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TANZANIA

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Court heaped with 40m/- extra cash in Msigwa fine

JPM helps family with 38m/- as Chadema pays out total fine

By Guardian Reporter

FEW hours after news went out that President John Magufuli had topped up the 2m/- contributed by Iringa Urban MP Peter Msigwa's family with a generous 38m/- to enable his release from remand prison, Chadema headquarters announced it had already made the payment.

The story went that after making efforts to raise the 40m/- fine slapped on the



Chadema legislators Esther Matiko for Tarime Urban (L, foreground) and Halima Mdee for Kawe (to her left) are welcomed by supporters yesterday shortly after arriving at the opposition party's headquarters at Kinondoni in Dar es Salaam following their release from prison.. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala



Sorting out retirees' cycle of poverty, stress - and early death

By Aisia Rweyemamu

EMPLOYERS in the country have been called upon to invest in retirement plan education for workers to save them from life of poverty, stress and early death that befall retirees in Tanzania.

Speaking at a workshop on life in retirement in Dar es Salaam yesterday, experts on the subject noted that even the most educated retirees who held key

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President Magufuli is our relative because our uncle is married to his daughter.

politician on Tuesday by the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's court, the family managed only 2m/- but remembered that they had another 'relative' who could help out, namely Dr Magufuli.

"President Magufuli is our relative because our uncle is married to his daughter. He gave us 38m/-. We have already paid the fine and now heading to Segerea (remand prison) to obtain his release," a man who identified himself as Benet Msigwa, the lawmaker's brother, said at the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's court.

The 38m/- was reportedly handed over to Msigwa's relatives in Dar Salaam by the Director of Presidential Communications at the State House, Gerson Msigwa.

But what the lawmaker's elder brother did not clarify is why the 'family' chose to raise funds for the MP separate from the collective initiative that was launched by Chadema after the sentencing on Tuesday.

Three female legislators namely Kawe MP Halima Mdee, Esther Matiko (Tarime Urban) and Esther Bulaya (Bunda) were freed yesterday with the party insisting that efforts were underway to get the

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DPP collects 14bn/- via plea bargaining

By Guardian Reporter

DIRECTOR of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Biswalo Mganga yesterday said that his office has so far collected 13.5bn/- in plea bargaining with accused persons since the arrangement was introduced late last year.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Mganga said the amount has been paid to state by 357 people who were facing various economic crime charges who pleaded for the lesser penalty of repaying the government.

The DPP said that although

The agreements state that if the freed persons violate the conditions, my office can take appropriate action against them

the accused persons have been released after depositing various amounts of money, there are clauses that re-

strict their actions.

"If the released accused persons violate the terms of the agreement, my office has powers to resume charges against them," he said.

Although it is his office that negotiates and agrees to the release of accused persons, the agreement involves the courts which are party to the process, he explained.

"The agreements state that if the freed persons violate the conditions, my office can take appropriate action against them," he stated.

This is a significant increase

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COVID-19: ATCL halts its Mumbai route, stalls China flights inaugural

By Guardian Reporter

AIR Tanzania Co. Ltd (ATCL) has suspended its Mumbai route as well as postponed scheduled maiden flights to China over the spread of coronavirus.

The national carrier said in a statement yesterday that the Mumbai route has been temporarily halted due to suspension of all visas that were issued to people of other

We have also updated our cancellation, rebooking and refund policy to all Air Tanzania passengers holding our tickets on the mentioned route until 15th April

nationalities by India until 15th April 2020.

"We have also updated our cancellation, rebooking and refund policy to all Air Tanzania passengers holding our tickets on the mentioned route until 15th April," the statement said.

State-run Air Tanzania planned to begin charter flights to China next month ahead of scheduled

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Court heaped with 40m/- extra cash in Msigwa fine

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relevant amounts to obtain the release of the party's male convicts.

Speaking at a press conference called as the news of the president's intervention spread, Chadema's director of communications, ideology, publicity and foreign affairs John Mrema stated that the party was the first to settle the whole amount, namely 40m/- for Msigwa's total fines.

"We have already made full payments for Msigwa, John Mnyika and Salum Mwalimu. We are only working on procedures to release them," said Mrema, displaying a bank deposit slip.

Mrema's statement meant that the party's cadres whose bills were not yet settled by the time of yesterday's briefing were national chairman Freeman Mbowe (70m/-) and Tarime Rural MP John Heche (40m/-).

Mbowe and six other party cadres were convicted by the court on sedition charges and fined varying amounts or go to jail for five months each. They were found guilty along-

side the party's immediate former secretary general Dr Vincent Mashinji who recently decamped to the ruling party. Dr Mashinji was released a day later after CCM paid his 30m/- fine.

They were found guilty in the sedition and incitement charges, the prosecution saying they arranged and took part in an illegal rally, occasioning the killing of a National Institute of Transport student, Akwilina Akwilini in February 2018.

The total fine stood at 350m/- but Chadema remained with 320m/- after Dr Mashinji's 30m/- was paid by his new party.

As of Wednesday, Chadema said the fundraising campaign it embarked on soon after the sentencing had collected 234m/- in mobile transfers, bank deposits and cash.

Chadema cadre and former Nyamagana MP Ezekiah Wenje said at yesterday's press briefing that the party was still in need of 90m/-, as an earlier snag in mobile money transfer option had been resolved.

Sorting out retirees' cycle of poverty, stress, early death

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positions in the public and private sectors plunge into frustration and poverty after leaving working life due to lack of an effective retirement plan.

Speaking at the event which took place at the Tanzania Library Services (TLS), Dr Godson Lema from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training said there is a worrying trend whereby even well educated people end up in poverty after retirement, signaling that the problem is nearing crisis proportions.

"A lot of retirees including professors are living in stress and poverty; some of them die early because of this. The problem is that they did not prepare themselves nor did their employers prepare them," he asserted.

Dr Lema recommended that employers take this responsibility to have in place a compulsory training programme for employees on how to prepare for retirement even if it means workers' pay is deducted to foot the bills for the training.

"Such training should take place at least 10 years before retirement," he specified.

Salvatory Matemu from the Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF) cited another problem that drives retirees to poverty, depression and at worst death -lack of savings.

"Their only hope becomes social security deposits; they get tempted to induce fast-tracking of payment of benefits and end up being conned in most cases," he stated.

Recently, there have been media reports in cases whereby retirees -after

being advised by friends, relatives or con artists -inject colossal sum if not all of their retirement benefits in bad investments and find themselves penniless.

Dr Mkumbi Mitula who has authored a book on consequences of not planning for retirement, said he has researched on the matter and realized that most Tanzanians rely on what he termed as the traditional social security system instead of a scientific arrangement.

He elaborated that the traditional system includes spending huge chunks of resources in supporting extended families and hope of returning and live happily in the village after retirement.

"Unfortunately, things have changed considerably. Relatives do not help as before and life in rural areas is as expensive as urban settings in most parts of the country," he explained.

Dr Mitula also challenged social security schemes to not only educate members on the importance of remitting contributions but telling them to have other retirement plans, including other savings and investments.

"My advice is that retirement plan education be included in our education curriculum so that employees are alert on day one at work," he emphasized.

The author donated 250 copies of the book that will be stocked in regional libraries run by TLS countrywide.

TLS acting director general Asha Ngatila expressed hope that the books will help change the mindset of Tanzanians about work and retirement for the better.



Frédéric Clavier (L), the French Ambassador to Tanzania, with East African Community Secretary General Liberat Mfumukeko in Arusha yesterday during the signing of an agreement on the funding and implementation of a study on the modalities of having French as one of the EAC's official languages. Photo courtesy of French Embassy

COVID-19: ATCL halts Mumbai route, stalls China flights inaugural

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direct flights to the key Asian tourist market.

Earlier, ATCL Managing Director Ladislaus Matindi told journalists that the company had already received permits to begin scheduled flights to China via Bangkok.

The decision will cost the company about up to three percent of projected annual revenue, he elaborated.

ATCL was monitoring the situation and changes will be made in case of alteration of patterns in the way the disease is spreading glob-

ally, he stated.

"We will now have to take precautions. The launch of our first flights to China will be made having in mind key issues to safeguard the safety of our passengers."

Matindi was launching the ATCL staff council, a vital organ in the management of the company.

Tourism is the biggest source of foreign exchange in Tanzania, primed on wildlife safaris and beach holidays.

Up to 1.5m tourists visit Tanzania at present, meanwhile as the national carrier is challenged

with poor infrastructure, hindering ATCL to fly at night to some domestic destinations like Dodoma and Mbeya.

The management was also analyzing the situation in India where coronavirus was spreading.

Atashasta Ndiye, the Deputy Minister for Works, Transport and Communications said the outbreak of coronavirus has an impact on air transport globally. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) projects that airlines may lose up to \$113 billion, a 19per cent drop from expected business

turnover.

The government had no plan to block any flights into the country as measures to contain the disease but it was intensifying screening in all entry points, he affirmed.

A recent study led by a French researcher listed Tanzania as among countries that have high and comparable importation risks of the coronavirus on account of intensity of trade interactions.

The study underlined that varying levels of preparedness to face the threat of an outbreak and high levels of vulnerability character-

ize the country and a number of equally exposed countries having close links with China.

Egypt, Algeria and South Africa showed the highest risk for COVID-19 importation from China but had low vulnerability levels and moderate to high preparedness levels, the study indicated.

Egypt was the first African country to confirm a case of the disease, and since then others had identified isolated cases. But no generalized spread had occurred in Egypt, South Africa or Kenya where a similar case was reported earlier.



James Kaji, Commissioner General of the Drugs Control and Enforcement Authority, briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the praise the UN has heaped on Tanzania courtesy of the headway the country has made in the war on drug trafficking and abuse. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Bashe directs banks to open accounts for cotton, tobacco and cashew nut farmers

By Guardian Correspondent, Chato

THE country's major financial institutions have been directed to finalise registration of bank accounts for cotton, tobacco and cashew nuts farmers before May this year.

The decision aims to simplify payments to farmers, remove security hazards and botheration from unfaithful

accountants regarding their money.

Speaking here at the closing of the forum on enabling opportunities in agriculture, livestock keeping and fisheries to more than 200 youth participants from Shinyanga, Geita and Kagera regions, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Hussein Bashe asked financial institutions

to ensure they open up bank accounts for farmers that will incorporate mobile banking services via their mobile phones without any charge before the coming crop season starts.

Bashe's directives followed the forum's endorsement of 14 resolutions aiming to raise the country economy through agriculture.

"The government plan in incorporating banks is to identify farmers, assist them and ensure they develop their own economic wellbeing through agriculture. We want to erase the concept that a person engaged in farming is a poor person, we want young people to consider agriculture as an opportunity for them to kick out poverty," Bashe stated.

DPP collects 14bn/- via plea bargaining

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from the 12.3bn/- Mganga reported to have collected by February 10th, collected from 341 defendants in 104 criminal cases.

He was speaking at an event where the government announced the nationalisation of money and properties amassed through criminal means.

Plea bargaining is an arrangement between the prosecutor and the defendant whereby the defendant pleads guilty to the main charge in exchange for a more lenient sentence as well as dropping other charges.

One of the accused persons released on the arrangement is journalist Erick Kabendera who regained his freedom last month after spending seven months at Segerea remand prison in the city.

The journalist was fined 172m/- (\$74,000) for tax evasion, which he agreed to pay in six months and 100m/- (\$43,000) for money laundering.

Senior Resident Magistrate Janeth Mtega also ordered him to pay 250,000/- (\$108) for his release.

In September last year, Mganga directed that remanded economic crimes suspects who wish to be considered for plea-bargaining submit their written requests through the Prisons Commissioner to reach the DPP's Office.

This was after President John Magufuli directed that people facing non-bailable economic sabotage charges be set free under certain conditions.

The president's directive came a few weeks after the passing into law by Parliament, of the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No 4) Bill.



CRDB Bank Plc managing director Abdulmajid Nsekela pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday addressing some of the bank's employees at the inauguration of a mentoring programme meant to empower women to gainfully take up positions of leadership. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

TRA in Morogoro collects 92 pc of revenue target for 2019/2020

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

TANZANIA Revenue Authority (TRA) in Morogoro region has until February this year collected more than 63.6bn/- equivalent to 92 percent of the 2019/2020 financial year's collection target of 69.3bn/-.

The collection reflects an increase of 8bn/- compared to previous year's collection of 55bn/- during the same period.

Morogoro Region TRA Manager, Emmanuel Maro revealed this yesterday when submitting performance report to the committee of TRA stakeholders' experts in the region. He said the monies are from internal collections and charges including levies, import duty, property tax and signboards levy.

He said in the 2019/2020 financial year the region set a target to collect 67bn/- from its internal sources and managed to collect 60.8bn/- . In regard to import duty, the region targeted to col-

lect 1.4bn/- but collected 1bn/- while for signboards levy the target was to collect 779.1m/- but the amount collected was 980m/-.

Maro said that TRA aims to manage and ensure every business person pays tax voluntarily whereas in financial year 2019/2020, the authority registered 27,318 new taxpayers, an increase of 51 percent compared to 22,227 taxpayers registered in the 2018/2019 fiscal year.

He said TRA will continue to take various measures to ensure traders use the electric fiscal devices (EFD) appropriately. He said they will embark on educating traders on proper usage of the devices.

Speaking on behalf of Morogoro traders, Hussein Chalela asked TRA to intervene in the collection of service levy by Morogoro municipal council since they are charged 0.3 percent instead of 0.1 percent depending on the type of business one operates.

He said people are reluctant to pay service levy since the tax is not reflected

anywhere, insisting to file a court case to protest paying the tax.

Responding on trader's query, Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA) Chairman, Mhazini Nyanza called upon traders in the region to be tolerant as authorities were working to find solution on the matter.

NOTICE

This is to inform all full Members that the Annual General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 25 March, 2020** at the Institute.

For Agenda please refer the Notice Board.

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VP appeals for robust strategies for alternative energy to curb deforestation

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

VICE President Samia Suluhu Hassan has called upon Tanzania Energy Platform (TEP) to put in place robust strategies that bring sustainable alternative energy so as to reduce tree cutting—the main cause of environmental destruction.

The VP was speaking at

the closing of TEP meeting held in Zanzibar that brought together institutes of higher learning majoring on energy and institutions from the private sectors that produce such energy.

She said environmental destruction was still rampant including tree cutting for fuel especially in rural areas that welcomes desertification.

She added that the only way to fight such destruction is for energy experts to invent sustainable alternative energy for the national interest.

She said according to report by the World Bank in 2017 more than 48,389 hectares of forest land are destroyed for wood fuel and other human activities.

"That is a huge destruction

level of forest land and you experts must come up with a solution to save the country from becoming a desert," she said.

Suluhu, who is patron of TEP made up by the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) and other science education institutions including Karume Science Institute in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam

Institute of Technology in collaboration with Dutch Universities Association hailed the Dutch government for its help in developing the energy sector in the country.

She said she was pleased to see TEP's stress in gender equality by enabling women students to take up Master's Degree in the energy and gas sector.

For his part, the Representative from the Dutch Embassy Rogier Venstreaten said his country is at the forefront to see Tanzania fight environmental destruction by the need to have alternative energy for the nation's interest.

He said that is why the women are given priority in training for various degree courses in energy.

"In its strategic plans TEP stresses gender equality to see women are fully incorporated to ensure alternative energy is employed to arrest the rate of environmental destruction," he said.

Representative from Dutch Universities Association that are in the project Dr Robeit Hack said students from the universities in the country

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Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority CEO Cyprian Luhemeja (2nd-R) briefs members of the Dawasa board and their chairman, General (rtd) Davis Mwamunyange, on a tour of the agency's new offices at Ubungu in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Youth advised to engage in beekeeping business

By Guardian Reporter, Chato

YOUTH have been advised to come out and start engaging in beekeeping to improve their welfare and to be certain of employment.

The call was given by Sambusa Jonathan from Singida Commercial Beekeepers Association when sharing his experience and achievement during a youth conference on agriculture held in Chato district, Geita region on Wednesday.

Jonathan said their group is made up of youth who are university graduates of Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) engaging in beekeeping and processing of bee products.

He mentioned bees' products as to include bees' poison, honey, beeswax and modern beehives for beekeeping.

He told the conference participants that the market for the bee products including honey is available within and outside the country.

"Our group has 16,000 beehives out of which 15,800 are of bees groups and each hive has the capacity to produce one liter of honey every after six months," he said.

Speaking at the gathering, Director of Sokoine University Graduates Entrepreneurs Cooperative (SUGECO) Revocatus Kimario hailed the youths for their creativity to generate income and called on others to emulate them.

He said youth in Lake Zone regions have good opportunities due to the proximity of forests and availability of water sources to start beekeeping business.

A participant, Revelian Ngaiza said the Ministry of Agriculture and that of Livestock and Fisheries have been stressing on youth to establish groups to easily access capital loans from banks and financial institutions.

Maige Ikumbo is the owner of Ikumbo Enterprises based in Chato, he said the company has benefited much from raw hides and skins processing business.

He urged young people to venture into the business since the market is available. He said processed hides and skins can be used to make various leather products such as shoes, belts, sandals and handbags.

Ikumbo said the factory has the capacity to process skins from four slaughtered cows.

He said the raw skin is also at 500/- each while a single processed skin can fetch up to 300,000/-.

He advised fellow youth to make decisions and start engaging in the business as they can earn a lot of money within a short period of time.

"I was a carpentry; I abandoned the job to start processing raw hides. My business has grown with a good base of customers and a 20m/- capital," he noted.

Wanted: Early diagnosis, interventions for children born with Down syndrome

By Getrude Mbago

THE government has been urged to come up with a special strategy to promote early diagnosis and interventions for the children born with 'Down syndrome defects,' so as to support their early childhood development and thus enable them contribute well in the country's development.

Down syndrome is a genetic disorder caused when abnormal cell division results in an extra full or partial copy of chromosome. It is primarily recognized from its distinctive characteristics such as mental retardation, distinguishing facial features, and other traits.

Addressing journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday, founder of a not for profit organisation

'Pearl of People with Down Syndrome Foundation-Tanzania' Mony Petit said that the children should not be neglected as they are still capable of participating in various activities in the society.

"We are appealing for the government to create units in hospitals that will be monitoring all newly born infants to find out if they have the characteristics of

the defect, then educate parents on how to take good care of the children for their proper development," she said.

Petit who also have a child with the defect noted that if well raised and empowered, majority of the children can deliver their best in the area of hand-crafts, music, dance and hotel industry.

She said that in most cases,

having a Down syndrome child is considered as a curse or as a result of witchcraft something which leads to stigma.

For his part, Rahim Nakupanga, a midwife, also stressed that more investment should be put in capacitating the group with alternative education programmes to enable them be more active.

"Health attendants can detect

children with the chromosome disorders as early as during birth, this is where we should start investing more, we have to ensure that early diagnosis is conducted, parents are told the truth so that they can be able to make proper care of the child," he said.

Health experts say that Down syndrome can affect a person's cognitive ability and physical

growth, cause mild to moderate developmental issues, and present a higher risk of some health problems.

Statistics show that the estimated incidence of Down syndrome is between 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 1,100 live births worldwide. Each year approximately 3,000 to 5,000 children are born with this chromosome disorder.

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TENDER NUMBER: PRQ20190996

TradeMark (Trade and Markets) East Africa (TMEA) is an aid-for-trade organisation that was established in 2010, with the aim of growing prosperity in East Africa through increased trade. TMEA operates on a not-for-profit basis and is funded by the development agencies of the following countries: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Union, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom and United States of America. TMEA works closely with regional intergovernmental organisations, including the African Union (AU), East Africa Community (EAC), Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), national governments, the private sector and civil society organisations.

TMEA is seeking Expressions of interest for a technical adviser to support implementation of TMEA trade and logistics cluster programme in East Africa.

The Expression of Interest (EOI) document can be obtained at <https://www.trademarkea.com/procurement/>. All queries quoting the above Tender Title and Number should be emailed to procurement@trademarkea.com.

The closing date for submission of the expressions of interest is on **Friday, 03 April 2020 at 11.00 A.m. (Kenya Time)**. Only successful applicants will be contacted.

Interested and qualified firms and individuals must submit their expressions of interest through TMEA's mail box using the email address, procurement@trademarkea.com. The maximum size of each email with attachments should not exceed **5 MB**.

