking into consideration obtaining prices in local and foreign markets.

He added that due to the Coronavirus disease all auctions that will be conducted by Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives Societies (AMCOS) in regard to cashew nuts, tobacco, coffee, sisal, cotton and others there should not be huge gatherings of people and those in attendance should be spaced at 2 metres to minimise congestion.

He said the ministry's institutions - the National Food Reserves Agency (NFRA) and AMCOS for purchase of nontraditional crops should start crop buying preparations for the 2019/2020 season.

In regard to summary for audit on cooperatives conducted from July to December last year he said a total of 3,160 cooperatives were audited, out of which 35 were secondary, 1,882 were Amcos, SACCOS 91,059 and 184 others.

He said the audit conducted on 4,413 cooperatives, 69 received satisfactory certificates, 1,545 doubtful certificates, 330 received unsatisfactory certificates and 1,216 received poor certificates.

Hasunga directed the cooperative development commission to provide cooperative training to all cooperative societies in the country as well as on how to administer them.

He said the training is to include

societies' records financial and bookkeeping and special audit within one month to all 16 secondary cooperatives that received unsatisfactory or poor certificates.

He also directed the Commission for Cooperative Development to within three months finalize guidelines and regulations on how to get qualified, educated and experienced leaders.

Likewise Hasunga instructed all secondary cooperatives to employ qualified managers who are professional in the job.

Meanwhile, minister Hasunga called on cooperative commission staff to change so as to build up a strong cooperative movement to instill trust in the wananchi, and shun negligence, embezzlement and corruption.

He said reports continue to show the situation in the cooperatives is deteriorating against people's expectations, and added that the above mentioned vices contributed to many failures.

Other contributing factors included weak control systems in income and debts collection, little understanding by members in holding their leaders to account and in general poor administration at all levels of the cooperatives.

In another development, Hasunga announced the cancellation of 3,436 cooperative societies with effect from April 17th this year due to poor management.

He also asked the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) to conduct special audit on cashew nuts cooperatives for the 2018/19 season.

The minister said this step follows the report issued by the Cooperative Audit and Supervision Corporation (COASCO) showing some of the cooperatives do not exist in areas they from where they registered and whose leaders are not known.

He said in the COASCO report for the period July to December last year showed the total number of live cooperatives was 3,160 out of 6,463 but also there were 1,250 idle cooperatives whose verification should be finalized to find out why they are idle.

Makongoro Mahanga dies at Muhimbili

By Guardian Reporter

DR Milton Makongoro Mahanga (65), a deputy minister for Labour, Employment and Youth Development, died yesterday at Muhimbili National Hospital where he was admitted.

Until his death, Dr Mahanga was Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (Chadema) chairman for Ilala in Dar es Salaam. He was formerly a member of Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) in

2015.

A press statement issued by the party's information officer for Coast Zone Lyenda Gervas said Makongoro died at 6.30 am yesterday at MNH where he was admitted since March 21, this year.

Dr Mahanga had also been Member of Parliament for the former Ukonga Constituency in Dar es Salaam for 10 years (2000 to 2010) before it was split into two - Ukonga and Segerea.

In 2010 he contested for the Segerea Constituency and won but in 2015 lost it to Chadema candidate Mwita Waitara.

Dr Mahanga was the only former CCM cadre who had remained within Chadema after fellow cadres - former prime ministers Edward Lowassa and Frederick Sumaye rejoined the ruling party.

Other former prominent CCM cadres who later returned to the ruling

party included former EAC secretary general Juma Mwapachu and former deputy lands minister Goodluck Ole Medeye.

ACT-Wazalendo party has conveyed condolence message to Chadema via the party's deputy secretary of the information, mobilisation and public Relations Janeth Rithe saying Chadema has lost one its prominent cadres.

The late Milton Makongoro Mahanga was born on April 3, 1955.



Terms of Reference

FSR – BI Tool Design and Technical Training

1. Background of the Assignment

FSDT on behalf of Bank of Tanzania has previously conducted two geo surveys of financial access points in Tanzania - the first in 2012, and once again in 2014. The objective of these mapping exercises was to collect GPS location, and financial service data of physical financial access points.

FSDT adopted a market development approach toward addressing systemic constraints in the market and to contribute toward achieving pro-poor growth in the financial sector.

Despite the success of the mapping exercises, this approach has suffered several challenges including:

- Accessibility of Data - The data still lacks an institutional home. Stakeholders that want to access and use the data do not know where to retrieve it. Outside of the periodic mass survey, industry driven data collection is predominantly manual, which limits the efficiency in accessing the data. This manual nature limits the ability to analyse the data to provide insights for decision making;
- Outdated Data - Due to the nature of the approach used, there is a window between data collection and data publishing. This reduces the effectiveness of the data as it greatly varies from the real time data. In addition, the exercise conducted by FSDT can only be conducted every several years due to practicality and viability reasons;

2. Objectives

The objective of this engagement for the BI Tool Designer and Technical Trainer is twofold. Primarily the firm/consultant is to build capacity among the Bank of Tanzania Developer team to build the necessary decision support tools that will provide the necessary business intelligence as well as strategic oversight.

Bid Submission

Proposals, Technical and Financial, must be submitted electronically and received at the email address below no later than **9th April 2020 at 18:00 Hours** local time (Tanzania) with the subject line **"Proposal: FSR- BI Tool Design and Technical Training."**

Email: procurement@fsdt.or.tz

For specific responsibilities and details on application requirements visit: www.fsdt.or.tz/opportunities. We will only consider applications that adhere to proposal requirement.

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www.nbc.co.tz

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES MIGRATION OF IT SERVICES HOSTED AT THE SHARED ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA TO TANZANIA

1. National Bank of Commerce Limited has set aside funds for the procurement of various services during financial year 2020/2021, it is intended that, part of the proceeds of the fund will be used to cover eligible payment under the Migration of IT Services Hosted at the Shared Environment in South Africa to Tanzania.
2. NBC Limited now invites eligible Firms to manage the implementation of this strategic migration of its core systems while ensuring these critical changes to organization's IT infrastructure, whether physical or virtual, align with NBC's current and future business goals
3. Interested consulting firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services by submitting consultant's profile, description of similar assignments undertaking, working experience in similar conditions, and availability of appropriate skills among staff.
4. Consulting firms will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the NBC Procurement Policy.
5. Interested consultants may obtain further information from the website www.nbc.co.tz and then click 'Procurement' to access the document.
6. Expressions of Interest (EOI) must be submitted **not later than Wednesday, 15th April 2020 at 1600 hrs** and delivered by hand to the Tender Box located at reception of Head Office building, ground floor, along Sokoine Drive/Azikiwe Street.

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
NATIONAL BANK OF COMMERCE LIMITED**

The Bank for a Working Nation



Govt forms task force to 'review' suspension of Tanroads engineers

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE government has created a task force to look into the suspension of 12 engineers with the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) in Morogoro region.

The probe team according to Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication, Elius Mwakalinga has been tasked to find out whether there was any kind of sabotage following the collapse of Kiyegeya bridge that link Morogoro and Dodoma regions.

The commission, which has already begun the investigation, has been given seven days to complete the task and submit the report which should also highlight the cost incurred as the result of communication breakdown between the two regions.

The PS formed the commission following President John Magufuli's directive when he visited the bridge and identified some negligence by TANROADS engineers and other staffs of the region.

Mwakalinga said the probe team includes infrastructure experts, engineers, economists, Contractors Registration Board (CRB) and the Engineers Registration Board (ERB).

Minister for Work Transport and Communication Isack Kamwelwe,

said he had already implemented the president directives to suspend 12 engineers and their positions had been filled by other people including the appointment of new TANROADS manager for Morogoro region, Eng Ntije Nkolante.

Last week the President Magufuli suspended 12 Morogoro TANROADS engineers following carelessness in repairing Kiyegeya bridge.

The President also reprimanded top officials of the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications as well as Tanroads on account of negligence that caused the collapse of the Kiyegeya bridge.

Dr Magufuli reached that decision upon inspecting the site where the Mkanga Kiyegeya bridge is being rebuilt after it was swept away by floods on March 2. The finger wagging was personally directed at the minister, Isaac Kamwelwe and the permanent secretary, Tanroads chief executive Patrick Mfugale, and the director for repair work, Mohamed Ntunda

Last week the President Magufuli suspended 12 Morogoro TANROADS engineers following carelessness in repairing Kiyegeya bridge.



A Tanzania Bureau Standards technician (R) briefs Industries and Trade ministry permanent secretary Prof Riziki Shemdoe (2nd-R) on standardised measurements when the PS visited the bureau's engineering department in Dar es Salaam yesterday, as TBS director general Dr Athuman Ngenya (C) looks on. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has instructed all councils in Mwanza, Shinyanga, Tabora and Geita regions to start using warehouse receipts for purchase of non-traditional crops like grams, simsim and others warning whoever will disregard the directives stern measures will be taken against them.

The directive was issued recently by the Deputy Minister for Agriculture

Bashe roots for warehouse receipt system

Hussein Bashe at a stakeholders meeting on cooperatives held in Tabora.

Bashe said the system that will be supervised by the Cooperative Development Commission, Warehouse Receipt Board and Tanzania Mercantile Exchange (TMX) is aimed to assist and

benefit farmers.

He said the issue of cooperative is savior to farmers and is a policy issue of which all government officials are supposed to administer instead of sabotaging it.

"I am directing all council directors to ensure the crops are purchased

through cooperative auctions that are safe but also beneficial and offer better prices to boost farmers, instead of leaving private people to suppress them," he said.

However there are reports that some councils and cooperative officials and other trade officials who are opposed

to the system, mostly from private interests.

Areas which the system is allegedly sabotaging the system include Kwimba, Magu, Misungwi, Shinyanga rural and Kishapu districts, whereby in the villages of Idisa, Mwamashimba, Shagihilu, Ndolejeji and Muhuze, in

which middlemen have been allowed to buy the crops behind closed doors.

When asked what steps will be taken against the saboteurs, the chairman of Tanzania Cooperative Development Dr Titus Kamani said they are following up the reports to know their veracity.

However, Dr Kamani appealed to district directors in the said regions to fully participate in the use of the new crop purchase system as it is of great benefit to the councils' incomes.



Request for Bids

For Provision of Air ticket Services

RFP No. PIT/CO/039/FY20

1. Plan International Tanzania is an International humanitarian child-centered development organization without religious, political or government affiliation. Plan's mission is to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries through a process that unites people across cultures and adds meaning to their lives. Plan international in Tanzania is operating in Dar es Salaam, Coast, Morogoro, Geita, Dodoma and Mwanza regions.
2. Plan International Tanzania is therefore issuing this request for bids to firms with good qualification, experience and track records for provision of Air ticket Services
3. Interested eligible bidders must confirm their intention to bid indicating all relevant contact information including an email address to tenders@plan-international.org Attn: Head of Procurement and Logistics. Bidding documents in the English language will be sent to interested bidders by email. Plan Tanzania will not be held responsible for any costs related to printing of the bid documents.
4. Bidders are requested to submit Technical and Financial Proposals each enclosed in a separate envelope and marked "Technical Proposal" and "Financial Proposal" respectively. The two envelopes shall then be enclosed in a single envelope.
5. Bidders must submit the proposals in a sealed envelope by hand or post to: The Country Director, Plan International Tanzania, Plot no. 496 Mikocheni Light Industrial Area, P O Box 3517, Dar es Salaam before Monday 6th April 2020, marked the respective RFP number. Not to be opened before Monday 6th April 2020. Electronic and Late bids will be rejected.

Country Director
Plan International Tanzania
Central Technologies House
Plot No. 96 Mikocheni Light Industrial Area
New Bagamoyo Road - Next to TBC1&NECTA
P O Box 3517
Dar es Salaam

215677401

Farmers' groups call for govt intervention in counterfeiting of agricultural pesticides

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

NATIONAL Network for Small Scale Farmers Groups (MVIWATA) has appealed to the government to intervene and control the importation of pesticides in the country to eradicate the challenge posed by fake pesticides that fail to kill agricultural pests.

The appeal was issued here at the weekend by MVIWATA chairman for Arusha region Rev John Safari when speaking to this paper.

He said many farmers in the country are faced with a big problem of their crops being attacked by pests thereby

getting very poor harvests due to fake pesticides in the market.

"We appeal to the government to send agriculture experts in villages to conduct research on some pests that resist pesticides so as to have authentic pests killing pesticides," he said.

The Arusha region administrative secretary (RAS) Richard Kwitega said the government is adequately set to solve all challenges faced by farmers especially those under the MVIWATA umbrella to improve their agriculture activities.

"This is in addition to the other

challenges on the availability of fertilizers and other agriculture inputs, hence do not worry the government is at your service," he said.

Speaking on the pesticides he said there has been the problem over understanding in the use of the pesticide among farmers thereby contributing to the failure by the pesticides to kill plant pests.

He called upon agriculture extension officers and other farming experts to ensure they make regular visits to farmers to train them on the correct application of the chemicals.



Fatuma Mathayo (in hat), a security guard on duty at Dar es Salaam's Kariakoo market, administers a sanitiser on the hands of a would-be customer yesterday as a precaution against the spread of Covid-19 infections. Photo: Romana Mallya

ALAF launches SAFBUILD to cater for their customers' needs



Cake cutting at the SAFBUILD Launch event

A report by TechSci Research valued the global pre-engineered building market at around USD 13 billion and forecast it to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 11 per cent to reach around USD 25 billion by 2024.

SAFBUILD integrates other ALAF building solutions, including various roofing and wall cladding profiles and flashing elements, underlay SAFTHERM heat barrier-membranes, CLEARDEK polycarbonate

translucent sheets, on-wall louvres and roof-mounted rotary ventilators, RAINGAIN rain-water harvesting accessories and matching performance FIXTITE fasteners.

SAFBUILD offers a flexible, practical, value-for-money enclosure for all manner of human space-use needs. ALAF shall liaise with the project's consultants with respect to all technical details required at both the design and implementation phases of the project and fur-

ther offer erection supervision at site to ensure that quality and design standards are met.

All this departs from the market norm of conventional heavy, hot-rolled steel construction that is slower, laborious and often prone to site rework. SAFBUILD customers, fabricators and end-users alike shall enjoy a fully factory-engineered yet customized solution, this leading to quick-to-install and maintenance-free buildings that will remain in pristine condition for

generations.

The galvanized steel structural members take out the headache of manual corrosion-treatment of steel and by using lighter, higher tensile-strength members. SAFBUILD yields a reduced overall building weight that does not require heavy handling machinery without compromise of strength.

ALAF is a member of the SAFAL Group, the largest steel roofing company in Africa for-

merly known as Aluminium Africa Limited, which was established in 1960 and is the leading steel roofing manufacturer and building solution provider in Tanzania.

The company offers a wide range of roofing products, pipes and hollow sections, aluminium zinc-coated steel coils, colour coils, cold rolled products, structural steel and engineering products.

The Safal Group is Africa's

specialist products - such as fastener products, steel pipes and hollow sections as well as other value-added accessories for the building industry.

Safal Group lays great emphasis on being a socially responsible corporate citizen. Its focus is primarily on the communities in which it operates, particularly those most affected by poverty and social disadvantages. The Group also supports innovators serving as role models for community upliftment.

At all Safal Group plants, manufacturing processes are de-

Tanzania's construction industry is projected to grow as a result of efforts by His Excellency President John Pombe Magufuli in promoting industrialization in the country. Increasing demand for pre-engineered building solutions that reduce construction time and cost is anticipated as a result of this.

Pre-engineered building solutions have revolutionized the construction industry by meeting demand for innovative, cost-effective and fast-paced construction of modern infrastructure.

With the projected growth in the pre-engineered buildings market, ALAF have introduced SAFBUILD to cater for the needs of consumers seeking cost-effective and environment-friendly solutions. The company is exploring significant investments in SAFBUILD as an upgrade to local steel PEBS rather than their replacement.

SAFBUILD is targeting investors keen on single pre-engineered building spaces such as factories, warehouses, storage facilities and industrial plants to reduce operations costs. It is designed and detailed on SAFDESIGN, a design and analysis software that speedily automates a customer's journey from idea to full project detailing within minutes, anchored on a stringent world-class design code that factors superior parameters to applicable local standards.

largest producer of steel roofing and sheeting and was the first producer of aluminium zinc-coated steel on the continent. With over 36 businesses and insights gathered over 50 years, it has remained at the forefront in developing and providing products that lead the industry.

The outputs of more than 30 roof manufacturing operations make Safal Group the largest producer of metal roof sheeting in Africa. To complement its roofing brands, it has developed

signed and managed with sustainability in mind and therein aim to minimize emissions and waste while maximizing energy efficiency.



SAFBUILD is targeting investors keen in single pre-engineered building spaces such as factories, warehouses, storage facilities, and industrial plants to reduce operations costs.



(Left to right) - Mr. Sunil Maru - Neptune Architect Director, Ms. Isamba Kasaka - ALAF Limited Marketing Manager, Mr. Daniel Mwasandube - Webb Uhu-ronu and Partners, Mr. Morgan Nyonyi - MD NSCD, Mr. Anurag Mishra - ALAF Limited Business Development Manager, Mr. Shailesh Tripathi - ALAF Limited Project and Institutional Sales Manager, Mr. Nikesh Mehta - COO Prime Fuels and Mr. Manish Garg - Head of Safal Building Solutions.



Live engagement session to help better understand the nature of the product.

WHO plans to declare DR Congo Ebola-free

KINSHASA

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) says it has been over a month since last Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) case was recorded in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General said: "If it stays that way, the outbreak will be declared over in less than a month. "WHO thanks all partners for their solidarity in staying the course in the service of the people of the country; my special thanks to the government".

Meanwhile in a statement posted on the agency's website, it stated that there have been no new cases of EVD reported in the ongoing outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since Feb. 17.

However, because there is still a risk of re-emergence of EVD, it is critical to maintain surveillance and response operations until and after the end of outbreak declaration - as outlined in the WHO recommended criteria for declaring the end of the EVD outbreak. Ghebreyesus said: "Unfortunately, the response faces increasing limitations that could result in delayed detection and control of flare-ups. These limitations include a funding shortfall, ongoing insecurity and lack of access to some areas, and limited staffing and resources amidst other local and global emergencies".

According to the statement, no funding for the Ebola response has been received by WHO since December 2019.

It said an urgent injection of 20 million dollars is required to ensure that response teams have the capacity to maintain the appropriate level of operations through to the beginning of May 2020.

"If no new resources are received, WHO risks running out of funds for

the Ebola response before the end of the outbreak. "Ongoing response activities include investigating and validating new alert cases, supporting appropriate care and rapid diagnosis of suspected cases", said Ghebreyesus in a statement.

The UN agency said From March 9th to 15th over 32, 000 alerts were reported and investigated.

It said of these, 2,550 alerts were validated as suspected cases, requiring specialised care and laboratory testing to rule-out EVD.

"During this same period, 2760 samples were tested, including 1565 blood samples from alive suspected cases, 405 swabs from community deaths, and 790 samples from re-tested patients," it stated.



If no new resources are received, WHO risks running out of funds for the Ebola response before the end of the outbreak. "Ongoing response activities include investigating and validating new alert cases, supporting appropriate care and rapid diagnosis of suspected cases"



Presumed supporters of the opposition Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (Chadema) seated yesterday at the Kisumu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam, where they were charged with violence. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Over 40bn/- needed to repair damaged road infrastructure, reveals Kamwelwe

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

WORKS, Transport and Communications minister Isack Kamwelwe has said more than 40bn/- is needed to restore road infrastructures damaged by rains.

He also pledged to take stern measures against any Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) manager whose roads will remain damaged as the government has already dispensed emergency funds to

every region to restore damaged roads as quickly as possible.

Kamwelwe issued the directives in Dodoma on Sunday as he was speaking to reporters on the trends of the ongoing rains in the country.

He said TANROADS continues to assess the damage to the roads and the repair cost and added that up to now, 40bn/- is needed to restore them to their former condition.

He said when the Kiyegeya Bridge in Morogoro region broke down the

government had issued 7bn/- for the repairs and all regions have funds for the purpose.

"TANROADS managers, make sure you beef up roads and bridges inspection in your areas so that we will not hear any regional road closed," he said, and reminded them of President Magufuli warning that any manager whose roads will remain damaged should count himself out of his job.

The minister called on officials of

institutions in his ministry to ensure they take precautionary steps so that the infrastructures under their jurisdiction remain intact.

"Inspections should be made daily so that prompt steps are taken, no manager should be slumbering and we must ensure the roads are in ship-shape at all times," he added.

He said Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA) reports the rains to increase in April and come to an end in May.



Tanzania Private Sector Foundation board chairperson Angelina Ngalula briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on measures the institution has taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19 infections at workplaces across the country. With her is board member Simon Shayo. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Reporter

IN response to the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19), a local firm—Sahara Ventures has postponed the 2020 Sahara Sparks season and its build-up events to a later date.

Sahara Ventures chief executive officer, Jumanne Mtambalike, said yesterday in Dar es Salaam that this year's event themed "Future Reimagined" focuses on rethinking Africa's future by imagining Africa in the year 2030 would be held at the end of July.

"Sahara Ventures and partners

Covid-19: Dar firm postpones continental innovation, technology and entrepreneurship showcasing event

through its events wing Sahara Sparks Events Limited organise events on innovation and technology entrepreneurship with stakeholders in Africa. The events explore possibilities of using innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship as tools to foster Africa's social-economic development," he said.

However, he added, in responding to and abiding by the precautionary measures announced by President John Magufuli and the World Health Organisation (WHO) of prohibiting small and large public gatherings, the #FutureReimagined campaign will continue and the company is exploring possibilities of conducting virtual

events.

