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TANZANIA

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## POLLUTION



EDUCATION ON IMPACTS OF PLASTIC CARRIER BAGS CRUCIAL **PAGE 3**

## PROJECT



SOLUTIONS TO SOCIAL CHALLENGES IN RURAL AREAS **PAGE 4**

## ENERGY



ARUSHA POLICE ARREST 48 MINERAL TRADERS **PAGE 5**

## ECONOMY



AFRICA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH REMAINED STABLE IN 2019 **PAGE 6**



Page 13



## Local airline chiefs map out viral infections strategies

By Guardian Reporter

EXECUTIVES of airlines operating in the country met in Dar es Salaam yesterday to lay down strategies to ensure that infectious diseases do not enter Tanzania through air transport.

The meeting hosted by the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA) brought together senior executives of airlines operating domestic and international routes.

Briefing reporters at the start of the meeting, TCAA Director General Hamza Johari said participants would set out precautionary measures to be adhered to so that infectious diseases are kept at bay.

He said the meeting has been convened as a matter of urgency due to the coronavirus threat that is already wreaking havoc around the world.

**China has said it will send charter planes to bring back Hubei province residents who are overseas as soon as possible**

"We must take precautionary measures because we receive a huge number of arrivals through our airports," he said.

Johari noted that although there is no case of coronavirus or any other contagious infectious disease, the government is putting in place strategies to ensure that no such diseases find their way into the country due to weak control systems.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) yesterday declared the new coronavirus a global health emergency as the outbreak continues to spread outside China.

"The main reason for this declaration is not what is happening in China but what

TURN TO PAGE 2

# Ndugai takes on Zitto for role in World Bank's delayed loan

THE government intends to spend the loan money to improve access to secondary education in the country



Workers at a tourist camp at Mto wa Mbu township in Monduli district, Arusha region remove tents as the camp was flooded after a heavy downpour, given the ongoing rains in the region on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza.

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

SPEAKER of the National Assembly Job Ndugai has criticized Kigoma Urban MP Zitto Kabwe (ACT-Wazalendo) for being part of a group of Tanzanians who oppose the World Bank's 500 million (1.15trn/-) education loan to Tanzania.

Speaking in the House yesterday, Ndugai said it was unpatriotic for a lawmaker to write a letter to the lender not to release the loan, noting that Kabwe, who was not in the session, would have some explaining to do when he comes back.

"Even if we have ideological differences, he was not supposed to do what he did; he has gone too far," Ndugai said.

Kabwe recently admitted that he had written to the board of directors of the World Bank in Washington urging it to delay the loan until the government irons out some pending issues.

The Speaker charged that some lawmakers were hypocritical in claiming that they are acting in the best interest of the country while in the process denying many poor Tanzanians their rights.

"Most of us here send our children to posh private schools. Yet we deny children of poor Tanzanians an opportunity to get education,"

**“Even if we have ideological differences, he was not supposed to do what he did; he has gone too far”**

he stated.

After Ndugai's remarks in a session that was broadcast live, Kabwe went to his social media accounts to push the blame to the government's policy that bars pregnant school girls from resuming their studies after delivery.

"To Speaker Ndugai: There is no ideological difference on the issue of girls who get pregnant resuming studies. CCM's manifesto promised that in 2015, opposition parties promised the same and two-thirds of citizens supported it. There is only one person who opposes it—President John Magufuli," he posted on twitter and tagged the Head of State.

"The one who is blocking the World Bank's loan is President (John) Magufuli through his

TURN TO PAGE 2

## New study links antibiotic resistance to environment

By Guardian Reporter

TRANSMISSION of bacteria in the environment is the main factor responsible for antibiotic resistance, a new study shows.

Conducted by researchers from the Washington State University in north-eastern Tanzania, the study whose findings have just been published in Nature Communications found that it's not antibiotic use alone driving resistance.

Instead, researchers found that transmission of bacteria in the environment is the most important factor. The four-year study was led by researchers from the WSU Paul G. Allen

**“The study, funded by the National Science Foundation, began in March 2012 and involved visiting 425 households from 13 villages throughout northeastern Tanzania**

School for Global Animal Health. "We were surprised to find these

microbes everywhere," said Douglas Call, a Regents professor and associate director for research at the Allen School, "but it appears that within impoverished communities, there are many opportunities for bacteria to spread between animals and people via contact with waste or through consumption of contaminated food and water."

The study, funded by the National Science Foundation, began in March 2012 and involved visiting 425 households from 13 villages throughout northeastern Tanzania.

TURN TO PAGE 2

## 'Fight against pneumonia to save 150,000 child deaths'

By Guardian Reporter

BOOSTING efforts to fight pneumonia could avert over 153,000 child deaths from pneumonia and other major diseases in Tanzania, a new analysis has found.

Modeling by the US-based Johns Hopkins University, scaling up pneumonia treatment and prevention services can save the lives of 61,302 children under the age of five in Tanzania. It would also create 'a ripple effect' that would

**“Kyaw Aung, head of health services at UNICEF Tanzania, said that at present, Tanzanian children stand a better chance of surviving past their fifth birthday than ever before**

prevent 92,310 extra child deaths from other major childhood diseases at the same time, underscoring the need for integrated health services.

This health modeling exercise came ahead of the first ever global forum on childhood pneumonia, which took place in the Spanish city of Barcelona from Wednesday to Friday this week.

Pneumonia is caused by bacteria, viruses or fungi, and leaves children fighting for breath

as their lungs fill with pus and fluid. Globally, it is the biggest single killer of children, claiming the lives of 800,000 children last year, or one child every 39 seconds. Despite considerable progress made in Tanzania, 312 children under five continue to die every day, due to preventable causes including pneumonia.

Although some types of pneumonia can be prevented with vaccines and can be easily treated with low-cost antibiotics if properly

TURN TO PAGE 2



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## New study links antibiotic resistance to environment

FROM PAGE 1

At each household, data was collected about people's daily activities, after which researchers collected fecal samples from people, domestic livestock, chickens, dogs, and when present, wildlife. Water was also sampled.

The methods used by the team were unique from most studies, allowing collection and testing of more than 61,000 bacterial isolates. Depending on the community sampled, over 65 percent of bacteria from people were resistant to at least one of the nine antibiotics tested.

The prevalence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria was highest for people, but it was also high for domestic animals even when those animals were never exposed to antibiotics.

For example, in some communities up to 50 per cent of bacteria from dogs were antibiotic-resistant.

"In these communities, no one is treating their dog with antibiotics, and yet they have a high prevalence of resistance," Call said. "It's not an antibiotic use problem; they are coming into contact with antibiotic-resistant bacteria in the environment."

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria were also prevalent in wildlife, the study indicated.

More than 50 per cent of wildlife feces contained ampicillin-resistant bacteria, which was higher than the average across people, chickens, livestock and dogs. The prevalence of resistance to the remaining eight antibiotics was highly correlated with results from domestic samples.

"We've got almost as much resistance on the wildlife side as the domestic side," Call said. "This is one factor that shows how bacterial transmission plays such an important role in this system."

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria were also prevalent in water sources, it specified.

The World Health Organization recognizes antibiotic resistance as a threat to global health and estimates 10 million deaths worldwide by 2050 if no effective interventions are made.

While antibiotic-resistant bacteria were prevalent throughout the study area, the findings are seen the first step to address widespread health risks, experts noted.

"Hygiene and sanitation have to figure more prominently in efforts to combat antibiotic resistance," said Mark Caudell, the first-author of the work. Caudell is a former WSU researcher and now the regional social science coordinator for antimicrobial-resistance at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

"Until hygiene and infrastructure improves, and transmission begins to decline, antibiotic stewardship alone is unlikely to have much impact," he added.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa shares a light moment with Rombo legislator Joseph Selasini at the ongoing National Assembly session in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: PMO

## 'Fight against pneumonia to save 150,000 child deaths'

FROM PAGE 1

diagnosed, tens of millions of children are still unvaccinated, globally, and one in three children with symptoms do not receive essential medical care.

Child deaths from pneumonia are concentrated in the world's poorest countries and it is the most deprived and marginalised children who suffer the most. Forecasts show that over 149,131 children under

the age of five could die from pneumonia between 2020 and 2030 in Tanzania, on current trends. Globally over the next decade, deaths are likely to be highest in Nigeria with 1.4 million, India (880,000), the Democratic Republic of Congo (350,000) and Ethiopia (280,000).

Health interventions aimed at improving nutrition, providing antibiotics and increasing vaccine coverage, boosting breastfeed-

ing rates - key measures that reduce the risk of children dying from pneumonia - would also prevent millions of child deaths globally from diseases like diarrhoea, measles and sepsis.

Kyaw Aung, head of health services at UNICEF Tanzania, said that at present, Tanzanian children stand a better chance of surviving past their fifth birthday than ever before.

"The government's imple-

mentation of high-impact health programmes such as routine immunization, and improved management of common childhood illnesses, has saved the lives of thousands of children across the country. However, if we are serious about ending preventable child deaths, we have to address pneumonia.

"This means not only improving timely detection, prevention and prescribing the right treatment but also

addressing the major causes of pneumonia deaths like malnutrition, lack of access to vaccines and antibiotics, and tackling the more difficult challenge of air pollution."

The Johns Hopkins modeling shows that of the total 8.9 million deaths from all causes globally that could be averted over the next decade, 3.9 million would be the result of greater efforts to reduce levels of malnutrition

alone. On January 29-31, the nine leading health and children's organisations - ISGlobal, Save the Children, UNICEF, Every Breath Counts, la Caixa Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, Unitaid and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance - were hosting world leaders at the Global Forum on Childhood Pneumonia in Barcelona, the first such international forum.



Zanzibar Second Vice President ambassador Seif Ali Iddi Kulia in talks with a delegation of specialists from Save a Child's Heart (SACH) - Israeli-based international humanitarian charity at his office Vuga in Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Rahma Suleiman

## Local airline chiefs map out viral infections strategies

FROM PAGE 1

is happening in other countries," said WHO director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The concern is that it could spread to countries with weaker health systems, he said.

The US joined a number of other countries that have told their citizens not to travel to China.

The State Department issued a level four warning - having previously urged Americans to "reconsider" travel to China - and said any citizens in China "should consider departing using commercial means".

China has said it will send charter planes to bring back Hubei province residents who recently travelled overseas "as soon as possible."

A foreign ministry spokesman said this was because of "practical difficulties" Chinese citizens have faced abroad. Hubei is where the virus emerged.

At least 213 people in the China have died from the virus, mostly in Hubei, with almost 10,000 cases nationally. The WHO said there had been 98 cases in 18 other countries, but no deaths.

Most international cases arose from people who had been to Wuhan city in Hubei province.

However in eight cases - in Germany, Japan, Vietnam and the United States - patients were infected by people who had travelled to China.

Speaking at a news conference in Geneva, Dr Tedros described the virus as an "unprecedented outbreak" that has been met with an "unprecedented response."

He praised "extraordinary measures" the Chinese authorities

had taken, insisting that there was no reason to limit trade or travel to China.

"Let me be clear, this declaration is not a vote of no confidence in China," he said.

But various countries have taken steps to close borders or cancel flights, and companies like Google, Ikea, Starbucks and Tesla have closed their shops or stopped operations.

US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross says the outbreak could "accelerate the return of jobs to North America."

WHO declares a public health emergency of international concern when there is an extraordinary event which is likely to constitute a public health risk to other states through international spread of such disease.

It has previously declared five global public health emergencies, starting with swine flu in 2009, when the H1N1 virus spread across the world, killing more than 200,000 people.

Next was polio in 2014, where it was noticed that although closer than ever to eradication in 2012, polio numbers rapidly rose in 2013.

Zika was next in 2016, where WHO declared Zika a public health emergency after the disease spread rapidly through the Americas.

Ebola has twice been so declared, in 2014 and 2019 where the first emergency over the virus lasted from August 2014 to March 2016 with nearly 30,000 people infected.

More than 11,000 died in West Africa at the time, while a second emergency was declared last year as an outbreak spread in DR Congo but scarcely touched neighbouring countries, observers noted.

## Ndugai takes on Zitto for role in World Bank's delayed loan

FROM PAGE 1

directive barring girls who get pregnant from continuing with education," the MP posted in another tweet.

In his recent interview with BBC, Kabwe also said that he opposed the issuance of the loan because it was being released during

an election year, insisting that he believed the money would be used to favour the ruling party, CCM in elections slated for October.

"The World Bank giving the government of CCM this money during an election year amounts to supporting them while within these four years this government has violated

basic people's rights such as press freedom and political rights. So it is our view that the World Bank should be more careful on when to give money to African governments," he said.

The World Bank's board of directors was scheduled to make a final decision on the matter last Tuesday but postponed it amid pressure

from activists who argue that the government has not changed its policy.

The government intends to spend the loan money to improve access to secondary education in the country.

Tanzania has run into trouble with the global lender over its policies targeting pregnant school girls before. A USD300

million educational loan to Tanzania was withdrawn in 2018 over concerns about expelling pregnant school girls and the introduction of a law that made it a crime to question official statistics.

The government amended the statistics law last year, but stopped short of any formal changes to the way it treats pregnant school girls.

## Lugola questioned by PCCB over Euros 408 million deal

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

FORMER Home Affairs Minister, Kangi Lugola was yesterday questioned for over six hours by officials of the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) following allegations of involvement in irregular procurement deals worth Euros 408 million (over 1trn/-).

Speaking during the launch of quarters for Tanzania Prisons officers in Dar es Salaam last week, President John Magufuli directed the anti-corruption body to investigate the matter which also involved former Commissioner General of the Fire and Rescue Force, Tobias Andengeny and Permanent Secretary, Jacob Kingu.

Lugola arrived at PCCB Dodoma offices around 7:24 am where he was grilled until noon.

However, the Mwibara legislator through CCM refused to talk to journalists who were gathered outside the PCCB building insisting to comment on the matter in coming days.

Lately, the Ministry's former PS, Jacob Kingu and the then Commissioner General of the Fire and Rescue Force, Tobias Andengeny arrived at PCCB offices for interrogations.

According to PCCB, the last person to be interviewed was Deputy Home Affairs Minister, Eng Hamad Masauni.

According to President Magufuli, the officials signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the deal to procure drones and other firefighting equipment for the Fire and Rescue Force while well aware that the money was not allocated in the ministry's budget or approved by the National Assembly.

Magufuli claimed that Tanzanian officials who went for negotiations in Romania before signing the agreement were paid a US \$ 800 sitting allowance per day and provided with return air tickets.

Following the scandal, Magufuli announced a mini cabinet reshuffle appointing George Simbachawene Minister for Home Affairs and Mussa Hassan Zungu Minister of State in the Vice President's Office Environment and Union Affairs, the position which previously held by Simbachawene.

Lugola has been a Member of Parliament for Mwibara constituency since 2010. He was appointed Minister for Home Affairs by President Magufuli in July 2018, replacing Mwigulu Nchemba in a mini-cabinet reshuffle. Nchemba headed the ministry since 2015.

Prior to his appointment as Minister for Home Affairs, Lugola was Deputy Minister in the Vice-President's Office responsible for Environment.



**Lately, the Ministry's former PS, Jacob Kingu and the then Commissioner General of the Fire and Rescue Force, Tobias Andengeny arrived at PCCB offices for interrogations**



Former Home Affairs minister Kangi Lugola leaving the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) office in Dodoma yesterday shortly after being questioned for over six hours by officials following allegations of involvement in irregular procurement deal worth Euros 408 million (over 1trn/-). Photo: Correspondent Renatha Msungu

## 'More education on impacts of plastic carrier bags crucial'

By Guardian Reporter

THE Parliamentary Committee on Industry, Trade and Environment has suggested for the government to continue educating Tanzanians on the impacts of the banned plastic carrier bags since they are still illegally imported in the country through porous borders.

Members of parliament were concerned that some dishonest

people use illegal routes to import the single use carrier bags which were banned in the country in June 2019.

Presenting the committee report for 2019, Vice Chairman, Masoud Ali Hamis said the government should also consider tax exemptions on some equipment used to produce alternative bags to facilitate local manufacturers to massively produce them. He said:

"Tax exemption will reduce production cost thus lowering the price of alternative carrier bags which are now sold at prices that not all Tanzanians can afford".

He said the banned plastic bags were given for free by sellers at markets across the country, but currently buyers are required to purchase bags every time they go to the markets. He however noted that some of the

alternative carrier bags cannot be re-used as expected.

The committee was of the view that industries which were manufacturing plastic bags would have been left to produce the bags for export.

"We have killed a number of factories that were producing plastic bags, we could have let them operate and produce the bags for markets outside Tanzania.

The government would have set up regulatory supervision to ensure all the manufactured bags are exported," said Hamis.

Hamis informed that plastic bags can last for up to 500 years before they decay thus affecting water penetration into the soil.

He said the plastic bags are also associated with spreading of diseases such as cholera and malaria as well as causing death to animals.

Recently, the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) Northern Zone official, Justine Kasoka was quoted saying despite the ban on importation and production of plastic bags, some dishonest traders still import them from neighbouring Kenya.

According to Kasoka some of the dumb ports that deceitful traders use to import the bags are Tarakea, Holili, and Kitobo

in Kilimanjaro region, and Namanga in Arusha region.

In his budget speech in the National Assembly in April 2019, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa announced total ban on production, importation, sell or use of plastic bags with effect from June 1, 2019.

Zanzibar imposed ban on plastic bags in 2011 under the Environment (Protection) Act, No. 49 of 2008.

## Ilala residents appeal for help as floods threaten their lives

By Beatrice Philemon

SOME residents of Ilala Quarters suburb in Dar es Salaam region have appealed to city authorities to visit the area and resolve the problem of recurrent floods attributed to unplanned settlements.

Speaking to The Guardian yesterday, representative of the residents Lize Mwakisu said recent rains flooded their homes at night leading to massive destruction of property and endangering lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

The 65-years-old said some people need to be evacuated urgently as they live in hazardous areas. She also said the problem of unplanned settlements whereby people buy and build home on valleys should be addressed as a permanent solution.

"They need support from the government to rescue them from floods because the rainfall that had occurred three weeks ago had caused excessive flooding, many people had become homeless after heavy floodwater destroyed their houses.

"As more rainfall continue, more floods continue to affect more people in our area, we need the regional commissioner to visit our place so that we can discuss how we will prevent this situation and

right now we are suffering a lot, they don't have a place to go because the majority of people living in this area are low-income earners."

"We call upon the Dar es Salaam regional commissioner to visit our area to see how people suffer when floods occur so that he can find another alternative to rescue people living in this area," she noted

According to her, many people have been affected by flooding because all canals and drainage channels that were built over the last 60 years had blocked as result of residential construction sand and solid waste.

She called on Ilala Municipal Council to help them unblock and clean canals and drainage channels and make them wider enough to allow stormwater to flow easily and prevent floods re-occur in such areas.

Apart from that all houses built illegally on the canals and drainage channels should be demolished.

In a bid to address the risks and effects associated with flooding to the residents and infrastructures as well, the government can pay compensation to people living in the areas to find another area to stay.

"We need support from that government because when floods occur in our area our are swept away which is huge losses to people's life in terms of deaths, damage to infrastructures and property as well health risks," she noted.

She said they need special evacuation centres because since floods happen in Ilala Kota there are no special evacuation centres that can serve the victims.



The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) Tanzania Country representative Fred Kafeero (L) looks at the leguminous plant which is under research at the eastern and southern africa regional for world vegetable centre (WVC), when he visited the centre in Arusha on Thursday. He is flanked by the centre's director Dr. Gabriel Rugalema. Photo: Correspondent Daniel Sabuni

By Getrude Mbago

THE Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) yesterday launched the first ever awards aimed to recognise and reward stakeholders who had demonstrated an outstanding performance in the promotion of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and digital economy in the country.

Dubbed 'ICT Awards 2020' the event will recognise service providers including mobile network oper-

## TCRA launches 'ICT Awards 2020'

ators, content service providers (radio and television), online content service providers (radio, television, forums and bloggers), multiplex operators, internet service providers, postal and courier service providers.

Speaking during the inauguration ceremony in Dar es Salaam yesterday, TRCA director general Eng James Kilaba said that the awards

giving ceremony is scheduled to take place on May 15, this year.

He said that the authority wants to accelerate effective use of information, education; communications and technology amongst stakeholders thus promote innovation and ensure universal access, secured, quality and affordable communication service.

"I am happy that Tanzania has

so far demonstrated a responsive innovation especially encouraging utilisation of ICTs in many areas of our economy and this is effectively supporting the government visions of attaining a middle income status by 2025," he

The DG emphasised that the awards had been careful set to accommodate all TCRA licences emphasising that participation in the

awards is mandatory to all licensees.

"We are all aware that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have fundamentally changed the way people communicate, work and earn their livelihood.

It has forged new ways to create knowledge, educate people and disseminate information. It has also restructured the way the world conducts economic and businesses practices," he said.

## Rwanda to Scrap Visa Fees

KIGALI

RWANDA is considering scrapping visa fees for citizens of the Commonwealth nations as well as the African Union and La Francophonie member countries, President Paul Kagame has announced. Kagame made the announcement recently at the International School for Government at King's College in London, while speaking about Rwanda's transformation journey.

The conversation was moderated by Alexander Downer, the Executive Chair of the institution. The President emphasised Rwanda's commitment to trade with the rest of the world.

"We are soon considering exempting citizens of the Commonwealth, as well as the African Union and the Francophonie, from paying visa fees when entering Rwanda," he said.

The move was expected to ease access to Rwanda for a significant section of the international community.

The Commonwealth has 53 members while Francophonie has 54 member states across the world.

To date, only 17 African countries were exempted from paying visa fees. The tally of African countries, Commonwealth member states and La Francophonie comes to about 95 countries set to benefit from the move.

This, development experts say, would among other things increase chances of Rwanda hosting global summits due to ease of access, among other benefits. The development could also see Rwandans easily access countries from across the in the event of reciprocity by beneficiary countries.

Kagame who was in the UK for the UK-Africa Summit said that there is a positive momentum in terms of the relationship between the United Kingdom and Africa, including Rwanda.

"The timing is good. Britain is looking to re-imagine its global trade and investment arrangements. And later this year, the world's largest new free trade area will become operational in Africa, covering nearly the entire continent," he said.

AGENCIES



**We are soon considering exempting citizens of the Commonwealth, as well as the African Union and the Francophonie, from paying visa fees when entering Rwanda**



Former President Jakaya Kikwete receives a gift of a Maasai picture from members of the Lions Club of Dar es Salaam and Arusha as a sign of appreciation when they paid a courtesy call at his Masaki residence in Dar es Salaam yesterday. The delegation briefed him about 'Wise Wall Project' to be implemented in Lossimngori village, Monduli district. Photo: Aisia Rweyemamu

## Kikwete urges individuals, institutions to contribute into finding solutions to social challenges in rural areas

By Aisia Rweyemamu

RETIRED President Jakaya Kikwete has called upon individuals and institutions with enough financial resources to voluntarily contribute into finding solutions to the many social challenges facing Tanzanians especially those in rural areas.

President Kikwete noted that since the social challenges are part of life, there are some

people with financial capacities who can contribute towards reducing them.

Kikwete said this yesterday in Dar es Salaam shortly after being briefed about the Wise Wall project that aimed to address the long existing water and many other social challenges at the Lossimngori village in Monduli district, Arusha region.

The project is collaboratively implemented by Lions Club in

Dar es Salaam and Arusha. It is expected to effectively start in February this year and will be a lifelong project.

"I am very familiar with the village, it is a semi-arid area therefore there is a great need for water, I congratulate the Lions Club as well as the people involved in the project on their good intentions to help the community" Former President acknowledged.

He added that the project is interesting since it directly deal with social problems in the specific village.

Meanwhile, Kindness Ambassador and founder of the Wise Wall project, Deepak Ramola, told President Kikwete that the project will build a community center and a museum at the village.

He said they will also construct rain harvesting water

facilities to enable the villagers harvest and store the precious liquid to be used during drought seasons.

"It is going to be a village of life lessons in Tanzania where you can learn from the entire community wisdom and knowledge", he said.

Ramola said they have chosen to implement the project in Tanzania because there are so much similarities of culture

with India but also they will get chances to learn the history and natural progression of the strong relationship between Tanzania and India.

Mbayani Tayai, a Lossimngori villager said that more than 1,000 villagers will directly benefit from the project.

Tayai said completion of the learning center will help a good number of Maasai youth to gain life skills and reduce rural - ur-

ban migration.

"Villagers at Lossimngori face serious water problems. We are grateful to the government efforts in ensuring we have access to clean and safe water, but the problem still persist. The rain water harvesting infrastructures to be built by the project will enable us to have reliable water services," he explained.



Simiyu regional commissioner, Anthony Mtaka (2nd R) and CRDB Bank lake zone manager Lusingi Sitta (L) handing over a dummy cheque worth over 2.2m/- to Igaganulwa secondary school student Yohana Lugegenga after he emerged the best student in the last year's Form Four national examination results during the regional education forum on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## NIMR embarks on research to come up with Ebola, Human Papilloma Virus vaccines

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

THE National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) - Mwanza centre has embarked on a research to come up with vaccines to prevent Ebola and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) in the country.

