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TANZANIA

MONDAY 7 DECEMBER, 2020

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RC cautions schools over cheating in exams



ACT-Wazalendo agrees to GNU role in Zanzibar

By Guardian Reporter

MEMBERS of the Central Committee of the opposition ACT-Wazalendo have agreed with Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi on the need for the party to become part of a Government of National Unity (GNU), declaring that it is being formed with good intentions and for the interests of the Zanzibar people and the country at large.

The decision has come a month after the formation of the Zanzibar government under President Dr Mwinyi. GNU is an aspect of the constitutional blue-

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Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi exchanges greetings with NMB Bank Plc CEO Ruth Zaipuna in Zanzibar at the weekend moments after he arrived at the venue of an event sponsored by the bank to congratulate him on his late October election victory. Looking on (4th-R) is Zanzibar House of Representatives Speaker Zuberi Ali Maulid. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

STAMICO, Indonesia sign MoU, eye Kagera tin mines

By Guardian Reporter

THE State Mining Corporation (STAMICO) has stepped up its international profile after winning this year's Appreciation Award from Indonesia, the fourth edition of the award rankings, as the best business partner in the mining industry. The award was presented by the Indonesian Ambassador to Tanzania, Prof Ratlan Pardede in recognizing the organisation's contribution to investment efforts in the mining sector, at a weekend event in Dar es Salaam.

The award was presented to four other local institutions that have made significant contributions and cooperation to investors from Indonesia.

STAMICO acting managing director Dr Venance Mwase expressed appreciation towards the Indonesian

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Dar es Salaam Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (Dawasa) CEO Cyprian Luhemeja (2nd-R) receives a National Board of Accountants and Auditors trophy in Dar es Salaam at the weekend for exemplary preparation and presentation of financial statements for last year in the Water Utilities category. The agency is busy implementing eight mega projects in Dar es Salaam and Coast regions using its own resources. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Japanese billionaire tourists scan investment attractions

By Guardian Reporter

A GROUP of 37 visiting Japanese billionaires has expressed satisfaction with the country's friendly business and investment environment, showing interest in starting projects in the tourism, transportation, health, manufacturing

and agriculture sectors.

The tourists, part of a 'Billionaires Club' business travel arrangement, landed at the Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA) on December 3, featuring top executives of some leading Japanese

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Tourism: Tanzania named most fascinating African destination

By Guardian Reporter

PARTICIPANTS at the first Africa Tourism Day (ATD) have voted Tanzania as the most exciting and fascinating tourist destination in Africa.

The regional event was part of the

Lagos State World Tourism Day 2020, described as a successful 'phygital' celebration in Nigeria, in which virtual participants of the first exciting ATD were asked to vote for the African coun-

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Japanese billionaire tourists team examines investment attractions

FROM PAGE 1

companies, for a week-long stay in the country.

Upon arrival, they had an opportunity to listen to presentations from top management at the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) and the Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB).

TTB Board Chairman, Judge (rt'd) Thomas Mihayo said the government has embarked on a plan to promote conference tourism, noting that the 2020-2025 CCM election manifestos lays accent on conference tourism promotion to obtain more foreign investors and boost revenues, projected at \$9bn annually.

"We are working closely with our embassies and we have already started to implement the pledge. We aim at increasing the number of tourists to five million by 2025," he declared.

Representing the billionaires, the director of a company producing artificial limbs, said they are impressed with available investment opportunities especially in the health sector.

The Japanese tourists' visit follows efforts by relevant authorities to promote the country's tourist attractions, with TTB organizing the tour in liaison with the Tanzania embassy in Japan.

They also lauded the peaceful atmosphere, noting that this is a key factor in having many foreign visitors choosing Tanzania as their most preferred tourist destination.

The tourism sector is a leading source of foreign exchange where last year it contributed close to \$2.6bn to the country's economy, as it contributes 25 percent of total exports, providing direct and indirect employment to over 1.5m people.

Tourism contributes 25 percent of foreign currency earnings and accounts for 17 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), with the sector gradually becoming cross cutting and contributing to the growth of other sectors like industry, agriculture, infrastructure and financial services.

Back in May, President John Magufuli lifted a precautionary ban on international passenger flights imposed in March following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, letting foreign tourists fly in, on condition that they provide medical proof on their Covid-19 status, as per the recently designed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO).



Former President Jakaya Kikwete, the University of Dar es Salaam's Chancellor, claps shortly after launching a Generation Empower training programme in Dar es Salaam at the weekend. With him (from-L): Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) Prof Bernadetta Kilian, Vice Chancellor Prof William Anangisy and Empower Limited founder and CEO Miranda Naiman. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

ACT-Wazalendo agrees to GNU role in Zanzibar

FROM PAGE 1

print for the Isles since 2010.

Briefing journalists yesterday in Dar es Salaam on what was decided by the central committee, Secretary General Ado Shaibu said the decision was reached following internal party sittings and involvement of the people, many of whom agreed with participating in the unity government.

"The central committee has satisfied itself that the GNU format was created with good intentions and will be in the interest of Zanzibaris and the nation in general. The decision was reached after in-depth deliberations and references to the 2010 GNU which performed well," he stated, noting that members saw

it would not be a bad thing to form another unity government this year.

Shaibu asserted that the central committee focused on the current situation in Zanzibar where hate politics have re-emerged out of scars from the 2020 general elections.

He said the central committee appealed for the GNU as it takes effect to launch in-depth investigations on the breach of peace before and after the Zanzibar election process and take appropriate steps including instituting amendments to the electoral system and to the relevant organs of government.

The party has allowed members of the House of Representatives, MPs and ward councilors who were elected to proceed with their representative roles in the relevant legislative

and consultative chambers.

The central committee has directed the party's leadership committee to nominate a member who would become Zanzibar's First Vice President, he further noted.

ACT-Wazalendo's consent to participate in GNU concludes the debate lasting several weeks among party supporters on the issue.

On November 20 President Mwinyi said he had written to ACT-Wazalendo on the constitutional format for the party as it received upwards of 10 percent of votes and thus qualified to participate in GNU. A period of 90 days was set by the Isles leader for the opposition to make their decision.

President Mwinyi reserved the position of First Vice President and two

ministries for ACT-Wazalendo, and has also not appointed deputy ministers, with observers expecting that ACT-Wazalendo cadres will benefit from these positions once the GNU format is accepted.

The Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) declared Dr Mwinyi the winner in the October general election with 76.27 percent of the votes while ACT-Wazalendo's Seif Shariff Hamad came second with 19.87 percent of the votes cast.

The constitutional blueprint applicable for Zanzibar demands that the runner up political party with at least 10 percent of the votes join the winner in forming a GNU, a product of a political settlement back in 2010 to end decades of bitter animosities and outbreaks of violence.

STAMICO, Indonesia sign MoU, eye Kagera tin mines

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Embassy for recognizing the organisation's contribution to its investments in the mining sector, asserting that the award is a catalyst for development and a sign of STAMICO's transformation into an outward, expansion oriented business entity.

Dr Mwase said: there is a long-term strategic partnership with the Indonesian Mining Corporation—PT.Timah, leading to the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in developing various mining projects in Kyerwa District, Kagera Region.

The partnership has opened doors for experts in mineral from its Indonesian counterpart entity to explore investment sites in the country and take samples (tin and gold ore) to the mining laborator operated by the Geological Survey of Tanzania (GST) in Dodoma for closer examination. There are strategic areas linking STAMICO with Indonesia, including tin mining that is expected to start in the near future.

"We have plans to visit the PT.Timah Institute in Indonesia following a long standing invitation to share experience on mining industry operations," he stated.

Considerably developed plans also exist in the tin mining project and improving the foreign market for minerals, which is of significant interest for artisanal miners in the country.

Dr Mwase said these initiatives are synchronised with President John Magufuli's efforts to improve and develop investment in the country by ensuring investors rapidly access relevant information.

Ambassador Pardede praised STAMICO for facilitating the signing of the MoU as part of the provision of professional cooperation to investors, and developing communication with the PT.Timah institution despite challenges posed by the outbreak of Covid-19.

"This was a sincere commitment that reflected the agency's commitment to attracting investors," the envoy noted, hailing STAMICO for opening doors to help small-scale miners by connecting them with foreign investors.

Vowing to continue cooperating with STAMICO in its efforts to improve the country's mining industry, he invited Tanzanian experts to visit mining sector institutions in Indonesia for more exposure and enhancement of ties.



Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam (RCD) project director Kumail Manji (2nd-L) receives a souvenir from Chanika Primary School headteacher Ladislaus Mutanda at an event held in Dar es Salaam at the weekend that saw various stakeholders donate 400 desks to Chanika and Tungini primary schools - thus benefiting some 1,2100 pupils. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Tourism: Tanzania named most fascinating African destination

FROM PAGE 1

try which is best for tourism. The poll voters selected Tanzania as the most exciting African safari destination, followed by Mozambique and Nigeria.

Abigail Olagbaye, the Africa Tourism Day organizer and African Tourism Board (ATB) ambassador in Nigeria who is also Desigo Tourism Chief

Executive Officer (CEO), announced the winners of the poll which targeted to pick the best photograph contest winner and the most exciting and fascinating travel destination in Africa.

The ATD photo contest winner was Steven Sigadu from Zambia who was awarded a five-day visit to Cape Town in South Africa.

Tanzania has been rated

among the leading safari destinations in Africa due to its rich natural attractions, mostly the wildlife in leading protected parks including the Serengeti, Ngorongoro, Ruaha, Selous Game Reserve, Manyara and other fascinating nature reserves with scenic beauty.

"Visiting and staying in Tanzania could be a lifetime and memorable moment when visitors meet some of the

friendliest people one will ever meet who will go above and beyond to help guests out and make them feel welcomed in their country," she stated.

"Serengeti National Park is one of the best safaris one can choose to experience to see the "Big African Five: Lion, Leopard, Elephant, Rhino and Buffalo."

Tanzania is home to fa-

mous natural and attractive geographical features including Mount Kilimanjaro, Ngorongoro Crater, Mount Meru, the Indian Ocean Coast, and a myriad of natural caves from Olduvai Gorge to Amboni Caves near Tanga.

Africa Tourism Day seeks to focus on Africa as a single destination through its annual event to be held in rotation around the continent.

This affords host countries the chance to showcase their unique tourism assets to attract tourists and investors at a continental and global level. The event celebrates Africa's rich and diverse cultural and natural tourist endowments.

The ATD also aims at creating awareness on issues that are impeding development, progress, integration, and growth of the tourism indus-

try, along with formulating and sharing solutions, plans to leapfrog tourism development in Africa.

The Nigerian organisers were in partnership with TravelNewsGroup, enabling the November 25th event to be streamed around the globe on social media by Livestream, eTurboNews and circulated to members of world tourism platforms.

Refugee students find hope in the freedom to study

By Special Correspondent.

Students across the globe and here in Tanzania have faced challenges this year. With universities closed due to Covid-19, they've had to study at home and catch up quickly on returning to their educational institutions.

Khalid Hassan is studying computer sciences at The University of Dodoma. For him, going "home," during the closure meant returning to Nyarugusu in Kigoma, one of the largest refugee camps in the world. Khalid is a Burundian refugee and has lived in Tanzanian refugee camps for 10 years of his life. He's fled the violence and instability in his home country twice, the first time aged 2, and again in 2015, just 3 years after being repatriated.

Khalid was given the opportunity to attend a Tanzanian university thanks to the DAFI Scholarship: a UNHCR tertiary scholarship programme for refugee youth, funded by the governments of Germany and Denmark and other private donors. The programme is currently in 54 countries, and in Tanzania, is implemented by UNHCR and the International Rescue Committee.

Before applying Khalid says: "I didn't have any hope for something in the future. The future was closed." When he found out he'd been accepted for the scholarship, he says: "I was really surprised. I didn't expect anything in the camp. It was like a celebration."

The programme currently supports 116 refugee students studying in different universities across Tanzania. The courses chosen include social work, translation, counselling psychology, English, computer studies, education and medicine. The scholarship covers students' full tuition fees, accommodation, transport, education supplies and support services.

When refugee students begin life at a Tanzanian university, they have to adjust to different ways of teaching and begin learning in English for the first time. The Burundian and Congolese refugee children in Tanzania's camps attend schools run by the International Rescue Committee that follow the curriculum of their home country and are taught in French. But such challenges did not deter Khalid: "I had to put in the extra work. I worked harder than any other student at college."

The language barrier is an issue Boniface Akembe, a refugee from the DRC, is trying to address. He's a DAFI graduate himself, and gives voluntary English lessons in Nyarugusu to refugees hoping to go on to higher education. Boniface graduated in 2012 with a degree in Education in Special Needs from The University of Dodoma and is one of 12 DAFI graduates using their education to help others in the camps. Boniface has assisted hundreds of students with special needs to gain access to full time education in the camps' schools and has been instrumental in training teachers on how best to support these children.

Because of restrictions placed on refugees living in Tanzanian camps, attending university is one of the few ways refugees can experience life beyond the camps' boundaries. When Boniface left Nyarugusu to go to university in 2008, it was the first time he'd set foot outside the camp since arriving with his sister from war-torn DRC at the age of 6.

When he arrived at the University of Dodoma: "everything was new," he says. "Nyarugusu schools didn't have buildings then and there were a lot of buildings. People were coming to university with cars! I was scared. I didn't think I would be able to cope with the environment but as time went on, I started coping. I had to do what I had to do and I tried my best to learn."



Photo: Khalid is hopeful that his degree in computer science will provide him the skills necessary to support himself in the future (Photo courtesy Khalid)

Enabling girls from the refugee camps to go on to higher education is something The IRC is working hard to achieve. The drop-out rate of girls from the camp's secondary schools is high. But thanks to ongoing efforts there are currently 47 girls taking courses in Tanzanian universities and colleges, 18 of them are studying bachelor level degree programmes whilst the remaining are taking part in vocational training programmes.

Beatrice fled the violence in Congo, escaping to Tanzania in 2014. She is now in her final year studying computer sciences at the University of Dar Es Salaam and describes her 3 years of study as "the days I was most happy."

For Daphrose, a refugee from Burundi, her dream to study came after 13 years of living in Tanzania's refugee camps. She arrived in Tanzania with her younger sister at the age of 8 and doesn't want to recall the events that forced her to flee her home country. At the age of 34, she is now taking a degree in counselling psychology, to help those who have experienced similar trauma.

At university, the freedom to interact with other students, mainly from Tanzania, is an experience most students enjoy. But despite feeling welcome, most of them conceal their status as a refugee. According to Khalid: "When you say you are a refugee, they will be afraid of you. They will not feel free interacting with you and you'll be segregated from others. You need to interact with others for your success." For him, concealing his background, gives him a chance to be treated as an equal: "I really feel free because no one considers where someone came from. You have the same rights and access to everything in the college."

So what hope is there for the future of these students? Currently, it's difficult for refugees to obtain a permit to work in Tanzania, and on graduating, students like Khalid will most likely return to the camps where he's concerned that he'll lose his knowledge. If the situation is stable enough, he

hopes one day to return home to Burundi to start his own company helping the community with IT support.

Former DAFI graduate, longwa Mashango, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, is an example of how the opportunity to attend university can change the fortunes of many.

He went from living in refugee camps, to obtaining 2 degrees: a Bachelor of Education and a Masters in Development Studies. After graduating, he returned to the camps where he and fellow DAFI graduate and friend, Washikala Malango, trained hundreds of refugees in business skills they had learnt during their time at university. They repatriated to DRC in 2011 where they set up an NGO, teaching entrepreneurial skills to young people. They now run a hugely successful renewable energy business, Altech, with the aim of eradicating energy poverty. longwa believes they've helped around a million people to better their lives by distributing solar energy programmes to around 200,000 households across DRC.

The chance for these students to attend university in Tanzania enables them to look to the future and to contribute to positive change in society. The current students have plans: to become a doctor, to open a counselling centre in an orphanage, to run their own business and many more. They know it won't be easy, but as Khalid says, "We are used to experiencing hardship. Now I have hope for the future. When I go back to Burundi, I can start my own business, I have enough skills to do that or I can apply for a job and I can live like that. I can manage to afford everything I need in my life. Before it was not like that."



Photo: Boniface has used his degree in special needs education to help many children with special needs gain access to full time education in Nyarugusu camp. (Sanjeev Dasgupta / IRC)



Photo: Daphrose hopes to help other young refugees overcome the kind of trauma she experienced (Sanjeev Dasgupta / IRC)

Some of the names in this article have been changed to protect student's identity.

For more information about the IRC's work in Tanzania, please visit: rescue.org/tanzania

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CRDB Bank Plc head of marketing Joseline Kamuhanda (R) and her retail banking counterpart, Stephen Adili, introduce the bank's 'Tumekusoti Ada' promotion to be implemented through the Junior Jumbo account. This was at a press conference held in Dar es Salaam at the weekend. The drive is meant to inspire parents and guardians to open accounts for their children, with the bank having set aside a "give-away" 30m/- in school fees up to this December 31. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

JPM mourns the death of Nsekela

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT John Magufuli yesterday conveyed a message of condolence to the family of the late Harold Nsekela, the retired Judge of Tanzania Court of Appeal and Commissioner of the Ethics Secretariat.

On his Twitter account, President Magufuli wrote: "I am saddened by the death of the Commissioner of Ethics, Retired Judge of the Court of Appeal Harold Nsekela. I convey my heartfelt condolences to the family of the deceased and staff and workers of the Ethics Secretariat and the Judiciary."

"Retired Judge Nsekela was a man of ethics, patriot and hard worker. May God rest his soul in peace, Amen," he added.

The late Judge Nsekela was appointed Commissioner to the Ethics Commission in 2016. The position he held until his death.

He was born on October 21, 1944, studied his First Degree at the University of East Africa and a Master's Degree at Yale University in the Unit-

ed States.

He worked as Assistant Instructor at the Faculty of Law at the University of East Africa, Instructor at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), and Instructor in banking laws at the Institute of Finance Management (IFM).

He was appointed Judge of the High Court in 1977, Judge in the Court of Appeal in 2003, Judge in the East Africa Court of Human Rights (EACHR) in 2006 and Judge for Appellants Division, and President of EACHR in 2008.

From 2008 to 2014 he was President of the East Africa Court for Human Rights and in 2014 he was a Member of Tanzania's Reconciliation Institution

Retired Judge Nsekela was a man of ethics, patriot and hard worker. May God rest his soul in peace, Amen

Oil palm cultivation attracts additional 480ha in Kigoma

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

KIGOMA Region has attracted 480 new hectares of oil palm which are currently at different stages in cultivation thus bringing the crop's total cultivation coverage in the country's northwestern region to at least 20,120 hectares.

National Coordinator for oil palm research, Dr Filson Kagimbo said in an interview that out of the additional land, 750 acres are being cultivated by the Army institutions - the

Prison Army and National Service- whereby the remaining 450 acres are under the supervision of the smallholder farmers.

Dr Kagimbo said that the move shows how residents in Kigoma have responded well to the government's quest which calls on massive cultivation of the crop so as to stimulate economic growth.

"The farmers are currently busy working on their lands planting the crop professionally under supervision of trained extension officers," he informed.

The official observed that through the Tanzania Agriculture Research Institute (TARI) and local government authorities, extension officers in all districts within Kigoma Region have been capacitated on agronomic practices for the cultivation of the crop.

"We have already trained the officers in Buhingwe, Kigoma Municipality, Kigoma District Council and Kasulu District," he added.

In further efforts, he said the similar training was soon to be extended to Uvinza, Kakonko and Kibondo districts.

"After Kigoma, the plan is however to reach out to extension officers in other oil palm production regions, including Mbeya, Morogoro, Kagera, Tanga, Dar es Salaam, Coast and Zanzibar," he maintained.

The development is part to comply with fresh impetus by the fifth phase government to revive production and productivity of the crop with an eye to reduce scarcity and importation of edible oil in the country.

Statistic depicts that Tanzania imports 365,000 metric tons of edible oil annually which costs the government at least 443bn/-

Palm oil is the most consumed edible oil in Tanzania due to its widespread availability and cost-effectiveness whereby in 2016, domestic edible oil consumption was estimated to be 570,000MT, 64 percent of it being palm oil, 30 percent sunflower and 2 percent cotton seed oil.

Since the launch of the national quest to revive the sector, many efforts have been made to improve palm oil seedlings production and researches with Kigoma-based TARI Kihingwa centre picked to coordinate the timely initiative.

As of June 20, this year, the centre had successfully produced at least 1,805,868 seeds of coded Tenera, which suffice to cover a total of 36,117 acres, with the general target being to produce 5,000,000 seeds.

However, the centre entered into a joint venture with Yangu Macho Group Limited and Feli-sa Company to ensure abundant seed production.

Palm oil production is still mainly concentrated in Kigoma Region, which accounts for more than 80 percent of all oil palm production in Tanzania with available statistics shows

that in 2018, Tanzania produced a total of 40,500 tonnes of palm oil, out of which, 31,750 tonnes was produced from 19,640 hectare in Kigoma.

The amount produced is equivalent to 1.6 tonnes per hectare which is lower than the average produced in Malaysia, of 8 to 9 tonnes per hectare.

The low palm oil produced contributes to the use of low yielding palm oil varieties, small areas of land devoted to palm production, poor agronomic practices, and use of low-quality planting materials, among others.




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Pre-qualification of any company submitting an "Expression of Interest" shall be at the sole discretion of BGML.

For and on behalf of BULYANHULU GOLD MINE LIMITED

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All Applications will have to be submitted to TCRA for shortlisting and only three (3) applicants will be submitted to CRASA Headquarters for further consideration.

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Issued by:

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Email: dg@tcra.go.tz

Deny bail to GBV suspects, stakeholders recommend

By Guardian Correspondent,

Singida

RAMPANT acts of gender based violence (GBV) in Singida Region have continued to be headache to government officials and stakeholders necessitating the government to come up with various recommendations including looking into possibility of denying bail to rape suspects and those involved

in child pregnancies.