TMEA cannot answer any query relating to this tender **7 days or less prior to the submission deadline**

21566001



Imran Karmali (R), Director of the Kibaha-based GF Vehicle Assemblies Ltd, briefs Parliamentary Industries, Trade and Environment Committee members at the firm's factory yesterday. The facility is expected to start operations soon. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Global firm launches plant-based beverage

By Guardian Reporter

AS more people include plant-based alternatives in their diet, global food and beverage processor—Nestlé has responded to the demand by launching plant-based versions of some of its popular brands.

A statement released yesterday by the company said Nestlé Australia is the latest to introduce plant-based version of Milo, its famed powder that was first introduced in 1934.

The new Milo replaces milk powder with soy and oats. The core ingredients are the same as the original Milo - malt, barley and cocoa. The Milo development team worked hard to make sure it kept the same unmistakable choc-malt taste and iconic crunch that Australians have grown up with.

The product is also lower in sugar compared to original Milo and has a combination of vitamins and minerals to support effective energy release. The new Milo gives people a plant-based option, alongside the original, reduced-sugar and extra protein versions.

Trevor Clayton, head of the Dairy business unit at Nestlé, said: "People are looking to vary their diets with more plant-based options, including to lower their environmental footprint and for health reasons. We already have some great plant-based products and are now adding one of our biggest global brands with Milo.

We're continuing to make good on our promise to offer consumers food that is right for them and right for the planet."

The new Milo follows on from other recent launches of plant-based beverages. Nestlé in Brazil introduced oat- and pea-based Ninho Forti + on shelves from December 2019, in a ready-to-drink carton with a paper straw. The United States saw the launch of Nesquik GoodNes in January, based on oat and pea protein with the great chocolate milk flavor of Nesquik.

Nestlé is using all its expertise in plant-based protein as well as in dairy to make sure the new drinks are high in nutritional value and taste delicious.

Globally, the company has around 300 R&D scientists, engineers and product developers located in eight R&D centers that are dedicated to the research and development of plant-based products. This includes its center in Konolfingen, Switzerland, that specializes in dairy.

The need for plant-based dairy alternatives that taste great and offer strong nutritional benefits is rising, as more families are following a flexitarian diet that is lighter on meat and dairy products. Many consumers cite environmental reasons, as plant-based products are produced with lower emissions, land- and water usage.

Nestlé has stepped up its focus on providing more nutritious options for children, with Nestlé for Healthier Kids program. The two focus areas are accelerating the healthy transformation of Nestlé's product portfolio in line with WHO recommendations, and inspiring healthier eating with supportive programmes and services.

Don't befriend smugglers of plastic carriers, cautions Dr Gwamaka

By Guardian Correspondent, Tunduma

TANZANIANS living in border areas have been asked to refrain from befriending smugglers of banned plastic bags into the country instead, report them to authorities.

Talking to reporters here during his one-day inspection visit to selected border spots along Tanzania and Zambia border in

Tunduma District, Songwe Region, the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) Director General, Dr Samuel Gwamaka, said the council was aware of banned carriers being smuggled into the country across the common border with other countries. He appealed to Tanzanians in border areas to report smugglers to authorities instead of befriending them.

"It is important to tighten security along the border to prevent a few people from smuggling banned plastic carriers and packages in to the country in order to protect the environment and the local market of internal producers of legitimate products. Don't befriend these smugglers because what they are doing is harmful to our country. We expect Tanzanians in border areas

to be in the forefront in fighting illegal trade activities along our borders," Dr Gwamaka explained.

He said NEMC has granted a one-month grace period for production, distribution and use of plastic materials to allow orderly transition to use of lawful materials produced locally. He explained that people were using tube-plastic materials, not for lack of proper materials but for sheer

convenience.

Dr Gwamaka said carrier and wrapper business was regulated by the Environmental Management Act of 2004 and its Regulations, explaining that the law and its regulations had to be respected by all people. NEMC, he said, will ensure the law and its regulations were abided by in order to protect the environment.

The director general insisted

that all alternative carriers must meet the GSM 70 condition in order to protect products produced locally, explaining that if illicit carriers would be smuggled into the country they would kill the market of legitimate local products. He also appealed to environment task forces from grassroots to regional levels to increase public education campaigns to make ban enforcement easy and under-

stood by the people.

A Tunduma resident, Jestina Mwalupengo, said banned plastic bags were still in use because they were being smuggled into Tanzania from an unnamed neighbouring country.

"We shall continue educating each other on the use of local legitimate carriers because environment is clean unlike before the ban," she said.



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF WORKS, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION
TANZANIA SHIPPING AGENCIES CORPORATION
TASAC



INVITATION TO ATTEND STAKEHOLDERS MEETING TO CLARIFY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS WITH THE GOVERNMENT NOTICE NO. 342 OF 2018 ON REGULATED SERVICE PROVIDERS LEVY

The Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC) has organised Stakeholders Meeting to be attended by the **Regulated Service Providers in the maritime transport sector at Karimjee hall on Wednesday, 18th March, 2020 from 9:00 am to 1.00 pm.** The purpose of the meeting is to enhance awareness on the Tanzania Shipping Agencies (Service Provider Levies and Fees) Rules, 2018 (Government Notice No. 342 of 2018) and to clarify compliance requirements with the Government Notice No. 342 of 2018.

The invited stakeholders for this meeting are **Maritime Transport Services Providers** (including Ports Operator and Terminal Port Operators), **Shipping Agents, Dry Port Operators** (including Inland Clearance Depots-ICDs and Empty Container Depots-ECDs), **Cargo Consolidators and De-consolidators, Miscellaneous Port Services Providers and Gross Mass Verifiers (GMVs).** Please note that a maximum number of representatives from each stakeholder's firm should be two (2) people, one of them should be from finance/accounts.

The meeting was organised as continuation of awareness programme following the earlier meetings held on 20th February, 2019 and 20th November, 2019 in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza respectively.

You are all welcome

Polite Reminder: It is an offence and punishable under the laws to operate in maritime transport sector and provide regulated services without a valid Certificate, Permits and/or TASAC License.

Issued by
Director General

Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation
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UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

UNHCR FIELD OFFICE, KASULU

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL VACANCY NOTICE
TANKS/VN/20/004

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Field Office, Kasulu invites qualified internal/external candidates to apply for the following position:

Vacancy Notice No: TANKS/VN/20/004
Position Title: Associate Programme Officer
Position No: 10006240
Category: Fixed-Term Appointment (FTA)
Grade: NOB
Duty Station: Kasulu, Tanzania
Duration: 1 Year
Start Date: 01 May 2020
Issue Date: 13 March 2020
Closing Date: 03 April 2020

Organizational Setting and Work Relationships

The Associate Programme Officer (NOB) will be based in UNHCR Field Office in Kasulu. He/she will be supervised by the Head of Field Office and may supervise a small team of local staff. He/she may refer to UNHCR's Programme Manual (Chapter IV), UNHCR's corporate and regional strategic priorities, operation plans and other relevant institutional rules and regulations for further guidance.

The Associate Programme Officer will provide programmatic guidance and support with regard to the implementation of protection and solutions strategies within available resources. S/he will coordinate with the other sections/units to ensure harmonized programmatic approaches at all levels and throughout the UNHCR Operations Management Cycle. The incumbent will work in line with the overall UNHCR directions which crucially require working with partners, including with persons of concern, governmental institutions and the private sector, ensuring that programme management is approached as per UNHCR's Strategic Directions, Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs), Global Compact for Refugees (GCR), and corporate positions on SDGs.

The incumbent is expected to work in line with the multi-functional team (MFT) approach as defined within the Program Manual, ensuring the participation of relevant stakeholders in all phases of the Program Management Cycle.

All UNHCR staff members are accountable to perform their duties as reflected in their job description. They do so within their delegated authorities, in line with the regulatory framework of UNHCR which includes the UN Charter, UN Staff Regulations and Rules, UNHCR Policies and Administrative Instructions as well as relevant accountability frameworks. In addition, staff members are required to discharge their responsibilities in a manner consistent with the core, functional, cross-functional and managerial competencies and UNHCR's core values of professionalism, integrity and respect for diversity.

Duties:

- Support in assessing and analysing the needs of persons of concern in a participatory manner, using an Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) perspective as basis for planning.
- Provide support on programmatic aspects of developing multi-year protection and solutions strategies and annual plans with corresponding priorities taking into account corporate priorities.
- Support Results Based Management and programme capacity in light of evolving requirements, programming approaches and gaps.
- Assist the planning process in compliance with planning parameters outlined in the Programme Manual and the planning instructions.
- Support the revision and analysis of plans, mid-year and year-end reports of UNHCR office(s) in the Area of Responsibility (AoR), ensure quality assurance and compliance with established policies, guidelines, procedures and standards.
- Assist in the provision of overall direction to broaden partnerships with key stakeholders in order to maximize the protection and solutions response for persons of concern.
- Provide support to ensure a consistent application of the framework for implementing with partners, including the effective implementation of the policy on selection and retention of partners, management of partnership agreements, risk-based project performance monitoring, and risk-based project audits, among others.
- Contribute to ensure consistent and coherent monitoring approaches, tools and systems across the region, in line with global standards and policies.

- Actively contribute to UNHCR's programming of community of practice and continuously contribute to improvements of programming tools and processes.
- Oversee a timely and effective follow-up of internal and external audits observations and recommendations that relate to programmatic issues.
- Perform other related duties as required.

Education and Professional Work Experience

- 3 years relevant experience with Undergraduate degree; or 2 years relevant experience with Graduate degree; or 1-year relevant experience with Doctorate degree
- Economics, Business Administration, Social Sciences, or other related fields

Essential

Demonstrated experience in programme management including familiarization with the OMC and sound knowledge of Results Based-Management. Demonstrated experience in field operations, sound knowledge on the centrality of protection in programming, Joint Needs Assessments and the principles of targeting.

Desirable

Demonstrated experience in coordination within an inter-agency context and other actors, in a refugee or humanitarian context. Sound experience in program management training and capacity building activities.

Functional Skills

- Project Management
- Results-Based management
- UNHCR's Programmes
- Experience with coordinating with Implementing Partners (Government/NGO/Corporate)
- Data Management

Language Requirements

- Knowledge of English and local language i.e. Kiswahili

Core Competencies

- Accountability
- Communication
- Organizational Awareness
- Teamwork & Collaboration
- Commitment to Continuous Learning
- Client & Result Orientation

Managerial Competencies

- Judgement and Decision Making
- Managing Resources
- Empowering and Building Trust

Cross-Functional Competencies

- Analytical thinking
- Negotiation and Conflict Resolution
- Political Awareness

Interested candidates should express their interest by completing the attached Personal History Form and the Supplementary form if needed in full. Please bear in mind that submission of the Personal History Form which is not signed may render that applicant ineligible for consideration. Please quote the Vacancy Notice Number and Position title.

Due to the volume of applications only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Shortlisted candidates will be required to sit for a written test followed by oral interview.

Qualified female candidates and candidates with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

The Expression of Interest for the position should sent by email to:

The Head of Field Office
UNHCR Field Office, Kasulu
Email: tanksva@unhcr.org

25697001



Baturi Msuya, a teacher at Changa Primary School in Tanga Region gives one of her pupils tablets at yesterday's launch of a vaccination campaign against elephantiasis and worm infections. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

Mwanza RC launches campaign on malaria in Ukerewe District

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

CAMPAIGN against mosquito breeding grounds using insecticide and other chemical sprays in homes to exterminate killer mosquitoes has been launched in Hamukoko village, Ngoma Ward in Ukerewe District.

Launching the exercise, Mwanza Regional Commissioner John Mongella appealed to wananchi in the district to ignore rumours that the insecticides increase bedbugs and reduce power to bear children.

He said malaria is a disease that causes deaths in the society especially among children and pregnant women and researches on the diseases symptoms done in 2017 showed that Mwanza Region still has a high prevalence of malaria infection at 8.1 percent - higher than the national average of 7.3 percent.

He said the exercise that started on March 3 will go on for one month and will cover 76

villages of the district and is sponsored by the US government via Abt Associates.

Dr Godian Kikopolisi, the Abt Associates Coordinator said the insecticide takes five days on average to kill malaria spreading mosquitoes.

Acting Mwanza Regional Medical Officer, Dr Silas Wambura said in order to exterminate mosquitoes that spread malaria in the island of Ukerewe various means will be employed.

"We have started with these two exercises but our aim is that when mosquitoes are bred in ponds of water we spray the water with insecticide while spraying mosquitoes in homes continues at the same time - killing two birds with one stone," he said.

More than 80,000 households from 76 villages in Ukerewe District will benefit from the exercise while giving short term employment to 622 sprayers and 4583 village leaders.



We have started with these two exercises but our aim is that when mosquitoes are bred in ponds of water we spray the water with insecticide while spraying mosquitoes in homes continues at the same time - killing two birds with one stone

Three neighbouring countries to feature in 2020 Tanga trade fair

By Correspondent George Sembony,

Tanga

THIS year's annual Tanga trade fair is expected to attract participants from three neighbouring countries namely - Rwanda, Burundi and Kenya.

Chairman of the Tanga trade

fair organising committee from the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA), Paul Bwokisaid East African women have also registered in big numbers to participate in the trade fair.

According to Bwoki the chamber intends to widen participation of the EAC business

community to the annual event which will open-up business and investment opportunities in the region.

Bwoki said that the event that has been annually organised for the past eight years will be held between May 28th and June 6th this year under the theme - Agriculture for Industrial De-

velopment. "We have over 100 business entities and industries that have confirmed to take part in the trade fair," he noted.

TCCIA Tanga Executive Secretary, Charles Hoza appealed to Tanga region's local government authorities to use the opportunity to showcase their achievements and market avail-

able business and investment potentials.

He said the participation of LGAs in the trade fair has been encouraging hence the need to come up with strategies to ensure fully participation of each municipal.

"We must be able to show off what we have achieved and

what we have otherwise these opportunities will remain in our profile books. We have a lot of untapped investment potentials that need to be marketed," said Hoza.

Some of the institutions and companies that are expected to participate at the weeklong event include Tanzania Trade

Development Authorities (TAN-TRADE), Waja General Company, Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) and the Ngorongoro Crater Area Authority (NCAA).

Others are financial institutions, social security funds, Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) and the Tanga Water and Sanitation Authority (Tanga UWASA).



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Advisor

Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health

As a federal enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

The GIZ program "Improving Healthcare in Tanzania" aims to improve the performance of the health system in the partner regions Mbeya and Tanga, in particular through digitization of key work processes and capacity development of its key players to plan and provide essential health services.

The programme works with regional and district authorities and selected health facilities in Mbeya and Tanga to enhance and expand their obstetric and newborn care services and make basic and comprehensive emergency care available. In addition, newly established newborn care units at district and health centre level will provide special care to critical babies. Family planning options for women are expanded and integrated into other services at health centres and hospitals to reach women in particular in the post-partum period.

The program is looking to fill the position of an Advisor for Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH)

Duty station: Dar es Salaam
Terms of the Contract: Fixed term contract

Responsibilities

- Ensure that the Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) activities implemented by the project are evidence-based and in line with applicable national and international guidelines
- Communicate with and engage relevant authorities that project activities are in line with national strategic plans including One Health III, reporting requirements and applicable approval processes
- Increase partner collaboration and project visibility at national and subnational level through active engagement in relevant technical working groups and tasks forces in support of the implementation of the Sector Wide Approach and engage in partner networks such as the WHO-led Quality of Care Network or the International Partnership for maternal, newborn and child health
- Integrate the (Maternal and Neonatal Health & Family Planning (MNH&FP) component within the organization, particularly with other project components such as digitalization and governance and GIZ wide technical networks and knowledge management platforms.

Tasks

- Provide overall technical support in the field of Sexual, Reproductive and Newborn Health, in particular to establishing Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EMONC) as well as care for the sick newborn to the project
- Development of operational, monitoring and evaluation plans, workflows, processes and other implementation materials for the Maternal and Newborn Health (MNH) and Family Planning (FP) activities that are based on available evidence and in line with applicable national and international guidelines and address the gaps identified by previously conducted assessment missions together with the team lead and contractors
- On demand, support the implementation of EMONC activities (e.g. as TOT for mentors)
- Support the team leader in recruitment and management of the international contractor who will implement the MNH&FP activities, contributing to the tender process and acting as the technical liaison person mediating and facilitating between the project's activities, facility staff and further stakeholders
- Actively drive collaboration and communication of GIZ with other stakeholders in the area and contribute to ongoing discussions on Sexual, Reproductive and Newborn Health in relevant technical working groups

and partner networks such as the WHO-led Quality Care Network on national but also on subnational and facility level

- Develop productive relationships and provide strategic, evidence-based advice for the further development of One Plan III and its implementation in respective national fora
- Design, implement (if possible) and collaborate on monitoring, evaluation and research activities in the area of MNH&FP including evaluation of the triage card for newborn care, and operational research on provider behaviour and attitudes
- Within the project, participate in meetings and communications as needed to ensure that the MNH&FP component of the project is well integrated with other project components (digital, governance) and engage in GIZ internal technical networks and knowledge management platforms. Contribute and draw up briefing notes, brief summaries, reports and presentation documents and contribute to other tasks and processes as needed.
- Frequent travel may be required

Required qualifications, competences and experience

Academic Qualifications

- Medical Doctor (gyn/obs/ general medicine), experienced Midwife or equivalent medical qualification with a documented qualification in RMNCH
- Masters' degree in public health or equivalent health related
- Training in monitoring, evaluation and research methods
- Desirable: Training in statistical analysis or epidemiology

Professional experience

- At least 8 years of professional experience, of these
- At least 4 years clinical work in gynaecology/obstetrics and sexual and reproductive health (incl. family planning)
- And four years of implementing maternal, neonatal, child health programmes and family planning, two of them in a senior position
- At least 3 years of advisory work on policy and framework development in an international organisation (UN, NGO, bilateral implementer)
- Desirable: experience in Development Cooperation/Aid projects, particularly in advisory roles
- Desirable: demonstrated working experience in conducting programme/project assessments/evaluations in the public health sector in Tanzania
- Experience with international tender processes and working with contractors as an asset

Other knowledge, additional competences

- Sound understanding of the health sector in Tanzania, preferably with existing network from government, academia and development partners
- Ability to critically assess situations using available data and develop targeted implementations
- Proven ability to work in an international team
- Excellent business language skills, both in Swahili and English
- Outgoing personality with excellent networking skills

Applications:
Interested candidates should send their letter of application together with the CV and copies of academic certificates by email to hr.giz-tanzania@giz.de.

Please use the subject line "Advisor RMNCAH".

Applications in hard copy will not be accepted. Closing date for submission: **20.03.2020**
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

GIZ Tanzania is an equal opportunities employer and encourages applications from all qualified and eligible candidates regardless of their gender, origin, religion/belief, disability or any other minority group.

Foundation revamps library, gives sanitary pads to a secondary school in Coast Region

By Guardian Correspondent, Chalinze

WENTWORTH Africa Foundation has refurbished a library and distributed sanitary pads to Mboga Secondary School in Coast Region as part of marking the International Women's Day.

Located in Msoga ward, the school which started in 2011 has a total of 736 students, whereby 480 are girls.

Speaking soon after handing over the donation, Wentworth Africa Foundation president, Barbra McBean said that the foundation has funded and supported secondary schools in Mtwara, Lindi and Coast regions.

"Only through education can individuals achieve their life goals," she said, adding that the foundation's objective is to improve education, health, safety and comfort for students through library refurbishment.

In this area, she said, the foundation has been working with

Read International - a non-governmental organisation, which advocates for readership and literacy among children.

"We've been also working on the menstrual hygiene education management programme, which involves providing sanitary pads, mentorship and life skills training, with a focus on keeping the girl student in school.

McBean appealed to all the students to make full use of the donation and to work hard to improve their results in the coming year, noting that the foundation was keen to see parents, local government and the school continue to work together to support the foundation's efforts and be part of breaking the poverty cycle.

School headmaster, George Mwakisaba commended the foundation for the support saying: "This will improve education performance at the school as students will not have any excuse as the school library has plenty of books in all the subjects as well as access to the internet."

He said: "Teachers have also been trained with advanced teaching methodologies, which will assist to bring students and teachers closer and teaching more enjoyable and

efficient."

Read International executive director, Magdalena George informed the audience that the school now has a reading club with 48 students.

"It is crucial that the youth develop the reading habit and appreciate the importance of books and the wealth of knowledge in them."

Chalinze MP Ridhwan Kikwete lauded the great work the foundation was doing in the country's education, urging them to continue supporting the sector.