Dr Safari Kinung'hi, the NIMR's centre director said that the final results of the study are expected to be released next year whereby the preliminary findings were also impressive.

Addressing journalists and communications officers under the Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and children, Dr Kinung'hi said that the researchers hopes that the final results will be helpful.

The team of journalists and communications officers visited the centre as part of the ongoing campaign dubbed 'Tumebobesha Afya', which intends to expose what the institutions under the Ministry of Health has so far done to improve infrastructures and services to people.

He said that the experts are researching to prove the effectiveness of the current HPV vaccines provided to young girls to prevent cervical cancer.

For his part, senior researcher at the centre, John Changamche said the experts are also working to come up with the Ebola vaccine to help the country during outbreaks.

He also said that "We are researching to find out whether the HPV vaccine could be effective and may be it can be given to a girl only once without repeating the dose."

Launching the national programme in April 2018, Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan directed regional and district medical officers to ensure that girls aged 14 are vaccinated with Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine to prevent them from cervical cancer.

She said that the target of introducing the HPV vaccine was to reach 3 million girls by December this year adding that it was free of charge for all recommended girls.

According to the VP, the introduction of the HPV is aimed at reducing treatment cost cervical cancer patients incur when diagnosed with it.

Suluhu detailed that according to Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI) cervical cancer was the leading cancer by 32.8 percent and contribute 38 -percent of all cancer related deaths.

## Zanzibar well prepared to fight Coronavirus

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR government has said that it is well prepared to control the spread of the highly contagious, pneumonia-causing illness (Coronavirus) which has been recently reported in China.

The disease which has been dubbed as Wuhan coronavirus has killed at least 170 people in China

since it started two weeks ago. More than 7,711 others have been infected in more than a dozen countries, including five confirmed cases in the United States. Cases have also been reported in Thailand, Japan and South Korea.

A team of medical experts led by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry for Health Asha Ali Abdullah briefed the Second Vice Presi-

dent Ambassador Seif Ali Iddi after familiarisation tour and meeting with delegates from Save a Child's Heart (SACH) of Israel.

According to the PS, the team is in the Isles waiting to start providing awareness to the community on how to prevent and fight the disease.

Speaking with doctors from SACH, Ambassador Seif Ali Iddi

said that the experts' tour will allow more children in the Isles to get cardiovascular service.

He said a number of people especially those with low income have benefitted from the system by reducing cost of treatment initially used to treat them abroad.

"I would like to thank the management of SACH from Israel for the good services to our people

that bring happiness and trust to the people," he said.

Ambassador Idi highlighted the importance of strengthening the collaboration between them and the local experts.

A representative from SACH, Dr Mara Chapira said a team of experts will screen 400 children at Mnazi Mmoja Hospital suffering from heart complications.



A firm's employee of Dar's Morocco to Mwenge expansion road takes the position of police traffic officer to control and directs cars along Bagamoyo road at ITV Mwenge bus stage on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

## Kenyan court halts the biometric registration

NAIROBI

KENYA'S High Court on Wednesday halted the implementation of a new biometric registration system until data protection laws are enacted.

The court also declared the collection of GPS and DNA data unconstitutional.

The Kenya government had been collecting sensitive personal data, including fingerprints, family details and even location details in the mandatory exercise.

All the sensitive data would be available at the click of a button.

The government insisted the registration was mandatory, saying citizens would not be eligible to receive government services including passports and birth certificates unless they took part. But the high court found that the collection of all this private data was putting Kenyans at risk of suffering irreversible damage if the information was misused.

So the three-judge panel ordered a halt to the implementation of the project - known as Huduma Namba - until comprehensive data protection laws had been enacted.

The court also ruled that the collection of DNA and using GPS to record the precise

location of people's homes was unconstitutional.

The Nubian community had tried to get the entire ID system scrapped on the grounds that it discriminated against marginalised groups.

To register, one needs a national ID - which the stateless Nubians have reported extreme difficulties in obtaining.

However the court dismissed the petition. For decades Nairobi's Nubian community have called Kenya home, yet today, they are still considered outsiders. The Nubians are originally from northern Sudan and southern Egypt, where they settled along the banks of the Nile. They can now be found scattered throughout East Africa and some parts of Northeast Africa.

The Nubians were brought to Kenya over 100 years ago by the British, and have been treated as foreigners ever since. Because of their ethnic and religious origins, they are forced to go through a lengthy and humiliating vetting process in order to obtain the ID cards that are essential for everyday life. This lack of effective access to citizenship leaves them with a second class status, condemned to live in poverty.



**The Nubian community had tried to get the entire ID system scrapped on the grounds that it discriminated against marginalised groups.**

## Arusha police arrest 48 mineral traders allegedly for conducting businesses outside trading centre

By Guardian Reporter, Arusha

POLICE in Arusha city have arrested 48 mineral traders for allegedly conducting the businesses outside the newly state-owned international minerals trading centre.

When launching the facility mid last year, Minerals Minister, Dotto Biteko insisted the government will take stringent measures against mineral traders acting contrary to government

directives.

Speaking to this paper, Tanzania Mineral Dealers' Association (TAMIDA) vice chairman, Thomas Munisi, said the traders were arrested on Thursday after they were found conducting businesses outside the government-controlled trading centres.

"The mineral traders violated government guidelines which require all licensed traders to conduct the businesses in the mineral exchange centre", said

Munisi praising the government for improving the country's businesses environment.

According to him, some mineral traders have been resisting to conduct business within the established market over various reasons. He said the association has been encouraging them to use the market for the government to get revenues.

He however urged mineral traders and miners to respect the country laws and make sure

they abide by set guidelines in the sector. He said the country's minerals sector is currently performing better compared to previous years, adding TAMIDA is ready to collaborate with the government to further improve the sector.

"The country's mining sector is growing fast. Our wish is to see the sector contributing more to government revenues before 2025", he said calling upon top government officials to find time

to listen to various queries from mineral stakeholders.

He commended President John Magufuli for scrapping a number of nuisance taxes in the sector.

Contacted, Arusha Regional Police Commander, Jonathan Shana confirmed the arrest of the traders who he said violated country's regulations that require them to conduct mineral businesses within the established international minerals

trading center.

Last year, when launching the minerals exchange centre, minister Biteko said before the review of the Tanzania Mining Law and the Mineral Rights Regulations in 2010, the contribution of the sector to the national income was small compared to that from fisheries.

He said the reforms in the mining sector have contributed into increased contribution of the minerals sectors to the na-

tional income from the previous 3.5 per cent to 5.7 per cent per year.

Plans are to make the sector contribute 10 per cent to the national income by 2025, said minister Biteko.

Tanzania is Africa's fourth-biggest gold producer after South Africa, Ghana and Mali.

The country exported gold worth \$1.549 billion last year, up slightly from \$1.541 billion in 2017, central bank data shows.

## Global network launches project dubbed 'building local economies in East Africa'

By Beatrice Philemon

A global network of local communities-Slow Food in collaboration with its local networks in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has launched a project dubbed 'Building Local Economies in East Africa through Agroecology' aiming to support the development of agroecological food systems, improve knowledge and communication, and include agroecology in policy frameworks.

A press statement issued by Slow Food stated that the project to be funded by the Agroecology Fund will run from this year to February 2021.

The first activity within the project is a Slow Food Academy on Agroecology, a four-month course organised by Slow Food Uganda and Slow Food Kenya, which will take place across both countries with the participation of some Tanzanians and DRC delegates.

The academy aims to create a regional coordination linking all Slow Food projects and their practices on agroecology with the aim of reinforcing and spreading effective and cost-efficient agroecological solutions, in order to guide local producers and farmers towards a new agricultural system.

Specifically, after an introduction on Slow Food and agroecology, the modules will focus on ecological, organic agriculture, education, and raising awareness of agroecology, the philosophy of good, clean and fair food, and effective advocacy and activism for a sustainable, ecological food system.

Commenting, Edie Mukibi, Slow Food vice-president said: "The academy represents an occasion to train a new leadership who will shape the future of agriculture in Africa and elsewhere. Participants will have the possibility to discuss solutions to contemporary challenges and lay the foundations for an economically-viable food system".

He added participants to the course are all young people aged between 18 and 35 years old, a mixture of farmers, agriculture professionals and indigenous peoples, who will meet four days per month from the end of January until May.

By spreading agroecological practices and strengthening farmers' knowledge of agroecological farming, the project also aims to boost local economies and improve the livelihoods of communities in Kenya, Uganda, the DRC and Tanzania.

This will be done by enhancing market opportunities based on direct contact between producers and consumers, which generates higher incomes, more employment and well-being (as a deep multiplier effect) and contributes to a new narrative around agroecology.

This narrative is essential for a wider cultural shift towards considering agroecology "the agriculture of the future" and in order to advocate for long-lasting change.

Slow Food is a global network of local communities founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions and counteract the rise of fast food culture.



A heap of charcoal bags displayed while waiting for customers outside Urafiki Friendship Market popularly known called 'Mahakama ya Ndizi' in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Citizens need to be educated on the use of renewable energy technologies that are simple and reliable to reduce the use of charcoal. Photo: John Badi

## Tunduru district faces an acute shortage of learning infrastructures, teacher's houses

By Guardian Correspondent, Tunduru

TUNDURU district in Ruvuma region is facing an acute shortage of learning infrastructures and teacher's houses.

Statistics indicates that the district is facing a shortage of 89 class rooms which had affected provision of both, primary and secondary school education.

Data shows that Tunduru district requires a total of 340 class rooms against the available 251 classes. The district is need of 308 teacher's houses.

The district education officer (Education), Celestina Kahangwa admitted the shortage, saying authorities had started to take measures to improve the situation. She said the district had allocated over

430m/- which will directly be deposited to village bank accounts for construction of 49 primary schools.

"We are aware of the shortage of classrooms in our public schools, we will soon start construction of classes in a number of villages", said Kahangwa.

Tunduru district has a total of 435 houses for secondary school

teachers whereas about 800 teachers had been forced to rent houses far from the schools.

There are 24 secondary schools of which 22 are state owned and two owned by religious institutions.

The government issued Circular 5 in 2015 which implements the Education and Training Policy 2014 and directs public bodies to

ensure that secondary education is free for all children.

This includes the removal of all forms of fees and contributions. Tanzania is among the countries that have signed and agreed to implement the Millennium Development Goals (SDGs) and among them is the number four goal regarding the provision of quality education.

## 'Higher than usual temperatures expected in East African region particularly eastern Tanzania'

By Guardian Reporter

HIGHER than usual temperatures are expected in the East African region particularly eastern Tanzania, eastern Somalia, eastern Ethiopia, south-western Kenya, western Rwanda, much of Eritrea, Burundi as well as eastern and south-western Sudan.

According to weather forecast for March, April and May this year issued by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development-IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) earlier than usual start of rains is expected across most of the region, especially over northern Tanzania, northern Uganda, western and north-eastern Kenya, south-western Ethiopia, and southern Somalia.

It said a delayed rainfall onset is expected over central and north-eastern Ethiopia and northern Somalia. The areas are also likely to have prolonged dry periods a few weeks after the start of the season.

Regional and national authorities are encouraged to use the seasonal forecast for planning and to update

it with ten days and monthly forecasts provided by ICPAC and national meteorological services.

March, April, May is an important rainfall season for Burundi, southern Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, and Uganda.

The forecast showed that drier than usual conditions are expected over central and north-eastern Ethiopia and southern Tanzania.

The forecast indicates a high likelihood of a wetter than usual season in western Kenya, south-western and eastern Uganda as well as eastern Rwanda and western parts of South Sudan.

It is likely that episodic rainfall events might lead to flash floods in these areas. Considering October, November and December rainfall season was one of the wettest on record, leading to major floods across the region, which affected infrastructure and livelihoods, stakeholders are advised to remain vigilant and implement the required mitigation measures.

The fifty-fourth greater horn of Africa climate outlook forum (GHACOF54) was convened from



Deputy minister for Land, Housing and Human Settlements Development, Dr Angeline Mabula (L) inspects the ongoing construction of Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) office building being undertaken by the National Housing Corporation (NHC) at Iyondo Msimwa forest farm in Ileje district, Songwe region this week. Photo: Correspondent Munir Shemweta

## 'Africa's economic growth remained stable in 2019'

By Guardian Reporter

THE 2020 African Development Bank's (AfDB) 2020 African Economic Outlook (AEO) has indicated that Africa's economic growth remained stable in 2019 at 3.4 per cent and is on course to pick up to 3.9 percent this year.

The report showed that East Africa nations maintained its lead as the continent's fastest-growing region, with average growth estimated at 5.0 per cent in 2019; North Africa was the second fastest, at 4.1 per cent, while West Africa's growth rose to 3.7 per cent in 2019, up from 3.4 percent the year before.

Central Africa grew at 3.2 per

cent in 2019, up from 2.7 per cent in 2018, while Southern Africa's growth slowed considerably over the same period, from 1.2 percent to 0.7 per cent, dragged down by the devastating cyclones Idai and Kenneth.

Overall, the forecast described the continent's growth fundamentals as improved, driven by a gradual shift toward investments and net exports, and away from private consumption.

The 2020 AEO, themed 'Developing Africa's workforce for the future', called for swift action to address human capital development in African countries, where the quantity and quality of human capital is much lower than in other regions of the

world.

The report also noted the urgent need for capacity building and offers several policy recommendations, which include that states invest more in education and infrastructure to reap the highest returns in long-term GDP growth.

Developing a demand-driven productive workforce to meet industry needs is another essential requirement for the countries.

"Africa needs to build skills in information and communication technology and in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The Fourth Industrial Revolution will place increasing demands on educa-

tional systems that are producing graduates versed in these skills," the report noted.

To keep the current level of unemployment constant, Africa needs to create 12 million jobs every year, according to the report. With rapid technological change expected to disrupt labour markets further, it is urgent that countries address fundamental bottlenecks to creating human capital, the report said.

Akinwumi Adesina, African Development Bank President said: "Youth unemployment must be given top priority. With 12 million graduates entering the labour market each year and only 3 million of them getting jobs, the mountain of youth un-

employment is rising annually". Adesina added: "Let's look at the real lives beyond the statistics. Let's hear their voices, let's feel their aspirations."

Hanan Morsy, director of the macroeconomic policy, forecasting and research department at the Bank said: "As we enter a new decade, the African Development Bank looks to our people. Africa is blessed with resources but its future lies in its people. Education is the great equalizer. Only by developing our workforce will we make a dent in poverty, close the income gap between rich and poor, and adopt new technologies to create jobs in knowledge-intensive sectors". Speaking during the launch of

the report, former Liberian President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, commended the bank for upholding the confidence of the people of the

referring to Africa's fastest-growing economies, she said, "There are stars among us...and we want to applaud them. We want to see more, particularly for countries like mine, which have been left behind, so that more can be done to give them the support that they need."

Although many countries experienced strong growth indicators, relatively few posted significant declines in extreme poverty and inequality, which remain higher than in other regions of the world.

Essentially, inclusive growth – registering faster average consumption for the poor and lower inequality between different population segments – occurred in only 18 of 48 African countries with data.

The Bank's flagship publication, published annually since 2003, provides headline numbers on Africa's economic performance and outlook.

The African Economic Outlook provides compelling up-to-date evidence and analytics to inform and support African decision makers. The publication has built a strong profile as a tool for economic intelligence, policy dialogue and operational effectiveness.



Nyanza company workers construct a road at tarmac level linking Kitunda and Kivule in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## WFP and SADC underscore need for multi-stakeholder action to improve food and nutrition security-Dr Tax

By Guardian Reporter

THE United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) have underscored the need for multi-stakeholder action to improve food and nutrition security and build resilience in the region.

In their recent meeting, the regional director of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) for Southern Africa, Lola Castro and SADC executive secretary, Dr Stergomena Tax agreed to set up a joint technical team to develop an action plan to operationalize the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2019 to develop an immediate multi-sectoral regional anticipatory action plan for preparedness and effective response to climate related disasters.

They also committed to the implementation of the 2019 MoU, between SADC and WFP, which seeks to promote and strengthen bi-lateral cooperation for improved food and nutrition security in the region. The two Parties further

For her part, Lola Castro expressed gratitude to the SADC executive secretary for her leadership in overseeing the technical cooperation between SADC and WFP which is built on mutual interest to enhance food security, build resilience and reduce malnutrition in the SADC region.

She also noted the need for SADC to

ensure efficient regional cross border road transport and transit networks, transport and logistics services, systems and procedures that would facilitate movement of food and other relief supplies to reach those in need in a timely manner. Earlier, Dr Tax expressed appreciation to the WFP for the continued technical support and cooperation with SADC in various areas, including food and nutrition security, food fortification, vulnerability assessments and analysis, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience.

Dr Tax underscored that natural disasters, such as floods and droughts threaten the ability of the SADC region to end food insecurity and malnutrition in line with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. The SADC executive secretary noted that the recent cyclones in the region led to the destruction of infrastructure and disruption of communication and transport systems, thereby affecting production and timely movement of supplies to the affected communities.

The SADC executive secretary was accompanied by the Senior Technical Advisor Nutrition, Pontsho Sepoloane, while the WFP regional director was accompanied by senior regional supply chain advisor, Christine Mendes, regional external partnerships officer, Jaspal Gill, and external partnerships officer, Kwena Mokgalane.

## CHRAGG advised to closely work with the government, key partners

By Guardian Correspondent

EXECUTIVE director of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), Gilbert Sebihogo has advised the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) to closely work with the government and key

partners towards serving ordinary citizens, cautioning them to avoid unnecessary criticism to authorities.

Sebihogo gave the advice during his brief familiarisation tour at CHRAGG offices in Dodoma on Thursday.

He urged the chairperson of CHRAGG, retired Judge Mathew

Mwaimu to navigate working with the government and convince them to help fulfilling its obligations, and whenever they demand to hold them accountable they have to do so in a polite way.

"You have to consider government as your main partner and work with it without disturbing

or undermining its good programmes, this will give them justification to continue cooperating with you," Sebihogo insisted

He added: "You should not be criticizing everything because there are a lot of good things the government is doing for its citizens, you should recognize them. If there are issues you

think were not worked properly, recommend them wisely".

According to him, working with the government is very technical and requires a prudent approach to make them understand that you are there to help them fulfilling its responsibilities and not otherwise.

"CHRAGG has to be relevant

to government and the people, people need to see you on the ground, you are likely to be at the centre of attraction and all the actors will seek consultation from you" he added

CHRAGG chairperson, retired Judge Mathew Mwaimu said the commission has been approaching and seeking consultation

with a number of institutions.

"We will continue looking for opportunities to meet with authorities and inform them on the roles of CHRAGG. We are aware that there some areas we need to improve to be able to work with the government, stakeholders and the community at large," Judge Mwaimu said

## SADC calls for strengthening of disaster preparedness, response

By Guardian Reporter

THE Southern African Development Community (SADC) has called upon member states to re-double efforts to strengthen disaster risk management capacities, as emphasised in its disaster preparedness and response strategy adopted in 2016.

Countries are also advised to fully operationalise the necessary collaborative mechanisms to ensure swift joint and concerted responses to disasters.

In a statement, on the impacts of adverse weather conditions that led to heavy rains and flooding causing deaths, population displacement and destruction of property in Madagascar, SADC executive secretary, Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax said: "We have noted with great sadness the impacts of widespread rains and floods following a weather system that formed in the Mozambique channel on 17th January 2020 that hit the north-west of Madagascar on 22nd January 2020".

It said the torrential rains and floods have affected over 106,846 people in seven regions of the country, displacing over 16,000 people and leaving at least 170 dead, and the death toll is expected to rise, as several people are still missing.

The heavy rains and floods have also damaged key infrastructures, including roads, houses and schools in several locations. Over 10,600 houses are still flooded while 146 have been destroyed.

The statement said around 6,600 students are out of school or are learning in make-shift classrooms, as a result of the damage to classrooms.

The flooding has also affected several lowland areas that are used to grow crops, mainly rice and may therefore impact on the food security in the coming cropping period.

"SADC appreciates the overwhelming support extended to the government of Madagascar and the affected communities by our cooperating partners, non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations on the ground. We call upon all our partners, within and beyond the region, to continue supporting the rescue operations, and in providing the needed humanitarian assistance to the affected communities", Dr Tax said in a statement.

Following increased frequency and scale of the climate-related catastrophes, such as cyclones, floods and droughts in the SADC region, SADC reiterates its call for joint global efforts to mitigate climate change by stepping up efforts to enhance adaptive capacities of developing countries in line with the spirit of the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction (2015-2030) and Article 8(4) of the 2015 Paris agreement on climate change while enhancing carbon sequestration through the adoption of cleaner production technologies, scaling up reforestation and combating deforestation.



**SADC appreciates the overwhelming support extended to the government of Madagascar and the affected communities by our cooperating**



Technicians at the construction site of one of classrooms for first-year students at Rusoli ward secondary school in Musoma rural, Mara region this week. The schools had already enrolled a total of 132 students. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## BMH signs Memorandum of Understanding with Cuba

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

BENJAMIN Mkapa Hospital (BMH) in Dodoma has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Cuba to acquire seven specialised doctors who will work together with local experts at the hospital.

Benjamini Mkapa Hospital

director, Dr Alphonse Chandika told journalists yesterday that through the agreement, BMH is set to further improve medical services since it will have the specialised Cuban doctors performing a number of activities in partnership with local doctors.

He said the MoU was signed considering that Tanzania and

Cuba have enjoyed strong historical bilateral ties way back since independence from the founding fathers Julius Nyerere and Fidel Castro.

"We have opened a new partnership chapter, doctors and nurses from Cuba will share expertise with doctors at BMH thus improving the hospitals' efficiency and quality in provid-

ing medical services", he noted adding that the signing of the MoU will further cement existing bilateral relations.

Dr Chandika said local doctors are likely to beef up specialised medical services at BMH as well as add to local doctor's knowledge on various modern medical equipment available at the facility. He said

they had chosen to work with Cuban doctors because they are not expensive and have the best expertise in providing medical services.

He said Cuba has provided a number of doctors currently working at different countries around the world, and that those coming to Tanzania are also expected to impart extra

knowledge to locals.

The Cuban doctors will work in various departments such as cardiac section, laboratory, intensive care unit (ICU), emergency and operating theater, he noted.

Cuba has recorded impressive milestones in a number of sectors particularly in health and education, which they had

heavily investing since its independence.

The Cuba with a population of 11 million people has over 90,000 doctors, where one serves about 3,000 people surpassing the ratio set by the World Health Organisation (WHO) of one to attend to 8,000 patients.



Good Samaritans help to push a commuter bus at Kitunda in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam as captured on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## 'Construction of Mtwara - Newala - Masasi road at tarmac level begins in this 2020/2021 financial year'

By Guardian Reporter

CONSTRUCTION of the 160 kms road from Mtwara - Newala - Masasi at tarmac level will begin in the 2020/2021 financial year, the National Assembly heard yesterday.

Deputy minister of Works Transport and Communications, Elias Kwandikwa said the ministry has completed conducting feasibility study for the construction of the road and Mwiti bridge.

He said the government has resolved to construct the 210 kms road from Mtwara - Nanyamba - Tandahimba - Newala - Masasi.

He was responding to a question from Nanyamba Member of Parliament, Abdullah Chikota (CCM) who wanted to know when the government will construct the Mtwara - Newala - Masasi road that goes through Mtwara to Mnavata.

"We are planning to con-

struct all the 210 kms at tarmac level starting the next financial year. We had completed feasibility study since 2015", said the Deputy minister noting the job will be implemented in phases.

Kwandikwa said the first phase will involve a section of the road from Mtwara to Mnavata (50 kms), the project which until December 2019 was implemented by 76 per cent. He said the government allocated 3.40bn/- for the project in the 2019/2020 financial year.

In his supplementary question, the MP was concerned with the slow pace implementation of the project insisting the government to complete the remaining 20 kms of the road.

Responding, Kwandikwa called upon the residents of Nanyamba constituency to be patient as the government works to improve road infrastructures in the area.

## Communities affected by Cyclone Kenneth receive shelter assistance

MAPUTO

THE government of Mozambique through National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) requested support from the humanitarian community to provide for urgent needs including shelter materials, non-food items, and food assistance.

The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) responded to the request and provide shelter assistance.

In certain districts entire villages were destroyed, and com-

munities left without shelter, food, crops and assets.

During Cyclone Kenneth over 35,000 homes were damaged or destroyed in and over 20,000 people were displaced.

Field assessments and community discussions revealed needs at each location. Beneficiary lists were compiled by the organization together with local authorities and community leaders who identified vulnerable households.

The project focused on seven districts- heavily affected areas that had not yet received dis-

tributions-including villages in Ancuabe, Macomia, Mecufi, Meluco, Metuge, Muidumbe, and Quissangua. Locations were coordinated with Shelter Cluster partners and implementing partners.