It has been found out that some members of the community fail to appropriately cooperate whenever they witness the commission of these acts or having correct information of the incidents if the suspects are released on bail at police stations or courts, the situation that endangers the lives of informers.

GBV acts unearthed by Stars of Poverty Rescue Foundation (SPRF) - a Non-

Governmental Organisation (NGO) under the sponsorship of Foundation for Civil Society (FCS) showed that for Ikungi District alone they topped 104, while many of them were settled at family levels.

Speaking at the weekend at a meeting for exchanging notes on what was to be done to eradicate GBV acts, various stakeholders, including the police in the District have called on officials at all levels not to allow cases to be set-

tlated at family levels.

"It's no acceptable at all for a girl under 18 years to be impregnated and you as parent go and discuss with a criminal on how to receive bride price, that is not acceptable," said the Ikungi district Crime Officer, Magoma Mtani.

Mtani said in his experience in the police investigation department, he has seen victims, especially children being taught on how to hide the truth on the incidents.

"As for now, after an incident is reported, we are not releasing them to go home, we make sure there and then that the case goes to the court because if you release the suspects, the case is as well as finished," he added.

Officer Commanding Station (OCS) for Ikungi Stephen Chaula called government officials at village and ward levels to ensure they stop settling the GBV cases in their areas.

Dr Suleiman Muttani, SPRF Managing Director said GBV cases reported in Ikungi District between March and November this year topped 48 with seven among them settled at family level.

He said his institution has identified many challenges when implementing its duties against acts of GBV, including very poor cooperation by victims to come up and give evidence on the reported cases, In addition, he said, some

village by-laws were not friendly, due to their requiring a complainant to pay the militiamen between 5,000/- and 10,000/- as inducement for them to go and arrest the suspect.

Patrick Kisango, Singida Region's Community Development Officer said he believes that if every person was accountable by taking appropriate steps against the incidents, GBV acts would be past history.



Rose Mgetta (3rd-L), acting Head Bishop of Dar es Salaam's Mikocheni B 'Mlima wa Moto' Assemblies of God Church, cuts ribbon yesterday to launch a 13-day period of prayers. Others (front row) include Rose Rwakatare (5th-L), Bishop Yohana Masinga of Dodoma (4th-L) and Kenya's Rev Paul Kuria. Photo: Selemani Mpochi

Mwinyi: Zanzibar govt will do its utmost to serve members of the business community

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi says his government will look for a new push in finding solutions to challenges facing the business sector.

Dr Mwinyi gave the remarks here at the weekend in his speech to the Zanzibar's members of the business community.

He said he wants to see close cooperation with the private sector and boost open debates that are beneficial in putting in place friendly environment for businessmen.

He said the government does not engage in business, it only creates good policies, laws, and having in place suitable regulatory restrictions, while business is conducted by private people.

He further said his vision was to see Zanzibar becoming a trading centre in the East African region due to its geographic environment which could also make it become a hub for trade, tourism, industry and as a

free port.

He also referred to his remarks to ministries' officials to make budgeted plans saying in every sector had its own procedure and in regard to road construction, the government will that responsibility.

He said the aim of the meeting was to honour his election campaign pledges to meet with business people to know the challenges they were facing and that for now he would work on all the challenges.

He told government officials that he had pledged to honour to the people for the com-

ing five years hence it was essential for them to speed up solving the existing challenges.

He said in regard to the ports, there was a big likelihood the project would be implemented in collaboration with the private sector.

He said there was a possibility to have a port for Zanzibar that would provide tourism services as well as fishing ports and oil terminals that would berth large ships that would distribute oil to other areas in East Africa.

He said the accomplish for





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RC cautions schools over cheating in examinations

By Guardian Reporter

SCHOOLS that cheat in examinations in order to be seen performing better have been cautioned to stop the practice at once because the country might end up with many educated people without needed qualifications.

Speaking at the weekend on behalf of Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner Abubakar Kunenge at the Second Graduation Ceremony of Ihsan secondary school that saw 87 students graduating, the Dar es Salaam Regional Education Officer Abdul Maulid said the government has mobilized itself to eradicate cheating in examinations in order to produce graduates that were employable.

"Our youth who complete their education from various schools belong to the government and when the fail to find employment, the whole blame is piled to the government, and not to the schools that produced cooked up pass marks," RC Kunenge said.

He praised Ihsan secondary school for well preparing their students in ethics and their devotion to God and called on

students to become good ambassadors to where they will go.

Kunenge said there was no short way for students to perform better than employing qualified teachers and for those from foreign countries they must abide by immigration procedures.

"The fifth phase government has made efforts to put in place an enabling environment for investors including in the education sector, hence it is the responsibility for the school to employ qualified teachers by following the procedures set down by the government," he added.

Dr Hashim Saiboko, the school's headmaster said he will continue working together closely with all government and private institutions to realise goals set by the government.

He said for now the school has 400 students while its infrastructures had been earmarked for 600 students hence, he called for parents to apply for vacancies for their children at the school.

Mbarouk Mansour, a student praised efforts by teachers on how they prepared them for the National form IV examinations a week ago.



Dar es Salaam regional education officer Abdul Maulid (L) presents an award to Mbarouk Mansour, one of the Form Four leavers of Dar es Salaam's Ihsan Islamic Seminary Secondary School, at graduation ceremony held at Kigamboni at the weekend. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

CSOs urge government to ratify ILO convention on violence and harassment

By Correspondent Joseph

Mwendapole

CIVIL Society Organisations and workers have urged the government to ratify the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on violence and harassment in the world of work.

They made the remarks during the weekend when speaking at a dialogue to end gender based violence (GBV) at work places organised by Women in Law

and Development Africa (WiLDAF). The meeting brought together workers, trade unions and civil society organisations.

The event was part of activities to mark the 16 days of activism against gender based violence (GBV) in Tanzania.

Tanzania national theme for 2020 is 'End Gender Based Violence - Change Begins With Me' while the global theme for this year's campaign is "Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect", highlighting

the increased need to address violence against women and provide essential services for survivors.

According to ILO the C 190 convention is already agreed by over 170 member states and that some of the member states have started the process to ratify it.

Devota Tweve from Young Alive Initiative said that ratifying the convention will help in reducing harassment that women experience when implementing their daily routines. She said that most women experi-

ence sexual harassment in their day to day activities.

"This convention is important because every person have the right to work without discrimination and be involved in any kind of harassment; women have for years been victims of this situation at work places. We must work together and raise voices to end GBV," she said

Tweve noted that people who came across any kind of harassment at work places get psychological problems which affect their per-

formance at home and work places.

"There are harassment which cannot be tolerated and someone can opt to quit the job to be on the safe side, we need to ratify the convention to enable people especially women to be free from the various forms of harassment," she said

Edina Rwezaura from the Tanzania Mines, Energy, Construction and Allied Workers Union (TAMICO) said that ratifying the convention will boost workers' working morale as well as

make them more confident.

She said once the convention is ratified workers especially women will no longer experience as employers will be aware of the ratified pact which protects women and at work places.

She said most workers especially women who are most vulnerable at their workplaces will be aware of the treaty and where to report the matter whenever they come across such kind of harassment.

"There are some people who get certain favor at work

places due to sexual corruption; with the convention in place, employers will give equal opportunities to all the workers," she said.

Johnbest Mwachaja from Youth Think Tank underscored the need to sensitize workers to know about the convention so that they can be aware of their rights.

He said it is also important for activists to continue raising voices through different platforms including social media to make sure the government starts the process to ratify the convention.

Enabel

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CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

LAKE TANGANYIKA WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECT

The Belgian Development Agency/ENABEL through the Lake Tanganyika Authority is implementing the Lake Tanganyika Water Management Project funded by the European Union in Burundi, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and Rwanda. In Tanzania, the project is partnering with the Kigoma/Ujiji Municipal Council to improve the viability and coverage of its solid waste management service. The project is now seeking a qualified and competent local consultant to help building and strengthening the organizational and legal capacities of the staff members of the department in charge of solid waste management at the Kigoma/Ujiji Municipal Council and the Community-based organizations engaged in the door-to-door pre-collection of solid waste. Local consultants with proven experience are called to express their interest.

More information for this assignment are available at: <https://latawama.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Call-for-manifestation-of-interest-Recruitment-of-a-local-consultant.pdf>

Coveted International ESQR Gold Prize lands in Tanzania

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

THE Tanzania National Park has been bestowed the top coveted International Gold Award for Best Practices from the European Society for Quality Research, in recognition for TANAPA's excellent services.

Speaking here the TANAPA Senior Assistant Conservation Commissioner in-charge of Communications, Paschal Shelutete said his institution topped the

Gold Category which listed more than 51 other organizations from 39 countries around the globe.

"The award is the result of TANAPA's outstanding and responsible conservation efforts as well as maintaining quality service delivery alongside proper marketing of Tanzanian destinations and country as whole," he said.

The Tanzanian Ambassador to Belgium, Jestas Nyamanga will be receiving the award on behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism at ESQR in Brussels.

The European Society for Quality Research (ESQR) recognizes and highlights outstanding business results, best practices, quality awareness and achievements by companies in regional and global markets. Through its recognition programs and awards, ESQR makes quality a top priority for the recognized organizations, regardless of their sector, size and location.

Tanzania National Parks oversees a total of 22 National Parks scattered across the country, with Serengeti National Park, which recently also won the World Travel Award, topping the bills as far as popularity is concerned.

TANAPA which is the only entity from the continent to win the top international gold prize, is also in charge of Africa's highest peak, the

Mount Kilimanjaro and the continent's largest conservation entity, the newly gazetted Nyerere National Park.

In another development, a statement from the European Society for Quality Research (ESQR), is to the effect that the European Award for Best Practices Convention which was to be held in Brussels on the 9th of December 2020 has been postponed due to ongoing International Travel restrictions.

Selected organizations, public administrations and companies from Europe, Asia, the Americas, Africa and Australia were to be handled with the European Awards for Best Practices in recognition of their best practices and results in quality management strategies.

Renowned business leaders from different countries, academic experts, quality professionals, civil servants and diplomats were also supposed to participate in the above ESQR 2020 Convention before being shelved.

Bringing together the best professionals, organizations, public administrations and companies in the field of Quality, the European Society for Quality Research (ESQR), through its recognition program, is committed to recognize the best practices and spread the Quality Culture by engaging business leaders to have more active role in it.

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KATIKA MAHAKAMA KUU YA TANZANIA
KANDA YA DAR ES SALAAM

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ANGALIA: Kama usipohudhuria siku iliyotajwa hapo juu na Mahakama ikithibitisha kuwa umepokea taarifa hii ya kuitwa shaurini, basi shauri linaweza kusikilizwa na kuamuliwa bila uwepo wako.

HATI hii imetolewa kwa AMRI yangu na CHAPA ya Mahakama hii leo tarehe 04 Mwezi DESEMBER, 2020.

THE HIGH COURT OF TANZANIA
NAZIBU MSAJILI
MAHAKAMA KUU - DAR ES SALAAM

The award is the result of TANAPA's outstanding and responsible conservation efforts as well as maintaining quality service delivery alongside proper marketing of Tanzanian destinations and country as whole



Ayubu Kalufya (R), Vodacom Tanzania Plc's Lake Victoria zone head of sales, pictured at Biharamulo bus terminal in Kagera Region at the weekend presenting a car to Happiness Manembe Apollo after she emerged first winner of the firm's 'Shangwe Shangwena' promotion. Under the ongoing marketing campaign, lucky M-Pesa customers win cars and other prizes worth more than 5bn/-. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

TBL wins NBAA's award for quality presentation of financial statements

By Guardian Reporter

TBL Plc was a big winner at the National Board of Accountants and Auditors (NBAA) Best Presented Financial Statements Awards where it was a runner up for the Best Presented Financial Statements for the year 2019 in manufacturing category. This marks another big win for TBL Plc which has won this prestigious award numerous times.

Dr. Charles Mwamaja, Commissioner of Finance Development sector from Ministry of Finance, was the Guest of Honour at this year's event which was held in Dar es Salaam over the weekend.

Following the awards ceremony, TBL Plc Managing Director, Philip Redman said, "This is a proud moment for TBL Plc as this award is a reflection of all the hard work that our staff and business partners put in to making TBL Plc a great company."

Across the spectrum, TBL Plc is renowned for being one of the most compliant companies in Tanzania that continuously provides value to all its stakeholders from its use of locally-sourced brewing ingredients to

its global award-winning beers that are the nation's preferred brands.

TBL Plc is the nation's largest brewer, has invested significantly in world class manufacturing processes, its people and continues to empower its entire supply chain.

The Group's contribution to the development of Tanzania through the collection and payment of taxes, as well as community-based initiatives, continues to be recognized by multiple stakeholders in the country through the various accolades accorded to the company.



This is a proud moment for TBL Plc as this award is a reflection of all the hard work that our staff and business partners put in to making TBL Plc a great company

Produce financial quality reports, accounting and auditing firms told

By Getrude Mbago

ACCOUNTING and auditing firms have been urged to invest in producing quality financial reports so as to promote compliance and attract more potential investors who can contribute immensely in the economic growth.

Speaking during the closing of the three-day Accountant's Annual Conference in Dar es Salaam during the weekend Dr Charles Mwamwaja, Commissioner for Financial Sector Development in the Ministry of Finance and Planning said that the quality of information and how

it is presented is vital in allowing users to make well-informed decisions.

He urged accounting and auditing firms to conduct their activities faithfully and legally and avoid facilitating fraud by producing false financial statements, something which affects the health and stability of the country's financial system.

Mwamwaja said that responsible financial reporting contributes significantly to ensuring that financial information put out by the entities is reliable and enables investors to make informed decisions as they participate in the capital markets.

"Firms should ensure that the quality of their financial statements becomes the foremost thing to consider for their progress," he said.

He further said: "Any professional accountant should remain impartial and loyal to ethical guidelines when reviewing a company or individual's financial records for reporting purposes, manipulating financial records if allowed will affect the industrialisation process."

"I understand that one of the topics that you covered during the three-day conference concerns the digital economy which is now not an option but rather

an important and critical issue for growth and prosperity and you learned on how you can add value to the technology driven enterprise," Mwamwaja said.

Organised by the National Board of Accountants and Auditors (NBAA), the three-day conference brought together over 3000 professionals from various public and private organisations inside and outside the country.

The event also went along with awards giving to the best presented financial statements of the year 2019.

During the event, Tanzania Revenue Authority

(TRA) and Tanga Cement PLC emerged the overall winners of the best presented financial statement for the year 2019 using the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) respectively.

The NBAA executive director, Pius Maneno said awards seek to promote integrated reporting through enhancing accountability, transparency and integrity in compliance with appropriate financial reporting framework.

"One of the achievements of this competition includes improved financial

reporting through feedback provided to all participating entities. In this regard, the board will continue encouraging more institutions to participate," he said.

He further said that the board will continue strengthening its efforts with the professional colleges in the country to ensure that they enroll more graduates.

Prof Isaya Jairo, NBAA chairman, said the best presented financial statements awards event was introduced to improve the presentation and content of annual reports and encourage entities to go be-

yond minimum reporting requirements.

"This is the best platform for promoting professionalism and excellence in the presentation of financial statements of companies."

The award, held as the ultimate gauge for financial reporting process among companies in the country and which passes through a rigorous screening system overseen by seasoned judges with diverse backgrounds, involves companies using the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IP-SAS).

Dar es Salaam based-Open Kitchen firm supports Sinza Special School

By Guardian

Reporter

THE Dar es Salaam based-Open Kitchen Company has supported Sinza Special School with construction materials and cash worth 11m/- so as to construct modern toilets to cater the needs of children with disabilities at the school.

Executive director of the company Upendo Mwalongo told journalists yesterday during the annual event to celebrate the "Amka Twende" project implemented by the firm.

She noted that various reports point out that a favourable learning and teaching environment is vital in improving children's performance in schools.

According to her, the special school faces a number of challenges including shortage of quality toilets to accommodate children with disabilities.

"The Amka Twende is a special initiative

aimed to help address challenges facing vulnerable communities including empowering women to be able to stand for their dreams, so in the Sinza Special School, we have purchased some materials as well as cash to facilitate the construction of the latrines," she said.

Mwalongo said that the project also seeks to encourage patriotism and make Tanzanians value locally-made goods and services.

The head teacher of the Sinza Special school which is located in Kinondoni District, Dar es

Salaam, Catherine Msese commended Open Kitchen for their support which is going to improve the school's environment and attract children to concentrate on their studies.

"The school has 63 pupils, due to their mental disorders; they face challenges in learning, me and my team have been working hard to ensure that we take good care of these children so as to enable them enjoy their learning journey and thus achieve their dreams," she said.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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Closure date: 15th December 2020

If you need help, or have queries, please contact: Careers@fao.org FAO

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RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT

Consultancy services to conduct research on the role of youth led change in community development Tanzania.

Background

Restless Development is a global agency for youth-led development. Since 1985, the agency has been working with young people supporting them to demand and deliver a just and sustainable world for all. Restless Development works to ensure young people have a voice, a living, sexual rights and are leaders in preventing and solving the world's challenges. We listen to young people, our work is led by young people and together we help young people make lasting change in their communities.

While delivering our youth-led approaches, we are often asked: 'Why youth-led development? What does involving young people in delivering programmes, informing conversations, and influencing others bring?' We believe that our work and the young leaders whom we partner with speak for themselves. However, to date, we have not had a well-evidenced, rigorous answer to this question - and neither, we've found, do others who work through youth-led approaches. As part of our FY 20/21, we would hope to use some of our Sida Core fund support to develop a robust answer to these questions. By doing so, we hope to inform our own future programming as well as those who want to maximize the value that youth leadership can bring

The Research Focus

There is a wealth of information that we already have documented - in M&E data, in programme documents, in activity reports, in monthly reports, in quarterly reports, etc. - but there has never before been a dedicated investment towards aggregating this information at a global and strategic level, unpacking these 'how' questions. So, the primary method that this research will employ is a systematic desk-based evidence review.

Submission of Proposals

- Detailed terms of reference for this assignment can be downloaded at our website www.restlessdevelopment.org/country/tanzania

- All queries should be directed to jobstanzania@restlessdevelopment.org by 11th Dec 2020.

The deadline for submission of the Proposals is Sunday 20th December, 2020 at 17.00 hrs.

The Guardian

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MONDAY 7 DECEMBER 2020

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

We need more effective strategies bigger push in fighting corruption

INTERNATIONAL Anti-Corruption Day has been observed annually, on 9 December. Both grand and petty corruption are serious problems in Tanzania yet various comprehensive laws are in place to prevent corruption. It is largely due to a weak internal control and low or non-compliance with anti-corruption regulations within different government agencies. For instance, public procurement, taxation, and customs service are areas that are prone to corruption.

Foreign companies have identified that corruption within those sectors poses potential obstacles for doing business in Tanzania as bribes are often demanded. It is also believed that the existing large informal sector, 48.1 per cent of GDP, is associated with cumbersome business registration process which has created opportunities for corruption.

President John Magufuli launched a campaign against grand corruption and established a special court to handle the matter.

As a result, corrupt officials have been fired. These efforts and similar projects are internationally supported by Germany and the European Union. There are fears that such anti-corruption efforts will end when President Magufuli steps down.

Corruption is a form of dishonesty or criminal offence undertaken by a person or organisation entrusted with a position of authority, to acquire

illicit benefit or abuse power for one's private gain. Corruption may include many activities including bribery and embezzlement, though it may also involve practices that are legal in many countries.

Political corruption occurs when an office-holder or other governmental employee acts in an official capacity for personal gain. Corruption is most common place in kleptocracies, oligarchies, narco-states and mafia states.

Corruption can occur on different scales, corruption ranges from small favours between a small number of people (petty corruption), to corruption that affects the government on a large scale (grand corruption), and corruption that is so prevalent that it is part of the everyday structure of society, including corruption as one of the symptoms of organised crime.

Corruption and crime are endemic sociological occurrences which appear with regular frequency in virtually all countries on a global scale in varying degree and proportion. Individual nations each allocate domestic resources for the control and regulation of corruption and crime.

Strategies to counter corruption are often summarised under the umbrella term anti-corruption.

Additionally, global initiative like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 also has a target to substantially reduce corruption of all forms.

World ought to stand together in saving humankind from genocide, war crimes

THIS Wednesday (9 December) will be the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, as well as the 72nd anniversary of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the "Genocide Convention"), the first human rights treaty adopted by the General Assembly.

The Convention signifies the international community's commitment to "never again" and provides the first international legal definition of "genocide," widely adopted at national and international levels. It also establishes a duty for state parties to prevent and punish the crime of genocide.

This year's event, in line with the UN75 initiatives and commitments to promote peace and prevent conflicts, and the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, and honouring the victims of genocide, aims at listening to their voices and discussing the impact of international justice responses, including criminal justice and reparations, on empowering victims and preventing further atrocity crimes. International judges and experts will also share their experiences in granting justice for victims of genocide and related crimes, in the pursuit of peace and stability and preventing the recurrence of these crimes.

To prevent genocide and genocidal conflicts, it is critically important to understand their root causes. While conflict has many causes, genocidal conflict is identity-based.

Genocide and related atrocities tend to occur in societies

with diverse national, racial, ethnic or religious groups that are locked in identity-related conflicts. It is not simply differences in identity, whether real or perceived, that generate conflict, but the implication of those differences in terms of access to power and wealth, services and resources, employment, development opportunities, citizenship and the enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms. These conflicts are fomented by discrimination, hate speech inciting violence and other violations of human rights.

In terms of prevention, the critical step is to identify the factors (discriminatory practices) in a given situation that lead to or account for acute disparities in the treatment of a diverse population, and to seek ways to diminish and eventually eradicate these possible causes of genocidal violence. Given that no country is perfectly homogeneous, genocide is a truly global challenge.

At the 2005 World Summit, member states committed to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, as well as their incitement.