Deputy Minister for Energy, Subira Mgalu who was the chief guest praised the gas company - Wentworth Resources for complementing government's efforts to provide power to communities.

She said that Wentworth Africa Foundation is assisting the government realise the millennium sustainable goals in the education sector.

"The fifth-phase government highly values education and that is why it is providing free primary and secondary education and in this the foundation is a true partner helping us to provide a more conducive environment for learning," she added.



NBC Tanzania managing director Theobald Sabi (L) speaks at a farewell ceremony held in Dar es Salaam yesterday for employees of the bank who have just retired. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

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The Guardian

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FRIDAY 13 MARCH 2020

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Draft Budget promising, but vigilance vis-à-vis spread of coronavirus crucial

FINANCE minister Dr Philip Mpango has unveiled 35 trillion/- Budget estimates for financial year 2020/2021, presented to the legislature in a committee sitting rather than a proper session of the House.

Those reading the Budget ceiling and expenditure outlook will notice at least one thing - that the global coronavirus situation has "influenced" the estimates. Given what is being said even in some technologically and otherwise advanced countries, a coronavirus outbreak would leave the economy in tatters.

Major and well-equipped economies including the United States already expect a recession, and the outlook for other countries is surely likely to be worse than that.

Without anyone having to shout to the rooftops about it, what appeared to be impossible now appears increasingly believable. This is that, as was the case with SARS and MERS, both of them viral infections in the past two decades, it appears that COVID-19 isn't a pandemic likely to hit Africa as seriously as in many Western countries, and a few in Asia.

No one can tell precisely how rapidly COVID-19 will continue spreading, or how helpful is the outlook for a vaccine, but Africa is distinctly basking in isolation from the wave of the virus, thank goodness. That means we can also afford to think of budgetary estimates with some relief.

There are however certain areas where estimates will be scaled down, and that has already begun happening, for instance in the sphere of tourism, as it was already big headlines that a big batch of expected Chinese tourists had unavoidably stayed away.

This is by no means the only batch staying away, as some cut-price airlines have at least temporarily closed shop, on

the basis of stock market reports in Britain boasting years of experience in travel on the East African scene.

That source of foreign exchange is singularly unpredictable in the coming year, and indeed even for the final stages of the 2019/2020 Budget, upon which plenty still depends in fiscal health.

In that tourism is the single biggest earner of foreign exchange for Tanzania, it will not be surprising that income estimates will have to be reworked. That task can't be conducted now as the number of coronavirus infections is still rising in a large number of countries, but presumably already ebbing in China.

What the future holds may eventually depend on finding a workable vaccine soon enough, and it can't be said for sure what will be the picture in foreign trade at that point.

In that case we are likely to have what economists would refer to as a highly leveraged budget in the sense that plenty of what it contains will be pegged on factors - or things - whose value (size of earnings expected from those sources) is impossible to establish at the moment.

Treasury experts deserve a pat on the back for the calm with which they have prepared the current estimates, as we pray for things to remain more or less as they are, at least in Africa generally and our own country in particular.

With one-third of Africa's school-going children stunted, the continent won't survive a corona pandemic spreading as viciously as it is reported doing in Europe, Asia and North America.

This is a cataclysm as countries with elevated health care systems actually struggle to contain the wave - which is precisely why enhanced vigilance in the Government's budgetary considerations is of fundamental importance and relevance.

Pandemic has understandably added value to importance, relevance of washing hands

GETTING one's hands clean in whatever situation and especially after using hands is becoming the first line of precaution in global campaigns on ways to contain the spread and impact of the coronavirus.

This aspect of precautions has been highlighted by a resolution of a just-ended meeting of Health ministers of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), as part of a number of measures to help contain the outbreak.

Other countries have been emphasizing the same sort of measures, though it remains unclear as to the success registered.

Talking about the coronavirus situation in their respective countries, US President Donald Trump and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson underlined the need for continual or regular washing of hands and went to the extent of making demonstrations.

They used running towels and water with soap to show how the washing of hands needs to be done, while at an earlier period some of our national leaders focused on avoiding direct greeting, also a relevant aspect to the prevention spectrum of actions. Not one action is enough.

This emphasis returns to the fore a continuous health sector sub-theme at the national level in Tanzania, and by a certain irony it also shows how ill disposed most of our people will be if the coronavirus outbreak were to hit us.

Ordinarily, people in more wealthy countries would not need to be reminded too repeatedly or vigorously on the need for them to washing their hands. But, with the global pandemic, the routine gesture has an added urgency to this.

In African countries where water is itself used a bit sparingly, the whole paraphernalia of running

water, soap and clean drying cloth could admittedly be a rather testy environment.

Local experts have also been working on the theme and provided rather detailed explanations of what to do in case there is an outbreak, this including using face masks in areas where many people meet.

Of course, it is hard to say how practicable this is or whether the message is indeed "sinking in".

Yet, the Chinese experience shows that locking people in and not having large numbers of people in open spaces can be more effective than taking precautions while people are still free to move around.

That is how China has drastically cut down the rate of infection relative to the situation in other countries, where the incidence of infections has been rising rather than starting to fall.

The speed at which the pandemic hit China, Iran, Italy and even the US and the UK leaves doubt as to the effectiveness of the various prevention proposals floated, though it is good that people have an idea of basic do's and don'ts.

Still, the more important area is the need to clear as to who have mild symptoms after infection, those where the symptoms worsened and where deaths occurred, and what determined those differences.

Age has been isolated as a factor - that those above 60, and particularly those nearing 80, faced an especially heightened risk if they were to be infected with the coronavirus.

World Health Organisation statistics show home-based infections, aside from social gatherings of some duration and intensity, as the main vehicle for infections.

Thus, it will pay to appreciate the fact that isolating those infected ought to come well before, say, an entire family is down with the virus.

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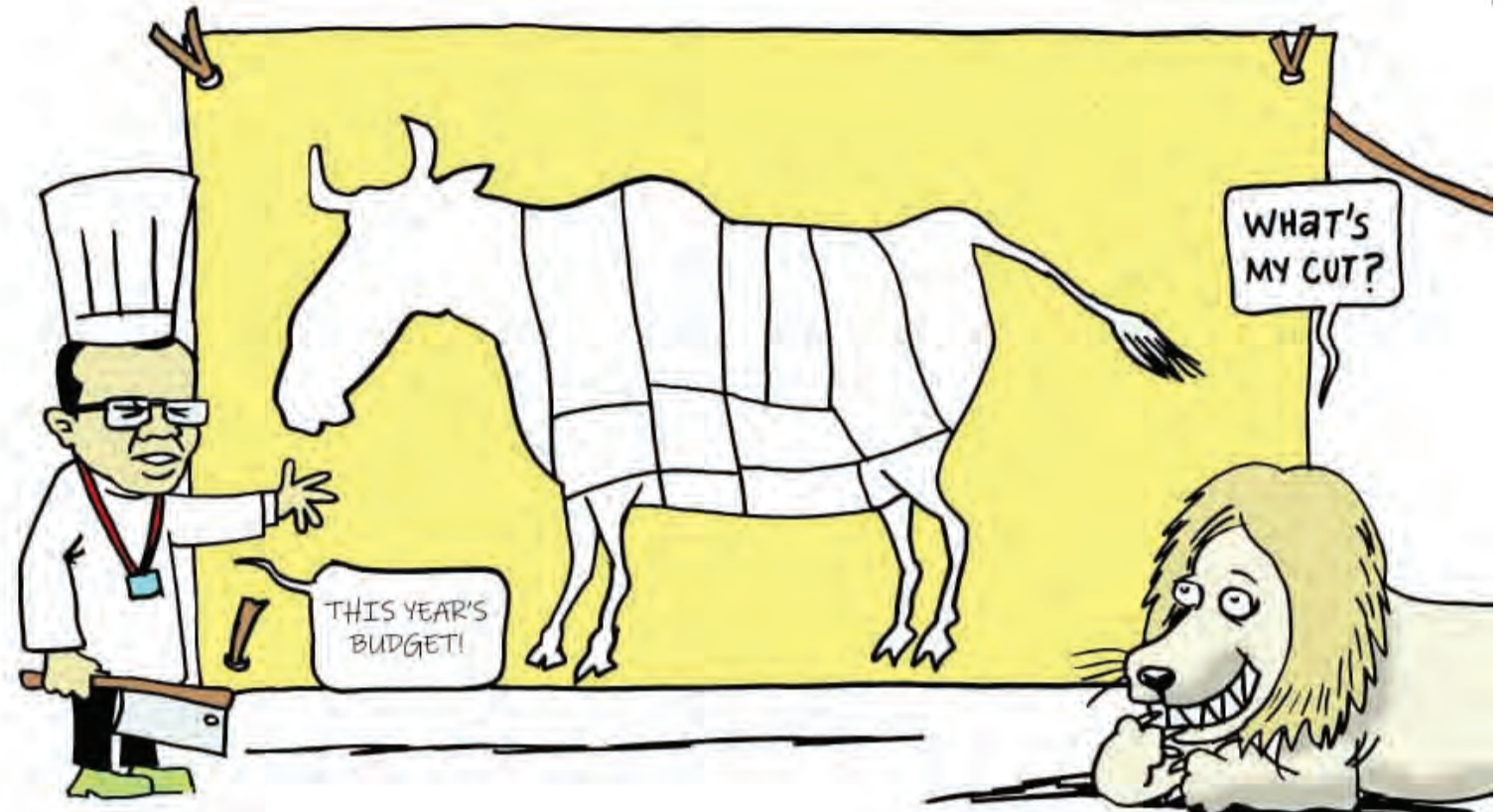
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Optimism for African oil producers despite coronavirus, OPEC+ fallout

By NJ Ayuk

SOMETIMES it is easy to forget how interconnected human lives across the globe have become. Perhaps we no longer talk as much about globalization as we used to in the 1990s because globalization is no longer an issue to be discussed or protested against and is simply the reality that surrounds us. And there is no cruder evidence of that than the coronavirus.

Despite the fact that the virus hasn't yet affected African nations in any way as seriously as other regions of the world, a fact the World Health Organisation is still unable to explain, forecasts already indicate that just through reduced demand for African exports, the virus was expected to wipe at least USD\$4 billion in revenue from the continent's economy.

Most of that was simply because China in particular and Asia and Europe in general were reducing oil and gas consumption dramatically as transport and economic activities came to a standstill in the light of an epidemic that has already forced several dozens of millions of people to be put under quarantine.

Last week, news reports indicated that oil traders in Africa were unable to find buyers for fifty-five Nigerian oil cargoes as global demand crashed.

By last Friday morning, the virus had wiped out the equivalent of USD\$5 trillion in value from the global stock markets. That's two and a half times the GDP of the whole African continent.

And all that was before OPEC+'s Friday meeting in Vienna. Wasn't that one surprising?

I believe it is safe to say that few people could have expected this outcome. After all, for the last three and a half years, the world in general, and the oil industry in particular, had learned to trust the alliance of OPEC countries with Russia and other oil producers to work together to stabilize the markets and guarantee a sustainable price for the barrel of crude.

Through their decision to cut down oil production to address reduced demand and balance out the effect of the



US shale play, all together, they were keeping 1.7 million barrels of oil per day away from the market, a landmark decision of cooperation like we had never seen in history.

Perhaps also because of its novelty and its width and because it was dependent on the will and cooperation of so many, it also fell victim to the infestation this virus has brought.

OPEC, that Saudi-led consortium of nations, was proposing a combined further cut of 1.5 million barrels per day to continue to match the decline in global demand. The Russia-led group was however not going to go further than 600 thousand.

The conclusion is that there would be no new cuts at all and no renewal of the previous cuts. The OPEC+ alliance that saved the industry from collapse in 2016 has, at least for the moment, come to an end.

All bets are off. At the end of next month, when the current agreement ends, all restrictions will be lifted and the world is bracing for an oil flood.

The markets have already factored that in, with the Brent and the WTI registering its biggest daily crash since the beginning of the first Gulf War. While oil seems to have rebounded slightly today, it will take time to make up for Monday's 25 per cent crash.

That is, if the recovery is anywhere in sight, since Saudi Arabia announced that it was

years will also help minimize the impact of this situation. Yes, final investment decisions might be slightly delayed until the situation stabilizes, but they will come in due course.

So what's next?

If this year is showing itself challenging for African energy, 2021 will be a year of opportunity. But for that to happen, we have to start adapting now, laying down the policies that will allow us to take advantage of the future opportunities. It is in moments of crisis that true leaders have the opportunity to shine.

While it is difficult to predict the future, there are a few deductions and inductions we can try to make with some certainty.

One is that neither Russia nor Saudi Arabia wants a low oil price, and there is a limit to how long they are willing to sustain it. No one gains from it and if anyone has the capacity and funds to sustain it for a longer period of time it is Saudi Arabia.

So, it is not really a price war, since it can't really be a war if you already know the winner at the head start. Already, Russia has suggested that it might be open to negotiating coordinated cuts within OPEC+ during the group's next meeting in May/June.

What seems likely is that the first to suffer from this will be American shale producers. This sector was already finding it hard to finance itself in recent years but continued to unbalance the market with its rapid response to price fluctuations.

These producers are highly leveraged, and it is likely that most will go bust in the present situation. This is something Russia and Saudi Arabia tried to do back in 2015/2016. While it did not succeed at the time, it might have better chances now.

Further, in three months' time, at the time of the next OPEC+ meeting, the coronavirus situation might also be very different. Earlier this week, president Xi Jinping visited Wuhan, the epicentre of the epidemic, for the first time since the beginning of the outbreak.

This was in a clear demonstration of a strong response to a rapidly evolving situation that seems to be stabilizing. China itself is an extremely leveraged economy and cannot afford to slow down for much longer. It can be expected that the country's demand for oil will start rising again in the foreseeable future.

If that happens in a scenario when the US shale sector is no longer able to respond, it might just be that the price will climb higher than it was before the virus, and with Saudi Arabia securing for itself a much larger slice of the global marketplace. Again, things will get worse before they get better, but they will certainly get better.

So, for African nations, this is the time to position ourselves correctly - and that will require close attention to international developments and close cooperation to be able to take advantage of new opportunities.

The African Energy Chamber will be instrumental in that, but so will be the African members of OPEC. The time to show statesmanship and stay close to Saudi Arabia and the decision-making table is now.

It's crucial to grow Africa's relevance in the international oil stage by showing level-headedness and cooperation in face of a global crisis. If we take that route, we will come out of this stronger than ever.

An African Energy Chamber dispatch filed from Johannesburg. NJ Ayuk is the chamber's executive chairman, CEO of pan-African corporate law conglomerate Centurion Law Group, and the author of several books about the oil and gas industry in Africa - including Billions at Play: The Future of African Energy and Doing Deals.

Plurality of voices enhances creativity and entrepreneurship

By Anders Sjöberg

I am greatly honoured and proud to have been invited as the Guest of Honour by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) to participate in the launch of the three investigative reports. The issues that you are addressing are very pertinent and reflections of contemporary democracy challenges in the world, including the situation for media professionals in Tanzania.

MCT is a partner to Sweden within our development cooperation with Tanzania. They are one of the many important actors working relentlessly towards adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In this regard, specific emphasis is placed on the civil liberties of press freedom and freedom of expression as enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

As I stand here today, I would like us to remind ourselves that the world is changing very fast, and one amongst those changes is regression in democracy, a foundation within which civil liberties are constructed.

Two global reports have recently taken the temperature of democracy and civil liberties around the world. In December last year CIVICUS, an organisation tracking civic space in 196 countries, released a report entitled "People Power Under Attack 2019", showing that the fundamental freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression are backsliding across the world.

The report concluded that 40 per cent of the world's population now live in countries where civic freedoms are being violated.

In the same vein, a newly released report by Freedom House found that 2019 was the 14th consecutive year of decline in global freedom.

According to the organisation, the gap between setbacks and gains has widened compared with 2018, as individuals in 64 countries experienced deterioration in their political rights and civil liberties while it was only those in 37 who experienced improvements.

The MCT reports being launched today constitute an open call to the relevant authorities to respect the rule of law and civic rights as enshrined in the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania.

It is my sincere hope that the reports will stimulate debate about the role of media freedom, taking Tanzania to its next level of performance as it aspires to become a low middle-income country in the next few years.

Freedom of expression incorporates both freedom of opinion and freedom to seek, receive and spread information and ideas of all kinds: in speech, in writing and in print.

The media are often referred to as the fourth estate, implying their key role of providing checks and balances in society.

Political scientist Dr Pippa Norris argues that the media and journalists play three very critical roles in the society: to serve as a "watchdog"; to provide space and function as a "civic forum"; and to speak the truth to power.

The prevalence of sexual harassment and gender-based violence in newsrooms is of deep concern and it needs to be addressed urgently. Men need to come forward and assume a central role in keeping women safe. Men must become part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Along the same line, I sincerely hope that the policies referred to and discussed in the booklet "Gender in Media Policy" will be implemented across the sector.



The Swedish Ambassador to Tanzania, Anders Sjöberg, cuts a ribbon to launch one of the six publications of the Media Council of Tanzania. Holding the book (right) is the Executive Secretary of the Council, Kajubi Mukajanga, and left is the Chairperson of the MCT Ethics Committee retired Judge Juxon Mlay.

Although Sweden rates high on the press freedom index, we are not spared by the current harsh media climate. Journalists, artists, elected officials and authors alike are, threatened and attacked for their work and opinions even in Sweden.

This could seriously undermine the watchdog role of journalists and the public debate more generally. Female journalists are more frequently targeted than their male counterparts.

The lack of a level playing field for women and men is an additional factor hampering national development and threatens our democratic state.

Hate speech and threats are on the rise globally and women journalists are especially vulnerable. Insecurity is on the rise, democratic space in many parts of the world is shrinking and human rights are being threatened.

This is the time when fearless and courageous journalism is most needed. And when practitioners of free speech are threatened, we must do everything we can to protect them.

Today, in many places around the world, we see a repressive media climate, where disinformation and propaganda go hand in hand with deteriorating security and working conditions for journalists and media workers.

Gender is also left behind in media sector dialogue. Journalists can, and should, play a decisive role in promoting transparency and accountability - in other words, acting as "watchdogs".

Investigative reporters can scrutinize and evaluate all manner of authorities and hold them accountable for their actions, whether it is public institutions, non-profit organisations or private companies.

Equally importantly, in playing its civic forum role, the free press can strengthen the public sphere by facilitating debate about the major issues of the day as well as long-term economic, social and political trends. The reporting should be fair, impartial and balanced, allowing multiple interests and voices to be heard.

The third point is that the media also function as agenda-setters, providing information about various political, economic and social issues and thereby channelling citizens' concerns to decision-makers.

This could be of critical importance during emergencies such as natural disasters but could also include regular, ongoing reporting on current and even less urgent affairs. Again, here it is important to underscore the importance of providing fact-checked and therefore truly professional or quality journalism.

Being a representative of a Government that pursues a Feminist Agenda, I strongly welcome the reports being launched here today: "Gender in Media Policy" and the study entitled "Challenging the Glass Ceiling: Study of Women in the Newsroom in Tanzania".

The facts and figures in the reports speak for themselves and I note that stereotypes and bias against women are still present, re-

inforcing gender inequality in the media.

Confidence in the media is decreasing, while space for human rights defenders, journalists and advocates of democracy is shrinking.

Democracy and freedom of the press go hand in hand. You cannot have one without the other. And we all know that democracy is so much more than just holding free and fair elections.

Democracy is about many critical aspects such as having in place a vibrant civil society, equality of opportunities for both women and men, having non-corrupt office bearers and ensuring the rule of law.

In this context, having free and independent media is crucial to keeping the citizenry - the voters, in particular - informed, and to hold elected leaders to account.

Quality investigative journalism brings trust and helps the citizenry to understand their society better. Here, my own country finds itself in a pleasantly unique position. We are very proud of having the world's first press freedom law, which was enacted more than 250 years ago.

The Act abolished the censorship of all printed publications and guaranteed public access to official documents as well as the right and opportunity to engage in political debate. As a matter of fact, this preceded our system of parliamentary democracy, which evolved more than 100 years later.

I welcome today's "Report of the Study on the Efficacy of the Access to Information Act". It is an investi-

gative piece of work giving an insight into the status of the implementation of Tanzania's Access to Information Act.