One community leader stated that the distributions "helped to alleviate people's suffering". A father stated "the tarpaulin is keeping my children away from the cold at night." An elderly woman said "the toolkit is helping my son to rebuild my house." The shelter effort reached over 13,000 house-

holds (nearly 66,000 individuals). Materials were purchased within Mozambique through suppliers from Maputo, Namupa and Cabo Delgado. Chief of Changane village Fernando Iassine said: "In Changane there are 6,250 families. In Cyclone Kenneth around half of the families lost roof panels, and the homes more than 1,000 families were destroyed."

Iassine added: "There were some injuries because of the metal roofing panels that flew off houses during the cyclone, and the nails and other rem-

nants left on the ground.

"The distribution was the first assistance we received in Changane after the cyclone. Each family received a tarpaulin and toolkit- including a hammer, nails, saw, catana (knife) and wire cutters and a hoe. The materials were of good quality", he noted.

He said when families who lost their homes received the kits they used the tools to collect wooden poles and bamboo and constructed 'cabanas' (informal homes) to live in.

He said the villagers are us-

ing the tarpaulins to cover their houses.

"Some homes are being repaired, but many homes are not yet repaired or rebuilt, and the families continue to live in 'cabanas'. "Life is worse now than before the cyclone, and more assistance is needed for reconstruction of homes. I only want for people in Changane to be able to recuperate their homes."

"My house fell in Cycle Kenneth. At the time I was at my in-laws' home; my children and I continue to stay with them,

because our home is still in pieces," said Ilerta, 34 years old.

"The items that I have received will help me, but if it is possible, I still need additional materials to construct my house. I am very scared with this rainy season; I don't know what will happen."

Humanitarian aid following Cyclone Kenneth has reached tens of thousands of individuals, but due to the widespread effects of the storm, additional assistance is still needed for affected communities to fully recover.

## Wanted: Global action plan to eliminate child labour

**C**HILD labour refers to the exploitation of children through any form of work that deprives children of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and is mentally, physically, socially or morally harmful. Such exploitation is prohibited by legislation worldwide, although these laws do not consider all work by children as child labour; exceptions include work by child artists, family duties, and supervised training.

Child labour has existed to varying extents throughout history. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, many children aged 5-14 from poorer families worked in Western nations and their colonies alike. These children mainly worked in agriculture, home-based assembly operations, factories, mining, and services such as news boys—some worked night shifts lasting 12 hours. With the rise of household income, availability of schools and passage of child labour laws, the incidence rates of child labour fell.

In the world's poorest countries, around one in four children are engaged in child labour, the highest number of whom 29 per cent live in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2017, four African nations Mali, Benin, Chad and Guinea-Bissau witnessed over 50 per cent of children aged 5-14 working. Worldwide agriculture is the largest employer of child labour. The vast majority of child labour is found in rural settings and informal urban economies; children are predominantly employed by their parents, rather than factories. Poverty and lack of schools are considered the primary cause of child labour.

Globally the incidence of child labour decreased from 25 pc to 10 pc between 1960 and 2003, according to the World Bank. Nevertheless, the total number of child labourers remains high, with UNICEF and ILO acknowledging an estimated 168 million children aged 5-17 worldwide were involved in child labour in 2013.

In the same vein, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has set forth a new strategy to

fight child labour in tobacco growing countries in Africa where US\$ 4.8million will be spent.

This was revealed recently by the director of advocacy and engagement for elimination of child labour in tobacco growing foundation (ECLT), Nicholas McCoy in his release to global agriculture stakeholders.

He said through this approach Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia will get US\$ 1.6million each and their governments, workers, employers' organisations and companies will be engaged to address the root causes, deficits and hazardous works to tobacco growers.

McCoy clarified that approach will help vulnerable children and young people to go to school hence acquire knowledge and skills and farmers will be trained to make safe agricultural activities.

We hope that this strategy will also help lawmakers and authorities to strengthen national action plans and policies on child labour hence protect children in areas where tobacco is grown and beyond.

We are also told that strategy will strengthen and sustain collaborative global efforts to support the 40 million farmers and families who depend on tobacco growing for a living in southern and eastern Africa.

The set-forth strategy will bring together governments, workers, employers' and the private sector to promote strong government policy and multi-stakeholder cooperation.

In addition to the ILO's funding commitment, the organisation will continue mobilising sustainable sources of funding from the public and private sectors with proper safeguards in place.

The 4 African countries have an opportunity to play not only to benefit farmers, workers and their families but also in shaping a global intervention model, including services and investment.

The 2019 Kampala technical meeting agreed that tobacco is a legal crop which sustains livelihood of millions of people hence requires multi-stakeholders' collaboration to recurrent improvement.

equivalent to 22 per cent and some 1,843 tonnes of bee wax (20 per cent).

The National Beekeeping Policy 1998, states on how to conduct researches to improve beekeeping but yet only 5 per cent of beekeepers use modern beekeeping technologies. This new strategic plan-2020/2030 is expected to come up with solutions on how to improve the agriculture sub-sector.

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

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

The sector employs about 2 million people and generates about US \$ 2 million per year. It also helps in biodiversity and in increasing agricultural production through pollination.

The country's production potential is huge having about 38.8 million ha of forests and woodlands ideal for beekeeping. Utilization of this potential is only about 7 per cent.

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## FLOODS



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## Why can't South Africa grow its economy?



60 per cent of purchases in South Africa are paid for in cash

By Mandla Lionel Isaacs

**A** big part of the answer may be that in our society there are at least two divergent worldviews which preclude broad alignment between key role players.

Like most South Africans, I am deeply frustrated by our decade-long economic stagnation. As the economy grows slower than the population does, GDP per capita has been shrinking for the past five years, and sky-high unemployment has become a structural feature of our society, with all its devastating immediate and far-reaching consequences on individuals and families.

I've been reflecting on why we cannot seem to get ourselves out of this predicament.

It's not as if South Africa is short of ideas on how to grow the economy inclusively. The National Development Plan - despite having been largely ignored and more relevant now as an example of massive lost opportunity - pointed out many of the things we need to do, eight years ago now.

South Africa has solicited proposals from the best international development economists. Various think tanks have offered useful suggestions. The IMF does an annual economic diagnostic. In Operation Phakisa, SA adapted and tried the Malaysia-style lab concept to develop tangible action plans to accelerate growth in priority sectors. Government and business have had countless dialogues, roundtables and high-level working groups.

National Treasury, responsible for the unenviable task of allocating our limited resources to our many public needs, is acutely aware of the consequences of low growth: as our economy cannot generate the tax revenue required to fund the government spending we demand, we borrow, increasingly unsustainably (R12 of every

100 spent by government go to debt servicing.)

The only solution is growth, which is why Finance Minister Tito Mboweni - in sheer frustration at our seeming refusal to focus on what we need to do to reignite inclusive growth - published an economic strategy in August 2019 for public discussion. It outlined a set of growth reforms which could add just over two percentage points to GDP growth and a million jobs in 10 years. While not the 5-6% growth and 11 million net new jobs called for by the NDP, it is an opportunity to get moving.

The document has yet to be formally adopted by the government, despite vocal support from President Cyril Ramaphosa. Then again, our government has had its hands full trying to keep the lights on.

South Africa basically has given up on coming up with an ambitious economic programme to rapidly develop the country in a generation, comparable to what the Asian Tigers have achieved. We would be lucky now to agree on and drive even a modest economic reform agenda.

Why can't we agree on a set of actions to grow this economy? Many of the issues have been identified: poor leadership, political dynamics in the ruling party, and entrenched interests resisting changes to the status quo, among others.

But there must be more to it. The South African economy has lagged developing country peers - and developed countries for that matter - for almost 60 years. Low growth is the norm, not the exception.

A big part of the answer may be that in our society there are at least two divergent worldviews which preclude broad alignment between key role players on how to grow the economy.

For the purpose of this discussion, let's refer to the worldview of the haves, and the worldview of the have-nots.

The haves are those invested or employed in the small part of SA's economy that yields world-class wealth accumulation, incomes and living standards for a tiny few. Mostly white, with some new black members, the haves are the owners and managers of listed corporates, private companies and the established small- and medium-sized businesses. The haves are black middle-class people like myself, however precariously we cling to the economic ladder beneath the truly wealthy. They are the privileged elite who dominate SA's economic discourse.

It is everything from Sandton to Stellenbosch, gated communities, golf estates and shopping only at Woolworths.

It is having the largest Porsche dealership in the world.

It is the top 10% that owns 95% of wealth in South Africa.

Within the haves, we ask ourselves: why can't we get it together? Surely the politicians and labour understand that all of our problems are better solved in the context of a growing pie? An improved policy and regulatory environment, more private-sector participation in areas which have been the preserve of state-owned monopolies, among other economic reforms, will mean faster growth, improved business confidence, and companies hiring more and paying more tax. Over time, this will mean more employment, better wages and wealthier consumers as citizens become integrated into the mainstream economy, with savings, pensions, increasing home values and so on.

One of the simplest and most difficult things for us as human beings is to see the world through another's perspective. It is why countless lives have been lost to war over the millennia. It is at the root of intractable political differences between and within countries. This simple fact explains so many of the divisions and fail-

ures to communicate that we too often experience in our families, workplaces and communities.

And it is why we cannot grow.

Somewhere along my leadership journey - far later than I would like - I learnt to see past my own sense of self-righteousness. The iceberg model posits that a person's behaviour, like an iceberg, is only the most visible part of a much larger mass. Our behaviour and indeed our worldview sit atop layers of thoughts and feelings, beliefs and values and needs. I would add lived experience.

So when I find myself unable to fathom why what is obvious to me is not obvious to someone else, I fall back on this model.

The have-nots agree that South Africa is in an economic crisis, but then their economic crisis is decades old, not a decade old. Theirs is households and families where many adults simply don't work, either unable to find employment or having long since given up and accepted economic marginalisation. Theirs is low wages and barely making ends meet amid ever-rising living costs.

They are the nearly half of our population which lives in poverty and the three of every four South Africans for whom "poverty is a constant threat in their daily lives". (World Bank, 2018)

The have-nots don't see us as being in this together. They see an economy which structurally excludes them. They are excluded from the pathways to prosperity, from education to skilled work, management positions and business ownership.

These two starkly opposed worldviews, of the haves and have-nots, underpin our economic policy contestation and play a significant role in the lack of progress.

So, when business-friendly reforms are called for, the have-nots are unmoved. They see a business sector which is unfriendly and sceptical of black talent, such that the senior and top management ranks do not come close to reflecting the country's demographics. White men continue to be assumed competent, black men and women continue to have to overachieve to receive comparable levels of trust and acceptance.

Black businesses find it difficult to thrive, squeezed between concentrated sectors dominated by a few large companies, and supply chains dominated by old (white) boys networks.

The haves think it obvious that the government has shown itself incapable of managing large state-owned companies, and private-sector participation should be brought in. The have-nots, while noting the dysfunctional state of many SOCs, see large companies that nurture black talent, having launched the careers of many leading black businesspeople by giving them the executive responsibilities that are so much harder to come by in the private sector. They see large companies whose value chains are more accessible because of the government's policy commitment to preferential procurement, even as we note that many black businesses would point out myriad challenges and failures in this regard.

Most economic onlookers are exasperated by the years of delay and uncertainty on mining policy, energy policy and telecommunications spectrum. When one looks closer, it is because the ruling party and government have found it difficult to find policy positions which accommodate and are acceptable to their constituents in black business, who continue to be on the periphery of these industries, as well as established business and foreign investors. That's before we even deal with the concerns of workers and communities in the mining and energy sectors in particular.

Our economic stagnation is the biggest threat facing our society. We cannot meaningfully address poverty, unemployment and inequality until we grow and transform the economy. We tend to frame this challenge in terms of political will, ethical leadership, improved policy coordination and effective implementation, all of which are critically important. What we aren't confronting, and which is why we find it so difficult to embark on a growth trajectory, is that our economic policy discourse is caught between two very different worldviews. They must be reconciled for us to move forward.



# SDG's implementation stock take: The role of policy makers and practitioners

**T**HE United Nations Association of Tanzania envision the implementation of the United Nations agenda in Tanzania particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals are the central focus of the United Nations to be achieved by 2030. A set of universal goals adopted in September 2015 by the United Nations. The SDGs are outlined in Agenda 2030, with 17 Sustainable Development. Our reporter GERALD KITABU caught up with UNA Tanzania Secretary General REYNALD MAEDA. In this interview he sheds light on SDG's implementation stock take; the role of Policy makers and practitioners.

into force. Over the next fifteen years, with these new Goals that universally apply to all, countries will mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities, and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. The SDGs are universal, meaning they are equally applicable to all countries. They include challenging targets for rich countries as well as poor. They are universally applicable to all countries, breaking down the paradigm where poor countries carry the burden for change, and aligning them with a vision where 'everything is connected.

**Q: As one of the CSO's what role have you played in realizing SDG's commitments at national level?**

A: First of all, UNA Tanzania is a co-convenor of the Tanzania Sustainable Development Platform, an informal platform for CSOs to come together and self-coordinate, share experiences about implementation, follow up and monitoring and review of the agenda 2030 in Tanzania as well as the agenda 2063 and vision 2025 which is the main national development compass.

UNA Tanzania has been engaging in the SDGs landscape since 2012, when the consultations for the post-2015 agenda were held and Tanzania was among 50 countries chosen by the UN to collect people's recommendations on what priorities should be in the post MDGs development agenda.

As a CSO both individually and together with the Tanzania Sustainable Development Platform and other partners we have been able to influence a number of processes in the country and the few milestones that can be highlighted is the establishment of the Parliamentary Group on Sustainable Development which has 35 MP



**UNA Tanzania SDG Stock take facilitation group photo with the SDGs Parliamentary group members, PO-RALG, and CSO's: File Photo**

members and was launched by Hon. Job Ndungai (MP) - Speaker of the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania in November 2018. This was the first time there was a tangible engagement of SDGs at the parliament level.

UNA Tanzania works with the group through capacity building and information sharing, to strengthen the capacity of the members of the Parliamentary group on sustainable to broadly understand the concepts of sustainable development, deepen the understanding of the synergies between national development plans, SDGs and Agenda 2063 among the members of the Parliamentary Sustainable Development group but also to provide the Parliamentary Group on Sustainable development with tools necessary for follow up and monitoring of sustainable development implementation progress and analytical tools to conduct budget analyses on how sustainable development goals are reflected in national budgets

Taking into consideration the transformative nature of Sustainable Development, and in line with the Africa Parliamentary Union resolution R.141/39/16 on the role of Africa Parliaments in achieving

Sustainable Development Goals, we strongly believe that the Parliamentary group on SDGs will strengthen the role of Parliament of Tanzania in planning, resources allocation, oversight on implementation, and in following-up and review the implementation of sustainable development projects and programs in Tanzania. In 2019 the platform which we co-convened coordinated the writing of the CSOs National Voluntary Review Report which was presented at the UN High Level Political Forum.

We continue to provide capacity strengthening on SDGs and in 2019 alone we have provided trainings to about 300 CSO's including CBOs, we have conducted 3 trainings to MPs and Parliamentary clerks and engaged with TAMISEMI on how to amplify the role of local governments in the implementation of SDGs in the country.

UNA Tanzania also work with the President's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government in Policy framework in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030 For example; UNA Tanzania follows up closely on the Implementation of the 4 percent loan given to Municipals without any interest, this is to boost the economic situation of the youth in Tanzania and touches on Goal 1 and Goal 8 (No Poverty and Decent Work and Economic Growth respectively). As part of its implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, the President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG) have initiated the regional

and district strategic plans which supplements the Five-Year Development Plan II at regional and district level. Trainings and Capacity building are as well in line to building more skills on how to link the Regional and District strategic planning and streamline SDG targets to the grass root level - again, leaving no one behind.

**Q: Work is already underway by all levels of government, civil society, NGOs, academia, and the private sector, to advance progress on the SDGs. What do you think should be the role of decision, policy maker and other practitioners?**

A: The SDGs requires many hands to work on them collaboratively with a united vision to meet the targets set by 2030. To begin with, now that we have a Parliamentary SDGs group to work with, here are some of the roles that they are expected to work on with achieving the agenda 2030. To ensure political commitment in domestication and implementation and implementation of sustainable development in Tanzania, facilitate integration, linkages, synergy and uptake of sustainable development and other international commitments by respective Parliamentary committees, Facilitate Multi-stakeholder engagements, partnerships and dialogues on sustainable development with the executive, donors, civil society organization, private sector and academia. Other roles include ensuring cross-party

collaboration on Sustainable Development, ensure people centered and inclusive sustainable development leaving no one behind, steer house debates and discussions in support of sustainable development, production of an annual report on sustainable development in Tanzania that will take stock of the progress, key achievements and challenges in achieving sustainable development in Tanzania, ensure balance and accountability in the three dimensions of sustainable, development (social, economic, and environment) in government plans.

**Q: What do you think should be the new plans and strategies to achieve the goals fruitfully?**

A: The government of Tanzania continues to make progress in the implementation of Agenda 2030 through the Five-Year Development Plan II and Mkuza III for Mainland and Zanzibar respectively. Most notable achievements are in education goal 4 and health goal 3 where we can see tangible results such as the fact that for the first time since our independence each district has at least one health center. Despite the commendable efforts by Tanzania, we are now entering the decade of action, with only 10 years to the end of the SDGs. We are also going to phase out our Development Vision 2025 in five years, time is critical. We need to take urgency in scaling up actions that will lead into achieving primarily our national development plans through which SDGs are integrated. My quick thoughts on few strategies that could be used during the decade of action are to establish the SDGs coordination mechanism and give it mandate to follow up on national level implementation.

Secondly, is to amplify the role of local governments. The real actions take place at the community level, and local governments have access to communities because they work with them directly. So strengthen TAMISEMI's capacity to implement and report on progress of the SDGs. Most of all because the SDGs are already in activities they do on a daily basis, the only problem is that there are no clear linkages. Once these links are established, we will be able to track progress smoothly. UNA Tanzania is working with TAMISEMI on issues of capacity strengthening.

Thirdly is to encourage multi stakeholder partnerships the government and private sector, government and CSOs, private sector and CSOs etc because each one has a role to play in implementing the SDGs. For example CSOs role is not only to monitor but we are also implementers.

**QUESTION:** We understand that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the central focus of the United Nations to be achieved by 2030. There are a set of universal goals adopted in September 2015 by the United Nations. What are these goals and what do they mean?

**ANSWER:** As the time frame for MDGs ended in 2015, the world and our governments needed to continue with the efforts to fully achieve MDGs and build upon them by tackling new challenges. For the last few years, the UN has been discussing what the global priorities should be for the next 15 years (2016 - 2030). In particular, the Rio+20 conference in June 2012 galvanized a process to agree upon the post-2015 global development framework and develop 17 new Goals, or global priorities, which are called SDGs. On 1 January 2016, SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development officially came

## DJIBOUTI CITY

**N**EEMA Namdamu, 42, grew up in the village of Bukavu in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo where children with disabilities were considered a curse.

As a child Namdamu contracted polio, leaving her paralysed from the waist down. Her neighbours advised her mother to do what they felt was the "right thing": to leave the child alone in a hut until she died of starvation.

However, thanks to her mother who refused to give in to the community's demand, Namdamu lived and went on to attend school and pursue her studies all the way to post graduate level.

But, all through the years of her education, she struggled just to get to her classrooms.

"Not a single educational institute - be that school or college or university - had a disabled-friendly building. I cried while climbing the stairs everyday," recalls Namdamu. She has since founded Mama Shuja - an NGO which gives vocational training including computer operating, data entry, digital story telling, tailoring and handicrafts to young girls and women with disabilities living in eastern DRC's conflict areas.

Nmadamu is attending the 3rd International Summit on Balanced and Inclusive Education currently being held in Djibouti City, Djibouti. Organised by the Education Relief Foundation (ERF), there are over 200 delegates and government representatives from over 35 countries currently in the Horn of Africa nation.

But the government representative from the DRC is absent.

And Namadamu says that this reflects the overall lack of awareness about the importance of education in her country.

Making more learning institutions disability-friendly is key for inclusive education

Idriss Moumin is a passionate advocate of inclusiveness. As the President of the Association for People with Disabilities in Djibouti, and someone who lives with total visual impairment, he strongly wants all the disabled people in his country to be able to access education as their right.

Understanding the special needs and rights of people with disabilities is one of the issues discussed at the summit, but Moumin feels the level of understanding hasn't matched his expectations.

"I have been hearing several speakers say phrases and terms like 'we are doing this for them (disabled) and 'normal people'. I want to remind them, this is not about giving a handout, but providing (for those with disabilities) what is their right. And who are these normal people? Am I then an abnormal person?" asks Moumin.

In Djibouti - a country of less than a million people, there are 10,500 people with various degrees of disabilities, according to an ongoing population survey. The complete data from the survey will be released only in February, but for now it is assumed that there are about 600 students and about 300 are in early years of school.

"Our main issues are accessibility, equipment and social acceptance. We lack transportation and roads and learning materials. We definitely need resources to fill these gaps. But, there is an

## Inclusive education still evades people with disabilities

equal need for providing these facilities as a right. For example, we should get jobs because we have our rights to employment, not because we need compassion," Moumin tells IPS.

According to the World Bank estimates, globally one billion people experience some form of disability. Of those, it is estimated that 93 to 150 million are children. According to Plan International these children are 10 times less likely to go to school than other children.

And when they do attend, it is likely to be in a segregated setting. Historically, children with disabilities have been excluded from the general education system and placed in 'special schools'. In some cases, they are separated from their families and placed in long-term residential institutions where they are

educated in isolation from the community, if they are educated at all.

**Investing in disabled-friendly schools in Niger**

But, according to UNESCO, one of the biggest reasons why children with disabilities don't access education, even if education policies are inclusive, is because of the lack of disabled-friendly school buildings and suitable learning materials.

Niger is the largest country in west Africa. But according to the latest data published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), on average a person goes to school only for six years. As a result, Niger also has the lowest literacy rates in the world at 15.5 percent - far behind the global rate of 92 percent.

Niger has an education index of .20. The education index is a statistic from the U.N. which is calculated using the mean number of years of schooling

**Idriss Moumin, president of the Association for the Physically Disabled in Djibouti, says that understanding, dignity and honouring of rights of the disabled are very important for inclusive education. File photo**



and the expected number of years of schooling. Its education index means that Niger is ranked at the bottom of all 189 countries with available data.

Children with disabilities are also at increased risk of school violence and bullying, preventing the safe enjoyment of their right to education, says the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), School violence and bullying: Global status report, 2016.

However, despite political conflicts and extreme poverty, several organisations are working to improve education in Niger. One such organisation is Remember Niger Coalition (RNC) - an American charity that has stepped in to help children with disabilities attend school.

In 2019, the RNC partnered with the Maradi Association for People with Disabilities and the Hosanna Institute to establish the School of Hope, a school specifically designed for children with disabilities. The three-classroom building was completed in November 2019 with one class ready for use in October when the school year began with 20 kindergarten students.

According to Julie Frye, director of marketing and communications at RNC, this is the first phase in establishing a primary through high school complex for all children, including students with learning differences and unique needs. When complete, the school will have classes from kindergarten all the way to high school for over 600 students.

The design of the School of Hope classrooms takes into consideration issues of accessibility and barrier-free spaces such as handrails, wide doorways, and access ramps. Construction included the installation of four accessible toilets and hand-washing stations, customised to meet the special needs of the disabled community.

"School infrastructure is pivotal to our mission to create quality educa-

tional opportunities in Niger. In order for quality learning to take place, students and teachers must have facilities that are safe and adapted to their needs," Frye tells IPS. The RNC has invested a total of \$50,000 so far, she reveals.

**DRC: Education curbs violent crimes against the disabled**

In DRC, especially in Bukavu and other eastern towns and villages, there remains significantly high levels of violence against women and girls, who are often beaten, raped and tortured. Those who are disabled cannot run away, making them more vulnerable.

The solution, Namadamu says, lies in education for the disabled and joint financing by the government and private sector funders.

"If we invest \$1 million, we can build a large school, hostels, toilets, vocational skill training, special learning materials for the blind and other technologies like computer, TV camera etc. Such a facility can provide total, inclusive education to a large community. But where is that money? We need external investment," says Namadamu.

Sheikh Mansour Bin Mussallam, the president of ERF, says that though there is space for private investors in inclusive education, it needs to happen in a more collective and cohesive way. It should not be fragmented, but confederated.

"Regardless of whether its private sectors or philanthropists or academic bodies, we need to act through coordination. The main issue or tragedy is that where there is regional lack of initiatives, organisations or individuals, they do not communicate. When they do communicate, they do not cooperate. And when they do cooperate, its not very efficient," Mussallam tells IPS in a special interview.

# The Geneina massacre: Displacing the displaced

By Tom Rhodes

WHEN you enter El Geneina Secondary School for Girls on a school day you will see anything but students. The normally lively school in West Darfur, Sudan, has a more sombre air these days. Cooking pots pour smoke into the windows, salvaged livestock pick at shreds of grass around the compound and families squat, listless, in the classrooms.