They agreed that when States require assistance to fulfill that responsibility, the international community must be ready to assist them and, when States manifestly fail to protect their populations from those crimes, the international community must be ready to take action, collectively, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

Intervention only happens when prevention fails. Therefore, prevention is the basis of the principle of the responsibility to protect.

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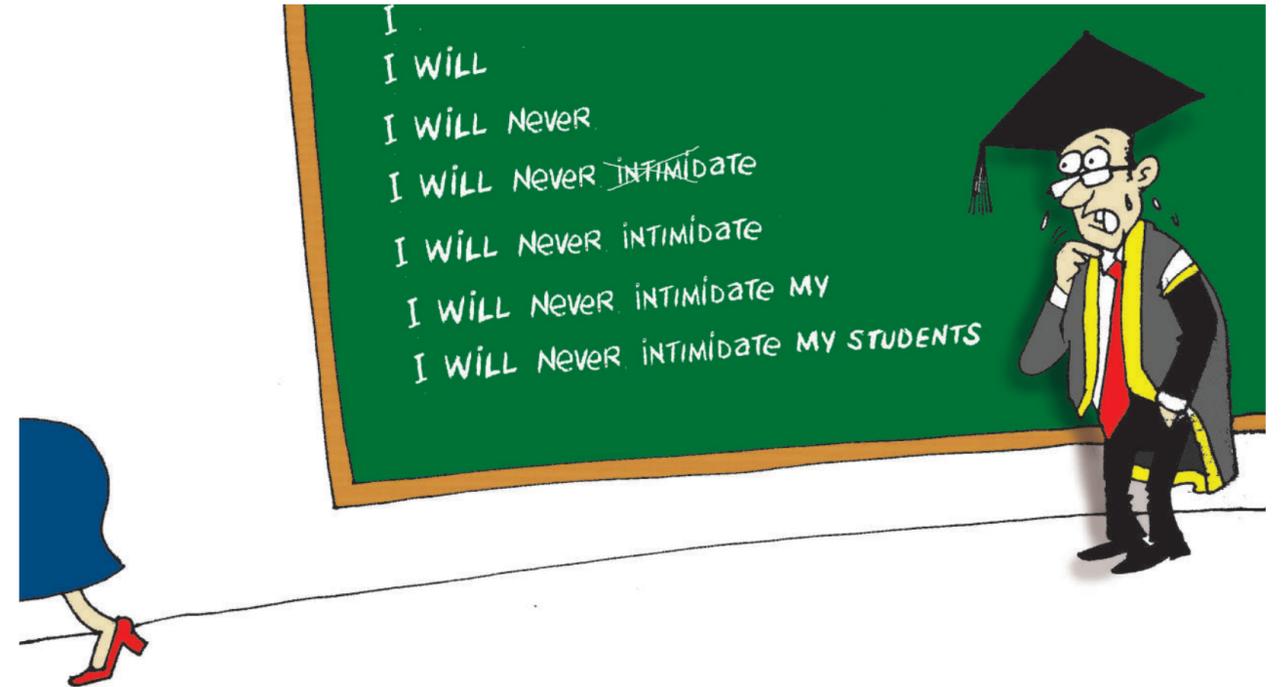
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Somali women's inclusion in politics long overdue

By Dr Hodan S. Isse and Sagal B.H. Musa

SOMALI women are exhausted of not being heard and side-lined at every opportunity, especially when they know that they can be pivotal players in the political arena.

There is little doubt that women in Somalia have played a significant role in keeping the country afloat through decades of conflict and disaster.

They are productive contributors to the economy through their petty trades and small businesses. They are often the sole providers for their families, peace builders in communities and caretakers of both the youth and the elderly.

And yet while they have played a prominent role in revitalizing the economy and bringing a sense of stability in their communities, they have also paid a heavy price.

Many have been forced from their homes due to violence and natural disasters such as droughts and forced to live in displacement camps.

Women in Somalia also suffer high maternal mortality rates, lack education, have little access to capital or finance, have no social protections and are often victims of violence.

According to the United Nations, Somalia has high rates of gender violence, including rape and female genital mutilation (FGM). Around 98% have undergone FGM, the UN says.

It is therefore time for



women to be included in the political fabric of the country in a more meaningful way so that they can serve in the best interests of the nation.

Inclusive politics is essential for women to empower themselves. Somali women want to take bold steps to improve their lives. However, without policies to ensure this is attainable, sustainable and enforceable, this will not happen.

Somalia is expected to hold elections in February 2021, and it is key that women are now given a seat at the table.

Women currently hold 24% of the 329 seats in Somalia's lower and upper houses of parliament - it is crucial that 30% of the seats in government are reserved for women ahead of the elections.

Until now, the term "women empowerment" has been used by male politicians when they want to praise women without giving them real equity by providing them an actual voice.

Recognizing women's contribution

by more inclusion in politics would acknowledge the important role they dominantly play in Somali society.

There is large empirical evidence that gender neutral boards at large business firms outperform boards with no women. It has also become evident that women-led countries have outperformed in containing the COVID-19 pandemic.

And it is also an undeniable fact that women represented equitably in government roles have a track record of better governance and economic development. Women build bridges, they are concerned for future generations, they water the seeds of the nation and are less likely to extract and deplete resources until there is nothing left.

Women will work towards policies of equitable resource sharing, affordable healthcare, quality education, access to finance, safety nets for the vulnerable, and will further economic development policies to support the youth.

These policies will allow communities to liberate themselves from the devastating shackles of extreme poverty that Somalia continues to face and have fully addressed in a systematic way.

Social justice is at the core of Islamic teachings and it is time for women to be treated fairly and provided the necessary rights and protections that they deserve. Somali women are exhausted of not being heard and side-lined at every opportunity, especially when they know that they can be pivotal players in the political arena.

It is time for Somali women to have their moment in sun.

Dr. Hodan Isse is the Clinical Assistant Professor Emeritus at Finance and Economics School of Management University of Buffalo.

Sagal B.H. Musa is a managing director of BHM Holding, Ltd, one of the largest FPCs in Somalia with a focus on East Africa real estate development and private equity investments.

Promoting ecotourism!

By Special Correspondent

ECOTOURISM is catering for tourists wishing to experience the natural environment without damaging it or disturbing its habitats. It is a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and relatively undisturbed natural areas, intended as a low-impact and often small scale alternative to standard commercial mass tourism.

It means responsible travel to natural areas, conserving the environment, and improving the well-being of the local people. Its purpose may be to educate the traveler, to provide funds for ecological conservation, to directly

benefit the economic development and political empowerment of local communities, or to foster respect for different cultures and for human rights.

Since the 1980s, ecotourism has been considered a critical endeavor by environmentalists, so that future generations may experience destinations relatively untouched by human intervention. Several university programmes use this description as the working definition of ecotourism.

Generally, ecotourism deals with interaction with biotic components of the natural environments.[4] Ecotourism focuses on socially responsible travel, personal growth,

and environmental sustainability. Ecotourism typically involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions.

Ecotourism is intended to offer tourists an insight into the impact of human beings on the environment and to foster a greater appreciation of our natural habitats.

Responsible ecotourism programs include those that minimize the negative aspects of conventional tourism on the environment and enhance the cultural integrity of local people.

Therefore, in addition to evaluating environmental and cultural factors, an integral part of ecotourism

is the promotion of recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation, and creation of economic opportunities for local communities.[5] For these reasons, ecotourism often appeals to advocates of environmental and social responsibility.

Many consider the term "ecotourism", like "sustainable tourism", an oxymoron.

Like most forms of tourism, ecotourism generally depends on air transportation, which contributes to global climate change. Additionally, "the overall effect of sustainable tourism is negative where like ecotourism philanthropic aspirations mask hard-nosed immediate self-interest."

Why fixing South Africa's patent laws is necessary in fight against HIV

By Umunyana Rugege

COVID-19 is a global health crisis and one that affects working-class and poor people disproportionately. People's lives are at stake. The world needs governments, multi-lateral institutions, and industry to take bold steps that prioritise the needs of vulnerable populations above profits and above nationalism. Sound familiar? We discussed this around the early 2000s, in relation to the HIV epidemic.

We have won many battles in the fight against HIV in South Africa over the past two decades, from the 2002 Constitutional Court victory in the mother-to-child-transmission case that enabled the state to expand this important intervention; to victories driven by activists, people living with HIV, unions and others that stopped the excessive pricing of HIV treatment by pharmaceutical companies using competition law; to now managing the largest HIV programme in the world with the lowest cost drugs.

But even so, we still have not taken advantage of the opportunities in international trade law to deal effectively with harmful monopolies across all disease areas.

South Africa's patent law has not been changed since the 1970s. This is inexcusable given that in the interim, we established a constitutional democracy that places obligations on the state to take necessary legislative and other measures to progressively realise the right to health. We know how patent laws and the lack of competition drives up prices of life-saving medicines. We learnt that lesson decades ago.

For more than a decade, activists in South Africa have been pressing the government to reform the country's patent regime.

A long and meandering policy process, which sought the input of a vast array of stakeholders from industry, civil society and with the support of think tanks around the world, has resulted in a policy adopted by cabinet in 2018 that properly balances intellectual property and public health. This was a victory for the movement for equitable access to affordable medicines. But more is needed - changes in policy mean little if not manifested in law.

The Fix the Patent Laws Coalition (FTPL), a group of over 40 organisations working to reform South Africa's patent laws has called for the urgent finalisation of draft amendments to the Patents Act to ensure that the government has the tools to address all public health issues. The



urgency and importance of this has been brought into stark relief during the COVID-19 pandemic.

And let's not forget the ongoing struggle faced by many people with cancer to access medicines that may save or extend their lives - as much of an issue now as it was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. But fixing South Africa's patent laws is also critically important for addressing the HIV epidemic. There are 7.6 million people living with HIV in South Africa. That is roughly 13% of the population - 4.8 million women and 2.5 million men. Young women continue to bear the brunt of this epidemic and continue to face dis-

crimination and stigma and also face poverty and the burden of unpaid care work. It is critical that second line treatment and new treatments are available in the public health sector.

Exciting new research means we may soon have an HIV prevention injection, which, if accessible, will be a major breakthrough for women in South Africa. Affordability is key, however, and that means that we must ensure that the legal environment can respond to public health needs. The same issues will arise with other new HIV treatments that are found to be safe and effective, whether it is other forms of long-acting antiretroviral treatment, potential antibody treatments, or if things go really well, a vaccine or a cure.

As new drugs for HIV and TB are developed and health technologies for COVID-19 become available, we

must ensure that we meet the challenge in line with the constitutional right to access health care services. When it comes down to it, we cannot allow people to die while treatments that may save their lives remain out of reach because of legal obstacles.

The South African government has shown exemplary leadership on the world stage on matters of public health.

For example, the government has proposed a coronavirus waiver of intellectual property at the World Trade Organisation to ensure that developing and middle-income countries are not left behind while wealthy nations secure deals with pharmaceutical companies, and that monopolies do not stand in the way of widespread African access to COVID-19 vaccines. This is the kind of solidarity that helped turn the HIV epidemic around.

But it is time for our exemplary leadership on the world stage to be mirrored at home. Addressing intellectual property barriers in our domestic laws is critical to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and to address the pressing HIV, TB, and cancer burden. This is why the Fix the Patent Laws Campaign has called on Minister Ebrahim Patel and President Cyril Ramaphosa to act with urgency to ensure that South Africa has an intellectual property regime that ensures equitable access to life-saving vaccines and medicines. We have waited long enough.

China improves multi-level system to take better care of elderly people

By Qiu Chaoyi

SINCE China entered an aging society at the end of the 20th century, the number of elderly people and their proportion in the total population of China have continued to grow.

From 2000 to 2019, the elderly population aged 60 and above increased from 126 million to 253.88 million, and the proportion of the elderly population in the total population increased from 10.2 percent to 18.1 percent.

China has the largest aging population in the world, and the problem of population aging will become more serious in the foreseeable future.

Effectively responding to population aging will not only improve the quality of life and living standards of the elderly and safeguard their dignity and rights, but also promote economic development and social harmony.

Currently, more than 90 percent of the Chinese elderly choose to spend their later years at home and community-based elderly care centers.

How to ensure that these seniors can receive professional care services? Beijing has offered a solution with the model of its "fenceless" community-based nursing homes.

By introducing platforms such as professional elderly care institutions, housekeeping companies, shopping malls and supermarkets, and volunteer organizations, communities in Beijing provide elderly care services for sen-

iors at their communities and homes, significantly improving their quality of life.

An 86-year-old woman surnamed Jiang is among the people who benefit from the elderly care model. Living in Yuetan neighborhood in the city's Xicheng district, Jiang is hardly mobile and has difficulty feeding and bathing herself.

"Many thanks to the help of Ren Wuying, who I can rely on for any possible trouble," Jiang said. Ren is a professional nursing worker of a nursing home at Jiang's community.

Spending time together with Jiang when she was down in the dumps and taking care of her for a long time, Ren has forged a deep friendship with Jiang.

"She is always one call away even when she is having a meal," Jiang said, adding that Ren is on intimate terms with her.

This is one of those "fenceless nursing homes" in Yuetan neighborhood. In 2019, nine nursing homes in Yuetan offered services such as day care, medical assistance, meal assistance, bath assistance, and recreational activities to over 160,000 person-times of seniors at 26 communities.

"It was a challenging task to meet residents' demand for elderly care at some communities with a large aging population, few elderly care resources, and senior residents on relatively low income," said Yu Rui, deputy director of Yuetan neighborhood citizen service center.

Now the problem can be



Home-based and community-based elderly care centers set up canteens to provide convenient services for senior residents at communities in Tongling, east China's Anhui province.

easily solved by integrating home-based and community-based elderly care services and services of elderly care institutions, Yu noted.

In 2019, China had over 180 million elderly citizens suffering from chronic diseases, of whom 75 percent had more than one. Although the average life expectancy of Chinese people currently reached 77 years, people still suffer from a high prevalence of diseases and have to live with diseases.

Therefore, the integration of medical and elderly care is the answer to how to improve the living quality of senior citizens with diseases. A 76-year-old woman surnamed Wu in Beijing understands the issue too well. "I suffer from prolonged illnesses, including cardiovascular diseases, and had a cerebral infarction," she explained.

Six years ago, Wu moved to Dongli nursing home in the city's Changping district. Beijing Longfu Hospital adjacent to the facility dispelled her worries about possible recurrence of her diseases, as the hospital cooperates with the nursing home. Therefore, it's convenient for senior nursing home residents to see a doctor immediately and swipe their medical insurance cards to pay relevant fees. Wu suddenly had a frog in her throat and

was choked by water one month ago. After checking her medical history, doctors from the hospital immediately did magnetic resonance imaging or MRI scans for her and found that she had mild cerebral infarction.

Fortunately, her physical mobility was almost unimpaired thanks to early detection and treatment.

"I didn't want to sleep in the ward at night, so I came back to the nursing home," Wu smiled, acclaiming the integration of medical and elderly care. More and more seniors receive integrated elderly care and medical services at their own communities.

At Xiaocixuan elderly care center in Yuxiu district of Guangzhou, south China's Guangdong province, Wen Xiaoni, a doctor from Baiyunjie community health service center, is seen carrying out a physical examination for a 94-year-old man Yu Shixiong. "You have done a good job controlling your blood sugar levels," Wen said and turned around to tell a nurse to reduce four units of insulin every day for Yu.

"The average age of seniors at our elderly care center reaches 87, and most of them suffer from chronic diseases," said Li Min, deputy head of the Xiaocixuan elderly care center.

To enhance the integration of medical and elderly care, the nurs-

ing home has signed a service contract with the community health service center, and worked with nearby first-class hospitals at grade 3, the top level in China, including Guangdong Provincial People's Hospital, so that seniors suddenly hit by a critical illness can be immediately transferred to these hospitals through a "green channel", according to Li.

After several years of efforts, China has made positive progress in building an elderly care service system.

Zhao Chenxin, deputy secretary general of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), said the country has continuously increased the investment in building the elderly care service system.

The NDRC has invested more than 12 billion yuan (\$1.83 billion) from the central budget to support the building of the elderly care service system during the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020), Zhao added.

Going forward, China will continue to address inadequacies in elderly care services and enhance the quality of service from the perspectives of policy support, talent training and stronger regulations, so as to consolidate the policy system for the development of the elderly care industry.

In the long run, improving the multi-level elderly care system will boost the "silver economy." He Xiaofeng, chairman of Dajia Insurance Group, believes that the building of a multi-level elderly care service system has great potential in meeting the demand for elderly care and creating jobs.

He added that vigorously developing elderly care services is not only an important measure to meet the basic living needs of people but also a significant means to support China's domestic circulation.

People's Daily

For grave rights concerns, truth should not be casualty of conflict

By Special Correspondent

MAY-KADRA is the latest in a spat of violence committed against civilians across many parts of Ethiopia over the past two years. Located close by the junction of a border with Sudan and Eritrea, it is a dusty town in the far western part of Tigray Regional State where the massacre of 600 civilians was reported this month. Who actually did such a despicable crime after forces of the Federal Defence and Tigray regional government clashed remains unclear, with claims and counterclaims coming out of each side.

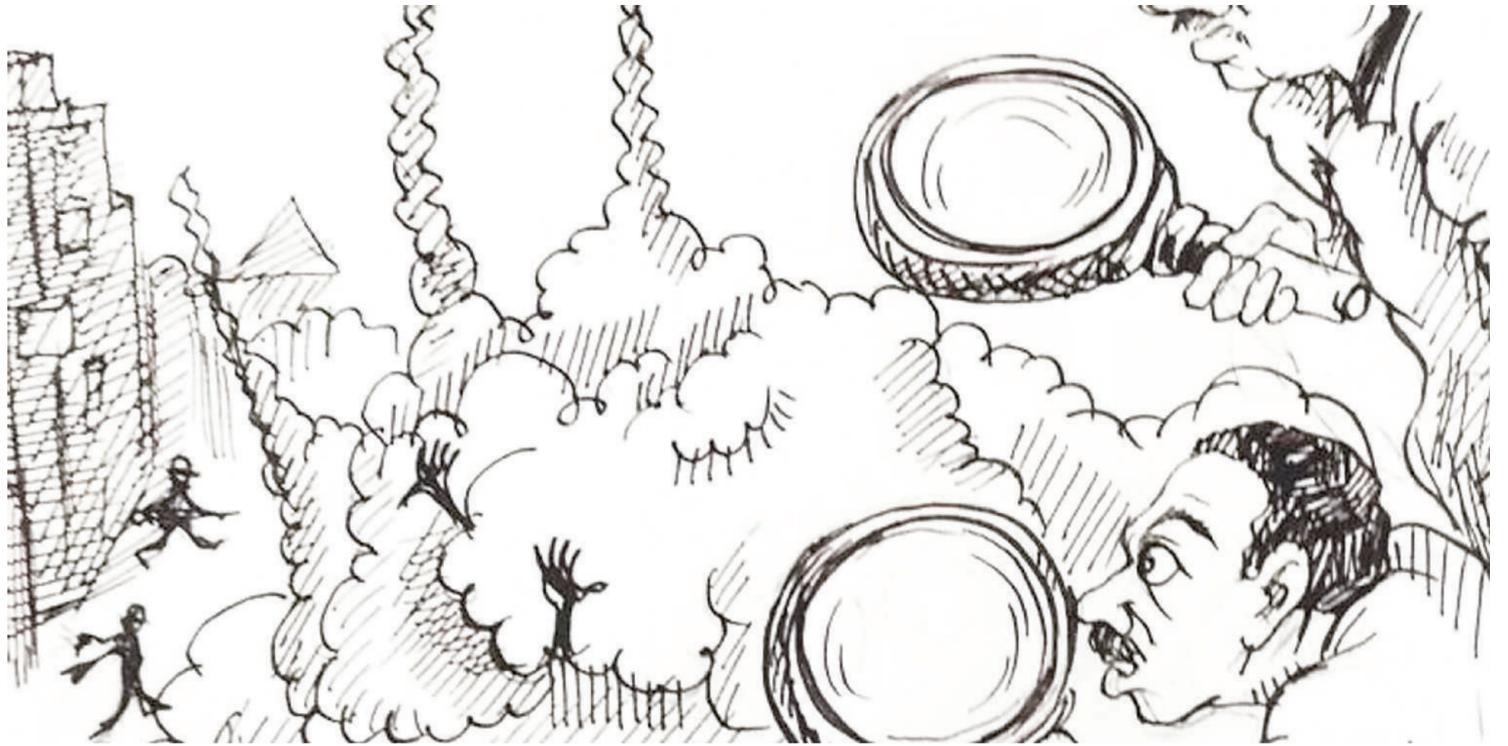
Both sides in the armed conflict continued to preach the righteousness of their cause and rested the responsibility for the conflict on their opponent. They both claim victory in the battlefields while remaining mute over the regrettable casualties their respective forces are bound to suffer. After all, this is an armed conflict in which the full forces of military units are deployed - from infantry to air force and mechanised divisions. However, the total communications blackout in the Tigray region has not helped, making it impossible to ascertain many of the claims. It instead created the perfect environment for the truth to become a casualty, as the old adage goes.

It is almost impractical to fault the parties for this, especially once the conflict has begun, and amenable conditions for a ceasefire are not on the table as far as either side is concerned. Truth is a weapon in itself. How it is framed and utilised is part of the tactics in the contestation, no less potent from the battlefields. Any strategist would ensure that the revelation of truth is not made to interfere with the objectives of the military operation. Truth can affect strict military norms, betray strategies and impact morale.

As Chris Cleave, a British writer and journalist, once put it, "What was war, after all, but morale in helmets and jeeps?"

This relationship to truth in a time of conflict explains partly why both sides only comment on what is going right in their military operation from their respective perspectives. It is also why the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the governing party in the Tigray Regional State, only admitted the loss of control of towns after the trickle of photos, videos and some independent reporting made it to social and mainstream media.