I trust that the publication will be widely shared and discussed with the authorities and among the public at large. As I have mentioned, in Sweden we have been practising this for a long time and I can assure Tanzanians that access to public information brings a lot of benefits in terms of transparency and accountability. Indeed, it is probably one of the most efficient anti-corruption measures.

My country's own experience is one where national development has thrived on the back of free press and freedom of expression.

Ensuring free flow of, and access to, information as well as a plurality of voices has contributed to creativity and entrepreneurship. That, in turn, has made us the second most innovative country in the world, according to Global Innovation Index 2019.

Moreover, investors traditionally invest capital where transparency and accountability are ensured. In addition, free flow of information and perspectives enhances the level of trust and tolerance towards different perspectives within a society.

During a meeting of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) held last year, President Dr John Magufuli highlighted the importance of the media and made a call for funds and other forms of support as a way of improving the working conditions of journalists. Sweden shares the belief that protection of, and security for, media practitioners is crucial.

In conclusion, I would like to welcome the United Republic of Tanzania to partner with Sweden, both being signatories to multiple conventions on human rights including the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, in the advancement of these fundamental universal principles.

Asanteni sana kwa kunisikiliza (Kiswahili for: Many thanks for your attention).

This is the full text of speech made by Sweden's Ambassador to Tanzania, Anders Sjöberg, at the launch of a set of Media Council of Tanzania reports held in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday this week (March 10).

Africa can become more influential in the UN Security Council

BY GUSTAVO DE CARVALHO AND DANIEL FORTI

THE bloc of three elected African members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) - the A3 - has grown considerably in stature and diplomatic capacity. This is largely due to the creation of the African Union (AU) in 2002 and the growing partnership between it and the UN.

Although African issues haven't traditionally been contentious in the UNSC, increasing geo-political tensions among council members are starting to spill over onto these files, to the detriment of collective political action. If the A3 bloc wants to ensure its relevance and influence in 2020 and beyond, Africa must ensure that unified positions are a priority.

Africa is numerically significant at the UNSC: in 2018, over 50% of UNSC meetings, 60% of its outcome documents, and 70% of its resolutions with Chapter VII mandates concerned African peace and security issues. African states comprise nearly 28% of the UN's overall membership, providing significant regional political backing to the A3. Niger, South Africa and Tunisia are the A3 members in 2020; either Djibouti or Kenya will replace South Africa from January 2021.

Despite much time having been spent on African issues, many UNSC members have treated them as marginal or less strategic compared to Syria, North Korea or the Middle East peace process. African files (including many UN peacekeeping operations) have therefore often not been very conten-



tious in the council.

However intense negotiations on Libya and the Central African Republic earlier this year show that growing fault lines in the UNSC are spreading to these files. The council's five permanent members - China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and United States - are mired by impasses and conflicting strategic interests, including among once-strong allies. Clashes in other parts of the world are now affecting the UNSC's engagements with Africa.

The role of the A3 at this time is critical to shape UNSC debates, break geo-political deadlocks, and guide the council's collective action. But for this to happen, African unity is essential.

A3 members can show unity through various approaches. They can issue joint statements to the council, define joint negotiating positions for outcome

documents, and convene joint public press stakeouts. The role played by the AU permanent observer mission to the UN is particularly important. It can help coordinate A3 and AU engagements, facilitate regular interactions with diplomats and officials in Addis Ababa, and retain AU and UN institutional memory.

A3 members alone have limited influence on the UNSC. But a unified position on African files - especially when informed by AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) decisions - provides legitimacy, credibility and leverage in A3 engagements with other council members, and can influence outcomes. In a sign of such unity, the A3 in 2019 delivered 16 joint statements in the UNSC during both

country-specific and thematic debates.

The role played by the AU permanent observer mission to the UN is particularly important

The benefits of collective A3 engagement are clear, but political and institutional dynamics nevertheless threaten to disrupt the bloc. Agreement is frequently tested by broader geo-political conflicts and the interests of powerful council members. Deepening divisions among permanent members in particular strain alliances between the A3.

As a result, negotiations on one file rarely occur in isolation. Instead the A3 has to remain unified across a larger set of negotiations (on both African and non-African files) in order to achieve a par-

ticular outcome. A3 members are continuously identifying and negotiating their own interests; other council members can take advantage by either aligning with these different positions or trying to split the A3 bloc.

A3 countries, like other council members, have to navigate national, regional, continental and global interests that are not always complementary. This is especially complicated when governments, regional economic communities and the PSC diverge on a particular issue.

The UNSC and PSC are also not identical institutions: they have different compositions, mandates and working methods, and are informed by different political interests and incentives. Getting the two bodies to align on the same files is an enormous expectation for the A3. The challenge is magnified by the bloc's rotating membership which means there are steep learning curves for each member when joining the UNSC as well as for working within the A3 bloc.

Getting the UNSC and PSC to align on the same issues is an enormous expectation for the A3

Despite these challenges, the A3 can collectively influence the UNSC. Council members, particularly the other elected members, look to the A3 when a political or security crisis breaks out on the continent. When African institutions take decisive positions, the A3 can use them with confidence to guide the UNSC. For example, in June 2019 the A3 broke a deadlock in the UNSC and shaped the council's press statements on Su-

dan after the PSC suspended the Sudanese government.

Given that both councils discuss several similar issues, the A3 can help align PSC and UNSC agendas. UN peace operations have fixed reporting cycles, so identifying when country-specific discussions will take place is relatively easy. But merely aligning calendar dates isn't enough if the debates don't build on one another.

South Africa in particular can play an important role in fostering collaboration between the UN and AU since it is now on the UNSC while chairing the AU. As chair, South Africa has stronger diplomatic weight to advocate for AU positions in the UNSC.

South Africa will probably focus on the AU's Silencing the Guns initiative, especially in light of the UNSC resolution on the same issue adopted in February 2019. South Africa will host an extraordinary AU summit on Silencing the Guns in May 2020, which should shape the A3's engagement in the UNSC.

With its ambitious mandate and the challenging geo-political dynamics that must be navigated, the A3's evolution into a coherent political bloc within the UNSC is laudable. African states must now take the next step to consolidate their influence. That requires remaining unified, principled and closely linked to Addis Ababa. With challenging times ahead for the UNSC, the A3's leadership on Africa-related decisions is key for conflict prevention and crisis management.

With virus basically curbed, China pushes ahead battle against economic fallout

BEIJING

AFTER securing an upper hand in its all-out confrontation with the novel coronavirus on home turf, China is warily repositioning itself to fight the economic fallout of the outbreak already declared as a pandemic.

In stark contrast to the rapid spread elsewhere in the world, the virus spread has been basically contained in China, with new risks largely coming from imported cases. The National Health Commission said it received reports of 15 new confirmed cases on the mainland on Wednesday, among which six were imported cases.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, China has prioritized the health of people from home and abroad and taken stringent measures to contain the spread of the virus at the expense of short-term economic gains.

Flexibility and agility are what China has learned from its tough fight with the ferocious virus. Shortly before the World Health Organization declared the outbreak as a pandemic, China's State Council unveiled new measures to support foreign trade and investment in case the increasingly severe situations overseas might further weigh down global industrial chains.

The measures in the pipeline include a shorter negative list of foreign investment and more foreign trade loans from financial institutions.

DECISIVE COMMAND

During his Tuesday inspection of Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak, Chinese President Xi Jinping reiterated that the epidemic will not undermine the fundamentals of China's steady and long-term sound economic development despite short-term economic repercussions.

In a speech at a teleconference on Feb. 23, Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, stressed the importance of coordinating the prevention and control of the epidemic and economic and social development.

While ensuring sufficient epidemic prevention and control, resumption of work and production in certain regions has a bearing on solid material supply to contain the epidemic, completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all aspects, China's opening up and global economic stability, among others, said Xi.

Xi demanded detailed steps to keep the economy stable, including category-based and region-specific work and production resumption, enhanced macro policy adjustment, doubled-down efforts on poverty alleviation and boosting employment, stepping up agriculture production, ensuring people's livelihood, as well as stabilizing foreign trade and investment.

POLICY TOOLKIT

As the world's second-largest economy, China has much



International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva in Washington D.C. IMF supports China's efforts to tackle the novel coronavirus outbreak, and is confident that China's economy remains resilient. Photo: Xinhua

leeway in sustaining steady economic growth. The ample maneuver room comes from the government's rich policy toolkit.

Xi has demanded the right pace and capacity of macro policies to cushion the epidemic's impact and prevent economic growth from slipping out of an appropriate range.

The epidemic has become one of the busiest occasions for China's government agencies, which are in full swing to keep an eye on the economy's well-being amid the epidemic fight and develop support steps.

Liquidity is boosted via open market operations and targeted credit ease. Tax, fee and social security payment cuts are offered to impacted firms. Daily necessity supplies are ensured through national reserve allocation. Logistics is facilitated via fast-track channels and free tolls. Food production is guaranteed by supporting spring farming.

Governments at all levels are responding swiftly to calls for help. Some local authorities arranged char-

tered buses, trains and flights to bring employees back to work to ease labor shortages.

After reports of some 300 million chickens starving over impeded feed supply in epidemic-stricken Hubei, the government prompted state-owned grain suppliers to send feed and later ordered local governments to refrain from blocking ways key to transport of livestock feed and products.

MARKET FORCES

Besides government aid, the country's businesses have been biting the bullet with grit and wit to survive and thrive. Companies and factories see the hard times as a chance to discover opportunities in the midst of a crisis.

Industrial giants are taking the lead in business adjustments, such as the rollout of non-contact delivery services and promotion of virtual reality salesrooms and online scenic spot tours. Many also lend a hand to prop up smaller players in their business ecosystem, including scraping rent

and commission and offering micro-loans for vulnerable partners.

In one of the hardest-hit sectors, many restaurants take to food delivery to keep business going. Some even put their chefs on livestreaming platforms to pitch dishes or offer cooking tips.

The country's vibrant digital sector further adds to the economy's resilience by enabling millions of people to work, entertain and study from home via telecommuting and livestreaming.

As of the end of February, over 95 percent of companies in petrochemical, telecommunications, electricity and transport industries have resumed operation, while staff in over 80 percent of foreign-funded enterprises have returned to work.

As the rest of the global economy is increasingly gripped by fears of the outbreak, China's getting back to economic normality offers much-needed comfort.

UPHILL BATTLE

Xi said the COVID-19 epidemic will inevitably deal a relatively big blow to China's economic and social development, but its impact is temporary and generally manageable. He pointed out that at such a time it is even more important to view China's development in a comprehensive, dialectical and long-term perspective and to strengthen and firm up confidence.

China's major economic growth targets for 2020 are yet to be announced as the annual session of the national legislature was postponed due to the epidemic, but Xi has reiterated that the country has confidence and capabilities to achieve the building of a moderately prosperous society in all aspects and the eradication of poverty.

Noting that the country has been trying to manage a balancing act between containing the epidemic and reviving the economy, analysts and business insiders of many countries have expressed their cautious optimism that the Chinese economy will be left unscathed in the long run.

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said in February that she believes the Chinese economy "remains resilient" and will "return to normal in the second quarter" of 2020.

"We believe the coronavirus is a one-off negative shock, which should not alter the long-term growth trajectory of China's economy," UBS economists said in a research note in February. "As the virus outbreak is contained and economic activities normalize, we see pent-up demand being released and businesses recover."

However, experts said worldwide disruptions by the pandemic would pose new challenges to the Chinese economy.

The prevention focus should be shifted to the monitoring of inbound travelers to minimize the impact on business resumption, said Zhang Yan-sheng, chief researcher of the China Center for International Economic Exchanges. **Xinhua**

Current laws can't protect Zimbabwe women from sexual trafficking

BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe

SIMILO Ntuli* looks like an ordinary, fashion-savvy woman in her twenties. As a hairdresser and beauty therapist in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city, Ntuli has her finger on the pulse of the latest styles and trends. But she also has, what she admits, are dark secrets.

"I have become suspicious of young rich women whose source of income cannot be explained," she says. And she knows what she is talking about.

"I have been to Dubai (in 2018) where I was invited to work for some rich guys but what I saw made me think twice about how I want to make my money," she tells IPS on condition of anonymity.

"The grossest sexual fantasies you can imagine can get a young girl money that is unthinkable here in Zimbabwe," she says.

Ntuli says she was introduced to contacts or clients in the Near East by "a fixer" in Bulawayo. But she says she had to leave Dubai in a hurry after the demands to perform "despicable sex acts" proved unbearable.

Lobbyists in Zimbabwe are concerned by what they see as the weak enforcement of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, also known as the Palermo Protocol. It came into effect on Dec. 25, 2003 and seeks to prevent, suppress and punish the trafficking of persons.

Zimbabwe may be a signatory, along with 184 members of the U.N., but activists here say that enforcement efforts against organised human and sex trafficking remain inadequate as the true factors driving this are not being addressed.

Zimbabwe is facing its worst economic crisis in decades and activists say that the lack of safety nets, awareness campaigns and legal recourse for exploited women has continued to expose them to exploitation.

"The rate at which foreigners come to the country exposes the young women to trafficking. Recently, Zimbabwe adopted the mantra that it is 'open for business' and potential investors in their quest to partner with Zimbabwe have

been frequenting the country," Fadzai Traquino, national director of Women in Law in Southern Africa, tells IPS.

She explains that because of the current economic climate perpetrators are able to take advantage of vulnerable young women, offering them "job opportunities", explaining that those women who accept such opportunities often do so out of desperation.

"And so it becomes difficult to curb the pandemic as women are opting for these opportunities to secure financial and economic security," Traquino says.

And, as Ntuli points out, there remain gaps in how human and sex trafficking crimes can be reported.

"I think people, including the police in Zimbabwe, have become cynical. I think it's because of the economic crisis. Someone who I told my story to asked what I thought I was doing going to Dubai. I cannot even approach law enforcement officers on this matter as I feel I know what their reaction would be," Ntuli says.

In 2019, the United States State Department issued the Trafficking in Persons Report noted that Zimbabwe "does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking", while local researchers say more needs to be done if young women such as Ntuli are to come forward and report cases for justice to be served. Ntuli admits that she is unaware if there is any legal recourse open to her as a victim of sex trafficking.

"Educating vulnerable people about human trafficking for sexual exploitation is one piece to addressing the problem. As the Palermo Protocol mandates, governments need to deal with the root causes of trafficking for sexual exploitation, and these are grounded in gender inequality and discrimination," says Tsitsi Matekaire, the global lead of End Sex Trafficking at Equality Now, an NGO that advocates for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls.

"Governments must ensure that women and girls are supported to reach their potential, free from the impact of discrimination and poverty, and create more equal societies so that they are not



Victims say places like beauty salons have become hunting grounds for fixers, middlemen in sex and human trafficking. Courtesy: Ignatius Banda

vulnerable to sex trafficking in the first place," Matekaire tells IPS.

"Governments must ensure that victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation are properly supported to rebuild their lives after the traumatic experience, whether they have been trafficked within the country or where trafficked to another country," she adds.

The International Criminal Police Organisation's (INTERPOL) Vulnerable Communities unit has noted the importance of training local enforcement agents on how to conduct victim interviews in cases of human trafficking and child sexual exploitation.

In responses to IPS' enquires, the police organisation used the example of a successful INTERPOL-assisted raid of sex traffick-

ing in West Africa in January, where local police were provided with specialised training to bust a trafficking ring.

While Zimbabwe has made efforts to address human and sex trafficking, Traquino says more still needs to be done.

"The Government of Zimbabwe has demonstrated overall increasing efforts to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is not has not fully reached the required level of commitment in tackling human trafficking at large," she tells IPS.

"There is more that can be done to conscientise young economically vulnerable woman. The state has not taken advantage of the platforms that the youth are mostly found at, particularly Fa-

cebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and various other social media platforms. Sensitising young women about the risks of trafficking on the [social media] platforms that they frequently visit can be effective as the message reaches them directly," Traquino says.

The Global Sustainability Network (GSN), which actively supports the U.N. Sustainable Development Goal 8 of decent work and economic growth, has focused much of its work on eliminating modern slavery. It acknowledges that the "legal system is failing – human trafficking is illegal everywhere but it is growing everywhere".

"As a consequence something has to change – we need new laws – governments are obliged to protect their citizens," GSN

states. Gillian Chinzete, senior programmes officer with the Harare-based NGO Girls and Women Empowerment Network, also believes African governments and respective legislatures must be pressured to act.

"This will help in ensuring effective implementation of policies," she tells IPS.

"Communities have little or no information about human trafficking. Human trafficking cases are hidden from the general communities," Chinzete adds.

"Not her real name. This is part of a series of features from across the globe on human trafficking. IPS coverage is supported by the Airways Aviation Group.

Agencies

FRANK ALISHINDATSh **8,827,532.76****KWA DAU LA**TSh **200**

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Kupata nafasi ya kushinda kiasi hiki cha fedha na hata kuja Dar es Salaam na ndege nahisi ni kama ndoto kwangu.

WOW! FRANK ASHINDA TSH8,827,532.76 KUTOKA BASHIRI YA TSH200

Mteja wa betpawa Frank Msanga amepitia **furaha isiyo na kifani usiku wa Alhamisi** pale dau lake la Tsh200 katika Ligi ya Europa kutoa ushindi wa Tsh8,827,532.76.

Malipo yake ya awali Tsh5,695,053.40 yaliongezeka kwa 55% kutokana na bonasi kubwa za ushindi za kubashiri mechi 13, zilizoongeza kiwango kuwa Tsh8,827,532.76 kabla ya kodi. betPawa inatoa bonasi bora na kubwa za ushindi Tanzania kwa bashiri zenye mechi tatu na

zaidi, pamoja na 250% kwa mechi 30.

Mkazi wa Tunduma alieleza: “kabla ya kubashiri, mara nyingi nipo na marafiki zangu wawili na **huwa tukishauriana**. Kuwa jasiri ndicho kilikuwa akilini mwangu.”

Frank hakika alikua jasiri. Chaguo zake tisa kati ya 13 zilikuwa na odds zaidi ya 2.00. Alitabiri kwa usahihi kuwa Cluj na Club Brugge zitawashikilia Sevilla na Man

Utd na kutoa sare na Rangers itawafunga Braga.

Aliongezea; “Nimetoka kwenye mazingira duni. Kupata nafasi ya kushinda kiasi hiki cha fedha na hata kuja Dar es Salaam na ndege nahisi ni kama ndoto kwangu. Malengo yangu ni kununua vifaa na mashine kama grinder na compressor, na pia mbolea kwa ajili ya shughuli zangu za kilimo.”

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EU acknowledges the West must do much more to help developing countries tackle global warming

By Peter Fabricius

THE European Union's climate czar Frans Timmermans says the EU and the rest of the West have to do much more to help developing countries adapt to climate change if they want to win their support for deeper cuts in greenhouse gas emissions at the UN's COP26 climate conference in Glasgow this year.

But he is also very clear that whatever happens, whether in Europe or in South Africa, "there's no future in coal".

That's the message Timmermans - who is Vice President of the EU Commission and flag bearer of its "Green Deal" - took back to Brussels and delivered to the EU member states' environment ministers after visiting South Africa last week. The Green Deal aims to make Europe "climate-neutral" - i.e. with no net emissions of greenhouse gases - by 2050, in part by converting to a "circular economy" with more materials recycled and services replacing manufacture.

The historic Paris Agreement at COP21 in 2015 established a goal of limiting warming to well below 2, aiming at 1.5. But the national commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions which countries submitted in Paris have proved to be inadequate to reach those targets. So countries are now expected to commit to greater cuts at Glasgow, five years on.

Timmermans said his experience of COP25 in Madrid in December 2019 had showed him that if COP26 were to succeed, the EU and African Union (AU) positions would have to be aligned as closely as possible - and South Africa's leadership was key to getting the AU on board. Madrid had also made very clear to him "that we have to be serious about adaptation because that was the bone of contention between the two in the past".

Aggravating the problem, other industrialised nations "who didn't want to do anything, started hiding and using this as a pretext not to have to move themselves". Though he didn't name them, he seemed to be referring to big industrialised emerging markets like India (and perhaps China) who use their official developing world status to attack the developed world for failing to keep all their promises to help the developing world - even as they themselves continue to churn out many tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

"So I don't want to give them that excuse any more," Timmermans said.

"And on top of that I want to be acquainted with the specific challenges South Africa faces. Because apart from being the leader on this and having done tremendous work at the past COPs - without South Africa it's hard to imagine that Paris (COP21)



Generic coal mine EU acknowledges the West must do much more to help developing countries tackle global warming

would have been crowned with success - it's also a country with a specific challenge in this area, given its coal dependency."