Just before the new year on the evening of 28 December 2019, members of the paramilitary militia, the Rapid Support Force (RSF) and related family members launched an attack targeting Kerending Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camp. The fighting was purportedly linked to a dispute between two ethnic communities – the Maaliya and Maasalit – after one youth from the latter African group allegedly killed a young man from the former, Arab pastoralist community. The victim's family gathered with more than 24 4x4 vehicles and raided Kerending Camp, burning a market to the ground, according to eyewitnesses.

The following day, early in the morning, RSF members convened at the former governor's headquarters in Geneina town under the direction of the West Darfur RSF commander, Colonel Musa Hamid Ambello.

"First we remove Rugu Rugu Market and we catch the people who committed this crime and we kill them. We do this in 24 hours," announced Ambello's personal lawyer, Salah El Nur Aldawi, to the crowd. "We will remove every IDP camp!"

RSF members within the crowd can be heard chanting in exclusive footage of the meeting. As directed, IDPs reported seeing over 200 vehicles owned by the RSF raid the camp, eventually destroying and looting two IDP camps, Kerending Camps 1 and 2 along with neighbouring villages.

Local authorities did not take any actions to protect civilians, eyewitnesses told Ayin. The whole region devolved into a street war with gunfire on going for a total of three consecutive days.

"We have not seen this kind of violence, guns shooting everywhere [...] it was like the worst days of the conflict in Darfur all over again," said Ishag Ahmed



An injured 10-year-old girl in Geneina. File photo

Mater, one of the displaced from Kerending Camp, now residing in Geneina town.

The attacks by the armed group took place in the town as well as the camps. "I was shot twice in front of the campus dorms at the University of Geneina, in the front main entrance," said first-year university student Muhadeen Abul Gasim. "In the morning I went to the university to attend the first lecture. When I returned back to the dorm, suddenly armed men came and shot us – no tear gas, just shot us with live bullets for no apparent reason." Fellow students carried Muhadeen Abdul to the hospital to treat two bullet wounds in his leg.

## Humanitarian crisis – thousands still in need

The UN Migration Agency estimates the attack displaced nearly 50,000 people, including 5,500 that crossed over the border into neighbouring Chad. The same source says 2,303 homes were burnt down within the camps and 801 looted. So far, the World Food Programme has delivered food and nutrition assistance to 22 locations where the displaced people are currently taking shelter.

WFP managed to deliver III metric tons of food aid, enough to feed around

24,500 people for 15 days. The challenge is in the numbers. There are now 44 temporary shelters for the IDPs and, with roughly 50,000 displaced, the UN agency has been able to reach half the displaced population.

"So far the response of international organisations is weak and does not meet the needs of half the number, despite their efforts and [those of] volunteers in the emergency rooms," says Faisal Salah Abdullah, an activist and volunteer aid worker in Geneina.

"We appeal to humanitarian organisations to come as quickly as possible, since the possibility of IDPs returning from where they came is not possible due to the presence and cause of their displacement – the militias." Faisal Salah is helping mobilise convoys of supplies from local volunteers to provide ready-made meals and cooking facilities for the 44 displacement shelters.

The Ministry of Health and World Health Organisation said they have enough medical stock to support those in need, but gaps in healthcare provisions for children under five years exist. While medi-

cal supplies may be sufficient to treat injuries, El Geneina Hospital is still severely under-stocked in basic medicines such as anti-malarial treatments, Dr Yusuf Omar Adam told Ayin.

"Besides this, we are also lacking medical personnel," Dr Omar said, "the displaced are everywhere and it needs many more medical actors to reach them."

Cramped living conditions and limited access to safe water is starting to take its toll, according to Dr Hoda Atta, acting Sudan WHO representative. "The risk of vector and waterborne infectious diseases is spreading is high," Dr Atta said, "immunisation remains a gap that needs to be urgently addressed."

There are over 10,000 displaced women in need of sexual and reproductive health services, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reported, expecting around 119 women to give birth this month. But finding a safe place for deliveries remain few and far between. No one feels safe enough to return, IDPs told Ayin.

"Up to now, no one from the 44 centres sheltering those who fled the violence have returned," says

teacher Osam Bushara. "They have announced they are not going to return until certain conditions are met, including those who attacked them to be held accountable."

IDP camp and religious leaders for the displaced demanded on 20 January that the RSF leave Geneina and their huge arsenal of weapons be collected – a tall order that may be challenging to implement given the RSF's influence in the region.

Information Minister Faisal Mohamed Saleh said in a press conference that the Attorney General had formed an investigative committee to hold those responsible for the violence culpable. But holding an armed militia who can seemingly act with impunity is no easy feat, Bushara said.

"The government did nothing, they were aware and knew what was happening – you have the police force there, even with arms, but they fear these militias."

Saleh attributed the escalation of violence during the same press conference to the politicisation of the tribes in Darfur, along with the ease of spreading weapons.

Local Geneina residents believe the fighting cannot be simply labelled a tribal dispute and suspect members of the former ruling party, the National Congress Party, may be behind the violence.

"How can this incident simply be considered a tribal problem?" queries local activist Ibrahim Shomo. "There is no tribe possessing such weapons and bullets to continue attacking the camps for more than 13 hours with continuous shooting. I have no doubt that politicians have a role in provoking the situation in Darfur in order to achieve the agenda of the military to rule the state."

## More than simply a tribal flare-up

The El Geneina Crisis Committee was formed after the violence by local volunteers and accuses the local West Darfur government of complicity in the attacks. The committee called the events in El Geneina "no ordinary clashes", but described them as a planned scheme to block "the road to a peace agreement and peaceful co-existence among the people living in the state". So far a government committee set up to investigate the violence in Geneina, the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) and the Darfur Bar Association have all concluded that the event was political in nature and not, as some have characterised it, a tribal rift where-

by one side vastly out-gunned the other.

One potential motive central to the Darfur conflict may be land. According to the king of the Masalit tribe, Assad Sultan, the RSF attacked the Kerending IDP camps with intensity to clear the land for themselves. The camps are located on choice land neighbouring Geneina town, a river and the airport that the RSF believe traditionally belongs to them, he added. In fact, the Arabic pastoralist community resides directly next to where the Kerending Camps are based.

A traditional Arab leader from the Maaliya tribe who requested anonymity for his own security told Ayin they had made a request to the local government to remove the IDPs from the area since the land, in his view, originally belonged to his community. Indeed, one of the main demands to the state government by the Maaliya family whose son was killed was the transfer of Kerending Camp to another location, the independent Sudanese news site Darfur24 reported. So far, however, the Kerending Camp area remains deserted while the displaced IDPs remain huddled together in makeshift shelters.

The atmosphere remains tense. On 20 January, rumours emerged that a mass demonstration would take place to protest the local government's handling of the situation. Security forces were deployed across the region, even armoured vehicles and tanks were seen on the roads and outside government institutions, eyewitnesses said, but no demonstration occurred. Authorities relieved the former West Darfur Governor, Major-General Abdel Khaleq Badawi of his position whom they accused of complicity in the attack, with his successor, Major-General Rabie Abdullah Abdullah. But this has done little to restore confidence among the IDPs. The newly appointed governor attempted to pay condolences to some of the displaced at one of the temporary shelters – but the IDPs attempted to attack the government delegation after seeing the RSF leader Col. Musa Hamid accompany the state actors, news reports said.

But something must be done. The IDPs are wary of future insecurity and remain displaced, scattered across the area while the humanitarian needs are growing. "If they expect us to go back, they can think again," Ahmed Mater said, "we have seen all of this before."

Agencies

## Corruption thrives when secret money, not citizens' voices, determine policy choices

By Gary Pienaar

CURBING corruption is intrinsically linked to the influence of big money in politics. Ensuring transparency in party political funding will go a long way in dealing with rampant graft.

Last week, Transparency International (TI) released its annual Corruption Perception Index (CPI) report for 2019. The index focuses on corruption in the public sector, and scores are partly based on the assessments of experts and the perceptions of business leaders.

Several commentators have observed that some representatives of leading private businesses have been active facilitators in state capture and other forms of corruption that inform these very perceptions and weaken our national integrity.

In any event, the result is that South Africa is ranked in 70th position in the 2019 index, with a score of 44. In the 2018 CPI, SA was ranked 73rd with a score of 43. The score is of greater significance than our relative ranking, although, either way, we're in the modest company of largely authoritarian states of Eastern Europe, such as Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

We may speculate as to the reasons for the marginal improvement in our score, but they may relate at least in part to President Cyril Ramaphosa's administration's efforts to re-establish the independence and effectiveness of the National Prosecuting Authority and the passage into law of the Political Party Funding Act 6 of 2018. In addition, although our investigative media and



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa. File photo

the Zondo Commission are doing the difficult, but sound work of uncovering all manner of malfeasance, we continue to fall short on measures of visible and

meaningful accountability.

It is true that most G7 countries didn't perform much better, with several slipping down the index

due to lower scores. This, however, is no excuse for our uneven efforts to improve the integrity of our governance.

What factors make the most difference to improving national integrity?

One of the key focus areas of the report was identifying the set of factors that most differentiate countries that tend to perform well in the index when compared to those that persistently perform poorly. Using data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) database, TI's analysis shows that corruption "is more pervasive in countries where big money can flow freely into electoral campaigns and where governments listen only to the voices of wealthy, or well-connected individuals". Countries that perform well on the CPI exhibit strong enforcement of political party finance transparency laws and also practice broader stakeholder consultations in policy decisions.

Delia Ferreira Rubio, Chair of Transparency International, says that: "Governments must urgently address the corrupting role of big money in political party financing and the undue influence it exerts on our political systems."

Likewise, Patricia Moreira, Managing Director of Transparency International, urges that: "To have any chance of ending corruption and improving peoples' lives, we must tackle the relationship between politics and big money... and all citizens must be represented in decision-making."

Associated factors are identified in the following assessment by TI: "To have any chance of curbing corruption, governments must strengthen checks and balances, limit the influence of big money in politics and ensure broad input in political decision-making. Public policies and resources should not be determined by economic power, or political influence, but by fair consultation and impartial budget allocation."

In South Africa, of course, we have additional governance weaknesses in our supply chain management and budget expenditure, both of which provide fertile ground for politically- or personally-motivated favouritism.

How does South Africa fare on the two particular TI measures of broad public participation and regulating the power of money in policymaking?

Public participation South Africa has long-established, but widely underutilised legislation requiring public consultation during budget planning and this requirement is not limited to local government, or the processes associated with their Integrated Development Plans. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, has also recommended community-based monitoring as one specific form of public participation to monitor budget expenditure and ensure effective service delivery.

Regulation of political party funding

The Independent Electoral

Commission (IEC) held public hearings in Parliament in early August 2019 on the draft regulations to give effect to the Political Party Funding Act 6 of 2018. Ramaphosa signed and promulgated this significant reform legislation a year ago in January 2019. The regulations are necessary to enable the IEC to fulfil its responsibilities in terms of the act of ensuring that political parties report their donations and publicly disclose their most generous backers.

In 2018, the Constitutional Court held in the litigation brought by My Vote Counts that voters have the right to cast an informed ballot. For this reason, voters and the general public have the right to know who funds political parties, and who might be able to exert undue influence in their policy choices once in power.

It is vital that these regulations are implemented well in advance of the local government elections due next year. It is essential for voters to know the patterns of fundraising ahead of an election, as voting on election day doesn't take place in a vacuum. Political parties have long since begun their fundraising for their local government election campaigns, but the amounts they raise and their largest, and most influential donors will remain unknown to the public until these regulations are promulgated and political parties are obliged to lodge monthly reports with the IEC.

Agencies

# Kenya leapfrogging on 4 SDGs: Building bridges between Silicon Savannah and Silicon Valley

Dr. Temina Madon and Radhika Shah

ONE year ago, the UN began implementing reforms meant to make it more effective in delivering on sustainable development. Now, with the start of 2020, the global body has declared this as the "decade of action" to turn the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into a living reality for all humanity. But what does this look like, on the ground?

In countries like Kenya, there is widespread belief that the traditional approaches to economic growth are not enough to achieve the SDGs. Fortunately there are signs that the UN is embracing the disruptive innovation that is needed, across the development landscape, to transform the lives of people around the world. At the African Diaspora Investment Symposium held this month in Silicon Valley, USA we saw the UN, government, and private sector leaders engaged in insightful dialogue on how businesses can partner with the public sector to contribute to Africa's development.

A team led by ICT Minister Joe Mucheru from the Government of Kenya and Siddharth Chatterjee, the UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya, spoke at the symposium. The team also met with several Silicon Valley companies and technology startups, and participated in round tables with local thought leaders at academic institutions like Stanford University and UC Berkeley.

Our interaction with government representatives and the UN team in Kenya has demonstrated an encouraging shift, especially in mobilising public-private partnerships that can transform the economy, rather than simply facilitating transactions.

In Kenya there is a noticeable, deliberate push for public-private partnerships around the SDGs as well as national priorities like the "Big Four" Development Agenda. Working hand-in-glove with the Government, the UN Country Team is

branding and presenting Kenya's national goals as an important and transparent opportunity for the business sector. They are a way to direct private investment toward activities that offer both corporate returns and sustainable development wins.

The trend towards leveraging private sector resources for Kenya's national priorities, including catalyzing unique win-win partnerships with companies from across the world, is a welcome trajectory. In an era of declining public sector contributions to the global body, UN experts have been pushing for innovation to bridge the gap in investments needed to achieve the SDGs. This requires a mind-set shift: a focus on enabling companies to incorporate the development goals into their core business practices and strategies. And the UN's leadership is critical in helping to ensure that corporate interests are focused where they will reduce inequality and generate positive social returns.

A demonstration of this new direction is the recent collaboration agreement between the Government of Kenya, the Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) at the University of California, Berkeley, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the United Nations. This initiative will build technology-intensive partnerships that bring new financing, data, and innovations into Kenya's Big Four Agenda. The collaboration will be implemented through Kenya's SDG Accelerator Lab -- a Government-UN platform for developing, testing, and scaling novel approaches to development.

We are excited about the potential of this initiative to deliver for the citizens of Kenya. For instance, the majority of maternal and newborn deaths are preventable with relatively simple and inexpensive tools, but too often the right life-saving interventions are unavailable where and when they are most needed. Part of the solution may lie in new technologies, like data analytics



The government of Kenya and the UN Kenya team with their hosts on the roof of the LinkedIn HQ in San Francisco on 21 January 2019. Credit: UN

systems that integrate routine health administrative data with satellite imagery and machine learning.

These systems can, for example, help community health workers to prioritize and triage care and resources to those most at risk. Through partnerships with the companies

that build these technologies, Kenya can begin to realize the benefits of the fourth industrial revolution, bringing critical information and insights where they are urgently needed.

Credit must be given to the Kenya government for being at the forefront of technology adoption. Its collaboration with UN in Kenya,

a partnership characterized by deep trust and calculated risk-taking, is providing a template for other developing countries seeking to tap technology for sustainable development.

Kenya already stands out as a global front-runner in the sphere of technological innovation, through such products as the MPesa mobile money transfer service, which has transformed lives -- especially for those Kenyans who have for years been kept out of conventional banking. Kenya is also home to profound social innovations, including the use of randomized controlled trials to understand the effectiveness of development programs and products (an innovation merited with the 2019 Nobel Prize in Economics).

Of course innovation is not a silver bullet, and achieving the SDGs will require careful thinking about how new technologies is financed, delivered, and regulated -- especially if we are to advance the welfare of citizens who feel they are still stuck in neutral. However, if used in a thoughtful manner, technology holds incredible potential to transform governments, development partners, and businesses.

Through platforms like the Kenya SDG Accelerator Lab, there are opportunities to harness its full and transformative potential, in ways that leave no one behind.

It is encouraging that the UN and Government are together stewarding the involvement of technology providers, and the broader private sector, in Kenya's development agenda.

We concur with the observation of UN Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammed that there is no time for an incremental approach, and success will rest "first and foremost on a shift in UN's organizational culture and mind-sets at all levels".

## To everyone I offended with my journalism -- you earned it -- I wish I could have done a lot more!

By Sikonathi Mantshantsha

NOW that my service to the craft of journalism has come to an end -- for now, and in this form -- I regret not stepping on more toes than I actually did. Over the past 15 years of dedicating my life to the Fourth Estate, there were always more stories to tell, so much to do, and so little time.

There were always so many fraudsters to nail, crooks to expose, incompetents to help nudge out of positions they didn't deserve. My favourites are those in the public service, be they civil servants or political office bearers.

I see it as my duty, and that of every journalist and every citizen to hold them to account, so as to assist them to deliver on the promise of a better life for all of us. To do what I could to help get the state working again was the mission of my journalism. And to seek the truth from facts. That's how Daily Maverick has been defending the truth since its birth more than 10 years ago.

The reason is simple. Journalists are the eyes and ears of society. It is their mission to hold a mirror to society and to get us to talk about the most uncomfortable aspects of our collective national life.

If you get things working prop-

erly in the state and its institutions, such as the clinics, hospitals, police stations and schools, you can get to serve the poorest of society. If these institutions of the people are staffed by appropriately qualified personnel, who are passionate about the careers they have chosen, then they could look properly after the resources of the state. And the state would be able properly to look after the most vulnerable of society. As Nelson Mandela put it:

"A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones."

The other main duty of the state -- after keeping the citizens safe from any violent invasion -- by both foreign elements and internal criminals, is to deliver the services the rest of society needs to get on with the business of producing goods and services for the market. And to make as much profit as possible from such endeavours. For it is only from the profits that the state can sustainably levy the taxes to pay for the services needed by the indigent.

So we need the state to create an environment that would attract as many business people to come to invest in this country as possible. And for those investors to produce the best goods and services for the



In East Africa, the Revenue Authorities of Tanzania, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda are working closely with JICA and WCO to build capacity of the customs administrations in the region.

whole world. Only that way can they make as much money as they possibly can, and bring their profits back into the country. Thus the government can earn more tax revenue.

Let's repeat this: It is only from profit that entities pay taxes! And it is from taxes that the state can pay for its expenditure for the benefit of citizens. After all this time, one would think nobody still needs to be convinced of this simple fact.

But what does all of this have to do with journalism and upsetting the powerful? Everything.

It is in telling the truthful, and their armies of supporters, the truth they do not want to hear that we as citizens may get our power back.

It is in fearlessly and unapologetically pointing out the lack of drugs in hospitals, the absence of trains at the station, the lack of service at the police station, the rude nurse or absent teacher that we may yet win back our country.

That is our patriotic duty and our burden to bear for the next generations.

If we win the power back from the politicians and those constipated suits in the civil service, we may just have a chance to build the kind of country we desire to live in.

Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, the former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, put it this way when he was

asked by Forbes Africa magazine if he did not think he should have held back a bit when dealing with the CEOs of that country's commercial banks, whom he fired months into his job:

"No, I never did. On the contrary--I sometimes thought I didn't step on enough toes. I think that part of my responsibility as a Nigerian is to ask what are the things wrong in our society that need to be changed and what can I do in my position to change it."

Of course, as mere newsmen, and not being as powerful as the governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, all we could do was to embarrass the government, the institutions and the voters with irrefutable evidence of malfeasance -- be that at the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, Eskom, Transnet or South African Airways, fair game all of them. That's the job of journalists. And we owe the nation a duty to pursue and expose corruption and incompetence wherever we find it. Unapologetically so.

Hell! There are still a lot more incompetents, thieves and fraudsters masquerading as public servants.

There are many more crooks in the private sector. But the first duty of journalists and the media, in my humble opinion, is to tirelessly pursue those entrusted with power in the state and its institutions.

It is doing so on behalf of the indigent, who have no means to undertake the task themselves. Neither do they have any alternative for the services robbed from them by the corrupt.

That is not at all to say we should look the other way round when confronted with corruption in the private sector. We have an equal burden to unearth corruption everywhere. But we must acknowledge that, in an environment where profits are ever-shrinking in media, the first priority should be to dedicate resources to monitoring official corruption.

That is because shareholders and other investors in the private sector have the mechanisms and the resources to look after themselves, including voting crooks off boards and firing incompetent management teams.

At any rate, for every corrupt state official, there's their counterpart in the private sector.

So if there are any out there, who feel injured by my writings over the past 15 years of journalism, I have news for you: I wish I could have stepped on more toes than I actually did.

But, I make bold in saying the struggle continues, as my colleagues at Daily Maverick, and across the media landscape, have never had any doubt about the need to pursue their mission and sole reason for existence: to defend the truth!

## Stop promoting tourism habitually, urges Kanyasu

By Guardian Reporter

DEPUTY Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism Constantine Kanyasu has directed Saadani National Park to stop promoting tourism habitually and instead must come up with new strategies that will help to

increase the number of tourists, especially local tourists from the city of Dar es Salaam.

He also called upon Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA) to change its working system by ensuring every Reserve has one marketing officer instead of relying marketing officers from

TANAPA headquarters in Arusha who are few as they cannot cover all 24 reserves and parks in the country.

He said every marketing officer will have the responsibility to ensure every day he devises a new way to woo more tourists as a measure of his/her work performance.

Speaking to workers and staff of Saadani National Park in a meeting held on Tuesday inside the Park located in Bagamoyo District in Coast Region, Kanyasu said the current strategies to woo tourists to come to the Park cannot bring desired

results. He said Saadani National Park is very near the city of Dar es Salaam which is 139.7 kms away by road, hence the proximity he expected it to lead in the influx of local tourists.

He suggested there should be a procedure whereby a special

vehicle brings tourists from dare salaam.

He also suggested to conduct census for animals in the park to increase the number of the wildlife which tourists like most to view but don't see them easily.

He also advised wildlife to carry special devices that will help

tourists to view them as of now tourists have been using a lot of their time to find these animals often without success.

He also advised for the establishment of beach tourism as well as fishing tourism (sport fishing) instead of concentrating in photography tourism only.

# War of Words: The language of the climate emergency

By Leonie Joubert

Is there a more horrific way to die, than to burn alive?

If anything put the stern-punch back into the climate story, it must be the photograph of the charred body of a joey - a teenage kangaroo - snared in the strands of a fence that blocked its escape from a raging wildfire during the recent conflagration sweeping across south-eastern Australia. In charred rigor, the young creature's pose betrays its brutal death: lips pulled back in what looks like an affable smile, front paws crossed demurely over its blackened chest. But as it rotted, its drying, crisped hide pulled "tight as a funeral drum", to borrow the poetry of Roger Waters.

Any creature with a brain, a nervous system, and a level of awareness will die with the same horror as this one did, as heat reaching 800°C singed its hair, melted its skin, and screamed through its nerve endings; as smoke choked its nostrils and lungs. You can only hope that death came quickly. What of the other one billion animals - 1 000 000 000 - estimated to have died either by fire, or hunger or thirst, as Australia smouldered through the worst drought and fire season in memory?

This isn't just a story about a quaint antipodean marsupial dying in a normal bushfire. There is something universal about its fate in the face of planetary forces far beyond its control. In a sense, we are all that joey: powerless and trapped.

2019 was the year that the "climate truth bomb" hit. After a year of apocalyptic headlines rolling off the digital presses day after day, terms like "catastrophic" and "irreversible" change, or the "existential threat" of climate "collapse" started to become threadbare from overuse.

But the photographs don't lose their oomph. They capture the reality of communities and habitats caught in the blast radius of a detonating planetary life-support system.

Although even as the language of climate "change" hots up in the media, there is still the usual smattering of opinionists who reckon that this shock-language is just the hysterics of alarmist "wonks". Besides, they argue, if you take the time to actually read the hundreds of pages of dense and arcane climate science put out by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UN IPCC), you won't

find words like "collapse", "catastrophic", or "existential threat".

"(A careful look at the reports of the IPCC... you will find none of the horrors described by Greta Thunberg or Extinction Rebellion or many smart writers and journalists," one such critic opined recently.

It's true. You won't. But if you're looking for that kind of language in the IPCC's publications, you don't understand what you're reading.

### Is it alarmist, or alarming?

For Tasmania-based climatologist Dr James Risbey, with the Australian national science agency CSIRO, 2013 was the year that the climate truth bomb dropped for him. The island suffered hellish wildfires that year, the kind that scientists had been warning about for a decade, and which foreshadowed this year's devastating fire season.

He remembers much of the island state being on fire in 2013, and some blazes generating their own pyrocumulous clouds.

"There were smoke plumes everywhere. It was surreal. It was unlike anything we'd experienced before," he recalls. "This was when the penny dropped. It was scary. When you actually experience it like this, the intellectual knowledge suddenly becomes real, it has a hook to hang on."

In the same week that Risbey spoke to the Daily Maverick from his office in Hobart, Tasmania, US President Donald Trump took to the stage at the World Economic Forum in Davos to decry climate "alarmists" for being "prophets of doom".

But is the language used to tell the climate story alarmist, or alarming? This is something Risbey was already thinking about over a decade ago. In an article published in 2008, Risbey looks at terms like "rapid", "urgent", "irreversible", "chaotic", and "worse than previously thought" in the context of the climate discourse, to see if they were a good fit for what increasingly looks like a planetary emergency.

Once you stack up the evidence, these terms were appropriate descriptors of the crisis then. And they still apply now, he says.