Still, not all is fair in love and war. Even in the instances where armed conflict is justified - and it rarely is - crimes against humanity are acts with accountability before the international community. This is true both from a moral stand-



point as well as established international laws on armed conflict. Already, charges of war crimes have been levelled against each side. From disturbing reports by Amnesty International and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission to gruesome accounts of refugees in Sudan, it has been established that hundreds of civilians were found brutally murdered in May-Kadra. These are acts that could lead to war crimes.

The preliminary report by the Commission under Daniel Bekele is a harrowing account of a violation of the laws of armed conflict: attacks against a civilian population not taking part in hostilities. The perpetrators are alleged to be forces loyal to the TPLF, according to witness accounts gathered by the Commission. The leadership of the TPLF nonetheless has denied responsibility. Media reports based on the accounts of refugees that have fled to Sudan attribute these acts of violence to militias attached to Amhara Regional State. Where the truth lies is impossible to pinpoint without an international investigation.

Armed conflict is ugly; directed against civilians, it is uglier still. Investigating them is critical for any healing or political settlement to take place in the aftermath.

Having incensed the public, who are rightly outraged, it requires a thorough investigation. The Commission's report in highlighting the details of the atrocity

committed is encouraging, and a follow-up investigation by the African Commission on Human & Peoples' Rights to be carried out, even more so.

Also of importance is the allegation by the federal government of an attack against disarmed members of the Northern Command, at the start of the conflict, by the forces of the TPLF. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) charged that in the town of Shiraro, in the Northwestern part of the region, the TPLF "massacred" unarmed members of the National Defence Forces. If proven, this too would be another violation of the law of armed conflict, which prohibits attacks against combatants that are unarmed or no longer possess the ability to engage in battle. This would qualify in the case of the alleged killing in Shiraro, given that they were found with their hands and legs tied to muffle movement, according to the Prime Minister.

Those who are responsible should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

A fact-finding mission composed of members that command a certain level of credibility due to their impartiality and expertise, which are usually international rights institutions, should be deployed and provided with access to verify these claims. The world is calling out both sides to cooperate in allowing access to a team of an international investigation, a call neither side should frustrate if it believes truth is with their side. The call for "an independent and impartial inquiry commission to investigate" is one of the 15 resolutions motioned on Thursday before the European Parliament.

Denying access to international scrutiny in the guise of a sovereign right would be against international norms and the Constitutive Act of the African

Union Article 4 (h) Ethiopia signed.

No less worrying, there have also been charges made against the federal government in its military operation, including indiscriminate bombings that led to the loss of civilian life and the denial of humanitarian access in the region. The latter should not be a point for contention. A region that requires imports of food and fuel to meet demand would be hard-pressed to avoid a humanitarian crisis if left to its devices without transportation lines open.

It is incumbent upon the federal government to provide access for humanitarian aid to pass through, including in areas under the control of forces of the TPLF. It is a message the international community has rightly been consistent in stressing, including the European Union (EU).

"International Humanitarian Law needs to be upheld," Josep Borrell, high representative of the EU, said after his meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Demekle Mekonnen. "On behalf of the EU, I have called for safe and free movement and protection of civilians, vulnerable groups and IDPs."

It is just as critical that indiscriminate attacks are avoided. It is indeed against international law of armed conflict to "render certain points, areas or military forces immune from military operations" by utilising the presence of civilian populations if this is indeed what the TPLF leaders are aiming to do. This is a law against human shields, and indeed becomes a worrying prospect as federal troops advance on the most densely populated eastern parts of the Tigray region, such as Meqelle, the seat of the Tigray Regional State administration.

In the same token, the federal government's response could be indiscriminate if it employs tactics that will make it impossible to discriminate against

military targets from a civilian population. The allegation that the TPLF leadership is using civilians in Tigray as human shields, even if true, does not give it free rein to respond in a manner that inflicts heavy casualties on the civilian population. Here, the principle of non-reciprocity comes into play.

Humanitarian law is to be respected under all circumstances, even when it is believed that the other side is acting irresponsibly in its treatment of the lives of the people in the areas it occupies. The obligation to minimise and discriminate falls on the shoulders of the party that takes the shot as well as the opponent that is using human shields.

"Great care will be given to protect innocent civilians from harm," Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said in a statement announcing the launch of what he said would be the final phase of the military operation. "All precautions will be taken to ensure that heritage sites, places of worship, public facilities, development institutions and residential areas will not be targets." History will hold him up to his words in the developments that are yet to come.

For now though, the world is urging both sides to cease active conflict. But the viable response is through dialogue and mediation.

How compliance ecosystem helps prevent corporate failure

By Michael Katz

COMPLIANCE by company boards and management, particularly in the case of complex companies with cross-border activities, requires monitoring by an entire ecosystem.

Following a corporate failure the usual questions are asked: What went wrong? Who was at fault? More often than not a finger is pointed at the auditors. Is that fair? Sometimes the attribution of responsibility to the auditors is correct. On other occasions, one or more of the other role-players in the total compliance ecosystem must bear the blame. The purpose of this article is to identify all of the role-players in the compliance ecosystem, to specify each of their responsibilities in preventing corporate failures, the consequences of which are devastating to the market, investors, employees and creditors. It is important to appreciate factors which companies operate against - complexity, cross-border activities, regulators, new technology and a multiplicity of stakeholders.

The law

More often than not, after a catastrophic corporate failure, questions are raised about the adequacy of the law. South African company law, in respect

of its substance, procedures and remedies, ranks among the best in the world. Laws and regulations that regulate companies and their officers, such as the Banks Act and Financial Markets Act, are also highly comparable with their peers in other jurisdictions. In the case of state-controlled companies, the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act apply. It imposes strict duties on directors and management.

Corporate governance - codes of good practice

A mistaken belief exists that corporate governance, including codes of good practice, is a topic distinct from corporate law. That is erroneous. The foundation is the law. Codes of good practice contain principles designed to ensure better implementation of the requirements of the law.

Whilst I support the principles of King IV, I stress that the three essential requirements of good governance are:

- Full disclosure - as the eminent US jurist Louis Brandeis remarked in his book *Other People's Money*, "Sunlight is the best policeman; electric light the best disinfectant";
- A culture of healthy dissent in the organisation, from the chairman down; and
- Non-executive directors who have a good knowledge of the business of the com-



pany, failing which they are captive to management and unable to discharge their role of being an essential filter of management's performance and conduct.

The regulators

The regulators include the Prudential Authority, the Market Conduct Authority, the JSE and the Takeover Regulation Panel. They contribute to the content of the law, including obligatory standards of conduct and, in appropriate cases, must approve the appointment of directors and senior managers. They also exercise an important role in enforcement.

They do not have the power, nor should they, to prescribe the business model nor to regulate on purely commercial issues.

There are a number of specialist regulators, such as the Independent Regulatory Board of Auditors which has a vital supervisory role over auditors.

Enforcement of the law

Having opined that the relevant law is more than adequate, the focus turns towards the adequacy of its enforcement. Unfortunately, problems do arise in this sphere. A committee of the US Senate, which was vested with identifying the causes of white-collar crime, evaluated the extent to which the justice system acted as

a deterrent to would-be perpetrators. In order of effectiveness, the deterrents were:

- The fear of detection and being apprehended;
- The fear of a successful prosecution; and
- Far behind the first two, the fear of the severity of the sentence.

Without the fear of detection, apprehension and successful prosecution compliance will suffer a severe handicap.

Non-executive directors

The non-executive directors determine the strategy of the company, prescribe performance targets for management and monitor compliance with those targets. Clearly, they have a multitude of other responsibilities and duties, including the purpose of the company.

In the complexity of the modern company, directors delegate to committees of the board and to management.

In delegating functions to committees of the board it is necessary that certain principles are complied with, namely suitably qualified people must be selected to serve on those committees, the terms of reference must be clear and specific, and there must be systematic report-back to the board. The board cannot abdicate its functions.

In delegating to senior management it

is the responsibility of the board to ensure the existence of sound systems and controls. The absence of these sound systems and controls and the existence of complex corporate structures often constitute a fertile opportunity for sophisticated frauds.

The audit committee

The audit committee is a statutory committee and not a board committee. Its functions are prescribed by the Companies Act and King IV and other specialist legislation. A properly functioning audit committee is a vital component of the compliance ecosystem.

Senior management

Senior management, whether or not designated as prescribed officers, generally have the same fiduciary duties and duties of care, skill and diligence as are applicable to directors. They often have additional contractual duties.

The auditors

It is self-evident that the auditors have a significant role in the entire ecosystem of compliance. I do, however, believe that the existing auditors model is anachronistic with regard to the complexity of the modern economy, often with cross-border dimensions and huge developments in technology.

Very often the auditor is dependent on compliance by directors and management with their duties and responsibilities. The converse is clearly also true. This interaction between the responsibilities of di-

rectors and management on the one hand and auditors on the other hand is extremely complex.

Auditors essentially have two roles:

- Preventative, in the sense that they must ensure that their client companies have adequate systems and controls which will enable and ensure compliance; and

- Detection and disclosure of non-compliance. These findings and qualifications by auditors are essential tools for other role-players, such as the boards and regulators, to discharge their duties in responding to frauds and other breaches.

Shareholders (investors)

The role of investors, particularly the institutional investor, in the compliance ecosystem is often understated. Their role arises in at least three contexts:

- They elect directors. In doing so they should be vigilant in assessing the reputation and performance record of potential candidates;

- They should be conscientious in monitoring compliance by directors and management. The fundamental philosophy of regulation in this context in South Africa is regulation by disclosure - full and truthful disclosure in all documents, financial statements and circulars issued by companies. These should be carefully evaluated by investors and appropriate action taken, including recovery of damages by derivative action and removal of delinquent or non-performing directors.

Family planning education pays off as more women opt for contraceptives

By Felister Peter

DIFFERENT approaches used by health care providers at village and district levels in the provision of family planning (FP) education have resulted in many women opting to use various modern contraceptive methods.

The Challenge Initiative (TCI)-Tupange Pamoja project which is led by Jhpiego with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in collaboration with the government has seen more women escaping from unplanned pregnancies.

The project is implemented in thirteen districts within five regions namely, Arusha, Tanga, Mwanza, Geita and Dar es Salaam.

Rose Mnzava who led the project said: "We wanted to use

different approaches to reach and educate women on family planning issues. We started with training to master coaches at district level, who in turn trained health care service providers at health centres as well as community health workers (CHW) at village levels."

Mnzava who was speaking in Dar es Salaam over the weekend during an event to award the best performing districts, attributed the recorded successes with the use of community health workers. She said that CHW were visiting women at their homes since most of them are unwilling to seek education at health centres over fears of spending many hours.

"We also decided to come up with a special arrangement for provision of the service; we had

to set a special day to provide FP services at health facilities where visiting mothers were attended within 30 minutes. This encouraged many women to start using contraceptive methods," asserted Mnzava.

She added that the TCI-Tupange Pamoja project has resulted in an increased number of women using FP methods whereas in Ilala District the number has increased to 26 percent from the previous 13 percent while in Ubungo District 34 percent of women are enrolled with the service. The use of contraceptive methods in Dar es Salaam has now reached 36 percent.

According to her, the use of different approaches in reaching and educating women and girls has resulted in many of

them enrolling with the service.

The government launched a new family planning initiative in 2012 intending to increase the availability of modern contraception methods at all levels within the health system.

To reach youth, especially young girls, Mnzava said they applied the edutainment method whereas many youth were attracted as the learning was made simple, enjoyable and fun.

The 2015/2016 Tanzania Demographic Health Survey (TDHS) indicates that Tabora and Katakwi regions lead with early pregnancies followed by Shinyanga and Dodoma.

The survey shows that gender based violence (GBV) which includes early marri-

ages and pregnancies are rampant in Mara, Tabora, Shinyanga and Kigoma Regions.

Coordinator, Adolescent reproductive Health in the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Gerald Kihwele said the government is working to end the problem of early pregnancies whereas it has outlined a number of strategies which includes protecting youth from early pregnancies and marriage.

"We want youth, especially girls to accomplish their life dreams. We want them to be free from any forms of GBV as well as continue keeping them at school," said Kihwele. The government's plan is to ensure that family plan-

ning education reaches out to all the youth and community, he stated.

Jhpiego Country Director, Alice Christensen underscored the need for continued provision of family planning and reproductive health since the country's population has many people aged 25 years and below.

Christensen noted that private sector participation in the provision of FP and reproductive health is vital in increasing access to the service in schools and homes.

Program Officer, New Born and Child Health in the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Dr Mike Mabimbi commended the good approach used by the TCI-Tu-

pange Pamoja project which has contributed in increased number of users of the modern contraceptive methods.

Dr Mabimbi highlighted some bottlenecks in provision of FP education mentioning poor male participation and involvement and the use of profane language by some health workers.

He insisted the need to improve the quality of health care provision to attract more people to the service. He said although the services are offered for free, poor disbursement of funds by most of the districts affect implementation of the project.

"We need to strengthen health financing to ensure sustainability of the services," Dr Mabimbi noted.

Kenyan scientists root for agro-ecology to improve pandemic recovery amid shocks

NAIROBI

KENYA should encourage small-holder farmers to embrace nature-based food production systems that guarantee food security and climate resilience amid shocks linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, scientists said over the weekend.

Mary Nyasimi, executive director of Nairobi-based Inclusive Climate Change Adaptation for a Sustainable Africa, said that ecologically friendly agricultural practices have the potential to shield rural farmers from negative impacts of the pandemic and climatic shocks.

"Having agro-ecology embedded in existing agricultural, food, environmental and climate change policies is important so that when implementation and budgetary allocations are made for such policies, agro-ecology can also be part of it," said Nyasimi.

She was a co-author of a recent study commissioned by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), Biovision Foundation and the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, which found that agroecology boosted food security, incomes and climate resilience for Kenyan small-holders.

The study titled "The potential of agroecology to Build Climate-Resilient Livelihoods and Food Systems", says that greater adoption of nature-based farming practices is key to address rural poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

Nyasimi said that small-holder farmers should leverage on compost manure, agro-forestry and crop rotation in order to improve crop yield, restore soil fertility and sustain the health of vital ecosystems like wetlands.

She said that policy shift combined with awareness targeting farmers and consumers is key to boost uptake of agroecology at the small-holder level.

"Kenya needs strong consumer movements to advocate for agroecology farming practices," said Nyasimi adding that demand for organically grown food has gained steam in many African countries amid their health benefits.

Frank Eyhorn, CEO, Biovision Foundation said that a shift to farming practices that promote conservation of habitats has the potential to lift Kenyan small-holders from abject poverty while shielding them from climatic stresses.

"Decision-makers must reset the course towards agro-ecology and agrobiodiversity based approaches in order to be able to deal with climate change and provide farmers a decent economic and social livelihood," said Eyhorn.

Kenya is among African countries that have developed robust policies to promote agroecology as devolved units spearhead efforts to boost its uptake among smallholder-farmers who produce more than 70 percent of staples consumed locally.



Mining Commission chairman Prof Idrisa Kikula (R) presents to Exim Bank Shinyanga branch manager Sarah Paul a certificate of participation in the just-ended Trade and Minerals Exhibition in Shinyanga municipality. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Dr Mike Mabimbi (2nd-R) from the Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children ministry presents a laptop to Ilala acting district medical officer Dr Yusuph Ally at the weekend after the district emerged among the best performers in Dar es Salaam Region in the provision of family planning services. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Madagascar: USAID funds Turtle Survival Alliance

By Inès Magoum

THE United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing a grant of \$150,000 to the Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA).

The international organisation will use the funds to protect turtles, which are "seriously" threatened with extinction as a result of the Covid-19 crisis in Madagascar.

Since the adoption of containment measures to limit the spread of Covid-19 in Madagascar, zoos and aquariums have closed due to lack of funding.

Currently, the Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) cares for thousands of turtles prematurely returned to the wild. In the East African country, the international organisation's rehabilitation facilities currently have 24,000 turtles, including four endangered species.

The aim of the TSA is to protect these animals from the horrors of poaching. The alliance is supported in its fight by the United States of America.

They have just awarded a \$150,000 grant (about 586 million Malagasy ariarys) to the TSA through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

and the US Department of the Interior's International Technical Assistance Program (DO-ITAP). "With this funding, the TSA will be able to continue to combat turtle poaching in Madagascar. The turtles rescued from the poachers' claws will be taken to the international organisation's rehabilitation centres where they will be treated.

After this stage, the TSA will prepare the turtles to be reintroduced into the wild (safe and carefully selected places)," says John Dunlop, the director of the USAID mission.

The fight against wildlife trafficking

In the island nation, the US government is also funding initiatives to combat wildlife trafficking, including through two USAID projects. One is the USAID Hay Tao project, which aims to strengthen policies to combat wildlife crime, advocate for environmental justice, and fight corruption and wildlife trafficking.

The second conservation project is called USAID Mikajy. It empowers local communities, regional civil society organisations and forestry officials to combat illegal logging and wildlife trafficking in two regions of Madagascar, namely Menabe and MaMaBay (Masoala-Makira-Bay d'Antongil).

Extraordinary sessions on AfCFTA: AU adopts decision on start of trading

By Special Correspondent, Johannesburg

AFRICAN Union heads of state and governments have underscored the urgent need for member states to kick-start trading activities, under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The decision was adopted during a virtual meeting of the 13th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union on the AfCFTA, held over the weekend, under the Cyril Ramaphosa, South African President and chairperson of the African Union (AU).

The summit is taking place just four weeks before the AfCFTA commences trading on the 1st of January 2021, to consider the adoption of the legal instruments that will facilitate its operation.

Welcoming all the participants to the 13th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, Chairperson Ramaphosa said "today we stand on the cusp of a new era in the progress of our continent.

The moment that we have all been working painstakingly towards has finally arrived...We are all filled with a great sense of pride at how far we have come to reach this moment".

The AU Chairperson further recalled the collective journey embarked upon over four decades ago, with the adoption of the Monrovia Strategy in 1979, followed by the Lagos Plan of Action in 1980, the Abuja Treaty in 1991 and the subsequent Decisions and Declarations adopted during previous Summits relating to the economic development and integration of the African continent.

"And now, we are about to witness the realisation of one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063." Stated the Chairperson of the Union, with great relief.

"Throughout this process, we have stood united, with 55 sovereign AU Member States rallying together, despite different levels of economic development and diverse strategic priorities.

The commencement of trading under the AfCFTA on the 1st of January 2021 is one of the most significant milestones in the continental integration project," noted the AU Chairperson.

He underlined that, this is going to be the clear-

est affirmation that Africa is determined to take charge of its own destiny, and that its success and development is fundamentally tied to harnessing the potential and energies of her citizens.

According to Ramaphosa, the AfCFTA will boost intra-African trade, it will promote industrialisation and competitiveness and contribute to job creation, and it will unleash regional value chains that will facilitate Africa's meaningful integration into the global economy.

The AfCFTA will also improve the prospects of Africa as an attractive investment destination. It will help advance the empowerment of Africa's women, by improving women's access to trade opportunities which will in turn facilitate economic freedom for women, and expand the productive capacity of countries.

"To support this, we must strengthen women's participation in the continental economy by ensuring there is greater public procurement earmarked for women-owned businesses. We must ensure that there is sufficient support given to women-owned SMMEs and cooperatives in both local and regional economies," Ramaphosa emphasized.

Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission on his part expressed satisfaction on the milestone achieved in the implementation of the AfCFTA. He said it is the fulfilment of the dream long aspired by the founding fathers of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), who have always wanted to create an African common market.

Moussa Faki noted that, for this dream to finally become a reality, this continental project had to go through several stages. First was the signing in 1991 of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, followed by the signing in March 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda, of the Agreement establishing the AfCFTA, during which 44 countries signed the Agreement, and it is with great satisfaction that in record time 34 countries have ratified the legal instrument on the AfCFTA. This, the AUC Chairperson said, shows the determination by member state to quickly achieve the economic integration of the continent.

The paradox of local government: Sacrificing service delivery at the altar of equity

By Ivor Chipkin

AUDITOR-General Kimi Makwetu's last report before he died identified a few municipalities whose accounts tell a 'good story of disciplined spending that achieves value for money'. Yet these cases are overshadowed by a general tale of regression, indicating that the model of post-apartheid local government has failed.

This November 25 and 26, I participated in a conference on 25 Years of Local Government. The topic sounds dry. However, there was nothing dry about it. The event was organised by the think-tank that I run, GAPP, and the South African Local Government Association (Salga). It brought together many of the people who 25 years ago helped design the current model of local government. (The conference videos can be seen here.)

The "system architects" came together over two days to discuss the system that they had designed and to reflect on how it had fared over two and a half decades. This is what made the event so special.

At one level it was a mea culpa and on another it was a celebration. And therein lies an unrelenting tension. Were we honouring achievements accrued over 25 years, or lamenting a catastrophe? Local governments are widely deemed to have failed spectacularly. Typically, they are seen as sites of craven corruption, ineptitude and incompetence.

Municipalities fail to deliver basic services or maintain even the most basic infrastructure. Typically, on the very day of the conference itself, one commentator described Johannesburg in an article in Business Day as a city in terminal decline: "There is hardly a road in Joburg that is not crumbling, potholed or choked with weeds."

The recent Auditor-General's report on municipalities suggests that these remarks are neither anecdotal, nor about the city itself, nor about municipalities in general. Kimi Makwetu's last report before he died identified a few municipalities whose accounts tell a "good story of disciplined spending that achieves value for money". Most of them were in the Western Cape.

Yet these cases were overshadowed by a general tale of regression.

Against this background, it seems fairly obvious that the model of post-apartheid local government has failed. The current system is too generic, imposing "wall-to-wall" municipalities across the country, all cookie cut-outs of each other.



Some argued that large metros shouldn't be treated as local governments at all, and be given an independent status in national political forums. After all, it was ridiculous to have the needs of the large cities, also the economic engines of the country, subsumed with those of other municipalities or, more seriously, overshadowed by provincial governments.