"We will confirm this in the next 14 days. Alongside this, some of the builder up events to the main SS20 as it has been our tradition will continue. This includes the Silicon Dar Startup School event expected 1st - 03rd April to be hosted at the Data Lab University of Dar es Salaam Col-

lege of ICT," he said.

Sahara Sparks is a regional event with average attendees of more than 1000 people every year from different countries and nationalities

The event focuses on leveraging demographic trends for economic transformation in Africa, capitalizing on the digital economy and the fourth in-

dustrial revolution, nurturing regional integration and cross border collaborations.

It also focuses on combating climate change and embracing the circular economy, fostering innovation for development to realize SDGs and deepening good governance and cross-generation leadership dialogues.

According to Mtambalike, other building up events towards the main event that was planned for between April and August will be canceled or postponed.

SADC urges members to make the history of liberation of Southern Africa part of curricula

By Guardian Correspondent

THE Southern African Development Community (SADC) Executive Secretary, Dr Stergomena Tax has called on member states to incorporate the Southern African liberation history into the school curriculum, so that youth and the future generations can appreciate the sacrifices of that generation of young men and women who brought liberation.

The Executive Secretary stated: "It's no doubt, the freedom we enjoy today is one of the many achievements we can all be proud of as a region so we must endeavor to ensure that our unique liberation history is not forgotten".

The secretary made the statement at the commemoration of the Southern Africa Liberation Day, saying that as they celebrate the day, they should also pay tribute to who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of the region.

Dr Tax explained that, without the commitment and selflessness of the men and women who sacrificed their lives, the countries would never have achieved the political liberation.

"We owe a great deal to our founders, we might have lost the majority of them, unfortunately, but their legacy lives on, may their souls rest in eternal

peace," she said.

The secretary said, the member states must collectively work to transform the countries' economies and liberate people from the bondage of poverty.

"We must all commit to our shared vision of a common future that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standard of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice and peace and security of our people," he urged the member states.

He challenged the member states to do their best to ensure that their hard earned freedom is sustained for posterity.

However, the secretary has also appealed to everyone to adhere to all measures being put in place by our governments to avoid or minimise the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

"This year's commemoration of the Southern Africa Liberation Day is coming at a time when the world at large, and all of us, are grappling with COVID-19, which has been declared by the World Health Organisation, as a global pandemic and public health emergency.

He added: "We shall not fail, let us cooperate and move in unity, everyone must play their part, a paradigm shift in the way we conduct ourselves and our businesses is a must."

By Guardian Correspondent, Ruvuma

Govt asks for private sector's support in coronavirus fight

LOCAL government authorities in Ruvuma Region have warned that residents in the region are at high risk of being infected with coronavirus due to critical shortage of protective gear in the market.

This includes shortage of masks and hand sanitisers which are key in preventing the spread of the viral infection.

To address the challenge, local government authorities here have appealed to the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (TCCIA) and other stakeholders to support the government's efforts in preventing the spread of the disease by ensuring that protective gears reaches markets in the area.

Acting Regional Administrative Secretary for Ruvuma, Lucas Mwalusaka said yesterday that Ruvuma is receiving thousands of immigrants via the country's borders with Mozambique and Malawi who enter the country for trade activities with Tanzanian business community, among other socio-economic activities.

"We experience a critical shortage of Coronavirus scanners at our borders with Mozambique and Malawi. I

request the private sector to support us in addressing this challenge," Mwalusaka said when addressing a delegation from TCCIA which is led by its President, Paul Koyi.

The Acting RAS informed the TCCIA delegation that the region has taken effective precaution measures against the virus including the installation of hand sanitisers in various public places.

Mwalusaka expressed satisfaction with the way commuter bus operators have adhered to government directives and health guidelines.

"Bus operators in our region have introduced electronic ticket processing as an alternative to prevent COVID-19. This is commendable as it has reduced unnecessary congestion of travellers at the bus stations," said Mwalusaka.

Responding, TCCIA President, Paul Koyi instructed TCCIA officials based in Ruvuma to closely cooperate with the local government authorities in the region to ensure the equipment are available and are distributed in the respective areas.

"As private sector, we are

dedicated to join hands with the government in curbing Coronavirus," said Koyi.

In Tanzania, the number of coronavirus cases has reached 12 according to President John Magufuli.

In his address to the nation on Sunday, President Magufuli said all persons arriving from countries affected by coronavirus will undergo mandatory individual isolation for 14 days at their own cost starting yesterday.

His decision followed the doubling of cases from six as of mid last week to 12 at the weekend.

Eleven of the confirmed positive cases had arrived in Tanzania from affected countries except one person, implying that this was the first local transmission to have been registered.

In efforts to curb the virus transmission globally, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has called upon the countries to enhance preventive measures after declaring the virus as a global health pandemic as the outbreak continues to spread outside China.



Nathaniel Mahinyila of Dodoma city's Swaswa suburb pictured at the weekend collecting whatever earthly belongings he could move to safety after his house was demolished by the ongoing rains. A total of 72 houses have been affected, with 316 people rendered homeless. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

Tanzania pledges bettering of weather services to mitigate climate challenges

TANZANIA is committed to improve meteorological services in effort to help curb climate challenges facing the nation, Minister for Works, Transport and Communication, Isaac Kamwelwe said yesterday.

In a speech to mark the World Meteorological Day, the minister said while Tanzania leads other countries in the region in meteorological services, there is need to improve further.

He said the government has purchased three weather radars to be installed in Mtwara, Kigoma and Mbeya regions to boost national weather forecast.

Kamwelwe, noted that after the three new radars, Tanzania will have a total of five weather forecast radars, making the Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA) to have the ability to see 70 percent of national meteorological airspace.

"It is worth noting that Tanzania has surpassed the global minimum meteorological accuracy of 70 percent, reaching a world-class performance of between 88 and 96 percent," he said.

The minister noted that this year's WMD's theme of "Climate and Water" is a reminder to Tanzania and the rest of the world to take serious measures to control water sources as well as taking matters of climate seriously.

He emphasized that fresh water is vital for life, essential for the production of food, virtually for all goods and services and for the environment.

According to the minister, the world now faces increasing challenges posed

by water stress, floods and droughts and lack of access to clean supply.

"There is dire need to improve forecasting, monitoring and management of water supplies and to tackle the problem of too much, too little or too polluted water," he added.

He thanked TMA for the good work including accurate weather forecast that is important for national economic planning.

He said the government will

continue empowering the authority to improve its performance and accuracy in weather forecast, explaining that TMA reports are important in national planning and development.

He also noted that TMA's Director General Dr Agnes Kijazi's election as the third vice president of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) is a demonstration that Tanzania is doing well on meteorological services.

Every 23 March, the World

Meteorological Organisation commemorates the coming into force of the convention establishing the World Meteorological Organisation on 23 March 1950.

Unlike other years, this year the government did not commemorate the event with big gathering of people and many activities following the national call to shun gatherings in attempt to avoid Corona virus.

Just a handful of journalists attended yesterday's briefing that was officiated by the minister and TMA's DG, Dr Kijazi. Kamwelwe also used the occasion to appeal to the public to adhere to guidelines issued by the authority to reduce chances of getting the disease.



Tanganyika Law Society

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Location of the assignment	Tanzania, United Republic Of
Period of Assignment	60 days
Type of contract	Consultancy contract
Open to	Scholars with a proven track record in consultancy and research work.
Deadline for submitting applications	April 7, 2020
Submit to	research@tls.or.tz

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) is a statutory professional organization established by an Act of Parliament - the Tanganyika Law Society Ordinance of 1954. Currently TLS is governed by the Tanganyika Law Society Act, Cap 307 as amended.

One of the core components of TLS statutory mandate outlined in the TLS Act, Cap 307 is to assist the Government, Judiciary and Parliament in all matters affecting legislation, and the administration and practice of the law in Tanzania. Other TLS statutory mandates include; to facilitate the acquisition of legal knowledge by members of the legal profession and others, to protect and assist the public in Tanzania in all matters touching, ancillary or incidental to the law, and to represent, protect and assist members of the legal profession in Tanzania as regards to conditions of practice and otherwise.

For TLS to execute its mandate, research has become one of the most important components to its operations. TLS Monitoring and Evaluation Department is tasked with coordination of research activities under the guidance and oversight of Research and Publication Committee.

ABOUT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EoI)

TLS is seeking expressions of interest from qualified experts (team of experts) to design methodology and conduct research in the following topics;

1. Public participation in the criminal justice system and expectations.
2. Judicial accountability to the public.
3. Impact of pieces of legislation enacted by the Parliament in the last 10 years.

Interested consultants/team of experts may obtain a complete set of ToR from TLS website; www.tls.or.tz. The deadline to submit expressions of interest is **April 7th, 2020.**

All submissions (expressions of interest) shall be sent through: research@tls.or.tz.



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

TENDER NOTICE

1. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL No: RFP/2020/SUP/019: FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF UNHCR LOGISTICS BASE AT MUBONDO AREA IN KASULU

1.1 Background:

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Representation Office in Dar es Salaam invites to make a firm offer to carry out the work as per the scope of works, specifications and Terms of Reference for setting up and construction of UNHCR logistics base in Kasulu.

1.2 Eligibility:

Firms/Contractors duly registered with relevant government authorities, with sound financial basis, relevant experience, reputed clientele and with knowledge of how to meet UNHCR's requirements are invited to participate in the bidding process.

The tender documents can be accessed through the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1b1c8pY2VnUlk8hbLbX-cR4OotKTYK3g3?usp=sharing>

If you fail to access the link, please write to Betty Ndassa at ndassa@unhcr.org copy Urbanus Kioko at kioko@unhcr.org

1.3 Crucial dates for this Request for Proposal

Advance notification of attendance Notification should be addressed in writing to kioko@unhcr.org copying Patrick Mutai mutaip@unhcr.org the latest on or before **Friday 03rd April 2020.**

Site visit at Mubondo area in Kasulu, Kigoma Region	Tuesday 07th April 2020 from 10.00 hours EAT
Deadline for receiving requests for clarification	Sunday 05th April 2020 at 17.00 hours EAT
Deadline for submission of offers	Monday 04th May 2020 17.00 hours EAT

IMPORTANT NOTE: Due to the current situation with COVID-19, and in case the Government orders lockdown or close of business, you will be notified for the cancellation of the site visit and you can address your questions to the emails provided.

2. Other tender documents can be accessed through the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1b1c8pY2VnUlk8hbLbX-cR4OotKTYK3g3?usp=sharing>

If you fail to access the link, please write to Betty Ndassa at ndassa@unhcr.org copy Kaimu Ishobeza at ishobeza@unhcr.org

TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER	TENDER ITEM DESCRIPTION	DEADLINE SUBMISSION DATE
ITB/2020/SUP/001	Provision of Transport Services	Tuesday 14th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/002	Supply and Delivery of Bulk Fuel	Tuesday 14th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/006	Plastic Jerry Cans	Wednesday 8th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/008	Sanitary Napkins (Re-Usable Pads)	Wednesday 8th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/009	Sleeping Mats	Wednesday 8th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/010	Kitchen Sets	Wednesday 8th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/011	Solar Lamps	Wednesday 8th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/012	Mosquito Nets	Wednesday 8th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/013	Fleece Blankets	Tuesday 28th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/014	Wrappers (Khanga)	Tuesday 28th April 2020, 16.00 hours
ITB/2020/SUP/018	Multi-purpose Soap Bars	Tuesday 28th April 2020, 16.00 hours

3. ALL PRE-BID CONFERENCE MEETINGS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED.

The Guardian

www.ippmedia.com

TUESDAY 24 MARCH 2020

**Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995**

Empowering students to combat poaching is extremely essential

TANZANIA'S Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism released information that 19 elephants were killed in 2018 compared with 193 in 2013.

In recognition of the value of its natural resources, the government is keen to introduce more wildlife management into the curriculum at Pasiansi Wildlife Training Institute.

This centre focuses on wildlife conservation, law enforcement and security training with the aim of empowering students to combat poaching. Elephant poaching in Africa has dropped significantly from a peak in 2011, according to a new analysis of annual surveillance data.

The progress seems to have resulted in large part from declining demand for ivory in China, which 2017 banned the trade, and government action in some African countries. The illegal killing of elephants in sub-Saharan Africa began to rise in 2005. Many scientists suspected the rise was due to growing demand for ivory in China, where carved ivory has long been treasured and a growing middle class was flush with cash. By 2014, the continental population of savanna elephants had dropped by almost a third to an estimated 352,000. To figure out which elephants were killed by poachers—and which died of natural causes—rangers working with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora examined carcasses found at 53 sites in parks across the continent. Their annual reports cover about half the African elephant population.

Poaching has been defined as the illegal hunting or capturing of wild animals, usually associated with land use rights. African elephants are being poached for their ivory tusks - the heaviest teeth of any animal alive. In October 2013 poachers were reported in the press to have poisoned more than 300 African elephants in Hwange

National Park in Zimbabwe. Poaching was performed by impoverished peasants for subsistence purposes and a supplement for meager diets. It was set against the hunting privileges of nobility and territorial rulers.

Since the 1980s, the term 'poaching' has also been used to refer to the illegal harvesting of wild plant species. In agricultural terms, the term 'poaching' is also applied to the loss of soils or grass by the damaging action of feet of livestock which can affect availability of productive land, water pollution through increased runoff and welfare issues for cattle. Stealing livestock as in cattle raiding classifies as theft, not as poaching.

In 1998, environmental scientists from the University of Massachusetts Amherst proposed the concept of poaching as an environmental crime, defining any activity as illegal that contravenes the laws and regulations established to protect renewable natural resources including the illegal harvest of wildlife with the intention of possessing, transporting, consuming or selling it and using its body parts.

They considered poaching as one of the most serious threats to the survival of plant and animal populations. Wildlife biologists and conservationists consider poaching to have a detrimental effect on biodiversity both within and outside protected areas as wildlife populations decline, species are depleted locally, and the functionality of ecosystems is disturbed.

The latest figures from Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism indicate that poaching levels of rhinos and elephants in Namibia are at their lowest since 2015. Figures for 2018 reported by Tourism Update show that 26 elephants and 57 rhinos were poached in Namibia. However, in May 2019, there were 18 recorded incidents of poaching, mostly on private land, with eight animals killed.

Surely, Tanzania is very much at home with what global company Scania does

SCANIA is a global company offering sales and services in more than 100 countries. Scania is also a major Swedish manufacturer of commercial vehicles - specifically heavy trucks and buses. It also manufactures diesel engines for heavy vehicles as well as marine and general industrial applications.

Scania was formed in 1911. Today, Scania has production facilities in Sweden, France, the Netherlands, India, Argentina, Brazil, Poland, Russia and Finland. In addition, there are assembly plants in ten countries in Africa, Asia and Europe. Scania's sales and service organisation and finance companies are worldwide. In 2012, the company employed approximately 42,100 people around the world.

The government has welcomed the Swedish truck conglomerate—Scania to establish a multi-million dollar assembly plant in Tanzania as the company takes advantage of Tanzania's high-quality natural gas.

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Investment), Angellah Kairuki, confirmed in Dar es Salaam that she had recently talked with Scania managing director Lars Eklund on the issue.

We welcome that investment initiative from Scania. We expect the proposed plant will be a huge investment project, the kind of projects we need in East Africa. With this investment in the pipeline we hope the government, shall continue to improve the business environment in order to attract foreign investment inflows and consolidate the gains on our industrialisation agenda.

revenues for our country's socio-economic development in realizing the middle class economy come 2025.

The Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) which was established in 1997 by the Tanzania Investment Act to be 'the Primary Agency of the Government to coordinate, encourage, promote and facilitate investment in Tanzania and to advise the government on investment policy and related matters', we believe that the agency will create and maintaining a positive climate for private sector and foreign investments in the country.

We are told that the agency deals with all enterprises whose minimum capital investment is not less than US \$ 500,000 if foreign owned or US \$ 100,000 if locally owned. Enterprises engaged in mining and petroleum should follow the approval process contained in their respective laws. The agency is duty bound to assist all investors to obtain permits, authorisation as required by other laws to set up and operate investments in Tanzania accordingly.

Other TIC's functions include providing advice to the government on investment related matters and stimulating local and foreign investments.

We also call upon the TIC support to the prospective investor in cooperation with the government as the ministry's job is to expose investment opportunities and attractions so that we can achieve comfortably the country's vision of making Tanzania a middle-income industrial country by 2025.

We are happy that Eklund has appreciated the conducive investment climate prevailing in Tanzania and noted that, besides the good investment environment, natural gas was an important raw material in running buses running on diesel or CNG gas.

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Covid-19: You have been warned: Spread fake news, and you sure could go to jail

By Omphehmetse S Sibanda

THE public must be advised to simply stay away from publishing, forwarding or creating fake news and misinformation about the novel coronavirus - and that includes being careful of reckless jokes disseminated within their social groups.

In 2017, Time magazine published a special edition, "The World Is Not Ready for the Next Pandemic" which addressed the extent to which nations had been preparing for the next pandemic or epidemic. In June 2019 Bruce Schneier wrote in the New York Times that the next pandemic will be fought on two fronts: "The first is the one you immediately think about understanding the disease, researching a cure and inoculating the population. The second is new, and one you might not have thought much about: fighting the deluge of rumours, misinformation and flat-out lies that will appear on the internet" (my emphasis).

In the current Covid-19 pandemic, the world was caught on both fronts. Third World countries will eventually be hard hit. Viral misinformation and fake news pose the biggest risk for the spread of the coronavirus in South Africa. If not attended to, fake news and misinformation will lead to tens of thousands of deaths. A solid strategy regarding the socio-political and economic discourse around the coronavirus - particularly the paucity of the normative framework to deal with fake news and misinformation - is sorely needed.

It should thus be welcomed that the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) has gazetted regulations that grant the government powers to act against those who deliberately endanger themselves and others during the pandemic. The new regulations prohibit deliberately infecting others with the coronavirus, or spreading fake news about the virus. The legislative machinery has been slow to react to the spread of misinformation and fake news - even before the coronavirus outbreak, no specific law or regulation existed to prohibit this spread. We had to rely on general laws of defamation, and laws against insults and hate speech to combat misinformation and fake news.

A case in point is the defamation case of Trevor Manuel v Economic Freedom Fighters and Others [2019], which attorney Dario Milo of Webber Wentzel called a "significant victory against fake news".



The relevant provisions of section 11 of the new regulation on fake news and misinformation state that, "Any person who publishes any statement, through any medium, including social media, with the intention to deceive any other person about: (a) Covid-19; (b) Covid-19 infection status of any person; or (c) any measure taken by the Government to address Covid-19, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or both such fine and imprisonment."

It is important that the public is guided through the regulation in the simplest and most understandable way possible, and the consequences of not adhering to the regulation must also be clear.

First, fake news and other forms of misinformation about the coronavirus are prohibited. Any publication designed to deceive people is prohibited - and by "any" it means just that: via SMS, WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, online videos, other messaging and networking platforms. In simple terms, the regulations prohibit creating or spreading fake news about the virus. Second, the offence of spreading fake news is not conditional on being the originator of the fake message, unless you can prove a lack of intention or deliberate act to deceive another person. Be careful though: you may still be convicted for the offence under indirect intention (dolus indirectus) or eventual intention (dolus eventualis). It will not be enough to argue that you did not have the direct intention (dolus directus) to deceive another person.

Therefore, the public must be advised to simply stay away from publishing, forwarding or creating fake news and misinformation about the coronavirus, and that includes even being careful of reckless jokes disseminated within their social groups. The government is bestowed with the sole responsibility

of disseminating or ordering the dissemination of credible information about the virus. If the information or communication transmitted has no endorsement by the government, treat it with caution. (In terms of section 10(1) of the new regulations, the authority to "issue directions to address, prevent and combat the spread of Covid-19 in any area of the Republic of South Africa" rests with the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize or his departments, institutions or persons.

The punishment for fake news and misinformation is a fine, which has yet to be determined, or a prison term of up to six months - or both. This is relatively "soft". Elsewhere, fake news peddlers have been subjected to very tough punishment.

In the People's Republic of China, "Whoever fabricates false information on [a] dangerous situation, epidemic situation, disaster situation or alert situation and disseminates such information via information network or any other media, or intentionally disseminates above information while clearly knowing that it is fabricated, thereby seriously disturbing public order, shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not more than three years, criminal detention or public surveillance; if the consequences are serious, he shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than three years but not more than seven years."

The Malaysian Anti-Fake News Act 803 of 2018, subsequently repealed five months after its passage on 2 April 2019, provided harsher punishment. It allowed for "a fine not exceeding five hundred thousand ringgit [about \$122,702] or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six years or to both, and in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding three thousand ringgit [\$736] for every day during which the offence continues after conviction".

I must hasten to add that the lesson learned from the repeal of the Malaysian law is that it was used arbitrarily and in a draconian manner. Just one month after the Anti-Fake News Act was enacted, a citizen was arrested and convicted for posting a YouTube video claiming Malaysian police took 50 minutes to respond to emergency calls in Kuala Lumpur after the shooting of Palestinian lecturer and Hamas member Fadi al-Batsh on 21 April 2018, while Malaysia's inspector-general of police claimed response time was eight minutes.

Heidi Larson in 2018 predicted that "...the next major outbreak - whether of a highly fatal strain of influenza or something else - will not be due to a lack of preventive technologies. Instead, emotional contagion, digitally enabled, could erode trust in vaccines so much as to render them moot."

Further, "the deluge of conflicting information, misinformation and manipulated information on social media should be recognised as a global public-health threat". This is a warning that is shared by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The South African Minister of Health recently lamented that "fake news is making us sick".

In the foreword to a January 2019 White Paper of the World Economic Forum by Peter Sands, Research Fellow at the Harvard Global Health Institute, he references the lesson of the boiling frog.