The problem with language, though, is that it is vague and imprecise, particularly from the perspective of a scientist who wants to communicate precise meaning according to carefully calibrated measures



A photo of a burnt kangaroo taken during the wildfires that swept through Australia. File photo

of the world.

### "What is 'rapid'? Relative to what?" Risbey asks.

For someone working on geological timescales, where for instance oceanographers might be thinking about sea-level rise unfolding over the course of the next few centuries, 100 years is fast. For most of the reading public or a government policymaker, who may be measuring the passage of time by their own life expectancy of 80 or so years or a five-year electoral cycle, impacts happening a century from now might not seem "fast" at all.

"As scientists, we want the most accurate description of the science, so we need to choose the right term and explain what it means. These terms - "rapid", "urgent", "irreversible", "chaotic" - used in the right context, are reasonable descriptors. They are strong terms, but they are vague, which means we have to work harder to provide that context."

**Dramatic storytellers versus neutral scientists**  
The picture of the immolated kangaroo is grim. Telling the truth this way is the storyteller's role in communicating the reality of the emergency that we have brought upon ourselves. But while the media and other storytellers can indulge in a degree of creative license in their use of language to cre-

ate dramatic tension, scientists can't, according to science history professor Naomi Oreskes at the University of California.

"Science is different. Scientists are expected to eschew drama," she says. "They are expected to lay out the facts in quantitative terms, stripped of emotional valence."

This kind of literary drama is forbidden in the verbal spectrum of the climate scientist who is trained to be "cool-headed", and to "avoid emotion".

Over the years, scientists have been accused of some "alarmism" and "of over-interpreting or overreacting to evidence of human impacts on the climate system".

But when Oreskes and a team of fellow researchers took a close look at the matter back in 2013, they found that climate scientists are actually biased in the opposite direction, "toward cautious estimates... erring on the side of less rather than more alarming predictions".

Climate scientists have "been conservative in their projections of the impacts of climate change". This tendency to "err on the side of least drama" is a kind of cautious over-editing, something which former NASA climate scientist Prof James Hansen calls "scientific reticence".

Climate scientists have toned down their message and their language, in spite of the evidence, to stay within the Overton Window - the range of ideas that are tolerated within public discourse.

The reasons for this self-editing are simple, Oreskes and her colleagues argue. They lie in the core scientific values and norms of objectivity, rationality, dispassion, restraint, objectivity, scepticism, and moderation. Scientists are trained to be level-headed, disciplined, and self-controlled because any emotionality would be seen as negative, and as having clouded their judgment. They must aim for scientific "respectability".

This group culture ends up policing itself: "because science operates according to a prestige economy, in which reputation is paramount, anything that might incite the distrust of one's peers is to be avoided".

This isn't a criticism of scientists or the scientific culture, Oreskes and co maintain. "The culture of science has in most respects served humanity very well". But when it comes to communicating the full social, economic, and political risks of climate change, it has failed.

### Is climate collapse an 'existential threat' to humanity?

The science put out by the UN's IPCC is amongst the most peer-reviewed in the history of the modern scientific discipline of truth-testing. But the UN puts a tight editorial muzzle on its scientist authors.

The UN has a diplomatic mandate, and uses diplomatic language in its communications, explains South African economist Anton Cartwright from the University of Cape Town's African Centre for Cities.

While the IPCC's written outputs are peer-reviewed by leading scien-

tists, the language used in the texts is signed off by governments, and heavily edited to be politically palatable. This doesn't mean that the science is cleaned up to misrepresent the state of climate collapse, but that the language is deliberately rose-tinted and neutral.

A reading of the IPCC's Global Warming of 1.5C report, published in 2018 and which Anton Cartwright helped write, will show that there is no reference to climate change being an "existential" threat to society and civilisation, barring one footnote in Chapter 5 which explains that the authors couldn't agree on how to define "existential risk".

### That doesn't mean that the authors thought the term shouldn't be in the report.

An existential threat is a threat to something's survival. In this context, losing a life-supporting natural system as critical as a stable climate poses a real threat to the ongoing survival of humanity and many other life forms and natural systems.

During the preparation meetings for writing the 1.5°C report, Cartwright argued that the term should be included to describe one possible outcome of our shared climate future. However, many of his fellow authors argued that we don't know for sure how many people climate change would kill, and that forfeiting development would also risk lives.

"My point was that, with the facts as they are, a lot of people may die. How much more do we need to know before we make sacrifices for the sake of a concerted response?"

Indeed, how many people need to be at risk of dying - what percentage of total humanity - to label this an existential threat?

For Risbey, to spend too much time wrestling with how to define "existential threat" gets us hogtied in misleading arguments.

"Climate change, if unchecked, will entail massive disruption to humans and other species on the planet. That's not really arguable anymore. We are sending the climate back to the Cretaceous period, to what it was like during the era of the dinosaurs, and we're doing it very fast. Substantial parts of the planet will not be very habitable for humans and other species.

Taking into account the neutrally-worded conclusions of the Global Warming of 1.5°C, the UNEP Emissions Gap Report, and a recent article in the journal Nature which argues we are on the verge of triggered nine irreversible tipping points that will slide us across into a completely unstable climate regime (and this, at just 1°C of global heating), the language does seem to be grossly out of step with the level of planetary emergency.

But the lexicon of acceptable and conservative terminology in the IPCC's texts is evolving. A concept like "transformational adaptation", which appears in the 1.5°C report, is new and means something far more powerful than the bland words suggest.

Transformational adaptation speaks to the massive disruption needed to give a complete overhaul to the global economic and political systems that have allowed climate-wrecking consumption and pollution to continue unabated for decades.

Run this through the activists' thesaurus, and "transformational adaptation" reads like the many posters popping up at climate marches around the globe: "Systems change, not climate change!"

"To stay below 1.5°C warming, we need transformational change, as opposed to linear and incremental change," says Cartwright. "We need systemic change in energy, urban infrastructure, land ecosystems, and the industrial system."

This kind of change will be disruptive, just as climate impacts will be disruptive. But scientists were finally able to get this message past the editorial pens of governments involved in the sign-off of the text for the 1.5°C report.

Let's see if a term like "existential risk" finally makes it into the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, due out in two years' time.

In spite of all this semantic squabbling, though, "we are definitely not doing enough to avoid catastrophe," Cartwright says in blunt summary, using terminology that he and his colleagues are not able to introduce into their IPCC writings. By his reading of the evidence, the "risk is loaded towards runaway climate change".

Tipping points: hitting the wall  
It's like we're careening down the highway at full speed, but there's a wall across the road somewhere ahead of us, and we're about to hit it.

"We don't know where (the wall) stands, but we know that if we don't brake we will hit it, so we should hit the brakes now. That's what the tipping points are," says climatologist Prof Hans-Otto Pörtner from the Alfred Wegener Institute Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research in Germany.

The wall metaphor is Pörtner's. He is an IPCC co-chair, making him one of its most senior IPCC scientists, and yet even with this rank, he can't use this kind of figurative language in his contribution to the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, due out in 2022, because it's not the right editorial "voice" for the platform. But he uses the metaphor comfortably in his communication with the media.

According to Pörtner, we don't fully understand climate tipping points, but they're lying ahead of us nonetheless: once certain physical processes kick into play, like the rapidly thawing Arctic permafrost which is releasing massive stores of previously frozen methane that is likely to surge global heating into overdrive, the climate system will slip across an irreversible threshold and into "runaway" climate collapse.

The concept of tipping points is something which the scientists have only recently started speaking about with greater confidence, according to Risbey. In 2008, scientists who spoke about tipping points were sometimes exposed to ridicule, but now these are a more regular feature in academic papers.

Using the wall analogy, Pörtner explains why we should be applying the bog-standard precautionary principle. We're going to slam into the wall, and given our current inaction, it will be at breakneck speed. It's inevitable. Instead of bickering about whether we'll hit it within 1.5km or 2km, we should be applying the brakes now so that the impact won't be so catastrophic.

Even with our "best efforts" to throttle carbon pollution, as outlined at the most recent UN climate negotiations, the 25th Conference of Parties held in Spain last November, we still get to 2.9°C to 3.4°C by the end of this century, according to Cartwright. But the actual global emissions rate which is growing annually puts us way above that - 4°C or more, by the end of the century.

Yes, scientists agree, there are many uncertainties - about how accurately the models capture the future where so many complex natural systems are at play, what happens when tipping points kick in, how much warming is "baked in" and already unavoidable - but these should prompt greater alarm and more urgent action, not less.

Agencies

## THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD =044=

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

- 3 letter word: BYE, TUG, YAM, PAT,
- 4 letter word: ACID, FEET, NEED, ELMS, ACNE, LOBE, SEAL
- 5 letter word: AVOID, ADAGE, BIBLE, SMELL,
- 6 letter word: STOREY, ENROLE, CHANCE, INLAND
- 7 letter word: LIBERAL, NODULAR, CLARIFY, CAGOULE
- 8 letter word: ATTRACT, SILENCE,
- 9 letter word: SELECTED
- 10 letter word: OMBUDSMAN

WORD FIT CROSSWORD

- Clues Across
- 1 Cause somebody to act (8)
  - 5 Celebrity (4)
  - 6 Powerful attack (9)
  - 8 Said at the end of a prayer (4)
  - 11 Connecting and combining (10)
  - 14 Past simple of give (4)
  - 15 Single number (4)
  - 16 Not enclosed (4)
  - 17 Rank (5) 18 Genetics (4)
  - 19 Holy book for Muslims (5)
  - 20 small closed container (6)
  - 23 Smaller amount (4)
  - 24 Past simple of swim (4)
  - 25 Sell (4)
- Down:
- 1 Supporter (11)
  - 2 Control someone's actions (7)
  - 3 Informal language (5)
  - 4 Anger (4)
  - 5 Official position (6)
  - 7 Risk of losing money (6)
  - 9 Stages of sexual reproduction (9)
  - 10 Country (8)
  - 12 Atlas (3)
  - 13 Distance (6)
  - 17 Piece of paper money with a value of 100 dollars (5)
  - 19 Touch with your lips (4)
  - 21 Cattle (3) 22 Deciduous tree (3)

## BUSINESS



StanChart's CEO, Sunjay Rughani speaks at a past event. Photo courtesy of StanChart Tanzania.

## IMPRESSIVE

## StanChart Tanzania posts impressive 29pc pre-tax profit increase in 2019

By The Banker Reporter

DEFYING intense competition in a crowded baking market, Standard Chartered Bank Tanzania Limited made an impressive pre-tax profit of 47.14bn/- last year being an increase of 29 percent compared to 36.44bn/- registered in 2018.

The Dar es Salaam based lender also recorded an increase in loans, advances and overdrafts by 11 percent from 640.12m/- to 712.52m/- quarter on quarter.

The bank's CEO, Sanjay Rughani said, "We are happy with the results that we recorded in 2019. This set of results is a reflection of the strength of our business strategy, driven by our dedicated



**Our Clients continue to be the reason why we are in business, and why we are here for good as per our brand promise. In 2019 our business units worked closely with our clients and agreed on win-win repayment plans which ensured that clients' businesses were not impacted. We are happy to note that this recovery strategy has worked well for both parties and we will continue to implement it in 2020**

employees as well as an execution of our commitment to further supporting the growth of our country."

Rughani said the growth in loans, advances and overdrafts was mainly a result of conscious efforts of increased collaboration with loyal clients in all segments. "We also expanded on our platforms to provide more convenient banking to our clients. We, therefore, pride ourselves to remain a trustworthy partner, supporting our stakeholders to better realize their potential," he added.

Commenting on performance of the bank's revolutionary full digital bank on mobile that it launched in the market in February last year, the CEO highlighted that 2019 was the year in which business grew exponentially in terms of adding new clients, proving that Tanzanians have become more digital savvy and are using mobile phones not only for basic transfers and receipt of money.

"This is our 103rd year in Tanzania, having first opened our doors in 1917. In February last year we launched our Full Digital Bank on Mobile and so far we have managed to more than double our clients' base. This is a key indication that digitization is the fastest and most reliable way of further deepening financial inclusion in Tanzania," Rughani noted.

During the year, the bank also recorded a significant achievement in its recovery of impaired loans and advances. Commenting on the impairment losses on loans and advances, StanChart Tanzania's Chief Financial Officer, Rayson Foya said the Individual and Corporate Units at the bank had a positive outcome of their recovery strategy last year, which resulted into the good results.

"Our Clients continue to be the reason why we are in business, and why we are here for good as per our brand promise. In 2019 our business units worked closely with our clients and agreed on win-win repayment plans which ensured that clients' businesses were not impacted. We are happy to note that this recovery strategy has worked well for both parties and we will continue to implement it in 2020," Foya noted.

In 2018, the bank won the Bank of the Year Award by The Banker which is part of Financial Times Group for the ninth year. Regarded as "The Oscars of the Banking Industry", the Banker Award is handed out to only one bank in every participating country.

Last year the bank was awarded the Best Custodian of the Year Award by the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange and also won the "Employer Brand" Award by the Association of Tanzania Employers, ATE, that recognizes organisations' distinctive positioning and attractive employer brands.

## IMPRESSIVE

## Gender plays no role on the fire line, says all-women team fighting Noordhoek blaze

CAPE TOWN

This week, for the first time ever an all-women brigade of firefighters, called Team Juliet, joined the efforts to contain the Noordhoek wetlands blaze, which had been raging since Sunday.

"We were extremely honoured to get the call to assist on the line. Upon approaching the fire, some nerves were evident, but an overall excitement was felt within the crew. While out on the line, the ladies performed extremely well and kept their focus on working as a team and taking lessons learnt home.

Once we stood down and were driving away from the fire, there were just silent smiles from ear to ear. A sense of pride was felt throughout the entire group. These ladies are officially firefighters, and they did an outstanding job on their debut," says Kylie Paul, Team Juliet's superintendent.

Kylie, found her love for wild-fire-fighting through joining the Volunteer Wildfire Services as a volunteer firefighter in 2017. "From my very first day as a volunteer I knew this is what I wanted to do professionally."

Last year, in a bid to increase feet on the ground for an ever-changing fire season in the Western Cape, NCC Environmental Services, in partnership with Chrysalis Academy, the Consulate General of the United States in Cape Town and the Department of Community Safety in the Western Cape, embarked



Team Juliet members in a souvenir photo.

on an exciting journey to uplift and empower fifteen women by training and employing them as wildland firefighters.

Charl Steenkamp, Brand Manager for NCC was on the scene this past Monday to snap some images of the crew tackling the blaze. Of the efforts, he said "I've been photographing Team Juliet from their first day at NCC Environmental Services. Seeing them on the fire line made me realise how much they've grown in confidence,

not just in what they do, but also in front of the camera.

"They no longer shy away but are proud and confident in who they are and what they've accomplished. It's a privilege to photograph these amazing women and see their journey unfold."

On Facebook, NCC Wildfires says, "Led by Kylie Paul, (who) got onto a fire line for the very first time, they undertook extensive mopping up on the fire line.

"Then all hell broke loose as fires in the Noordhoek wetlands advanced towards the residential areas and all resources were mobilised. The three helicopters with a spotter, City of Cape Town's Fire and Rescue Services, WoF ground crews and 5 Volunteer Wildfire Services crews supported the @NCCWildfires crews and vehicles in containing the wildfire.

"NCC's Juliet Wildfire Crew joined their fellow firefight-

ers on the line to get some firsthand experience of a wildfire. They performed exemplary and will take a lot away from what they learnt today. "Thanks to the residents who supported all the crews with cold refreshments - the firefighters really appreciate it."

"It was extremely important that, while we recognised the significance of being the first all-female crew out on the line, we needed to focus on our assignment in the safest way possible. It was a humbling experience, which has brought me so much pride. These ladies are inspirational in every way, and I am truly blessed to be able to work with them," says Kylie.

Traditionally firefighting has been a male-dominated profession, but more opportunities are becoming available for inclusion, says Kylie. In the Western Cape in particular, there are already a number of women who have achieved successful careers in various roles in the fire industry.

"Our team's goal is to pave the way to assist with integrating and creating more opportunities for women in this fantastic industry. At the end of the day we are all firefighters - gender plays no role on the fire line - but this is a start. I want every young girl to see us out there, getting stuck in, and know that they can do anything their

## CONFRONTATION

## 'Dangerous' to crop African voices on climate: Uganda activist



Ugandan activist Vanessa Nakate.

AVOS

Africa is on the frontline of climate change, and it is crucial to listen to voices from the continent in global discussions about the crisis, Ugandan activist Vanessa Nakate told AFP on Tuesday.

Nakate was at the heart of a viral debate that erupted at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland last week after she was cropped out of a photo of a young activists, including Greta Thunberg, taken after a press conference.

Nakate, a 23-year-old graduate in business administration, was the only black person and only African in the photo shoot

and accused the Associated Press news agency of racism in cropping her out. The agency said the photographer had cropped the photo for composition purposes.

However in an article on Monday AP said the incident had prompted "soul-searching" on the issues of racial sensitivity and inclusion. Famous activists such as Thunberg are from first-world countries which are often blamed for being behind global warming, whose effects are worst felt in poor nations, with countries in Africa at highest risk from climate extremes.

"It wasn't just about the photo because I read the article

first. They quoted the various activists but I wasn't there," Nakate told AFP in an interview in Kampala. Nakate found out about the Fridays for Future youth protests in early 2019 and was inspired, alongside her brother, to protest once a week at a neighbourhood market in Kampala.

She was invited by activist group Arctic Basecamp to deliver hard truths to world leaders gathered at Davos. "There was no message that I had spoken at the conference ... It is dangerous (for African voices) to be excluded from the debate) because many people are ignorant about the climate crisis in Africa and most of the

activists feel unheard," said Nakate.

"If their voices are silenced it means they won't be able to explain to the people that we are facing a climate crisis. It's important for every voice to be listened to no matter where they come from."

Africa 'most vulnerable' Experts say Africa is the most vulnerable to climate shocks, with more frequent droughts and floods stretching people to their limits as farmers and herders get no time to recover. East Africa is currently facing its worst locust invasion in decades after one of the wettest seasons in 40 years came on the back of a drought - a sit-

uation scientists say is becoming the new normal.

"Uganda mainly depends on agriculture and we're really affected by climate change, for example by extreme weather conditions - droughts in some places, floods in other places - that means food prices are affected and only the more privileged can get something to eat and the less privileged are left with nothing," said Nakate.

"They literally lose everything after these climate disasters." She said that messages of support after the scandal, including from others inspired to join climate activism, had "motivated me and encouraged me so I came out stronger."

## OUTSTANDING

## Ethiopia's reformist leader woos private sector investors to fuel growth

ADDIS ABABA

Abiy Ahmed, 43, swept to power in 2018 amid a shakeup of the ruling coalition that had governed the country since 1991. He moved quickly to free political prisoners and end the decades-long war with neighbour Eritrea. Mr Ahmed also announced sweeping fiscal reforms and promised to wrench the economy from the grip of the military.

Rewards were quick to come from international investors including the United Arab Emirates, which pledged Dh11 billion in loans to Ethiopia. "These changes are significant and bold and indicative of a more liberal policy orientation," says Ronak Gopaldas, director at Signal Risk, a market intelligence firm in Johannesburg. These changes have won Mr Ahmed the Nobel Peace prize and comparisons to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of Indian independence.

"Such a comparison may be somewhat premature," says Mr Gopaldas, who notes that Mr Ahmed has yet to realise some of his pledges, and faces a difficult time winning over entrenched

interests in the government.

Daunting challenges - both political and fiscal - lie ahead. Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies worldwide, registering a growth rate of more than 10 per cent for some years now. However, the World Bank in January cut its forecast for Ethiopia's economic growth in the 2020 fiscal year to 6.3 per cent.

This is well below the projection of the National Bank of Ethiopia, which forecast that gross domestic product growth would accelerate to 10.8 per cent for the fiscal year ending in July. Meanwhile, external debt has reached \$27bn (Dh99bn), just over a quarter of the Ethiopian gross domestic product of \$100bn. At the same time, Ethiopia's economic growth is mainly driven by state investment, much of it funded by debt.

Exports, the main source of foreign exchange, reached just over \$7bn in 2019, similar to the levels in 2018 and just marginally higher than \$6.2bn in 2017, according to World Bank data. Demand for its main commodities such as coffee, tea and other agricultural produce have been flat amid a worldwide glut in supply. This means



Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's giant portrait in Addis Ababa.

there is little hope for an export-driven reversal of debt anytime soon.

At the same time, the high growth rate that Ethiopia has enjoyed is not sustainable if it is mainly state driven, experts say. "The public investment model has been accompanied by the rapid accumulation of debt, and of foreign exchange shortages, which has crowded out the private sector," says Jules Leichter, the resident representative of the IMF in Ethiopia.

While the money spent

has improved overall services such as health and education among others, the time has come to transition to private sector funded growth. This would require a new policy framework designed to attract business to the country. "We need these to boost private sector productivity, to achieve sustainable growth that Ethiopia is moving towards," says Leichter.

Fortunately, the country's current leadership understands this. "Businesses that operate in Ethiopia have noted a number of con-

straints that make it very, very difficult for them to do business," Eyob Tekalign Tolina, head of financial development and also a minister in Mr Ahmed's cabinet, told an investor conference hosted by the UN Economic Commission for Africa, held in Addis Ababa last September.

"Things like access to foreign exchange and electricity, corruption, government inefficiency, poor internet. These are [some of] the factors that have dampened private business in spite of

the country's potential."

The government is implementing a number of reforms with the assistance of agencies such as the IMF and World Bank to overcome these barriers to private capital, Mr Tolina said. For foreign investors, the real test will be Ethiopia's commitment to a pledge that Mr Ahmed made in 2018 to reform and sell off various state-owned enterprises.

Fortunately for Mr Ahmed, investors so far like what they see. The country is in the process of selling off major state assets such as the sugar industry that was mostly controlled by the military. Also on the block is the world's largest mobile phone monopoly, as well as railroads and other assets.

As a result of the government's continued adherence to reforms, the IMF extended a \$2.9bn loan in December to help balance out foreign exchange shortages. "A lot of reforms are already in the pipeline - that's why this support is coming through," says Zemedeneh Negatu, Global Chairman of the Fairfax Africa Fund. Government reforms would pave the path for private investment.

"The key message from

the government is that the private sector is going to have a bigger role in the economy, as opposed to the last 15 years." An influx of private capital will lead to other positive measures, including the opening of a stock market. "This will be a big, big game changer, because there are many companies in Ethiopia that will benefit from a private capital market," says Mr Negatu.

Given the size of Ethiopia's economy - one of just three in Africa to cross the \$100bn threshold - a stock market could grow to formidable size and possibly rival the current largest capital market in Africa, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

Mr Ahmed, meanwhile, is doubling down on political reforms as well. In January a date for elections was set, with a national vote scheduled for August 16. This will be the first real political test of his administration, and the first too when many political exiles and dissidents can take part.

He has also moved to settle a long running dispute with Egypt and Sudan over the \$4bn Grand Renaissance Dam now being completed on the upper stage of the Nile. Downstream users fear

that Ethiopia will restrict the amount of water and prioritise its own needs. If unresolved, the dispute could lead to war between three of Africa's largest militaries.

However, in January, the three countries signed an accord in Washington, to work together to ensure the construction of the dam - especially the crucial filling stage that will take at least six years - will cause as little disruption as possible.

The future for Ethiopia may be as bright as optimists hope if Mr Ahmed manages to win the election, complete a full term in office, and introduce fiscal reforms. "For the first time I have been thinking of going home," says Kebedi Tefferi, an Ethiopian living in Cape Town as a refugee, and who ekes out a living selling used clothing in the city centre. He fled the country when he was told police were looking for him after he penned down blog posts that criticized the government and made his way overland to South Africa.

"For 12 years I have not seen my father or mother. For the first time I have hope that I will someday return and maybe live as a businessman, not just a refugee."

## CONCERN

## Africa and the world are seeing a decline in tourists - should we be worried?

JOHANNESBURG

In 2018 tourism was booming in Africa - a 9% increase from the previous year. But in 2019, that growth had dropped to 4%, according to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) - despite limited data available for the continent. While North Africa did exceptionally well, including Egypt's economic stabilisation, Sub-Saharan Africa only had a 1.5% growth.

Should we be worried? Thousands from the travel and tourism sectors are promoting all sorts of holiday destinations - ranging from capital cities to exotic islands, at the World Travel Market in London. There have a few factors contributing to this slowdown - countries are clamping down on its borders, the global economy

is stalling, the world's biggest travel operator Thomas Cook shut down last year and security and geopolitical tensions have made certain destinations less desirable in mainstream media.

And if the hashtag #FlyingWhileAfrican is to be believed, airlines tend to put their worst foot forward on the continent - using older planes and ruder staff on African routes.

In South Africa, there's been a big dip in international travellers - including fellow Africans - and with SAA's business rescue and routes cancellations, an ugly gap in the continent's much-needed air connectivity will be an antithesis to growth.

The rest of the world? But it's not only Africa that's seen this decline - the number of international tourist arrivals rose by 4% last year to 1.5 billion, its

slowest rate since 2016. However, AFP reports that according to UNWTO's intelligence chief, Sandra Carvao, this decline is not ringing massive alarm bells.