Timmermans met Deputy President David Mabuza, several Cabinet ministers, including Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan and Environment, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Barbara Creecy, as well as parliamentarians, youth groups and representatives of the hydrogen industry, which Timmermans sees as key to both Europe's and South Africa's clean energy future.

Timmermans rated his visit a success because aligning the positions of the EU and South Africa and the AU required focus at the highest level. "And that clearly is present in South Africa."

It was still early days to say what exactly Pretoria would do at COP26.

"But I think they understand they're in a strong position, also in the presidency (chair) of the African Union, to prepare us well, at least to see to what extent we can come closer together in preparation for the COP. There's no guarantee we will have that. But at least we know what we want to achieve and I know what the priorities are."

"It was also good for me to learn from so many people that the issue of climate change might not be the first concern of people who are struggling," he added. "If you are struggling to reach the end of the month, the end of the world is not your primary concern."

"But I am convinced that many, many South Africans are looking at the weather, at the droughts and the storms and the wildfires and saying, 'We've got a problem!'"

Timmermans seemed to be a bit taken aback by the strength of the argument he heard from the South African government - though more from some officials than others - that the EU had to keep its side of the bargain before South Africa would help it. "It's been made very clear to me if there is no strong commitment on the European side on the issue of adaptation, it's going to be very difficult to get an aligned position. I take that back home so I can debrief ministers. And I can tell them we need to step up our act on adaptation."

What specifically could the EU give South Africa and Africa?

"A number of things. Of course, not every African country is at the same stage of development. With South Africa specifically it's not only about adaptation; it's also about economic cooperation, it's about trade, it's about science and technology. We also discussed that at length. It's about seeing how we can bring some of the more promising developments in new energy to a higher level so that they become marketable."

"But for Africa in general the message that we need to do more, to actually be more concrete in terms of the promises we've made to support adaptation in Africa is very clear. Though Africa also needed to do its bit."

Timmermans agreed that one of the big promises which the EU and the North more broadly needed to keep was to properly fund the Green Climate Fund,

launched in 2010, for which rich countries originally pledged \$100-billion a year, to help poorer countries mitigate and adapt to climate change. In reality the developed world has only put a little more than an accumulated \$10-billion into the fund. Timmermans agreed that the Green Climate Fund commitments were largely still "only on paper. And so that's why we need to follow through and show that we're going to put money on the table. Real money."

The EU also intended to launch tailor-made climate programmes for the different states of Africa.

The EU had special and converging interests with South Africa because it was an industrialised country. One issue which came up all the time in his discussions in South Africa was the "just transition" - from coal as an energy source to renewable energy. "That's the big, big issue."

The EU had also made plans for just transition. "We have 30 coal mining regions that need to move to a different economic structure. South Africa has a huge challenge, obviously, in that area. Our ambition in Europe is to leave no one behind. And I clearly heard in South Africa also, the ambition is to leave no one behind."

He had agreed with Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan to share the EU's experiences of transitional regions "so we can showcase some of our experiences, both positive and negative. So some lessons can be learned, and some mistakes avoided." He was very interested in learning about that.

Europe and South Africa confronted the same issue. "Whether it's in 10 or 15 or 20 years in Europe or a bit longer in other parts of the world, I honestly believe there is no future in coal. I think we need to be honest with our constituents about that. Not that that's going to be ending tomorrow. Governing, politics, is not just about tomorrow, it's also about the long-term future. And in the long-term future we have to develop alternatives. Both in terms of our energy sources, but also in terms of our economic activities in coal mining regions."

As the grandson of a coal miner he knew the transition from coal could be very difficult and painful. But he had never met a coal miner whose ambition had been for his son also to be a coal miner.

"If we really want Paris to be a success, then we have to organise a just transition out of coal." He said he was encouraged that from Mabuza down, everybody he had met understood this.

"And if South Africa is committed to the Paris Agreement, that means carbon neutrality somewhere in the second half of the century."

Apart from getting out of coal,

everyone also had to develop CCS - carbon capture and storage - and seek a different energy mix. Apart from the climate, coal had no future simply for economic reasons.

"I think that coal exports from SA have already halved. And that's not going to get much better, probably. And renewable energy is getting cheaper and cheaper."

"And this country is ideally placed. You have the sun, you have the wind, you have the coastline, ideally placed to be extremely successful in renewable energy, wind and solar."

He cited Poland as a European example of the declining economics of coal. The country gets 80% of its energy from coal, but doesn't use it or sell it. "They're stocking it and they're buying cheaper Russian coal." Coal was dying because it was so carbon intensive. And because there were alternatives. "The Stone Age didn't come to an end because of a lack of stones," he quipped.

Another major convergence which he saw between the EU and South Africa was that both had steel industries which needed to be decarbonised - and hydrogen could be the way to do it.

"We're going to decarbonise our steel industry. It would be wonderful if we could in parallel help South Africa decarbonise its steel industry. Steel is now produced with coal. But in the very near future, and it's already close to market in Europe, we're going to produce steel with hydrogen. And South Africa is ideally placed to produce a lot of hydrogen. It could even be an export product in the future."

And if South Africa could also produce steel with hydrogen, it could achieve a strategic advantage over the Americans, Chinese and others, by selling the car industry carbon-neutral steel. The European steel industry was already seeing this as a huge economic opportunity.

Timmermans met hydrogen power advocates while in South Africa, at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Hydrogen South Africa (HySA), a government research programme to develop South Africa's hydrogen and fuel-cell technologies. He understood from those meetings that, given the geographic location of South Africa and its surroundings, it needed export markets for its hydrogen.

And South Africa and Europe could work together on hydrogen which was definitely going to be a big thing in Europe. South Africa was very well placed to develop green hydrogen because of its large resources of water, sun and wind, with which it could desalinate enough salt water both to address its fresh water shortages and to produce hydrogen.

Noting Minister of Mineral and Energy Resources Gwede Mantashe's recent preoccupation with natural gas, Timmermans said gas could be a transitional energy carrier to hydrogen. Gas was certainly cleaner than coal, and the infrastructure for gas was quite easily adaptable to also transport hydrogen.

"And the blending of gas and hydrogen is also a possibility."

But how helpful would it really be if the EU achieved its target of climate neutrality by 2050 while other big greenhouse gas emitters - especially the US - continued to deny and defy man-made climate change?

"The thing is, whatever political agenda some people might have, Mother Nature is reminding us of the fact that there is a problem, every day," he rejoined.

"And that problem's not going to go away. Even if we are very successful and we limit the rise of temperature to 1.5 (above pre-industrial levels), we will still have to do a lot of adaptation because the weather will remain erratic. And we will have more natural disasters and storms."

"But if we let it get out of hand and let it go to 2 or 3 or 4, then it gets completely out of control.

Then we're really in trouble. So I say, without irony and without hesitation, that it is an existential issue for humanity."

Timmermans said the developed world could not say to the developing world: "No, no, you can't get to our level because we can't afford that. That's not a proposition anyone can make. So we have to adapt; there is no alternative."

And the US was adapting even if the Trump White House was not.

He cited the recent decision by the world's largest asset management firm, BlackRock, to join the global investor campaign to pressure the biggest polluting companies.

"All these huge investors with billions and billions of dollars are saying we're moving towards green investment. That's corporate America. The thing is, for small and medium sized enterprises it's more difficult because then you're looking at next year and the year after. But corporations need to look 20, 30, 40 years ahead. And they've done the math. They know where this is going. They're quickly changing. And I think this change is not incremental, it's exponential."

This was also happening at lower levels of the US government, the states and cities. "So that society is moving in that direction even if the White House is not. They even attempt, if I understand correctly, to depict the coronavirus as a hoax. It takes a stretch of the imagination to do that."

Timmermans also thought China, the world's second largest economy and largest manufacturer, was on the right path, though facing difficulties.

"China's facing a couple of challenges now. It began with the trade dispute (with the US). Because China knows it needs to make these changes, for two reasons. First, an environmental reason because they have a problem in the cities. And they have a problem with a water shortage; pollution problems. So they need to do that."

"And second, they don't see the European Green Deal as a deal just to reduce emissions. They see it as an economic strategy because it's about economic transformation... We combine the need to address a climate crisis with the need to ensure that the industrial revolution lands well for the whole of society."

"So we need to regulate it to serve all of society, otherwise you will have just a few winners, as you can see in big tech now. And a lot of people losing out. So we combined the two. And the elements in this which the Chinese find most interesting is the economic element. So they see the Green Deal as an economic strategy, which is good because it means they will engage with us. To do what they mean to do and want to do, they need a certain margin in their economy. It's very costly."

"And the trade dispute I think has eaten away the margin. So that's why they are a bit hesitant at this stage. Not about where they need to go but the pace they need to go at. So I hope when we get out of the situation we're in today, with looming trade conflicts, that perhaps we can speed up. But I'm generally optimistic about the Chinese commitment to this and I hope we can get some good results in Glasgow. Let's not forget that the Chinese were extremely helpful to get the Paris Agreement done."

Timmermans said the growing number of climate catastrophes around the world were persuading the developing world that it had to cut emissions, no matter what the developed world did.

"By and large, I believe that everyone's moving in the same direction. Because Mother Nature is unforgiving."

But he also believes the industrialised world still has a responsibility to do more and the developing world will move faster if the West does help.

Agencies

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD =066=

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	
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9 letters: DEDUCTION
 8 letters: DREADFUL, URETHANE
 7 letters: LAUNDRY, ILEITIS,
 6 letters: LEDGER, ETHICS,
 5 letters: TASTE, SNAIL, SALON
 4 letters: YOUR, SALT, OOPS,
 3 letters: OIL, RED, SUN, DUE, ROT, INN, GOT

WORD FIT	CROSSWORD
S L O W L Y D E C R Y I N G M A T E R I A L S C O U R S E A D H O G S C O R A M B L E S S E B	S H A R L A S S T H M N S H A C K L E O P P O S I T E P H I T R E N E W K O I N E A R E V E B A I L I T I E L N D O N E S I A S P E A K E O N I E N O M A D N E G R O S I O M A T E R A N S I O M A T E R S I O M A T E R S E N D E A V O R S

CLUES: ACROSS
 1 Traveller (9)
 2 Colourless (5)
 3 Christian Eucharist (4)
 4 Cobbler (9)
 5 Dirty (6)
 6 Adjure (4)
 7 Creative activity (3)
 8 as a group (8)
 9 Tired (5)
 10 In a sloping position (6)
 11 Approach (8)
 12 Afford, bring forth (5)
 13 Vice versa of the word Yes (3)
 14 South African mountain (4)
 15 Loot (7)
 16 Place in a grave (5)
 17 Shade or variety of colour (4)
 18 Award, bequeath (5)
 19 Centre, crux (4) 33 Ancient (4)

CLUES: DOWN
 1 Decease (4,4)
 2 On dry land (6)
 3 Deficit (8)
 4 Kernel (4)
 5 Hostility (6)
 6 Highest mountain (7)
 7 Frightened (6)
 8 Trouble, fuss (3)
 9 Image (5)
 10 Character (10)
 11 assemblage (9)
 12 American Indian people of SE Alaska (7)
 13 Appeared (7)
 14 Land surrounded by water (6)
 15 Chief city of UK (6)
 16 Gamble (3)

Comments: 0789 43 73 09

LOCALS SHUN PURCHASING OF 'CHEAP' FUMBA TOWN HOUSES IN ZANZIBAR

By Francis Kajubi

LOCAL consumers are missing out on a list of buyers of eco-friendly three bedroom apartments going at as low as 41.2m/- each at Fumba Town in Zanzibar.

Corporate Property Solutions is the company that has until now sold 140 apartments of between three and five bedrooms but the buyers are mostly foreigners while locals account for only 12 percent.

"This modern project was targeting locals but they are nowhere to be seen compared to foreigners who are making use of this golden opportunity," said Lucy Mchiwa who is Sales Executive of CPS.

Mchiwa said last week in Zanzibar that the project whose construction started in December 2016, has eco-friendly houses of between three and five bedrooms which are located in different zones.

"Prices which range between US\$17,900 and US\$199,900 are determined by size and location of the apartment with those on the beach front costing more," she said.

Fumba Town properties are built using alternative technologies such as pre-fab technology that utilizes renewable resources such as earth bag, breaks and treated timber.

Mchiwa further noted that timber treated houses are durable and more comfortable with a lifetime of between 60 and 100 years. "People from Scandinavia countries and Europe are our popular buyers and tenants of the properties," she added.

Most foreign owners use their properties as residences or simply let them to visitors to the Spice Islands whose ma-



A model apartment at Fumba Town.

major source of foreign currency is tourism.

"No less than 40 foreign tenants are letting our properties out of the finished 200 but often in short stays of between one to three months," the CPS Sales Executive noted.

Unlike outright purchasing of the apartments, letting is a bit higher at between US\$250 a day

compared to hotels which charge between US\$1,200 and US\$1,500 per day for luxury rooms of similar size.

Fumba Town project which is implemented by CPS and Volks House is being constructed on an area of 600,000 acres from which 3,000 stand alone houses and apartments will be erected in the next five years. So far 300

houses have been completed.

The town is built on bulldozed coral rock that is low in organic material, fertility and bad soil structure hence not fit for farming. Fifty per cent of the waste in Zanzibar is organic that can be turned to soil. By layering organic materials together with charcoal, sawdust, cardboard boxes, paper and letting them decompose,

CPS is imitating nature's way of soil building.

The project employs the earth bag building technique as a way of reducing the use of fossil fuel by choosing an alternative method of building technology with the intention of preserving the nature of the earth.

Big increase in number of green financial hubs

JOHANNESBURG

Cities all over the world have expanded their thinking, policy and investment in the energy space into efficiency, renewables and smarter infrastructure.

Green finance is a worldwide affair. While the traditional money centres of New York and London play critical roles in the burgeoning renewable economy, investment is increasingly originating farther afield, nearer to places in need of upgraded energy infrastructure. That means countries from South Africa to Morocco to Kazakhstan are betting they can compete as new hubs of climate-focused funding.

Standard Bank's South African Unit, for example, this week sold the continent's biggest green bond yet. Africa is expected to attract significant green investment as it builds up solar and wind power, exploiting an opportunity to leapfrog outdated fossil fuel energy systems. Aspiring green finance hubs are already rising in such places as Casablanca, Lagos and Johannesburg to fund this tectonic shift.

Tiny Luxembourg, which launched the world's first green securities exchange in 2016, has the largest market share of listed green bonds, while Astana, in Kazakhstan, is trying to brand itself as the centre of Central Asia's green finance market.

"Cities all over the world have expanded their thinking, policy and investment in the energy space into efficiency, renewables and smarter infrastructure," says Kristin Barbato, co-founder of Dynamo Energy Hub, which is building networks and workspaces in cities around the world for cleantech entrepreneurs.

This isn't to say international banks are standing on the sidelines. France's Credit Agricole surpassed Spain's Banco Santander last month to become the top underwriter of green bonds so far this year. While France has dominated green bonds in 2020, China was the dominant issuer last year. Hong Kong's Financial Services Development Council meanwhile has been working since 2016 to establish that city as a regional green finance hub, saying "if it does not seize this opportunity, others will do so." They already are.

The shifting centres of green finance are also about tackling the world's environmental problems where they start. Most of the plastics flowing into the ocean come from a few South Asian countries. The answer to fixing this global problem is local recycling infrastructure, according to Rob Kaplan, founder of Singapore-based Circulate Capital. The firm has raised more than \$100 million from plastics makers to stop trash from reaching the ocean. The fund, which just opened, is deploying capital fast: With 10 deals currently in due diligence, it expects about one-fifth of its assets to be committed by summer. "There's so much pent-up demand," says Kaplan.

Most infrastructure projects have historically been funded at the local level, so it makes sense that finance centres are proliferating, says Scott Jacobs, founder of San Francisco-based Generate Capital, which recently raised \$1 billion to invest in clean energy infrastructure. The big issue for future infrastructure won't necessarily be financing, but rather people to think up what we need to build next. "Electricity decarbonisation is not going to be a problem anymore — it's happening," Jacobs said. "But what we really need now is for the 27-year-olds who are excited about building the next app to want to build the next landfill gas system instead."



Cities all over the world have expanded their thinking, policy and investment in the energy space into efficiency, renewables and smarter infrastructure

American billionaire to build Africa's largest agriculture research centre in Rwanda

KIGALI

American billionaire Howard Buffet has pledged to establish Africa's largest centre for agriculture research and extension in the country.

Buffet was speaking at the inauguration of a \$54m irrigation scheme in Nasho Sector of Kirehe District which also consists of a solar power plant with a capacity of 3.3 megawatts to power the irrigation system.

The scheme is a partnership between the Rwandan government and Howard G. Buffet Foundation (HGBF) to modernize Rwanda's agriculture sector and specifically improve smallholder farmers' livelihoods.

Buffet said that following the successful implementation of the project and impact on the beneficiaries, he said that they had decided to continue to the partnership through the establishment of a research and extension centre.

The centre which he dubbed as a 'powerhouse of research and extension that does not exist in Africa,' will also involve connecting Nasho Sector of Kirehe District with Rwanda Institute for Conservation Agriculture (RICA) in Bugesera District.

"We came to an agreement with the government to finish the road that will connect RICA and Nasho, we have come to an agreement on how we will be able to complete it. About 36 kilometres of road," he said.

The connection of the two areas will lead to the creation of the continent's largest agriculture research and extension. "With the opening of RICA, we have an opportunity to connect RICA and Nasho and establish, we are going to create a powerhouse of research and extension that does not exist in Africa," he said.

He commended the commitment and leadership of the Rwandan government which he said had enabled the cooperation. The irrigation scheme inaugurated this week has been operational since the agriculture season 2017A, Nasho Irrigation Scheme project is made of 63 center pivots irrigation system, irrigating 1,173 hectares belonging to 2,099 smallholder farmers.



BM Assembling Plant employees at work at their Kibaha factory premises. Photo courtesy of NIT.

NIT head promises technical support to Kibaha Yutong assembling plant

By Property Watch Reporter

A local Yutong buses assembling plant located in Kibaha district of Coast region has been assured of technical support by National Institute of Transport which will deploy its engineers to help in sophisticated works.

Speaking after touring a BM Assembling Plant earlier this week, NIT Rector, Professor Zacharia Mganilwa said the institute has qualified and experienced experts to help the local factory speed up the process but also ensure that the assembling is properly done.

Prof Mganilwa said, among others, NIT has qualified mechanical engineers, automobile engineer, transport finance and market experts who will work with businessman, Jonas Nyagawa to successfully run his engineering company.

"Our experts will work with the factory owner by providing their services in areas where necessary," he noted stressing that NIT will talk with Nyagawa to agree on in which areas he needs support. Giving out examples of how NIT's experts will assist BM Assembling, the Rector said automobile engineers will look at quality of the buses,

comfortability of seats and the interior finishing of the Chinese made passenger vehicles.

He further noted that after all testing is done, NIT will also provide certificates of road worthiness needed to ply the country's roads. According to him other government institutions such as Tanzania Revenue Authority and Tanzania Bureau of Standards will also provide their certificates to allow Nyagawa officially become a commercial passenger service vehicles assembler.

"But this local investor will also provide a facility for our students to

undertake their practical training," he added while pointing out that in future the company may enter manufacturing with Liganga iron ore and other locally mined gems used as raw materials.

Briefing the NIT delegation, Nyagawa said his idea in establishing the plant five years ago, was to meet local demand but also lower prices of the vehicles. "When I decided to invest in this risky business, nobody including officials from the government, understood me," he said.

He pointed out that one major factor that convinced him that

the business is viable was price which fell from 450m/- each for an imported bus to 300m/- if it is assembled locally. "It's a huge difference which can be reinvested by our company to start manufacturing some of the parts such as chassis right here," Nyagawa noted.

The BM Assembling Plant owners said he needs US 4 million to buy a chassis manufacturing machines that will save the country a lot of money. Nyagawa targets to assemble 100 buses per annum starting this year. His company employs 12 people only so far.

EUROPEAN BANK LAUDS DAR RESTRUCTURING URBAN FINANCING, LAND REFORMS

By Property Watch Reporter

INITIATIVES to restructure housing financing being piloted in Africa by some countries including Tanzania are helping to address the challenge of rapid urbanization on the continent.