"In this apocryphal story, a frog placed in cold water remains in the water as the temperature is gradually increased to boiling. In failing to notice the gradual but real change in its circumstances, the frog dooms itself to a catastrophic ending. Although frogs do not behave this way in real life, humans often do. Neurobiologically conditioned, as we are, to pay attention to stark contrasts and sudden changes, we often overlook slow-moving changes in our environments that may herald disastrous consequences... The evolution of infectious disease risk is one such change."

Misinformation and fake news can be disastrous for South Africa, a country with a healthcare system that over years has been struggling to better itself.

As Sand says, "in a world of always-on news and 'fake news', fear spreads faster than any pathogen, sparking policy reactions, sharp changes in customer behaviour and deep anxieties among staff."

You have been warned: STOP misinformation and the dissemination of fake news about Covid-19.

DENVER, Colorado
By Gerald Kitabu

CSOs implorred to engage, build capacity of, local communities for bigger impact

Civil society organisations (CSOs) in Tanzania have been challenged to ensure they play their key role of engaging and building capacity for local communities to understand their task and at the same time demand action from their leaders in their respective areas.

Effective capacity building should involve ordinary citizens both in urban and rural areas including local communities at grassroots level.

The challenge was thrown by a lecturer with Mzumbe University, Dr Andrew Mushi, at CSOs training held recently in Dar es Salaam on how CSOs can engage and work with local communities in the areas they work for better impact.

Dr Mushi, who facilitated the training, said that besides other roles such as service delivery and policy advocacy it is imperative that the CSOs should work with local communities, capacitate them so that they can report irregularities and demand action.

Citing an example of climate change that in recent years has affected crops, infrastructure, businesses, energy and settlements, Dr Mushi said: "It is the local people who are affected by climate change such as floods, drought, etc, but in most cases CSOs tend to do everything themselves, instead of building capacity and raise awareness for the local communities to demand action from their leaders."

"When you let people know what is supposed to be done and from there let



A lecturer at Mzumbe University, Dr Andrew Mushi, makes a point at recent training for CSOs held in Dar es Salaam. Photo by Gerald Kitabu

them engage their leaders, the impact is much better. Another advantage of doing this is that it uses very little resources to achieve more and better results," he stressed.

He said that when communities are capacitated they will start to demand action right from the street level, village, ward and district level adding that if they see anything related to climate change they will demand climate action from their leaders.

Jeremiah Wandili, Secretary General Kinondoni NGO Network, said that CSOs need to be in the front line to advocate for climate change, raise awareness, build capacity to engage the government in budget allocation for climate change adaptation initiatives.

"It is true that we as CSOs need to spearhead engagement of community members to demand for the right policies and also for

the responsive governance," he said.

He advised CSOs to have a kind of blended service delivery, to build capacity of the local communities such as on climate smart agriculture, and support needed services.

"In Kinondoni we have fisheries, farmers, there is a rise of sea level, some infrastructures are being destroyed due to floods and so forth, we need to help build capacity for the local communities to

demand responsible authorities to prepare for resettlement areas and allocate enough resource for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

An advocacy officer with Ekama Development Foundation, Rehema Mmanga, said the issue of climate change needs a gender eye. It has been reported several times that women and children are the most vulnerable to climate change therefore, it is

must that all government's plans and strategies on climate change adaption and mitigation should put into consideration gender mainstreaming.

"As CSOs we need to give voice to members of local communities who have no voice but prioritising gender," she said.

EeColinitiative founder Nyakorema Rioba said that for the local communities to change and demand action, there is a need to help them be able to redefine and understand climate change in a very simple language. Some local communities think that climate change is for a particular group such as the elite and rich people, but in fact, these are day-to-day things that people do.

For example, when you are taking shower for a long time, it means you are using much water. Likewise, if you are using light for a long time and you don't switch it off, that means much energy is lost. The community must be educated and change. Successful engagement requires CSOs to go and to do this successfully, we need to go down and work with people at the grassroots level.

There is also need to share vision, knowledge and experience. The local communities need to understand the vision of CSOs, they must know why CSOs are doing this and what they will gain from that particular project.

"We should tell them the truth that we are not here to empower or help them because they are crippled but because they are capable and can do things happen," she said.

Human Dignity and Environmental Care foundation (HUDEF) Executive Director Sara Pima explained that the communities depend on the CSOs, as such, the key role as CSOs is to help the community through capacity building, education and awareness creation.

"We have to know our position, our target group, to consider the local communities when planning and making decisions," she said.

Earlier on, ForumCC's Executive Director Rebecca Muna said the training was meant for civil society organisations from Ilala Municipal Council in Dar es Salaam. It aimed at building the capacity to engage local communities and empower them to report irregularities.

"There are a lot of things which are happening but not known to the authorities. So, we want them to start reporting. If someone is not doing well in terms of solid waste management that means the local communities will be able to report that."

"If sand vehicles destroy the roads or industries pollute the city or rivers like Msimbazi, they should be able to report the cases," she said.

She called on CSOs to work with the Ilala Municipality and the local communities and involve them in various meetings so that they can be empowered to be able to report those who are destroying the environment.

"I call on the policy and decision makers and whoever responsible, including the private sector to start taking action on climate change. This is because climate change affects all communities, their infrastructures, houses are destroyed, businesses, affect agriculture. If today a particular community is hit by floods it means they lose each and everything," she said.

Citing Dar es Salaam residents, she said most of them depend on business, if the floods come that means their business will also be affected and destroyed. So, when planning, policy and decision makers must consider climate impacts. Example, when developing roads at gravel level, they should consider floods, whether it is energy, water, city planning, housing, or agriculture, they should also take into consideration the impact of climate change.

The training brought together 23 organisations from Ilala in Dar es Salaam under the Accountable Climate Action and Finance Transparency Initiative (ACATI), supported by the European Union.

Safeguarding social justice in a time of social distancing

By Special Correspondents

Covid-19 does not discriminate, but us humans do. In South Africa, the majority of people know the well-rehearsed positions of distance along the lines of race, class and wealth. Social distancing comes naturally to those with means - just say the word and we'll retreat into our own home; protected by fast internet delivered through fibre specially sunk into the soil for us, by walls and by fences; with access to home delivery and a security guard down the road who got up at 3.30am to make it to work on time and who will return home at 8pm.

Social distancing, however necessary during this pandemic, may amplify the country's steep inequality manifold. And yet, it offers an opportunity to lessen social distance and draw on South Africa's long history of resilience when faced with disaster, and to bolster social cohesion.

While social distancing is vital to flattening the curve of Covid-19 infection and reducing health system stress and, ultimately, excess mortality from a lack of capacity for intensive care, we may inadvertently push others into the fray for us, and we do so while building community and social solidarity.

As we retreat into our homes - be it for reasons of self-isolating with symptoms suggestive of Covid-19 or another disease or after exposure, for protection, or just to keep the children entertained now that the schools are closed - we may inadvertently or thoughtlessly put people at higher risk of



A general view of commuters at a taxi rank on March 17, 2020 in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is reported that the taxi governing body Santaco is working on a plan to put stringent hygiene measures in place for drivers and millions of commuters at taxi ranks as well as inside the vehicles they travel in. File photo

infection, who have less resilience should they get sick, fewer means and less power to negotiate with us due to their dependency on us as employers or benefactors. Here, we discuss a number of ways that these risks could play out and what to do to counter them.

Start caring for the carers

Asking careworkers such as nannies and domestic workers to continue to show up for work creates a superhighway for infections between two households at opposing ends of the wealth spectrum, increasing both households' risk of infection, however, only one of them tends to have access to private healthcare should they fall sick. (It is important to note here that at this stage, the risk of infection is highest for middle class folks with a recent history of overseas travel.)

If they take public trans-

port to work, their risks are compounded. Now is an excellent time to offer paid leave to carers and other domestic workers until the pandemic is under control - at least for those of us with a realistic expectation of continuing to be paid in the next months. Alternatively, offer staff to stay with you (and offer for them to self-isolate if they choose to do so); or at least pay for ride-hailing services to and from your home. If you should fall sick yourself, keep paying them, make sure they have access to appropriate testing and care - but, in that instance especially, make sure they stay at home.

With the children out of school, it is tempting to draft grandparents into childcare, or ask nannies or au pairs to work full time. The elderly are at much higher risk of severe versions of Covid-19 and should be the first to self-isolate, either on your property, if you have enough space, or

if more convenient, in their own home. If childcare staff rely on public transport and cannot easily be accommodated in your home, rather send them home with pay, and take turns with your partner or one or two available friends to look after your children yourselves.

If your staff have school-going children of their own, make sure you don't force them to choose between looking after your children or house and looking after their own children in the frantic weeks to come. Often people who are marginally employed find it hard to get others to look after their kids while they work, and if they must draw on older relatives or those with TB and/or HIV, this will further compound risk.

If you can't send your staff home with pay and you have some spare space, it might be better for them to come live with you with their children, and benefit from

whatever homeschooling arrangements you have made for your children.

If your staff have elderly or vulnerable members in their household, including those with disabilities or underlying lung or heart disease, remember how hard it is to self-isolate in an overcrowded household. Consider offering the elderly parents of your staff your spare room or cottage to self-isolate in, if you have these available. The pandemic curve will thank you for it.

Don't hoard

It is hard to stock up when you live hand-to-mouth, so please don't give in to primal instincts and don't hoard. There is no hint of supply lines being hit - witness the almost total refilling of supermarket shelves the next day - and it harms a person who may have limited means to get to the supermarket, only to find what they need missing.

Support small businesses and self-employed folks

In the coming weeks of increasing self-isolation, larger businesses will close down temporarily, while smaller businesses such as training studios, restaurants, artists, hairdressers and other small shops will all be at risk of going under. In order to prevent those paid hourly or on contracts from losing the income that entire families often depend on, large businesses should find flexibility around leave policies and extensions of contracts. If you can afford it, keep paying self-employed people or small businesses that you currently support, order in food from a favourite

restaurant (establish a contact-free handover routine); buy (online where possible), food or personal care vouchers for people to redeem once this is over; and if you have to shop, shop (or order) from a small shop.

Add generously for the poor and marginalised

As the streets get emptier, the poor who rely on handouts at traffic lights, on the streets or at your gate will collect less donations, and less people will be willing to open their windows or doors during self-isolation. If you have to drive anywhere, be it to work or to the shops, give more generously than normally or add some tins for others to your shopping and hand them over in a bag, together with some hand sanitiser or soap.

Another perfect example of small steps with a potential large impact is to take small bottles of hand sanitiser to petrol attendants, people at the side of the road, low-income workers, or anyone else who relies on public transport and, if needed, explain its use. In places without regular water supply, in particular transport hubs, crèches and other institutions, consider assisting with the installation of hands-free tippy-taps.

Bolster mental health, including your own

Possibly more than the strain of Covid-19 itself, we will collectively take strain from engaging with it. Take a break and check in with each other; start a conversation with your neighbour or the people who keep you safe. Be especially alert for friends

and contacts who may be at risk for increased domestic violence as tensions fray, and again, offer a safe space as you are able. At the very least, if you are worried about someone, reach out, ask the hard questions and assist with safety planning as you are able.

In this country, we've all too often given up on stopping to think about where people come from and how they lead their lives, often in ways that accommodate ours. Covid-19 is a perfect opportunity to find out about people's living circumstances, in particular their means of transport, and their household's crowding and access to water.

If you can, go through people's questions and concerns; hear them out on what they might have heard or read elsewhere, and answer the questions they might have, even if they come in the shape of a statement. Start a neighbourhood whatsapp group that isn't about security. Try to share practical advice about hand washing if someone asks. And be deliberate about exercise and self-care. Check in with your family and friends by phoning. Limit obsessive news reading and social media checking to specific, limited time periods.

Join a mutual aid organisation or start your own

This means that running alongside our individualism is another, much more remarkable story; the emergence all over the globe of local, neighbourhood-based Mutual Aid groups. This is an extraordinary burgeoning of creative ways of organising support and access to resources at hyper local level.

How to demonstrate trustworthiness with coronavirus coverage

By Mollie Muchna

DURING the coronavirus outbreak, the Trusting News team has been heartened to see journalists rallying around their communities and producing incredible work. We've seen newsrooms discussing how best to serve their audience during a global pandemic. We've seen paywalls removed for the health of local communities. We've seen journalists working overtime to cover the rapid-fire updates.

But we've also been watching the public's reaction. We've been tracking some common themes when it comes to complaints, frustrations and misunderstandings from our audiences about how we do what we do.

Maybe you've come across some of them in e-mails, phone calls and comments: You're blowing this out of proportion. You're sensationalising news to get more people on your website. You don't care about getting it right. You only care about ratings, not protecting the community.

It's tempting to brush these accusations off. But it's important - perhaps now especially - that we as journalists demonstrate the credibility of our work and address misassumptions about how journalism works and what motivates it.

Here are some pieces of advice that might be especially useful to you during coronavirus coverage.

One: Show how your staff covers big news. When faced with big breaking news



situations like this, journalists know how to mobilise. We quickly identify angles and assign staffers to cover key areas.

But most news consumers understandably do not know what a commitment of resources that is. What if offering a window into the complexity of your work could help lend credibility and inspire an appreciation for the efforts?

What if you told them which reporters were covering which aspect of the outbreak? Explained who they were talking to and what information they were trying to gather?

Think about how you could shine a light on that investment. In a story (in text or on-air) or on social media, how can you explain the components of your coverage?

Be careful to use a tone that focuses on explanation, not bragging. Your goal here isn't to get a pat on the back for your staffers but to show the ways you're working on behalf of the community.

Two: Be clear about the goal of your coverage. There are a lot of updates flying around these days. There's so much to know

and understand, and there's sure not a shortage of news stories.

Many local newsrooms have likely had internal conversations recently that echo these sentiments: We want to help our audience make decisions. We want to inform people, not scare them.

But have you said it outside the newsroom, to the people who matter most? Does your audience know about your goals for coverage of this huge, global story? Or, like so much of journalism's internal deliberations, is your mission invisible to outsiders (you know, like the people you aim to serve)?

Try to articulate in a sentence (or a few) your approach to covering the coronavirus. Then think about where you could insert that messaging. Try on-air, in a newsletter or in a social post. Try putting it in italics at the top of a story, or at the top of your landing page of coverage.

If you have a box teasing from coronavirus stories back to that landing page, add it to that box. Yes, on every story. Few people will notice, much less complain about, the repetition.

Three: Explain how coverage affects your bottom line. Accusations of money driving news decisions aren't uncommon in general, and they often ramp up during times of big news.

You've probably recently seen accusations like: You're exaggerating the nature of the coronavirus because scaring people is good for ratings. How can you charge me to read information that is important to public safety right now?

But this shows that your audience is curious about your funding. While many journalists aren't in the habit of talking about their funding with their audiences, no one but you is going to correct the record about your finances and your ethics.

So talk in the newsroom about ways to honestly and thoughtfully respond to an accusation that you're sensationalising coverage because it brings in audience and revenue. Then find ways to inject that message into your coverage.

Four: Explain how you decide which stories to cover. Your audience is noticing what you do

and do not cover now more than ever. If we're honest, a lot of our coverage decisions happen intuitively or are based on things we don't verbalise in the newsroom, much less explain to the public.

But if you don't let the public in on your process, they'll make all kinds of (likely negative) assumptions about your motivations and decision-making, like "the media is just reporting on this because they're playing into mass hysteria".

To combat this, try making a list of the questions and complaints you've been hearing about your COVID-19 coverage. Then write a piece to share publicly describing your process and your goals. Share it over and over in comment threads, over email, in links within stories - anywhere it would be useful.

Five: Ask for questions and input. With facts changing quickly, there is bound to be a lot of confusion and questions from your audience. But inviting feedback and questions will help you better understand what your audience doesn't understand or may be missing in your coverage.

Try asking them for their questions and feedback on social media, or by adding an editor's note. Remind them that you're there for the health of the community, then ask: "What would you still like to know about this story? Did we miss something? Let us know."

Six: Show the breadth of your journalism. During big new stories, it can be hard to remind people that you do more than just churn out negative news updates. During this outbreak, are you reporting on how to

support local businesses - or about what families can do to keep safe?

It's also likely that our audiences don't really notice that we're still reporting on other aspects of our communities, too, like local political races and traffic updates.

It's upon us as journalists to expand our communities' ideas of what journalism is by pointing out the breadth of our coverage. You can do it in a social thread, in a list of links in a newsletter, or in a quick roundup in print or on air.

Seven: Show you're on the side of facts. In a situation evolving as fast as this one, it's inevitable that we will report things that later turn out to be untrue.

Think about how you can explain your reporting process to your audience. Talk about how you will update information and where the latest updates can be found. (Will it be online, or on social media? Will you remove incorrect information?)

Make it clear that you will correct errors publicly and will only cite the best information you can find. And if you see other news outlets sharing misinformation, correct that as well.

This can be done from within a story, in a social post, in a newsletter - anywhere you're communicating about the topic. Think of it as an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to getting it right and being on the side of facts.

Eight: Use quick, easy transparency sidebars. When we as journalists explain our process, we allow users to see how our story came together, why

we put resources towards covering the story and why we chose to include certain people, images and words.

One way you can do this is by creating boxes or sidebars dedicated to transparency. These boxes allow you to explain their process and decisions within the story itself. Users don't have to click to another page to learn more about the journalism - they get the splash of behind-the-scenes information alongside the story they clicked on.

On your COVID-19 coverage, write one to three sentences that answer these two questions: Why did you do this story? How did you do this story? Include this information in the story in a pullout or shaded box.

Nine: Engage on social media. Invest in your relationship with your audience by using social media to have conversations. Ask your followers how they're feeling, what they need from the media and how you could help them. Also, answer questions, be human, delete misinformation and try to keep coronavirus comments concentrated.

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Can dialogue with violent extremist groups help bring stability to Mali?

By Special Correspondents

In a strategy shift in Mali's fight against terrorism, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita announced on 10 February that he was exploring the option of dialogue with violent extremist groups. On 8 March Iyad Ag Ghaly, Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) leader, said the group agreed to dialogue with Bamako without preconditions in line with the popular will, particularly that expressed by the population regarding the end of French occupation.

Since 2012 Mali has faced a security crisis with multiple drivers and sources. Despite the 2013 Franco-African military campaign that led to the recovery of northern cities occupied by violent extremist groups, the country remains unstable.

Rivalries within the extremist groups have seen these groups fragment and weaken, yet they remain the main source of insecurity in the country. By establishing themselves as actors of local governance, they provide security and arbitrate old quarrels to gain communities' support.

With the worsening security situation, some civil society and Malian political actors have called for dialogue in addition to the military efforts of Mali and its partners. The option of talks was first raised in 2012. Ansar Dine and National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad representatives met Blaise Compaoré, then



Talks with extremists in Mali could be an opportunity to renew the social contract between the state and the population. File photo

mediator of the Economic Community of West African States in the Malian crisis, in Ouagadougou to express their willingness to engage in political dialogue with Bamako.

Since 2012 Mali has faced a security crisis with multiple drivers and sources

But this option was ruled out when the forces of Iyad Ag Ghaly and other terror groups advanced towards the south of Mali, reportedly aiming to extend their control there, in January 2013. This triggered the French-African military intervention.

On 18 June 2013, Mali's government and the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad and High Council for the Unity of Azawad rebel armed groups reached a preliminary agreement for the presidential election and inclusive talks

in Algiers. These negotiations gave rise to the 2015 Peace and Reconciliation Agreement.

During talks leading up to the Algiers Process Agreement signed in 2015, voices within the political class, including member of parliament Oumar Mariko, said a peace agreement 'cannot exclude Iyad and his men, the real actors of the North'.

In 2017 a survey conducted by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Bamako and in other regional capitals revealed that 55.8% of Malians were in favour of dialogue with 'jihadist' groups. In March and April 2017, a recommendation from the Conference of National Understanding also supported opening dialogue with violent extremist groups.

The security situation facing the Liptako-Gourma

region highlights the need to strengthen or revisit current regional responses

A good offices mission conducted with Katiba Macina in central Mali, led by Imam Mahmoud Dicko, then president of the High Islamic Council of Mali, was central to the differing views between Malian authorities on the option of dialogue. A few months later, Mali's president declared he was far from approving the mission mandated by his Prime Minister Abdoulaye Idrissa Maïga.

Before Mali, Algeria and Mauritania also tried dialogue with extremist groups. In Algeria, dialogue led to the adoption of a so-called civil harmony law ending more than a decade of violence in the country. In Mauritania, after several years of an entirely security-based policy, the authorities

opted for dialogue and deradicalisation led by clerics for Mauritanian 'jihadist' fighters. Despite their limitations and imperfections, the methodologies applied in these two countries helped demobilise some members of those groups.

The Malian government's initial opposition to dialogue with violent extremist groups was seen as an alignment with its international partners, notably France and the United States. But since the January 2020 Pau summit which brought together the leaders of the Sahel and the French president, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (EIGS) was designated as the main enemy in the fight against

terrorism. This position evidently encouraged the Malian authorities' position regarding the JNIM, whose leader Iyad ag Ghaly is Malian.

Ownership of the dialogue initiative by the Malian authorities allows them to determine the appropriate format and the expected results of the process.

Dialogue must not be an end in itself but rather a continuous effort alongside all responses to violent extremism

Since 2016, Institute for Security Studies research has suggested that many factors contribute to people's association with so-called jihadist groups in Mali, not all because of religious indoctrination. Rather, protection of oneself, and one's family, community and economic activity is an important motive, among others.

Therefore dialogue shouldn't focus only on the leaders of violent extremist groups. Foot soldiers, middle leadership and top leaders often have different reasons for being part of extremist groups. At the lower level, objectives might also differ between combatants, suppliers, cooks, motorbike mechanics and informants.

Such an inclusive approach should take into account people's frustrations, for example grievances against justice and expectations such as security and basic social services. It should also allow a perspective of the differences between policymakers and recipients.