"This is a growth that we can consider strong because it is within the historical average, but we see a slight slowdown compared to the last two years. But it should be noted that the last two years have been really exceptional with a growth that was not normal."

Environmental concerns have also impacted on the industry, especially in Europe where flight shaming has generated a rise in slow travel to closer destinations instead of travelling to the other side of the world burning CO2.

Another concern has been the uncertainties around Brexit - UK travellers make up a big chunk of the market and their unknown status

has led to less travelling. But tourism remains an important economic driver for the world economy.

"The number of destinations earning \$1 billion or more from international tourism has almost doubled since 1998," says Zurab Pololikashvili, UNWTO secretary-general in the report. "The challenge we face is to make sure the benefits are shared as widely as possible and that nobody is left behind. In 2020, UNWTO celebrates the Year of Tourism and Rural Development, and we hope to see our sector lead positive change in rural communities, creating jobs and opportunities, driving economic growth and preserving culture."

Not everyone is feeling the pinch - the Middle East is growing at almost double the global average - 8% - due to Saudi Arabia's campaign

to attract more visitors, while Asia and the Pacific also had an above-average growth. However, with Australia's bushfire disaster this might give the region a knock.

French tourists also seem to be spending the most as the world's top outbound market, while Americans were enjoying the benefits of a stronger dollar. China however - the world's biggest traveller market - is seeing a decrease in tourist spending.

Was does 2020 have in store for us?

The UNWTO is predicting a 3 - 4% growth this year, while 47% of participants in the report believe tourism will perform even better. Two major events - the Tokyo Olympics and Expo 2020 Dubai - is also expected to be a major driver for travellers at the start of the decade.

Major changes to the



Tourist enjoying a wildebeest migration at Serengeti National Park

Schengen visa coming into effect in February will also fuel more travel to Europe - while it will be more expensive, repeat visitors with clean records will be rewarded with longer visa stays and applications can be done much farther in advance.

For Africa, SAA's fate still hangs up in the air for now, with little hope of a knight

in shining armour riding in to rescue its routes. Visa access on the continent also remains stagnant, although the launch of eVisa application platforms is on the increase, including in South Africa with the launch of a pilot programme.

The Department of Home Affairs also started a campaign at the end of 2019 to celebrate the

eased travel requirements for minors visiting South Africa. The unabridged birth certificate saga had been a serious thorn to the industry for many years until it was finally scrapped last year. But as we know from the news - the world is an extremely volatile place, where only a soothsayer can say for sure where the world will be heading next.

## SUCCESS

## Marvelling at 2019 success, PanAfrican Energy forecasts bumper 2020



PanAfrican Energy Tanzania CEO, Andy Hanna.

By Guardian Reporter

BUOYED by an impressive 2019 performance which saw its natural gas production increase by over 50 percent from 39.9 million standard cubic feet per day (MMscfd) in 2018 to 63.1 MMscfd, PanAfrican Energy Tanzania Limited foresees another stellar performance this year.

In its latest report, the company said it expects further increases in demand in 2020, across the power and industrial sectors, and potentially through expansion of its ongoing compressed natural gas vehicles project.

The company's managing director, Andy Hanna said, "After a highly successful year, PAET is looking forward to an even more successful 2020 as the company plans to carry out a number of

challenging technical projects to meet demand and increase access to the benefits that Tanzania's indigenous natural gas resources bring to the nation."

Hanna said although the timing is uncertain, additional power generation is expected to be installed at Kinyerezi, commencing in the third quarter of 2020, and building to 185 megawatts of combined cycle generation capacity by the end of the year of which 150MW will be gas fired generation.

He further noted that alongside gas for power generation, the gas producing company is actively seeking to further accelerate industrial expansion in Dar es Salaam and has recently restructured and lowered gas prices to industries to ensure the commodity remains a cheaper

and a cleaner alternative to more expensive and far more polluting fuels such as diesel or coal.

"Success will depend considerably on our highly capable Tanzanian team working alongside our partners TPDC, and on the continued levels of support we have received from PURA, EWURA and other stakeholders in the Songo Songo project. All of the signs are there that we should be optimistic for the year ahead and for the natural gas industry as a whole in Tanzania," the PAET chief added.

Of the 63.1 MMscfd supply of protected gas, much of the 9.2 British standard cubic feet was sold at the wellhead to Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation and processed and transported to Dar es Salaam through the National Natural Gas

Infrastructure.

"This gas was used primarily for increased power generation, while the remainder was sold to power and industrial customers in Dar es Salaam via the Songas processing and transportation facilities," the company stated in its report.

PAET is working to ensure gas production from the Songo Songo field can continue to meet demand beyond 2020, with several initiatives in progress or being evaluated. Installation of compression facilities is vital in optimising the throughput capacity of the Songas facilities over the remaining term of the production sharing agreement and underlying licence.

Failure to incorporate compression would lead to a significant loss in production through the Songas facilities as

field pressure declines below the level required to deliver on-specification gas to the power sector in Dar es Salaam and our industrial customers over time.

On 23 December 2019, a letter of instruction was signed with an international contractor with significant presence and experience in Tanzania for the commencement of detailed engineering and design for the compression project. A definitive agreement for the project is expected to be signed by the end of February 2020 on a fixed price, turnkey basis.

"It is forecast that compression will be operational by the end of 2021 and cost approximately US\$38 million, of which US\$34.2 million is forecasted to be spent in 2020," the company's report added.

CREATIVITY

# 40kg weight loss spurs Emirati dad into salad business

ABU DHABI

Tucked away in a corner of Masdar City lies a small, boutique restaurant that one Emirati hopes could take a step towards transforming the nation's health. It is almost four years since Yousif Al Hammadi, 38, embarked on a mission to change the fast food culture he said has seeped into Emirati society, sending many on a pathway towards ill health.

In 2016, Mr Al Hammadi, a father of four, weighed 120 kilograms and found it difficult to eat healthily, in part due to his busy career as a petroleum engineer. A trip to the United States inspired him to set up his own restaurant business and make drastic changes to his own eating habits.

We are now better informed how our poor eating choices and unhealthy



Yousif Al Hammadi in the Chop't branch in Masdar city.

diets increase the risk of diabetes, cancer and heart disease. "I found myself in

America and I thought about doing something different with my life that would add value to society and give me a new challenge," he said. "I had an idea to open

that already existed. "Then I looked at taking on a franchise of an existing business I had seen in America, but finally decided to do something from scratch."

Although Mr Al Hammadi, who lives in Abu Dhabi, wanted to try something new, his dream of a healthy eating salad bar had to take a back seat at first while he found his feet in retailing. With no previous experience in the food and beverage industry, his first attempt at a new restaurant was a small burger kitchen called Box's.

When that started to do well, he opened a salad bar called Chop't. He then took up an intense form of Thai boxing and CrossFit classes to shed more than 40kg in weight. Swapping junk food for healthy salads and wraps also helped shift the kilos.

"Back in 2015 I found it very difficult to find a restaurant that had healthy

options," he said. "That's what gave me the idea for Chop't as there was clearly a gap in the market. "I was determined to make a difference, and I still am."

"During my time in America, there were restaurants selling healthy, fresh food that gave people the option to create their own dishes from local ingredients. "I changed my mentality towards food and it changed my life. I stopped eating junk food and began exercising. I found when we eat healthier, natural food and cook it with a bit of imagination you feel so much better."

"I managed to lose more than 40kg without surgery, just by changing my life through diet and exercise." The main Chop't restaurant is in the International Renewable Energy Agency building in Masdar City and is proving popular with government workers in the

area. "There is always a queue outside my salad shop, which is encouraging that people are happy to make healthier choices now," Mr Al Hammadi said. "Now that I've lost weight I can wear whatever I want. If I want to play sport, I can as I'm a lot slimmer."

"Without the right food, I will not have the energy to do this sport. Junk food is no use." A new delivery branch of Chop't has just opened in Business Bay in Dubai and comes after another branch started up in Dubai Marina.

There are two more delivery restaurants in Abu Dhabi as well as the eat-in restaurant in Masdar City. Mr Al Hammadi would one day like to see more healthy eating restaurants than junk food on sale. "People are better educated and informed now. This is leading to a change and more are opting for healthier food."

DIVERSITY

## Barbie introduces dolls with vitiligo and alopecia

LONDON

The very first doll was introduced back in 1959, but now toymaker Mattel is redefining what it means to "look like Barbie."

The American company has introduced a diverse new range of dolls to its already bolstered line-up, which last year saw the release of a gender-neutral Barbie and a disabled Barbie.

For 2020, Mattel has unveiled a doll with vitiligo, a condition in which a person's skin loses pigment, typically in patches, and another with the hair-loss condition alopecia.

The Barbie with vitiligo is now on sale, while the latter, which comes without hair, will hit shelves in June. "What makes us different makes us beautiful," said Mattel, when announcing the new releases on Twitter.

The latest iterations of the world's most famous doll form part of Barbie's Fashionistas line, which already includes a figurine with a wheelchair and one with a prosthetic leg. New releases also include a Ken doll with long rooted hair and the first-ever redhead Ken. In total, the line represents nine body types, 35 skin tones and 94 hairstyles, ac-

ording to the Barbie website.

"As we continue to redefine what it means to be a 'Barbie' or look like Barbie, offering a doll with vitiligo in our main doll line allows kids to play out even more stories they see in the world around them," Mattel said in a statement, adding that the brand worked with a dermatologist to ensure the doll accurately represented the condition. "For 2020, Barbie is continuing the journey to represent global diversity and inclusivity in the fashion doll aisle by showcasing a multi-dimensional view of beauty and fashion."

Last year, Mattel also released a series of 20 'Shero' Barbies, turning the likes of activist and supermodel Adwoa Aboah; Bindi Irwin, actress, conservationist and daughter of the late 'crocodile hunter' Steve Irwin; actor, model and activist Yara Shahidi; tennis star Naomi Osaka; and film director Ava DuVernay in Barbie figures. The dolls were designed in collaboration with the women they represent, and the team hopes to help close the "dream gap", by donating funds to organisations championing equality for women.



The newest additions to Barbie's Fashionistas include a doll with alopecia, centre, and a redheaded Ken.

Crisis

## Over 6 000 cruisers stranded as ship goes into lockdown over coronavirus

MILAN

Over 6000 tourists were blocked on a cruise ship in Italy on Thursday after the vast liner was placed on lockdown over two suspected cases of the deadly coronavirus.

Samples from a Chinese couple were sent for testing after three doctors and a nurse boarded the Costa Crociere ship in the port of Civitavecchia to tend to a woman running a fever, the local health authorities said.

Costa Crociere confirmed the ship, carrying some 7 000 people including the crew, was in lockdown. It said it a 54-year old woman

from Macau "was placed in solitary confinement in the on-board hospital last night with her travel companion", and was following instructions from the health ministry.

The Costa Smeralda, the company's flagship and the fifth-largest cruise ship in the world, "came from Palma de Mallorca and is currently engaged in one-week cruises in the western Mediterranean," it said.

The couple flew in to Milan from Hong Kong on January 25, before getting on the cruise, according to Italian media reports. "The couple's cabin has been isolated and

they are in with the doctors," an unnamed passenger was quoted as telling ANSA news agency. "We're a bit worried of course. No-one is getting on or off the ship apart from the doctors. This holiday risks ending in a nightmare."

China reported its biggest single-day jump in novel coronavirus deaths on Thursday, as global fears deepened with at least 15 countries confirming infections. The World Health Organization, which initially downplayed a disease that has now killed 170 in China, was preparing to meet Thursday to decide whether to declare it a global emergency.



**ISIDINGO** MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

<p><b>ITV</b></p> <p><b>MONDAY 27 Jan</b></p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 Habari 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Soap: Isidingo the need 09:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 Jagina rpt 11:30 Igizo rpt: Mtego 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Jungu kuu rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Mjue Zaidi 13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:00 Art and Lifestyle rpt 14:10 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:00 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:10 Aibu yako rpt 18:15 Mapishi 18:45 Kesho leo 19:00 Afiya ya Jamii 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:05 Dakika 45 22:00 Insta Moja 22:15 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTV</p> <p><b>TUESDAY 28 Jan</b></p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 Habari 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 09:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:30 Shamsam za pwani 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 Shamsam za pwani 11:20 Shangweka rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Afiya ya jamii rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Kipindi maalum: KTMDA 13:30 Shamba lulu rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:00 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza Huru 16:30 Watoto wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:10 Yu wapi 18:15 Mapishi rpt 18:30 Uchumi na biashara 19:00 Jarida la wanawake 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:05 Tanzania yetu 21:35 Chetu ni chetu</p>	<p>22:15 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 DWTV</p> <p><b>WEDNESDAY 29 Jan</b></p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 09:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:30 Korean drama: The great Queen Seondok 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 Korean drama: The great Queen Seondok 11:20 Uchumi wetu rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Dakika 45 13:55 Habari za saa 14:00 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:00 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt 18:30 Igizo rpt: Dhoruba 19:00 Ijue Sheria 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:00 Aibu Yakol! Hata wewe? 21:10 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco 21:40 Ripoti Maalum 22:15 Telenovela: Elena's Ghost 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 2:00 DWTV</p> <p><b>THURSDAY 30 Jan</b></p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habariz a saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 9:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto 10:30 Igizo: Mkaguzi 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 Igizo: Mkaguzi 11:15 Kesho Leo rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Ijue Sheria 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Arts &amp; lifestyle rpt 13:30 Tanzania yetu 13:55 Habari za saa 14:00 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Mapishi 18:30 Jagina 19:00 Usafiri wako 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari</p>	<p>21:00 Malumbano ya hoja 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 DWTV</p> <p><b>FRIDAY 31 Jan</b></p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 09:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 9:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:30 Hawavumi lakini wamo 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 Hawavumi lakini wamo 11:30 Usafiri wako 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera 12:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanesco 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Jagina rpt 13:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:00 Chetu ni chetu rpt 14:10 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 17:30 Ibadaya ya kiislamu 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Mizengwe rpt 18:30 Shamba lulu 19:00 Kipindi Maalum: TMDA 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:05 Kipima Joto 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 DWTV</p> <p><b>SATURDAY 01 Feb</b></p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:00 Habari 8:00 Al Jazeera 9:00 Watoto wetu 10:00 Mjue Zaidi rpt 10:45 Usafiri wako rpt 11:15 Shamba lulu rpt 11:45 Mapishi rpt 12:00 Chetu ni chetu rpt 12:40 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost 14:40 Igizo rpt: Dhoruba 15:15 Igizo: Mkaguzi 16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe 16:20 Igizo: Mtego 17:00 Shamsam za Pwani 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Mapishi 18:30 Igizo: Dhoruba 19:00 Art and lifestyle 19:25 Jungu Kuu 20:00 Habari 21:00 Shangweka 21:30 Kesho leo rpt 22:00 Kipindi maalum: Insta Moja 22:15 Hawavumi lakini wamo 23:00 Isidingo rpt 01:30 DWTV</p> <p><b>SUNDAY 02 Feb</b></p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha</p>	<p>7:00 Habari 8:00 Al Jazeera 09:00 Watoto Wetu 10:00 Isidingo 11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt 12:00 Bongo Movie rpt 14:00 Tamasha la Michezo 15:00 Mwangaza 16:00 The Great queen Seondok 16:45 Igizo rpt: Mkaguzi 17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:15 Mapishi 18:30 Matukio ya wiki 19:30 Igizo: Mtego 20:00 Habari 21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Biko 21:10 Mizengwe 21:30 Mjue Zaidi 22:15 Bongo Movie: 00:30 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost</p> <p><b>CAPITAL</b></p> <p><b>Tues 28 Jan</b></p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera 07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio) 09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio) 13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio) 16:00 Series rpt: Life is a teacher 16:30 Capchat rpt 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 Innovation 19:30 Jagina rpt 20:00 Series: The other side 20:45 Telenovela: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 21:30 Capital Prime 22:00 Turning the spotlight rpt 22:30 Eco@Africa 23:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p><b>Wed 29 Jan</b></p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera 07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio) 09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio) 13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio) 16:00 Series rpt: The other side 16:30 Culinary delight rpt 17:00 Innovation rpt 17:30 Meza Huru 19:00 Sports Gazette 19:30 Chetu ni chetu 20:00 Series: The other side 20:45 Telenovela: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 21:30 Capital Prime 22:00 Dakika 45: 22:45 The Décor 23:15 Al Jazeera</p> <p><b>Thurs 30 Jan</b></p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera 07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio) 09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio) 13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio) 16:00 Series rpt: The other side 16:30 Business edition rpt 17:00 In good shape 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 Turning the spotlight</p>	<p>19:30 Tanzania yetu 20:00 Series: The other side 20:45 Telenovela: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 21:30 Capital Prime News 22:00 Capchat rpt 23:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p><b>Frid 31 Jan</b></p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera 07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio) 09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio) 13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio) 16:00 Series rpt: The other side 16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt 17:30 Meza Huru 19:00 Drive it 19:30 Eco@Africa 20:00 Aibu yako 20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition 20:45 Telenovela: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 21:30 Capital Prime News 22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt 00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p><b>Sat 01 Feb</b></p> <p>08:00 CNN International 09:00 Drive It rpt 09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt 10:00 Culinary delight rpt 10:30 Innovation rpt 11:00 Out n'about rpt 11:30 Sports Gazette rpt 12:00 Usafiri wako rpt 12:30 Eco@Africa rpt 13:00 Business edition rpt 13:30 Korean Drama rpt: Ilijimae 14:30 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt 17:45 Bundesliga kick off 18:15 Capchat rpt 19:15 Mizengwe 19:30 The Decor 20:00 Korean Drama: Ilijimae 21:00 Out n'About 21:30 New Year's concert 2020: Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra 23:00 The other side rpt 01:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p><b>Sun Feb 02</b></p> <p>08:00 CNN International 09:00 In good shape 10:00 Capchat rpt 11:00 Sports Gazette rpt 11:30 Korean Drama rpt: Ilijimae 12:00 Jagina rpt 12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt 13:00 In good shape rpt 13:30 Series rpt: The other side 15:15 Aibu yako 15:30 Drive it rpt 16:00 Dakika 45 rpt 16:45 Mizengwe rpt 17:00 The Decor rpt 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 Turning the Spotlight rpt 19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights 20:00 Korean Drama: Ilijimae 21:00 Shift 21:15 Capchat live 22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Dónde está Elisa?) Where is Elisa? 00:00 Al Jazeera</p>
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## WORLD

# McConnell likely has votes to end Trump trial with no witnesses

By Bloomberg

US Republican Senator Lamar Alexander said he will vote against calling witnesses in US President Donald Trump's impeachment trial, all but closing off chances that Democrats can secure new evidence and making it increasingly likely the trial will wrap up as soon as Friday.

"There is no need for more evidence to prove that the president asked Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden and his son, Hunter," Alexander, who is retiring from his Tennessee seat when his term ends next January, said in a statement.

"The question then is not whether the president did it, but whether the United States Senate or the American people should decide what to do about what he did," he said released after the Senate concluded questioning House prosecutors and Trump's defense team. "I believe that the Constitution provides that the people should make that decision in the presidential election that begins in Iowa on Monday."

The decision is a victory for Trump's legal team and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who had been steering the trial to a quick conclusion that is all but certain to end in the president's acquittal.

"That's a big, big deal," Republican Senator Ted Cruz said in an interview with Fox News. Without Alexander, Democrats are "not going to break 50."

White House congressional liaison Eric Ueland said, "We took another big step towards the president's acquittal in the Senate today, and look forward to completing this impeachment process as soon as possible."

## Two Votes

Only Utah's Mitt Romney and Maine's Susan Collins have backed hearing from witnesses, including former Trump National Security Advisor John Bolton. Collins, who faces a tough re-election battle in November, said in a statement Thursday night said that "hearing from certain witnesses would give each side the opportunity to more fully and fairly make their case, resolve any ambiguities, and provide additional clarity."

Democrats would need four Republican votes to get a majority to call witnesses in the trial. Several Republicans who had been publicly noncommittal this week announced the opposition to witnesses.

The remaining potential GOP vote for witnesses is Alaska's Lisa Murkowski. She has previously indicated openness to calling witnesses, but since a



This still image taken from a US Senate webcast shows US Senator and Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) asking questions to House Managers during the impeachment trial in the Senate Chamber at the US Capitol on Thursday in Washington, DC. (AFP)

meeting with McConnell Wednesday morning she's repeatedly refused to discuss the issue.

"I am going to go reflect on what I have heard, re-read my notes and decide whether I need to hear more," she said in a statement after the Senate wrapped up its work on Thursday.

Even if Murkowski votes with Democrats that would likely leave the vote at 50-50. That would leave it up to Chief Justice John Roberts to decide whether he should step in as a tie-breaker. Both McConnell and Democratic leader Chuck Schumer have expressed doubt that he would. If Roberts declines to act, the witness vote would fail.

Murkowski on Thursday night asked the president's legal team why the Senate shouldn't call Bolton to testify. She noted that Trump administration witnesses said Trump denied linking aid for Ukraine to investigations, while reports say Bolton wrote in his upcoming book that the president made a direct link.

Trump lawyer Patrick Philbin said that subpoenaing Bolton would set a bad precedent for future presidential impeachments by allowing the House to submit an incomplete case to the Senate.

"It will do grave damage to this body as an institution to say that the process in the House doesn't really have to be complete," Philbin said. "That's not the way this chamber should allow impeachments to be presented to it."

But she also joined with Alexander and several other Republicans in asking Trump's defense team whether testimony from Bolton would make any difference because the allegation still wouldn't rise to an impeachable defense.

That gave Trump's lawyers an opening to hammer home a point they've been making repeatedly over the past two days. Philbin and the other Trump attorneys have argued that if the president is acting with mixed motives, for both policy and political reasons, the House does not have a case for impeachment.

Another Trump defense attorney, Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, went even further on Wednesday, saying a president can't be impeached for taking actions that are motivated by a desire to help his political prospects.

Democrats on Thursday repeatedly sought to rebut that argument.

"What we have seen over the last couple of days is a descent into constitutional madness," said Adam Schiff, the lead House impeachment manager. "The only reason you make that argument is because you know your client is guilty and dead to rights. This is an argument made of desperation."

McConnell had been working behind the scenes to shore up support for bringing the trial to a quick conclusion.

Friday will start with two hours of closing arguments from each side. Then the Senate would vote on the question of calling witnesses. If that fails, the chamber would move toward a vote on final judgment on the two impeachment articles against Trump, one charging him with abuse of power and the other with obstructing Congress.

With a 67-vote super-majority needed to convict in the GOP-led chamber, Trump is expected to be easily acquitted.

Agencies

## State of emergency declared as bushfire threatens Canberra

SYDNEY

AUSTRALIAN officials declared a state of emergency for the capital city of Canberra and surrounding regions on Friday, as soaring temperatures and strong winds threatened to propel a large bushfire beyond the control of firefighters.

Andrew Barr, Chief Minister for the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), said the decision to declare the first state of emergency since fatal wildfires in 2003 indicated the potential danger over the weekend.

Officials said an uncontrolled fire in the ACT's south, on the doorstep of Canberra, had grown to 185 square km, almost 8% of the territory's land mass.

"This fire may become very unpredictable. It may become uncontrollable," Barr told reporters in a televised briefing. "The combination of extreme



heat, wind, and a dry landscape will place suburbs in Canberra's south at risk."

Australia's federal parliament is located in Canberra,

which is also home to several government and independent institutions as well as national museums. Four people died

and almost 500 homes were

destroyed in the 2003 Canberra fires.

The state of emergency declared on Friday will run for 72 hours, giving authorities greater

powers to order evacuations, close roads and take control of private property.

Heatwave conditions are also expected to sweep through Victoria and New South Wales states over the weekend, where some 80 fires are burning.

In neighboring New Zealand, where smoke from the Australian blazes has turned glaciers brown, firefighters were battling to contain around 25 fires that spread rapidly to cover around 100 hectares on the South Island. Heatwave conditions were also forecast for much of the country over the weekend.

Australia has been battling bushfires across its east coast that have killed 33 people and an estimated 1 billion native animals since September. Around 2,500 homes have been destroyed as more than 117,000 square km have been razed.

Agencies

## FBI probes use of Israeli firm's spyware in personal and govt hacks - sources

The FBI is investigating the role of Israeli spyware vendor NSO Group Technologies in possible hacks on American residents and companies as well as suspected intelligence gathering on governments, according to four people familiar with the inquiry.

The probe was underway by 2017, when Federal Bureau of Investigation officials were trying to learn whether NSO obtained from American hackers any of the code it needed to infect smartphones, said one person interviewed by the FBI then and again last year.

NSO said it sells its spy software and technical support exclusively to governments and that those tools are to be used in pursuing suspected terrorists and other criminals. NSO has long maintained that its products cannot target U.S. phone numbers,

though some cybersecurity experts have disputed that.