European Investment Bank said in its report titled, 'Banking in Africa: financing transformation amid uncertainty,' that creation and reforming of Tanzania Mortgage Refinance Company and Nigeria Mortgage Refinance Corporation in 2013, have played a major role in improving housing financing in urban areas.

"South Africa is also beginning to tackle the constraints to its mortgage and housing markets. Meanwhile, several other African countries are working to reform their housing subsidy systems," the report stated.

It further said in West Africa, for example, the interventions of the Regional Mortgage Refinancing Fund (CRRH-UEMOA) in the regional financial market have enabled refinanced banks to grant more mortgage loans at more attractive rates and with longer maturities.

Since 2012, this regional institution has mobilised a total amount of 162.3 billion CFA francs, about USD



Newly finished Watumishi Housing Limited's Gezaulole apartments in Dar es Salaam. Watumishi is a beneficiary of Tanzania Mortgage Refinance Company Limited.

300 million, on maturities ranging from 10-15 years through eight public issuances on the sub-regional financial market.

"Instead of financing themselves on domestic or sub-regional financial markets, some institutions turn to development finance institutions (DFIs), whose role as a technical partner and funder (of last resort) remains crucial for a strong

supply of long-term financing on the continent. Alternative solutions such as hire-purchase systems can be also developed, including by specialised institutions," the report said.

It also credited Dar and Kigali for successful land reforms and land title systems existence which are serving as benchmarks. "In Tanzania, an innovative and flexible urban land regime and the

establishment of formal systems for issuing title deeds have helped to provide appropriate answers to land issues," the EIB report noted.

"A particularly instructive case is that of Rwanda. The most direct effect of land reforms is more efficient treatment of land titles and of transfers of ownership. In addition, land reforms also contribute towards increasing

the income of the state, of local governments and of the population," the report added.

It however said in-situ upgrading - with the government providing the infrastructure (regardless of land titles or not), depending on the needs of the local community - can actually be a low-cost and pragmatic solution to urban upgrading that preserves the fabric of the community, in particular when this can be accompanied by some kind of cost recovery system.

"Urban land reforms, if they are carried out in a fair and efficient fashion, can also have significant crosscutting effects on the business environment. For instance, Rwanda rose from 61st place in 2012 to 4th in the world in 2017 under the criteria for transferring ownership in the World Bank's Doing Business ranking," the EIB report pointed out.

For local populations, land reforms are an important negotiating tool, particularly in the process of divesting land ownership to foreign investors. So, although they were originally introduced to improve tax revenues and protect citizens' land rights, land reform programmes have also proven to be important catalysts for access to finance by local populations, the report stressed.

Government: We'll spend N150bn on 44 highway projects

ABUJA

The federal government will spend the N150 billion Sukuk bonds being issued by the Debt Management Office (DMO) in financing 44 ongoing highway projects across the country.

Minister of State for Works and Housing, Abubakar Aliyu disclosed this on Thursday at the summit on National Policy and Development in Abuja. He said due to paucity of funds, the federal government had to leverage on alternative sources of funding to finance infrastructure.

The minister said in 2017 and 2018, the federal government spent N200 billion raised through Sukuk bonds on 58 critical highway projects across the country. Twenty-five of these projects were funded in 2017 and 28 in 2018, he said.

Engr Aliyu said the "expansion, reconstruction and rehabilitation of Lagos-Ibadan road, construction of Second Niger Bridge and the rehabilitation of Abuja-Kaduna-Kano dual carriageway are being financed with the Presidential Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)."

He said this concerted and sustained effort in road infrastructure financing has positively impacted on the physical completion of many of the projects. The summit was organised by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Policy Development and Analysis with theme as 'Actualising the Next Level Agenda: Strategies, Prospects and Anticipated Challenges.'

The minister said in bridging the infrastructure gap in the country, the works and housing ministry is also intervening in tertiary institutions' internal road networks across the country through the reconstruction of internal roads in 44 tertiary institutions nationwide.

Nairobi takes bulk of hostel investments

NAIROBI

A study by Cytonn Research shows Nairobi is the most favoured investment destination for hostels due to high student population that prefers Parklands.

However, it notes Kenya could host more than 30,000 international students if it built well-located, high quality and affordable accommodation. "For investment opportunity, Nairobi metropolitan area hosts the University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) that account for 43.1 percent of the country's total student population," it observed.

The research said such hostels should have high-quality finishes and amenities, market-specific design and be located near universities. The report that surveyed Parklands, Ruiru, Kahawa Sukari, Thome, Juja, Rongai, Athi River, and Karen named Parklands suburb as the most popular at 84.4 percent occupancy.

The average yield stands at 9.8 percent for the upper mid-end student housing where each purpose-built hostel room went for an average monthly rent of Sh12,141. In the low mid-end housing segment, Juja had the cheapest monthly rent at Sh3,583 with an 85 percent occupancy rate, largely serving JKUAT students.

Africa50 signs deal to upgrade Gbessia Conakry International Airport

CONAKRY

The Government of Guinea, Africa50 and the Group Aéroports de Paris (ADP), signed a 25-year concession agreement to co-develop and finance the upgrade and expansion of Gbessia Conakry International Airport, during an official ceremony held in Conakry, in the presence of the President of the Republic of Guinea, Alpha Condé.

This event follows the signing on 3 February 2020 of the Shareholders Agreement under which partners agreed to establish the Société de Gestion de l'Aéroport de Gbessia (SOGEG), the new concessionaire. SOGEG is owned by the Government of Guinea (34%), Africa50 (33%) and ADP (33%).

The project consists in the construction and operation of a new terminal for international and domestic passengers and related infrastructure, including a cargo terminal, aprons, and taxiways. The new terminal will have a capacity of one million passengers a year, about twice its current capacity (traffic to be reached by 2031). Phase 1 of the project, estimated at €120 million, should begin this year.

ADP, a global player in airports development and operation will provide technical and operational know-how. Africa50 will bring its project development and finance expertise on board and will act as a bridge between the Guinean government and the private investors.

The modernization of the airport will have a significant development impact, providing higher levels of service and safety for passengers and an expansion of economic activity. It should also lead to ICAO certification of the airport shortly after completion.

Opera to open SA data centre this year



Opera data centre in Nairobi, Kenya.

JOHANNESBURG

Norwegian-based Web company Opera is set to open a data centre in South Africa this year. This was revealed by Jørgen Arnesen, head of marketing and distribution at Opera, in an e-mail interview with ITWeb.

Opera is a freeware Web browser for Microsoft Windows, Android, iOS, macOS and Linux operating systems, developed by Opera Software. With 6.93% market share in Africa, Opera is the third most popular browser on the continent after Chrome (70.14%) and Safari (8.93%).

The company says it has a growing user base of more than 350 million monthly active users worldwide, with 120 million of those users based in Africa. Arnesen says two years ago, Opera announced its 'Africa first' strategy that followed the

company's investment of more than \$100 million to speed up Internet adoption in Africa and strengthen the Internet ecosystem with local partners.

"This year, Opera is looking at investing in a data centre in South Africa and we are working with mobile network operators to create more affordable access to the Internet from mobile devices," he says. "We expect to launch the data centre soon and its primary use will be to improve the user experience with even faster browsing using Opera products."

Global IT infrastructure The company recently launched data centres in Kenya and Nigeria, which are now part of Opera's global IT infrastructure. "South Africa is an important market for Opera, and we will continue to look for opportunities to provide the best possible user experience," says Arne-

sen. "It's also a very strategic geographical location as the benefits that Opera can provide with the installation of the data centre would also benefit neighbouring countries like Mozambique. In this way, we can bring a better online experience for many more people using Opera products in the region."

Global tech companies like Amazon Web Services and Oracle are also set to launch their data centres in SA this year. "We are constantly improving our browsers by adding new unique features that enhance the online experience of our users," says Arnesen. "For example, last year, we introduced an offline file-sharing feature to our Opera Mini browser, which became the first major mobile browser to introduce a built-in file-sharing functionality."

Moreover, he adds, Op-

era is soon to launch Opera News Lite, a downsized and simplified version of the Opera News app that is used by more than 39 million users worldwide. He explains that Opera News Lite is extremely responsive, especially in areas with limited bandwidth and phone storage.

"Opera News is currently the most downloaded news app in 2020 in countries like South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, according to App Annie, and during Q2-2019, it became the world's most downloaded news app," Arnesen notes.

"We are constantly expanding our product portfolio beyond the development of mobile browsers. Last year, we introduced our new online marketing platform, Opera Ads - an intelligent advertising solution for digital agencies, publishers and brands to connect and engage with the Opera audi-

ence on a global scale and with geo-targeting capabilities."

It also announced online editorial platform Opera News Hub, which has over 5 000 African content creators producing local articles and stories which are published across the Opera products, such as Opera Ads and Opera Mini.

According to Arnesen, Opera has already partnered with MTN and Airtel in Nigeria. "Since the beginning of the year, we have been working together offering people free browsing through our products and together we have created affordable data packages for consumers."

"Plans are under way in South Africa to start working with mobile network providers to replicate these efforts and bring down the connectivity barriers in the country."

CONSTRUCTION

THAILAND PLANNING \$21BN UPGRADE OF RAIL NETWORK

BANGKOK

A city famous for traffic jams is looking to solve its congestion and pollution woes by building a massive train station and overhauling its rail network.

Bangkok, a capital choked by daily gridlock and seasonal toxic haze, is at the centre of plans for Thailand's biggest rail development project that will make travel by train possible to China and Singapore, and will connect most major Thai cities to Bangkok and its expanding transit systems.

The Thai government has committed to spending more than \$21 billion to expand Bangkok's rail transit, extend train lines, and build high-speed rails -- with a massive \$1.3bn hub at the centre that will become Southeast Asia's largest train station when it opens in 2021.

The plan is part of the government's move to ease air pollution. Exhaust from gas guzzling vehicles, as well as power generators, has been blamed for contributing to hazardous haze blanketing Bangkok and parts of the country over the past several months. The government has urged citizens to use more public transportation and has made expanding the transit system a priority.

"It will be good for the country's economy and environment over the long term," said Somprawn Manprasert, chief economist at Bank of Ayudhya. "The pollution problem has shown that we have reached the point where our actions start to hurt us."

Thailand's rail ambition serves not only as a tool to reduce fossil fuel use but also to boost the struggling economy, overhaul its dated train system and tame its currency. The rail network is a flagship infrastructure project that's viewed as a major support for an economy reeling from a severe drought and a slump in tourism as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

The majority of the \$33bn infrastructure budget over the next three years will be spent on rail projects, with the goal that it will bring more private investment and boost consumption as Thailand seeks to recover from the slowest growth in five

years.

"The global economy is quite weak and the interest rates are quite low. This is the best time to invest in infrastructure," Voravuth Mala, acting governor of the State Railway of Thailand, said in an interview. "If people can travel quickly and conveniently, the economy will be good. That's the idea we build upon."

The development will double the state passenger rail's capacity and triple the freight capacity through track doubling. It's expected to serve more than 22 million commercial passengers annually after the upgrade, and transport more than 30 million tonnes of commodities. High-speed rail will connect key Thai cities to Bangkok, a city of 10 million residents and 20 million visitors where the transit system will also double in number of lines.

Even though Chinese and Japanese rail systems dwarf that of Thailand, such expansion is rare for the country, where the network had been undeveloped for almost seven decades as it turned to highways. The state rail network reached 3,300 kilometres in 1951, but has only added about 700km over the past 69 years.

"Investing in the rail system is necessary for economic development," said Pavida Pananond, an associate professor at Thammasat Business School's Department of International Business, Logistics and Transport. "But the caveats for Thailand lie in the usual issue of how these projects are implemented, whether it will be a source of vested interests in corruption and siphoning off the budget."

For Mr Voravuth, who has been at the rail agency for three decades, he's now starting to see the projects that were discussed during his early years come to fruition. By 2037, the network length is expected to grow by 60 per cent with routes added to tourist destinations and border towns.

The double-track rails will make transportation of goods and passengers more efficient and reduce logistics costs in the country, said Manoj Lohatepanont, director of Chulalongkorn University Transportation Institute. However, high-speed rails will not see enough demand for at least a decade, and the government



Labourers working on a train track in Bangkok.

still needs to develop suitable feeder systems for Bangkok transit to increase usage, he said.

Thailand's first high-speed rail will connect to the Chinese rail network at Vientiane, the capital city of Laos. It will be built by China, and will become part of the Belt and Road Initiative. It will

also serve a purpose of taming the baht, which has strengthened last year partly because of a healthy current account and large foreign-cash pile.

The contract with the Chinese counterpart will be expressed in US dollars, said Kobsak Pootrakool, secretary of the Economic Ministers Council. "Buying

a large amount of dollars on the day of contract signing will weaken the baht and reverse the flow," he said, adding that it's the first time the Thai government has used dollars as currency in the contract, though it could become more common in the future.

The first phase of the

608km rail network is already under construction. The second phase, which would connect to the Chinese railway in Laos, is in the design phase. Several high-speed contracts covering 668km and 970km routes are being planned.

When the giant Bangkok station opens in early 2021, the rail agency plans

to slowly phase out the old diesel locomotives and replace them with electric trains, according to State Railway's Mr Voravuth. The idea is in line with the country's power plan to reduce the share of electricity produced from fossil fuels and increase the amount from renewable sources.

China asserts its command of the seas with immense Tianjin museum

TIANJIN

WORK has been officially completed on China's National Maritime Museum in the port city of Tianjin, which combines a huge scale with a striking design, a range of green features and a political message.

The museum, built over six years on Tianjin's waterfront on Bohai Bay, resembles four immense aluminium-clad telescopes directed out to the East China Sea. It was designed by Australia's Cox Architecture in association with the Tianjin Architecture and Design Institute, and UK consulting engineer Arup. Building was carried out by China Construction

Engineering Corporation using Tianjin's shipbuilding know-how. The building covers 80,000 sq m, roughly two and a half times the area of the Sydney Opera House. This is divided between six display areas and 15 exhibition halls on three floors.

The sustainable elements include an outer shell fitted with an integrated drainage system to channel rainwater into storage tanks and its patterned façade also helps shed snow, which can be heavy in northeast China. The roof includes a solar panel array that, together with its geothermal heating system, reduced the energy needed to run the



China's National Maritime Museum in the port city of Tianjin.

building.

Earthquake-proofing is done by means of massive ball joints that are designed to move in response to a seismic event. The four protrusions are cantilevered over the bay by as much as 42m. Each has a theme -- namely, "the ancient ocean", "the ocean today", "journey of discovery" and "the age

of the dragon", and aim to highlight China's historical role as a maritime power.

As for the political message, Michael Rayner, a former Cox partner, told the Australian Financial Review last year that the sponsors, the National Maritime Museum Preparatory Office of the Chinese Government and Tianjin Municipality,

were "keen to show as much as possible China's maritime trade correlation to European and Middle Eastern trade, rather than be seen as some kind of isolated maritime history."

Philip Cox, the company's co-founder, told the paper that the scale of the museum made it "a very important statement" that China "has

been a maritime power and maintains its position as a maritime power." He added: "I think unlike other countries that haven't asserted themselves in that demonstrative way -- even the Japanese haven't done that -- the Chinese felt it necessary to make a statement that yes, it has always been a maritime power."

Green energy fuels 60% profit rise for Acciona

TORONTO

Spanish infrastructure company Acciona has announced a profit of €352m in 2019, a 60% rise on its 2018 performance when corporate operations are excluded.

The company attributed the rise, which was made in spite of a 4% fall in revenue to €7.2bn, to its growing operating efficiency and a growth in margins. It added that its adoption of sustainable solutions played a role in the results. At year-end, 93% of its investments and 83% of its gross operating profit qualified as "low carbon," according to the EU's new classification of business activities.

Acciona's earnings from its energy business grew almost 14% last year to €845m, driven mainly by the performance of renewable assets outside of Spain. The company's overall investment increased to €1.2bn, with its energy business accounted for €509m. Over the year it installed 471 MW of generation, and has 835 MW under construction, mainly in Chile (251 MW), the US (145 MW) and the Ukraine (76 MW).

By the end of 2019, the Madrid-based company had 10.1 GW of installed capacity: 56% in Spain and 44% in international markets, with a total annual production of 22,991 GWh. The company added that it had 13 GW of potential projects.

The energy division's revenue declined 9.5% to €2bn, largely owing to a fall in hydropower in Spain caused by lack of rain. The investment in infrastructure amounted to €37m, mainly concentrated on the Sydney Light Rail concession and the purchase of heavy machinery in Canada. The real estate business made a net investment of €210m. Net financial debt stood at €4.9bn.

The turnkey project business signed some €4.7bn of contracts over the year, and the portfolio now stands at €8bn. It said that desalination plants, bridges and railway lines were the types of schemes in greatest demand.

Abu Dhabi records real estate transactions worth Dh58bn in 2019

ABU DHABI

The total value of real estate transactions in Abu Dhabi reached Dh58 billion in 2019 as the emirate ramped up efforts to attract investors, the Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT) said on Wednesday.

The department also said the

total number of transactions in 2019 reached 19,000 with the value of real estate deals touching Dh20.6bn through 10,155 transactions, whereas the value of mortgage deals reached Dh37.4bn through 8,663 agreements. It did not provide comparative figures for the previous year.

"The number of real estate deals

was a result of the appropriate payment plans, offers and various facilities offered by several developers along with the low interest rates offered by mortgage loan providers from banks and financing institutions," said Hamad Al Mutawa, executive director of operations affairs at DMT.

Of the transactions, lands and

buildings accounted for Dh10.3bn of deals, or 50 per cent of the total. The remaining 50 per cent related to the sale of individual real estate units. Al Reem Island topped the list of areas with the most real estate transactions at a combined Dh6.52bn, followed by Yas Island with Dh3.425bn, Al Reef with Dh2.293bn, Al Shamkha at

Dh1.078bn, Khalifa City with Dh687 million and Al-Faqa at Dh303m.

A number of new initiatives such as the Dh50bn Ghadan 21 stimulus programme, long-term visas for real estate buyers and allowing foreign investors to own freehold property in Abu Dhabi are all helping the local real estate sector.

WORLD

China says its COVID-19 peak is over

WUHAN/BEIJING

THE peak of the current COVID-19 outbreak in China is over, a government spokesperson said yesterday.

Speaking at a press conference in Beijing, spokesperson for the National Health Commission, Mi Feng, said that new cases kept declining and the overall epidemic situation remained at a low level.

Mi said the number of new cases in Wuhan, the epicenter in central China's Hubei province, has dropped to a single digit, with only eight cases reported on Wednesday.

Only seven new cases were reported on the Chinese mainland outside Hubei, but six were imported from overseas.

The Chinese health authority said yesterday it received reports of 15 new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection and 11 deaths on the Chinese mainland on Wednesday.

Among the deaths, 10 were in Hubei province and one in Shaanxi province, according to the National Health Commission. Seven of the newly reported deaths from Hubei were in Wuhan.

As of Wednesday, Hubei had not seen new confirmed COVID-19 cases for seven consecutive days in its 16 cities and prefectures outside Wuhan.

Meanwhile, 33 new suspected cases were reported, said the commission.

Also on Wednesday, 1,318 people were discharged from hospital after recovery, while the number of severe cases decreased by 235 to 4,257.

The overall confirmed cases on the mainland had reached 80,793 by the end of Wednesday, including 14,831 patients who were still being treated, 62,793 patients who had been discharged after recovery, and 3,169 people who died of the disease.

In Hubei, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases had reached 67,781. Wuhan had so far reported



Children wearing face masks play at the public area of a community in the Xicheng district of Beijing, capital of China, on Wednesday. XINHUA

49,986 confirmed cases and 2,430 deaths as of Wednesday.

The province also saw 1,242 patients discharged from hospital after recovery on Wednesday, bringing the total number of discharged patients in the province to 50,298.

By the end of Wednesday, 85 imported cases had been reported, after six new imported infections were reported.

Among the 12,769 hospitalized patients, 3,453 were still in severe condition and another 727 in critical condition. There were 158 suspected cases. The commission said that 253 people were still suspected of being infected with the virus.

The commission added that 13,701 close contacts were still under medical observation. On Wednesday, 2,206 people were released from medical observation.

Six imported cases were reported on the mainland Wednesday. Among them, three were reported in Guangdong province, two in Gansu province and one in Henan province. By the end of Wednesday, 85 imported cases had been reported, said the commission.

By the end of Wednesday, 129 confirmed cases including three deaths had been reported in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), 10 confirmed cases in the Macao SAR, and 48 in

Taiwan including one death.