Preliminary discussions should help identify potential interlocutors and mediators who can establish relationships with them for the smooth running of the process.

Dialogue with the various hierarchical levels in the extremist groups will make it possible to connect the different dimensions of the conflict, to understand the expectations of the different actors of insecurity, to get out of a state-centric approach and to demobilise members of the groups by taking into account local dynamics.

The momentum towards dialogue is an opportunity for the state and the communities to negotiate a new social contract. There must be greater consideration of both the diversity and specificities of Mali's communities. Dialogue must be considered in a holistic way for it to help build long-term stability.

Finally, for dialogue in Mali to be effective, the transnational nature of violent extremist groups in the Sahel must be considered. The security situation facing the Liptako-Gourma region highlights the need to strengthen or revisit current regional responses.

Dialogue must not be an end in itself but rather a continuous effort alongside security-military options and development, justice and governance interventions in their responses to violent extremism.

Agencies

Guinea votes in contested referendum and parliamentary poll

CONAKRY

VOTERS in Guinea are casting ballots in a contested referendum and parliamentary election held against the backdrop of deadly protests and the coronavirus pandemic.

Conde is proposing a change to the constitution to codify gender equality and introduce other social reforms. But his opponents fear the real motive is to reset presidential term limits, allowing the 82-year-old president to run for a third spell in office later this year - a scenario his government has not discounted.

Shortly after voting began at 08:00 GMT, young people attacked police deployed outside a polling station in a school in Ratoma, a suburb of the capital, Conakry, according to an AFP news agency reporter and other witnesses. In another school nearby, voting equipment was vandalised.

Since October, Guineans have protested en masse against the possibility of Conde extending his grip on power. At least 31 people and one gendarme have been killed to date, according to

reports.

Originally scheduled for March 1, Conde postponed the referendum late last month after international criticism of some 2.5 million dubious names on the country's electoral roll. Some 7.7 million people were on the register, out of a total population about 13 million people.

The government says it has now scrubbed the problematic names, after an expert team from the West Africa bloc ECOWAS urged doing so last week. But Guinea's embattled opposition still doubts the vote's credibility.

Cellou Diallo, a former prime minister and the head of the leading opposition party, the UFDG, said the process of cleaning up the electoral roll had been opaque.

"It is an electoral masquerade," he said, adding that the roll did not reflect the electorate. His party, as well as the other large opposition parties, are boycotting both the referendum and the parliamentary election.

In a deeply polarised political environment, opposition figures have also prom-



There are also questions about the fairness of Sunday's vote, which additionally is taking place amid mounting concern about the spread of the novel coronavirus in Africa.

ised to stop the votes from taking place.

Sidyia Toure, the head of the opposition UFR party, said Conde wants to "con-

vince the international community he is open to criticism" while pursuing a third term anyway.

Conde in 2010 became

Guinea's first democratically-elected president. He was returned to office by voters in 2015 for his second and final five-year term under

the current constitution, but critics say he has become increasingly authoritarian, citing arrests of protest leaders.

The draft constitution would also limit presidential terms to two but extend the length of the term to six years, potentially enabling

Conde to govern for another 12 years.

Guinea's government argues the new constitution would usher in badly-needed changes in the country, especially for women. These would include banning female genital mutilation and under-age marriage and giving spouses equal rights in a divorce.

Conde has not denied that he might use the new constitution to seek another term when his second term runs out this year. He told French media last month that there was "nothing more democratic" than holding a referendum and it was up to his party to determine whether he would run again.

Amid concerns about the fairness of Sunday's vote, there is also increasing concern about the spread of the new coronavirus. Guinea has confirmed two cases to date.

"I have the impression our country is taking things lightly," said Amadou Oury Bah, a banker and politician.

The governing party called for people to vote but also insisted on the strict respect for health measures.

How COVID-19 outbreak affected S. African fishermen



In previous years, children would learn how to fish from their parents. These days, because of the dire state of the industry, people are more and more reluctant to have their children follow in their footsteps.

By Barry Christianson

WEEKS before the first case of the new coronavirus was confirmed in South Africa, the fishermen at Steenberg's Cove had already felt the devastating effects of the outbreak.

A small fishing village in St Helena Bay, on the West Coast of South Africa, Steenberg's Cove is located some 150km (93 miles) from Cape Town.

Amid long-standing economic woes that stretch back decades, the

members of the community in recent years have largely depended on small-scale fishing for their livelihoods, especially the four-month-long West Coast rock lobster (WCRL) harvesting season running from mid-November to mid-March.

However, the amount of WCRL allocated to the small-scale fishermen in the village decreases each year, falling to 64kg (141 pounds) in the current season from 86kg (190 pounds) in the year before, and resulting in a drop in income of more than \$400.

According to Shamera Daniels, of the West Coast Rock Lobster Association, China imported 95 percent of South Africa's WCRL in the 2018-19 season.

But this year, as the coronavirus outbreak in China forced the shutdown of markets across the country, the small-scale fishermen at Steenberg's Cove were instructed by South African authorities to stop harvesting WCRL.

The members of the community found themselves without any in-

come for more than two months. In order to feed their families, many defied the order and continued fishing at night for a fraction of the price they would otherwise be able to get.

To mitigate the effects of the crisis, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries then decided to extend the harvesting season for an additional three months. Yet, it remains unclear whether prices will bounce back and whether fishermen will be able to recover their lost income.

Fighting COVID-19, Dar has a leaf to borrow from Seoul

By Guardian Correspondent

NEW cases of coronavirus are on the rise in Tanzania, a country that has only one testing laboratory in Dar es Salaam.

Tanzania has been forced to change its well-kept traditions over the virus scare that is holding the bull by the horns.

For the first time since 1964, Tanzania will not hold its annual ritual-like Uhuru touch race across the country. The symbol of independence and socialist ideology whose replica had been hoisted atop Mt Kilimanjaro on the independence eve December 8, 1961, will remain at standstill this year.

Efforts by its critics who have been calling on its extinguishment citing out datedness have been futile but a blow from a tiny virus has put off its mighty fire.

President John Magufuli has announced last week that the torch, that would have burnt a whopping US\$438,766, will not run this year to avoid crowds, in the wake of the spread of the new coronavirus, and the money will be channelled towards fighting the pandemic.

The ruling CCM has announced halting all internal and public meetings while the Government announcing calling off all gatherings including closing down schools and universities. Workers are encouraged to work from home whenever possible.

Sanitizers are seen at the entrance of every public building including hotels and offices where clients would sanitize their hands before they enter. People wear masks, which costs ten times more than the usual price.

The government has closed down all schools and universities for 30 days in a bid to minimize gatherings and contacts. This also includes cancellation of all sporting events including the national football league.

Usually, rigid religious norms have succumbed to the scare. Catholic bishops have banned traditional handshakes during mass used as a gesture of forgiveness before receiving Holy Communion.

The faithful also has been advised against plunging a finger into a bowl of holy water as they enter or vacate church premises and shall receive communion by hand and not the tongue to shun contamination.

Tanzania Muslim community has not been left without instructions. Chief Mufti Sheikh Aboubakar Zubeir has told Muslims who will be affected not to attend Friday prayers and avoid any contact with other people.

With state-of-the-art temperature detection and sanitary facilities at the major airport in the commercial capital Dar es Salaam, mass testing is not in the cards.

With two free-toll numbers on which people can report suspected cases being touted, a media awareness campaign on the symptoms and means of infections is

on.

It is very likely that new cases can infect others before they become too acute to go undetected because mass testing has not been considered, amid a scarcity of testing laboratory.

Traceability of new cases remains a challenge given technological hitches.

Those whose specimens get tested in Dar es Salaam are only suspected cases while the rest would just depend on God's mercy while taking precautions measures such as wearing face masks, sanitizing hands and avoiding unnecessary contacts. Data of infections in Tanzania, like is the case in other parts of Africa, might not reflect the reality because testing is not robust.

Tracing of possible infected people is very minimal.

At the time of fighting the spread of the scourge, Tanzania can pick a leaf from the countries that have been successful, such as South Korea.

On the early days of the scourge, South Korea abruptly became the world's number one highly affected country outside China.

But instead of taking the Chinese model of quarantining cities, Seoul embraced a model of open information, public participation, and widespread testing.

According to AFP, as of Wednesday, March 11, South Korea had 7,755 confirmed cases - the fourth-highest total in the world - but only 60 deaths, well below the World Health Organisation's global average.

Apart from adopting a transparent approach in releasing information on the severity of the scourge, Seoul opted for mass testing and managed to test more than 30,000 people per day.

The government subsidizes the testing costs and the people are required to pay an equivalent to US\$1.

Seoul has more than 500 designated testing clinics, including over 40 drive-through facilities that cut contact between patients and medical workers.

As health facilities were not to accommodate such a huge number, the Government came up with a drive-through approach where vehicles would queue and a medical worker would take samples from passengers who still seat inside the vehicle for testing before the car moves on.

Instead of taking the Chinese approach of quarantining affected cities, South Korea embraced a model of open information, public participation, and mass testing.

Each confirmed coronavirus patient's contacts are traced and offered tests.

Technological advancement and political will have played a key role in the fight against coronavirus in South Korea.

Infected persons and other people who have been in contact with the infected person have their movements monitored in CCTV, use of mobile phone and credit cards and the movements posted on the Government's website for a period of 14 days.

Kenya's anti-counterfeit authority raises alarm over fake sanitisers

NAIROBI

THE Anti-Counterfeit Authority yesterday warned Kenyans to beware of the danger of counterfeit sanitisers and detergents in the market as the country takes preventive measures to stop the spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The increased demand for these products poses an opportunity for unscrupulous traders to capitalise on vulnerability by selling counterfeit detergents and sanitizers.

The Executive Director of Anti-Counterfeit Authority, Elema Halake, said that some unscrupulous persons may take advantage of this situation to cash in on the Coronavirus pandemic to manufacture and trade in counterfeit sanitizers and detergents.

The authority is currently following some leads on suspected counterfeit sanitisers and detergents.

Halake encouraged Kenyans to be alert when buying these commodities.

"We encourage Kenyans to beware

and report any suspected cases to the authority or any other law enforcement agency," he noted.

This serves as a reminder that dealing in counterfeit goods is a criminal offence and is punishable by law. The Authority reassures members of the public that it remains vigilant to detect and seize any counterfeit sanitizers and detergents.

This comes at a time when the Kenya Pharmaceuticals association also warned of purchasing uncertified drugs in the name of curing Corona-

virus.

Kenya Pharmaceuticals Association chairperson Patrick Adera warned Kenyans on buying two types of medicine known as Hydrochloroquine and Azithromycin after the United States said the two drugs could cure coronavirus.

The association now says that the drugs have not been verified, further warning that those selling the medicine should wait till research has been completed.

SPECIAL REPORT

MCT comes up with guidelines on Covid-19 outbreak reporting

THE Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) on Friday (March 20) announced having developed guidelines for journalists on the reporting of corona virus outbreaks.

The council, part of whose mandate is to underline the need for journalists in Tanzania to adhere to the highest professional and ethical standards, has developed the guidelines in order to ensure that media practitioners conduct themselves appropriately during the ongoing Covid-19 crisis.

"It is the journalist's duty to clearly and responsibly communicate reliable information to the public," say one of the sections in the guidelines.

It adds: "During a global health crisis, like the one the world is facing with the spread of COVID-19 (also known as novel corona virus), this role becomes ever more critical."

The guidelines are as follows:

- While not downplaying the gravity of the situation, contribute to the efforts geared at reducing fear and panic among the public.
- Seek to understand plans and strategies being implemented to address the outbreak and its social and economic impact.
- Talk to as many different people as possible. Do your best to capture the different realities people are living in during the outbreak



to help authorities get feedback so they can plan appropriate interventions.

- Strictly adhere to professional conduct, using credible sources of information such as medical doctors, Ministry of Health and World Health Organisation (WHO).
- Be aware of misinformation. Strive to establish the truth so that you do not become part of the problem of disseminating false information.
- Treat the victims of the corona virus with dig-

nity and respect their right to privacy. Minimize interviews with them, photos of victims should be avoided and their names excluded from stories to minimize unnecessary exposure, unless the subjects themselves want to be known and share their experience.

- Visual reporting on the crisis is valuable, but it needs to be carried out responsibly. Reporters should make sure their images accurately portray what's going on.
- Focus on reporting, not analysis unless it is

through expert opinion.

- Watch your headlines. With a high volume of information, and the fast pace of social media, many people get their news from headlines alone.
- Use statistics and graphics accurately and in context to avoid causing panic.
- Avoid racist tropes -do not encourage stereotypes or inadvertently promote racist interpretations.
- Regularly check the status of any event you plan on attending, tak-

ing into account there is a ban on public gatherings above a certain number of people.

- Always take into account the possibility of being grounded in a quarantine/lockdown zone.
- Consider the potential psychological impact of reporting from an area affected by COVID-19, especially if reporting from a medical or isolation facility, or quarantine zone.
- Ensure you have a contingency plan in place, taking into account

that certain areas, specific regions, and/or entire countries can be locked down and quarantined with little or no notice.

- Avoid close contact with anybody showing symptoms of respiratory illness, such as coughing and sneezing. Always cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Wash your hands regularly with hot water and soap. Use anti-bacterial gel or wipes if hot water and soap is not available, but always follow this up with a hot water and soap wash as soon as possible.
- Maintain a 'safe' distance when interviewing anyone showing symptoms.
- Consider your mode of transportation to and from the assignment. Avoid traveling on public transportation at rush hour and make sure to use alcohol gel on hands when disembarking.
- Use directional microphones from a safe distance rather than clip mics.
- Use protective gloves if working in or visiting an infected site such as a medical treatment facility. Other medical personal protective equipment (PPE) such as a bodysuit and full face mask may also be

necessary.

- Equipment such as cameras, recorders and microphones which are widely shared amongst staff must be disinfected using fast acting microbial wipes, before and after every use and their operators required to wear gloves.
- Always ensure your hands are washed thoroughly with hot water and soap before, during, and after leaving an affected area.
- If you develop symptoms, especially fever or shortness of breath, seek medical treatment. If you are in a heavily infected area, you may risk encountering COVID-19 infected patients at crowded treatment centres, therefore increasing your chances of exposure.
- Always follow the local health authorities' guidance and instructions.
- WHO and Ministry of Health are in agreement that it is not necessary for people without symptoms to wear masks, unless you are told to by the local authorities; or you are in a high-risk area such as a hospital; or you are taking care of a person with suspected COVID-19 infection.
- Those who have reported from active outbreak areas may be

required to stay away from the office or interacting with news sources, family members and others for a period 14 days.

- Programmes that require studio audience presence should be discouraged. If necessary then guests must be seated at least one meter from each other. This protocol also applies to the distance between the anchor/host and the nearest guest. Anchors/Radio hosts must wash their hands before and after their show and avoid touching their faces at any time.
- Sanitisers must be put at all entrances to the media houses with special consideration being given to studio entrances. Guests and anchors must clean their hands before entering the studio. Crew must wash hands with water and soap before and after each production and where necessary put on masks and gloves.
- Editing benches, computers, mixers in the gallery and other equipment must be disinfected before and after every production or editing session.

These draft considerations have been adopted from several local, regional and international best practices.

By Correspondent Beatrice Philemon

Solar Mtaji project improves lives of disabled in Chanika, Kibindu villages

SITTING on her wood bench outside her office, a 52-year-old mother of three, Amina Kiseembe says, she was excited when she heard about Solar Mtaji Programme that was introduced by Sepon Limited at Lukooni Street, Chanika area in Ilala District to help people with disabilities.

The project was established in the area to improve standards of living through income generating activities using solar power, which enable them to charge clients' mobile phones and conduct tailoring activities that in turn have helped them to earn cash from customers.

Amina, secretary of Umoja wa Kusaidiana Walemavu Chanika (UKWACHA) was still excited as she looked up from her sewing machine.

"I'm thankful for the Solar Mtaji Programme," she explained, noting that before the project, lives for people with disabilities were so difficult. People were having one meal per day, others going to bed without having had anything to eat, apart from poor availability of health services, school fees for children, rent also being difficult for them.

Amina is among 34 people with disabilities in the association who are benefiting from the project. It provided room for members to earn cash to buy food for their families, pay school fees for children, medical bills and other social services.

"Sepon Limited given us solar-powered sewing machine as well as installed solar power phone charging apparatus so that we can use it for tailoring activities and phone charging services to earn cash that will help us

to improve our livelihoods," she said

With the solar-powered sewing machine, right now they can work more hours than before, get light from solar, put food on table without difficulty at least two meals per day, although there are other people still eating one meal per day.

They are able to spend more hours for phone charging outlets and conducting tailoring activities although the project is not well-known for many people.

The project has provided room for members to pay medical bills as well as assist the association to save extra cash for operation and maintenance of the system and reduce operational costs.

"Today we can earn at least 5000/- to 7000/- a day working on solar-powered sewing machine. The amount is still small as the majority of Chanika residents are not aware of what we do," she says.

Currently the group has women and men who are largely dependent on this project.

She called on Dar es Salaam residents including Chanika residents to support them in terms of giving them tenders for tailoring activities because they have qualified tailors who can provide the best services for what they need.

While phone charging system they earn between 2000/- and 3000/- per day, customers willing to charge their mobile phone, torch and other outlets, the price



Amina Kiseembe (R) use solar powered sewing machine donated by Sepon Limited, Left is her instructor Zuhura Mkone. Photo: Correspondent Beatrice Philemon

ranges between 200/- and 300/-. Such work helps the members to alleviate poverty in families, and meet various necessities.

For his part, an 82-year-old man sitting on a wood bench with a smile on his face, Said Kwaro who lives at Lukoni Street in Chanika area, affirms that the solar-powered sewing machine and phone charging project has dramatically changed the economic

prospects of the group.

"I was among people who were excited when we heard about the project in this area, and now it is a dream come true as today we have got power in our office and cash, thanks to Sepon Limited to have installed the solar phone charging system and donating solar powered sewing machines worth 1.8m/- so that members can use for tailoring activities," he says.

He said the money they use it to pay medical services, food, pay school fees for their children and maintenance of the project.

So far the group has 34 members and one maize milling machine but they don't have raw materials.

"Although Sepon Limited has helped us to install the solar phone charging system and donated the solar-powered sewing machine, we still need more donors who can support us with Bajaj, Toyo Motorcycle KE6, sewing machines, raw materials for maize processing as well as land that members can use for vegetable farming to improve their livelihoods.

"We need more support because the funds we get from our tailoring business and phone charging is not enough to support all members," he stated.

He called on customers from different areas across the city including Chanika's residents to give them tender in-terms of tailoring activities so that can grow and benefit from what they did.

The funds they get from tailoring activities is small because they don't get large tenders, they just get small tenders like repairing clothes," he pointed out.

"Just look we have solar-powered sewing machine and maize milling machine, but we don't have raw materials for those activities. How can we survive," he wonders.

Sepon Limited's Public Relation Officer Frank Swai

said that the Solar Mtaji Programme was formally established on July 27th last year.

So far the project has brought in new hope for women with disabilities, widows, youths and individuals in Dar es Salaam and Coast regions.

The project's main goal is to help people to improve their livelihoods through income generating activities like tailoring and phone charging, and embark on modern farming to create opportunities for youths and women.

This project enables marginalized groups such as women, youths and people with disabilities to have alternative means to alleviate poverty in their families by avoiding dependence on men, parents, guardians or relatives, and reducing gender based violence against women.

He said they train them on those issues because they want them to be good ambassadors who will help their peers move from one position to other position in terms of raising income and help families to be happy.

"Under solar mtaji programme, we don't give people cash but provide working tools in terms of installing the solar power systems at business premises as well as provide free training on how to run their businesses professionally, save money they get in business and create a conducive business environment for them," v Swai says

He said right now the com-

pany has installed a video centres, water pumping system for irrigation, rural ICT centres and related services for printing, photocopy service, a hair cutting solar system for barber shops and sugar cane juicer, enabling the shops to be set up.

"As Sepon we are glad to see what we have achieved in areas where we operate as right now women with disabilities have managed to improve their economic status," Swai affirmed, noting that solar powered outlets are changing lives of thousands of people who live in off-grid areas.

The project being implemented in Dar es Salaam and Coast region targets reaching 1000 youths across the country by late next year, he stated.

The Solar Mtaji Programme has dramatically changed economic prospects of the village because people are able to set-up income generating activities and have better lives.

In other areas income has increased dramatically for phone charging services.

Before the new project, villagers relied on smoky kerosene lamps and candles as their source of power and charcoal making as source of income.

Also people were forced to walk long distance to other areas for phone charging services, up to four kilometers away for phone charging, he says.

Apart from that houses were at times being destroyed by fire and every week two people would be found dead in a house fire at Kibindu village.

"People died because a lot of people just thatched their huts and use smoky kerosene lamps," he says.

Furthermore villagers relied on the charcoal trade

to raise their incomes, the price ranging from 5000/- to 7000/- per sack. That is a small amount and charcoal making was conducted throughout the year that in turn speeds up deforestation in those areas.

But with the installation of solar phone charging system/video centre at Kibindu village this brings new changes for the village and right now life has changed dramatically as compared to the situation in the past, he says.

Right now people use solar to set-up income generating activities, watch football games, put up phone charging outlets, light their households, while deforestation has declined dramatically as youths have secured occupational outlets.

People are able to build brick houses and install iron sheet roofing, purchase motorcycles, pay school fees for their children, buy 10 acres of land for agricultural activities while some small business people set up a music recording studio and CD burning.

For his part, Shaban Mrisho from Kibindu village says that the Solar Mtaji Programme has completely changed his family's life.

Through phone charging outlets including torch, right now he is able to obtain up to 540,000/- in one month.

"I am very thankful to Sepon Limited who brought the Solar Mtaji project to our village. I have managed to set up music recording studio, CD burning and sell cold drinks," he says.