The FBI conducted more interviews with technology industry experts after Facebook filed a lawsuit in October accusing NSO itself of exploiting a flaw in Facebook's WhatsApp messaging service to hack 1,400 users, according to two people who spoke with agents or Justice Department officials.

NSO said it was not aware of any inquiry.

"We have not been contacted by any U.S. law enforcement at all about any such matters," NSO said in a statement provided by Mercury Public Affairs strategy firm. NSO did not answer additional questions about its employees' conduct but previously said government customers are the ones who do the hacking.

A spokeswoman for the FBI said

the agency "adheres to DOJ's policy of neither confirming nor denying the existence of any investigation, so we wouldn't be able to provide any further comment."

Reuters could not determine which suspected hacking targets are the top concerns for investigators or what phase the probe is in. But the company is a focus, and a key issue is how involved it has been in specific hacks, the sources said.

Part of the FBI probe has been aimed at understanding NSO's business operations and the technical assistance it offers customers, according to two sources familiar with the inquiry.

Suppliers of hacking tools could be prosecuted under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA) or the Wiretap Act, if they had enough knowledge of or involvement in im-

proper use, said James Baker, general counsel at the FBI until January 2018.

The CFAA criminalizes unauthorized access to a computer or computer network, and the Wiretap Act prohibits use of a tool to intercept calls, texts or emails.

NSO is known in the cybersecurity world for its "Pegasus" software other tools that can be delivered in several ways. The software can capture everything on a phone, including the plain text of encrypted messages, and commandeer it to record audio.

A business strategy firm retained on behalf of Amazon.com Inc Chief Executive Jeff Bezos, FTI Consulting, said this month that NSO could have supplied the software it said Saudi Arabia used to hack Bezos' iPhone.

The phone began sending out more data hours after it received

a video from a WhatsApp account associated with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, FTI said. Saudi Arabia called the FTI allegation "absurd," and NSO said it was not involved. Other security experts said the data was inconclusive.

The FBI is investigating and has met with Bezos, a member of his team told Reuters. A Bezos spokesman did not respond to a request for comment.

FBI leaders have indicated that they are taking a hard line on spyware vendors.

At a briefing at FBI Washington headquarters in November, a senior cybersecurity official said that if Americans were being hacked, investigators would not distinguish between criminals and security companies working on behalf of government clients.

"Whether you do that as a company or you do that as an individual, it's an illegal activity," the official said.

In the counterintelligence aspect of the probe, the FBI is trying to learn if any U.S. or allied government officials have been hacked with NSO tools and which nations were behind those attacks, according to a Western official briefed on the investigation.

Outside of government, journalists, human rights activists and dissidents in several countries have been victims of attacks using NSO spyware, according to the University of Toronto's Citizen Lab researchers.

In the past, NSO has denied involvement in some of those instances and declined to discuss others, citing client confidentiality requirements.

Agencies

## Xinjiang slams drowning rumours

By Liu Xin

NORTHWEST China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region denied rumors of children being drowned or hurt due to the absence of their parents "detained" at vocational education and training centers, saying these stories were "fabricated."

The regional government held a third consecutive weekly press conference on Monday, January 20, where Rishat Musajan, mayor of Hotan prefecture, said that some foreign media used the tragic sufferings of ordinary families to make up lies to slander Xinjiang's policies.

Some foreign media reported that three children drowned when their parents were "detained" at vocational education and training centers in Xinjiang, and that one 8-year-old girl, whose father was "detained," was burned in close to 60 percent of her body by an overturned stove.

Rishat said a 2-year-old boy named Rehemutula Xirewak from Moyu county in Hotan, whose parents live a normal life and have never been detained, drowned in December 2019.

At that time, his father, Xirewak Aihaitiwak, was renovating their house, and his mother, Bujiannait Jiapar, went to her mother's house when the boy played by himself and wandered away. Later, the toddler accidentally fell into a river and drowned.

A 5-year-old boy named Naisirula Aihemait from Lopu county, Hotan was lost after being left alone for moments by his parents on December 14, 2019.

The parents called the police after finding the boy went missing. The parents learned from a child who was playing with the boy that their son fell into the river while playing.

The police immediately organized a search for the lost boy. At about 11:30 am the next day, the police found the boy's body under the ice of a water channel. When the tragedy happened, both his parents lived a normal life and were not detained.

As for the third drowning case of a 10-year-old boy in Maigat county, Kashi, Rishat said that it was "totally made from thin air." The regional public security department concluded that no boy had drowned in Yarkant River in August.

On February 18, 2018, 12-year-old girl Aisimagul Aihemait in Kumubositan village, Pisha county, Hotan accidentally knocked a stove when she was playing in the room while her mother, Bumairemu Dawut, was washing clothes in the yard.

After the accident, local government and village officials applied for a special assistance fund for the girl. The villagers also raised money for her medical treatment. Thanks to timely treatment and her parents' care, Aisimagul has returned to school, Rishat said.

However, the good deeds of the local government and the villagers were misinterpreted by some foreign media with ulterior motives, Rishat said.

"I want to ask those media, as you have used the tragic sufferings of ordinary families to make up lies time and again, don't you ever worry about your organization's credibility? Don't you ever feel ashamed about your cold-bloodedness and loss of professional ethics?" Rishat asked.

Officials also refuted rumors on boarding schools in Xinjiang, saying that Xinjiang attaches great importance to education. By prioritizing educational development, increasing investment and implementing educational projects for the interest of the people, the region aims to enable every child to enjoy fair and quality education.

According to statistics, as of the end of 2019, Xinjiang had 12,757 schools for basic education, with 5.89 million students and 484,000 teachers. The gross enrollment rate of pre-school education is 95.95 percent, and 99.9 percent of school-age children are enrolled at primary schools.

"Whether to apply for boarding or not entirely depends on the students and their parents without any so-called forced boarding," a senior official said at the press conference.

Global Times



**I want to ask those media, as you have used the tragic sufferings of ordinary families to make up lies time and again, don't you ever worry about your organization's credibility? Don't you ever feel ashamed about your cold-bloodedness**





Members of the medical team of the Second Military Medical University receive praise from a patient at Hankou Hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, Jan. 27, 2020. (Xinhua)

## A race against time! Wuhan battles coronavirus

WUHAN

MORE than one week after Wuhan was put on lockdown, the megacity with a population of over 10 million has been racing against time to battle the epidemic.

Zhang Dingyu is president of Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital, one of the city's designated hospitals to admit patients infected with the new virus. He has spent the past 30 days seeing and treating patients since the arrival of the first few cases of pneumonia caused by the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

In the past week, going to bed at about 2 a.m. and getting up at about 4 a.m. has become the 57-year-old doctor's daily routine.

Wearing a protective cap and suit and putting on a face mask, Zhang clutches at the handrail as he slowly makes his way up and down the stairs. He was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as motor neuron disease, though he never revealed the state of his illness to his colleagues.

"I have never encountered such pressure as today," Zhang said. "For me, ALS is like a sword hanging in the air. I want to make a contribution with what limited time I have left."

He added that he has to quicken his pace to save time and indeed more patients.

His wife, also a medical worker, was infected with the novel coronavirus and was hospitalized on Jan. 19. Luckily, after medical treatment, she has now recovered.

Chinese health authorities announced Thursday that 7,711 confirmed cases of pneumonia caused by the novel coronavirus had been reported in 31 provincial-level regions and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps by the end of Wednesday. A total of 170 people have died of the disease.

The National Health Commission said in its daily report that 1,370 patients remained in critical condition, and 12,167 people were suspected of being infected with the virus as of the end of Wednesday.

Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei Province and center of the coronavirus outbreak, reported 356 new confirmed cases and 25 new deaths on Wednesday, the provincial health authorities said. On Jan. 23, China locked down the city in an unprecedented effort to curb the spread of the new infectious disease. At present, Hubei has 131 designated hospitals, including 30 in Wuhan and another 101 distributed in the counties and cities of the province, for confirmed and suspected new pneumonia patients, according to Liu Yingzi, director of the Hubei Provincial Health Commission.

Liu said that more than 170,000 local medical workers are now fighting

the epidemic and 6,097 more from 29 provincial-level regions and the military had also joined by Tuesday.

### MILITARY AT THE FRONTLINE

On the eve of the Chinese Lunar New Year, a traditional occasion for family reunions, Song Caiping left the comforts of home and family for Wuhan.

Song was among 450 military medical staff sent to Wuhan, including professionals who had experience in the fight against SARS and Ebola.

The medics, in three teams dispatched by medical universities of the army, navy and air force of the People's Liberation Army, arrived in Wuhan by military aircraft on Friday night. They were mobilized from various hospitals affiliated to the military universities. All of them volunteered for the mission.

As a member of the medical team from the Army Medical University, Song and her colleagues took charge of two inpatient areas with the help of doctors and nurses of Jinyintan Hospital. After three hours' preparation, they began receiving the first batch of 20 infected patients transferred there.

"We will stick to prevention and control in a scientific way and standardize the diagnosis process. We can definitely defeat the epidemic and win the battle," said Xu Dixiong, head of the medical team from the university.

At Hankou Hospital, a medical team from the Second Military Medical University took charge of the intensive care unit with 16 beds and newly opened an inpatient ward with 39 beds, rushing to treat critically ill patients with all-out efforts.

"We sent our best staff from various clinical departments. They have rich experience in battling contagious diseases," said Zhou Xianzhi, president of Air Force Medical University. "Some of them took part in major missions such as the battle against SARS and the fight against Ebola in Africa, as well as earthquake rescue missions."

### RAPID HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION

Following Beijing's SARS treatment model, Wuhan is building two hospitals to treat pneumonia patients infected with the novel coronavirus. The two facilities are expected to be put into use on Feb. 3 and Feb. 5, respectively.

Workers, trucks, and excavators are racing against the clock to meet the deadline at the construction sites.

At around 6 p.m. Wednesday, construction of power facilities at Leishenshan (Thunder God Mountain) Hospital, one of the hospitals, was completed.

In only three days, more than 300 workers toiled around the clock to install and adjust 7-km-long high-voltage cables and 26 supporting facilities.

Xinhua

## Europe's Huawei decision -- a vote for open-minded technology cooperation

BEIJING

DIVORCE seems to be not the only thing London and Brussels have agreed on with each other recently.

On Wednesday, the European Union (EU) issued a set of guidelines for 5G security, which stress the importance of diversified vendors and rule out bans on any specific company or country. Brussels' decision came just one day after the British government approved a limited role for Chinese telecom company Huawei in the country's 5G network construction.

These almost synchronized decisions by Britain and the EU to allow Huawei to participate in the building of their 5G networks, albeit with some restrictions, are an apparent vote for open-mindedness when it comes to international technological cooperation. The moves also show that Britain and the EU have kept cool-headed and determined to make independent choices in line with their vital interests, rather than being coerced by some zero-summers in Washington to dig trenches and erect barriers against Chinese tech firms.

Undoubtedly, a stronger 5G part-



nership can benefit both China and the European countries. The 5G technologies not only promise a ultrafast data transmission speed, but can also open up new possibilities in mankind's future way of life such as autonomous vehicles and remote surgeries, whose benefits are too far-reaching to be declined.

Huawei, a trailblazer and leader in the next generation of mobile telecommunications technologies, can offer its partners quality products and services at competitive prices.

Embracing Huawei will also help bolster the overall cooperation and mutual learning between China and Europe in science and technology, which in recent years have seen continuous headway.

In late 2017, Beijing and London

launched a joint strategy for cooperation in science, technology and innovation, the first of its kind China has developed with another country.

At the heart of Europe, the China-Belgium Technology Center project situated near Brussels has been making steady progress and is scheduled to open in autumn. It is expected to provide a gateway for cooperation in innovation, investment and industrial partnerships between China and Europe.

With respective strengths in advanced technology, digital economy and the new generation of information technology, China and the EU can jointly breed remarkable changes in areas like smart cities, artificial intelligence, life sciences and smart manufacturing.

That being said, both the British government and the European Commission still have not completely cleared up their doubts about 5G cooperation with China.

Britain said it would exclude Huawei from sensitive core parts of 5G and cap Huawei's market share of non-core 5G network. The EU, meanwhile, urged its member states to apply restrictions "for suppliers considered to be high risk."

Xinhua



## Pentagon chief defends Trump after brain injury comments

WASHINGTON

US Defense Secretary Mark Esper on Thursday defended President Donald Trump's response to American troops' being diagnosed with traumatic brain injuries from Iran's missile strike, saying he cared about the service members, as the number of service members diagnosed increased to 64.

Last week, Trump appeared to play down the injuries, saying he "heard that they had headaches and a couple of other things," prompting criticism from lawmakers and a US veterans group.

Of the 64 service members who have been diagnosed, 39 had returned to duty, the military said.

"I've had the chance to speak with the president; he is very concerned about the health and welfare of all of our service members, particularly those who were involved in the operations in Iraq, and he understands the nature of these injuries," Esper said during a news conference on Thursday.

Army General Mark Milley, chairman of the military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the service members suffering from traumatic brain injuries had been diagnosed with mild cases. He added the diagnosis could change as time went on.

Pentagon officials have said there had been no effort to minimize or delay information on concussive injuries, but its handling of the injuries following Tehran's attack has renewed questions over the US military's policy regarding how it deals with suspected brain injuries. "(Traumatic brain injury) manifests itself over time. ... I still believe that morning there were no casualties reported," Esper said.

Since 2000, about 408,000 service members have been diagnosed with traumatic brain injury, according to Pentagon data.

Iran fired missiles at the Ain al-Asad base in Iraq in retaliation for the US killing of a top Revolutionary Guard general, Qassem Soleimani, in a drone strike at Baghdad airport on Jan. 3.

The missile attacks capped a spiral of violence that had started in late December. Both sides have refrained from further military escalation.

Xinhua

## WHO declares outbreak global emergency, disfavors travel ban

GENEVA

WORLD Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Thursday that the novel coronavirus outbreak has become a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

Speaking at a press conference after a closed-door meeting of the Emergency Committee, he stressed that the WHO disfavors or even opposes imposing travel or trade restrictions on China.

Under the International Health Regulations, the WHO director-general has the authority to determine that an outbreak constitutes a global health emergency when certain conditions are met. The designation is aimed at mobilizing more international resources to deal with the epidemic.

Since the International Health Regulations entered into force in 2007, the WHO has made multiple global health emergency declarations.

Ghebreyesus noted that Chinese President Xi Jinping personally commands and deploys the prevention and containment efforts.

"The speed with which China detected the outbreak, isolated the virus, sequenced the genome and shared it with WHO and the world are very impressive, and beyond words. So is China's commitment to transparency and to supporting other countries," he said.

"In many ways, China is actually setting a new standard for outbreak response," he added.



That reflects not only China's high sense of responsibility for the lives and health of its own people, but also its strong support for global disease prevention and control, he said.

Ghebreyesus said he believes that China will effectively contain and eventually defeat the epidemic, adding that China's efforts to combat the disease deserve respect and appreciation, and are worth learning.

In fact, many of the prevention and containment measures China has taken far exceed relevant requirements for dealing with emergencies, and the measures China has taken are good not only for that country but also for the rest of the world.

Now the situation is still developing and more research is needed, and particularly countries with fragile health

systems should enhance their responses, said the WHO chief.

That is the main reason behind the declaration, he said, adding that considering global health security, it is also a necessary step to achieve a scientific, rational and calm response based on evidence, and to help other countries take scientific, reasonable and appropriate measures to prevent the epidemic.

Wu Zunyou, chief epidemiologist of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said that the declaration is a standard practice of the WHO.

"China's current prevention and control measures are the strictest and very effective. We are confident that we can effectively contain the epidemic and finally overcome it," Wu said.

Xinhua

## UNESCO, StarTimes establish partnership to boost African sustainable development

NAIROBI

THE United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Multisectoral Regional Office and StarTimes, Africa's leading digital TV operator, on Thursday formalized partnership with to support projects that promote literacy, gender equality and youth empowerment in Africa.

Ydo Yao, the regional director and representative of UNESCO, said a partnership with StarTimes will advance the sustainability agenda in Africa

through harnessing education, culture, technology and innovations.

"Upholding shared mission and goals, this newly-established partnership with StarTimes will bring together advantages and resources to maximize impacts in the areas of education, culture, social and human science, as well as communication and information," said Yao.

He said that multilateral agencies are keen to partner with industry to promote inclusive and green growth in Africa amid challenges like poverty, in-

equality and environmental disasters.

"Partnerships with the private sector are crucial to address today's global and regional challenges, and UNESCO emphasizes and values these partnerships contributing to optimal results for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," said Yao.

The partnership between UNESCO and StarTimes will involve the production of content and projects related to e-learning, artificial intelligence, youth empowerment, social inclusion of people living with disabilities and promo-

tion of the creative industry.

StarTimes, through its digital platforms that have a wide reach in Africa, will be able to transmit content that seeks to empower and transform livelihoods in the continent.

Luis Lu, the vice president of StarTimes, said the company is committed to robust partnerships with the public sector and multilateral institutions to transform African communities through access to knowledge and entertainment.

Xinhua

## In Iowa's small black community, little love for the caucuses or Joe Biden

DES MOINES, IOWA

IN the Near North Side neighborhood, a black community in the heart of Iowa's state capital, it would be easy to miss that the nation's first presidential nominating contest is only days away.

For months, Democratic candidates have buzzed around the state - one of America's whitest - courting supporters ahead of the Iowa caucuses on Monday. But in this Des Moines neighborhood, there is barely a campaign sign in sight.

Residents here, in two dozen interviews, said they felt overlooked by the Democratic candidates, a troubling sign for a party that will need the support of African-American voters for its eventual

nominee in the Nov. 3 presidential election.

The interviews are no substitute for professional polls aimed at Iowa's black Democrats, but they give a sense of the mood among one of the party's key demographics in a battleground state.

While many residents wanted to see Republican President Donald Trump defeated, few believed a Democratic president could improve their lives.

Contrary to national polls that show Joe Biden is the most popular Democratic candidate among African Americans, only two of the 24 interviewed said they preferred former President Barack Obama's vice president. Twelve said they supported U.S.

Senator Bernie Sanders, citing his focus on economic justice.

Black voters account for about a quarter of the national Democratic primary electorate. Some question why Iowa, which is roughly 90% white and 4% black, gets an outsized opportunity to influence the presidential race every four years compared to more diverse states that better reflect the overall country.

### 'THEY COME AND USE US'

Derrick West, a 40-year-old barber, is skeptical of politicians but thinks maybe a woman in the White House could bring real change.

"These politicians, they want our vote, they come and use us. After they get our vote, they don't

help us. Iowa is always the key state to win, but it has some of the smallest number of African Americans. Even if every single African American was qualified to vote here, what impact could we have?"

Actually, I haven't seen any of the candidates in this neighborhood. I think they are scared of what we would tell them. I hope a woman wins.

We've had men all these years, and where has it got us? We haven't figured out racism in America yet. Any woman president would do for me. And I like (U.S. Senator Elizabeth) Warren. She's a fighter."

### 'HOW CAN WE TRUST YOU?'

Ako Abdul-Samad, 68, a state legislator and founder a non-prof-

it organization aimed at helping low-income minority communities, remembers how Obama had campaign offices and yard signs in black neighborhoods during his 2008 bid to become the first U.S. black president.

"In 2008, they had hope. There's no candidate that's doing it this year. The question here is: How can we trust you? I'm more supporting Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren. The people I've been talking to, Biden is not really resonating. For the African-American community, he's taking us for granted because he was Obama's vice president. Yes, we want to see Donald Trump defeated. But for African-Americans, even more important, is jobs, our public safety. Can my son leave home and

make it back alive?"

### 'AMERICA SHOULD BE ASHAMED'

Ivette Muhammad, a 52-year-old social worker, said she was not upset that the once-diverse field of Democratic candidates has dwindled to white front-runners.

"Because Barack Obama was met by such opposition and racism, there is a great deal of concern that that would repeat itself. Barack Obama met such degradation. I love Tom Steyer, and I love Bernie Sanders.

They seem most committed to social, economic and criminal justice. I mourn over the social injustice and the criminal injustice. America should be ashamed of itself. There seems to be no moral

compass to put in place policies to alleviate this."

Des Moines security guard Duke Kelly, 55, has two basic wishes: access to better jobs and expanded bus routes to get him there.

"I travel by bus, but a lot of the better-paying jobs are not on the bus routes...I'm not sure any of these candidates can do what they say they want to get done. When they get in office it's about what Congress allows them to do. They won't be able to make things happen.

It's just another election. I mean (Andrew) Yang wants to give everyone \$1,000 a month. If Yang ever gets into office, they are not going to let him do that."



NFL Super Bowl 54 football game halftime performer Jennifer Lopez and Shakira pose for a picture after a news conference Thursday, Jan. 30, 2020, in Miami. (AP Photo)

## Jennifer Lopez and Shakira vow 'empowering' halftime show

MIAMI

JENNIFER Lopez and Shakira said their Super Bowl halftime show will pay homage to Latino culture, promising a joint performance that has an empowering message and also one that will remember NBA icon Kobe Bryant.

Lopez and Shakira on Thursday held a press conference before Sunday's big game in Miami, telling media they worked hard to put together an eye-popping, high-energy 12-minute performance before the San Francisco 49ers take on the Kansas City Chiefs at Hard Rock Stadium.

"When I was living in Barranquilla, my hometown, as a little girl no one would have thought that I would be performing at the Super Bowl," Colombian singer Shakira said. "It would be so hard to believe. And it's a reality today, now. I think that this is a palpable example of how anything is possible really and I think what matters is the size of dreams."

Shakira and Lopez have separately released a number of chart-topping hits that dominated both the pop and Latin charts in the last two decades. While rehearsing days ago, Lopez said her beau Alex Rodriguez came to her in tears to let her know Bryant, a friend of his, had passed away. Lopez said Thursday she wanted to send love and support to Bryant's wife and family.

"We have to love people when they're here and not wait," said Lopez. "I think about Vanessa as a mom and losing her best friend and partner and losing her child, you know, how awful that must be for her right now, and I just wanted to send the message and praying God guides her through every moment because she has three more babies to take care of."

Bryant had attended concerts by Lopez and Shakira, the singers said Thursday. Shakira added that they want to honor his legacy

Sunday.

"Life is so fragile. And that's why we have to live every moment as intensely as we can," Shakira said. "And I think we'll all be remembering Kobe on Sunday. And we'll be celebrating life and celebrating diversity in this country. I'm sure he'll be very proud to see the message that we're going to try to convey onstage."

The singers also want to celebrate women and the Latino community with their performance. Lopez noted that for the first time two Latinas are headlining the halftime show.

"That statement alone to me is empowering. When I think of my daughter, when I think of all the little girls in the world, to be able to have that (and) to see that two Latinas (are) doing this in this country at this time, it's just very empowering for us," said Lopez, who was born in New York to Puerto Rican parents.

Sunday will mark the first halftime show to be orchestrated under the leadership of Jay-Z and Roc Nation thanks to their new entertainment partnership with the NFL. The singers said they are extremely excited but also a little nervous about the performance.

"I was up till 4 in the morning last night trying a pair of shorts and kind of tearing because they didn't fit right. So, it is nerve-racking but also exhilarating," Shakira said.

"It's definitely a ride," Lopez added. "The relieving factor is they're going to be people out there and it's our people cheering for us, fans, and it's in Miami," Shakira said as the audience cheered on loudly.

"And that's so, so special because Miami is a city full of energy, it's an important nest for the Latino community and it's been a viable city for me because a huge part of my career was forged here. And it's also it'll be on my birthday, too, so happy birthday to me."

AP

## Kenin's Melbourne heroics forged from turbulent family past

MELBOURNE

Sofia Kenin's father on Friday reflected on their journey from the Soviet Union all the way to Saturday's Australian Open final, saying it helped make his daughter the player she is today.

The 21-year-old Kenin, who plays Spain's Garbine Muguruza in the Melbourne final, has made a name for herself in the past fortnight for her aggression and tenacity.

Kenin -- who prefers to go by the name "Sonya" -- was born in Moscow but is a fiercely proud American.

The 14th seed, who stunned world number one Ashleigh Barty in the semi-finals, has a racquet decorated with the stars and stripes.

On the eve of the biggest match of her fast-burgeoning career, her father Alexander, who is also her coach, retold the family story.

He and wife Lena left the Soviet Union in 1987, initially for New York, returning to Russia for Sofia's birth in 1998 so a grandmother could help with the newborn.

The family would later settle in Florida and Kenin says her parents sacrificed themselves "so I could have the American dream".

Alexander said: "I wanted a better future for my kids and it (then Soviet Union) was

a completely different country (to what it is today).

"Nothing was allowed and we tried to get out for eight years.

"They controlled everything, we didn't see the world, you were just stuck."

Leaving friends and family behind and heading into the unknown of the United States was a wrench, said Alexander, and life was tough eking out a living in New York.

Alexander was a taxi driver by night and went to English and computer school by day.

"I don't think she experienced all the sacrifices we had to go through, but she knows about them," he said.

"It was very, very tough. I had to work at night, go to school in the morning. Driving in New York, speaking English on the (taxi) radio. I had no idea what they were saying.