The South African Constitution formally provides an intergovernmental system composed of strong national government, weak provincial governments and strong municipalities - a Strong-Weak-Strong, or S-W-S model, if you like. This was the model that the ANC won in constitutional negotiations against federalists in other parties.

Ironically, as Philip van Ryneveld pointed out, the effects of this formal arrangement have been undone by the provincialisation of power in the ANC itself. The power of provincial and regional barons in ANC conferences has elevated the de facto authority of this sphere of government, especially against municipalities and metros that have no special standing in the ANC's internal procedures.

In practice, therefore, South Africa has an S-S-W model of government. It has come at a very high price to the autonomy of municipalities, which are frequently embroiled in the internecine factionalism which has char-

acterised ANC politics since 2007.

So when Yunus Carrim, the former deputy minister of Cooperative Governance and Cooperative Affairs, called the 1995 White Paper on Local Government "excellent", and insisted that "I find it very hard to believe that we got the model wrong", it provoked incredulity.

Michael Sachs, for one, jumped in to insist that the model had created the current crisis. But what Carrim and others who defended the model were effectively saying was that policymakers in the early 1990s couldn't be blamed for not anticipating how the ANC would develop.

As a model, the emphasis on local autonomy, self-financing and participatory democracy was the right one. The model was betrayed by the poor calibre of people who were sent to populate the structures. This suggests that the current model can be saved if South Africa invests in finding better ways of recruiting, deploying and electing municipal officials and/or councillors.

If only it were that simple. What Sachs called out was the glibness of the 1994 generation.

The great value of a historical perspective on events, however, is that it is not simply a view from the present on the past. It is a view

from the present in relation to the past. This is the difference between monitoring and evaluation and history. The first assumes a basic continuity between the intentions of the past and the intentions of the present. The second approach does not. And in the space opened up by a historical view another judgement on the model of local government becomes possible.

The local government model was designed fundamentally to overcome a history of apartheid racism, segregation, division, inequality and inequity in the representation of citizens, in the allocation of resources and in the organisation of space. Models of metropolitan government (unicities, metros with substructures), one- or two-tiered local governments, and district models were designed with this imperative primarily in mind. In this regard, they have frequently been successful.

Yet these designs did not adequately pay attention to the functional roles that municipalities must play in providing services and even in fostering economic growth. Local governments are not well designed to play their technical roles, that is. Most notably they conflate administrative and political roles. If in national and provincial governments the autonomy of officials and politi-

cians is respected in the breach, in municipalities the distinction hardly exists.

From this perspective, Carrim and Sachs can both be right. We are in the midst, that is, less of a contradiction than of a paradox. The model has been successful in fostering equity. It is in crisis in terms of service delivery.

One of the symptoms of the malaise in South Africa is evident in the country's public culture. There is a tendency towards simplification, as if the great complexity of our society and our history can be summed up in simple binaries: good/bad; corrupt/uncorrupt(able); success/failure.

Proper policymaking has been replaced by sloganeering, whether it comes from political parties, civil society or the media.

Like the economic crisis, it is a sign of the intellectual crisis in South Africa too. The 25 Years of Local Government event represented a brief relief from this despondency and a glimpse of the public culture that South Africa needs.

What will it take for South Africa to prevent TB

By Ivy Apolisi and Dr Liesbet Ohler

SOUTH Africa has good TB policies, an impressive achievement that comes through in Step Up for TB 2020, a report released this week by Stop TB Partnership and Doctors Without Borders (MSF), which assesses TB policy in 37 high TB-burden countries.

For lives to be saved, though, the policy must be implemented, and when it comes to implementation of TB policy in South Africa there is much that still needs to happen in the area of TB implementation, which is a major leg of the World Health Organization's (WHO) strategy to "End TB" by 2035.

Preventative measures recommended by the WHO include active case finding, infection control, and timely treatment for people diagnosed with TB disease. The WHO also recommends that people with TB exposure who are at high risk of developing TB disease be offered TB preventative treatment (TPT).

Studies show the effectiveness of TPT in preventing TB disease ranges from 60% to 90% and protection can last many years.

At the United Nations High-Level Meeting (UNHLM) on TB in New York in 2018, world leaders committed to providing TPT to at least 30 million people by 2022, including giving TPT to 20 million people who live in the same house as individuals with clinically diagnosed TB disease. We are very far from reaching this target.

In the years since the UNHLM, only 6 million people have been initiated on TPT. To meet the 2022 target, the

Stop TB Partnership estimates that over 6 million people who need to access the TPT in 2020 alone, something that is now thought impossible.

Why are we failing? The challenges are multi-faceted, but TB prevention programs piloted by MSF in Khayelitsha in the Western Cape and Eshowe in KwaZulu-Natal reveal some important implementation lessons.

In Khayelitsha, MSF launched a pilot program in 2017 that set out to screen for TB and follow up adolescents and children who had been exposed to drug-resistant TB (DR-TB) in their households, so that we would be able to respond quickly if these individuals did in fact develop DR-TB.

We chose to focus on older kids and adolescents because only 8% out of the estimated 25 000 children and adolescents who become sick with DR-TB each year are diagnosed and started on treatment.

Accessing this group was an extremely difficult task, and ultimately our program was only able to enrol 10% of eligible participants. We hit snags in both households and clinics. Perhaps the biggest stumbling block was the fact that we seldom found older children and adolescents at home - they tended to be at school, or out with friends. Those we did find generally needed to be accompanied to the clinic by their parent or guardian, requiring the parent or guardian to take a day off from work.

Few were willing to do this. Those who did agree to go to the clinic faced the additional barrier of long clinic queues, and clinic staff working under extreme pressure who prioritize curative services over preventative services like TPT.



In March, with South Africa in COVID-19 lockdown, we tried again, but this time our approach was home-based, with MSF teams conducting clinical assessments of the exposed children at their homes. We were also able to offer TPT this time around, made possible by the publication of new national guidelines in 2019 that significantly expand the eligibility criteria for TPT to include all DR-TB contacts considered to be at high risk of developing TB disease, including children and adolescents.

Earlier, to address barriers at the clinic level, we had identified specific TB champions - clinic doctors with a passion for TB treatment - who were more than happy that we refer individuals to them for TPT. The COVID-19 lockdown also meant that schools were shut and therefore a greater number of older children and adolescents were at home, as were their parents and guardians.

All of these factors contributed to the program being successful as a way to diagnose TB disease among household contacts, possibly preventing over 60 vulnerable individuals in Khayelitsha from becoming sick. The lockdown has now eased, and although children have not yet returned to school full-time, already the challenge of finding people at home has returned, underscoring the need for modified strategies to avoid the dissolution of this service.

In Eshowe, a mere 7 - 25 % of eligible adults received TPT between 2018-2020, while only 1 % of eligible children under

the age of 5 have received TPT in 2020. The usual challenges are compounded by the realities of the rural setting, with many service users living among dramatic hills and deep valleys far away from their nearest health clinic.

In 2019 we asked health care workers in Eshowe and Mbongolwane why they don't prescribe TPT. They told us they were not certain what length of TPT regimens to give, as there is a perception that different guidelines advise different treatment durations. They also reported not always knowing which groups to target for TPT and that clinics often run out of Isoniazid, one of the antibiotics given to prevent TB.

However, recently enhanced efforts to find 'missing' TB cases provide an opportunity to improve the provision of TPT. Interventions launched by the Department of Health and MSF in Eshowe and Mbongolwane include the placement of TB screening officers at clinics, to increase screening and diagnosis of TB patients, and elicit contacts for all patients with a positive TB diagnosis.

Community-based teams then perform the contact tracing through home visits and if contacts are eligible for TPT, they can receive it at small community-based hubs for TB/HIV services.

These decentralized hubs save service users a great deal of travel expenses and queue time.

MSF Eshowe also deploys TB ambassadors (volunteers who have previously been treated for TB or have family members who were diagnosed and treated for TB) to communities to conduct

education on TB-related topics, including TPT. TB ambassadors are key in identifying patients that are potentially eligible for TPT, and they can also assist in ensuring they maintain treatment.

If TPT is to be successfully rolled out in Khayelitsha, Eshowe and other TB-affected communities, the health system needs to incorporate strategies that make TB prevention easier to access. This is possible by involving community health workers to offer services in communities and even homes or establishing after-hours services for groups who work or attend school.

Health promotion is also urgently needed to increase public awareness around TB and the importance of TB prevention, including TPT. Sadly, at present, TPT is not prioritized as an essential service in the health care system. To save more lives this needs to urgently change.

Bank to allocate 30m/- to pay fees for Junior Jumbo clients

By Guardian Reporter

TWENTY lucky children who hold Junior Jumbo Accounts at CRDB Bank Plc will have their school fees paid next year through a campaign christened 'Tumekusoti Ada' which was launched in Dar es Salaam last week.

Speaking to reporters, the bank's Head of Retail Banking, Stephen Adili said the new promotion is part of a 'Jipe Tano' campaign launched last October and goes through till the end of this month. Adili said the promotion is geared towards encouraging parents and guardians to open Junior Jumbo Accounts for their children.

"The main objective of this promotion is to encourage parents to adopt a saving culture for their children to meet future educational needs," Adili said adding that the 20 lucky kids will each get 1.5m/- cash for their fees.

He said many parents have been facing challenges of paying fees after the end of year festive season because they don't save for their children's fees hence delaying them to report for classes. "We have a special account for parents to save money for their kids school fees which is called Junior Jumbo Account which is very easy to open and less costly to maintain," the CRDB Bank Head of Retail Banking added while pointing out that such an account also teaches children to adopt saving culture.

Meanwhile the 'Jipe Tano' campaign



CRDB Bank managing Director Abdulmajid Nsekela. File Photo

has been going on successfully with more than 3,000 customers having already won 50,000/- each with a total of 20m/- spent. CRDB Head of Marketing, Joseline Kamhanda said the response from the public has been overwhelming hence the cash awards given.

"We thank Tanzanians for the support and change of attitude to adopt a culture of saving with us," Kamhanda said adding that through 'Tupo mtaani kwako' promotion, the bank has already visited 48 districts in 20 regions of the country.

She urged the public to

continue saving with CRDB by using all digital platforms including SimBanking, SimAccount, Internet banking and CRDB Wakalas. "This is end of year festive season so let's be careful with our expenditure to avoid liquidity crises next year," she added.

GSM's festive season competition to improve the lives of Tanzanians

By Guardian Reporter

Home and Office furniture retail company GSM Group has launched its festive season competition dubbed, 'Shinda na imarisha nyumba yako' alongside another campaign named 'jishindie safari ya utalii ngorongoro' a competition designated to allow the retailer's loyal customers and new ones a chance to win a number of valuable items during the year-ending festive season.

Speaking after holding a press briefing to officiate the start of the competition at Mlimani City Shopping Mall in Dar es Salaam yesterday, GSM's Chief Commercial Officer, Allan Chonjo, stated that the reason for creating such competition is to offer the company's loyal and new clients a chance to win grand prizes during the year-ending holiday season.

"The year 2020 has been a very challenging for everyone especially following the outbreak of COVID-19 which disrupted most of the socio-economic activities that were ongoing and people's personal plans;

Seeing this, we realised we had the obligation to come up with the competition so that everyone may have a chance to own merchant products of their dreams from GSM Home and GSM Retail," said Chonjo.

The competition will include both

GSM Home which specialises in selling home and office products and GSM Retail which focuses on selling clothing products under the other brands such as Splash, Babyshop, Shoexpress, ANTA, Max and HomeBox which sells home items.

The competition kicked off on 1st December is expected to take place in four phases. In each phase, the winner will win special prizes from either GSM Home or GSM Retail.

"In this competition, every citizen can compete hence earning a coupon after purchasing GSM items worth 1million/- and above. Thus, granting the competitor a chance to win various goods that will change the appearance of one's home," said GSM Home's Marketing Coordinator, Smart Deus.

On his side, GSM Retail's Marketing Coordinator, Malick Mosha said, "a customer who buys clothes worth 50,000/- in a single purchase will have a chance to enter the competition and win various prizes such as a voucher worth 250,000/- or the grand prize of a prepaid trip to Ngorongoro national park."

"Our goal is to ensure that we continue being the leading retailer and service provider by meeting the needs of our customers and offering high-value products at affordable prices. Hence, improving our customers' lives altogether," Added Mosha.

UniCredit chairman elect says Mustier's exit not due to MPS

ROME

Jean Pierre Mustier's decision to step down as CEO of UniCredit had nothing to do with a possible acquisition of bailed-out rival Monte dei Paschi (MPS), UniCredit Chairman-elect Pier Carlo Padoan was quoted as saying on Sunday.

In an interview with Italy's Corriere della Sera daily, Padoan denied Mustier's exit facilitates a merger with MPS, after speculation about a deal hurt UniCredit shares last week.

"MPS played no part in Mustier's decision to leave UniCredit at the end of his current term. Moreover, his decision does not change in any way the bank's position towards any such operation," Padoan said.

Mustier resigned last Monday citing a clash with the board over strategy. UniCredit had been in talks with the Treasury over MPS, which Rome is trying to re-privatise, sources had said.

Mustier had prioritised returning cash to shareholders over mergers and had worked since his arrival in mid-2016 to reduce Italy's exposure to its fragile home turf.

In an attempt to reassure investors, UniCredit's board said the capital re-

turn strategy was unchanged and ruled out deals that harmed the bank's capital position.

Padoan said Mustier's decision was due to "different opinions" over "the steps to take for the integration strategy outside of Italy. The strategy, on which we agree, is not in question. Different views emerged on how to take it forward".

Padoan, who was named in October as incoming chairman, denied a report saying he had challenged Mustier's international focus advocating instead expansion in Italy.

A former Italian economy minister who oversaw the MPS bailout and a Member of Parliament for the ruling PD party at the time of his appointment, Padoan also sought to dispel concerns about political meddling.

"Political interference, real or alleged, can only be harmful ... But in UniCredit's decisions political interference has played no role."

Padoan, who is leading the board's search for Mustier's replacement, said the new CEO needed to have "a high international standing, a strong knowledge of the banking system, inclusive leadership and strategic vision".



TASAC director general, Emmanuel Ndomba addresses journalists at a previous event in Dar es Salaam: File Photo

Shipping corporation eyes more professionalism in its operations

By Francis Kajubi

TANZANIA Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC) has pledged to embrace professionalism in its operations as it emerged a second winner of the best presented financial statement for the year 2019 Awards given by the National Board of Accountants and Auditors (NBAA).

Speaking after receiving the award on Saturday evening in Dar es Salaam, TASAC Director-General, Emmanuel Ndomba, said that the award tells it all that the agency has been utilizing the public funds allocated to it appropriately as planned.

"This is the first time we are tak-

ing part in this kind of competition and lucky enough we have emerged the second winner. As the awards are meant to portray the strengths and weaknesses of different entities in reporting their annual financial statements, we are confident that our expenditures go abreast with the funds issued to us" said Ndomba.

According to him, he hopes that TASAC will perform even better in the next year's competition. The agency is marking the second year of its establishment since the split of the then SUMATRA that resulted in the formulation of two agencies TASAC and LATRA two years ago.

TASAC won the award seconding the Tanzania Revenue Authority

(TRA) that emerged the first winner and the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation Limited (TBC) the third winner under the category of public entities that operate under certification of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

NBAA Executive Director CPA Pius Maneno, said that the awards were initiated so as to encourage the application of IPSAS in financial reporting and auditing. The winners are subject to at least scoring 75 percent of the required qualities stipulated in the IPSAS.

"For the 2019 awards, 61 institutions made it to scoring 75 percent as required thus being considered qualified for the competition. The

entities were divided into 13 categories of competition namely large bank, Small banks, manufacturers, trading and distribution, public entities abided to IPSA and public entities abided to IFRS;

Other categories were insurance companies, water distribution agencies, local government, Universities, regional administrative authorities, ministries and government departments, non-profit institutions and small scale auditing companies" said Maneno.

He said that NBAA will continue to notify participants of the competition on shortcoming in their financial reports so as to improve them and avoid penalties from authorities.

AAR cancels Nairobi County medical cover over KSh855m debt

NAIROBI

Medical insurance service provider AAR has suspended the account of Nairobi County over a Sh855 million debt, locking out more than 12,000 employees who are to foot hospital bills from their own pockets.

A communication to the workers seen by Business Daily shows that City Hall informed the staff to start paying their medical expenses effective last week.

last week.

Governor Mike Sonko's administration, who was impeached on December 3, has defaulted on insurance premiums for five months, prompting the insurer to halt services for the thousands of staff and their dependents.

Suspension of the insurance cover will hit the workers at a time patients are now forced to pay for a Covid-19 test before they get treatment for

some ailments across public and private hospitals.

"Please be informed that we shall be going off cover today at midnight for all Nairobi City County staff and their dependents due to lack of premiums payment for the last five months," sub-county administrators informed workers in the statement.

The insurer pulled the plug on the service two weeks after City Hall defied requests to settle the dues and

avert a looming crisis for workers.

AAR had on November 13 written to City Hall to settle the debt before November 18 failure to which it would suspend the services without further consultations. The money is for the period between July to June 2021.

"We hereby request for settlement of the outstanding premium amount of Sh855,002,417 before Wednesday,

18 November 2020. Please take note that without medical insurance payment, we will be unable to continue offering uninterrupted services to the Nairobi City County staff and their families," AAR managing director Nixon Shigoli said in letter to City Hall.

"This letter serves to inform you that we will be forced to go off cover effective Wednesday 18 November 2020 at midnight should we not have

received the outstanding premium payment by then without any further reference to your office," added the letter written on November 13.

Failure to pay the debts comes at a time the governor has refused to authorise withdrawal of cash from City Hall's accounts triggering a near paralysis of service delivery that has also led to salary delays for the employees and ward representatives over the past two months.

TANZANIA COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY



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STATEMENT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF 43RD AFRICAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS/ICT DAY 7TH DECEMBER 2020



**FROM, ENG. JAMES M. KILABA,
DIRECTOR GENERAL, TCRA**

Theme 2020: "Post COVID-19: Role of Telecoms/ICT in the Resumption of Socio-Economic activities"

This year, we celebrate the 43rd anniversary of African Telecommunications/ICT Day, which has been celebrated annually. The Day marks the founding of African Telecommunication Union (ATU) in 1977.

ATU is a specialized agency of African Union in the field of Telecommunications/Information and Communication Technologies – ICTs. It was founded to facilitate among other things formulation of effective policies and strategies aimed at improving access to ICT infrastructures and services to member states.

As we celebrate the 43rd anniversary of ATU Telecommunications/ICT day, Tanzania, as a member of ATU, joins other countries in Africa to mark this Day whose theme is dedicated to raise awareness on "Post COVID-19: Role of Telecoms/ICT in the Resumption of Socio-Economic activities".

1.0 ICT SERVICES DURING AND POST COVID-19

ICT sector is playing a vital role in socio-economic development in Tanzania. In fact, ICT Applications and Services are now the foundation of almost every element of society and played a critical role in supporting society during the unprecedented time of COVID-19 outbreak. We have witnessed the Communications Industry working more closely with the Governments all over the world to ensure better outcomes for all citizens especially during the challenging time of the pandemic. In Tanzania, some of the government interventions during the COVID-19 outbreak includes:-

- a) Assignment of a dedicated number used as a toll-free Voice/Short Messaging Service (SMS) /USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) for COVID-19 services (199 number). The numbers enable Tanzanians from all walks of life to make free calls, get menu-based information services and send free short messages on various issues related to COVID-19 disease, including reporting, assistance, etc. in relation to the COVID-19 disease. This helped to collect and disseminate faster and efficiently all the necessary informa-

tion and intervention of COVID-19 disease in Tanzania.

- b) The Government through Ministry of Health provided awareness content to Mobile Service Providers, Radio Stations, Television Stations and Social Media Platforms that was transmitted to citizens, to ensure that the public is well informed about the protection measures necessary to combat the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. The messages have been quite informative and timely reached many citizens who are using the assorted Telecommunication platforms including Mobile phones.

1.1 Digital financial services

Digital financial services are considered as a key enabler and lever to influence social distancing and payment transactions during the time of COVID-19 outbreak. In Tanzania, we witnessed many citizens turning to mobile payments as a tool to curb COVID-19. During the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers increasingly used mobile money to buy essentials like food, groceries, medical supplies, telecom recharges and utility bills. Such measures have a potential of shifting a greater volume of physical cash payments to electronic payments and away from cash. The effort is indispensable today and tomorrow as the society is now used to electronic payments and thereby gets rid of handling physical cash.

During the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic, mobile money transactions increased from 256,964,881 transactions in March 2020 to 299,258,504 transactions in September 2020, as it was safer and easier way to carry out financial transactions online rather than physical transactions in rendering different services. The daily transaction limit to customers was increased, from TZS 3,000,000 before COVID-19 disease to TZS 5,000,000 when COVID-19 disease outbreak occurred and daily balance from TZS 5,000,000 to TZS 10,000,000.

During the outbreak of COVID-19 some business encouraged consumers to make online transactions/ payment rather than cash as a measure to contain and minimize spread of COVID-19 disease. After COVID-19, businesses and consumers continued to use existing online payment and transactions for greater efficiency in services delivery.

With electronic payments, revenue authorities can easily verify the taxes and charges due to Governments by a business. To this end, lowering the cost of electronic transactions could attract more and more citizens to use electronic payments and thereby driving the adoption of electronic payments. This is an opportunity to accelerate more the digital economy in the country.

1.2 Online Meeting Platforms

During COVID-19 pandemic, development and utilization of online meeting platforms increased massively. People had to quickly adapt to online meeting platforms, and extensively participated to online meetings sessions convened within and outside the country. Good number of online meeting platforms like Zoom, GoToMeeting, and BlueJeans were introduced and the existing ones were improved with more features to accommodate more people and functionalities just to create the atmosphere of physical meetings.

After COVID-19 disease, People get used to online meeting platforms, and comfortably continue to use in both public and private sectors.