The project's outcomes have provided room for villagers to improve their livelihoods, create economic opportunities and keep their perishable food supplies fresh, he added.



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Minister Bashungwa orders Tirdo to increase production of ethanol used to make sanitisers

By Francis Kajubi

As the country races to contain the spread of coronavirus, Minister of Trade and Industries Innocent Bashungwa has directed Tanzania Industrial Research and Development Organization to increase production of ethanol, a raw material used by local manufacturers to sanitizers and disinfectants.

Speaking to TIRDO and Tanzania Bureau of Standards senior management officials last weekend, Bashungwa said local manufacturers of sanitizers and disinfectants need more ethanol to increase production of the chemicals needed to contain the spreading of COVID-19.

"I have been informed that TIRDO is producing a maximum of 360 liters of ethanol (alcohol) a week, a key component for the production of sanitizer and disinfectants which is not enough. You need to increase your production capacity and inform manufacturers so that they buy the materials from you first," Bashungwa ordered.

According to him the country has only three industries manufacturing the COVID-19 preventive gear and chemicals but that their production is still low because of inadequate raw materials and regular power outages.

The three factories are Keko Pharmaceutical Limited, Mansoor



Trade and Industry minister Innocent Bashungwa.

Daya Chemicals Limited and Tarmal Industries Limited which have capacity of between 1,500 and 5,000 liters a day. He ordered TIRDO management to come up with a budget needed to

increase production by mid this week. "I urge you to meet all manufacturers of protective materials immediately, learn their strength and weaknesses and prescribe solutions especially

on boosting production to meet local demand," he added while also ordering TIRDO and TBS to address challenges facing small and medium size enterprises which produce jelly

soaps so as to also supply them with disinfectants needed for their products.

Bashungwa warned that he will revoke licenses of manufacturers and suppliers of COVID-19 protective gear and chemicals if they hike prices because of the growing demand by the public. "I will sit down with sugar manufacturers and negotiate with them on the need to use molasses from their factories to make alcohol needed for sanitizer production," he noted.

TIRDO's acting Director for Industrial Research, Humphrey Ndossi said TIRDO's capacity of producing ethanol for sanitizer manufacturing from cassava and molasses fermentation is low hence the need to invest in expansion of its distillation processes.

TBS Director General, Dr Ngenya Yusuf said approved ethanol has been registered as batch No TZS 1650:2014 which the bureau's officials are keenly following in the market. "We have organized teams across the country especially on ports of entry and border posts to make sure that protective materials that don't meet standards are not smuggled into the country," Dr Yusuf said.

Coal is now the world's most expensive fossil fuel

SYDNEY

Coal, the dirtiest and usually the cheapest option for energy, is now the world's most expensive fossil fuel.

Oil's epic collapse over the past month means the global crude benchmark is now priced below the most widely traded coal contract on an energy-equivalent basis, according to Bloomberg calculations. Australia's Newcastle coal on ICE Futures Europe settled at \$66.85 a metric ton on Friday, the equivalent of \$27.36 a barrel of oil. Brent futures ended at \$26.98 a barrel.

While coal use in the US and Europe has fallen because of cheap natural gas and renewables, as well as flat energy demand growth, consumption continues to rise in Asia, where it's traditionally been the cheapest option for energy-hungry emerging markets. It's also the dirtiest fossil fuel, emitting about twice as much carbon dioxide as natural gas and 30% more than gasoline when burned.

The new top price ranking, which is more a function of the sudden drop in crude prices than a surge in coal demand, must be sustained to incentivise switching plants and investments away from coal. In the short term, coal use in Japan could fall marginally this summer in favour of cheaper LNG, according to Goldman Sachs Group.

The Newcastle contract represents coal for power generation use, which mostly has different supply and demand fundamentals than the oil market. Flight cancellations and travel restrictions may have slashed global petroleum use by as much as 20%, while Saudi Arabia and Russia are about to flood the market with extra supplies. That's sent Brent down about 60% since the start of the year. Power markets in Asia that are the biggest customers for seaborne coal have been more resilient.

Newcastle coal, which is priced at Australia's main loading port, has already been trading on an energy-equivalent basis above the Japan-Korea marker, the benchmark for liquefied natural gas in Asia, for most of this year.



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Stanbic Bank urges customers to use digital platforms to transact

By Smart Money Reporter

CUSTOMERS of Stanbic Bank Tanzania Limited have been encouraged to use digital platforms to transact to avoid contracting coronavirus which is currently ravaging the world.

The bank's Head of Personal and Business Banking, Brian Ndadzungira said in Dar es Salaam this week that as Africans continue to face the threat of the deadly Covid-19 virus, it is important to take precautions by staying away from visiting banking halls.

"The safety of our employees and customers is some-

thing that we care deeply about and we strongly encourage them to use Stanbic Bank's suite of digital banking tools for their financial needs, whether this be from a personal or business perspective," said Ndadzungira.

He explained that customers can manage account limits, make payments to local or international beneficiaries, stay connected by accessing prepaid airtime, data and electricity, download and send statements or use mobile money almost anywhere and at any time.

"Digital solutions for business owners also make it possible to bank remotely

and our relationship managers are available via phone and email to assist wherever possible," he noted while stressing that the bank's digital products offer ease and convenience hence replaces the need to visit a physical branch.

"Digital platforms provide an efficient, fast, safe and nearly instantaneous solution to many, if not all of your daily banking requirements, away from public spaces," Ndadzungira added as he stressed that Stanbic Bank's representatives are available at call centres to assist customers should they require advice or have specific



Stanbic Bank officials celebrating customer care week with customers recently.

questions related to their financial needs.

"This will likely see a higher volume of calls at call centres, and we are preparing internal systems for this eventuality," he assured the

public saying the bank has rigorous business continuity processes and practices which are rehearsed and planned on a regular basis.

Stanbic Bank has also issued a wide ranging travel ban in order

to reduce risk to its staff members and customers noting that all cross-border travel but subsidiaries of South African based Standard Bank Group have been suspended indefinitely.

General Motors to help Seattle firm boost ventilator production

SEATTLE

General Motors is forming a collaborative venture with Ventec Life Systems to help the company increase production of ventilators that are used to treat patients with Covid-19, GM said in a statement.

General Motors will provide Ventec with logistics, purchasing and manufacturing expertise as the Seattle-based company moves to increase production. The ventilators will be built in Ventec plants, not GM's, said a spokesman for the car maker.

"With GM's help, Ventec will increase production,"

said Ventec chief executive Chris Kiple. "By tapping their expertise, GM is enabling us to get more ventilators to more hospitals much faster. This partnership will help save lives." GM could eventually use its facilities to build equipment with Ventec's processes and systems, but this would take time to accomplish and is not currently planned.

GM chief executive Mary Barra told White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow on March 19 that the car maker would help in any way possible, including assisting with the production of ventilators. Ford Motors and Tesla have made similar

statements. This is the fastest way GM could help, the spokesman said.

"We are working closely with Ventec to rapidly scale up production of their critically important respiratory products to support our country's fight against the Covid-19 pandemic," Barra said in a prepared statement. "We will continue to explore ways to help in this time of crisis."

The move reflects the history of the big US car makers, when GM, Ford and other automakers converted car plants during World War II to build tanks, bombers and other wartime goods. This time, though, it would

be more difficult to adapt car plants to produce medical equipment.

Companies like Ventec must meet stringent rules from the federal government and have facilities that are much cleaner than most factories, especially car plants, said Sandy Munro, president of consulting firm Munro & Associates. Medical equipment also requires different processes and skills than car assembly.

"You have to have medical clean rooms and you have specific training," Munro said in a phone interview. "None of these guys have that. It would take a long time to be able to do this kind of work."



An employee works on the final assembly of VOCSN Multi-Function Ventilators at manufacturer Ventec Life Systems' base near Seattle.

Edenville Energy raises over 1.8bn/- to finance coal project in Rukwa



Crushed coal at Edenville's Rukwa Coal Project ready for shipment to the market.

By Smart Money Reporter

SOME 1.75 billion ordinary shares were sold by London Stock Exchange listed Edenville Energy Plc and raised £700,000 (over 1.86bn/-) to finance Rukwa Coal to Power Project which targets to generate electricity. In a joint statement, the company's Chairman, Jeff Malaihollo and CEO, Alistair Muir said the amount was before expenses were deducted. The new ordinary shares

of 0.02p each were sold at a placing price of 0.04p per ordinary share with existing shareholders through Brandon Hill Capital Limited.

"As envisaged, following the passing of the resolutions, subscribers to the placing will now be issued with one warrant for every two placing shares subscribed for under the placing," the two company officials stated.

Meanwhile, Edenville Energy Plc said its Rukwa coal project's wash plant

recommended continuous operations early this month. "As announced on 27 February 2020, a stockpile of approximately 6,000 tonnes of unwashed run of mine coal, which was mined from the southern pit at Rukwa, has been established adjacent to the wash plant," the statement added.

The statement further said the wash plant is currently processing ore from the stockpile ahead of the first customer pick-up which is scheduled for

last week. "As previously announced, the Company expects to commence mining from the northern area at Rukwa during March 2020 as the stockpiles diminish and the ramp up in production continues," the London based company stated.

As previously noted, the region has so far experienced one of its wettest rainy seasons in many years. Should this continue throughout March there is the potential for further disruption to mining oper-

ations ahead of the expected end of the rainy season in late April.

Apart from the Rukwa project, the company also has exploration licences form a contiguous block covering 494.99 square kilometres and lie adjacent to the Kiwira-Songwe coalfield. It paid a private vendors US\$161,700 in cash to acquire it. The licences are held by Edenville's 99.5 percent owned Tanzanian subsidiary, Edenville International (Tanzania) Limited.



A Rwandan online shopper checks products on a tablet.

Shoppers turn to online platforms amid lockdown

KIGALI

On Saturday, March 21, Rwanda declared a countywide lockdown, only allowing essential services such as hygiene, medicinal and food selling services to remain operational.

The lockdown is part of the efforts to combat the coronavirus, which has wrecked the world with Rwanda reporting 19 confirmed cases, as of Sunday, March 22. The Government also banned unnecessary movements, prompting many Rwandans to opt for online services including shopping for food items.

Murukali.com is an e-commerce that has been delivering grocery, office equipment and day to day necessary products. The platform has recorded a significant demand in food products and toiletries. "People are ordering for rice, vegetables, fruits and toiletries in large numbers," said Yvette Uwimpaye, Murukali.com's Chief Executive Officer.

She said they have enough products to satisfy the market and source for the ones they don't have in their stores from other reliable vendors. Upon accessing their website, one can easily spot products and their prices,

which can be ordered and delivered at a fee of Rwf1,500 in Kigali.

That is slightly different from other online shopping platforms such as DMM.HeHe - which works with local businesses to deliver groceries to clients. "Fees range from Rwf800 to Rwf2,500 depending on the urgency (requested by the customer) or location, for now, we only deliver in Kigali" said Clarisse Iribagiza, DMM.HeHe's chief executive. She added that delivery time ranges from 30 minutes for medicine and 1-2 hours for groceries which is flexible as the customer can pick a time slot once checking

out. For payment, HeHe strictly accepts cashless payment methods such as Mobile Money and card payments, something they've done since June 2019. However, Murukali accepts cash upon delivery on top of cashless payments although they encourage "customers to use cashless payment methods to curb the spread of coronavirus."

Both companies pointed out they are receiving many orders from Kacyiru, Kiyovu and Kibagabaga among others. Uwimpaye revealed that some customers have raised complaints of hiked prices. "We have tried not to hike

prices for products we have and for those we fetch from elsewhere, we tried to communicate for our customers to understand that the situation is common throughout the market."

Ilibagiza specified that they have not increased shipping fees encouraged their partner businesses not to hike prices. Both companies say that they equip their drivers with hand sanitizers and protective gears such as gloves to protect them and their clients. Other companies with delivery services include Vuba Vuba, Twoherere and Rushfoods among others.



SA Trade and Industry minister Ebrahim Patel.

Business bodies pledge support for Ramaphosa as Covid-19 cases surge

JOHANNESBURG

South African business bodies and lobby groups on Sunday pledged to work closely with President Cyril Ramaphosa and his government in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, as global cases surged past 300,000.

Representatives from business groupings Business Unity South Africa, the Banking Association South Africa and the Black Business Council met with the president and government ministers on Sunday morning to "consolidate a single approach to the economy."

This comes as countries around the world scramble to pass economic rescue packages as the impact of the virus severely constrains economic activity, causing stock markets to plunge and layoffs to surge, as analysts warn of a global recession.

South Africa's struggling economy slumped into its second recession in two years in the last quarter of 2019 amid power cuts, low business confidence and record high unemployment.

Minister of Trade and Industry, Ebrahim Patel, said the meeting focused on the impact of the global economic slowdown on SA, stocks of health products, competition exemptions, price regulations and support for small and vulnerable enterprises.

"What came out of the meeting was excellent ideas. Lots of proposals and thoughts were given [These] will now be fed into the command council the president will chair this [Sunday] afternoon." Patel said the meeting showed "enormous convergence of thinking" and a commitment to working together. The minister said the president would

be communicating the details and outcomes of the meeting he chaired with business bodies later on Sunday. This address has since been postponed to Monday. Martin Kingston of Business Unity South Africa said the meeting was "very constructive," and the business body had offered its support to work collaboratively with the president and his executive.

Kingston and other business leaders did not provide specifics of what was discussed on Sunday, leaving it to the president to make any announcements. "We have mobilised very significant resources to look at the impact on health-care, the labour market and obviously economic interventions in the immediate short term, in the medium term and over time."

Kingston said the "ravages" of the virus would be felt "for a long time to come" and preparation was needed for key interventions in the future. "We have committed ourselves to working on an aligned basis on all key aspects of the economy," he said.

Richard Wainwright of the Banking Association South Africa said South Africans could be confident of the resilience of the country's banking system. Sandile Zungu of the Black Business Council said business had committed to working with government and other social partners to "flatten the curve."

Flattening the curve refers to measures intended to prevent a surge of coronavirus cases by instead attempting to stagger infections out over a longer period, by introducing social distancing measures. "Let's honour the social distancing protocols," said Zungu.

UAE passenger flights grounded, malls to close and stay-home order issued

ABU DHABI

The UAE government urged all residents to stay in their homes unless "absolutely necessary" on Monday.

The decision was also taken to close all malls and markets in the next 48 hours. Stores selling essential goods including supermarkets and pharmacies will remain open. All inbound, outbound and transit flights will be suspended in the next 48 hours.

The stay-home request falls short of a complete lockdown and allows families to use vehicles, shop for essential items and visit family members - if urgent. Emergency authority NCEMA urged the public not to visit hospitals except for critical or emergency cases. If you must enter a medical facility, you should wear a face mask to prevent the spread of the virus. More details about the use of public transport and taxis are expected later.

Restaurants will not be allowed to receive customers. Instead, their services will be limited to home deliveries only. "The public are also urged to use their own family cars, with a maximum of three individuals per vehicle," the Ministry of Interior and NCEMA said in a statement on state news agency Wam. The government said the public should stay at home "unless it is absolutely necessary" to buy items such as food and medicine, or perform essential jobs.

Despite the grounding of passenger services, cargo and emergency evacuation flights will continue to run, the Civil Aviation Authority said. "Additional examination and isolation arrangements will be taken later should flights resume, in order to ensure the safety of passengers, air crews and airport personnel and their protection from infection risks," it said.



Representatives of each of the eight participating villages gather to receive and allocate funds from the first carbon revenue payment.

Mpanda villagers get 65m/- from Ntakata Mountains carbon offset payments

By David Beroff

At the end of December I boarded the recently inaugurated Air Tanzania flight to Mpanda to conduct one of the scheduled bi-annual Finance and Grievance meetings with the Ntakata Mountains project steering committee, composed of representatives from each of the eight participating villages. As is customary whenever we visit one of our project areas, I first met with district leaders and officials, and then headed out to Katuma village to meet with the committee.

The steering committee is comprised of the chairperson, who is elected, and the executive officer, who is a government appointee, one from each of the 8 project villages. The 16 person body serves as the primary governance body for the project, and is Carbon Tanzania's direct point of contact for all project related issues.

As I arrived, all the leaders were eagerly waiting since this was to be a special meeting. After nearly 3 years this was to be the first announcement of carbon revenues that were available to be transferred to the villages. As we went through the procedural aspects of the meeting and ensured that there were no community grievances, you could see everyone was anxious to get to the part about revenue!

As I scribbled 65m/- (US\$28,000), the

available revenue, on the chalk board you could see that the committee quickly realized that no matter how they chose to divide it every single village would immediately at least double their normal yearly operational and development budgets. After the leaders did a double take at the number, I explained that apart from the 10% that they were meant to send to the district, it was their responsibility communally to divide the revenue as they saw fit and fair.

Only a solution that all parties accepted freely, and by mutual consensus, would be accepted. It was an interesting scene to observe all these people who had long been in positions of leadership but had never been faced with the challenge of distributing resources, as they had never previously had any at their disposal. It was clearly quite a challenge as each village is a different size and has unique conservation challenges that require funds. Only a solution that all parties accepted freely, and by mutual consensus, would be accepted, and eventually the group independently decided to split half the funds evenly between all villages and half based on the size of each village, a reasonable solution indeed!

All villages have for a long time formulated development plans and identified and budgeted for critical

needs, but have rarely had access to corresponding funds. As such the room lit up when I collected bank information and they realized they truly would be getting revenue from the carbon in their forest.

Each village's leadership also agreed to take on the responsibility of paying the Village Game Scouts, who had previously been directly supported by Carbon Tanzania. Such a commitment is a clear signal of the communities owning the process and delivery of the project itself. Representatives from each of the eight participating villages gather to receive and allocate the funds from the first carbon revenue payment.

This meeting represents a new phase in the project, whereas communities have begun to receive tangible financial benefits from the work they have tirelessly been doing to protect the vital ecosystem services provided by their locally owned forests. The committee claimed that in their minds the carbon project had now officially "begun," and as they were immediately going to start using the funds for community betterment, they would never have an issue explaining "all these carbon things" to their constituents again. Carbon Tanzania and the communities both left the meeting excited about the future of the Ntakata project, both for the landscape and for the people.

SA's panic-buying highlights inequalities

JOHANNESBURG

Pictures of empty shelves and long queues have pervaded all forms of media in South Africa over the past few days. These scenes are not unlike those in other parts of the world as many consumers succumb to panic buying, in fear of running out of toilet paper - among other essential items.

Many authors have covered the reasons for panic buying and all behaviourists would agree that this is not a new or unexpected phenomenon. But the way it plays out in a country as economically unequal as South Africa accentuates the gap between the haves and have-nots.

Who wins and who loses from panic buying?

Of course, there is a first-mover advantage in getting to the front of the line. This behaviour is what often triggers a rush on the stores in the first place. But in a country that is not actually experiencing a famine or toilet paper shortage, the losers are those who cannot afford to stock up should the need arise.

While inequality exists everywhere, wealthier economies have a population base that is generally more capable of stocking up their homes when needed. This is also true of South African households in the upper middle class and at the top end. The majority of consumers in South Africa are, however, unable to fill up a trolley in the best of times, let alone to finance a serious stockpile.

South Africa by numbers While there are different ways to segment a population of 58 million people, the UCT Liberty Institute of Strategic Marketing has used the National Income Dynamics Survey to paint a picture of the South African consumer landscape. The scope of this article does not allow a full explanation of how this segmentation was derived, but a few phenomena are notable from the graphic.

UCT Liberty Institute of Strategic Marketing

South Africa has roughly 58

million people living in 17 million households. About 1000 households are added to this number every day. South Africa has a very high number of young people - almost half of its population is under 24.

If we divide the country by household income (that is, all the earners in the household combined) as shown in the graphic, then 7 million would fall into the category of middle class and above. That means 50 million people are living in households below the level needed to support a middle class lifestyle. These 50 million people are likely to be using public transport and public health care and living with very little financial margin.

As one goes into the ultra poor and survivor category, households regularly run out of food before the end of the month. A hallmark of living in this kind of household is a dependence on social grant income and a food shortage by the third week of the month. In addition, most poorer households live at least one taxi ride away from the closest supermarket and pay for extra seats on the taxi if purchasing more than a few bags of groceries. The one time of the year when stockpiling is more frequent is during the festive season (December) when carefully negotiated expenditure is made using savings from group schemes called stokvels.

When panic breaks out

Behavioural economists use many cognitive biases to explain why panic shopping occurs. Most commonly cited are phenomena like loss aversion, the bandwagon effect and probability neglect. These reactions to the initial run on essential groceries create a panic contagion that ignores logic. There is no food or toilet paper shortage and shopping is allowed to continue during this kind of state of emergency. Nonetheless, the week of 16-20 March 2020, saw a massive panic shopping spree marked by daily shortages in many categories.

Times of crisis accentuate the

gap between the privileged and the rest. When the stock market dips, the wealthy have reserves to buy more shares and multiply their wealth in the long run. When a health crisis hits, the wealthy have access to medicine and private health care and can often navigate around work restrictions.

The poor, however, are not as fortunate. Even in the UK, the vulnerable are the losers as panic buying surged in early March. Workers on short term contract and freelancers globally are experiencing financial setbacks as this kind of work dries up. Germany has pledged 40 billion euros in aid to freelancers.

South Africa has freelancers in multiple industries but also the informal economy (and millions of households) hinging on micro enterprises like street vendors, spaza shops and taverns. These enterprises (many based on commuter populations and school children as their markets) are not registered businesses and unlikely to get any financial relief from the government. This form of enterprise does not have a "work from home" option as proposed by employment experts. These features of the informal sector are the same globally.

The social media posts comparing wealthy consumers lining up outside wholesalers and the poor lining up to catch a taxi home are anecdotal, but also somewhat symbolic of the realities in South Africa. The pictures of panic buying don't reflect the average South African. They depict the average wealthy South African. Many in the middle class may say they too are under financial pressure. This is true. But they are still in the privileged minority.