"But it's amazing the things you do to survive. She knows about that and I think it made her tough."

Kenin, who will usurp Serena Williams as the top-ranked American if she wins the final, picked up a racquet for the first time at three-and-a-half, hitting balls in the driveway of their Florida home.

She never showed any interest in dolls, her father said. AFP

## Kenin v Muguruza - the 750-1 Australian Open final that nobody saw coming

MELBOURNE

SERENA Williams dominated talk before the Australian Open but Saturday's women's final is between unseeded Garbine Muguruza and unheralded Sofia Kenin -- a 750-1 longshot of a championship match that nobody predicted.

After a tournament of surprises, the 21-year-old Kenin can even supplant Williams as the top-ranked American if she manages another plot twist by beating Spain's Muguruza in Melbourne.

The 38-year-old American legend Williams was attempting to equal the record 24 Grand Slam titles of Australian Margaret Court, but she lost in the third round to China's Wang Qiang.

Reigning champion Naomi Osaka went out at the same stage to 15-year-old sensation Coco Gauff, who was promptly turfed out herself by fellow American Kenin.

Six of the top 10 seeds exited in the third round, seemingly blowing the tournament open for Australia's world number one Ashleigh Barty.

But step forward Moscow-born 14th seed Kenin once more, who showed remarkably few nerves in her first Grand Slam semi-final on Thursday as she broke home hearts in straight sets.

Even if she loses the final, Kenin will reach a career-high nine in the world, rising from her current position of 15th.

If she beats Muguruza -- and she did so in their only previous meeting, at the China Open in the autumn -- she will leapfrog Williams into seventh in the rankings.

"After this week, she is a top-10 player, she deserves that respect and she deserves the recognition," said the beaten Barty, the latest to succumb to the fiery Kenin.

"She's played an exceptional tournament, she's had an exceptional last 12 months."

Kenin won her first WTA title



Sofia Kenin - Garbine Muguruza

only 12 months ago in Hobart and added two more during the season with the determination and aggression that has become her trademark in the past fortnight.

"I've always had that, no matter who I'm playing, where I'm playing, I'm going to fight for it," said Kenin, who moved to the United States from Russia as a baby with her family.

- Muguruza roars back -

The 26-year-old Muguruza will be the next to try to tame Kenin. British bookmakers William Hill said the odds of a Kenin-Muguruza final were 750-1 before the Australian Open began.

They make Muguruza the favourite because she has experience of the biggest occasions, having won the French

Open in 2016 and Wimbledon in 2017.

But this is her first final in Melbourne and she is ranked 32 in the world after her form tailed off alarmingly in the past 18 months.

The Venezuelan-born Spaniard began her Australian Open campaign with a viral illness and lost the first set of her first match 6-0 to American qualifier Shelby Rogers.

But with the illness on its way out and with Conchita Martinez back as her coach as of November, Muguruza has hardly looked back.

Unseeded for the first time at a Grand Slam since 2014, Muguruza beat three top-10 seeds in reaching the final.

She fought back in both sets in her semi-final against

fourth-ranked Simona Halep to defeat her fellow former world number one 7-6 (10/8), 7-5.

Muguruza is not one for exuberant celebrations and she gives as little away in her post-match comments.

So it was left to Halep to say that the Spaniard has the quality to be the world's top-ranked player once more -- but with one caveat.

"If she can play every day like this, she can be number one for sure," said the 28-year-old Romanian, also a French Open and Wimbledon champion, following their hard-fought semi-final.

"But it's tough to do that. The consistency on tour -- it's the most important thing and the toughest one." AFP

## NBA changing All-Star Game format, adding a Kobe tribute

BY TIM REYNOLDS

KOBE Bryant's final jersey number will be something this year's NBA All-Stars play to reach.

The NBA announced major changes to the All-Star format on Thursday, turning every quarter into a mini-game for charity before an untimed final quarter with a target score that will decide which team wins. Scores will be reset -- back to 0-0 -- at the start of the second and third quarters, then restored to begin the fourth quarter.

That's where the tribute to Bryant and the No. 24 jersey he wore for the last decade of his NBA career comes into play. The team that wins the All-Star Game will be the first to reach a target score, determined by the total points the team in the lead scored in the first three quarters combined -- plus 24, the obvious nod to Bryant.

The NBA said there will be multiple tributes to Bryant, his 13-year-old daughter Gianna and the seven others who lost their lives in Sunday's helicopter crash throughout All-Star weekend, including the showcase game on Feb. 16. The target score is just one of them.

"We spent a lot of time considering the right target number to use for the fourth quarter," said Byron Spruell, the NBA's president for league operations. "Through the events of this week it became clear to us that the only appropriate number for this season's All-Star game is 24."

The target score is the latest addition to the NBA's quest to make the game more competitive, something that players have wanted for some time.

This is the third year where the NBA has had a format where captains -- it'll be the Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James and the Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo in those roles this year, just like last year -- get to draft their teams, something that will



In this March 28, 2016, file photo, Los Angeles Lakers forward Kobe Bryant (24) waves as he walks off the court during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Salt Lake City. Bryant, the 18-time NBA All-Star who won five championships and became one of the greatest basketball players of his generation during a 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers, died in a helicopter crash Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. (AP Photo)

take place next week.

"We've been very focused on making it more competitive, making it more exciting and making it fun," Spruell said. "And we've had a great collaboration with the union. For this year's game, we really focused on what new things we could do to make it a really competitive game where each quarter mattered in this case."

It'll matter to Chicago-area charities, which will benefit from however many quarters Team LeBron and Team Giannis win that night.

The team that has the most points after the first quarter will win \$100,000 for its charity. The same will apply to the second and third quarters. The scores get added for the fourth to set the target score -- for example, if the score is 100-95 at that point, then the team that wins the All-Star Game will be the first to reach 124.

The target score concept is something that the NBA has been considering since last summer, when National Basketball Players Association president Chris Paul -- a big fan of The Basketball Tournament, a winner-take-all \$2 million event composed mostly of college alumni teams -- reached out to say the league should explore the concept. The Basketball Tournament uses what is called the Elam Ending: the game clock is turned off at the first stoppage with 4:00 or less in the fourth quarter, and the target score there is eight points more than the leading score at the time.

Paul coached in the TBT last season.

"It almost takes us back to when we would play on the playground," Spruell said. "We'd go up to 15 or 21 or what have you. This time it'll be 24 with someone hitting a gamewinning shot."

There's at least \$500,000 for

charity at stake from the game alone. Each of the first three quarters is worth \$100,000 -- if there's a tie, the money rolls over to the next quarter -- and the final score is worth another \$200,000. If one team sweeps all four quarters, the other team will receive \$100,000 for its charity regardless.

All-Star weekend generates more than \$1 million over the three days for Chicago neighborhood non-profit organizations, through the game itself and other events held under the NBA Cares umbrella.

For now, this is a one-year change, though the NBA is hopeful that the quarter-score for charity element and the target-score ending become part of the All-Star Game on a long-term basis.

"If successful, I would imagine we keep it moving," Spruell said.

AP

## Klopp plays down record-breaking Liverpool as title looms near

LIVERPOOL

JURGEN Klopp steadfastly refuses to allow Liverpool's long-awaited Premier League title celebrations to start, but the opening month of 2020 has underlined the Reds' mastery over their rivals.

Reds boss Klopp could see his side move an astonishing 22 points clear of their closest rivals and defending champions Manchester City on the opening weekend of February, should they beat Southampton and Pep Guardiola's team lose at Tottenham 24 hours later.

But the German played down the mounting tally of statistical landmarks after his side became the quickest ever to rack up 70 points in a season following their comfortable 2-0 win at West Ham on Wednesday.

"I'm not too much concerned about records," he said following Wednesday's 2-0 win at West Ham.

"We had a (points) record at Dortmund (in 2011-12) and Bayern beat it the next season. I don't want to be boring. We just don't feel like that."

At the corresponding stage last season, after 24 games, Klopp enjoyed a five-point advantage over Guardiola although February and early March saw his side held to costly draws by West Ham, Manchester United and Everton as they were overhauled by City.

Since that goalless draw with their local rivals Liverpool have dropped just two points in the league, at Manchester United in October.

Southampton visit Anfield on Saturday seeking to become the first club since Leicester, just over a year previously, to take a point from Anfield.

- Liverpool procession -

The almost inevitable crowning of Liverpool as England's best is being eagerly awaited by the club's supporters given it's been

30 years since their side were champions of England.

Victory against the Saints would mark a 20th consecutive home league win for the Reds, matching City's run between 2011 and 2012, and leave them six home wins short of becoming the first club in Premier League history to record a perfect home record.

February could also see Liverpool set a new mark for most consecutive Premier League victories -- currently the 18 set by City in 2017.

Liverpool are also within sight of matching one of the game's most impressive statistical feats; the 49 unbeaten league games amassed by Arsenal's 'Invincibles' of 2003/04.

Klopp's current 41-game unbeaten run began after defeat against City 12 months back, and Liverpool could reach the 49-game mark against Guardiola's side on April 4.

Should they continue in their current imperious form, Liverpool are also destined to set a bigger winning margin than even that amassed by the 2017/18 City team.

City won that league title by 19 points, their 100 points leaving them with an 18-point cushion over second-placed Manchester United.

At the current rate of point collection being shown by City and Liverpool, the Merseysiders would end the season 30 points clear of their rivals with a final tally of 111 points.

It would comfortably set a new record for the highest points tally in Premier League history, currently the 100 which City set in 2018.

Such has been their phenomenal effort over the opening 24 games of the campaign that Liverpool now need to win 10 of their remaining 14 fixtures to match that magical 100-point mark.

AFP

## Inter's Premier League new boys settling nerves before derby showdown

MILAN

ANTONIO Conte's new Premier League recruits have been settling nerves at title-chasing Inter Milan who travel to Udinese on Sunday looking to end a three-match Serie A winless run before their derby clash against city rivals AC Milan.

Inter have brought in Christian Eriksen, Ashley Young and Victor Moses to keep the pressure on leaders Juventus as the Chinese-owned club target a first Scudetto since 2010.

The pace of the season had taken its toll, however, and Inter are on a run of three consecutive 1-1 league draws against Atalanta, Lecce and Cagliari. Lautaro Martinez was given a two-match ban for his late sending off against the Sardinians, and will miss Sunday's game in Udine and the derby against AC Milan the following weekend.

Conte's side are three points behind eight-time reigning champions Juventus, who slipped up last weekend with a 2-1 defeat at Napoli.

But they have recruited Tottenham midfielder Eriksen, 27, Nigerian Moses, 29, on loan from Chelsea and defender Young from Manchester United.

The trio have already helped Inter reach the Italian Cup semi-final with a win over Fiorentina at the San Siro midweek. "When this opportunity came up I took it right away," Young, 34, told Sky Sports Italia.

"Along with Eriksen and Moses we come from the Premier League and this is an opportunity to experience something different, both as a game and lifestyle. "It's important for a player to face new challenges."

Former Chelsea boss Conte had already signed Romelu Lukaku from United last summer and also have Alexis Sanchez on loan from the club.

"He's a fantastic coach, he has won trophies, he has the ambition to win again and I also want to do it here," added Young.

Eighth-placed AC Milan host Hellas Verona, two points below in ninth, on the cusp of a Zlatan Ibrahimovic-inspired revival.

Milan have taken ten points in four games since Ibrahimovic's return to the club this month, and the Swede scored during the week to book a place in the Italian Cup semi-final.

Juventus missed the chance to open up a six-point lead at the top of the table with their shock defeat to coach Maurizio Sarri's struggling former club Napoli.

The Turin giants host 13th-placed Fiorentina, who held them to a goalless draw in Tuscany in September.

Lazio have a chance to close the gap as they are just five points behind Juventus and two adrift of Inter, before hosting struggling SPAL.

Lazio's 11-match winning streak ended in last weekend's derby draw to Roma, but Simone Inzaghi's side have a game in hand.

Roma travel to Sassuolo trying to hold the final Champions League berth ahead of Atalanta, one point behind, in fifth after thumping Torino 7-0 last weekend.

The Bergamo side host Genoa with Torino travelling south to Lecce. Napoli, in tenth, visit Sampdoria on Monday boosted after last weekend's win and with defenders Kalidou Koulibaly and Nikola Milenkovic and forward Dries Mertens back from injuries.

One to watch

Cristiano Ronaldo can push his scoring streak to nine consecutive league games. The Portuguese superstar, who this week became the first Instagram user to have 200 million followers, has found the net 12 times in his last eight Serie A games.

AFP

## Liverpool out of sight as top-four scrap takes centre stage

LONDON

LIVERPOOL can equal Manchester City's record of 20 consecutive home Premier League wins on a weekend that pits six top-four contenders against each other in the scramble for Champions League spots.

Jurgen Klopp's men, champions in all but name after 23 wins in 24 matches, will lock horns with inform Southampton at Anfield on Saturday with the chance to extend their lead over City to 22 points.

Pep Guardiola's City travel to face Tottenham while third-placed Leicester host Chelsea and Manchester United take on Wolves in an intriguing set of fixtures.

AFP picks out some of the main talking points ahead of this weekend's matches.

Will Fernandes be missing spark for Man Utd?

Manchester United finally got the Bruno Fernandes signing over the line this week and long-suffering fans will be desperately hoping he can be the key to unlocking opposition defences.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's resources have been stretched thin with injuries to Paul Pogba and Scott McTominay but they have struggled all season, particularly in midfield.

"Bruno's goals and assists stats speak for themselves," said the Norwegian boss. "He will be a fantastic addition to our team and he will help us push on in the second part of the season."

Leicester reset after League Cup pain

Leicester boss Brendan Rodgers would have dearly loved to have taken his team to Wembley for the League Cup final but they came up short this week against Aston Villa.

Rodgers said Saturday's match against Chelsea would galvanise his disappointed players as they push for a top-four place.

Despite their recent wobble, third-placed Leicester still have a sizeable 14-point lead over Manchester United, in fifth spot.

"No matter how low it is, you have to get on with it," said Rodgers, referring to Tuesday's defeat by Villa. "It's the life of a player. If you're going to compete, you're going to have disappointments, so you have to get over them quickly."

"It's all building a great resilience in the squad. Chelsea at King Power Stadium at the weekend, it's



Liverpool are closing in fast on the Premier League title (AFP Photo)

a great game for us really, after a game like that."

Pep v Mourinho

When Pep Guardiola and Jose Mourinho pitched up in Manchester in 2016, the city briefly became the centre of the football universe but the build-up to their latest clash has been decidedly low-key.

With so much focus on runaway leaders Liverpool, Sunday's meeting between the two managerial greats is taking place out of the limelight.

Guardiola's second-placed team are on the brink of conceding their Premier League title and Mourinho is battling to secure a top-four place for Tottenham after an inconsistent run of results.

The City boss is relaxed about his players' motivation, even though the title is out of sight, calling them "incredible".

Mourinho's team are in a dogfight to

finish fourth and look short of firepower without injured forward Harry Kane, but they have started to rebuild following the departure of Christian Eriksen to Inter Milan. New-signing Steven Bergwijn has been handed Eriksen's number 23 shirt and will give Mourinho more attacking options as he bids to revive Spurs' season.

Southampton reap rewards of loyalty An unlikely victory at Anfield would lift Southampton to the fringes of the Champions League race and put extra gloss on an astonishing turnaround under Ralph Hasenhuttl.

Southampton had a dispiriting start to their Premier League campaign, including a humiliating 9-0 defeat by Leicester.

But now they are sitting comfortably in mid-table, eight points off the relegation places, and looking up rather than down.

"It would be normal that we lose (against

Liverpool) but this season is anything but normal for us," said Hasenhuttl. "Not normal in the positive and not normal in the negative way so I don't expect a normal game from our side at the weekend."

"We know about the difficulties of this challenge but we need this challenge... I want to see how far we are and how well we can compete against a top team," he added.

Fixtures Today (1500 GMT unless stated)

Leicester v Chelsea (1230), Bournemouth v Aston Villa, Crystal Palace v Sheffield United, Liverpool v Southampton, Newcastle v Norwich, Watford v Everton, West Ham v Brighton, Manchester United v Wolves (1730)

Tomorrow Burnley v Arsenal (1400), Tottenham v Manchester City (1630)

## Relentless Real Madrid a reminder of what might have been for Atletico

MADRID

REAL Madrid were supposedly in a mess last summer and Atletico Madrid about to challenge for the title but each have defied expectations ahead of their meeting at the Santiago Bernabeu on Saturday.

With Real marching to the top of La Liga and Atletico languishing in fifth, the city derby this weekend is less a contest of rivals and more a moderately awkward assignment for the now title favourites.

A local derby can have a rhythm of its own, as shown by Espanyol in 20th holding Barcelona in first to a 2-2 draw earlier this month.

But Atletico will need a similar reversal of form, after four games without a win, in which they have lost to Eibar, drawn at home to Leganes - now themselves last in La Liga - and been knocked out of the Copa del Rey by Cultural Leonesa of Segunda B.

And as Atleti have floundered, Real have flourished, extending an unbeaten run to 20 matches, during which they have conceded only nine goals and scored 45.

In term of competitions, Real have won the Spanish Super Cup, pulled three points clear at the top of La Liga and eased into the cup quarter-finals, all without the injured Eden Hazard.

"We are top of the table again after being there a long time ago," said captain Sergio Ramos. "We have to keep going."

When Zinedine Zidane returned as coach almost a year ago, many questioned not only the timing but the wisdom of retaking charge of an ageing squad, seemingly on an unerring trajectory of decline.

Sceptics were initially proven right as results and performances failed to improve and when a disjointed transfer window fed into a 7-3 pre-season defeat to Atletico, the talk was less about winning trophies and more about Zidane losing his job.

Yet Zidane weathered the storm, his management by calm and charm recovering the players and restoring the steel that made Real Madrid such a fierce opponent when they were last crowned Spanish champions in 2017.

"Defensively what we are doing we are doing very well, it is our strength," Zidane said last weekend.

Their transformation began at the back, where Atletico once owned the reputation for the most stubborn rearguard in Europe but in recent months even that defining characteristic has left them.

- Muted displays -

In some ways, that was part of the plan, a new era centred instead on Joao Felix, where solidity in defence would give way a little to freedom of expression in attack.

Yet Felix, bought for 126 million euros, has only shown glimpses of his talent, a series of muted displays suggesting the 20-year-old was not ready to carry the weight of change on his shoulders.

"Every player has a different personality, every player needs a different amount of time," coach



Diego Simeone - Zinedine Zidane

Gwiji by David Chikoko



# SPORT

NBA changing All-Star Game format, adding a Kobe tribute

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 18



South Africa's senior women cricket team. ICC

## South Africa earn direct ticket to 2021 Women World Cup

HAMILTON

SOUTH Africa have become the third automatic qualifiers to the 2021 women's World Cup, to be held in New Zealand, apart from the home side.

South Africa got there after their 3-0 sweep over New Zealand, and joined Australia and England as the direct entrants.

One more team will earn a direct berth at the competition based on the 2017-2020 Women's Championship points table, and the remaining three will have to make the cut through a qualifier in Sri Lanka to be played in July.

India and Pakistan are currently just below the direct qualifiers - and New Zealand are at No. 6 - with West Indies and Sri Lanka at the bottom.

The 2021 tournament will be South Africa's seventh appearance at a World Cup, since making their debut in 1993, and they will be aiming for their first final appearance after finishing in the top four in 2000 and 2017.

Since the 2017 edition, they have won series against Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and now New Zealand, drawn a series against Pakistan and lost to England and India, both home and away. Their next assignment is at home against Australia in March.

Following the series in New Zealand, several players have also made good ground on the ICC rankings, with Lizelle Lee sixth on the batting chart after topping the run-scorers' list and Marizanne Kapp and Shabnim Ismail at No. 2 and No. 4 on the bowlers' list.

While those players are more than likely to be involved in the World Cup, the coaching staff that guided them there may not be. The contracts of Hilton Moreeng and his associates will end in April, and it's not clear if they will be subjected to the same review process as the rest of the country's cricket structures.

Acting CSA director of cricket Graeme Smith, who is expected to take on the role permanently following an IPL commentary stint, told media last week that the women's set-up would be reviewed too, along with the Under-19 and domestic set-ups, as part of an exercise to develop a plan for cricket to progress.

Moreeng has been in charge of the women's team since December 2012 and has taken them to two 50-over World Cups and three T20 World Cups, with the T20 World Cup in Australia set to be his fourth. Before that, South Africa play five T20Is in New Zealand.

## Tanzanite Queens to face Uganda test in 2020 FIFA Women World Cup qualifiers

By Guardian Reporter

NATIONAL U-20 women soccer team 'Tanzanite Queens' have an opportunity to make certain of their progression to the first round of the 2020 African U-20 Women's World Cup qualifying tournament, give they lock horns with Uganda U-20 women squad in the return leg of the preliminary round in Kampala today.

In the first leg duel, which took place in Dar es Salaam last weekend, Tanzanite Queens notched 2-1 victory over Uganda U-20 women side.

Winger Diana Msewa and forward Opa Clement scored Tanzanite Queens' goals, putting the side in pole position in the preliminary

round clash.

Uganda U-20 women team had earlier gone ahead via forward Juliet Nalukenge's strike.

Despite boasting of victory in the first leg, Tanzania Queens have an uphill task in their pursuit of qualification for the first round, given their opponents proved to be hard nut to crack.

Tanzanite Queens' head coach, Shime, was optimistic the team has every reason to emerge victorious in the clash and ultimately book a place in the first round.

The Tanzania girls travelled to Kampala on Thursday and they were set to feature in training session yesterday evening to stay in great shape.

"We are 2-1 up and, for that mat-

ter, we will opt for a game approach, which will see our team attack and defend well, with the aim of putting our opponents at bay and seek victory to sail through to the following round," he disclosed.

"We have prepared well, we have different approach for this game because it is an away duel, you have to prepare well if you are to emerge victorious."

"We have every reason to win today's clash, in football, though, there are results that one can hardly expect."

Should Tanzanite Queens see their opponents off, the Tanzania girls will take on the aggregate winners of a preliminary round clash pitting Senegal against Sierra Leone in the first round of the continental qualifiers.

If Tanzanite Queens, again, make the most of their opportunity in the next round by bundling their opponents out of the stage, they will come up against the aggregate winners of the first round game pitting Guinea Bissau and Ghana.

Ghana are one of the continent's three teams which have got bye into the first round on the basis of their better showing in previous continental competitions.

Nigeria and Cameroon are the other squads earning a bye into the first round of the continental qualifiers.

The 2020 African U-20 Women's World Cup qualifying tournament is the 10th edition of the African U-20 Women's World Cup Qualifying Tournament, the biennial international youth football competition.

The showpiece has been organized by the Confederation of African Football (CAF) to determine which Women U-20 national teams from Africa qualify for the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup.

Players born on or after 1 January 2000 are eligible to compete in the tournament.

Two teams qualify from this tournament for the 2020 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup, to be hosted by Costa Rica and Panama, as the CAF representatives.



Tanzania's U-20 women football squad 'Tanzanite Queens' defender, Protasia Mbunda (L), celebrates with winger, Diana Msewa, after the latter had scored for the team in the first leg of the preliminary round of 2020 African U-20 Women's World Cup qualifying tournament against Uganda U-20 women team, which took place in Dar es Salaam last weekend. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

## Players honour Bryant at TPC Scottsdale's iconic 16th

ARIZONA

Golfers got the chance to honour Kobe Bryant at the Phoenix Open's iconic par-three 16th hole on Thursday, with Justin Thomas and Tony Finau among those donning jerseys bearing the basketball great's number.

Bryant died along with his 13-year-old daughter Gianna and seven others when the helicopter they were travelling in crashed in foggy weather on a hillside northwest of Los Angeles on Sunday.

Finau donned Bryant's number eight yellow and purple Los Angeles Lakers jersey and wore shoes of the same colours.

"Tony, Tony, Tony," the gallery at the stadium hole chanted as Finau hit his shot.

Finau, who shot a two-under-par 69, said he had been "very inspired" by Bryant growing up.

"I remember growing up watching and I would always (ask) what time are the Lakers playing?" Finau told reporters.

"And Kobe was always going to do something special, it seemed like. So when he retired, I feel like I lost a part of my life.

"I only own one NBA jersey, so (that) gives you an idea of how much Kobe meant to me and just being a Laker fan in general. So I brought it out on 16 and that was quite fun."

Max Homa also wore a Lakers jersey, number 24, the other number Bryant played in during his storied two-decade career.

Thomas opted for something a little different, a red and white jersey of Bryant's former Lower Merion High School in Philadelphia.

"There's only one tournament all year you can put a jersey on and hit a shot and the timing worked out to be here, so it was a no-brainer for me," said the world number four after shooting a 68 to trail leader Wyndham Clark by seven shots.

"I've had it for probably four or five years.

"I have a lot of jerseys. It's always been one of my favorite because Kobe has always been my favorite and not many people have a Lower Merion jersey. A true fan knows what it actually is."

REUTERS

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

DOCTOR, I WANT MY BREASTS TO LOOK BIG



WHY DON'T YOU WEAR... GLASSES?