A total of 67 patients in Hong Kong, 10 in Macao and 17 in Taiwan had been discharged from hospital after recovery.

Mi said the top priority should be given to treating patients, and vowed no relaxation or lax efforts in the epidemic prevention and control work.

Mi's remarks came after the WHO characterized the COVID-19 outbreak as a "pandemic" as the coronavirus increasingly spreads worldwide. The WHO's characterization of the COVID-19 outbreak as a "pandemic" was to call on its members once again to make further political commitment and put in more resources to turn things around in the battle against the disease, Mi said.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, China has taken the most comprehensive, strictest and most thorough prevention and control measures, gaining precious time for itself and other countries and regions in setting up their own epidemic prevention and control, he added.

"China is paying close attention to the current rapid global spread of the epidemic, and can empathize with other countries in terms of the pressure in prevention and control," Mi said.

Xinhua

EU disapproves of US travel ban

WASHINGTON

THE European Union said on Thursday it disapproved of the US decision to improve a unilateral travel ban on European countries, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (pictured) and Council President Charles Michel said in a statement.

"The European Union disapproves of the fact that the US decision to improve a travel ban was taken unilaterally and without consultation," the statement reads, adding that the EU is taking "strong" measures to limit the spread of the virus.

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday ordered travel from Europe to the United States restricted for 30 days. Travel from Britain would not be affected by the ban.

In London, British Finance Minister Rishi Sunak said travel bans, such as the one announced by Trump would have an impact on Britain's economy.

"There will be an impact on the demand side of our economy as people are unable to spend in the way that they normally would and travel, but it also affects supply chains for businesses and that impacts the supply side of our economy," Sunak told BBC radio.

"And if those supply chains are disrupted, the productive capacity of our economy will shrink for a temporary period of time."

Sunak also said that Britain did not see the need for a US-style flying ban as part of its response to the spread of the coronavirus.

Meanwhile, Sunak said he was ready to do more to help Britain's economy if needed to offset the



impact of the spread of coronavirus, a day after he delivered the biggest stimulus budget for nearly 30 years.

Xinhua

Prime Minister Boris Johnson is set to chair an emergency Cobra committee meeting on Thursday afternoon, at which he is expected to declare that Britain would move to the "delay" phase, the second in Britain's four-step move in response to the spread of the coronavirus, according to reports.

The number of people in the UK who have died from coronavirus rose to eight, health officials said Wednesday. The number of confirmed cases rose to 456, up from 373 a day earlier, according to the health ministry.

In the delay phase, so-called social distancing measures such as school closures, more home working and reducing large scale gathering would be considered, though would not necessarily be approved immediately.

Xinhua

Iran asks IMF for funding of US\$5b, India cancels most visas

SEOUL / CARIO / SYDNEY / TOKYO

IRAN has asked the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for emergency funding to help it fight the coronavirus outbreak, which has hit the Islamic Republic hard, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet yesterday.

The IMF managing director, Kristalina Georgieva, "has stated that countries affected by #COVID19 will

be supported via Rapid Financial Instrument. Our Central Bank requested access to this facility immediately", Zarif said.

Iran's Central Bank chief Abdolnasser Hemmati wrote on his Instagram page that "in a letter addressed to the head of IMF, I have requested five billion US dollar from the RFI emergency fund to help our fight against the coronavirus".

India suspends most visas, closes

border with Myanmar

The Indian government has suspended all tourist visas amid COVID-19 scare.

"All existing visas except diplomatic, official, UN/International organizations, employment, project visas - will be suspended till April 15. This will come into effect from 1200 GMT on March 13, 2020 at the port of departure," said in a statement released by the Indian government on

Wednesday. "Any foreign national who intends to travel to India for compelling reason may contact the nearest Indian mission."

India has also closed a border with neighboring Myanmar to counter the outbreak, as countries across South Asia reported a rise in cases. No cases have so far been confirmed in Myanmar. The number of COVID-19 cases in India rose to 73 Thursday, up from 60 in the previous day, India's federal

health ministry said.

Authorities across India have sounded an alert and urged people to avoid unnecessary foreign travel and mass gatherings. Australia injects US\$11.4-billion stimulus

Australia's government said yesterday it would pump A\$17.6 billion (US\$11.4 billion) into the economy to prevent the coronavirus outbreak from pushing the country into its first recession in nearly 30 years.

SEVERAL Chinese cities raised their alert and implemented strict entry measures by asking all foreign visitors to undergo quarantine amid rising fears of the fast-spreading outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Japan and South Korea, aiming to prevent overseas cases of infection.

Such restrictions, in sharp contrast to the generous help and goodwill offered by the two neighboring countries at the early stage of the outbreak in Wuhan, sparked online discussions as some questioned whether it shows China's selfish and ingratuity mind-set as fears grow over the spreading virus.

However, analysts said this is China's pragmatic, scientific and

Cities tighten measures against import virus spread

responsible responses to the epidemic as the classic quarantine measures the country has adopted proved to be the only available way that worked out. If the rebound of infections occurs, the country's previous progress would end in vain, which will also drag the global epidemic combat into a deadlock.

Qingdao, a highly popular destination for South Koreans in East China's Shandong Province, is adopting a stricter epidemic prevention policy amid the COVID-19. It has asked all foreign visitors to either undergo self-quarantine or stay in designated

hotels, as infection numbers in South Korea soared tenfold in less than a week.

Local authorities began to assign vehicles to pick up all foreign visitors arriving in Qingdao and send them to their homes for a 14-day mandatory quarantine.

Foreigners coming for short-term visit or business travel will be sent to designated hotels, the local government said. Other cities in the province, including Weihai and Yantai, took similar moves.

South Korea reported an additional 144 confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Tuesday, bringing

the total to 977 with 11 deaths, according to the Yonhap News Agency. The spike in infection numbers also raised concerns on looming massive infection in the country.

Japan is also on the edge of a rapid spread of the virus, as the confirmed number has now topped 861, including passengers previously quarantined at the Diamond Princess cruise ship.

South Korea and Japan have become two of the most virus-stricken countries outside of China.

Some countries and regions also issued travel warnings to

South Korea and Japan.

The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention raised its travel advisory to South Korea to the highest level on Monday and urged against all non-essential travel to the country.

Besides Shandong, provinces in Northeast China, with a considerable ethnic Korean population, also escalated prevention and control measures. Hunchun, a city in Northeast China's Jilin and bordering North Korea, imposed a 14-day mandatory quarantine for all foreign returnees to the city.

Those without the city's permanent residence will be sent

to designated places for quarantine.

And Dalian, a city in Northeast China's Liaoning that hosts the annual summer Davos meeting, also took targeted measures to prevent overseas cases of infection, paying more attention to neighboring countries, the local government said on Monday.

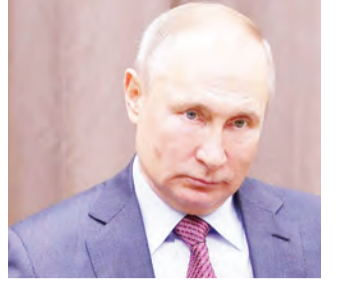
Local authorities in Shenyang, capital of Liaoning, sent out alert messages to local residents, urging them to avoid going to communities where Chinese returning from South Korea live.

China has made a huge sacrifice by imposing unprecedented city lockdowns and drastic re-

Putin accepts idea of removing presidential term limits amid global challenges - Kremlin

MOSCOW

THE complex global situation is one of the reasons why Russian President Vladimir Putin accepted State Duma member Valentina Tereshkova's arguments in favor of removing limits on presidential terms, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters yesterday.



"The global situation is no secret, it is very complex if not turbulent. Many countries, including ours, are facing external instability," he said.

According to Peskov, "in such tough times, some countries moved to allow the incumbent president to remain in office." "In such tough times, it is important to maintain stable, firm and consistent policies," the Russian presidential spokesman emphasized.

"Apparently, this was Tereshkova's reason, these were the arguments that President Putin accepted," Peskov added.

"The constitutional provision limiting presidential terms will remain in place and an exception will be made only for the incumbent president in relation to the amendment package, and, which is more important, in light of the current situation, this is what Tereshkova's initiative was about," he noted.

When asked why Putin had changed his view on the need to limit presidential terms, Peskov pointed out that the global situation, including the situation around Russia "was definitely one of the crucial reasons."

Constitutional amendments

Russia's Federation Council (the upper house of parliament) approved a bill amending the country's Constitution at a plenary meeting on Wednesday.

The bill sets a limit of two presidential terms. However, the senators also approved an amendment proposed by lawmaker Valentina Tereshkova, which says that Russia's incumbent and former heads of state can run for president regardless of the time spent in office before the amendment came into force.

However, President Putin said that the Constitutional Court must check the amendment before it took effect.

Putin submitted the bill to the State Duma (the lower house of parliament) in late January, following his 2020 State of the Nation Address.

The document particularly expands the authority of Russia's parliament and Constitutional Court, bars officials from holding foreign passports and residence permits and ensures the supremacy of the Constitution within Russia's legal system.

Agencies

Iran agrees to send black boxes of downed airliner to Ukraine

MONTREAL/OTTAWA

IRAN has agreed to send black boxes from a downed Ukrainian jetliner to Kiev for analysis, an Iranian official said on Wednesday, a move that would end a two-month standoff over the recordings from the jet.

Top Iranian officials have until now refused to hand over the flight recorders from the Ukraine International Airlines flight, which was shot down by the Iranian military on Jan 8 with the loss of all 176 people on board.

Farhad Parvaresh, who heads Iran's delegation at the UN's Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), said Tehran's civil aviation authority had also invited other interested countries to participate in reading the data.

This effectively opens the door to the United States, Ukraine, Canada and ICAO itself, people familiar with the investigation said. Air crash investigations are usually left to ICAO's 193 member states.

Canadian Foreign Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne described the move as a step in the right direction.

"We welcome those words, but we will judge Iran obviously by their actions," he told reporters. Ottawa has repeatedly pressed Iran to hand over the damaged boxes from the crash, in which 57 Canadians died.

Iran had also made clear it would transfer the boxes to France if need be, Champagne said.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau urged Iran in January to send the recorders to France, one of the few countries with the ability to read damaged black boxes.

Andriy Shevchenko, Ukrainian ambassador to Canada, tweeted that the announcement was "an important result".

Under UN rules Iran retains overall control of the investigation while the United States and Ukraine are fully accredited as the countries where the jet was respectively built and operated.

Agencies

restrictions on movement, which WHO experts called a "bold approach" that changed the course of the epidemic, which probably prevented hundreds of thousands of more cases of infection.

The country has seen visible progress in its fight against the disease with 24 provincial-level regions across China reporting zero new cases of COVID-19 infections on Monday.

Outside of Hubei, regions reported only nine new cases of infections on Tuesday, a significant drop from previous days.

Meanwhile, WHO experts mentioned that the number of coronavirus cases reported in China a day has dropped from 2,500 two weeks ago to 406 on Monday, which was about an 80 percent decline. *Global Times*



A pedestrian wearing a face mask walks near a display promoting the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympics. (Agencies)

Tokyo 2020 announces opening event despite mounting coronavirus concerns

TOKYO

TOKYO 2020 organisers said on Thursday that Japan's softball game against Australia on July 22 would be the first event on the schedule, the announcement coming as concerns mount about the potential impact on the Games from the coronavirus outbreak.

The game will begin at 9 a.m. local time (0000 GMT) at the Fukushima Azuma Baseball Stadium with two further fixtures, Italy v United States and Mexico v Canada, later in the day.

It will mark the first day of action at the Games, which officially begin with the

opening ceremony on July 24.

The schedule announcement comes amid fears that the coronavirus outbreak, labelled a pandemic by the WHO on Wednesday, could have a major impact on the Games.

The outbreak has led to the cancellation or postponement of dozens of major sporting events across the globe, including the NBA season [LIN2B503M].

An organising committee member said late on Wednesday that any decision to delay the Olympics should be made before May but on Thursday Japanese government spokesman Yoshihide Suga said there was no change in planning for the Games.

REUTERS

SportPesa Jackpotwinner seeks better use of cash prize

By Guardian Reporter

REHEMA Omary, a spouse of SportPesa Jackpot winner Yassin Ridhiwani Ally has disclosed they are planning to make good use of cash prize her husband won from SportPesa.

Rehema pointed out they are planning to use over 437m/- in cash prize Allywon to buy a house they will be living in.

Ally had placed right bets on all 13 matches and was eventually presented with over 437m/- by the gaming firm.

Rehema disclosed at SportPesa office in Dar es Salaam that she and her partner want to fulfil their dream, owning a house, considering they had been staying in a rented house for many years.

Rehema pointed she feels happy she and her partner are soon expected to have their own house and live with their family in it after the win.

She noted she was forced to at times leave her partner awake alone at night when the latter was betting via SportPesa.

She said she at some point feared Ally was simple chatting with his friends.

"I'm so happy to see our dream will to a great extent be fulfilled, owning our own house was our dream," she pointed out.

"The efforts in the end paid off after

he had placed right bets in the SportPesa Jackpot and won, it was not easy for the partner to emerge as winner, I congratulate him for winning which will change our lives."

"I used to leave him alone at night betting via SportPesa, I earlier feared he had been chatting with other people, but my fears were unfounded," Rehema pointed out.

SportPesa's Director of Administration and Compliance, Tarimba Abbas, noted: "We feel happy our firm changes Tanzanians' lives via our betting game."

"I appeal to Tanzanians to keep on betting via SportPesa with a view to winning prize, they should not lose hope given they will boost their chances of winning millions of cash if they bet regularly, as it is the case for Ally, I believe his live will improve a lot after his win."

He pointed out this week's cash prize for Jackpot game is 241,916,240/- . People, he disclosed, should bet with a view to winning.

People who want to take part in the game, he disclosed, should either dial *150*87# on their mobile phones or visit SportPesa website www.sportpesa.co.tz.

People that are below 18 years should not bet.



SportPesa's Director of Administration and Compliance, Tarimba Abbas (R), presents Yassin Ridhiwani Ally, who emerged as last week's SportPesa Jackpot winner, with a dummy cheque of 437,631,320/- at the firm's office in Dar es Salaam recently. Looking on is Ally's wife, Rehema Omary (C), and child. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Over 3,000 athletes line up for Sokoine Half Marathon 2020

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

MORE than 3000 athletes are expected to compete at this year's edition of Sokoine Half Marathon slated for next month in Arusha.

The half marathon is held to commemorate and celebrate the life of the late Edward Moringe Sokoine, who was Tanzania's first Prime Minister.

Chairman of Sokoine Memorial Foundation, Lembris Kipuyo, said on Wednesday all preparations for the event are going on smoothly.

He disclosed that they expect Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar's Second Vice President, Seif Ali Iddi, to be the race's guest of honour.

Kipuyo said the half marathon will also be

accompanied by special memorial prayers.

He disclosed said the Sokoine Half Marathon will involve three categories which are 21 km Uzalendo race which is for experienced runners.

The race will also include the 10km Furuha Run for up-and-coming athletes and 2.5km walk which is designed for people below 12 years.

He said there will be awards, namely cash prize, medals and specially designed T-shirts for winners in all categories.

"All preparations for this year Sokoine Memorial Half Marathon are going on smoothly and we will host the event next month in Arusha, we thank our sponsors TTCL and CRDB Bank for their gesture," he said.

He also disclosed that registration for the race has started at various places in the country and the main registration center is Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium in Arusha.

Arusha Regional Amateur Athletics Association (ARAA) secretary general said they are well prepared for the marathon which is slated to start at Arusha Clock Tower and end at Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium.

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Toronto Raptors center Serge Ibaka (9) guards against Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert (27) in the first half during an NBA basketball game Monday, March 9, 2020, in Salt Lake City. (AP Photo)

NBA suspends season until further notice, over coronavirus

MIAMI

THE NBA has suspended its season "until further notice" after a Utah Jazz player tested positive Wednesday for the coronavirus, a move that came only hours after the majority of the league's owners were leaning toward playing games without fans in arenas.

Now there will be no games at all, at least for the time being. A person with knowledge of the situation said the Jazz player who tested positive was center Rudy Gobert. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because neither the league nor the team confirmed the test.

"The NBA is suspending game play following the conclusion of tonight's schedule of games until further notice," the league said in a statement sent shortly after 9:30 p.m. EDT. "The NBA will use this hiatus to determine next steps for moving forward in regard to the coronavirus pandemic."

The test result, the NBA said, was reported shortly before the scheduled tip-off time for the Utah at Oklahoma City game on Wednesday night was called off. Players were on the floor for warmups and tip-off was moments away when they were told to return to their locker rooms. About 30 minutes later, fans were told the game was postponed "due to unforeseen circumstances."

Those circumstances were the league's worst-case scenario for now – a player testing positive. A second person who spoke to AP on condition of anonymity said the league expects the shutdown to last a minimum of two weeks, but cautioned that timeframe is very fluid.

"It's a very serious time right now," Miami Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "I think the league

moved appropriately and prudently and we'll all just have to monitor the situation and see where it goes from here."

The Jazz released a statement saying a player – they did not identify Gobert – tested negative earlier Wednesday for flu, strep throat and an upper respiratory infection. That player's symptoms diminished as the day went along, but the decision was made to test for COVID-19 anyway. That test came back with a preliminary positive result.

"The individual is currently in the care of health officials in Oklahoma City," the Jazz said, adding that updates would come as appropriate.

For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, which declared a pandemic on Wednesday, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 58,000 have so far recovered.

It has been a worldwide issue for several weeks. And now, it has hit the NBA.

"This is crazy," Cleveland forward Tristan Thompson said on Twitter.

Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban said he was stunned when the news came down, adding that "this is much bigger than basketball."

"This is a global pandemic where people's lives are at stake," Cuban said. "I'm a lot more worried about my kids, and my mom is 82 years old, and talking to her, and telling her to stay in the house, than I am about when we play our next game."

Charlotte Hornets coach James Borrego, speaking before his team's game at Miami, said "these are scary times."

Rapidly evolving times, as well. Around 7 p.m., a person with knowledge of the situation told AP that owners – who met by teleconference Wednesday – were largely in support of a plan to play games in empty arenas on a short-term basis.

About an hour later, the Thunder-Jazz game was halted before tip-off. And about 90 minutes after that, the season was called off, effective when the last whistle was to blow Wednesday night.

That came even earlier than planned: The last game of the night's six-game slate, New Orleans at Sacramento, was called off as well because one of the referees assigned to work that Pelicans-Kings game, Courtney Kirkland, worked a Utah game on Monday.

"The game was canceled out of an abundance of caution," the NBA said.

There are 259 games, roughly 21% of the schedule, left to play this season – and no one knows if, or when, things will resume.

"We believe in the leadership of the league," Philadelphia 76ers general manager Elton Brand said.

The shutdown is the latest major development in a season filled with unspeakably hard challenges. The league lost as much as \$400 million in revenue after a rift with China was started in October when Houston general

manager Daryl Morey tweeted out support of anti-government protesters in Hong Kong. Former NBA Commissioner David Stern died in January, the same month that soon-to-be Hall of Famer Kobe Bryant died in a helicopter crash.

And now, a pandemic – which could also cost the league hundreds of millions in lost revenue, depending on how long it lasts. Cuban said he expected his team to remain in Dallas, rehabbing and working and being ready to return whenever the league reopens.

"As we've said from the beginning, the health and safety of our fans, employees, players and partners is our top priority and thus we fully support the NBA's decision to postpone games," Orlando Magic CEO Alex Martins said. "We will continue to stay in contact with the league, and local, state and federal health experts as we closely monitor this public health crisis."

If the regular season ends here, it would be the end of Atlanta guard Vince Carter's 22-year playing career. And just in case this was it, the Hawks put Carter in with 19.5 seconds left in overtime in what was already clearly going to be a loss to New York.

Carter took an open 3-pointer and made it – the Knicks, aware of the moment, didn't defend him either – and celebrated with Hawks teammates afterward after what may be the final shot of his career.

"A weird, but cool memory," Carter said.

Also shut down: The G League, the NBA's minor league where teams have somewhere between six and nine games left on their 50-game schedules.

Neymar leads PSG into Champions League quarters as banned fans gather outside

PARIS Saint-Germain players celebrated with supporters gathered outside the ground after Neymar set them on their way to a 2-0 win over Borussia Dortmund behind closed doors on Wednesday, taking them through to the Champions League quarter-finals 3-2 on aggregate.