What does this mean? The COVID-19 pandemic will eventually pass, as have other flu pandemics in centuries gone by. The fact that we were able to monitor this one globally in real time is a possible turning point for the way such events are handled in the future.

VIEW FROM THE TOP



South Africans in a panic shopping spree.

African producers feel pain of lower oil prices

LAGOS

African oil producers are early collateral damage in the dispute between major oil producers, as they now scramble to re-adjust budgets tied to the price of crude.

A collapse in talks between Opec members and non-Opec members led by Russia earlier this month saw crude oil futures fall to their lowest levels since 2014, with Brent falling below \$30 per barrel. About 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa produce oil, which accounts for most of their annual export income. These include Nigeria, Angola, South Sudan and Gabon among others. Current national budgets are built around a dollar price in the \$50-\$60 range for most of them.

Many oil producers were already hurting as the volume of crude sales fell in February, as major customer China drastically curtailed purchases as it struggled with the coronavirus that cut deep into energy consumption. In early March, Bloomberg reported that about 70 per cent of April-loading cargoes from two of Africa's largest producers Angola and Nigeria, had yet to find buyers.

Now, these orphan cargoes are going to have to compete with a flood of oil onto the market as major producers battle it out of market share. "When the elephants fight, it's the smaller producers that suffer," says Kola Karim, chairman of Shoreline Group, an energy investment firm in Lagos. "Because our income is based solely on the foreign exchange income from oil."

Nigeria remained heavily dependent on oil for foreign income, even though it had opportunities to also diversify. It hasn't even developed the technology to use gas produced from the same oil fields, flaring it off into the atmosphere instead.

"We need to look to our gas sector," Mr Karim says. "Gas would be a natural hedge against oil price fluctuations. If we were exporting gas, we'd be in a dollar-earning position right now." Crude oil sales make up around 90 per cent of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings. In turn, the national budget is built around the barrel price of crude.

The latest budget published last December assumed production of 2.18 million barrels a day at a price of \$57 per barrel. At 10.6 trillion naira, this was the largest budget in the country's his-



Nigerian finance minister Zainab Ahmed.

tory. This will now have to be revised sharply downward. "There will be reduced revenue on the budget and it will mean cutting the size of the budget," the finance minister Zainab Ahmed said in Abuja, according to Reuters. This will also likely drive up government borrowing.

"It means Nigeria will face higher deficits," says Usoro Essien, head of research at Veriva Capital in Lagos, Ni-

geria. The administration of Muhammadu Buhari, president of Nigeria, had pledged to invest in the country's decrepit infrastructure to kickstart the economy, but now the budget blowout will probably mean greater borrowing to meet such commitments.

For Mr Buhari, the oil meltdown comes at a particularly inconvenient time. His administration has a lot riding on a \$22.7 billion external loan package that narrowly passed through parliament in early March. The money is to be spent on crucial infrastructure projects such as electricity, road and rail infrastructure.

"The central bank is going to have to look at how it manages borrowing, because borrowing is a big part of the success of this project," Mr Essien says. Other countries are also feeling the pain. Opec's smallest member, Equatorial Guinea, produces around 420,000 barrels a day which accounts for more than 90 per cent of the state's budget. Last year it opened an investment drive, with 27 offshore exploration blocks put out to auction, with the intention of ramping up production.

These plans appear dead in the water for now. An investor conference in the

capital, Malabo, scheduled for June that was intended to get the process underway, has been postponed. Angola, Africa's second-largest oil producer, is also in bad shape. The country owes \$60bn in external debt, mostly to China. It was the pioneer of the 'Angola model' that leveraged crude in return for soft loans from China. "You know they've got to be getting nervous in Beijing about where things are going given that so much of their loan portfolio in Congo, Angola, South Sudan and others is oil-backed," says Eric Olander, managing editor of the China Africa Project in Beijing.

According to the Washington-based non-government organisation Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI), China had issued at least \$152bn in resource-backed loans over the last two decades, much of these in Africa.

"These deals, sometimes labelled as oil advances, often resemble pay-day loans," says David Mihalji, a senior economic analyst at NRGI. "They have short maturities, high interest rates and fees, and no commitments on how the money will be used. Countries should stay away from oil advances containing such harmful terms."

Even South Africa, which is not a

crude producer, has not escaped the oil-shock carnage. Sasol, the industrial group that converts coal and gas to liquid fuel, and one of the country's flagship corporations, saw its stock suffer its worst week in the group's 35-year-history earlier this month as Opec+ failed to agree on either a deepening, or even an extension, of production cuts.

Once a blue-chip company on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange whose shares traded at 470 rand a year ago, it now has now plunged to mid-cap status with shares at just 44 rand each. On its worst day March 12, shares fell below 30 rand.

"The disruption in the global oil market, coupled with the ongoing impact of Covid-19 has significantly changed the outlook in just a few weeks," executive vice-president of Sasol's chemicals business, Fleetwood Grobler said on behalf of the group in a statement.

Sasol is also struggling to meet payments for a \$10bn loan for a vast chemical plant under construction in Louisiana, USA. Most analysts believe Sasol needs an oil price of at least \$50 a barrel to break even. With prices languishing in the \$30 range, the company remains deep underwater.

WORLD

UN to create global coronavirus fund, Norway says

UNITED NATIONS

THE United Nations will create a fund to prevent the spread of coronavirus and support the treatment of patients worldwide, Norway said yesterday.

The purpose of the fund is to assist developing countries with weak health systems in addressing the crisis as well as to tackle the long-term consequences. The United Nations could make a formal announcement this week, the ministry said.

Norway, which suggested the fund, has not committed how much money it would put into the initiative, similar to a 2014 United Nations Ebola Response Fund.

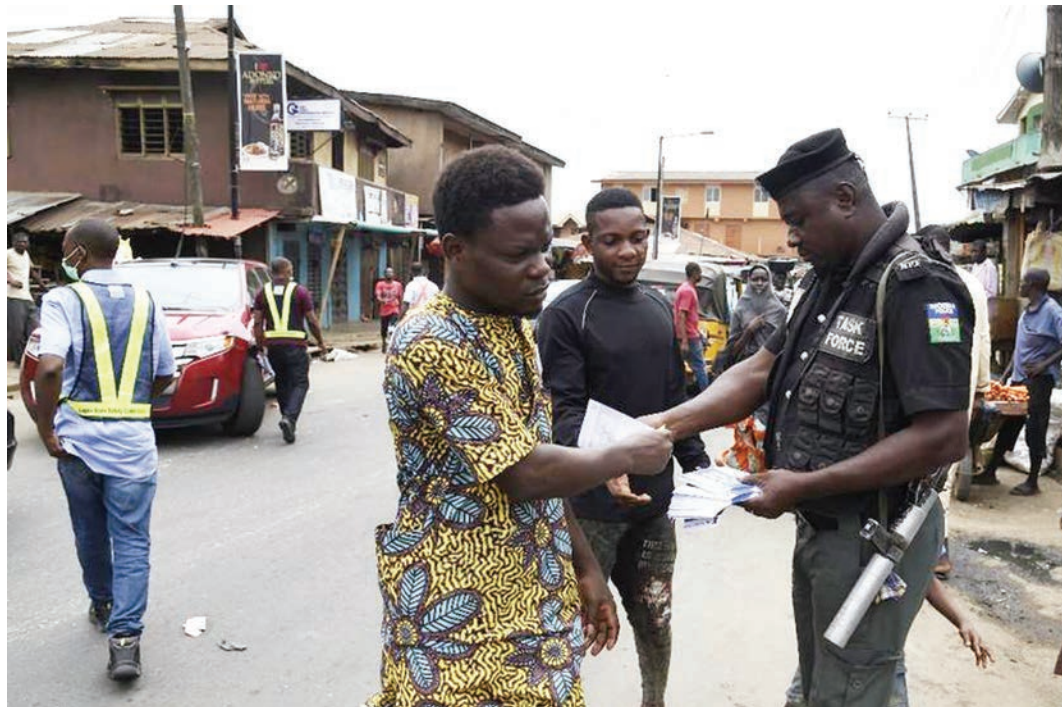
"We want to make sure that the efforts are as unified as possible and as early as possible so that we can answer up to the demands that countries will have, espe-

cially the poorest countries," Foreign Minister Ine Eriksen Soeride told Reuters.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday called on wealthy countries to not just think about their citizens but help less-prepared nations tackle the crisis.

Britain sent in the army to deliver protective equipment to hospitals yesterday and told people to stay at home and heed warnings over social distancing or the government would bring in more extreme measures to stop the coronavirus spread.

The distribution and delivery of millions of items of personal protective equipment including masks will now be carried out by the army who will drive trucks throughout the day and night, Health Minister Matt Hancock said in a



A police officer distributes flyers to inform the public about measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, in Lagos, Nigeria, on Sunday. (AFP)

statement.

Hancock also said that Britain now has access to 12,000 ventilators, compared to the 5,000 that they had at the start.

Meanwhile, the government opened the first part of a 330 billion pounds (US\$384 billion) loan guarantee scheme for businesses on Monday.

Also on Monday, a much-reduced rail service was introduced and jury trials were suspended, coming days after Prime Minister Boris Johnson advised Britons to work from home if possible and ordered the closure of pubs, gyms and leisure centres.

The government warned that Britain would face a shutdown with curfews and travel restrictions if people continued to flout the advice on social distancing.

The government was also pondering whether to close all non-essential retail shops, the BBC's political editor reported.

So far 281 Britons have died from coronavirus, while the tally has risen to 5,683 on Sunday, according to latest statistics.

Communities Minister Robert Jenrick said the government will write to 1.5 million of its most vulnerable citizens to demand they stay at home for the next 12 weeks to shield themselves from the virus.

In another sign of the times, clothing retailer Primark and department store John Lewis said on Monday they would temporarily close all of their shops, while McDonald's Corp will temporarily shut all of its more than 1,300 restaurants in Britain and Ireland. **Agencies**

Indian PM Modi urges people to take lockdown seriously

NEW DELHI



AS Indian authorities began to enforce curbs and restrictions across many states to contain the spread of COVID-19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said many people were not taking the lockdown seriously.

Modi (pictured) urged state governments to ensure that directives were followed. "Many people are still not taking the lockdown seriously. Please save yourself, save your family, follow the instructions seriously."

I request the state governments to get the rules and laws followed," Modi wrote on twitter. So far seven people were killed because of COVID-19 in India and the number of cases in the country have risen to 421.

The federal government has also ordered states to "strictly enforce lockdown" and directed them to initiate legal action against violators. Indian authorities have imposed lockdown across 80 districts of the country.

Shops, offices, commercial establishments have been shut down in the lockdown areas. Even authorities have put in place the prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (a government order which prohibits assembly of more than four persons in public places) in these areas.

Railways, metros and inter-state buses have been stopped in these districts, besides public transport is off the roads. "The lockdown in Delhi begins today. My dear Delhiites, you faced troubles and contributed in fight against pollution whenever odd-even was implemented."

You embraced the massive campaign against dengue. I am pretty confident that you will join this fight against COVID-19 and support the lockdown to protect your families," Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal wrote on twitter.

The lockdown was announced a day after millions of Indians stayed indoors on the call of Modi in a bid to self-quarantine for 14 hours. Health experts in India say self-isolation was vital to end the chain of transmission of COVID-19 in India. **Xinhua**

China's support hailed in Africa's fight against COVID-19

ADDIS ABABA

HIGH-LEVEL officials from the Ethiopian government and other African countries and organizations on Sunday commended China's support to Africa's ongoing fight against the COVID-19 global pandemic.

China, which is also presently fighting against COVID-19 at home, is winning acclaim from across the African continent for its solidarity and support to African countries and regional organizations in the continent's fight against COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of China's support to Africa's efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19, Chinese experts and officials from health and customs departments had shared information and experience about COVID-19 in a video conference with officials and healthcare specialists from Africa CDC and 24 African countries, showing commitment to sharing experience and supporting Africa in the fight against the pandemic.

Speaking to Xinhua on Sunday, Ethiopia's Minister of Health, Lia Tadesse, stressed that the China's support to the East African country and other fellow African countries in the fight against COVID-19 ranges from material support to experience and knowledge sharing endeavors. China has delivered testing reagents to African countries via Africa CDC and emergency supplies to countries affected, with Chinese medical teams also



helping fight the epidemic on the continent.

In addition to the Chinese government's solidarity with Africa on the face of COVID-19, Chinese companies and civil organizations are also providing urgently needed supplies to African countries.

On Sunday, the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed commended the Chinese Huajian International shoe factory for its support to the East African country's efforts in containing the spread of the COVID-19 through material donation to the Ethiopia and other African countries. "Grateful to Huajian International for donating anti-epidemic supplies in support of

Ethiopia's COVID-19 prevention efforts. Ethiopia looks to similar benevolent acts by partners as we work diligently in preventing the spread," Ahmed said.

Also on Sunday, high-level officials from the Ethiopian government, Africa CDC, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the Ethiopian Airlines Group has witnessed the arrival of the first shipment of medical relief donated by the Jack Ma Foundation and the Alibaba Foundation to support Africa on the face of COVID-19.

They include 5.4 million face masks, kits for 1.08 million detection tests, 40,000 sets of protective clothing and 60,000 sets of protective face shields,

according to the Jack Ma Foundation.

The supplies will first be distributed to countries throughout Africa which are particularly vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier last week, the foundations had announced their commitment to donating 100,000 medical masks, 20,000 test kits and 1,000 protective suits and face shields to each of the 54 nations on the African continent.

Tewolde Gebremariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines Group, told Xinhua on Sunday that the donation is an exemplary move, serving as a lesson to the rest of the world, showing collaboration and joint efforts in the bat-

tle against the epidemic.

The message is very important. It is a very good example for all over the world that feel panic and blame is not the answer. The answer is organizations, countries, institutions, and governments bringing their resources together to team up to provide this kinds of medical supplies medical equipment for the protection of the people. So, this is a very good example," Gebremariam said.

Speaking to Xinhua, Deputy Director of Africa CDC, Ahmed Ogwell Ouma, stressed that the Chinese government has placed its experience on the table for African countries to be able to see and use in their fight against the COVID-19 epidemic.

"Right now that China has already done a very big effort in controlling this outbreak," Ouma told Xinhua. "We are very impressed by the reduction in the numbers."

"The Africa CDC Deputy Director also stressed that "the experience that China has undergone is very important for us, because ours is just starting, while in China it is ending."

That experience is very important," Ouma further stressed that the Africa CDC, a specialized healthcare agency of the African Union (AU), "is working very closely with China CDC to ensure that Africa CDC is better prepared to support countries, and also to ensure that African countries are also learning from the experience of China." **Xinhua**

Taliban-Afghan govt Skype call breathes life into peace process

KABUL

The Taliban and the Afghan government held a "virtual" meeting on prisoner releases on Sunday, officials said, offering some hope of a breakthrough on a matter that has deadlocked the two sides and threatened a nascent peace process.

The two sides have differed on the release of prisoners - the Afghan government wanting a phased and conditional release and the Taliban wanting all prisoners released in one go as envisaged in an agreement signed with the United States in Doha last month.

The impasse threatened to derail a carefully negotiated peace process outlined in the agreement, including a pullout of foreign forces from Afghanistan after over 18 years of fighting.

The two sides spoke for over two hours in a Skype meeting facilitated by the United States and Qatar, officials said.

"Prisoner releases by both sides is an important step in the peace process, as stated in the US-Taliban agreement," US special representative Zalmay Khalilzad tweeted.

"Everyone clearly understands the coronavirus threat makes prisoner releases that much more urgent," he said, adding that "all sides conveyed their strong commitment to a reduction of violence, intra-Afghan negotiations, and a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire".

The Taliban had previously refused to speak to the Afghan government until all prisoners were released.

"Both sides exchanged options on initial technical steps for the release of prisoners," an Afghanistan National Security Council statement said, adding that a reduction in violence, direct talks as well as a permanent ceasefire were also discussed.

The Afghan government and Taliban have clashed frequently in the last few days, including the storming of an Afghan military base on Friday that authorities blamed on the group.

The Taliban's Doha office spokesman, Suhail Shaheen, also confirmed the meeting on Twitter but stressed that the discussion was only about the release of prisoners. **Agencies**

China's central SOEs to offer 3.2 billion yuan for poverty alleviation

CHINA'S centrally administered state-owned enterprises (SOEs) vowed to overcome the negative impacts of the novel coronavirus epidemic on industrial production, and promised to offer 3.2 billion yuan (about \$457.14 million) of funds to 246 designated poor counties this year, 692 million yuan more than last year.

The State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC) and central SOEs shoulder the heaviest tasks in China's battle against poverty among all central units assigned with poverty alleviation missions - they are responsible for offering pair assistance to 246

designated poor counties, or nearly 42 percent of all the 592 key counties for national development-oriented poverty alleviation work if counting in Pingxiang and Weixian counties in Hebei province - two designated counties receiving pair assistance from SASAC units.

China's central SOEs, while facing heavy tasks of their own reforms and development, have invested and introduced 20.6 billion yuan in various forms of assistance since 2015, which has helped accelerate the development of poverty-stricken areas and increase the incomes of the local people.

So far, 219, or around 90 percent of the 246 counties designated for poverty alleviation by central SOEs have either been lifted out of poverty or are undergoing checks, and over 90 percent of the central SOEs were rated as "great" or "good" in the assessing of poverty alleviation work last year.

Characteristic and effective approaches have been explored by the central SOEs in the poverty alleviation practice.

Infrastructure facilities are being enhanced. China Mobile, one of the major telecommunication enterprises in China has invested over 120 million yuan in network building since it started of-

fering pair assistance, improving its telecommunication facilities and widening broadband connection.

By the end of 2019, all of the administrative villages and registered impoverished villages in Baisha county, south China's Hainan province had been covered with 4G network, and 6,402 impoverished people there have been benefited by favorable packages offered by the company.

The central SOEs have been focusing on areas of extreme poverty, such as Tibet, Xinjiang's Hotan, Aksu, Kashi, and the Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture of Kizilsu, and the areas of Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu, and Qinghai provinces

with large Tibetan populations, as well as Liangshan in Sichuan, Nujiang in Yunnan, and Linxia in Gansu, diversifying approaches that lead to long-term development.

China Communications Construction invested 14 million yuan to construct resettlement areas in Nujiang, southwest China's Yunnan province, where many people lived in remote and isolated mountainous areas, benefiting over 3,000 residents from 741 households.

The construction group has also invested 105 million yuan and 145 million yuan respectively to build two bridges in Nujiang, which will facilitate the transportation of the 30,000 resettled

people upon completion.

In addition, China's central SOEs are also diversifying poverty alleviation models through development programs and consumption.

In a rural tourism project launched by China Tourism Group in poverty-stricken counties, the group has made black-pottery making, a local technique of Nixi township, Yunnan province a featured tourism program, which largely increased local villagers' income.

At present, households in the township can each make 80,000 to 90,000 yuan a year from making black pottery.

People's Daily

Biden to start considering running mates, consulted Obama

WASHINGTON

DEMOCRATIC presidential front-runner Joe Biden said on Sunday he needed to start vetting possible running mates "in a matter of weeks" and that he discussed the pick with former President Barack Obama.

Biden's vice presidential options will include at least six or seven women who will be subjected to background checks to ensure there will not "be any snafu," he told donors at a fundraising event held by telephone.

"I have to start that vetting process relatively soon, meaning in a matter of weeks," he said. "I think there will be a group that is in excess of six or seven people who I'll look at."

Biden said at a Democratic debate

last week that he would pick a woman for the job, a qualification he reiterated on Sunday.

Biden also emphasized that the woman would have to agree with his fundamental view on policies, including healthcare, education and the need for expansive US influence in the world. He said he shared that kind of common ground with Obama - whom he served as vice president - although they sometimes differed on tactics.

Above all, the person would need to be qualified to serve as president immediately.

"I've actually talked to Barack about this - the most important thing is that it has to be someone who, the day after they're picked, is prepared to be president of the United States of America if



Former Vice-President Joe Biden

something happened," said Biden, 77.

Biden holds a strong lead over Senator Bernie Sanders, his lone remaining rival for the party's nomination to face Republican President Donald Trump in November's elec-

tion. Sidelined from campaigning in public because of the coronavirus crisis that has put nearly one in three Americans under orders to stay at home, Biden said he would start broadcasting on Monday morning from his home in Delaware.

Those briefings will give Biden a way to offer an alternative to the daily news conferences on the coronavirus held by Trump, whose disaster response Biden has criticized.

Biden added that the election should move forward as scheduled amid concerns the coronavirus may not be fully contained by November. A number of states have already pushed back presidential nominating contests because of the outbreak.

"I know there's a lot of rumors and speculation as to, is the other guy going to try to postpone the election in November and all that. There's no need to do that," Biden said. "You know, we voted in the middle of the Civil War, we voted in the middle of World War One and Two.

"The idea of postponing the electoral process seems to me out of the question." **Agencies**

Uganda's president urges social distancing to prevent virus spread

KAMPALA

UGANDAN President Yoweri Museveni on Sunday called on citizens to maintain social distancing in order to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus after the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in the East African country.

Museveni made the appeal in a televised address in which he voiced the confidence that the nation will defeat the virus like HIV/AIDS, Ebola, rampant murders and polio. "We shall defeat this virus. I am here to lead the people's war against this virus," said Museveni.

"I fought AIDS with ABC (Abstinence, Being faithful, use Condoms) strategy. We did this by preaching just like we are doing right now. Same applies to Ebola.

Even COVID-19, it is easy to defeat if we are serious," he added. The president gave the address after the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in his country.

On Saturday, a 36-year-old Ugandan man who returned from Dubai aboard an Ethiopian Airlines flight tested positive.