1.3 Online Classes

During the outbreak of COVID-19 disease, Tanzania

introduced online schooling programs through Televisions whereby students were able to follow classes on different subjects and different levels provided through TV programs. New e-learning interactive platforms were created, whereby Teachers were able to provide notes, assignments and mark the assignments submitted by students. The Government through Ministry of Education, Science and Technology enabled specific channels in Televisions to provide e-learning platform for Primary and Secondary Students. This has enabled students to continue studying while at home.

In addition, existing e-learning Applications such as halostudy and shule-soft were improved with new features such as e-resources to enable students to have live studies, online discussions, online exams, class notes home works etc. and increased its efficiency due to the increase in use.

1.4 Working from Home

With the COVID-19 pandemic private companies, organizations, NGOs, banks, introduced remote working whereby, employees were able to work from home and serve their customers via online platforms.

Currently, some private companies are still working from home as they have seen accuracy and effectiveness of managing business operations remotely.

1.5 Judiciary

Introduction of online court sessions have helped to effectively resolve cases even during COVID-19 disease.

The uptake of ICT before and during the Covid19 disease has played a critical role to facilitate social economic development activities within the United Republic of Tanzania in different areas like online payment through Mobile Money Services for different services, online meetings rather than physical, E-commerce, online provision of education, Telemedicine, Court Online Hearings, etc. as explained earlier. We anticipate ICT will continue to facilitate resumption of economic activities post Covid19 as it used to be during the Corona Virus Pandemic Period.

In order to roll out and access most of the ICT services and applications, availability of radio frequency spectrum is critical. In knowing this, the Government of Tanzania made timely and earlier release of the 700 MHz Spectrum through a competitive auction to facilitate the rollout of 4G LTE. Tanzania will continue to support the area of infrastructure development by making sure proper infrastructure are deployed to support and accelerate the adoption of the digital economy. This goes hand in hand with innovations in different ICT applications and services necessary to modernise and enhance our life. Definitely, ICT-enabled solutions and emerging technologies can be effectively and efficiently be used for fostering economic, environmental and social sustainability.

The Government will also make sure that, even underserved areas in rural and urban get the required infrastructure through the Universal Communication Access Fund (UCSAF) by building proper infrastructure to facilitate the digital economy.

During this time when we are celebrating the 43rd anniversary of ATU Telecommunications/ICT day, TCRA will ensure more people have access to ICT infrastructures and services in the United Republic of Tanzania.

**ENG. JAMES M. KILABA
DIRECTOR GENERAL, TCRA.**

US bank lobby spends \$1 million on ad blitz for Republican Perdue in Georgia Senate runoff

WASHINGTON

THE largest U.S. bank lobby group is spending \$1 million on television ads to boost Republican Senator David Perdue in a bid to ensure the Senate remains in Republican hands after Georgia election runoffs in January, according to federal filings.

Perdue, who sits on the Senate Banking Committee and has long been an industry ally, backing lighter banking regulations, is seeking re-election against Democratic challenger Jon Ossoff.

The race is one of a pair of Georgia U.S. Senate runoffs on Jan. 5 after no candidate won a majority in the Nov. 3 election. Republican incumbent Kelly Loeffler is facing Democrat Raphael Warnock in the other runoff.

The contests will determine control of the chamber and are expected to be among the most expensive Senate races in U.S. history.

Overall, the four candidates' campaigns, as well as an array of party and independent groups, have so far spent nearly \$310 million to air ads or to reserve air time before the vote, according to AdImpact, an advertising tracking firm.

The campaign launched this week by the American Bankers Association (ABA) marks the single biggest sum the group has spent backing a candidate since it began running independent political ads in 2018, accord-



ing to federal campaign data. The ABA represents Wall Street banks as well as regional lenders.

The large expenditure underscores industry worries that Democratic control of the Senate could lead to tougher

banking policies, as well as clear the way for Democratic President-elect Joe Biden to nominate hard-charging regu-

lators.

Democrats must win both races to gain control of the Senate, with a Democratic vice president holding the tie-breaking vote.

A number of other Wall Street financiers are also pouring money into the Georgia races via the Senate Leadership Fund, a super-PAC that spends on behalf of Republican senators. Blackstone Group Inc Chief Executive Stephen Schwarzman and Ken Griffin, founder of hedge fund Citadel, gave \$15 million and \$12 million on Nov. 12, respectively, according to federal campaign data.

Neither Perdue's nor Ossoff's campaign responded to requests for comment. Spokespeople for Schwarzman and Griffin did not immediately provide comment.

"We support his efforts in Congress to bolster the economy and

keep people working, and we appreciate his keen understanding of the important role that banks continue to play in the recovery," ABA Chief Executive Rob Nichols said of Perdue in a statement.

The ABA began running ads supporting banker-friendly lawmakers from both parties during the 2018 congressional elections as part of a broader effort to rebuild the bipartisan support banks enjoyed before the 2008 financial crisis turned many Democrats against the industry. A narrowly divided Republican-led Senate would be a positive outcome for banks, according to bank analysts.

The group bought ads for 15 candidates during the 2020 campaign. But its Perdue expenditure is twice the previous \$500,000 record amount of cash the lob-

by group shelled out to back Republican Senator Thom Tillis' successful bid for re-election in North Carolina this year, according to Federal Election Commission filings.

The ABA ads for Perdue, created in coordination with the Georgia Bankers Association, applauded his support for a bill that would automatically forgive millions of coronavirus relief loans that banks distributed to struggling small businesses on behalf of the government.

Getting the government to quickly repay those loans is a priority for the industry, which could otherwise be landed with billions of dollars in risky debt.

"Tell David Perdue to keep fighting for the Paycheck Protection Small Business Forgiveness Act" and thank him "for protecting jobs," the ad tells voters

Most of California to be under stay-at-home orders as COVID-19 surges

SACRAMENTO

CALIFORNIA'S two most densely inhabited regions and its agricultural breadbasket will be under stay-at-home orders by Sunday night as the COVID-19 pandemic strains hospitals in the most populous U.S. state, officials said.

Designed to kick in when intensive care units in any of five regions have little remaining capacity, the order affecting Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley will close bars, hair salons and barbershops, and allows restaurants to remain open only for takeout and delivery service.

The shutdowns, which go into effect at 11:59 pm Sunday, are triggered by an order announced Wednesday by Governor Gavin Newsom, a Democrat.

The San Francisco Bay Area will also go into lockdown on Sunday night, under a different set of orders announced Friday by officials there.

"We know that people are tired of the stringent measures, but they are the only weapons we have to combat the virus," said Dr. Maggie Park, public health officer in San Joaquin County, in the state's hard-hit farming region.

More than 25,000 new cases of COVID-19 were diagnosed in California on Friday, officials said on Saturday, a record since the pandemic began. The state also recorded 209 deaths, bringing the total to 19,791, officials said.

Overall, the United States saw a record 228,407 new cases on Friday, and 2,568 deaths, according to a Reuters tally.

More than 100,900 people were hospitalized with the disease in the United States as of Friday. That number grew by about 22% over the past 14 days, the Reuters tally showed, but the growth rate has

slowed from an increase of 47% over the previous 14 days.

California's statewide orders, which kick in whenever a region has less than 15% capacity available in its intensive care units, allow critical infrastructure to stay open, including schools that have obtained waivers allowing them to hold in-person classes. Dental offices will also remain open.

The orders have been criticized by some Republican politicians who say closing small businesses and ordering people to stay mostly at home will do more harm than good.

Critics also decry decisions by several Democratic politicians, including Newsom and San Francisco Mayor London Breed, to dine in an expensive Napa Valley restaurant that was legally open but at a time when the virus was surging and officials were urging people not to socialize over the Thanksgiving holiday.

"Government lockdowns do not reduce cases or stop spikes," Republican State Assemblyman James Gallagher, who represents a district north of Sacramento that is not yet affected by the shutdown, said in a press release after Newsom announced the regional plans.

The U.S. death toll currently stands at almost 279,000. The University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation now projects nearly 539,000 COVID-19 deaths by April 1, even as vaccines start to become available.

Joe Biden, a Democrat who defeated Donald Trump in the November election, has said that upon taking office on Jan. 20 he will enact mask mandates where he has authority, such as federal buildings and for interstate travel.

| ITV | WEDNESDAY 09 Dec | THURSDAY 10 Dec | FRIDAY 11 Dec |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>23:30 The Base</p> <p>00:30 DWTV</p> <p>MONDAY 07 Dec</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Kumekucha Michezo</p> <p>8:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo</p> <p>9:30 Isidingo</p> <p>09:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>11:00 ITV Top 10 rpt</p> <p>11:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera News</p> <p>12:30 Mtego rpt</p> <p>12:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>13:00 Mjue Zaidi</p> <p>13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt</p> <p>13:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>14:10 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>14:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:10 Aibu yako rpt</p> <p>18:15 Mapishi</p> <p>18:45 Kesho leo</p> <p>19:00 Afya ya Jamii</p> <p>19:30 Isidingo</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Dakika 45</p> <p>22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p> <p>23:30 The Base</p> <p>00:30 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p> <p>TUESDAY 08 Dec</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Kumekucha Michezo</p> <p>8:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo</p> <p>9:30 Isidingo</p> <p>09:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu rpt</p> <p>10:30 Jungu kuu rpt</p> <p>10:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>11:00 The Base rpt</p> <p>12:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>13:00 Kesho leo rpt</p> <p>13:30 Shika Bamba rpt</p> <p>13:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>14:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru</p> <p>16:30 Watoto wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:10 Yu wapi</p> <p>18:15 Mapishi rpt</p> <p>18:30 Uchumi na biashara</p> <p>19:00 Jarida la wanawake</p> <p>19:30 Isidingo</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:00 Tanzania yetu</p> <p>21:30 Rock City Marathon</p> <p>22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p> | <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Kumekucha Michezo</p> <p>9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo</p> <p>9:30 Isidingo</p> <p>10:00 Movie: Inside</p> <p>12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt</p> <p>13:00 Dakika 45</p> <p>14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>14:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>15:00 Movie: Wonder girl</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang</p> <p>19:00 Uhuru day special</p> <p>19:30 Isidingo</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco</p> <p>21:30 Kipindi Maalum: Wanawake na uhuru</p> <p>22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p> <p>23:30 The Base</p> <p>00:30 Al Jazeera</p> <p>2:00 DWTV</p> <p>THURSDAY 10 Dec</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Kumekucha Michezo</p> <p>8:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo</p> <p>9:30 Isidingo</p> <p>9:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>10:00 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>10:30 Shamba lulu rpt</p> <p>10:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>11:00 The Base rpt</p> <p>11:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>12:30 Wanawake na uhuru rpt</p> <p>12:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>13:00 Arts & lifestyle rpt</p> <p>13:30 Tanzania yetu</p> <p>13:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>14:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt:</p> <p>14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Mapishi</p> <p>18:30 Jagina</p> <p>19:00 Usafiri wako</p> <p>19:30 Isidingo</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:00 Malumbano ya hoja</p> <p>23:30 The Base</p> <p>00:30 DWTV</p> <p>FRIDAY 11 Dec</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Kumekucha Michezo</p> <p>09:00 Kumekucha Kishindo</p> <p>9:30 Isidingo</p> | <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:30 Usafiri wako rpt</p> <p>11:00 The Base</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>12:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanesco</p> <p>13:00 Jagina rpt</p> <p>13:30 Rock City marathon rpt</p> <p>14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>17:30 Ibada ya kiislamu</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Mizengwe rpt</p> <p>18:30 Utalii</p> <p>19:00 Shamba lulu</p> <p>19:30 Isidingo</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Kipima Joto</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p> <p>23:30 The Base</p> <p>00:30 DWTV</p> <p>SATURDAY 12 Dec</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:00 Habari</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>9:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:00 Shika Bamba 5</p> <p>10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt</p> <p>11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt</p> <p>12:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang</p> <p>13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe</p> <p>16:20 Igizo: Mtego</p> <p>17:00 Shamsam za Pwani</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Korean drama: Hwarang</p> <p>19:00 Jungu Kuu</p> <p>19:30 Shika Bamba</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:00 Art and lifestyle</p> <p>21:30 ITV TOP 10</p> <p>22:10 Isidingo rpt</p> <p>00:30 DWTV</p> <p>SUNDAY 13 Dec</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:00 Habari</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>09:00 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>10:00 Isidingo</p> <p>11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt</p> <p>12:00 Movie rpt: Bado natafuta</p> <p>14:00 Tamasha la Michezo</p> <p>15:30 Mwangaza</p> <p>16:30 ITV Top 10</p> <p>17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Mapishi</p> <p>18:30 Matukio ya wiki</p> <p>19:30 Igizo: Mtego</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko</p> <p>21:05 Mizengwe</p> <p>21:25 Kipindi maalum: Cheza pesa</p> <p>21:30 Mjue Zaidi</p> <p>22:14 Bongo Movie: Mwanaheri</p> <p>00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin</p> <p>CAPITAL</p> | <p>Mon 07 Dec</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death</p> <p>14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)</p> <p>16:00 Series rpt: Itohan</p> <p>16:30 Tanzania Yetu rpt</p> <p>17:00 Eco@Africa rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 The Décor rpt</p> <p>19:30 Shamba lulu</p> <p>20:00 Series: Itohan</p> <p>20:45 The Monday Agenda</p> <p>21:30 Capital Prime News</p> <p>22:00 Kipima Joto</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Tues 08 Dec</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death</p> <p>14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)</p> <p>16:00 Series rpt: Itohan</p> <p>16:30 Capchat rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 Innovation</p> <p>19:30 Eco@Africa</p> <p>20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition</p> <p>20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death</p> <p>21:30 Capital Prime News</p> <p>22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Sat 05 Dec</p> <p>08:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>09:00 Rev rpt</p> <p>09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt</p> <p>10:00 Culinary delight rpt</p> <p>10:30 Innovation rpt</p> <p>11:00 Out n'about rpt</p> <p>11:30 Sports Gazette rpt</p> <p>12:00 Usafiri wako rpt</p> <p>12:30 Eco@Africa rpt</p> <p>13:00 Business edition rpt</p> <p>13:30 Korean Drama rpt: The slave hunter</p> <p>14:30 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death</p> <p>17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt</p> <p>17:45 Bundesliga kick off</p> <p>18:15 Capchat rpt</p> <p>19:15 Mizengwe</p> <p>19:30 The Décor</p> <p>20:00 Korean Drama: The Slave hunter</p> <p>21:00 Out n' About</p> <p>21:30 Movie: Knight rider</p> <p>23:00 Series rpt: Godwin</p> <p>01:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Sun 06 Dec</p> <p>08:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>09:00 In good shape</p> <p>10:00 Capchat rpt</p> <p>11:00 Sports Gazette rpt</p> <p>11:30 Korean Drama rpt: The slave hunter</p> <p>12:00 Jagina rpt</p> <p>12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt</p> <p>13:00 In good shape rpt</p> <p>13:30 Series rpt: Itohan</p> <p>15:15 Aibu yako</p> <p>15:30 Rev rpt</p> <p>16:00 Dakika 45 rpt</p> <p>16:45 Mizengwe rpt</p> <p>17:00 The Décor rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 Turning the Spotlight rpt</p> <p>19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights</p> <p>20:00 Korean Drama: The Slave hunter</p> <p>21:00 Shift</p> <p>21:15 Capchat live</p> <p>22:15 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> |

WORLD

Fighting erupts in Ethiopia's Tigray as army nears rebel force

ADDIS ABABA

BOMBING, looting and skirmishes persisted in parts of Ethiopia's Tigray on Saturday, a rebellious force in the northern region said after government troops declared they were within days of capturing the group's leaders.

A month of fighting between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's federal army and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is believed to have killed thousands of people and driven some 46,000 refugees into neighbouring Sudan.

Abiy's government has said the conflict is winding down a week after it seized Tigray's regional capital, Mekelle, but TPLF leader Debretsion Gebremichael told Reuters in a text message on Saturday there was still fighting outside the city.

He said federal forces bombed the town of Abbi Adi on Friday, without giving further details, while a TPLF spokesman accused government troops of looting in Mekelle.

"(They are) looting civilian properties, hotels and damaging factories after looting," the spokesman Getachew Reda told a TPLF-

owned TV station. The government did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Most communications in Tigray are down and access to the area is severely restricted, making it hard to verify either side's statements.

Abiy used to be a political partner of the TPLF - which dominated Ethiopia's governing coalition for nearly three decades - but he irked his former allies by putting Tigrayan officials on trial for corruption and rights abuses.

They said the arrests were politically motivated, accusing Abiy of trying to tighten his grip over Ethiopia's 10 semi-autonomous federal states. Abiy denies that, and has called the TPLF leaders criminals who mutinied against federal authority.

'Hiding in caves'

Army Colonel Shambel Beyene said late on Friday that government forces were 10 km (six miles) away from a forest in the Gore area where Debretsion, Getachew and other TPLF members were thought to be hiding.

"We will only need a few days to get to them," he said on state television.



An Ethiopian refugee who fled the Tigray conflict holds her child at the Um Raquba refugee camp in Sudan's eastern Gedaref state, on Saturday. AFP

Relief agencies, meanwhile, are worried about a lack of food, fuel, medicines and even body bags in Tigray. Convoys are on standby to take aid in.

Residents in the central town of Shire told a new government-appointed provisional administration that the cost of groceries was skyrocketing and fuel shortages were grounding ambulances used to take patients to hospitals.

"Residents are still staying away from their homes. Women are hiding in caves with their children," one man said at a meeting aired on EBC late on Friday.

Others complained about looting in the town.

Abiy's government has said it will protect civilians in the northern region and ensure their needs are met.

"Work to rebuild Tigray has commenced with teams ... undertaking repair work (and) restoring services," he said in a tweet on Saturday.

Abiy, who took office in 2018, won a Nobel Peace Prize the following year for making peace with neighbouring Eritrea and democratic reforms. He began opening up a closed economy, loosening a repressive political system, and taking action against those accused of corruption and rights abuses - some of whom were Tigrayan officials.

His government has also jailed thousands of opponents after violent unrest, angering his rivals.

Agencies

Moscow starts mass vaccination with its Sputnik V shot

MOSCOW

MOSCOW began distributing the Sputnik V COVID-19 shot via 70 clinics on Saturday, marking Russia's first mass vaccination against the disease, the city's coronavirus task force said.

The task force said the Russian-made vaccine would first be made available to doctors and other medical workers, teachers and social workers because they ran the highest risk of exposure to the disease.

"You are working at an educational institution and have

top-priority for the COVID-19 vaccine, free of charge," read a phone text message received by one Muscovite, an elementary school teacher, early on Saturday and seen by Reuters.

Moscow, the epicentre of Russia's coronavirus outbreak, registered 7,993 new cases overnight, up from 6,868 a day before and well above the daily tallies of around 700 seen in early September.

"Over the first five hours, 5,000 people signed up for the jab - teachers, doctors, social workers, those who are today risking their health and

lives the most," Mayor Sergei Sobyanin wrote on his personal website on Friday.

The age for those receiving shots is capped at 60. People with certain underlying health conditions, pregnant women and those who have had a respiratory illness for the past two weeks are barred from vaccination.

Russia has developed two COVID-19 vaccines, Sputnik V which is backed by the Russian Direct Investment Fund and another developed by Siberia's Vector Institute, with final trials for the both yet to

be completed.

Scientists have raised concerns about the speed at which Russia has worked, giving the regulatory go-ahead for its vaccines and launching mass vaccinations before full trials to test its safety and efficacy had been completed.

The Sputnik V vaccine is administered in two injections, with the second dose expected to be given 21 days after the first.

Moscow closed down all public places including parks and cafes, with exception for delivery, in late March, with

police patrolling the streets looking for those violating the rules. Restrictions were eased from mid-June, however.

Russia as a whole reported 28,782 new infections on Saturday, its highest daily tally, pushing the national total to 2,431,731, the fourth-highest in the world.

In October, certain restrictions such as remote learning for some secondary school children and a 30 percent limit on the number of workers allowed in offices were introduced again.

UN warns 2021 shaping up to be a humanitarian catastrophe

NEW YORK

NEXT year is shaping up to be a humanitarian catastrophe and rich countries must not trample poor countries in a "stampede for vaccines" to combat the coronavirus pandemic, top UN officials told the 193-member UN General Assembly on Friday.

World Food Programme (WFP) chief David Beasley and World Health Organization (WHO) head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus spoke during a special meeting on COVID-19, which has so far infected 65 million globally.

The pandemic, measures taken by countries to try to stop its spread and the economic impact have fueled a 40 percent increase in the number of people needing humanitarian help, the United Nations said earlier this week. It has appealed for



Yemeni child suffering from malnutrition is weighed at a treatment center in Yemen's northern Hajjah province. File photo

US\$35 billion in aid funding.

"2021 is literally going to be catastrophic based on what

we're seeing at this stage of the game," said Beasley, adding that for a dozen countries, famine is

"knocking on the door." He said 2021 was likely to be "the worst humanitarian crisis

year since the beginning of the United Nations" 75 years ago and "we're not going to be able to fund everything... so we have to prioritize, as I say, the icebergs in front of the Titanic."

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and his top officials have also called for COVID-19 vaccines to be made available to all and for rich countries to help developing countries combat and recover from the pandemic.

Tedros appealed for an immediate injection of US\$4.3 billion into a world vaccine-sharing program.

"We simply cannot accept a world in which the poor and marginalized are trampled by the rich and powerful in the stampede for vaccines," Tedros told the General Assembly. "This is a global crisis and the solutions must be shared equitably as global public goods."

Somali president vows to hold free, credible elections

MOGADISHU

SOMALI President Mohamed Farmajo yesterday expressed his commitment to holding free, fair and credible parliamentary and presidential elections without delay.

Farmajo (pictured) said the parliamentary elections which were supposed to have started on Dec. 1, and presidential elections due in February 2021 will be held in line with a political agreement on indirect polls reached between his government and six regional states on Sept. 26.

"We are committed to the full implementation of the election agreement while avoiding delays in the election period," he said in a statement issued in Mogadishu.