PSG needed to overturn a 2-1 defeat in the first leg of their last-16 tie in Germany, but Neymar's 28th-minute header put them ahead on the night in the second leg amid a surreal atmosphere, as banned supporters congregated outside the Parc des Princes instead.

Juan Bernat then deflected in a Pablo Sarabia assist to make it 2-0 and PSG -- for whom Kylian Mbappe was only fit enough to appear as a substitute -- go through to the quarter-finals for the first time since 2016. Dortmund finished the night with 10 men after Emre Can was sent off.

This game was played behind closed doors after the French government banned all gatherings of more than 1,000 people due to the coronavirus outbreak, but many still came together outside.

Those supporters brandished flares as the team bus arrived before the game and sang and set off fireworks throughout the match.

PSG players rushed to a concourse at the back of the stadium to celebrate with them at the end of the game after breaking a run of three straight exits in the first knockout round of the competition.

"We played like a team. It was a pleasure to be their coach tonight," PSG coach Thomas Tuchel told broadcaster RMC Sport.

"The atmosphere was great coming here in the bus, with all the ultras singing. We were all singing together and it was a special atmosphere.

"It needed a huge effort from us, playing without spectators made it all the more difficult."

Neymar was caught on camera in tears after the match, having shaken off desperate disappointment in the competition in the last two years, with injury preventing him from playing in the second leg against Real Madrid at this stage in 2018 and in both legs against Manchester

United last season.

Dortmund were disappointing, though, with Erling Braut Haaland never looking like repeating his first-leg heroics when he netted twice.

Their defender Mats Hummels admitted his team struggled with the atmosphere, saying: "It was really bizarre, but for both teams. The start of the game was really strange, like a friendly."

- Fireworks outside ground -

Mbappe was only named among the substitutes after struggling with illness and even undergoing a test for coronavirus in the build-up to the game.

His absence from the starting line-up was just the latest blow for coach Thomas Tuchel, who was also without the suspended Marco Verratti and injured centre-back Thiago Silva.

That meant Edinson Cavani and Pablo Sarabia started through the middle of the attack, while Argentine international Leandro Paredes was selected in midfield.

Cavani was denied the opener in the 25th minute when Dortmund goalkeeper Roman Burki stretched out a leg to tip his shot around the post.

The opening goal followed soon after, Neymar stealing in front of his marker to stoop and head in Angel Di Maria's corner.

The PSG supporters outside responded to the Brazilian's second goal in the tie by exploding more fireworks in celebration.

PSG scored again in first-half stoppage time. This time Di Maria laid the ball out to Sarabia on the right side of the box, and his low ball was diverted into the far corner by Bernat.

Mbappe came on with just under half an hour remaining, while Dortmund were still only one goal away from forcing extra time.

However, they rarely troubled Keylor Navas in the home goal and Can saw a straight red card with a minute left for throwing Neymar to the ground.

The Brazilian was also booked following that incident along with Di Maria, now watching from the dugout and who will miss the quarter-final first leg as a result.

AFP

US Soccer apologizes for arguments in equal pay case

NEW YORK

THE U.S. Soccer Federation apologized Wednesday night after it made claims in court documents that women on its national team had lesser responsibilities and physical abilities than their male counterparts, an assertion that drew widespread criticism and sparked a player protest.

The statement from USSF president Carlos Cordeiro came hours after The Coca-Cola Co. denounced the federation for its stance. Cordeiro also announced a shake-up of the USSF legal team.

"On behalf of U.S. Soccer, I sincerely apologize for the offense and pain caused by language in this week's court filing, which did not reflect the values of our Federation or our tremendous admiration of our women's national team," the statement said. "Our WNT players are incredibly talented and work tirelessly, as they have demonstrated time and again from their Olympic gold medals to their World Cup titles."

American players wore their warm-up jerseys inside out for the national anthems and team photo before a 3-1 win over Japan in an Olympic prep match. Players hid the USSF crest on the jerseys but allowed the four stars - one for each World Cup title - to be visible.

"I think it just was a powerful message," said forward Carli Lloyd, a two-time FIFA Player of the Year.

Coca-Cola had called the federation's assertion in documents filed earlier this week

"unacceptable and offensive."

"We have asked to meet with them immediately to express our concerns. The Coca-Cola Co. is firm in its commitment to gender equality, fairness and women's empowerment in the United States and around the world and we expect the same from our partners," Coca-Cola said in a statement, first reported by The Wall Street Journal on Wednesday.

Coca-Cola has been a long-term partner with the USSF as well as a global sponsor of the World Cup since 1974.

In court documents filed Monday in response to the players' motion for a summary judgment, the USSF said the women claimed their ability level is the same as the men "by ignoring the materially higher level of speed and strength required to perform the job of an MNT player."

"A reasonable juror could conclude that the job of MNT player requires materially different skill and more responsibility than plaintiffs' job does, while also taking place under materially different working conditions," USSF lawyers wrote. "The job of MNT player (competing against senior men's national teams) requires a higher level of skill based on speed and strength than does the job of WNT player (competing against senior women's national teams)."

Molly Levinson, spokeswoman for the players in the lawsuit, said "this 'argument' belongs in the Paleolithic Era." AP

Klopp, Simeone trade barbs as Atletico KO Liverpool

LIVERPOOL

HOLDERS Liverpool crashed out of the Champions League in the last 16 after Atletico Madrid scored three goals in extra time to earn a shock 3-2 victory at Anfield on Wednesday that sent them through 4-2 on aggregate.

After falling 2-0 down on the night, substitute Marcos Llorente struck twice in extra time and Alvaro Morata added a late third to ensure a famous victory for Diego Simeone's side against a Liverpool team unbeaten in their last 25 home games in European competition.

Premier League leaders Liverpool enjoyed the greater possession, created more chances, drew a series of saves from Atletico keeper Jan Oblak and scored through Georginio Wijnaldum and Roberto Firmino.

Yet after last season's memorable comeback by Liverpool against Barcelona in the semifinals, it was the Spaniards who turned the tables this time.

Simeone's Atletico are famed for their defensive solidity and their superb organisation and those qualities were on full display, but it was their clinical finishing and remarkable spirit that proved the key elements.

"We don't know where our limit is," said Llorente who had only scored once for Atletico before this game.

"We all defended until the death and when a team all digs in like this, things like this happen. I cannot describe this feeling."

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp was not impressed with Atletico's approach, however.

"I don't understand with the quality they have the football they play. They could play proper football but they stand deep and have counter-attacks," said the German.

"We accept it of course but it doesn't feel right tonight. I realise I am a really bad loser, especially when the boys put such an effort in against

world class players on the other side who defend with two rows of four."

Atleti boss Simeone was curt in his response to Klopp's reaction.

"[We play] to win. With our weapons, to win," he said. "Respecting our identity, respecting the characteristics of the players, exploiting the defects of the opponents, that's how we play."

After allowing an early chance for Diego Costa, which the former Chelsea forward drove into the side-netting, Liverpool, trailing 1-0 from the first leg, laid siege to the Atletico goal.

They powered forward in waves of attacks but Atletico were resilient with central defenders Stefan Savic and Felipe foiling everything Klopp's side threw at them.

The home team broke through two minutes before halftime when Alex

Oxlade-Chamberlain burst to the byline and pulled back a cross to Wijnaldum who powered an angled header into the bottom corner.

There was little change to the pattern of the game after the interval with Liverpool peppering Oblak's goal but the Slovenian proved himself up to the task, denying efforts from Mohamed Salah, Firmino and Sadio Mane while Andy Robertson headed against the bar.

"Oblak is the best goalkeeper in the world, I have no doubts," Simeone said after the match. "[Lionel] Messi resolves games offensively, and Oblak does it in goal."

"The fans will remember this game for a long time." Atletico thought they had grabbed a stoppage-time winner when Saul Niguez headed in a Renan Lodi cross but the effort

was rightly flagged for offside, ensuring the game went to extra time.

It took just four minutes for Liverpool to take the lead in the tie with Firmino heading against the post and driving home the loose ball as Anfield got ready for a night of celebration.

Yet then it all went wrong for Klopp's side.

Goalkeeper Adrian, standing in for the injured Alisson Becker, passed the ball out straight to Joao Felix who fed Llorente and the substitute punished the Spanish keeper with a precise shot into the far corner.

Llorente produced a carbon-copy finish following good work on the counter from Morata to end Liverpool's hopes of defending their European crown.

Morata put the icing on the cake in the final moments with a cool finish after Liverpool had thrown



Macros Llorente shifted the ball on the edge of the box to create space to score his second. (Daily Mail)

(Agencies)

Liverpool's Champions League exit gives season an anticlimactic feel

LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND

JURGEN Klopp's team will go down in Liverpool history as the side that ended the club's 30-year wait for the league title. Not even the threat of a Premier League shutdown because of the coronavirus will deny Liverpool the chance to lift the trophy, though they might have to do so in an empty stadium if English football is the latest domino to fall among Europe's top leagues.

But the best teams are only as strong as their weakest links, and Liverpool have now been knocked out of two competitions in the space of eight days because their backup goalkeeper is nowhere near as good as their first choice.

With Liverpool eliminated from the FA Cup by Chelsea last week and dumped out of the Champions League on Wednesday, thanks to Atletico Madrid, both defeats came as a direct result of mistakes made by Adrian, the Spanish keeper who is deputising for the injured Alisson Becker.

At the start of the season, Adrian was the penalty shootout hero of the UEFA Super Cup triumph against Chelsea in Istanbul, but as the campaign draws to a close, his fumbles and errors of judgement have played a key role in Liverpool facing up to the prospect of a glorious year fizzling into a tale of what might have been.

Although winning the Premier League title will unquestionably make this a successful season at Anfield, it promised to be so much more when they travelled to Madrid for the first leg of this Champions League tie three weeks ago. Back then, Klopp's men were still unbeaten in the Premier League and still within a shout of adding the FA Cup and Champions League to the Super Cup and FIFA Club World Cup they won earlier in the season.

"We know in the last two years we had some lucky moments in the Champions League," Klopp said. "You have to, to reach two finals, but today

it was everything was against us in the decisive moments. We accept it, of course, but it doesn't feel right tonight.

"I realise I am a really bad loser, especially when the boys put such an effort in against world-class players on the other side who defend with two rows of four."

"Our main mistake was to not score the second goal five minutes earlier. We scored it in extra time and not in the 90 minutes."

Saul Niguez's goal in Atletico's 1-0 first-leg win at the Estadio Metropolitan has triggered a slump that has seen Liverpool suffer four defeats in six games in all competitions. They are out of the FA Cup, they are no longer unbeaten in the Premier League, and they have seen their hopes of retaining the European Cup ended by Diego Simeone's Atletico.

If Manchester City lose at home to Burnley this week-

end, Liverpool can clinch the title on Monday with a win against neighbours Everton at Goodison Park, but once the title is won, there will be an inevitable sense of anti-climax and missed opportunity in the other competitions.

Liverpool should still be alive and kicking in the Champions League, despite Atletico's three-goal show in extra-time, which saw them end the home team's 68-game unbeaten run at Anfield in the Premier League and Champions League. Liverpool created 34 goal-scoring chances, including an Andy Robertson header against the crossbar, and dominated possession with 71%, but their Achilles' heel was the man in goal.

Meanwhile, in the other goal, Jan Oblak made save after save to keep Atletico in the tie to underline his status as one of the best in the world. Perhaps it is harsh to focus on Adrian

because the former West Ham keeper certainly did not intentionally make the mistakes that cost his team. But as Liverpool discovered when Loris Karius committed two howlers during the Champions League final defeat against Real Madrid in 2018, if your goalkeeper is not at the same level as the rest of your players, it will cost any team.

A poor Adrian clearance, while Liverpool were 2-0 ahead on the night following goals from Georginio Wijnaldum and Roberto Firmino, led to Marcos Llorente giving Atletico a lifeline on 96 minutes. Adrian also slipped when he attempted to keep out the striker's shot. That goal gave Atleti belief, and they smelled blood. Nine minutes later, Llorente scored again to put the Spaniards ahead overall before Alvaro Morata sealed a 3-2 win with a strike in the 120th minute.

But the crucial moment was Adrian's mistake for the first goal, just as it was against Chelsea in the FA Cup, when he fumbled Wilian's early strike into the net. That is the problem with understudy goalkeepers. They are rarely in the same league as the No. 1, so they are exposed when the heat is on, and mistakes are made.

Still, Adrian will get a Premier League winners' medal when they are handed out in May, and he will have earned it for his performances earlier this season when Alisson was sidelined for two months by a calf injury. But had he been more capable, or had Alisson been fit, Liverpool might still be chasing three trophies this season. As it stands, they have just one left to win. They will win that, but one major trophy doesn't feel like quite enough for the remarkable season Liverpool have had.

(Agencies)



SPORT

Klopp, Simeone trade barbs as Atletico KO Liverpool

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TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV FRIDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 Mid Week Movie (r)
13:30 Kali Za Wana
14:00 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Wakilisha (r)
16:00 Ujenzi (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Skonga
19:30 EATV SAA I
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 Friday Night Live
23:00 Kurasa (r)

Friday Night Live The Weekend begins here! Listen to upbeat mixed music by the hottest DJs, Gossip, showbiz updates and exclusive interviews with celebrities from home and abroad. Don't you dare miss this.

eastafrica RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 Friday Night Live

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Singida United upbeat despite defeat in VPL

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

STRUGGLING Singida United have remained upbeat on their ability to survive relegation battle in the ongoing Vodacom Premier League.

The team's interim head coach, Zulfadi Mahindi, said in an interview on Wednesday they still have chance to remain in the league.

They stretched their losing streak after conceding a humiliating 8-0 loss to the league's defending champions Simba in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday.

The Singida coach put on a brave face and said: "It is the duty of supporters of the club, management and my charges to fight together so as to remain in the league."

Mahindi said his charges would fight to the wire to escape the relegation to First Division League.

Singida United are anchoring the 20-team league with 12 points from 28 games.

"I'm sure we can escape relegation, what is needed is for my charges to come together, the supporters and management of the club should come together for the club," he insisted.

"It is possible to remain in the league, the good thing is that we are playing well, it is just unfortunate that we are losing games," he said.

Singida United's free-fall continued when they lost 8-0 to Simba at Uhuru Stadium on Wednesday. The loss condemned them to 20 consecutive games without a win in the league.

Commenting on the 8-0 defeat to Simba, the coach conceded defeat saying they lost to a good side.

"We were facing a side which is one of the best domestically, we tried to play our football but they were too good for us," he said.

The interim coach said he is confident that the team will do well in their future games starting with a home game against Mbeya City FC on Saturday.

"On Saturday, we will face Mbeya City at our backyard, we will make sure that we collect the needed points, the aim now is to remain in the league," he said.

Much as it now seems impossible for the side to remain in the league, it has some of the experienced players in the league including keeper Owen Chaima and defender George Wawa.

Haji Mwinyi and Haruna Moshi are also in the team's list of experienced players.

The mentioned players are expected to link with others to see to it their squad remains in the league.

Simba could have scored more against Singida United- Vandenbroeck



Simba striker, Meddie Kagere (C), challenges Singida United defender, Mwinyi Haji, when the teams clashed in a Vodacom Premier League game, which took place in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA SC head coach Sven Vandenbroeck believes his side could have scored even more in their 8-0 hammering of Singida United in a Vodacom Premier League clash, which took place at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday.

The Vodacom Premier League defending champions were looking to bounce back from

Sunday's 1-0 derby defeat against rivals Yanga.

Right from the first whistle, they overwhelmed their soon to be relegated opponents in a one-sided league match.

Goals from Meddie Kagere, who scored four, John Bocco and Sharaf Shiboub, as well as

a brace by Deo Kanda, helped the outfit, nicknamed 'Msimbazi Reds', to a huge home win.

Despite being delighted with the scoreline, Vandenbroeck pointed out it could have been even better for his side.

"Maybe it was better 6-0 and we scored two last Sunday instead

of 8-0 today. I am happy they took it seriously today at least in the first half. After a while when the score goes up it becomes a difficult game because you play against yourself, concentration is too easy, some guys drop down to 60%," he noted.

"At least I saw some guys with

the hunger to play to the last minute, the others have to pick up. Maybe we could have scored more in the second half if we concentrated."

He added: "We changed positions to let everybody play and to give the boys rest especially those who asked, it was not a tactical thing just to preserve them."

Commenting on his decision to opt out of fielding fringed players Shiza Kichuya, Yusuf Mlipili, Ibrahim Ajibu and others who could not even make the bench, Vandenbroeck said it was neither his nor the players' problem that they cannot get playing time.

"There is no problem. The problem is that some guys are performing better than what they do. That is the problem, not with me or other things but some guys had good form in the last couple of weeks. I think we had a 6-match winning run though we lost on Sunday," he noted.

"If the team is performing then most of the time you keep the same team. The other ones have to show that they want to play."

The defending champions lead the Vodacom Premier League table by 17 points with 10 matches to go and are well on course to win the title for the third time in a row.



Ngorongoro Half Marathon 2020 Coordinator, Meta Petro (C), Chairperson of the race's organizing committee, Marcel Bituro (L), and Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA)'s Public Relations Manager, Joyce Mgaya, participate in the race's press conference in Arusha yesterday. The race has been penned for April 19 in the region. PHOTO: MARC NKWAME

Over 2000 athletes to participate in Ngorongoro Half Marathon 2020

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

THIS year's installment of the annual Ngorongoro Half Marathon will be taking place here a week after Easter, attracting more than 2000 athletes from Tanzania, Kenya and other countries.

Organized by Meta Sports and bankrolled by the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA), the athletics event will be flagged off from the Lodware gate at the NCAA on April 19 at 6.00 am.

The main race will stick to the usual half marathon distance of 21 kilometers.

"There will also be 5km Fun

Run as well as the children's category featuring the 2.5km race," the Race Coordinator, Meta Petro, disclosed during a press briefing at Ngorongoro Tower in Arusha yesterday.

Runners will race all the way to Rhotia Hills, then turn back and complete the race at the Mazingira Bora grounds of Karatu Township, with organizers praying that there will be no heavy rains on that day.

Joyce Mgaya, NCAA Public Relations Manager, said this year's theme is 'Race Against Poaching, Promote Domestic Tourism'.

She pointed out it is expected that the race will highly

promote tourism activities at the Conservation Area as well as keeping the adjacent Karatu township busy.

The Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Khamis Kigwangalla, participated in the Ngorongoro Half Marathon for two consecutive years, 2018 and 2019.

Kigwangalla is also expected to run again next month.

During the previous Ngorongoro Half Marathon, Kenyan runner Abraham Too emerged as winner, clocking one hour, five minutes and 59 seconds.

Tanzania's Michael Kishiba from the National Service

(JKT), who covered the distance in one hour, five minutes and 45 seconds, finished second and he was the only Tanzanian in the top three positions.

He was ahead of the third-placed runner, Festus Cheboi, who also happened to be hailing from Kenya.

The same case applied to the female runners' winning bill. Esther Chesang from Kenya topped the lot having raced the 21 kilometers in one hour, 16 minutes and 49 seconds.

She beat Tanzania's Natalie Elisante from Talent Club of Arusha who completed the round in one hour, 16 minutes and 41 seconds.

Azam FC coach Cioaba fined

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

AZAM FC head coach Aristica Cioaba has been fined by the Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) for his refusal to grant media interview after his side's 3-2 loss to Simba SC in a Vodacom Premier League clash, which took place in Dar es Salaam two weeks ago.

According to press release from Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) information officer Clifford Ndimbo and signed by TPLB Chief Executive Officer Almasi Kasongo the coach is to pay 500,000/- for refusing to talk to the media after the clash.

The federation also said Simba SC have been given a strong warning for reporting late for the match against Azam FC, which took place at the National Stadium.

The release said Simba reported for the match at 6.45pm instead of 6pm.

The Premier League Board has also referred Police Tanzania's assistant coach, Ally Mtuli, to TFF Disciplinary Committee for his action in a game which ended with his side conceding 2-1 to Mwadui FC.

Mtuli is accused of attacking and insulting assistant referee Neema Mwambusi in the game played two weeks ago.

The federation also said Lipuli FC's Seif Ng'ingo and Ndanda FC's Abubakar Hashim have been fined 500,000/- apiece for their actions in a game between the teams.

The two are accused of attempting to uphold witchcraft beliefs in the match, which ended with the teams locked to 3-3 draw.

There are also fines and punishment meted out to clubs' players and officials in First Division League (FDL) and Second Division League (SDL) games.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