Museveni urged the public to avoid handshaking, wash hands often and regularly disinfect surfaces such as office tables.

"Let us be tough so that we defeat this enemy and go back to our normal life. If we are lousy we shall really suffer," Museveni said.

Xinhua

European nations strive to combat COVID-19 with raft of further measures as Merkel put in quarantine

BRUSSELS

WITH surging confirmed COVID-19 cases, European nations adopted a raft of further measures on Sunday to peg back the contagion, as German Chancellor Angela Merkel has put herself in quarantine after a doctor she met Friday tested positive.

INCREASING CASELOAD

Italy, which has been hit hardest by the epidemic in Europe, saw no abating sign in the spread of the novel coronavirus on Sunday. The sum of infections, deaths and recoveries now

stands at 59,138, up from 53,578 of Saturday, according to the Health Ministry. The authorities also confirmed that 12 Civil Protection staff members have tested positive.

Meanwhile, France has seen its first coronavirus death of health staff. A doctor from Compiegne hospital in l'Oise, one of the worst affected regions in the country, died of infection on Saturday, said Director General of Health Jerome Salomon. France has confirmed 16,018 coronavirus infection cases, 35 percent of whom are aged under 65.

In Spain, the number of con-

firmed cases rose to 28,572 on Sunday, and 1,720 people have lost their lives to the disease. The Czech Republic, North Macedonia and Romania recorded their first deaths from the COVID-19 on the same day.

Also on Sunday, German Chancellor Angela Merkel decided to immediately quarantine herself at home and take tests over the next few days after she was informed that the doctor who gave her a pneumococcal vaccination was diagnosed with COVID-19.

"The Chancellor will also conduct her official affairs from home quarantine," said govern-

ment spokesman Steffen Seibert. According to Deutsche Presse Agentur, Germany reported more than 24,100 COVID-19 cases with 90 deaths by Sunday.

BEEFING UP MEASURES

Before being informed of the confirmed case, Merkel told a press conference that Germany will prohibit public gatherings of more than two, but relatives who live in their own household are exempt from the ban.

German citizens are advised to reduce contacts with other people outside their own household to the least, and a minimum dis-

tance of 1.5 meters must be kept, preferably two meters.

Celebration gatherings in public places, at home and in private institutions are unacceptable, considering the current serious situation, Merkel said, adding that violations of the contact restriction will be sanctioned.

The restriction measures will be in effect for at least two weeks, showing "care for the elderly and ill people, "in brief, save lives," Merkel said.

In Spain, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on Sunday that his government was seeking to extend the current state of

emergency, which was declared on March 14, for another 15 days after the end of the initial period.

In Greece, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis announced in an address broadcast live on public broadcaster ERT a nationwide lockdown as part of measures to contain the further spread of the novel coronavirus.

The measure takes effect from Monday 6:00 a.m. local time, he said. All unnecessary movement of people is prohibited.

"It must be taken on time, so it is not taken in vain... We need bold and timely initiatives," Mitsotakis stated. **Agencies**

Kremlin offers its full support to international peace and security

MOSCOW

RUSSIA Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov said his country is committed to support international peace and security by preventing Nuclear Weapons.

He explained this recently as the world marks the 75th anniversary of the United Nations and 50th anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Lavrov (pictured) said, Kremlin is happy that in the 20th century the world did the its best to ensure strategic stability which prevented tragedies.

"Regrettably we remember that nearly 75 years ago, by dropping nuclear bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the US became the only State to have ever used that most horrible weapon and triggered the nuclear arms race the effects of which still linger. Yet, we need to underline that in the second half of the 20th century we joined efforts in ensuring strategic stability and preventing such tragedies," he said.

He, however, said during this century there are dangerous and destructive trends which are caused by the resurgence of foreign policy which one state has been accumulating, giving an example of the year 2002 when the United States of America (USA) withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty

Lavrov described this as not good to the whole ACDNP, saying Washington withdraw from the treaty due to its desire to dominate the globe and impose its rules at the expense of the interests of other nations and international law.

The Russian top official went further to say that, last year the US de-



noted INF Treaty and immediately Washington conducted flight test of military weapons and also it (USA) declared its intentions to place such systems in various parts of the world.

"During this century dangerous and destructive trends caused by the resurgence of the aggressive foreign-policy egocentrism of one state have been accumulating, Washington's withdrawal in 2002 from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, this treaty was crucial for strategic stability, and USA action was a heavy blow to the entire ACDNP," he said.

Lavrov said, his country in the first place stated that it would be forced to take symmetrical steps, but it later exercised the highest degree of responsibility and committed its self unilaterally not to deploy any ground-based intermediate and shorter-range missiles in the regions where the USA systems will not appear.

The Russian official said his country is aware of plans to undermine the credibility of its initiative and reminded the CD members that his country proposed to dispel suspicious through elaboration of possible verification regime for mutual moratorium, saying Ignoring this honest offer means that true causes of the INF destruction have

nothing to do with Russian position and actions.

He also disclosed that America, France and NATO have plans to place weapons in outer space and he asked CD members to develop measures which are acceptable to prevent confrontation in the outer space.

He urged the US and its allies to declare the same moratorium.

According to Lavrov, President Vladimir Putin offered the USA to extend the new treaty without any precondition, but to date Washington has not responded.

He said it got to a point where the USA and its allies are conducting Nuclear test on Russian territory. The Russian Foreign Affairs minister disclosed that 18 month ago Russia suggested to the USA that to ease the artificial tension and leave the door open for further strategic dialogue.

To show its commitment, Lavrov said, last year in November, his country played a major role in convening the conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction as well as their Delivery Systems.

He said currently there is a need of effective solution to any crisis as if all parties are involved and demonstrate genuine willingness to hear each other solutions are found, but he lamented on the USA refusal to comply with its international obligation which are on the United Nations (UN) Charter and also some European countries to implement the nuclear treaty.

Lavrov also defended action taken by Iran to suspend the implementation of exclusively voluntary restrictions and said Tehran has been complying with legal obliga-

tions under the NPT and IAEA.

He went on to say that his country is disappointed with Western countries actions to transform the once successful professional multilateral disarmament structures into a means of pressure on some states and said last year the USA denied visas to head and members of the Russian delegation who were to attend the UN meeting on disarmament.

Lavrov said these developments lead to further divisions within the international community and distract its attention from real international security problems and called upon US colleagues to return to a normal track of respectful inter-State dialogue and interaction in accordance with the UN Charter.

He urged that it is important for all to demonstrate political will to find solutions acceptable to all so as to reach a consensus on the start of negotiations, saying such multilateral cooperation in solving global problems is what the UN founding fathers looked forward.

The Russia official further called upon UNSC permanent members to play a special unifying role in developing updated and up-to-date proposals to ensure stability on the planet based on the UN Charter saying this is a critical stage and they must exercise their utmost responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

He also reminded the conference that his country president Vladimir Putin invited his colleagues to hold a P5 UNSC summit which he said would be a starting point for pivotal decisions in the interests of the entire international community and said the reaction to Putin invitation is encouraging.

Agencies

Egyptian PhD student hopeful to return to China to resume studies

CAIRO

MOHAMMED Nagah, an Egyptian information technology research assistant from Cairo, has expressed hope that he could return soon to China where he is pursuing his PhD.

Nagah (pictured), who works for Egypt's National Research Center, was picked up by the Egyptian government for the scholarship at Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan city of central China's Hubei Province.

He had to leave China when Egypt evacuated its nationals from Wuhan in February after the outbreak of the coronavirus.

The young man said that he is confident that the Chinese government has the ability to fight against the coronavirus.

Now China has largely curbed the spread of COVID-19 and business activities have steadily returned to normal.

Nagah showed admiration for China and its people who strictly followed the instructions and measures of the government to combat the virus.

"During the current crisis, I was impressed with the culture and awareness of the Chinese people," he said, adding that the Chinese people demonstrated their love and loyalty to their country during this crisis.

Nagah said that the Chinese government's response to the outbreak of COVID-19 was great, stressing that the government had one concern, which is saving peoples' lives and eliminating the



virus. Regarding the preventive measures in Egypt, Nagah said that the country is dealing professionally with the outbreak of the coronavirus, stressing that Egypt has the capabilities to contain the virus.

"I was placed in quarantine in Egypt after my return, and the procedures that the Egyptian medical staff implemented are all highly professional," he said.

Egypt, a country with a population of 100 million people, has confirmed 294 COVID-19 cases as of Saturday, including 10 deaths.

The most populous Arab country has been recently taking

strict precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, including temporary closure of schools and universities, suspending flights, reducing employees and sterilizing public transport vehicles, government offices, hotels and tourist attractions.

Egypt also temporarily shut down mosques and churches nationwide, while coffee shops, clubs, malls, restaurants and other entertainment places were told to close from early evening to early morning over coronavirus concerns.

Xinhua

Government officials in Jiangxi help poverty alleviation through livestreaming e-commerce

CHEN Weifeng, deputy chief of Tonggu county, Yichun City of Jiangxi in eastern China's province of Jiangxi, recently turned into a livestream host promoting local specialties that encountered poor sales due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

The newbie broadcaster hosted a livestream show on March 15 during which he made local food and helped sell free-range eggs for local impoverished households.

"The eggs are sold out, but a presale would be launched this afternoon," Chen said during the livestreaming session. The deputy county chief secured a great performance on the show.

He was joined by local Hakka women who grouped in pairs or threes to advertise the spe-

cialties. On the livestream show, they held prize draws, presented special offers and staged art performances. Besides, they also cooked local food including fried eggs and fired bamboo shoots, as well as presented tea culture performance.

The livestream show offered joy for the viewers during which they also had a better knowledge of Tonggu.

The effort was part of a poverty-relief activity launched by Jiangxi province on March 15 that encouraged senior officials of Party committees and government at all levels to advertise local specialties on livestream platforms such as Taobao Live and Kuaishou. Internet media platforms including Douyin, Weibo and Xigua also joined the



A TV host from the TV station of Xingan county, Ji'an, Jiangxi province livestreams an interview with Huang Shaoming, a potato planter in Luojixiang village, Jiebu township, to help him sell potatoes online, March 18. Photo by Li Fusun, People's Daily Online

activity to promote sales of agricultural products and expand sales channels for the farmers. "We sold all 10,000 eggs, 3,000 kilograms of rice noodles, 500 kilograms of honey, and 1,000 packages of smoked

bamboo shoots. Meanwhile, we also received over 300 orders of other local specialties such as chrysanthemum tea, tea seed oil and candied fruit," said Chen, who was quite satisfied with the 324,200-yuan (\$45,873) sales

performance.

Tonggu isn't the only place that benefits from the livestreaming commerce. Chishan township in Shangli county received over 100 orders of chrysanthemum tea in just 10 minutes, while Guangxin district of Shangrao sold nearly 1,000 packages of tea products in dozens of minutes. Besides, the pomelos and tofu skins presented by Ji'an were liked 1.9 million times.

Just in a day, the poverty alleviation livestreaming activity was watched by 26.9 million people. Exhibiting 567 products, it achieved a turnover of 7.5 million yuan and benefited 43,000 impoverished people.

The sudden outbreak of COVID-19 impacted the sales of agri-

cultural products, which led to a shrinkage of farmers' income. To address the poor sales of these products, Jiangxi Poverty Alleviation Office, together with other 9 related unites issued an action plan to help poverty alleviation through consumption. It encouraged the integration of poverty-alleviation products and online platforms, aiming to increase income for impoverished villages and households, and contribute to the eradication of poverty.

According to Lu Wenge, deputy head of Jiangxi Poverty Alleviation Office, the livestream offered an access for the people to cost-efficient products. He said Jiangxi will later turn it into a routine practice and a great channel for poverty-alleviation

products. He believes any product can benefit the impoverished, and hopes such activity will increase the income of impoverished households and mitigate the losses in the epidemic.

Jiangxi has always let development programs play a fundamental role in poverty alleviation. By adopting the poverty alleviation approach of fostering distinctive industries, advancing relocation, carrying out ecological restoration, strengthening education, and improving social security, the province encourages village cadres and local big names to initiate development programs, and calls on Party members, villagers and impoverished households to join them.

People's Daily



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe speaks at a parliamentary session in Tokyo Monday, March 23, 2020. Abe said a postponement of Tokyo Olympics would be unavoidable if the games cannot be held in a complete way because of the coronavirus pandemic. (Photo: Kyodo News via AP)

Tokyo Olympics seem sure to happen -- but in 2021, not 2020

TOKYO

THE Tokyo Olympics are going to happen – but almost surely in 2021 rather than in four months as planned.

This became clear after the IOC on Sunday announced it was considering a postponement and would make a final decision within four weeks. Major Olympic nations like Canada and Australia have added pressure by saying they will not send teams if the games are staged this year.

International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach sent a letter to athletes explaining the decision, while also acknowledging the extended timeline might not be popular.

"I know that this unprecedented situation leaves many of your questions open," he wrote. "I also know that this rational approach may not be in line with the emotions many of you have to go through."

The IOC's move seemed inevitable for weeks with pressure mounting from all quarters – athletes, sponsors, broadcasters and more than 200 national Olympic committees, and international sports federations.

Shortly after Bach's statement, the Canadian Olympic Committee said it would not send athletes to the Olympics unless the games are postponed by a year. Australia issued a statement saying it was advising its athletes to prepare for an Olympics in 2021.

World Athletics President Seb Coe sent a letter to Bach saying that holding the Olympics in July "is neither feasible nor desirable." He outlined a number of reasons, including competitive fairness, the likelihood athletes would overtrain if given a compressed schedule and the uncertainty caused by orders in many countries barring people from gyms and other workout venues.

National Olympic committees in Brazil and Slovenia had also called for postponement until 2021. Norway's Olympic body said it did not want athletes going to Tokyo until the global health crisis is under control.

The United States governing bodies of swimming and track – two of the three top-tier Summer Games sports – had called on their national Olympic officials to push for a postponement.

Japan's politicians fell in line quickly on Monday as they awakened to Bach's move, which was announced at 3 a.m. in Tokyo as most of the city slept.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, speaking at a parliamentary session, said a postponement of the Tokyo Olympics would be necessary if the games cannot be held in a complete way because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"If it is difficult to hold (the Games) in a complete way, a decision of postponement would be unavoidable," he said.

Abe said he hoped the IOC would announce a decision quickly, and Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike echoed him.

The IOC holds most of the cards in any rescheduling, spelled out in a Host City Contract signed in 2013 between the IOC, the Japanese Olympic Committee and the city of Tokyo.

Japan is officially spending \$12.6 billion to organize the Olympics, but a national audit put the figure at more than twice that much. The bill is sure to increase with any postponement, and the vast majority of the spending if from the public treasury.

AP

The hour for creative thinking in sports is now

By Correspondent Lloyd Ellipokea

D OUBTLESSLY, it is the worst-kept secret in the global realm of sports that a whole spectrum of various sports have come screeching to a halt as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Indeed, the reasoning behind this momentary cessation of an entire host of sports is quite easy to figure out as the temporary stoppage of most sporting activities was done so as to slow down the alarming spread of this virus that has been nicknamed 'COVID-19'.

Significantly, here on home soil, authorities have taken similar sweeping and precautionary measures all in an effort to successfully get to grips with the potent threat that the coronavirus poses.

One such step was the stoppage of all kinds of sporting activities on the home front until at least one month has elapsed, which in this writer's book is a sagacious and laudable move.

However, in the face of absolutely no sporting activity for the next entire month at least on the domestic patch, the million dollar question hanging in the air is: what on earth are our sports administrators to do besides trying their damndest to remain well, of course?

Well, since the next four weeks presents sports administrators with more time on their hands than they had bargained for, I would like to advise them to personally engage in fresh, creative and out-of-the-box thinking in a bid to find solutions to some of the frustratingly familiar woes which have bedeviled



Junior football players put their skills to use during a recent training at JMK Youth Park in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

local sports for seemingly ages.

One such malaise is the shoddy standard of officiating which has afflicted local football on and off for arguably the last decade-and-a-half.

Indeed, it appears that we are in another wretched period where the spectre of shabby officiating has reared its ugly head for the umpteenth time.

Indisputably, poor officiating is a veritable menace on our football landscape.

For example, it gives rise to bad blood in relations between football clubs and referees, which, of course, is detrimental to the sport of football on our shores.

Another distinctly adverse consequence of poor officiating

is that it robs fans of their confidence in domestic football's top flight league.

And, as is commonly known, spectators are the most important stakeholders of any sport and it is no different in football.

Thus, it follows that if the many domestic spectators of the Mainland Premier League lose confidence in a critical aspect of the league such as refereeing, then it would mean that the whole league championship would be significantly devalued and what's more, the country's top tier football league would begin an alarming descent into the abyss.

Therefore, during the next month or so, it would prove to be particularly helpful if football's

upper echelon administrators were to take a real stab at seeking to obtain a curative remedy for the long-running problem of shoddy officiating in local football.

Another worrying concern which needs to be urgently addressed is the glaring lack of a transition from gifted youngsters to thriving and blooming senior players in domestic tennis.

Indeed, over the past couple of years, we have witnessed a seemingly ceaseless number of precocious boys and girls who not only have shone brightly in dazzling fashion on the local tennis front but have imperiously stamped their authority on the East African tennis circuit as well.

Despite these admittedly encouraging developments, there is still one question that has gone unanswered, which is: why have we failed as a country to produce a steady supply of flourishing tennis players at the senior level as well?

I mean, on the face of things, the lack of successful tennis players at the senior level is akin to arguably the Riddle of the Sphinx.

After all, since there has been a plentiful supply of gifted youngsters who are being churned out frequently by a production line of talent working at a cracking speed, then for goodness sakes, why has there been such a conspicuous lack of trophy-winning tennis players at the senior level on the domestic sports landscape?

Perhaps, within the next month, it is hoped that some sports administrators, because they will not be involved in live sports, will ponder on the aforesaid challenge and other drawbacks which hinder local sports in the hope of finding a solution to them.



Junior basketball players participate in training session at JMK Youth Park courts in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Harvey Weinstein tests positive for coronavirus in prison - union official

NEW YORK

FORMER movie producer Harvey Weinstein, who is serving a prison sentence for sexual assault and rape, has tested positive for the coronavirus, according to the head of the state corrections officers union.

Weinstein, 68, has been placed in isolation at Wende Correctional Facility, said Michael Powers, president of the New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association.

Powers said he learned that the test came back positive on Sunday morning and is concerned about the corrections officers, who he said lack proper protective equipment. Several staff have been quarantined, Powers said.

Weinstein arrived at Wende Correctional Facility, a maximum security prison east of Buffalo,

New York, on Wednesday after being housed at New York City's Rikers Island jail.

He was sentenced to 23 years in prison on March 11 for sexually assaulting former production assistant Mimi Haley and raping Jessica Mann, a onetime aspiring actress.

Following the sentencing, Weinstein spent time at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan for heart problems, according to his spokesman, Juda Engelmayer. He also has other medical issues, including diabetes and high blood pressure.

A lawyer for Weinstein said on Sunday night that his legal team had not been notified of the coronavirus diagnosis.

"Given Mr. Weinstein's state of health, we are of course concerned, if this is the case, and we are vigilantly monitoring the situ-

ation," said lawyer Imran Ansari, who is based in New York.

The Niagara Gazette, a local newspaper in upstate New York, reported that Weinstein had tested positive for the highly contagious virus earlier Sunday, citing anonymous officials.

Two prisoners at the Wende Facility have confirmed cases of COVID-19, a state prison official told Reuters. The official said he could not comment on any individual prisoner's medical record.

The official told Reuters that, with each confirmed case, the Department of Corrections works with the Department of Health to identify potentially exposed people.

Mark David Chapman, who murdered Beatle John Lennon in 1969, served some of his time at Wende Correctional Facility, as did Robert Chambers, dubbed

the "Preppie killer," who strangled 18-year-old Jennifer Levin in New York City's Central Park in 1986.

Weinstein's conviction was hailed as a victory for the #MeToo movement against sexual misconduct by powerful men.

More than 100 women, including famous actresses, have accused Weinstein of sexual misconduct stretching back decades. He has denied the allegations, saying any sex was consensual.

Weinstein also faces separate sexual assault charges in Los Angeles.

Weinstein won an Academy Award for producing "Shakespeare in Love" and was responsible for other acclaimed films including "Pulp Fiction," "The English Patient" and "Gangs of New York."

REUTERS

Infantino eyes reboot for soccer to avoid crisis

GENEVA

THE future of soccer could be fewer games and fewer top competitions to help avoid a financial crisis, FIFA president Gianni Infantino said in a newspaper interview published Monday.

With soccer around the world in near-total shutdown and no end in sight because of the coronavirus pandemic, Infantino said the sport risked going into recession.

"Maybe we can reform world football by taking a step back," Infantino said in the interview with Italian daily Gazzetta dello Sport published on his 50th birthday.

"There needs to be an evaluation of the global impact," the FIFA president said. "Let's all together save soccer from a crisis that risks becoming irreversible."

Infantino said different formats could be an answer, with "fewer, but more interesting tournaments. Maybe fewer squads, but more balance. Fewer, but more competitive, matches to safeguard the health of the players."

Before the pandemic, Infantino added to the congested soccer calendar by expanding the World Cup from 32 to 48 teams for the 2026 edition, and by trying to launch a 24-team Club World Cup next year.

The inaugural edition of the

latter tournament in China was delayed last week after UEFA and South American soccer body CONMEBOL postponed their championships by one year to 2021. That was to give domestic leagues time to try to finish their seasons.

The shutdown means there are already too few dates in the FIFA-managed calendar to complete the scheduled qualification path for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

The pressure now on soccer stakeholders – many with conflicting interests – is likely to force a debate on the squeezed schedule that the pandemic has exposed.