The Somali leader called on federal member states which have not elected members of the election committee to do so to ensure timely elections.

The statement comes as the Horn of African nation on Dec. 1 missed a deadline to hold its parliamentary elections as agreed by the government and six regional states in September.

The country's elections team has not yet settled on the new date of the indirect elections as the opposition has rejected the composition of the electoral commission and its capacity to hold a free, fair and credible vote and is demanding overhaul of the team.

The forthcoming 2020/2021 poll is considered critical for the sake of entrenching the federal system of governance, which is required to appease communities and regions claiming systematic exclusion and marginalization for decades.

In his statement, the president called on all government agencies to double their efforts by playing their roles effectively for the smooth facilitation of the elections in accordance with the expectations of the signed political agreements.

He lauded the government officials for their dedicated efforts in electoral matters and in implementing their critical role in reaching an agreement on the country's electoral process through negotiations. *Xinhua*

Virtual seminar held to introduce China-proposed BRI to Egyptians

CAIRO

THE Chinese Embassy in Egypt, Egypt's Sharaf Foundation for Sustainable Development and China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA) jointly held on Saturday a virtual seminar to introduce the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to the Egyptian audience as part of the Get to Know China programme.

Chinese Ambassador to Egypt Liao Liqiang (pictured), President of CPDA Wu Hailong, and the head of the Sharaf Foundation for Sustainable Development, Essam Sharaf, participated in the seminar.

Jointly launched by the Chinese Embassy in Egypt and the Sharaf Foundation for Sustainable Development, Get to Know China is a program of virtual meetings that helps deepen the knowledge of China and its activities home and abroad as well as its contribution to revitalizing international cooperation.

During the seminar, Liao said the BRI has provided a new space for the growth of the global economy and built a new platform for international investment and trade.

"It also made a new contribution to enhancing friendship between peoples and improving their well-being, while expanding chances to improve global economic governance," he said.

"The BRI also built a bridge to promote global peace and stability, and became a pathway to shared opportunities and prosperity," the ambassador added.

Since the beginning of this year, Liao said, the BRI has been bucking the trend and achieved a series of satisfactory new positive results, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the global economic downturn.

"From January to October 2020, non-financial direct investment by Chinese companies in countries along the BRI routes amounted to 14.1 billion U.S. dollars, an increase of 23.1 percent year on year," Liao said.

During the joint fight against COVID-19 pandemic, BRI partners provided valuable support for China, while China provided medical aid for 122 BRI partners and sent medical teams to 25 countries, according to the Chinese ambassador. *Xinhua*

Vast region of US state of California to enter into new stay-at-home order amid COVID-19 surge

LOS ANGELES

THE vast region of the U.S. California state will enter a new stay-at-home order on Sunday night, as its many parts have hit the 15 percent or lower threshold for intensive care unit (ICU) capacity amid COVID-19 surge, local health authorities said Saturday.

Based on the latest ICU data, the 11-county Southern California region which includes Los Angeles County, and the San Joaquin Valley region in Central California, have dropped below 15 percent ICU capacity, said the California Department of Public Health in a statement.

It noted that the regional stay-at-home order will take effect in those two regions at

11:59 p.m. Sunday local time (0759GMT) and will remain in effect for at least three weeks.

The Southern California region's ICU capacity has dropped to 12.5 percent as of Saturday, while the available ICU capacity in the San Joaquin Valley region was reported at 8.6 percent on the same day.

The two regions are home to around 33 million people in the most populous state in the United States, representing 84 percent of the state's population, the Los Angeles Times reported.

The other three regions in California, including the Bay Area, Greater Sacramento Region and Northern California region, are also on the brink of new lockdown with ICU capacity hitting 21.7 percent, 21.4 percent

and 24.1 percent, respectively.

In response to the recent rapidly increasing number of new cases and hospitalizations from the virus, California Governor Gavin Newsom on Thursday announced plans for the regional stay-at-home order to contain the pandemic based on hospital capacity, which is designed to be triggered when fewer than 15 percent of beds are available in ICU for a region.

The new order will close a wide range of businesses and activities, including bars, breweries, distilleries, wineries, hair salons and barbershops, and personal care services.

In addition, a number of sectors in these regions, including restaurants, retail and shopping centers, as well as hotels and lodg-

ing, will have additional modifications in addition to 100 percent masking and physical distancing.

Critical infrastructure, schools and non-urgent medical and dental care can remain open with appropriate infectious disease preventative measures under the terms of the new order.

Public health officials urged people to stay at home as much as possible and wearing a face mask when out in public. Local residents are also required to keep gatherings small, short, outdoors and limited to members of one household.

The California Department of Public Health confirmed 25,068 new cases of COVID-19 and 209 new deaths as of Saturday,

bringing the state's total count to 1,311,625 cases and death toll to 19,791.

"California is experiencing the fastest increase in cases we have seen yet - faster than what we experienced at the outset of the pandemic and this summer. If COVID-19 continues to spread at this rate, it could quickly overwhelm our health care system and lead to catastrophic outcomes," health officials warned in a daily release.

In Los Angeles, a county home to over 10 million people, Saturday saw 44 newly reported deaths and 8,948 new COVID-19 cases. It is the third consecutive day and the fourth time this week the county's new case number surpassed the previous all-time high. *Xinhua*

Trump keeps up false claims of widespread fraud at Georgia rally for US senators

VALDOSTA, Georgia

U.S. President Donald Trump campaigned in Georgia on Saturday for two Republican senators at a rally that some in his party feared could end up hurting, not helping, their chances by focusing on his efforts to reverse his own election defeat.

In his first rally appearance since he lost to Democrat Joe Biden in the Nov. 3 presidential contest, Trump urged the crowd to vote for Republican candidates in the Georgia runoff election on Jan. 5 despite his unsubstantiated claims of significant electoral fraud in the state.

But he gave considerable time in his remarks to allegations, made without evidence, of widespread fraud in the nationwide election that led to a Democrat reclaiming the White House. Trump has declined to concede the race.

"They cheated and they rigged our presidential election but we will still win it," Trump said. "And they're going to try and rig this election too," Trump, a Republican, told the crowd, who chanted "Four More Years!"

The president repeated his attacks on Republicans who have refused to back

his claims, including Georgia's governor, Brian Kemp. Earlier on Saturday, Trump phoned Kemp and pressured the governor on Twitter to take further steps to help him overturn the election results.

Trump's allegations of widespread voter fraud have been rejected by state and federal officials across the country, and his campaign's numerous legal challenges have almost all failed.

Biden was the first Democratic presidential candidate to win in Georgia since 1992. Statewide recounts, including a painstaking review by hand of some 5 million ballots, turned up no significant irregularities.

The January runoffs pit two Republican senators, David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler, against well-funded Democratic challengers Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, seeking to capture a state that has not elected a Democratic senator in 20 years.

The races will determine which party controls the U.S. Senate. Democrats, who already have the majority in the House of Representatives, need to win both seats to control the Senate. If Republicans win one seat, they will retain their majority and be able to block



US President Donald Trump

much of Biden's legislative agenda.

Biden said he would visit Georgia to campaign for the Democratic candidates but did not give a timetable for his trip.

ATTACKING REPUBLICANS

Governor Kemp did not attend the rally due to the death in a car crash of Harrison Deal, a close family friend of the governor and staffer for Loeffler. He had an active exchange with Trump on Twitter earlier in the day, however.

"I will easily & quickly win Georgia if Governor @BrianKempGA or the Secretary of State permit a simple signature verification... Why are these two 'Republicans' saying no?" Trump wrote on Twitter.

Trump told the Saturday rally his challenge was headed to the U.S. Supreme Court "very shortly," without elaborating. Legal experts do not see a path to the nation's highest court, however.

"Hopefully our legislatures and the United States Supreme Court will step forward and save our country," he said.

Richard Hasen, professor of law and political science at the University of California, Irvine, said it was unclear what case Trump was referring to, but added: "I don't think any of these efforts stand any chance of success."

Trump's penchant for making his political rallies largely about himself - and now, his claims that the U.S. electoral system was manipulated - had raised concerns among some Republicans that his appearance in Georgia could end up turning voters off or making them feel there is no point in voting.

Before the rally, Matt Towery, a former Georgia Republican legislator who is now a political analyst and pollster, said Trump could help if he praised the candidates, but warned:

"If he talks about them for 10 minutes and spends the rest of the time telling everyone how terrible Brian Kemp is, then it will only exacerbate things." **Agencies**

All Russian regions to join anti-COVID vaccination campaign by next weekend - deputy PM

MOSCOW

ALL Russian regions will join the vaccination campaign against the coronavirus infection at the end of next week, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said on Friday.

"I would like to say that the vaccination campaign has already been launched in the Russian army, in the city of Moscow. By the end of the week, all regions of the country will join this campaign," she said, adding that President Vladimir Putin tasked the government and regional authorities to kick off free voluntary vaccination campaign against the coronavirus infection.

According to Golikova, vaccines will be supplied to the region along with production increase.

Population categories to be vaccinated first will be determined by the Russian health ministry.

"I would like to repeat once again that first of all they will be people from the risk group, i.e. medical workers, teachers, care and community workers, law enforcers, and those employed with essential services," she said.

She noted that vaccination against the novel coronavirus infection will take 42 days and those inoculated will have to observe precautions during this period not to catch the infection.

Thus, they will have to refrain from visiting crowded places, wear face masks, use sanitizers, minimize contacts and refrain from drinking alcohol or taking immunosuppressant drugs.

To date, 2,402,949 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Russia, with 1,888,752 patients having recovered from the disease. Russia's latest data indicates 42,176 fatalities nationwide. **Agencies**

Singapore scholar says RCEP injects new impetus into China-ASEAN cooperation

SINGAPORE

THE signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) has injected new momentum into the economic and trade cooperation between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, a Singapore scholar said in a recent interview with Xinhua.

The economic and trade cooperation between China and the 10-member ASEAN countries remains strong despite the impact of COVID-19, said Yu Hong, a senior research fellow of the East Asian Institute of the National University of Singapore, and such kind of co-

operation will be bolstered by the inking of RCEP, the world's largest free trade agreement so far.

For the first three quarters of this year, the bilateral trade volume between China and ASEAN has reached 481.8 billion U.S. dollars, making ASEAN the largest trading partner of China, the world's second-largest economy.

"This has demonstrated the resilience of China-ASEAN economic and trade ties, as well as the huge potential of economic and trade cooperation between the two sides," Yu said.

He pointed out that China and ASEAN countries are highly complementary in their industries and

enjoy huge potential for cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, digital economy, manufacturing upgrading and trade in services.

The signing of RCEP will help ASEAN countries with advantageous natural resources and labor forces to undertake the transfers of manufacturing industries, so as to accelerate their industrialization processes, he said. This in turn, will help ASEAN countries better integrate into the regional and global industrial chains, and strengthen regional economic integration, he added.

According to Yu, RCEP has injected "strong impetus" for Chinese and ASEAN companies to cope

with the COVID-19 pandemic by enabling them more access to the markets in the region.

Yu said ASEAN countries, being optimistic about China's economic prospects and the business opportunities given its vast market, will play an increasingly important role in China's economic and trade relations.

Mentioning the 17th China-ASEAN Expo concluded at the end of last month in Nanning city in south China, Yu said the expo is an important platform for the economic and trade cooperation between the two sides, promoting more ASEAN countries' products to enter the Chinese market, and

helping Chinese enterprises better understand the market demand of ASEAN countries and explore business opportunities there.

He said the expo's focus on the digital economy this year complies with the current trend of the development of China-ASEAN economic and trade cooperation.

"China has strong competitiveness and technological advantages in the field of the digital economy, which is also essential for ASEAN countries to accelerate their industrialization process," he said.

Cooperation in this field will become a new driving force for the growth of bilateral economy, trade and investment, Yu said. **Xinhua**

China launches Chang'e-5 lunar mission to collect, return moon samples

CHINA'S Chang'e-5 lunar probe was lifted up at 4:30 am Beijing time on Nov. 24, as Long March-5 Y5, China's state-of-the-art carrier rocket, blasted off from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in the southern province of Hainan, the 353rd launch of the Long March family.

About 2,200 seconds after lift-off, the Chang'e-5 lunar probe separated from the rocket and entered the planned orbit, starting the country's first attempt to retrieve samples from an extraterrestrial body.

The Long March-5 Y5 rocket went through four separations, including booster separation, fairing separation, primary and secondary separation, and rocket separation.

The lunar probe is made up of an orbiter, a lander, an ascender and a returner.

After it enters the lunar orbit, the lander-ascender combination will separate from the orbiter-returner combination.

The orbiter-returner combination will stay in orbit, while the lander-ascender combination is expected to touch down on the near side of the moon and launch follow-up missions.



A rendergraph of the Chang'e-5 lunar probe flying in the space. Photo courtesy of China Academy of Space Technology

The Chang'e-5 lunar mission aims at three major engineering targets.

First, it is expected to make breakthroughs in key technologies such as narrow-launch-window and multi-orbit fire data loading and launching, unmanned lunar sampling and sealing, lunar ascending, lunar orbit and rendezvous, as well as the storage of lunar samples, to improve China's aerospace technology.

Second, it marks the first attempt of China to retrieve samples from an extraterrestrial body, which will greatly advance China's sci-

fi development.

Third, it will improve the country's lunar exploration system and lay a solid foundation for future manned lunar-landing and deep space exploration missions.

The major scientific goal of the Chang'e-5 lunar mission is to investigate the landscape and geological background around the landing area, launch on-site data analysis for lunar samples, and establish a relation between field investigation data and lab data.

Besides, it will also carry out long-term and systematic lab research for the lunar

samples collected, so as to study the structure, physical characters, and material composition of lunar soil, as well as the origin and evolution of the moon.

The Chang'e-5 lunar mission is organized by China National Space Administration (CNSA). The CNSA Lunar Exploration and Space Program Center, China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, China Academy of Space Technology, China Satellite Launch and Tracking Control General, and the National Astronomical Observatories are responsible for the overall project, carrier rockets, detectors, survey and recovery, and ground application, respectively.

China's lunar exploration project is a signature project outlined in the National Medium & Long-term Program for Science and Technology Development (2006-2020), and marks a major strategic decision of the Communist Party of China to promote the development of aerospace, advance sci-fi progress and innovation, and enhance comprehensive national strength. Since its launch in January 2004, it has successfully carried out five missions.

People's Daily

Ghanaians confident of peaceful general elections

ACCRA

AS Ghana's general elections approach, the majority of people have expressed confidence that the elections will be held peacefully.

Today, more than 17 million eligible Ghanaians are expected to cast their ballots at 38,622 polling stations across the country to elect a president and 275 members of parliament. John Osei Tutu Agyeman, a former broadcaster and media consultant, believes in the ability of the security services to ensure a peaceful atmosphere before, during and after the elections.

"We have had these same fears in the past, but the elections in 2012 and 2016 turned out to be peaceful and beautiful, and I believe the security services will rise to the occasion again to preserve the peace in the country," Agyeman, also director of the Institute of Media Practice, a media think tank, told Xinhua.

Sharing similar views, Director of Kingdom Concept ConsultPrincess Sekyere-Bih said "we have been assured by the Ghana police service that we would have a very peaceful election, and we hope for a peaceful outcome."

"Not only have they deployed more trained men, but



Incumbent President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo

this time, they have more resources to ensure peace," said she.

Although there were clashes between party supporters during the voter registration in June and July, the 2020 election campaign has been largely peaceful as the COVID-19 pandemic limited outdoor activities.

"This gives us a foretaste of what might happen, so it must inform about the strategies which the police will put in place for peace during the election," Aremeyaw Shaibu, chairman of the Ghana-based Coalition of Domestic Election Observers, told Xinhua.

Shaibu urged the security services to be at their professional best to ensure a peaceful atmosphere during and after the polls.

Although some were apprehensive due to some isolated events, the larger Ghanaian society was hopeful of

a peaceful outcome for the elections, according to recent findings by the Center for Democratic Development-Ghana (CDD-Ghana).

"Stakeholders are important," said Rhoda Osei-Afful, an expert at CDD, adding that the Electoral Commission (EC) "is at the helm of affairs as far as the election is concerned." "How they engage the electorate, the political parties and their electoral officials is going to be critical in ensuring peace," Osei-Afful told Xinhua. The expert also urged political parties to help their supporters channel their grievances into the EC through laid-down channels to minimize the incidents of unnecessary rancor.

The Ghana police service has identified 4,098 areas where chaos is likely to erupt ahead of the elections and provided reports to the National Election Security Taskforce to guide its tactical arrangements and deployments across 16 regions.

The 4,098 flashpoints include historical election-related hot spots and locations where other forms of violence and crime have occurred in history, said Yaw Nketia Yeboah, a spokesman for the Ghana police service.

Xinhua

SW China's Chongqing establishes multimodal transport logistics system

How do automobiles under the brand of Dongfeng Sokon (DFSK) manufactured by factories in the inland Chinese city of Chongqing municipality get to run in the urban and rural areas in Germany and Indonesia? How do marine fish from Vietnam and chilies from India be brought to the dining tables of Chongqing residents? How is the mountain city of Chongqing connected with foreign countries thousands of miles away?

Thanks to the municipality's efforts to build multimodal transport system, these questions above got a clear answer.

By enabling railways, freighters, automobiles and airplanes to support and complement each other, Chongqing has seen its important logistics

channels gradually get more mature and smoother with each passing day.

A multimodal transport logistics system featuring logistics channels in all directions as well as coordination among the four modes of transport involving highways, railways, waterways, and air routes has been established in the municipality. At the same time, the application of the system is gradually maturing.

The New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor (ILSTC), a trade and logistics passage with an operational hub centered in Chongqing, is a perfect example of the

municipality's multimodal transport system.

Because of the corridor, automobile accessories in containers on a freight train departed from the Tuanjiecun Station in Chongqing can be directly transferred to a cargo ship after the train arrives at Beibu Gulf Port in south China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, and then transported to Jakarta in Indonesia.

The factories of Chongqing Sokon Industry Group Co. Ltd., manufacturer of Dongfeng Sokon automobiles, in Indonesia will then assemble relevant products and sell them to consumers

in countries including Indonesia. "It costs about the same as river-ocean transportation, yet is 10 days faster," said Wan Zhijun, deputy general manager of Chongqing Sokon Motor Group Import and Export Co., Ltd.

Since the beginning of this year, the company has exported more than 400-million-yuan (about \$61 million) worth of goods through the ILSTC, according to Wan.

One of the advantages of multimodal transport is its good cost-performance, noted Liu Yizhen, assistant to general manager with the New Land-Sea Corridor Operation Co., Ltd.

For most agricultural products and industrial products, water transport costs less and yet is too slow, and rail transport is not cost-effective enough, which makes the ILSTC characterized by rail-water transport an obvious choice, Liu pointed out.

The new corridor has optimized and complemented the traditional logistics system in Chongqing where goods were transported eastward by ships along the Yangtze River, according to Hu Hongbing, deputy head of Chongqing Port and Logistics Office. As of Oct. 31, the rail-ocean intermodal trains have made a total of 2,562 trips via

the corridor, with the cargo value of foreign trade reaching about 9.46 billion yuan and that of domestic trade about 6.85 billion yuan, Hu said.

The rail-ocean intermodal transport under the corridor has opened up a grand passage from west China to the coastal regions of the country and stimulated trade and exchanges between southwestern regions in China and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In 2019, the total value of foreign trade between ASEAN countries and Chongqing rose by 43.2 percent. The fig-

ure for Guangxi, Sichuan, and Gansu in China, which are all involved in the ILSTC, increased by 13.3 percent, 19.7 percent and 47.2 percent, respectively. In the first 10 months of the year, ASEAN remained China's largest trading partner, while the total trade value between China and ASEAN stood at 3.79 trillion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 7 percent.

Compared with traditional transportation, multimodal transportation makes it possible for containers to be transferred between various means of transport smoothly, avoiding re-packing when moving cargos from trains to ships or vice versa, said Gui Minghua, deputy head of the multimodal transport department, Chongqing Port and Logistics Office.

People's Daily



Some of the 2020 Kilimanjaro Premium Lager Marathon's participants get refreshed and cooled at the Simba Cement brand's water point during the race, which took place in Kilimanjaro.

Simba Cement brand prides in participation in 19th Kili Marathon anniversary

By Guardian Reporter

"WE have a group of more than 30 employees of Tanga Cement Company that will participate in the 2021 Kilimanjaro Premium Lager Marathon and this time around, we will have two female runners who will take part in the Tigo Kilimanjaro 21km race," Tanga Cement PLC Commercial Manager, Peet Brits, said when presenting his opening remarks in a recent interview.

He said Tanga Cement PLC, through the company's product, Simba Cement, has been sponsoring the Kilimanjaro Premium Lager Marathon since the race's introduction in Tanzania way back in 2003. The race was, then, just a fun run involving less than 500 runners.

According to Brits, as one of the co sponsors of the big event, they will be fully participating in this exciting event that brings together over 11,000 runners from more than 55 countries worldwide as they will also, in addition to taking part in 21km race, field one senior management staff in the Kilimanjaro Premium Lager Marathon.

He stated they are also keen on taking part in the corporate challenge where they will register five Tanga Cement permanent employees to participate. "There will be no professional athletes representing our firm," he stressed.

On training of the participants, he said: "Our runners are doing this by themselves as either individuals or on informal organized groups. They like running because this is their hobby. We trust their capabilities and believe that they will be able to participate and win as they need a bit of stretching from their previous race results."

The Commercial Manager and his team have been encouraging the staff to make this a habit as they are not only running for sport but also to be in good health. A fit body, he noted, makes a fit mind which in return will result to positive morale, team spirit and productivity at the work place.

Commenting on the Simba Cement's main motivation in the sponsorship, he disclosed: "Kilimanjaro is a home of Simba Cement, given most of our northern regions' customers are found in Kilimanjaro."

"Our participation gives us time to join our valued customers for the sports event and show them our appreciation after the race at our hospitality tent at the stadium."

He stated that this is all about the strength within the company's staff, their customers and the strength that is found within every bag of Simba Cement.

He noted not only does Simba Cement provides building bricks across the nation but also it, through the Kilimanjaro Marathon, cements customer relations.

"We believe all participants are driven by the strength within themselves, and that is what drives them to participate in the Kilimanjaro Premium Lager Marathon," he disclosed.

He moreover said they are happy to be a water point sponsor as theirs is lively and the busiest water point of the whole race.

"In response to the yearly growth on a yearly basis we have been increasing the number of employees who volunteer at our Simba Cement water. Bearing in mind that we're serving both the full and half marathon it's hectic and being just a few kilometers to the finish point, so you can imagine how grateful runners feel when they reach refreshments at our water point," he said.

According to the Commercial Manager, apart from the runners being cooled by water and coke, they get to enjoy good music from the Simba Cement water point.

"All I can say here is that our water point is the best and liveliest of all the water points" he stated. He disclosed that having a big group of the company's employees fully branded, all in good Simba Cement sprint, ensures an impactful presence.

He expressed sincere regards to the race's other sponsors including Kilimanjaro Premium Lager (Main sponsor-42km), Tigo (21km race), Grand Malt (5km Fun Run), water table sponsors, Kilimanjaro Water, TPC Limited, Unilever Tanzania, Kibo Palace Hotel, Absa Bank Tanzania, and official suppliers, Keys Hotel, Garda World Security, and CMC Automobiles.

He moreover presented special thanks to the event's organizers, Kilimanjaro Marathon Company, and the race's national coordinators, Executive Solutions Ltd.

Brits stated: "Tanga Cement is among the among the largest cement factories in the country which has been sponsoring Kili Marathon since its introduction in Tanzania. Kilimanjaro being a major home for Simba Cement with our depot located in Moshi town allowing us to serve our North East Region's customers with ease, we are delighted to be once again part of this historical event."

He said through the company's corporate social investment program, which focuses on education, health, environment, community development, as well as humanitarian aid during natural calamities such as earthquakes and floods, they have been constructing health centres, schools, classrooms, latrines, hospitals, etc towards ensuring development in the communities.

The Kilimanjaro Premium Lager Marathon's Local Race Director, John Bayo, lauded Simba Cement brand for being among the longest serving sponsors for the marathon.

"This shows how committed they are to the event as it must have given them a good return at the end of the day, I call on other potential sponsors out there to emulate Simba Cement brand," he remarked.

Aggrey Marealle, Managing Director of Executive Solutions Ltd, stated: "More than 11,000 runners are expected to take part in the Kilimanjaro Marathon 2021 race, come February, as registration is going on through either online-www.kilimanjaramarathon.com or via Tigo Pesa by dialing *149*20#, we also issue a big reminder to everyone that they should book accommodation now."

Morogoro entrepreneurs urged to invest in sports tourism

By Correspondent Michael Sikapundwa, Morogoro

MOROGORO Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS), Emmanuel Kalobelo, has requested the region's entrepreneurs to invest in tourism centers, which will in the process, help to develop sports.

Kalobelo made the statement when he graced the opening of this season's national inter-ports games, which took place in the region recently.

Over 100 guests, he noted, were set to visit Morogoro to attend the 14th edition of the inter-ports' games, which took place at Jamhuri Stadium.

The games had participating teams competing in basketball, football, netball and tug-of-war.

Dar es Salaam, Mtwara, Tanga, Lake Zone and invited teams from Dar es Salaam's Tanzania International Container Terminal Service (TICTS) and Zanzibar took part in the tournament.

The Morogoro RAS stated Morogoro happens to be a link of over five corridors which



Morogoro Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS), Emmanuel Kalobelo, kicks a ball to officially open the 14th edition of the national inter-ports' games, which took place in the region recently. PHOTO: MICHAEL SIKAPUNDWA

play great role in exportation and importation of goods from the Dar es Salaam port to eastern and southern parts of Tanzania.

The situation, he stated, calls for entrepreneurs to invest in hotels and tourism centres, given the inter ports games' attendants will be in need of such services.

"It's time for us to boost individuals' and the country's income since the network of infrastructure from Dar es Salaam port will ease transportation of, among others, fresh vegetables to small scale farmers as well as businessmen," he disclosed.

He noted: "Construction of hotels, which can each host over 500 guests, should be prioritized."

"You should also visit our tourist attractions at Uluguru mountains, Mwalimu Nyerere and Mikumi national parks, which has unique animal species."

"Ulanga District, for one, has tiger fishes, ox bow lakes, as well as worshiping sites which provide information on missionaries' arrival during colonial era."

The Jamhuri Stadium hosted football, netball and tug-of-war tournaments, the Ukwema JKT Hall venue played host to basketball.

Dar es Salaam and Tanga teams held sway

in all competitions, with the former emerging as winners in soccer with a 3-0 victory over Mtwara team.

Dar es Salaam as well clinched silverware in netball, cruising to 45-18 victory over Mtwara.

Lake Zone team lost 71-46 to Dar es Salaam in basketball event.

Tanga team made their presence felt in the men's category of tug-of-war event, lifting the tournament's top honour.

Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA)'s Director General, Deusdedit Kakoko, said it is an opportunity for the locals and TPA staff to look for investment opportunities in the region, given the

government has set out to construct a dry port.

He disclosed: "You should participate in the games but you should as well re-think of how the games can bring forth opportunities for boosting your income."

"The TPA has organized these games with a view to refreshing and sharing profit with the staff who work tirelessly," he said.

He insisted on the need for the squads to value fair play throughout the games.

He moreover congratulated Dar es Salaam port team for ending as the games' overall winners in the 14th edition of the event.

He also challenged Zanzibar, who emerged as overall winners of the last year's event, to step up as they have been performing well particularly in tug-of-war.

He disclosed: "In last year's games Zanzibar lifted over five trophies, they in particular held sway in tug-of-war, so, they should do away with negative sentiment that the Isles have weak people."



Dar es Salaam's St. Mary's Primary School's pupils entertain parents and guests with Bongo Flavour songs during the school's kindergarten pupils' colourful graduation ceremony which took place at the school's premises at Tabata in the city. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Dar dance music still in doldrums

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

DANCE music had, for almost a decade ago, turned out to be a successful music genre in Tanzania, with domestic music troupes riding high in the scene. Packed halls were a common sight during the troupes' shows.

A section of musicians in the genre were, between 2005 and 2014, quite popular among music followers. Such musicians like Ally Choki 'Mzee wa Farasi', Ramadhan Masanja (now deceased), Patchou Mwamba, Nyoshi El Saadat, Ndanda Kosovo and others were much familiar to the domestic dance music followers.

All of that came about thanks to huge passion for dance music the fans had showcased.

Twanga Pepeta troupe was awesome

When a fan mentioned such a band like African Stars, popularly known as 'Twanga Pepeta', to someone else, the latter could easily identify members making the troupe, pianist Victor Mkambi, drummer Abu Semhando, and singers Janeth Isinika, Luiza Mbutu, Choki, Rogert Hega, Charles Gabriel, Saleh Kupaza, Msafiri 'Diouf' and Saulo John 'Ferguson'.

The ranks of the troupe's female dancers also garnered great following thanks to their impressive performances.

The dancers include Lilian 'Internet', Otilia Boniface, Fetty Kiboroloni, Mwanumtu Athumani and lead dancer, Aisha Madinda.

The troupe's male dancers, namely Mandela 'Sura mbaya', Billahi Zungu, Super Bokilo, Danger Boy and their leader, Super Nyamwela, were equally popular.

The troupe always attracted plenty of

music followers in various shows held both in and outside Dar es Salaam.

Akudo Impact equally wowed fans with entertaining shows

Akudo Impact was another band that held sway in the genre, filling halls with plenty of fans when the band performed.

The troupe, nicknamed 'Vijana wa Masauti', won music fans' hearts with its dancing style, 'Pekechapekecha', with the troupe having its stronghold at Msasani Beach Club in the city.

The show episodes were filled by people of downtown Dar and surrounding regions.

The band was led by vocalist, Christian Bella, and his assistant, Tarcis Masela, with other gifted singers such as Zagreb Butamu, Papy Malay, Alain Kabasele, Canal Top and others.

They danced to various dances including "Yako wapi Mapenzi" which was compared to the national anthem due to the fact that many people knew its poems fluently.

Andrew Sekedia, gifted keyboardist, used to impress the band's fans and make them feel bad every time they missed the bonanza due to his outstanding performance.

The troupe also had talented dancers from DR Congo, including Nancy Lohuma, Shushuu Masha, Nadine Esalaa, Fanie Bosawa, Laisaa Sangwa and others, whose dancing prowess won music fans' hearts.

FM Academia 'Wazee wa Ngwasuma' is too nowhere to be found

The domestic dance music scene was, from the late 1990s to the past few years, mostly dominated by troupes, namely African Stars 'Twanga Pepeta', Akudo Impact 'Vijana wa Masauti' and FM Academia 'Wazee wa Ngwasuma'.

The FM Academia Band is presently known as CP Academia, as the troupe has

secured a new owner that has opted to change the troupe's name.

The troupe was then led by Nyoshi El Saadat and his assistant, Patchou Mwamba, with Dar es Salaam's New Msasani Club being the troupe's most preferred venue.

The troupe was moreover regularly staging shows at the Museum Village, located at Kijitonyam in the city.

The troupe consisted of such gifted singers as Muleziri Boyange 'Mulemule FBI', Pablo Masai, Rodger Muzungu, Kalidjo Kitokololo, Ibonga Katumbi 'Jesus', Joseph Mara, Tootoo Kalala and others.

They had talented dancers, namely Suzan Chubwa 'Queen Suzy', Titina Mwinyi, Queen Aaliyah, Side Mtianga and others, whose dancing skills hugely contributed to the troupe's ability to attract fans to its shows.

It is unfortunate that the bands are currently failing to attract music follower to the troupes' shows.

Due to the difficulties domestic dance music encounters, a section of the troupes are currently performing for free.

Domestic dance music fans, for example, were, in the past, forced to pay as much as 10,00/- each to access the shows staged by the 'Twanga Pepeta' troupe, given the troupe was then at its best.

The troupe is, surprisingly, lately staging shows for free at some of the venues in the city, with the shows still attracting few fans.

Akudo Impact has sadly plunged into oblivion after the troupe's musicians had opted to go separate ways.

The CP Academia is as well staging shows cheaply, with music fans who can simply buy drinks at venues hosting the troupe's shows, easily accessing the shows.

Barca's loss to Cadiz 'a huge step back' - Koeman

BARCELONA

RONALD Koeman says Barcelona were not good enough as their title ambitions took a "huge step back" in Saturday's 2-1 defeat away at Cadiz.

Goals from Alvaro Gimenez and Alvaro Negredo sentenced Barca to their fourth defeat of the season and their worst start to a campaign since 1987-88.

With just 14 points from their opening 10 games, the Blaugrana are already 12 behind leaders Atletico Madrid, who beat Real Valladolid 2-0 earlier on Saturday.

"It's a huge step back in terms of winning La Liga," Koeman lamented in his postmatch news conference. "It's disappointing but we must accept it, even though being 12 points back from a strong team like Atletico is a lot."

"The result today is difficult to explain. We concede the first goal and weren't good in attack, with too many players in the middle of the pitch."

"That's not the level I expect from my team. We must improve. We must be more focused. In general, the attitude without the ball was not good."

Cadiz went ahead in the eighth minute when Gimenez bundled the ball over the line after Marc-Andre ter Stegen had saved Barca defender Oscar Mingueza's poor header.

Pedro Alcala's own goal drew Barca level in the second half, but Cadiz restored their lead through Negredo five minutes later after Clement Lenglet's error from Jordi Alba's throw in.

"Our throw-in ends up in a goal for them," added an angry Koeman. "It's our mistake. It's incredible and you don't expect it from our team. You cannot concede a goal like that."

"I think it's a lack of concentration. We lack aggression without the ball. That could be why. It's not easy to explain how we concede that second goal. It's very disappointing."

Barca have now fallen behind in six of their 10 league games this season and have failed to win any of them, drawing two and losing the other four.

"It's worrying to lose so many games," midfielder Sergio Busquets told reporters. "The more we slip up, the further we are away from the top, which is where we want to be."

"I think individual mistakes have cost us a lot of points and we can't keep giving the opposition that early advantage."

"Once we're behind, it enables teams to shut up at the back and deny us space. It's not a question of attitude or commitment, but starting games like this makes it much more difficult."

(Agencies)

Guardiola wants no Christmas 'gifts' from Man City defence

LONDON

PEP Guardiola called on Manchester City's defenders to keep up a defensive mean streak as his side moved into the Premier League top four for the first time this season with a 2-0 win over Fulham.

Raheem Sterling's first goal in seven games and a Kevin De Bruyne penalty inside the first 26 minutes ensured a comfortable afternoon for Guardiola's men on Saturday as they recorded back-to-back wins in the league for the first time this season.

After a difficult start to the campaign caused by injuries, coronavirus cases and a short pre-season, City are edging back into title contention as they now trail leaders Tottenham and Liverpool by just three points.

"This season looks like there will be a lot of teams in contention. Everyone can beat everyone. In this month it was important to get qualification for the Champions League, now we focus on the Premier League. It will be a long season," said Guardiola.

"We struggled at the beginning of the season for many reasons. Now four games, four clean sheets. It's so important for us to maintain this solidity."

"It's important that we won and that defenders don't make mistakes and we don't gift goals."

Sterling had not scored in the league for nearly two months and been left out by Guardiola in recent weeks.

But the England international looked more like his old self to provide some much-needed penetration in behind for a City side that has struggled to score goals this season.

Sterling should have opened the scoring inside three minutes when he fired too close to Alphonse Areola after Riyad Mahrez's pass opened up the Fulham defence.

Less than two minutes later, Sterling got a second chance from another sumptuous De Bruyne assist and this time made no mistake on his favoured right foot.

Sterling then helped create the second as he turned Joachim Andersen inside the box and went down under the faintest contact from the Danish defender for a penalty.

De Bruyne had missed his last spot-kick against Liverpool, but confidently strode forward to send Areola the wrong way.

- Stones renaissance -

John Stones is enjoying a renaissance at the heart of Guardiola's defence as he was again preferred to Aymeric Laporte alongside Ruben Dias.

AFP

Chelsea's 'dependables' show Blues are more than their £220m summer outlay

LONDON

AMID the £220 million worth of summer signings who started for Chelsea, it was their old reliable supporting cast who steered them to the top of the Premier League.

Olivier Giroud and Kurt Zouma's goals either side of half-time and a late Christian Pulisic tap-in earned them a 3-1 victory over Marcelo Bielsa's energetic Leeds. All six of Chelsea's new recruits started on this Baltic evening in West London, but it was their unsung heroes who were the match-winners on this day.

The supporters -- all wrapped up in face coverings and scarves -- eagerly greeted the team as they ran out for their prematch warm up. This was their first chance to see Timo Werner, Kai Havertz, Eduard Mendy, Ben Chilwell, Thiago Silva and Hakim Ziyech in person. The sextet are an enticing assortment of footballing riches, but instead it was their familiar French duo of Giroud and Zouma who were the lingering heroes.

Giroud may end up being regarded like one of the Impressionist painters, only truly appreciated once he's gone. But as reliable as death and taxes, Giroud delivers. He backed up his four-goal haul against Sevilla in midweek with a wonderfully taken first-half goal as he timed his run perfectly to meet Reece James' cross to dart the ball past Illian Meslier.

LONDON -- Amid the £220 million worth of summer signings who



Flying high: Kurt Zouma (left) scored the winner as Chelsea went top of the Premier League. (Agencies)

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Even with just 2,000 fans in the stadium -- who more than made up for their meagre numbers, filling the echoing ground with their chants from the lower tier of the Shed End and West Stand -- Giroud is not afforded any quiet subtlety. As he chased down defenders, trying to pick their pocket in a moment of indecision, the supporters roared 'Girrouuuuuuu!' It's the SW6 equivalent of 'man on!' but while there are surely numerous suitors for this dependable 34-year-old, there will be no embrace warmer than his adoring fans in this corner of West London. They love him.

He has scored in his past six Premier League starts, but given this run stretches back to the start of July, that in

itself shows the Giroud paradox. There are few in Premier League history who have had to re-prove their class and value more times than Giroud has. Although Giroud is in the twilight of his career, he says he feels 10 years younger: old in wisdom, young in body, and again he proved that against Leeds.

Before the match he spoke of how whenever he hits a (selection) wall at a club -- like he did at Arsenal and at Chelsea -- he has two options: give up, or charge through it. Case in point, this time last season Giroud was being linked with a move away from Stamford Bridge with his old boss Antonio Conte known to be one admirer at Inter Milan. France boss Didier Deschamps is concerned at Giroud's lack of playing time ahead of next summer's European Championships but Giroud will not go quietly and Lampard cannot afford to let him go in January. Against Leeds he broke down their defensive wall with his first-half strike and kept the defence on their

toes, constantly prodding and pressing until he was replaced in the 79th minute, to a standing ovation.

Zouma was, like Giroud, linked with a move away from Stamford Bridge during the last year but instead has cemented his spot in the heart of Lampard's defence. He is flourishing alongside Thiago Silva, and though he will be disappointed with his positioning for Leeds' opener, where Kelvin Phillips' pass bisected Chelsea's defence to put Patrick Bamford through and past an on-rushing Eduard Mendy to score, he has the ability and bandwidth to become a stalwart for Chelsea.

Lampard's other dependables also delivered. Mason Mount was lively and it was his pinpoint corner that gave Zouma the space to score their second, while James is deservedly ahead of captain Cesar Azpilicueta in the right-back pecking order. Alongside James, Chelsea's defensive reinforcements Mendy, Chilwell and Silva offer a settled feel to their defence with N'Golo Kante omnipresent in front of their back four as he shifted positioning to quash Bamford's threat in the second half. Meanwhile, upfront, there are still enjoyable question marks over what their best attacking lineup is. You can imagine Lampard enjoys this conundrum.

Against Leeds their xG of 4.1 was their second-highest in 2020, and even though Hakim Ziyech was forced off through a hamstring injury after 30 minutes, they had the luxury of

being able to bring on Pulisic. The American, who got an hour off the bench, kept Luke Ayling on his heels with his tricky footwork and will only get better, having missed the early part of the campaign with a hamstring injury of his own.

"It's been a difficult period for him with the injury, and he's been frustrated in a good way," Lampard said. "To play the period of the game he played and to get the goal -- and he has an incredible gift to arrive in the 6-yard box at the right time -- he's only going to get better now."

Werner was again dangerous, flying in off the wings, but is yet to replicate the lethal finishing we saw at RB Leipzig. He failed to score from three yards out -- having blocked Giroud's header off Leeds' goal line -- thanks in part to Meslier's fingertips, but he'll continue to grow in this Chelsea side and his relentless work rate paid off as he teed up Pulisic's late goal.

While Ziyech looked lively before he was forced off injured, Havertz continues to try and find his feet in the Premier League. Speak to those who know him well and they are in no doubt he will end up being one of the world's best players. While there are glimpses of his Bayer Leverkusen form which led to Chelsea paying £72m, you feel he needs to be played more in the heart of the attacking action to bring the best out of him, rather than playing out wide in Chelsea's three-man midfield.

ESPN

'Welcome home': Premier League's soul is back as fans return

LONDON

CHRIS Dixon's eyes welled up as he prepared to return to his seat.

From Upton Park to the Olympic Stadium, Dixon has been coming to West Ham games across seven decades. Nine months without being able to come to watch his beloved team has been agony.

"I never thought at my age I would get so excited about winning a ballot for a football match -- it's been fantastic," the 71-year-old Dixon said. "All my supporter friends are gagging to get back. I'm quite emotional really. It gets in my throat. I really am so pleased to be back."

For the visit of Manchester United, Dixon was part of a landmark moment in English football. Never before had supporters been shut out of games for so long. The east London stadium welcomed the first, very restricted crowd at a Premier League game since March when the coronavirus pandemic that has killed more than 61,000 in Britain forced unprecedented restrictions.

"Welcome home," read the message flashing on the stadium's exterior screen, although the



Fans are socially distanced as they wait for kick off ahead of the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham United and Manchester United at the London stadium in London, England, Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020. (AP)

players couldn't deliver on the field, losing 3-1 to United.

Only 2,000 fans were allowed into a stadium that can fit 60,000 on Saturday -- after temperatures were checked and face coverings donned. Such is the lingering threat from COVID-19 which claimed another 397 lives in the 24 hours before the match.

But after months of matches in soulless empty stadiums, having a fan chorus once again for the Cockney club anthem "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles" was a godsend.

"We are a tribe," Dixon

said, "the team is a big thing for me."

Coming to football has long been a welcome distraction for many from everyday life, with fans often traveling the length of the country -- however limited the prospect of glory.

The highest West Ham has finished in the league is third in 1986. The last major title was the 1980 FA Cup.

"I go home and away, every game, up and down the country," 31-year-old supporter Ben Harris said. "It's just

huge."

Although Harris and the West Ham faithful could celebrate Tomas Soucek's goal -- and see the bubble machine kick into action -- they had to endure a second-half collapse as United scored three times.

Brighter days are returning for West Ham.

"My life's back," Harris said. "It's the one thing I've missed all through the lockdown. I work hard during the week, my escape is to come here a couple of hours a week. It's what I do."

But only half of the Premier League's 20 stadiums are allowed to have fans -- mainly in London, where Chel-

sea also had a couple of thousand watching Saturday's 3-1 victory over Leeds.

"Their input was huge, the noise they made," Chelsea manager Frank Lampard. "And you could see how excited they are at the end that we are top of the league."

Ten teams, including Leeds and Manchester United, are in cities that remain subject to the toughest coronavirus restrictions, leaving supporters shut out for now.

In the other major leagues -- France, Germany, Italy and Spain -- the seats are empty.

AP