Some influential clubs in Europe are pushing to get more guaranteed games in a bigger Champions League, and 20-team top leagues could be under pressure to make cuts. Those include leagues in England, Spain and Italy.

"It's not science fiction. Let's discuss it," Infantino said about the possibility of changing soccer calendars.

FIFA announced last month a task force of officials from member federations, clubs, leagues and player unions that would look at drafting a new match calendar from 2024. That work could also now include the next four years to adjust to the current shutdown.

AP

Coronavirus 'plague' should cancel Serie A - Brescia chief

ROME

BRESCIA president Massimo Cellino has said the Serie A season should be cancelled and referred to the coronavirus as a "plague."

Italy Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte halted all sports in the country at the start of March, including Serie A, until April 3 because of the outbreak.

Second-placed Lazio, who are one point behind leaders Juventus, are reportedly unhappy about the suspension of the league, but Brescia president Cellino said football should not be the priority in this climate.

"If Lazio want the Scudetto, let them have it," he told Corriere dello Sport. "This is the plague."

"Don't be daft, how can we resume the season? I am thinking of next term and only that. The Coppa Italia, the Scudetto... if [Lazio president] Claudio Lotito wants it, he can have it."

"He's convinced that his team is unbeatable, so let him keep that belief. How can we be sitting here talking about the Serie A title when we have a plague on our doorstep? I couldn't care less about football

right now."

Since the postponement, Juventus players Paulo Dybala, Blaise Matuidi and Danielle Rugani have contracted the coronavirus, while former AC Milan defender Paolo Maldini and his son Daniel also tested positive on Saturday.

A source told ESPN that Juventus players Gonzalo Higuain, Sami Khedira and Miralem Pjanic had all left Italy after being given permission by the club.

Italy's tally of coronavirus cases and deaths has continued to soar. As of Sunday, there were 793 confirmed dead and 6,557 cases. The country, the heart of western Europe's outbreak, now counts 53,578 known cases.

More than 60% of the latest deaths occurred in the northern region of Lombardy, whose hospitals have been reeling under a staggering caseload that has left intensive care beds hard to find and respirators in dire supply. The new increases come nearly two weeks into a national lockdown in a desperate bid to contain the spread of the virus.

(Agencies)

Nigeria striker George dies aged 26 in road crash

LAGOS

TRIBUTES have been paid to Enugu Rangers and Nigeria striker Ifeanyi George, who was killed in a road traffic accident on Sunday morning along with two other players.

George, 26, was driving to Lagos from Enugu when his vehicle collided into a stationary truck.

The player was returning home after being granted leave by Rangers due to the NPFL suspension amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's a big shock to me," Rangers defender Ifeanyi Nweke told ESPN. "This was all caused by coronavirus. He was travelling back to his city after we were all given 10 days' break, due to the outbreak, and was with two other players in their own car, in a convoy. They were OK."

George had represented Nigeria's home-based Eagles team on two occasions, playing for Salisu Yusuf's team in both legs of their double-header African Nations Championship qualifier against Benin in August 2017.

"He was a friendly guy and a good player," Nweke added. "He'd been with First Bank Football Club, Enyimba, and now was at Rangers."

Ex-Barcelona B winger Ezekiel Bassey overlapped with George at Enyimba, before the latter moved onto Rangers.

"He was a very cool guy, and an easy-going dude," Bassey told ESPN. "It's so sad to have lost him in this way. It's so sad, and so painful."

FC Tulsa midfielder Raphael Ayagwa, who played alongside George for Nigeria, also paid his respects to his former teammate.

"He was a really nice guy, funny and easy-going," Ayagwa told ESPN. "I still can't believe it. 'It's so sad, and such a big loss, just another case study for Nigeria's bad roads.'"

A statement issued by Rangers attempted to clarify the circumstances around the accident.

"The vehicle smashed into a parked articulated vehicle along Onitsha-Agbor-Benin road, Sunday morning," Rangers General Manager Davidson Owumi said.

"We just heard this disturbing news this morning and what we hear is not palatable.

"I await information from my officials that are already on their way to the spot where the accident was said to have taken place. We call for prayers in this hour of pains."

(Agencies)

Why the 2019-20 English Premier League season must be completed

BY IAN DARKE, ESPN.COM WRITER

THE great Scottish writer Hugh MacLvanney once described sport as "magnificent trivia." Those words have never rung more true than in these disturbing and difficult times.

Football pales into insignificance set aside the life-and-death matter of a global pandemic that has changed all our lives in the space of a few days. Suddenly it hardly matters whether the European Championship is postponed, who gets promoted or relegated, who wins the Champions League, whether VAR works properly or what Jose Mourinho or Pep Guardiola has to say.

Instead, the only thing we all care about is the health and well-being of our nearest and dearest, especially the elderly and frail. The heroes are not Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo or Bruno Fernandes, but the wonderful doctors, nurses and health workers who are risking their own lives in a tireless effort to combat this deadly coronavirus.

And yet, perhaps with a tinge of guilt, we yearn to revel in the daily dramas served up by the game we all love and for the season to be completed. Football will eventually resume, though nobody can be sure when and how much the landscape will have changed.

For example, players who were out with long-term injuries might be back for the delayed climax of what will be Europe's longest-ever season with obvious Premier League examples being Tottenham's Harry Kane and Son Heung-Min and Manchester United's Marcus Rashford.

Kane, England's captain and talisman for club and country, was on course to return in time for the originally scheduled Euros in June, but would he have been properly fit and sharp? Doubtful. Meanwhile, Rashford's back injury was so serious that he might have been unavailable for selection in Gareth Southgate's squad. Now, with the tournament delayed for a full year, both players can



Completing the 2019-20 Premier League season after the coronavirus suspension is the right thing to do. (Agencies)

look forward to playing a major role (assuming no further setbacks).

Similarly the delay, if not the awful reasons for it, might be to the benefit of emerging young players such as Phil Foden of Manchester City, Bukayo Saka at Arsenal, Chelsea's Reece James, and Dominic Calvert-Lewin, who has enjoyed a breakthrough season leading the line at Everton. Euro 2020 probably would have come too soon, but now all four and possibly others, including Manchester United's teenage striker Mason Greenwood, have another 12 months to state their case.

Against that, the delay might mean the Euros come too late for a few players for whom this summer would have been a last hurrah in international football, though you would fully expect a 36-year-old Cristiano Ronaldo to still

be starring for Portugal.

Whenever the action resumes, there is no doubt that Liverpool will deservedly be crowned champions of England, although it will be a shame if games are played behind closed doors and the Anfield fans, who have waited so long for the moment, will not be there to see it.

There are other, major logistical problems connected with the restart, which will not come before April 30, especially if it proves impossible to complete the fixtures by June 30.

After that date, 69 Premier League players will be out of contract, with David Silva of Manchester City and Tottenham's Jan Vertonghen just a couple of notable examples. Perhaps emergency deals can be put in place, but what if they pick up a bad injury during the extension that

scuppers a lucrative move? It is a complicated set of circumstances. All season-long loans are set to end in late June, too; a particular problem for smaller clubs that might lose key players.

Meanwhile, after such a long gap without competitive action, players would normally need a pre-season fitness regime and warm-up friendlies to get themselves ready to play, but surely there will not be time, leading to an increased injury risk as some teams are asked to play every three days to get the season finished.

Spurs, with the return of Kane, Son and possibly Moussa Sissoko, might be the big beneficiaries in the top-four equation. Wolves, who have had to play more matches than anyone, will be rested for the run-in. Chelsea could have Matteo Kovacic, N'Golo Kante, Tammy Abraham and

Christian Pulisic all fit and firing. Plus, with large gatherings banned, there might not be time for the Court of Arbitration for Sport to hear Manchester City's appeal against their two-year European ban, raising the possibility of their two-year UEFA suspension being delayed.

At the bottom, Aston Villa might be significantly boosted by the return of key man John McGinn, while Bournemouth could at last be able to call on their excellent midfielder David Brooks, who is yet to play in this campaign.

It will feel like a new season, but it will not be -- just a strange, hectic finish to the old one under summer skies. Teams who were flying might have lost their mojo after months of inactivity. Others who were struggling might be mentally refreshed and find some form.

But despite all the obstacles, it is exactly the right decision to soldier on, however long that might take. Any other way would be submerged in cries of injustice, not to mention possible lawsuits. The only place to settle football arguments is on the pitch.

The resumption will be emotional and we can but hope that the time is not only too distant, but that things can be back to normal quicker than we all fear. Whatever happens, the 2019-20 campaign is destined to go down in history with an asterisk alongside it, explaining the tragic reasons of why it took so long to complete.

Stay safe, everyone.

The biggest unsolved questions as shutdown goes on - 3

BY BILL CONNELLY, ESPN STAFF WRITER

8. Can Atalanta, Europe's most fun team, remain relevant?

Across Europe's top five leagues, the majority of the most prolific teams are also among the richest and most consistently successful: Bayern Munich (2.9 goals per league match), PSG (2.8), Borussia Dortmund (2.7), Manchester City (2.4), Barcelona (2.3), Liverpool (2.3). The second-most goals-heavy club in the game at the moment, however, is based in Bergamo, Italy, a city approximately the size of Topeka, Kansas.

Coached by Gian Piero Gasperini since 2016, Atalanta finished fourth in Serie A in his first season, then qualified for the Champions League for the first time last season when they finished third. They improbably advanced to the knockout rounds by securing seven points in their past three matches, and they went nuts, scoring four goals in both legs of their round of 16 win over Valencia. They have scored at least three goals on 11 occasions in Serie A play and at least five on five occasions. They're led in scoring by veteran Josip Ilić, but six players have scored at least seven goals.

They lean more heavily into a funky 3-4-1-2 formation than anyone else in Europe (Ligue 1's midtable Montpellier is the only other team that comes close), and they attack you from whatever angle you give them. They're also willing to risk disaster in the name of pursuing success -- they've given up at least 10 more goals than each of the three teams ahead of them in the Serie A table.

This is the Mike Leach Air Raid of European soccer. We must protect them and nurture the Nerazzurri at all costs. But they hold just a three-point lead over Roma for the fourth and final Serie A spot in the Champions League. FiveThirtyEight likes their chances, but they still have obvious work to do.

La Liga

9. Who wins the latest Barca-Real Madrid race?



Gian Piero Gasperini

with under 85 points since 2007, and over the past five seasons, three runners-up have topped 90. (Atletico finished third with 88 in 2016.) No one is taking advantage of the lower bar, however. Atletico are suffering their worst offensive output in years and are on pace for just 63 points.

Sevilla are on pace for 66. Valencia are stuck in seventh place. Valencia were run out of the Champions League by Atalanta while Barca (vs. Napoli) and, more likely, Real Madrid (vs. Manchester City) could be eliminated next week.

Atletico's Anfield heroics aside, this has not been the most memorable La Liga season, but it is evidently Barca vs. Real for the crown once more, and neither team seems willing or able to take control. Barca fired off four straight league wins to take the lead, then Real took it right back with a 2-0 win in El Clasico. Just a week later, Los Blancos lost 2-1 at 12th-

place Real Betis and gave the lead right back to Barcelona.

FiveThirtyEight gives Barca a slight edge in the competition -- a 62% chance to Real Madrid's 38% -- but in terms of expected goals (xG), Real's xG difference of plus-26.8 to Barca's plus-19.6 suggests they've been the better team thus far. Flaws or no, these teams appear as evenly matched as ever and the race (if we get one) will probably come down to the wire.

10. Who else makes the UCL from La Liga?

Hey, if almost all of your league's heavyweights and light heavyweights are having semi-disappointing seasons at the same time, that at least makes for a tight competition, right? With five teams within five points of third place -- Sevilla (47 points), Getafe (46), Atletico (45), Real Sociedad (43), Valencia (42) -- that should make for

an awfully tight race for Spain's third and fourth Champions League spots.

According to FiveThirtyEight, Sevilla (69% chance of qualifying for the UCL) and Atletico (52%) have a bit of an edge over Getafe (43%) and Real Sociedad (28%), with Valencia (5%) and Villarreal (1% with 38 points) holding on for dear life.

Expected goals suggest that Atletico has been dramatically unlucky so far this year. Their plus-18.6 xGD is easily third best and barely behind that of Barca, but they were apparently saving up all of their good fortune to unload on Liverpool. But xGD agrees that they and Sevilla (plus-15.2) have the quality edge over Sociedad (plus-9.9), Getafe (plus-5.8), and a similarly unlucky Villarreal (plus-10.7). So maybe we already know the answer to this one. Then again, we thought we knew what was going to happen on Tuesday in Liverpool too.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



TADA Cup 2020 postponed

SPORT

Why the 2019-20 English Premier League season must be completed

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Upanga Darts Club (UDC) players celebrate with a trophy after the culmination of this season's Dar es Salaam regional championship, held in the city recently. The UDC lifted the silverware in the competition, which brought together 11 teams. PHOTO: COURTESY OF UPANGA DARTS CLUB

Guardian Reporter

THIS season's Tanzania Darts (TADA) Cup, which had been slated for March 27-29 in Dar es Salaam, has been called off because of the coronavirus spread in the country.

Victor Kimambo, TADA secretary general, said in statement which was released last weekend, the national darts governing body opted to postpone

the competition with the aim of adhering to instructions issued by government to curb the spread of the disease.

Dar es Salaam's KT Chinese Club was expected to host the tournament.

The tournament is one of two annual competitions held by the national darts governing body with a view to raising the standard of the sport at the domestic level.

National Darts Club Championship is as well an annual event organized by

TADA at the national level.

The statement issued to all regional darts bodies' officials pointed out TADA reached the decision in a meeting, involving the national darts governing body's secretariat, which took place online.

Kimambo disclosed the national darts governing body has opted to take precaution to avoid gatherings particularly at present.

The official added the showdown will take place once the pandemic has been dealt

with.

He noted the TADA wishes regional darts associations all the best in the latter's regional tournaments.

He maintained the regional darts bodies need to take precautions on dealing with the pandemic.

Dar es Salaam darts giants Upanga Darts Club (UDC) had recently made no secret of its intention to stamp its authority in this season's TADA Cup.

The UDC recently won the top honour in the Dar es Salaam regional championship which took place at KT Chinese Club in Temeke District.

It was the consecutive success for UDC, given the outfit won a regional tournament, which was also hosted by KT Chinese Club early this year.

Eleven outfits, including one from Morogoro, took part in the regional championship. Hosts KT Chinese Club entered three teams in the showdown.

The competition had male players featuring in singles, doubles and team events, female players participated in singles and doubles events.

The participating sides were put in Groups A and B with Group A having been made up of Police, Lugalo, KT Chinese C, KT Chinese B, Morogoro Tex Club and Ibukoni.

Group B consisted of UDC, Mbezi, Segerea, Ngome and KT Chinese A.

The competition's team event had the clubs playing round robin matches, with two sides from either group securing qualification for the semi-finals and later locking horns for a place in the final.

Ibukoni and KT Chinese C finished in top two spots in Group A to sail through to the semi-finals, Group B had UDC and KT Chinese A finished in the top two spots to progress to the last four.

In the first of the semi-final stage clashes, UDC confronted Ibukoni which came second in Group A, the former registered 9-4 victory over the latter.

The second semi-final, involving the hosts' teams KT Chinese C and KT Chinese A, ended with KT Chinese C making short work of their opponents to book a place in the final.

The UDC players put their experience to show in the final, guiding their outfit to 9-6 victory over KT Chinese C and lift the trophy.

Ashok Motichand, Nanji Bhudia, Sameer Rashid, Mehboob Khakoo, Azim Haji Mohamed, Alikhan Wallani and skipper, Ravi Joshi, made the UDC squad in the regional championship.

TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV TUESDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 MPYA
12:30 Msimi Kitaani (r)
13:00 Wanawake Live (r)
13:30 Kall Za Wana
14:00 DK 10 za Mwangamizi
14:30 Bball Kings Highlights (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 SPORTS (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 KURUSA
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)

NIRVANA
Nirvana explores the hottest trends in fashion, beauty, art and lifestyle as well as interviews with notable people from the entertainment, art and fashion industries.

eastafrika RADIO
06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Pioneer Bongo
15:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Olympic gold medallist Van der Burgh battling coronavirus

CAPE TOWN

FORMER Olympic swimming champion Cameron van der Burgh has said he has been battling the new coronavirus for the last two weeks and that athletes who continue to train for the Tokyo Games are exposing themselves to "unnecessary risk".

South African Van der Burgh won gold in the 100m breaststroke at the 2012 London Olympics and silver in Rio four years later before retiring in 2018.

He said that while the most severe symptoms from the virus had passed he was still exhausted by any physical activity.

"I have been struggling with COVID-19 for 14 days today," he said on Twitter.

"By far the worst virus I have ever endured despite being a healthy individual with strong lungs (no smoking/sport), living a healthy lifestyle and being young (least at-risk demographic).

"Although the most severe symptoms (extreme fever) have eased, I am still struggling with serious fatigue and a residual cough that I can't shake. Any physical activity like walking leaves me exhausted for hours."

More than 14,600 people have died globally since the coronavirus outbreak began.

Van der Burgh, 31, said athletes who contract the virus will struggle to get back in peak condition for the Games, which are scheduled to start on July 24, though there have been growing calls for the Olympics to be postponed.

Canada became the first country to boycott the Games due to the coronavirus pandemic and Australia on Monday told its athletes to prepare for the Olympics to be postponed to 2021.

"The loss in body conditioning has been immense and I can only feel for the athletes that contract COVID-19 as they will suffer a great loss of current conditioning through the last training cycle. Infection closer to competition being the worst," he said.

"Athletes will continue to train as there is no clarification regarding the summer Games and thus are exposing themselves to unnecessary risk - and those that do contract will try rush back to training most likely enhancing/extending the damage/recovery time."

REUTERS

SYDNEY

"WE just need to make sure we've got soul in this group." It was Ellyse Perry (pictured) who delivered this critical message to the Australia Women's team when they stood on the brink of elimination from the T20 World Cup they would go on gloriously to win, the national team coach, Matthew Mott, has revealed.

Australia's campaign culminated in a wondrous night at the MCG where Meg Lanning's team defeated India to raise the trophy in front of more than 86,000 spectators. Mott described how, as well prepared as they were beforehand, the Australians struggled mightily with the weight of expectation.

It had them nervous and getting away from their natural, aggressive instincts in the tournament opener against India at the Sydney Showgrounds, and took them near to elimination in the following game against Sri Lanka in Perth. After Lanning and vice-captain Rachael Haynes had fashioned a partnership to get them home, team leaders called a batting meeting at their hotel to discuss how to change things - at this point, they needed to win four matches in a row to claim the title.

"Traditionally what happens in cricket, and this is only in my experiences, but because you share so much information about bowling and batting is



more of an individual pursuit, we rarely have actual batting meetings, they're normally part of the full meeting," Mott said. "But we actually called a batting meeting, we just opened it up and said 'how do you think we're going, what do we need to do to actually be the best we can be, and be true to ourselves' and the honesty around that was incredible.

"Players admitted 'I'm nervous, I haven't been playing like I normally play, I should be doing this, I should be doing that'. Ellyse Perry was at that meeting because she goes in both meetings as an allrounder. She says 'to be honest, we just need to make sure we've got soul in this group, and we look out

for each other, be a little bit more overt with our body language and maybe the odd fist-bump and something like that when someone has hit a good boundary'. I think if you look back to us in the first two games compared to the last few, you definitely saw a greater appreciation of a partnership, and I reckon that was pivotal."

Perry's message, combined with the batting of Lanning and Haynes, gave the Australians the reset they desperately needed to play more freely, as demonstrated by subsequent wins over Bangladesh, New Zealand, South Africa amid Sydney's showers, and finally India in the tournament decider. Perry, of course, was to miss the

last two games with a hamstring injury, but her experience and wisdom were tellingly kept on board right up to the finish line.

"We talked about it a lot before the tournament," Mott said. "The beauty of this team was we actually realised that we didn't react well in the first game and we were nervous, I was nervous, so I can imagine what the players were like. There was so much expectation and build-up, and we knew there was a lot at stake. For us to turn out at the MCG was potentially a game-changing moment for not just cricket but women's sport. So there was absolutely a burden there.

"How we internalised that and actually helped

each other out sort of happened after Perth and that partnership between Rach [Haynes] and Meg [Lanning]. I think you always look back and say what a great final, but we had no right to be there unless that partnership happened, and that just changed our whole philosophy for the tournament. It was almost like a lightbulb moment of 'if we keep playing scared and timid we're going to get these results'. So I was really pleased with the batting group in particular that they galvanised and formed a unit and said 'we're going to commit to this. If it doesn't come off, it doesn't come off, but we're going to make sure we go down swinging at least'."

Mott, who began his

coaching career as an assistant to Trevor Bayliss with the New South Wales state team, also spoke about the parallels between Australia's women taking on the task of winning a home World Cup and England's men's team trying to win their first-ever global tournament, also on home soil in 2019.

"Even the way England, after their disappointment in 2015, tried to change the game up and take the game on," Mott said. "It didn't always come off, sometimes it doesn't look great, and you're always judged on your results. There are certain times where it doesn't come off, but if you stay true to it, I think Alyssa Healy's the perfect example of that, if you've got that rare talent that not many players have, [it does reward you]."

"As coaches and support staff you've just got to keep fostering that when the results aren't coming, because you don't want game-changers to start second-guessing themselves. We had to hold the faith and there was a lot of people talking about 'how are you going to play', there was never a doubt in our team that at some point she [Healy] was going to hurt someone and I think she did it a few times, ably supported by Beth [Mooney]. A different role, a bit more consistent over time, but they're just a perfect foil for each other."

AGENCIES

Flexibles by David Chikoko

DON'T REPEAT AFTER ME.
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN STUPID. ANYTHING YOU SAY, WILL NOT BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY.



First Division League (FDL)'s African Lion players participate in training at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA